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TEXT AND ITS CULTURAL INTERPRETATION

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THE QUR'ĀN AND ITS WORLD:
I. THE PROBLEM OF RECONSTRUCTING ANCIENT
ARABIAN COSMOGONIC AND ANTHROPOGENETIC LORE

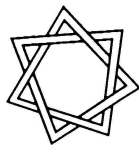For an adequate interpretation of the concept of the world as reflected in the Qur'ān it is necessary first of all to understand in what way the Qur'ānic ideas are linked to the corresponding system of notions, traditions, and symbols of the pre-Islamic culture of Arabia. This link but occasionally appears as a direct inclusion of corresponding notions into the system of early Islamic culture. Usually we come across statements negating the foundations of the pagan Arabian culture and at the same time explaining the ideas introduced by the Qur'ān as a restoration of the forgotten creed of the ancestors [1]. These notions, however, usually contained only a new interpretation of the principal cultural elements of the past. Sometimes this link has a more complicated structure, especially when it comes to the system of cosmogonic and ethnogenetic myths included into the Qur'ān.

The Qur'ānic ideas connected with the origin of mankind have been described, to some extent, in several works [2]. P. A. Gryaznevich, who studied the system of corresponding notions reflected in *jāhilīyya* poetry, in Arabic tribal ethnonyms and in the Qur'ānic text, came to the conclusion that there had never been any common Arabic myth, or any Arabic myth at all dealing with the origin of mankind or of the world as a whole [3]. The available sources allow us to state that in pre-Islamic Arabia there was no notion like the Primal Man or "the primary ancestor" current among the pagan Arabians. The history of every clan or tribe was being derived from a certain, usually deified, ancestor. This determined the discreteness of ethnic consciousness, which was the characteristic feature of the pagan Arabian ideology.

Certainly, Arabian Christians and Jews were familiar with the Old Testament ideas on the origin of the human race and the primary ancestor Adam. We can take for example the *qaṣīda* ascribed to the poet-Christian 'Adī b. Zayd, which presents a narrative very close to the passages from the Genesis telling about the creation of the world and the mankind [4]. 'Adī b. Zayd's text as a whole leaves us no doubt about its pre-Islamic origin. One of its passages is especially noteworthy. Verses 11—12 of the *qaṣīda* correspond to Gen. III.1: "Now the serpent was more subtil (*'rum*) than any beast of the field which the

Lord God had made". There is, however, a strange deviation from the Old Testament text in 'Adī b. Zayd's poem:

And the serpent was spotted (*raqshā'* — "black-and-white")
                                        when it was created,
Like you see the image of a camel or a she-camel...

It is worth noting that the verse that follow this passage are again close to the verse of the Bible.

The Hebrew *'rum* ("more subtil") is replaced in the Arabic text by *raqshā'* ("spotted"), one of the traditional appellatives for a serpent in the pre-Islamic poetry. If we take into account that Arabic *a'ram"* corresponding to *'rum* in the text of the Bible meant "spotted (black-and-white)", when applied to a serpent in *jāhilīyya* poetry [5], it explains the use of the term *raqshā'* — the synonym of *a'ram"* [6]. In this way the "subtil" serpent became "spotted". This transition evidently leads the poet to associate the serpent before its punishment by God with a camel, to whom the appellative *raqshā'* could also be applied [7]. All this brings us to the conclusion that, first of all, the text ascribed to 'Adī b. Zayd is authentic, and that it goes back directly to the Hebrew text.

Similar "mistakes" might probably explain some other strange features present in the Qur'ānic lore deriving from the Old Testament tradition.

So we read in 'Adī b. Zayd's poem:

(7) He accomplished his creation in six days
    And in the last of them created the man.
(8) And He called to him [rising] his voice: "Adam!",
                                        and he answered him,
    Because into the body created [by Allah] the breath
                                        of life had been placed.
(9) Then He gave him Paradise, for him to live there,
    And made wife for him, creating her from his rib.

To this very tradition Muḥammad appealed in his sermons. The Old Testament image of "Adam the forefather", which had developed many centuries before due to the victory of monotheism in a different cultural and ethnic environment, featured for a while in the centre of Muḥammad's disputes with his opponents. Muḥammad again and again speaks about Adam: Allah had made

a covenant with Adam (20 : 115/114), but being urged by Iblīs "Adam disobeyed his Lord and so he erred" (20 : 121/119) and was expelled from Paradise (20 : 123/121—123/122). In His mercy, however, "Thereafter his Lord chose him, and... He guided him" (20 : 122/120). The Prophet is speaking about the danger of temptation coming from Iblīs, who said to Allah: "if Thou deferrest me to the Day of Resurrection I shall assuredly master his (Adam's) seed (*dhurrīyya*), save a few" (17 : 62/64).

Muḥammad's sermons testify to a remarkable change. Numerous primary ancestors are replaced by one common forefather — Adam. The very application to this image demonstrates that before Muḥammad's preaching most of the Meccans had no idea of a common ancestor, *i. e.* the social notion of "mankind" was also unknown to them. In Muḥammad's sermons preached not long before the Hijra his audience is more and more frequently addressed as *yā banī adam* — "O sons of Adam!". (7 : 26/25; 27/26, 31/29, 35/33; 36 : 60).

What were the views Muḥammad was arguing against? The extant sources definitely prove that in the pagan environment of pre-Islamic Arabia there were still remnants of the ancient mythological ideas about the origin of the Primal Man from "the root, the sprout of raw clay" (*'irq al-tharā*), from the "mother-earth" (cf. Qur'ān 22 : 5), from the damp layer of earth (*al-tharā*) feeding the roots of plants; from dust (*turāb*, see Qur'ān 3 : 52). The motif of the "Primal Man-clay", which appears in the Qur'ān (6 : 2), is not present in pre-Islamic poetry.

Most important in connection with the further development of the subject is the notion of a stone being turned into a human being, of the birth of a man from a stone-rock. A number of Arabian tribal ethnonyms connected with the worship of stones symbolizing primal ancestors, as well as of rocks embodying pagan deities, reflect the existence of such ideas [8].

It should be mentioned also that the word *npsh* (*nfs*, cf. Arab. *nafs* — "soul", from *tanaffasa* "to breathe") was used in Nabatean and South Arabian epigraphics, in graffitti from Central Arabia, to indicate gravestones, which were expected to "represent the soul, *i. e.* the personality of the dead" [9]. There is a series of pre-Islamic legends concerning the "reverse process" of a man being transformed into a stone. Comparative mythology testifies that this kind of inversion goes back to a stable idea of the "direct process" of a man originating from a stone.

Most popular is the legend of Isāf and Nā'ila [10]. The story tells that a man called Isāf and a woman Nā'ila, both of Yemenese origin, made a pilgrimage to Mecca. When they were alone in the sanctuary they became inflamed with passion, sinned, and were immediately turned into stone. They were carried out of the Ka'ba and installed by the sanctuary. Their location is differently indicated in the sources. Most often one of the stones is placed by the Ka'ba, the other one — by the Zamzam well. The shape of the stones vaguely resembled human figures. Sacrificial blood was poured upon them. T. Fahd [11] takes this story for a later moralizing legend directed against temptations offered to pilgrims by those, who, having no ritually pure dress, performed sacred rites completely or almost naked [12]. Basing upon the information provided by al-Azraqī that these stones had formerly been standing on the hills of al-Ṣafā and al-Marwa embodying the cult of Ba'l and Ba'la, the scholar came to the conclusion that the

bringing together of these idols by the Zamzam well could mark the foundation of the Meccan sanctuary. The sacrifices formerly made on the hills were offered now by the well, and the two stones could symbolize here the two hills.

Among the people of the Ṭayyi' tribe there was a legend about Ajā' and Salmā, at some points similar to that of Isāf and Nā'ila. A man named Ajā' b. al-Ḥayy fell in love with Salmā who was a married woman from his own tribe. She had a nurse 'Awjā', in whose house they used to meet. Once the husband of Salmā and her brothers took the lovers by surprise. Ajā' and Salmā tried to escape, but were caught. Salmā was put to death on a mountain which received her name, 'Awjā' was killed on another mountain and Ajā' — on the third one. These mountains, including the third one, black rock, which resembled a human figure, got the names of the murdered [13].

There is another legend of the same kind. According to it, along the road used by pilgrims on the way from Mecca to the mount 'Arafāt there were stones called al-Niswa ("Women"). One woman who was unfaithful to her husband became pregnant. When she was there, on the road, she happened to bear a child in the presence of two other women. The three women immediately turned into stones [14].

The next legend is connected with South Arabia. Ibn al-Mujāwir [15] tells that there, at the site called Naqīl, were two stones — two women turned into stone, their reproductive organs could be seen regularly shedding blood. Also, the Ḥaḍramawt idol al-Jalsad was a great white rock with a black top resembling a human face. Al-Jalsad was worshipped in all Arabia, even among the Mahrians. T. Fahd explains the etymology of the idol's name as derivation from *jalmad* ("rock" — "strong man") [16]. Although this name easily fits the common metaphoric scheme (cf., for instance, Russian кремень "flintstone" — "strong man"), one should take into consideration that for the primitive or magic consciousness a name was not just a conventional sign but the integral part of the object to which it was attached.

The common elements of all these legends, which are widespread over the whole of Arabia (in Hijāz, Najd, in the south of the Arabian Peninsula), are: (i) a criminal coitus; (ii) turning into stone as a punishment for adultery (in the case of Isāf and Nā'ila — for the desecration of a shrine); (iii) the worship of the stones which came into being in this miraculous way.

Comparative mythology demonstrates that many anthropogenetic and cosmogonic legends include the story of the "original sin" which fertilized people and all other living beings [17]. It is not a mere chance that the element of "criminal coitus" appears in the legends cited above. Before Islam often the process of childbirth itself at its different stages was becoming the object of sanctification. There was the cult of reproductive organs.

On the other hand, the worship of rocks and stones as the dwelling of deities (suffice it to remember the Black Stone of Ka'ba) was certainly related to the worship of stones as primal ancestors, which is confirmed by numerous ethnonyms of the *banū jandal* — "the sons of rock" type. Comparative mythology testifies to the connection of these views with the myths of creation telling about the origin of man from stone. These myths were widespread in particular among the nomad Semites dwelling in rocky steppes and on plateaux [18]. All this brings us to the

conclusion that the legends cited above possibly go back to the original layer of anthropogenic and ethnogenic mythology of the inhabitants of Arabia, reflecting the stage of its development far gone from the archaic notions connected with the understanding of anthropogenesis as of "spontaneous transformation of stone into man without any participation of the God's will or action" [19].

The idea of man originating from stone is never explicitly stated in the Qur'ān, though there are certain hints present in several passages: "Then your hearts became hardened thereafter and are like stones, or even yet harder; for there are stones from which rivers come gushing, and others split, so that water issues from them, and others crash down in the fear of God" (2 : 74/69) [20]; "then fear the Fire, whose fuel is men and stones, prepared for unbelievers" (2 : 24/22, see also 17 : 50/53).

In our opinion, the system of these mythological notions was absorbed both by the Qur'ān and by the ideology of the early Islam, though in a modified form. It is known that Islam inherited the ritual of *hajj*, providing it with a new foundation connected with the Bible history. It is known that ritual is more conservative than mythology, though often with the change of ideology the same ritual could be provided with a new mythological foundation [21]. This happened to the system of mythological notions connected with *hajj*.

What is especially interesting is that the pagan ritual connected with the worship of Isāf and Nā'ila is taking its roots, as we were trying to demonstrate, in the ethnogenetic mythology of Arabia. The analysis of some of the features of the cult of Isāf and Nā'ila, of the appellatives applied to their names, proves that its mythological foundation changed several times. T. Fahd [22] demonstrates that at some stage the worship of Isāf, the god of wind and rain, whose appellative was Nahīk Mujāwid al-Rīh ("power which brings abundant rain with wind") and of Nā'ila, the deity of fertility, was related to the agrarian cult. Later Isāf (etymologically — "collector", "keeper") and Nā'ila ("receiver of gifts"), after their images had been installed by the temple treasury-well Zamzam, became its guardians. Finally, according to the Muslim tradition, the meeting of Adam and Hawwā (Eve) after their expulsion from Paradise took place by the mount of 'Arafāt. There they dwelled for a while and there their first child was born to them. Muzdalifa is also connected with the names of the forefathers [23]. The appearance of the Zamzam well and one of the rituals of *hajj* — running (*sa'y*) between the hills of al-Safā and al-Marwa — are connected with the names of Hajar and of the forefather of northern Arabs, Ismā'īl, the ancestor of their eponym 'Adnān. It was the realization of the idea that the ritual of *hajj* was connected with a **repetition** of what had been there at the dawn of human history, that this very place was in some way connected with the story of the Primal Man and the forefather of the inhabitants of Arabia (let us remember the al-Niswa women turned into stone by the 'Arafāt mount and the connection of the al-Safā and al-Marwa hills with the cult of Isāf and Nā'ila).

It is also important to recall A. Hocart's remark that myth is a part of ritual and ritual — part of myth. Myth is describing the ritual, and the ritual is staging the myth [24]. The Qur'ān, when it insists on the necessity of performing *hajj* as a ritual obligation of a Moslem, thus establishes a **link** between the new ideology and the system of mytho-

logical notions which developed around the worship of the Mecca shrine in the *jāhilīyya* time: "Safa and Marwa are among the waymarks (*al-mashā'ir*) of God; so whosoever makes the Pilgrimage ('umra) to the House, or the Visitation (*hajj*), it is no fault in him to circumambulate them; and whoso volunteers good, God is All-grateful, All-knowing" (2 : 158/153); "but when you press on from Arafat, then remember God at the Holy Waymark (*al-mash'ar al-harām*), and remember Him as He has guided you, though formerly you were gone astray" (2 : 198/194).

It is unknown when the name of Adam became associated in the people's minds with these places and with the stages of the *hajj* ritual [25]. As the Old Testament ideas on the origin of man were widespread among monotheistic Arabians, it is quite probable that the Hanīfs [26], whose devotion to the performance of the *hajj* ritual is marked by the Muslim tradition, could link some of its steps with the name of Adam even before Muhammad's preaching.

It is noteworthy that such an association indicates the contemporaries of the Prophet to have been familiar only with the **echo** of the ancient Arabian myths of creation. By the time of the rise of Islam the erosion of the system of ancient Arabian cosmogonic ideas had been almost accomplished. The Qur'ān only reflected the final stage of this long process.

The way the terms *adam* and *banū adam* are employed in the Qur'ān, as well as a number of other Qur'ānic terms [27], confirm that Qur'ānic ideas on the origin of man, which were gradually developing through the whole period of Muhammad's prophetic activities, reflect a complicated process of interaction of different ideological trends, a singular combination of both the Old Testament lore and ideas produced by inter-Christian disputes of that time overlaying the original Arabian ideological stratum. The development of the system of principal Qur'ānic notions which implied God — "Creator", people — "sons of Adam", the sanctuary of Mecca — "the House of Allah", etc., also turned to be connected with the image of Adam.

All this took place against a very complicated social and ideological background of Arabia in the sixth and early seventh century (gradual consolidation of Arabian tribes into one nation, transition from the tribal stage of organisation to territorial, from paganism to Islam, development of the State, etc.). As early as the end of the seventh—beginning of the eighth century in the works of genealogists and commentators of the Qur'ān there appears a joint genealogy of the tribes of Arabia going back to "forefather Adam" [28]. In this way the Arabs "joined the family" of the other peoples of the Bible, their history became part of the world history, and the Arabs themselves became members of the humankind (*banū adam*). In this respect they were becoming no less "civilised" than the peoples conquered by them.

Penetrating beyond the limits of Arabia, Islam entered the field which for many centuries had been cultivated by different monotheistic systems. There, first of all in Syria and Iraq, under the circumstances of intensive inter-ethnic and inter-confessional contacts, took place the final formation and record of the dogmatic and legal system of Islam and of its "sacred history". The strong ideological pressure of this all-embracing system of values, which absorbed the cream of the principal cultural elements of the *jāhilīyya* period, its aim being to justify the new role of the Arabs in the

"civilised world", had terminated the long process of disintegration and erasure from the collective memory of the old "barbaric" traditions. First of all, it affected the principal cosmogonic and anthropogenetic myths, the core of all ancient and medieval ideological systems. Due to their significance, however, the ideas of this kind could not vanish without a trace. Their presence is evident in the ritual of *hajj* recorded by the Qur'ān.

Notes

1. See I. Sh. Shifman, "O nekotorykh ustanovleniiakh rannego islama" ("On some of the regulations of early Islam"), *Islam. Religiia, obshchestvo, gosudarstvo* (Moscow, 1984), pp. 36—43.

2. See Th. Frankl, *Die Enstehung des Menschen nach den Koran*, (Prag, 1930); D. Bakker, *Man in the Qur'ān* (Amsterdam, 1965), pp. 1—27; J. Bouman, *Gott und Mench im Koran* (Darmstadt, 1977); O. Izutzu, *God and Man in the Koran* (Tokyo, 1964); I. N. Vinnikov, "Koranicheskie zametki" ("Qur'ānic notes"), *Issledovaniia po istorii kul'tury narodov Vostoka* (Moscow—Leningrad, 1960); P. A. Griaznevich, "Razvitie istoricheskogo soznaniia arabov" ("The development of the historical consciousness of the Arabs"), *Ocherki istorii arabskoĭ kul'tury V—XV vv.* (Moscow, 1982), pp. 75—155.

3. Griaznevich, *op. cit.*, pp. 89—90.

4. 'Adī b. Zayd al 'Ibādī, *Dīwān*, compiled by Muḥammad Khabbār (Baghdād, 1965), No. 103. Cf. Gen. I: 1—3, 6, 7, 14, 16, 26, 28, 31; II: 7, 8, 16—18, 22; III: 15—17.

5. See, for example, A. Lewin, "A vocabulary of the Hudailian poems", *Humaniora*, XIII (Goteborq, 1978), p. 284, also E. H. Lane, *An Arabic-English Lexicon*, Pt. 1—8 (London, 1863—1893), 2026.

6. [al-Ḥutej'a], *Der Diwan des Ǧarwal b. Aus al-Ḥutej'a*, bearb. von I. Goldziher (Leipzig, 1893), No. 89 : 5.

7. Lane, *op. cit.*, 1135.

8. Griaznevich, *op. cit.*, p. 84.

9. I. Sh. Shifman, *Nabateĭskoe gosudarstvo i ego kul'tura* (The Nabatean State and Its Culture) (Moscow, 1976), p. 105; G. Lankester Harding, *An Index and Concordance of Pre-Islamic Arabian Names and Inscriptions* (Toronto, 1975), p. 333; I. P. Veinberg, *Chelovek v kul'ture drevnego Blizhnego Vostoka* (Man in the Culture of the Ancient Near East) (Moscow, 1986), p. 88.

10. On the earliest version see [Ibn al-Kalbī], *Kitāb al-Aṣnām 'an Abī-l-Mundhir Hishām b. Muḥammad b. al-Sa'ib al-Kalbī bi taḥqiq al-ustādh Aḥmad Zakī* (al-Qāhira, 1963), p. 16.

11. T. Fahd, *La panthéon de l'Arabie Centrale à la veille de l'Hégire*, (Paris, 1968), pp. 103—9.

12. T. Fahd, *La divination arabe. Études religieuses, sociologiques et folkloriques sur le milieu natif de l'Islam*, (Strasbourg, 1966) p. 128.

13. *Ibid.*, p. 15.

14. *Ibid.*, p. 16.

15. [Ibn al-Mujāwir], *Descriptio Arabiae Meridionialis* (extr. de *Tārīkh al-Mustabṣir*), ed. O. Lofgreen, i (Leiden, 1954), p. 150 ff. See also Fahd, *La divination*, p. 15 ff.

16. Fahd, *La panthéon*, p. 86; S. A. Frantsuzov, "Ėtnoreligioznaia situatsiia v Khadramaute v VI—VII vv." ("Ethno-religious situation in Ḥaḍramawt in the sixth—seventh centuries"), *Khadramaut. Arkheologicheskie, ėtnograficheskie, istoriko-kul'turnye issledovaniia — Trudy Sovetsko-Ĭemenskoĭ kompleksnoĭ ėkspeditsii*, i (Moscow, 1995), pp. 316—7.

17. See L. A. Abramian, *Pervobytnyĭ prazdnik i mifologiia* (Primitive Feast and Mythology) (Erevan, 1983), p. 112.

18. The ideas of the origin of man from stone and of petrifaction as a punishment for a broken taboo are reflected in particular in Hurrian and Hittite mythology. They are also widely represented in Greek myths (the story of Deucalion and Pyrra, the myth of Niobe). Reflections of these ideas are present in the Prophetic books of the Bible (cf. Isaiah, LI, 1; see Griaznevich, *op. cit.*, p. 84). Thompson's index provides us with abundant comparative material: the motif of a man being turned into a stone or rock for breaking a taboo (St. Thompson, *Motif-Index of Folk Literature*, new enlarged and revised edition, i—v (Bloomington, 1956), C 961; D 230), as well as the idea of creating man from stone and of the origin of mankind from a rock (*ibid.*, A 1245; A 1234.2).

19. Griaznevich, *op. cit.*, p. 84.

20. A. J. Arberry's translation of the Qur'ān is used in the present article.

21. Abramian, *op. cit.*, p. 113.

22. See Fahd, *La panthéon*, pp. 106—8.

23. *Ibid.*, p. 241, n. 2.

24. A. M. Hocart, *The Life-Giving Myth and Other Essays* (London, 1970), p. 22.

25. The Muslim tradition identifies *al-mash'ar* and *al-ḥarām* with a small mound in Muzdalifa, six miles from Mecca, between Mecca and 'Arafāt, for more details see C. Pansera, "Alcune precisazioni sull' espressione al-Mash'ar al-Haram", *Rivista degli studi orientali*, XXXIV/1—5 (1949), pp. 74—7. There the "Mosque of the sacred grave" is located, see A. Kamal, *The Sacred Journey, Being Pilgrimage to Makkah* (London, 1964), p. 84. The term *mash'ar* had probably been applied to this sacred mound long before the coming of Islam. The same name was also applied to a certain stone between al-Ṣafā and al-Marwa worshipped before Islam as well (Fahd, *La panthéon*, p. 238, No. 3). Now the term *al-mashā'ir* is applied to different stages of *hajj*. The connection of some elements of *hajj*, like putting on special garments, ritual trimming, etc. with pre-Islamic ritual practice testifies to the acceptance of *hajj* as a complete ritual system by Islam.

26. Adam as the name of the forefather appears a number of times in verse ascribed to poet-Ḥanīf Umayya b. Abu'l-Ṣalt, see Umayya b. Abu'l-Ṣalt, *Dīwān* (Baghdād, 1975), Nos. 21, 45; No. 50 : 1; No. 95 : 3. It is noteworthy that the name *'dm* was widely used in northern Arabia long before Islam (second—fifth centuries A.D.). Lankester Harding recorded 109 cases of its use in Safaite inscriptions (see Lankester Harding, *op. cit.*, p. 32). The stem *'dm* belongs to the main fund of Semitic roots, it is connected with such notions as "earth", "red colour", "skin", "man", see I. Diakonoff, "Earliest Semites in Asia", *Schriften zur Geschichte und Kultur des Alten Orients* (Berlin, 1981), p. 52; I. M. D'iakonov, "Praotets Adam" ("Adam the forefather"), *Vostok*, I (Moscow, 1992), pp. 51—8. In the pre-Islamic Bedouin poetry the word-form *adam*, similar to the Qur'ānic one, could be used to indicate such notions as "dark", "white", "brown", see Th. Nöldeke, *Belegwörterbuch zur klassischen arabischen Sprache*, hrsg. von J. Kraemer, Bd. 1 (Berlin, 1952), p. 14. It is clear in this

connection why Arab authors, such as, for example, al-Jawālīqī (see von W. Spitta, "Die Lucken in Ğawālīkī's Mu'arrab", *ZDMG*, XXXIII, pp. 208), considered the name Adam, along with the names Ṣāliḥ, Muḥammad, Shu'ayb, an original Arabic name, in opposition to the names of other prophets: Ismā'īl, Ibrahīm, Isḥāq, Ilyās, Idrīs. Numerous different etymologies of the name were, however, suggested, see *ibid.*, p. 25; also I. Goldziher, *Studen über Tanchum Jeruschalimi* (Leipzig, 1870), p. 12, No. 4).

27. See E. A. Rezvan, *Etnosotsial'naia terminologiia Korana kak istochnik po istorii i etnografii Aravii na rubezhe VI—VII vv.* (Ethno-Social Terminology of the Qur'ān as a Source on the History and Ethnography of Arabia at the Turn of the Sixth—Seventh Centuries), PhD Thesis (Leningrad, 1984); E. A. Rezvan, "Adam i banu Adam v Korane — k istorii poniatiĭ "pervochelovek" i "chelovechestvo" ("Adam and *banū adam* in the Qur'ān — to the history of the notions the "Primal Man" and "mankind"), *Islam. Religiia, obshchestvo, gosudarstvo*, pp. 59—68.

28. Sozomenes, who lived in the first half of the fifth century, in his "Historia Ecclesiastica", already mentions that "Arabs are called "Ismailites" after their origin, after their "forefather" Ismail, the son of Abraham" (cited after Pigulevskaya, see her *Araby u granits Vizantii i Irana v IV—VI vv.* (Arabs on the Byzantine and Iranian Frontiers in the Fourth—Sixth Centuries) (Moscow—Leningrad, 1964), p. 41).