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### ABSTRACTS

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“The European Qur'an”

### **Bible and Qur'an at the Council of Basel (1431-1449)**

**John TOLAN, Université de Nantes**

The Council of Basel (1431-1449) represented the high water mark of the conciliar movement, which sought to achieve peace and unity in the through collective governance of the Church. The Gospels and Epistles provided conciliarists with a model of collective authority to oppose the papal notions of the pope as vicar of Christ. Two of the most fervent advocates of the conciliar model, Juan de Segovia and Nicolas of Cusa, met at Basel and studied the Qur'an together. The lasting impact of this discovery of the Qur'an, seen in their later works (Nicolas' *De pace fidei* and *Cribatio Alkorani* and Juan's Qur'an translation) have been widely studied. Less attention has been paid to how both of them reflected on Qur'an and Bible to hone theological arguments at the council, on subjects ranging from the Immaculate conception to the universal pretensions of the Church. While both authors were subsequently to use the Qur'an in anti-Muslim polemics, it had also become for them an intellectual tool for other purposes. In this, Basel represents a watershed in European approaches to the Qur'an, and of the relationship between Qur'an and bible.

# **Inmates of Hell: From Qur'anic Debate to Medieval Catholic Thought**

**David BERTAINA, University of Illinois, Springfield**

In the Qur'an, we find God warning Muhammad not to pray for polytheists, even those who were close kin, since "they will be inmates of hell" (Q 9:113). Qur'anic commentators reflecting on Q 9:113 imagined that Muhammad was prevented from praying by God. The implications of this passage led to several debates between early Muslims concerning the Family of the Prophet and the eternal status of his parents. Were Muhammad's parents destined for hell? A second question arose among Muslims from Q 93:7 ("Did he not find you astray and guide you?") and Q 42:52 ("You did not know what the Book is, nor what is faith"). How could the Prophet have been a polytheist and yet also doctrinally sinless prior to his calling?

This paper surveys how internal Muslim debates between the pro-traditionist hadith faction and Mu'tazilī skeptics created a series of polemical and apologetical responses to these questions. These debates were preserved by the Sunnī traditionist Ibn Qutayba (d. 889). Later, the Fatimid Muslim convert to Coptic Christianity known as Paul (Būluṣ) ibn Rajā' (writing ca. 1012) revised these arguments in his work *Clarity in Truth*. Ibn Rajā''s text was disseminated via Christian Arabic networks to Latin-speaking Europe. Eventually the substance of these arguments were reworked and utilized (without attribution) by Latin Catholic writers such as Ramon Martí and Riccolodo da Monte di Croce in their assessments of the Prophet and his family.

This paper explains how internal Muslim debates over the Qur'anic interpretation of Q 9:113, 93:7, and 42:52 were transmitted to Catholic Europe and adapted for new polemical approaches to the Qur'an including to contrast Muhammad's family and alleged polytheism with Biblical readings about Jesus and the Holy Family. In conclusion, some western Christian Qur'anic polemics about Muhammad's family and alleged polytheism are actually representative of certain views that some Muslims debated during the ninth century in the Arabic-speaking Middle East.

## **Raymundus Martini's use of the Qur'an in his *De Seta Machometi***

**Pierre COURTAINE, Université de Nantes**

Taking account of someone else's beliefs is always problematic in the context of a missionary activity. Should one exploit what brings the two religions closer and use their similar characteristics to introduce the new faith, or on the contrary, entirely oppose the other's beliefs because they work as a consistent whole which makes a true conversion even more difficult? Latin missionaries of the XIIIth century put a lot of work on the assimilation of qur'anic dogmas and choose a stance regarding Muslim beliefs. This presentation focuses on the approach of *Raymundus Martini*, a XIIIth century Dominican missionary.

*Raymundus Martini* extensively writes on the Qur'an in his *De Seta Machometi*. The first use he makes of it is about Muhammad's biography. His life is described with the help of many sources, the Qur'an being the most used. In this first part, the writer already uses the book to discredit the Prophet of the Muslims, assigning him a life that is contrary to the life of a true and virtuous prophet.

In the second part of this work, which is called the « fourfold reprobation of Muhammad », *Raymundus Martini* splits up the law of the Muslims between what is true or false. Thus, he principally criticizes the Qur'an while also citing some fragments that he considers right. Then he underlines the « impurity » of Muhammad's life with anecdotes from the Muslim holy book. The next parts, about the fact that the Prophet of Islam didn't perform any miracle and about the impure laws that he left for his worshippers also thoroughly use the Qur'an.

The writer takes the same holy book as a proof of the truthfulness of the Bible and of Christian doctrine. This particular case indicates *Raymundus Martini's* ability to use a book of authority among the Muslims in order to serve his missionary objective. He also answers the accusation of the Muslims about the falsification of the Bible done by the Jews and Christians. *Raymundus Martini* defends both groups on that point. He writes on this specific subject because he knows very well the rigor used in terminology by Jewish theologians, thanks to his anti-Jewish polemic experience.

The *De Seta Machometi* shows his writer's ability to exploit the Qur'an in a very rich and complex way. More than a mere reception of this source, it is a true critical thought that he deploys in order to produce a polemical context against Islam and his prophet through a book that the Muslims cannot ignore nor dispute against.

***Bible and Qur'an in the Polemical Discourse of an Athonite Monk:  
Pachomios Rousanos' (1508–1553) and His Anti-Islamic Treatise***

**Octavian-Adrian NEGOIȚĂ, University of Copenhagen**

Around 1550s, a Greek Athonite monk, Pachomios Rousanos (1508-1553), penned a polemical treatise entitled *About the Faith of the Orthodox and of the Saracens*, in which he attempted to explain some of the most profound Orthodox dogmas in opposition with the main Muslim beliefs on God, prophethood, and religious customs. Rousanos adopted a comparative perspective in his work, paralleling the two faiths and discussing their tenets and holy scriptures, and based his argumentation on the Byzantine polemical literature. As an Orthodox author coming from a monastic milieu, Rousanos used the Bible – especially the Old Testament – as the most authoritative source for his treatise. As a polemicist, he refuted the Qur'an, and questioned its authority as a sacred book. However, Rousanos was not trained in Arabic and he did not have access to the original text of the Qur'an. He relied on the *Confutatio Alcorani* by Riccoldo da Monte di Croce (c. 1243–1320), which he used in its Greek translation authored around 1360s by the Byzantine intellectual Demetrios Kydones (1324–1398). On a larger scale, Rousanos' case is one of the most illuminating examples of how the Qur'an was perceived and used in the Greek world: the interest in the holy book of Islam was mainly religious, rather than intellectual. In this sense, Rousanos' use of Bible and Qur'an served both to articulate his polemical arguments and to discuss the superiority of the Bible over the Qur'an by using a comparative religious perspective.

**Reading the Qur'an through Biblical glasses, the example of the Qur'an of  
Bellus.**

**Maxime SELLIN, Université de Nantes**

The Qur'an of Bellus is a manuscript copied in the city of Bellus in 1518 in the region of Valencia by a mudejare anonymous copist. It has many annotations that we can read between lines and in margins of the Qur'anic script. They are in Catalan, Castilian<sup>1</sup> and Latin. It seems that this manuscript was used by the group of polemicists in the entourage of the bishop of Barcelona, Martin Garcia<sup>2</sup>. Among them Martin de Figuerola (the close associate of Martin Garcia who met Egidio de Viterbo, and made sermons to the Muslim community of

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<sup>1</sup> According to Thomas Burman the interlineal annotations are in aragonese. See BURMAN, Thomas E. "Polemic, Philology, And Ambivalence: Reading the Qur'an In Latin Christendom." *Journal of Islamic Studies* 15, no. 2 (2004): 181-209. A careful linguistic analysis with synchronic consideration may help to determine what is the most accurate.

<sup>2</sup> CASSASAS CANALS Xavier, « El Alcorán de Bellús: un Alcorán mudéjar de principios del siglo XVI con traducciones y comentarios en catalán, castellano y latín », *Alhadra*, 2015, n° 1, p. 155-177.

Zaragoza), Juan Andrès (former *alfaqih* of Jativa who converted to Christianity), Gabriel de Teruel (former *alfaqih* of Teruel who also converted and participated in the translation of the Qur'an of Egidio de Viterbo and taught to Martin de Figuerola). Then, it may have been given to Egidio de Viterbo in Roma, before entering the library of the German orientalist and ambassador Johann Albrecht Widmanstetter. It's now preserved in the Bayerische Staatsbibliothek of Munich<sup>3</sup>.

We can find throughout the manuscript, drawings of many hands. Sometimes these drawings are followed by a Latin annotation that summaries or comments the verse. Hypothetically these fingers underline verses or part of verses that raised questions in the reader's mind.

In my communication I will describe the different characteristics of the maniculas. Indeed, the maniculas are a tool that underline a part of text to make the Qur'an easy to manipulate for a Christian reader. The annotations that are attached to it are sometimes a reaction to what the Qur'an says about a subject. It can be a summary of what was the important part for the reader. The combinations of the two help the reader to go back quickly to a part of the text. It shows that the Qur'an was carefully studied and annotated.

We will also see what the maniculas are pointing. They mainly point a verse about Jesus and the trinity, but some of them underlined some verses about Muhammad, and other monotheistic prophets. A great number of maniculas underline numerous subject that are hard to classify such as the consummation of pork, the month of Ramadan, the Jihad. The annotations can be polemical or informative. By the way, some of the informative verses can be used for the polemical rhetoric. Despite this bi-dimensional reading, the Bible remained the common thread of these verses.

To conclude, I will put my analysis in perspective. The Bible was also read with Qur'anic glasses. We see the same bi-dimensional reading of the Bible with the refutation and polemical views like shows Anselm Turmeda and Jadid al-Islam books and the *dalail al-nubuwa* genre. But it was also taken into consideration like shows the uses of the *Israiliyyat* in *Qiṣaṣ al-Anbiyya* literature.

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<sup>3</sup> It's now numerised and can be consulted online: <https://daten.digitale-sammlungen.de/~db/0009/bsb00095984/images/>

## **“Only the Most Perfect of the Perfects Could Possibly Institute the Perfection”: On Paul of Antioch’s Reading of the Qur’an.**

**Gabriel Said REYNOLDS, University of Notre Dame**

Sometime in the thirteenth century, Paul of Antioch, the Melkite Bishop of Sidon, wrote his *Risālah ilā aḥad al-muslimīn* “A Letter to a Muslim” or, as it is commonly rendered into English “Letter to a Muslim Friend” (and appropriately so, as he refers to his Muslims addressee as “tender friend and dearest brother” near the opening of the letter). As David Thomas has explained (“Idealism and Intransigence: A Christian-Muslim Encounter in Early Mamluk Times”), Paul’s letter provoked a response from the Egyptian legal scholar al-Qarāfī (d. 1285) but also a Christian expansion known as the letter from Cyprus (written around 1316), which itself provoked two Muslim responses: from Muḥammad Ibn Abī Ṭālīb (written in 1321) and from Ibn Taymiyya (d. 1328; his *al-Jawāb al-Ṣaḥīḥ*, the longest classical Islamic anti-Christian polemic). Intriguingly, Paul opens his treatise by discussing a visit to Byzantium and Europe and the arguments advanced by Christians there defending their choice not to accept Muhammad as a prophet. While it is possible that the European twist is a literary device (very little is actually known about Paul’s life) the arguments which follow show a unique engagement with the Qur’an and, in particular, a Christianizing exegesis of the text. Remarkably, it anticipates certain 20<sup>th</sup> century Catholic approaches to the Qur’an which imagine (as Paul does) that Muhammad played a providential role in bringing monotheism to pagans (an idea, incidentally, also found in certain Jewish ideas about Islam). In my paper for the EuQu conference I will compare Paul’s thoughts on the unfolding of salvation history with *Risālat al-Kindī* (particularly on the notion of a law of grace) and Thomas Aquinas’ *De Rationibus Fidei* (particularly on the Incarnation) in order to emphasize his distinctive contribution to the Christian engagement with the Qur’an.

## Comparing Qur'anic & Biblical Mariologies: The Case of Two Williams

Rita George TVRTKOVIĆ, Benedictine University

From the late medieval to early modern eras, Latin Christians deployed the Qur'an in their arguments, first against Muslims, then against their co-religionists. In most cases, short verses would be quoted and refuted. However, at least two authors did something different: they cited long passages from the Qur'an verbatim or paraphrased, or conversely, they promised to treat the Qur'an, then only barely mentioned it. What Qur'anic passages were worthy of such long quotes or conspicuous-but-ultimately-fleeting references? Unsurprisingly, the verses are christological and mariological. The existence of such passages was well known among Latin exegetes; Nicholas of Cusa's relatively sympathetic approach to the Qur'an, dubbed *pia interpretatio*, is premised almost entirely on them.

This paper will consider how and why two Williams, the Dominican friar William of Tripoli (d. c. 1273) and the Catholic Arabist Guillaume Postel (d. 1581), spent so much time comparing Qur'anic and biblical mariologies in their writings. For example, 40% of William's anti-Islamic book *Notitia de Machometo* is dedicated to verbatim quotes of Qur'anic verses on Mary, plus comparisons to their biblical counterparts. His other book (possibly written by a protege), *De statu Sarracenorum*, does similarly, devoting eleven out of 55 chapters to Qur'anic mariology. Likewise, Guillaume Postel's magnum opus, *De orbis concordia mundi* (1544), which argues for a single world faith, allocates 16% of its 447 pages to a retelling of the entire Qur'an through verbatim quotes and paraphrases, with disproportionate emphasis on Marian verses. A second Postellian book, *Alkorani seu legis Mahometi et evangelistarum concordiae liber* (1543), despite its title, is more an attack on Protestants than Muslims; in it, he includes Mary prominently in a numbered list of Protestant-Muslim errors, yet hardly quotes the Qur'an at all. And a third text, *Du souverain effect de la plus excellent Corone du mond* (undated MS), refers to Qur'anic mariology in an intra-Catholic argument for the Immaculate Conception.

Why do William and Guillaume cite the Qur'an in these ways, paying such attention to its mariology, and comparing it to the Bible both explicitly and implicitly? Why did they both devote as many or more pages to quoting the Qur'an than refuting it? What kind of authority did the two Williams give to Qur'anic mariology? And what kind of authority did their citing of Qur'anic mariology give to *themselves*?

## **Putting the Qur'an to the test in the early Propaganda Fide's apologetics (1610-1632)**

**Javier DE PRADO, Université de Nantes-Universitat Autònoma de  
Barcelona**

From the very beginning, the Latin West engaged with the Qur'an in a polemical tone that highlighted the inconsistency of its beliefs and the devilish purposes of its supposed author, the prophet Muhammad. Despite in doing so an exposure of the Islamic faith was sought, the idea of a conquest by the word, introduced already by Peter the Venerable himself, grew stronger and got to become central to the Vatican especially after the loss of Constantinople. Many of the greatest theologians of the time found themselves trying to read anew the Qur'an in order to delve deeper into it and provide the ever-growing body of missionaries sent to the East with useful guidelines to prove the words of the Prophet wrong. This process of re-reading very influential texts, such as Riccoldo de Monte Croce's *Contra legem Sarracenorum*, and writing new treatises dealing with the misdeeds of Islam would become even more popular with the aid of the printing press, helping thus to shape the methods that were current also at the turn of the seventeenth century, when the congregation De Propaganda Fide was founded (1622).

Islam being one of the favourite subjects to deal with for the congregation because of its proximity, this paper will seek to examine how was its infidelity dispatched in three of the most successful treatises of the first years of the *dicasterio*: Tomas de Jesus' *De procuranda salute omnium gentium* (1613), the prescriptive tool for missionaries in the East, Bonaventura Malvasia's *Dilucidatio speculi verum monstrantis* (1628) and Filippo Guadagnoli's *Apologia pro christiana religione* (1631). While adopting an apologetic approach, each work devotes many pages to uncover the Qur'an's failure in presenting itself as true religion, according to the Bible's standards: from the citations of Juan de Torquemada and Juan Luis Vives used by Tomas de Jesus to the extensive Koranic quotes provided by Guadagnoli, the variety of elements judged useful to put together an apologetic discourse is very ranged, although maintaining always the orthodox approach that is to expect from a congregation under the command of the Pope. In following the chronological line along these texts, besides, it can even be observed how the arguments taken from Medieval polemics and apologetics, very present at first, are slowly giving the way to a more attentive reading of the Qur'an, sometimes even put in an open comparison with the Gospel. The comparison between the relevant sections of the texts above mentioned can offer an insight of the politics that the Propaganda Fide –or at least its authoritative members- held towards the Qur'an in its very first years.



## **Discovering the Christian Truth in the Qur'ān. The correspondence between Baldassarre Loyola Mandes S.J. and Muḥammad Bulghaith al-Darawī**

**Federico STELLA, Università degli Studi di Napoli "L'Orientale"**

Baldassarre Loyola Mandes S.J. (1631-1667), was a former Moroccan Muslim prince, captured by the Knights of Malta who then converted to Christianity. He devoted several letters of his extensive correspondence to engaging a theological debate with Muḥammad Bulghaith al-Darawī, a Muslim jurist enslaved in Livorno. Besides the correspondence between Baldassarre and Bulghaith, additional letters Baldassarre exchanged with his spiritual director Domenico Brunacci S.J., and other individuals elucidate and shed light regarding the historical and intellectual context in which this controversy was engaged. The correspondence is housed in the Archive of the Pontifical Gregorian University (APUG). The theological part of the correspondence starts with a letter (survived in four versions: APUG 1060 I 137bivr-138bivv; 1060 I 292r; 1060 IV; 1060 I 327r-327Av) sent by Bulghaith in which he engaged a poetical controversy (*Versi Arabici*) regarding two major Christian dogmas: the divine filiation of Jesus Christ and the crucifixion. After this first attempt at controversy, Baldassarre wrote a profound and articulated theological answer, which has survived in two versions. The first (APUG 1060 I 292v-295v), originally written in Arabic and translated into Italian by Baldassarre himself, was the third part of a booklet (APUG 1060 IV), which also contains the *Oratio contra Mahomettem et eius sectatores*. This letter begins with the title *Risposta del Padre Baldassare Loyola Mandes alla lettera del Turco fessano*. The second surviving letter is quite similar to the former, and contains further quotations from the Qur'ān. Perhaps both versions had the same Arabic source, and were translated twice by Baldassarre. In these theological letters dated August 1664 Baldassarre used a rhetorical strategy mainly focused on trying to extrapolate the core themes of Christianity present in the Qur'ān. In order to reach this goal, Baldassarre translated some verses mostly taken from Q. 3 *al-'Imrān* and Q. 5 *al-Ma'ida* into Italian and commented on them. Therefore, the aim of this paper will be to show how Baldassarre develops his arguments in trying to explain to Bulghaith how with the right interpretation one can also find the Christian truth in the Qur'ān. In order to achieve this, I will show how Baldassarre translates and comments on the Qur'ān, sometimes omitting certain words, to outline the presence of Christian doctrines in the Islamic Scriptures. Although in other contexts - such as in his *Oratio* - he has used harsh words, Baldassarre now chooses to follow a more dialectical and concordist rhetorical strategy. Therefore, understanding the way he uses those verses in the development of his theological argumentations will be crucial for attaining a clear insight of how in an early modern historical context, a former Muslim now converted to Christianity (Baldassarre) engaged in an interreligious debate with a Muslim who was going to become a Christian (Bulghaith), without using warlike words.

## ***Testimonia Alcorani de Christo Domino: traces of the Papal inter-religious discourse at the hands of two Oriental clergymen***

**Sara FANI, Università degli Studi di Napoli “L’Orientale”**

In the second half of the 16th century Rome was one of the main European centres of relations and exchanges with the Islamic world. A growing number of scholars and intellectuals took part of this cultural fervour following different interests: political, commercial as well as religious ones. As it is well known the Roman Church and its invitation to reunification directed to the Oriental Churches, attracted to Italy, and to Rome in particular, clergymen and representatives from the Levant and Mesopotamia in order to negotiate the doctrinal terms of this union. They brought with them manuscripts and their proficiency in Oriental languages which became the base for the education and training of Western scholars. It is in this cultural framework that the document we would like to present in this occasion (BAV, Vat. Ar. 83, ff. 77v–85v) has been produced. It is entitled *Testimonia Alcorani de Christo Domino* and it is a trilingual compilation (Arabic-Syriac-Italian) of Christological Qur’anic excerpts written by the Syriac Orthodox priest Moses of Mārdīn (d. 1592) and the Roman Catholic prelate Leonardo Abel (Malta, 1541 – Rome, 1605), two of the most important personalities involved in diplomatic and cultural relationships between the Roman and the Eastern Churches.

The contributions to the religious dialogue of the two characters, both active and prolific scribes, are well known: the first accomplished three diplomatic missions to Rome as an envoy of the Jacobite Patriarch of Antioch, Ignatius ‘Abdallāh and is famous for his cooperation with Johannes Albrecht Widmanstetter and Guillaume Postel in the first printing of the Syriac New Testament (Vienna 1555); the second was named by Pope Gregory XIII titular bishop of Sidon, and legate to the Eastern Churches. His name also figures in a document referring to the establishment of a *Congregazione* (committee) aiming at printing Arabic tracts against the Muslim “sect”, within the wider typographic project of the *Typographia Medicea*, founded in Rome in 1584 under the auspices of Pope Gregory XIII and the cardinal Ferdinando de’ Medici, with the scientific supervision of Giovanni Battista Raimondi (d. 1614).

The short collection of Qur’anic Christological sentences gathered in this document probably represent one of the few traces and preparatory work of this propagandistic project related to the *Typographia Medicea*, which eventually was never realized. In this contribution I would like to point out the doctrinal content of the document and to read it within a wide framework of inter-religious dialogue, both between Christianity and Islam and between Catholicism and different Oriental Churches. The intellectual contributions of the characters involved as well as the developments and results of their diplomatic missions reveal their role of cultural mediators in the complex context of inter-religious relations in the 16th century Rome.

## Leon Modena's *Precetti di Maomotto nel suo alcorano*

**Aleida PAUDICE, Independant scholar**

My paper will focus on a work of Leon Modena (1571-1648): *Precetti di Maomotto nel suo alcorano da ove si può vedere che non è tanto bestial né rillassata al senso la loro legge*, (the precepts of Muhammad in his Qurā'n in which it is possible to see that is not so bestial nor is their law so freely abandoned to their senses), to which he added in Hebrew-as the Christians say<sup>4</sup>.

Leon Modena relied on the 1547 Italian edition of the Qurā'n translated by Giovanni Battista Castrodardo and published in Venice by Andrea Arrivabene. The work is a literary notebook compiled during 1640s, which among excerpts in Hebrew and Italian on books he read, contains a short collection of information about Islam. I intend to examine how the author compares Biblical and Islamic law in relation to Christian traditions and laws. As Howard Zvi Adelman has pointed out Leon Modena portrays Islam favourably pointing out the similarities with Judaism against Christianity, he considers Muslims ethical and praises their conduct toward non-Muslims. He is not interested in examining the verses in the Qurā'n about Jews, he praises Islamic rules falsely depicted by Christianity and does not resort to Jewish traditions of hostility against Islam and the Prophet Muhammad. I will examine the historical and cultural context that shaped Leon Modena's thought showing how his positive view of Islam was shared by other Jewish scholars. Jewish attitude toward the Qurā'n is complex and often ambiguous and varies across the centuries and the places where the Jews lived. My paper attempts to shed some light on a still unpublished source, written in the Venetian cultural milieu and part of a polemical Jewish discourse against Christianity and its denigration of Islam and its traditions. How do the Hebrew Bible and the Qurā'n relate to each other in providing a model moral behaviour in contrast to the Christian moral corruption? Leon Modena resorts to a *topos* in literary and historical writing of the 16th and 17th centuries in some Jewish but also Christian circles of Protestant area, what is the novelty of his work? In providing a translation of excerpts of it I will supply a new source of comparison and discussion for other scholars.

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<sup>4</sup> I will refer to the article by Howard Zvi Adelman, "A Rabbi Reads the Qur'an in the Venetian Ghetto" *Jewish History* (2012) 26: 1251-37. The article is based on a manuscript Archivio della Comunità Israelitica, MS No. 7, fols. 61b-58a.

## Levinus Warner and his reading of Islamic scriptures

Kentaro INAGAKI, University of Copenhagen

In this paper I shed new light on interpretative practices of the Qur'ān by Levinus Warner (1619-1665), one of the most renowned, yet hitherto little studied orientalist scholars in the seventeenth century. This paper pays special attention to how Warner analysed and mobilised the Qur'ān through a careful perusal of both printed and manuscript sources currently preserved at the Leiden University Library.

Early modern scholars read, interpreted, and employed the Qur'ān in the intricate intersections of political, confessional, and institutional settings. Normally, their readings of the Qur'ān were not free from polemical and apologetical objectives. This also holds true for Warner, who in his earliest treatise *Compendium Historicum* (1643) did show a keen interest in the battle of pen with Islam. In the *Compendium* Warner traced with the aid of *al-Kaššāf* by al-Zamaḥṣarī (d. 538/1144) the way in which Christianity and biblical figures such as Jesus and Mary are described in the Qur'ān. Upon closer inspection, it becomes apparent that Warner carefully examined not only differences, but also communalities between the Bible and the Qur'ān.

This paper focuses on how Warner analysed the shared narratives between the Bible and the Qur'ān in the *Compendium*. This paper argues that through the analysis of the shared narratives, Warner came to discuss the concepts such as revelation and scripture in his short treatise. In order to locate Warner's work in a broader intellectual context and assess his analysis of the Qur'ānic versions of the biblical figures, this paper compares the *Compendium* with other polemical works such as *Summa controversiarum religionis* (1653) by Johannes Hoorbeeck (1617–1666). This comparison allows us to reveal how the same text of the Qur'ān was differently interpreted by early modern scholars. This paper, furthermore, implies that early modern scholars shared *loci communes* of the Qur'ān, which contributed not only to the apologetical purpose, but also to an inquiry into the comparative study of the religions.

***The Qur'an as an exegetical tool in early modern Biblical Studies***

Since the seventeenth century the Qur'an has been understood by European scholars to offer a unique vantage point from which to acquire a better understanding of the Old Testament. Though of a much later date than the books of the Hebrew Bible, the Qur'an was believed to offer vital help for understanding obscure Biblical vocabulary as well as preserving, as a product of an "ossified" Orient, the cultural background against which the Hebrew Patriarchs and Prophets played their roles in the divine drama. Our paper will look at some of the uses several Biblical scholars in Early Modern Europe made of the Qur'an as an exegetical tool to improve their understanding of the (Hebrew) Bible. In the works of 17<sup>th</sup>- and 18<sup>th</sup>- century Biblical scholars like Johann Heinrich Hottinger, Samuel Bochart, Albert Schultens or Christian Benedict Michaelis, the Qur'an took on different function and was used as a linguistic, historical, antiquarian or literary archive and consider some of the intellectual consequences of this Early Modern use of the Qur'an.

***Making sense of Biblical Narratives in the Qur'an***

Almost without exception, early modern Christian readers of the Qur'an read Islamic Scripture primarily through the prism of the Bible, noticing similarities with satisfaction and discarding divergences with indignation. In our paper we want to examine several such reactions, focusing on the different ways in which early modern Christian readers explained the presence of (distorted) 'Biblical material' in the Qur'an. From the traditional idea of an alliance between the prophet and Jewish and Nestorian collaborators, to the influence of oral Biblical traditions or to the assumption that the Qur'an is based on apocryphal Biblical literature we will discuss early modern attempts to make sense of this intertextuality and pre-modern views of the Qur'an as an imperfect "receptacle" of both orthodox and heterodox Christian ideas.

***Contes ridicules, plaisantes reueries, tres-belles moralitez:***  
**The reception of Qur’anic narratives in seventeenth century France**

**Emmanuelle STEFANIDIS, Université de Nantes**

Christian authors in medieval Europe considered Biblical narratives in the Muslim scripture evidence of the falsehood of Muhammad’s religion: the prophet, in his bad faith and ignorance, had “plundered Sacred History” and corrupted it with “ridiculous tales”. Scholars, from Peter the Venerable (d. 1156) to Guillaume Postel (d. 1581), made apologetic use of Qur’anic narratives but paid little attention to them beyond polemics. In the seventeenth century, however, several protoethnographic works and travel accounts reported these stories extensively. Two factors explain this unprecedented interest: increased empirical knowledge as travelers roamed the Ottoman Empire, and a taste among European readership for exotic tales and witty stories. In France, in particular, the courtly culture of the *Grand Siècle* and the rise of the *honnête homme*, encouraged the development of literary and philological readings of Qur’anic narratives. While such readings did not aim to challenge Christian refutations of the Qur’an, in practice they decentered polemical motifs and contributed to carving a space of non-religious engagement with the Muslim Scripture.

This paper examines the multifaceted reception of Qur’anic biblical stories in seventeenth century France focusing on two central works: Michel Baudier’s *Histoire générale de la religion des Turcs* (1625) and the more informed *Observations curieuses sur le Voyage du Levant fait en 1630* (1668), attributed to Gilles Fermanel. How do the two authors present the Qur’anic narratives? What bodies of scholarship (biblical, mythological, historical etc.) do they draw upon to situate those stories? What role does the polemical hold in their accounts? Fermanel states from the outset that the Qur’an holds some *tres-belles moralitez*; to expose its “venom” convincingly, the author follows a strict method : he first lets the Qur’an speak for itself, “faithfully” transcribing all the passages that deal with a religious theme or a Biblical character, before offering comments and criticisms, often of a historical nature. Baudier is not as restrained; his accounts of *Histoires sacrées* as told by the Qur’an typically begin or end with an expression of outrage. Yet, his ambivalence towards these stories and their esthetic value surfaces when he warns the reader not to draw too much gratification from Muhammad’s *plaisantes reueries*. The literary curiosity for Muslim narratives, which first appeared in travel accounts aimed at a non-specialist audience, would grow stronger during the seventeenth century as a fascination with Eastern modes of storytelling developed, prefiguring the fashion of the Oriental tale. A study of the early reception of Qur’anic stories in Baudier and Fermanel thus allows for a more granular understanding of the emergence of “a new view of islam” and the possibility of non-polemical engagement with its sacred book in early modern Europe (Bevilacqua 2018).

## **Jesus and the Bible in an 18th-century Translation of the Quran into Hebrew**

**Naima AFIF, University of Copenhagen**

This contribution aims to discuss the way in which the Quran and the Bible are related in an 18th-century Hebrew translation of the Quran made from Glazemaker's Dutch and from Du Ryer's French version. After briefly introducing the translation (author, context, manuscript, content and features), I shall analyse crucial passages of the Hebrew translation dealing with the figure of Jesus as a case study. I shall then discuss how/why the translator, although he relied on the Islamic interpretations present in his Dutch source, often reshaped his translation according to stylistic and even theological elements from the Bible.

## **Translating the King James Bible into Arabic: the Sabat/Martyn Translation (1816 CE)**

**Vevian ZAKI, College of Saint Benedict/St. John's University**

By the beginning of the nineteenth century, Eastern Christian communities already had a long history of translating the Bible into Arabic. These translations came to be known and used among Muslim scholars, as well as European scholars and missionaries. Furthermore, some of these translations were collated and adapted by different denominations and appeared in a variety of printed editions.

Within this historical context, a certain school preferred to employ Qur'anic language in the Arabic Bible text. A late example of this tendency is the 1816 translation of the New Testament, undertaken using the King James Bible by Nathaneal Sabat and revised by Henry Martyn (d. 1812). This presentation has two parts: the first summarizes the different strategies of Eastern Christians in dealing with Qur'anic language; that is, from full adoption of the Qur'anic style to complete refrain from using it. The second part discusses the 1816 Sabat/Martyn translation, unfolding its historical context and some of its translation strategies.

## Mapping the Islamicate Midrashim: Uncovering the Earliest Phase of Jewish Engagement with the Qur'an

Michael E. PREGILL, Los Angeles, California

From the oldest European Christian engagements with the Qur'an in the Middle Ages through the advent of modern academic approaches to the Muslim scripture, scholars have frequently seen qur'anic narratives on the biblical prophets and related subjects as the result of formative Jewish influences on the Prophet Muhammad. This theme is manifest in some of the oldest Christian responses to the Arab conquests, reflecting attempts to denigrate Islam as deviant, heretical, and fraudulent. This view of Islam remained current in European Christian discourse for centuries, and impacted the germinal work of Abraham Geiger, whose 1833 work *What Has Muhammad Borrowed from Judaism?* recalibrated what had originally been a Christian polemical claim into a scholarly axiom.

Although contemporary scholarship has shifted away from the problematic, reductionist emphasis on “influence” that once characterized research on biblical narratives in the Qur'an, Geiger's role as a bridge figure between medieval ecclesiastical polemical discourse and the modern discipline of Qur'anic Studies has yet to be fully explored and appreciated. Although subsequent scholars revised and expanded aspects of his thesis while rejecting others, his work remains a monument to the effort to link the Qur'an to Jewish scriptural and parascriptural traditions through philological and text-critical methods.

There are numerous cases in Geiger's study that hold up to scrutiny, though his methods and conclusions merit revision, especially in the context of contemporary understandings of how the Qur'an absorbs, adapts, and redeploys its late antique literary precursors. However, in many other cases, Geiger's allegations about the dependence of qur'anic narratives on Jewish prototypes may be shown to have simply been wrong. In particular, there are significant examples in which the midrashic traditions that Geiger adduces as “influences” on the Qur'an are found in sources from the rabbinic corpus that reached their final form well after the rise of Islam. It is thus more plausible that the resemblances between these traditions and the Qur'an should be attributed to the impact of the Qur'an and Islam on Jews and Judaism in the wake of the Arab conquests.

I would argue that a systematic exploration of both Geiger's case study and the pertinent sources from the rabbinic canon—particularly *Pirqe de-Rabbi Eliezer*, *Midrash Tanhuma*, and *Targum Pseudo-Jonathan*—exposes a wealth of Jewish exegetical and narrative traditions that were modeled as responses to Muslim claims about Israelite history and the legacy of the biblical prophets. These traditions built on the considerable foundation of older aggadic lore, but adjusted pre-Islamic ideas and interpretations to adapt—or refute—narrative developments in Muslim tradition, eventually codified in *tafsir*, *qisas al-anbiya'*, and other genres of classical Islamic literature. This insight has numerous implications for our understanding of the relationship between Judaism, the Qur'an, and Islam. Many purported Jewish parallels and precursors to the Qur'an must be reevaluated in the light of this adjusted



chronology. Moreover, the corpus of “Islamicate midrashim,” as I have dubbed this body of material, represents an important witness to the earliest Jewish engagements with the Qur’an and Islam; these traditions were subsequently codified, printed, and disseminated as part of the rabbinic literary canon that circulated in modern Europe, though its Islamicate substrate has seldom been recognized.

## **The Haphazard *Alkoran* and the Muhammadan Phoenix – on Grundtvig’s reception of Islam**

**Thomas HOFFMANN, University of Copenhagen**

In this paper, I will focus on the influential Danish theologian and Lutheran pastor, historian, (hymn) poet, philologist, politician, and pedagogue, Nikolai Frederick Severin Grundtvig (1783–1872) and his depictions and interpretations of the Qur’ān, Muhammad, and the Arabs in his *Handbook in the World History*. The relevant chapter was based on ‘the best sources’, as the subtitle has it, which included Simon Ockley’s *The History of the Saracens* (1708-18), George Sale’s annotated Qur’ān translation (1734), and the work of the Arab historian Abu al-Fida (1273-1331), in a French translation by Jean Gagnier. However, Grundtvig’s approach was very much comparative: by comparing two “Holy Scriptures”, the *Alkoranen* with the Bible, the relation between Islam and Christianity, Grundtvig asserts, becomes clearer. I will investigate and contextualize Grundtvig’s complex views on the Qur’ān vis-à-vis the Bible and show how he used the Qur’ān as leverage for his conceptualization of contingent history and true religion.

## **Ecology of a vernacular Qur'ān: The case of Mūsā Bīgī's Translation into Turki-Tatar**

**Gulnaz SIBGATULLINA, University of Amsterdam**

This paper contextualises the infamous Qur'ān translation produced by theologian Mūsā Bīgī in 1911/12 against macro-transformations in the broader Muslim world. Thereby, it shows that a vernacular Qur'ān in Turki-Tatar was not as much an original phenomenon – contrary to popular assumptions – but rather a product of specific translation ecology that existed in Muslim reformist circles in the early twentieth century. Two significant transformations brought the issue of translatability of the Qur'ān to the forefront. First of all, by 1905, the ongoing vernacular turn among Turkic-speaking Muslims reached its climax; coupled with the proliferation of printing press and nationalism ideologies it fostered energetic activities in translating religious literature into non-Arab languages. Secondly, the first-generation of Muslim modernisers, including Muḥammad 'Abduh (1849–1905), brought about what Samuel Ross (2018) refers to as a “biblical turn”. These intellectuals appropriated using the Bible in Qur'ānic exegesis to replace *isrā'īliyyāt* and even weak *ḥadīths*. The second generation of modernisers, to which also Bīgī belonged, advanced the approximation of the Qur'ān and the Bible, eventually, contributing to “scriptualisation” of Islam. A growing number of Bible translations into Arabic, as well as translations of the Qur'ān into non-Arabic languages produced by Christian missionaries throughout the nineteenth century, reshaped not only Muslims' approaches to the Qur'ān as a literary text but also elevated the cultural status of the Qur'ān as a foundation of Muslim identity and an instrument in coining national sensitivities.