

Franz-Valery-Marie Cumont (January 3, 1868 - Brussels, August 25, 1947) was a Belgian archaeologist and historian, a philologist and student of epigraphy, who brought these often isolated specialties to bear on the syncretic mystery religions of Late Antiquity, notably Mithraism. Cumont was a graduate of the University of Ghent (PhD, 1887). After receiving royal travelling fellowships, he undertook archaeology in Pontus and Armenia (published in 1906) and in Syria, but he is best known for his studies on the impact of Eastern mystery religions, particularly Mithraism, on the Roman Empire. Cumont's international credentials were brilliant, but his public circumspection was not enough. In 1910, Baron E. Descamps, the Catholic Minister of Sciences and Arts at the University of Ghent, refused to approve the faculty's unanimous recommendation of Cumont for the chair in Roman History, Cumont having been a professor there since 1906. There was a vigorous press campaign and student agitation in Cumont's favor, because the refusal was seen as blatant religious interference in the University's life. When another candidate was named, in 1912, Cumont resigned his positions at the University and at the Royal Museum in Brussels, left Belgium and henceforth divided his time between Paris and Rome.

He contributed to many standard encyclopedias, published voluminously and in 1922, under stressful political conditions, conducted digs on the shore of the Euphrates at the previously unknown site of Dura-Europos; he published his research there in 1926. He was a member of most of the European academies.

His works include

Les religions orientales dans le paganisme romain (1906, widely translated)

The Oriental Religions in Roman Paganism

Texts and Illustrated Monuments Relating to the Mysteries of Mithra (1894-1900, with an English translation in 1903) is the study that made his international reputation, by its originality and massive documentation.

After-Life in Roman Paganism, lectures delivered at Yale University, published in 1922, was cautiously expressed, but it corrected many false impressions of pagan rite that Christian apologists had made.

Astrology and Religion Among the Greeks and Romans (available in a Dover reprint)

After his death, critics of his interpretation of Mithras as the descendent of the Iranian deity Mithra began to be heard, and surfaced at the First International Congress of Mithraic Studies in Manchester England, 1971. Modern interpretation of Mithras as the astronomical bull-slayer have continued to move away from Cumont's interpretations, though his documentation remains valuable.

In 1997 the Royal Library, Brussels, observed the fiftieth anniversary of Cumont's death appropriately, with a colloquium on syncretism in the Mediterranean world of Antiquity.

CHAPTER V

SYRIA

THE religions of Syria never had the same solidarity in the Occident as those from Egypt or Asia Minor. From the coasts of Phœnicia and the valleys of Lebanon, from

the borders of the Euphrates and the oases of the desert, they came at various periods, like the successive waves of the incoming tide, and existed side by side in the Roman world without uniting, in spite of their similarities. The isolation in which they remained and the persistent adherence of their believers to their particular rites were a consequence and reflection of the disunited condition of Syria herself, where the different tribes and districts remained more distinct than anywhere else, even after they had been brought together under the domination of Rome. They doggedly preserved their local gods and Semitic dialects.

It would be impossible to outline each one of these religions in detail at this time and to reconstruct their history, because our meager information would not permit it, but we can indicate, in a general way, how they penetrated into the Occidental countries at various periods, and we can try to define their common characteristics by showing what new elements the Syrian paganism brought to the Romans.

The first Semitic divinity to enter Italy was Atargatis,

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frequently mistaken for the Phœnician Astarte, who had a famous temple at Bambyce or Hierapolis, not far from the Euphrates, and was worshiped with her husband, Hadad, in a considerable part of Syria besides. The Greeks considered her

as the principal Syrian goddess, 1 and in the Latin countries she was commonly known as dea Syria, a name corrupted into Iasura by popular use.

We all remember the unedifying descriptions of her itinerant priests that Lucian and Apuleius 5_1 have left. Led by an old eunuch of dubious habits, a crowd of painted young men marched along the highways with an ass that bore an elaborately adorned image of the goddess. Whenever they passed through a village or by some rich villa, they went through their sacred exercises. To the shrill accompaniment of their Syrian flutes they turned round and round, and with their heads thrown back fluttered about and gave vent to hoarse clamors until vertigo seized them and insensibility was complete. Then they flagellated themselves wildly, struck themselves with swords and shed their blood in front of a rustic crowd which pressed closely about them, and finally they took up a profitable collection from the wondering spectators. They received jars of milk and wine, cheeses, flour, bronze coins of small denominations and even some silver pieces, all of which disappeared in the folds of their capacious robes. If opportunity presented they knew how to increase their profits by means of clever thefts or by making commonplace predictions for a moderate consideration.

This picturesque description, based on a novel by

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[paragraph continues] Lucius of Patras, is undoubtedly extreme. It is difficult to believe that the sacerdotal corps of the goddess of Hierapolis should have consisted only of charlatans and thieves.

But how can the presence in the Occident of that begging and low nomadic clergy be explained?

It is certain that the first worshipers of the Syrian goddess in the Latin world were slaves. During the wars against Antiochus the Great a number of prisoners were sent to Italy to be sold at public auction, as was the custom, and the first appearance in Italy of the Chaldaei 5_2 has been connected with that event. The Chaldaei were Oriental fortune-tellers who asserted that their predictions were based on the Chaldean astrology. They found credulous clients among the farm laborers, and Cato gravely exhorts the good landlord to oust them from his estate. 5_3

Beginning with the second century before Christ, merchants began to import Syrian slaves. At that time Delos was the great trade center in this human commodity, and in that island especially Atargatis was worshiped by citizens of Athens and Rome. 5_4 Trade spread her worship in the Occident. 5_5 We know that the great slave revolution that devastated Sicily in 134 B. C. was started by a slave from Apamea, a votary of the Syrian goddess. Simulating divine madness, he called his companions to arms, pretending to act in accordance with orders from heaven. 5_6 This detail, which we know by chance, shows how considerable a proportion of Semites there was in the gangs working the fields, and how much authority Atargatis enjoyed in the rural centers. Being too poor to build temples for their national goddess, those agricultural laborers

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waited with their devotions until a band of itinerant galli passed through the distant hamlet where the lot of the auction had sent them. The existence of those wandering priests depended, therefore, on the number of fellow-countrymen they

met in the rural districts, who supported them by sacrificing a part of their poor savings.

Towards the end of the republic those diviners appear to have enjoyed rather serious consideration at Rome. It was a pythoness from Syria that advised Marius on the sacrifices he was to perform. 5_7

Under the empire the importation of slaves increased. Depopulated Italy needed more and more foreign hands and Syria furnished a large quota of the forced immigration of cultivators. But those Syrians, quick and intelligent as they were strong and industrious, performed many other functions. They filled the countless domestic positions in the palaces of the aristocracy and were especially appreciated as litter-bearers. 5_8 the imperial and municipal administrations, as well as the big contractors to whom customs and the mines were farmed out, hired or bought them in large numbers, and even in the remotest border provinces the Syrus was found serving princes, cities or private individuals. The worship of the Syrian goddess profited considerably by the economic current that continually brought new worshipers. We find her mentioned in the first century of our era in a Roman inscription referring in precise terms to the slave market, and we know that Nero took a devout fancy to the stranger that did not, however, last very long. 5_9 In the popular Trastevere quarter she had a temple until the end of paganism. 5_10

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During the imperial period, however, the slaves were no longer the only missionaries that came from Syria, and Atargatis was no longer the only divinity from that country to be worshiped

in the Occident. The propagation of the Semitic worship progressed for the most part in a different manner under the empire.

At the beginning of our era the Syrian merchants, Syri negotiatores, undertook a veritable colonization of the Latin provinces. 5_11 During the second century before Christ the traders of that nation had established settlements along the coast of Asia Minor, on the Piræus, and in the Archipelago. At Delos, a small island but a large commercial center, they maintained several associations that worshiped their national gods, in particular Hadad and Atargatis. But the wars that shook the Orient at the end of the republic, and above all the growth of piracy, ruined maritime commerce and stopped emigration. This began again with renewed vigor when the establishment of the empire guaranteed the safety of the seas and when the Levantine traffic attained a development previously unknown. We can trace the history of the Syrian establishments in the Latin provinces from the first to the seventh century, and recently we have begun to, appreciate their economic, social and religious importance at its true value.

The Syrians' love of lucre was proverbial. Active, compliant and able, frequently little scrupulous, they knew how to conclude first small deals, then larger ones, everywhere. Using the special talents of their race to advantage, they succeeded in establishing themselves on all coasts of the Mediterranean, even in

Spain. 5_12 At Malaga an inscription mentions a corporation formed by them. The Italian ports where business was especially active, Pozzuoli, Ostia, later Naples, attracted them in great numbers. But they did not confine themselves to the seashore; they penetrated far into the interior of the countries, wherever they hoped to find profitable trade. They followed the commercial highways and traveled up the big rivers. By way of the Danube they went as far as Pannonia, by way of the Rhone they reached Lyons. In Gaul they were especially numerous. In this new country that had just been opened to commerce fortunes could be made rapidly. A rescript discovered on the range of the Lebanon is addressed to sailors from Arles, who had charge of the transportation of grain, and in the department of Ain a bilingual epitaph has been found mentioning a merchant of the third century, Thaïm or Julian, son of Saad, decurion of the city of Canatha in Syria, who owned two factories in the Rhone basin, where he handled goods from Aquitania. 5_13 Thus the Syrians spread over the entire province as far as Treves, where they had a strong colony. Not even the barbarian invasions of the fifth century stopped their immigration. Saint Jerome describes them traversing the entire Roman world amidst the troubles of the invasion, prompted by the lust of gain to defy all dangers. In the barbarian society the part played by this civilized and city-bred element was even more considerable. Under the Merovingians in about 591 they had sufficient influence at Paris to have one of their numbers elected bishop and to gain possession of all ecclesiastical offices. Gregory of Tours tells how King Gontrand, on entering the city of Orleans

in 585, was received by a crowd praising him "in the language of the Latins, the Jews and the Syrians." 5_14 The merchant colonies existed until the Saracen corsairs destroyed the commerce of the Mediterranean.

Those establishments exercised a strong influence upon the economic and material life of the Latin provinces, especially in Gaul. As bankers the Syrians concentrated a large share of the money business in their hands and monopolized the importing of the valuable Levantine commodities as well as of the articles of luxury; they sold wines, spices, glassware, silks and purple fabrics, also objects wrought by goldsmiths, to be used as patterns by the native artisans. Their moral and religious influence was not less considerable: for instance, it has been shown that they furthered the development of monastic life during the Christian period, and that the devotion to the crucifix 5_15 that grew up in opposition to the monophysites, was introduced into the Occident by them. During the first five centuries Christians felt an unconquerable repugnance to the representation of the Saviour of the world nailed to an instrument of punishment more infamous than the guillotine of to-day. The Syrians were the first to substitute reality in all its pathetic horror for a vague symbolism.

In pagan times the religious ascendancy of that immigrant population was no less remarkable. The merchants always took an interest in the affairs of heaven as well as in those of earth. At all times Syria was a land of ardent devotion, and in the first century its children were as fervid in propagating their barbarian gods in the Occident as after their conversion they were enthusiastic in spreading Christianity as far

as Turkestan and China. As soon as the merchants had established their places of business in the islands of the Archipelago during the Alexandrian period, and in the Latin period under the empire, they founded chapels in which they practised their exotic rites.

It was easy for the divinities of the Phœnician coast to cross the seas. Among them were Adonis, whom the women of Byblos mourned; Balmarcodes, "the Lord of the dances," who came from Beirut; Marna, the master of rain, worshiped at Gaza; and Maiuma, ^{5_16} whose nautical holiday was celebrated every spring on the coast near Ostia as well as in the Orient.

Besides these half Hellenized religions, others of a more purely Semitic nature came from the interior of the country, because the merchants frequently were natives of the cities of the Hinterland, as for instance Apamea or Epiphanea in Coele-Syria, or even of villages in that flat country. As Rome incorporated the small kingdoms beyond the Lebanon and the Orontes that had preserved a precarious independence, the current of emigration increased. In 71 Commagene, which lies between the Taurus and the Euphrates, was annexed by Vespasian, a little later the dynasties of Chalcis and Emesa were also deprived of their power. Nero, it appears, took possession of Damascus; half a century later Trajan established the new province of Arabia in the south (106 A. D.), and the oasis of Palmyra, a great mercantile center, lost its autonomy at the same time. In this manner Rome extended her direct authority as far as the desert, over countries that were only superficially Hellenized, and where the native devotions had preserved all their

savage fervor. From that time constant communication was established between Italy and those regions which had heretofore been almost inaccessible. As roads were built commerce developed, and together with the interests of trade the needs of administration created an incessant exchange of men, of products and of beliefs between those out-of-the-way countries and the Latin provinces.

These annexations, therefore, were followed by a renewed influx of Syrian divinities into the Occident. At Pozzuoli, the last port of call of the Levantine vessels, there was a temple to the Baal of Damascus (Jupiter Damascenus) in which leading citizens officiated, and there were altars on which two golden camels ^{5_17} were offered to Dusares, a divinity who had come from the interior of Arabia. They kept company with a divinity of more ancient repute, the Hadad of Baabek-Heliopolis (Jupiter Heliopolitanus), whose immense temple, considered one of the world's wonders, ^{5_18} had been restored by Antoninus Pius, and may still be seen facing Lebanon in majestic elegance. Heliopolis and Beirut had been the most ancient colonies founded by Augustus in Syria. The god of Heliopolis participated in the privileged position granted to the inhabitants of those two cities, who worshiped in a common devotion, ^{5_19} and he was naturalized as a Roman with greater ease than the others.

The conquest of all Syria as far as Euphrates and the subjection of even a part of Mesopotamia aided the diffusion of the Semitic religions in still another manner. From these regions,

which were partly inhabited by fighting races, the Cæsars drew recruits for the imperial army. They levied a great number of

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legionaries, but especially auxiliary troops, who were transferred to the frontiers. Troopers and foot-soldiers from those provinces furnished important contingents to the garrisons of Europe and Africa. For instance, a cohort of one thousand archers from Emesa was established in Pannonia, another of archers from Damascus in upper Germany; Mauretania received irregulars from Palmyra, and bodies of troops levied in Ituraea, on the outskirts of the Arabian desert, were, encamped in Dacia, Germany, Egypt and Cappadocia at the same time. Commagene alone furnished no less than six cohorts of five hundred men each that were sent to the Danube and into Numidia. 5_20

The number of inscriptions consecrated by soldiers proves both the ardor of their faith and the diversity of their beliefs. Like the sailors of to-day who are transferred to strange climes and exposed to incessant danger, they were constantly inclined to invoke the protection of heaven, and remained attached to the gods who seemed to remind them in their exile of the distant home country. Therefore it is not surprising that the Syrians who served in the army should have practised the religion of their Baals in the neighborhood of their camps. In the north of England, near the wall of Hadrian, an inscription in verse in honor of the goddess of Hierapolis has been found; its author was a prefect, probably of a cohort of Hamites stationed at this distant post. 5_21

Not all the soldiers, however, went to swell the ranks of believers worshiping divinities that had long been adopted by the Latin world, as did that officer. They also brought along new ones that had come from a still greater distance than their predecessors, in fact

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from the outskirts of the barbarian world, because from those regions in particular trained men could be obtained. There were, for instance, Baltis, an "Our Lady" from Osroene beyond the Euphrates; 5_22 Aziz, the "strong god" of Edessa, who was identified with the star Lucifer; 5_23 Malakbel, the "Lord's messenger," patron of the soldiers from Palmyra, who appeared with several companions at Rome, in Numidia and in Dacia. 5_24 The most celebrated of those gods then was the Jupiter of Doliche, a small city of Commagene, that owed its fame to him. Because of the troops coming from that region, this obscure Baal, whose name is mentioned by no author, found worshipers in every Roman province as far as Africa, Germany and Brittany. The number of known inscriptions consecrated to him exceeds a hundred, and it is still growing. Being originally nothing but a god of lightning, represented as brandishing an ax, this local genius of the tempest was elevated to the rank of tutelary divinity of the imperial armies. 5_25

The diffusion of the Semitic religions in Italy that commenced imperceptibly under the republic became more marked after the first century of our era. Their expansion and multiplication were rapid, and they attained the apogee of their power during the third century. Their influence became almost predominant when the accession of the Severi lent them the support of a

court that was half Syrian. Functionaries of all kinds, senators and officers, vied with each other in devotion to the patron gods of their sovereigns, gods which the sovereigns patronized in turn. Intelligent and ambitious princesses like Julia Domna, Julia Maesa, Julia Mamaea, whose ascendancy was very

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considerable, became propagators of their national religion. We all know the audacious pronouncement of the year 218 that placed upon the throne the fourteen-year-old emperor Heliogabalus, a worshiper of the Baal of Emesa. His intention was to give supremacy over all other gods to his barbarian divinity, who had heretofore been almost unknown. The ancient authors narrate with indignation how this crowned priest attempted to elevate his black stone, the coarse idol brought from Emesa, to the rank of supreme divinity of the empire by subordinating the whole ancient pantheon to it; they never tire of giving revolting details about the dissoluteness of the debaucheries for which the festivities of the new Sol invictus Elagabal furnished a pretext. 5_26 However, the question arises whether the Roman historians, being very hostile to that foreigner who haughtily favored the customs of his own country, did not misrepresent or partly misunderstand the facts. Heliogabalus's attempt to have his god recognized as supreme, and to establish a kind of monotheism in heaven as there was monarchy on earth, was undoubtedly too violent, awkward and premature, but it was in keeping with the aspirations of the time, and it must be remembered that the imperial policy could find the support of powerful Syrian colonies not only at Rome but all over the empire.

Half a century later Aurelian 5_27 was inspired by the same idea when he created a new worship, that of the "Invincible Sun." Worshiped in a splendid temple, by pontiffs equal in rank to those of ancient Rome, having magnificent plays held in his honor every fourth year, Sol invictus was also elevated to the supreme rank in the divine hierarchy, and became the special

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protector of the emperors and the empire. The country where Aurelian found the pattern he sought to reproduce, was again Syria. Into the new sanctuary he transferred the images of Bel and Helios, taken from Palmyra, after it had fallen before his arms.

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The sovereigns, then, twice attempted to replace the Capitoline Jupiter by a Semitic god and to make a Semitic religion the principal and official religion of the Romans. They proclaimed the fall of the old Latin idolatry and the accession of a new paganism taken from Syria. What was the superiority attributed to the creeds of that country? Why did even an Illyrian general like Aurelian look for the most perfect type of pagan religion in that country? That is the problem to be solved, but it must remain unsolved unless an exact account is given of the fate of the Syrian beliefs under the empire.

That question has not as yet been very completely elucidated. Besides the superficial opusculum of Lucian on the dea Syria, we find scarcely any reliable information in the Greek or Latin writers. The work by Philo of Byblos is a euhemeristic

interpretation of an alleged Phœnician cosmogony, and a composition of little merit. Neither have we the original texts of the Semitic liturgies, as we have for Egypt. Whatever we have learned we owe especially to the inscriptions, and while these furnish highly valuable indications as to the date and area of expansion of these religions, they tell us hardly anything about their doctrines. Light on this subject may be expected from the excavations that are being made in the great sanctuaries of Syria, and also from a more exact interpretation

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of the sculptured monuments that we now possess in great numbers, especially those of Jupiter Dolichenus.

Some characteristics of the Semitic paganism, however, are known at present, and it must be admitted that it would appear at a disadvantage if judged by those noticeable features that first attract our attention. It had retained a stock of very primitive ideas and some aboriginal nature worship that had lasted through many centuries and was to persist, in part, under Christianity and Islam until the present day. 5_28 Such were the worship of high elevations on which a rustic enclosure sometimes marked the limits of the consecrated territory; the worship of the waters that flow to the sea, the streams that arise in the mountains, the springs that gush out of the soil, the ponds, the lakes and the wells, into all of which offerings were thrown with the idea either of venerating in them the thirst-quenching liquid or else the fecund nature of the earth; the worship of the trees that shaded the altars and that nobody dared to fell or mutilate; the worship of stones, especially of the rough stones called bethels that were regarded, as their name (beth-El) indicates, as the residence of the god, or rather,

as the matter in which the god was embodied. 5_29 Aphrodite Astarte was worshiped in the shape of a conical stone at Paphos, and a black aerolite covered with projections and depressions to which a symbolic meaning was attributed represented Elagabal, and was transferred from Emesa to Rome, as we have said.

The animals, as well as inanimate things, received their share of homage. Remnants of the old Semitic zoolatry perpetuated themselves until the end of paganism and even later. Frequently the gods were represented

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standing erect on animals. Thus the Dolichean Baal stood on a steer, and his spouse on a lion. Around certain temples there were sacred parks, in which savage beasts roamed at liberty, 5_30 a reminder of the time when they were considered divine. Two animals especially were the objects of universal veneration, the pigeon and the fish. Vagrant multitudes of pigeons received the traveler landing at Ascalon, 5_31 and they played about the enclosures of all the temples of Astarte 5_32 in flocks resembling white whirlwinds. The pigeon belonged, properly speaking, to the goddess of love, whose symbol it has remained above all to the people worshiping that goddess.

"Quid referam ut volitet crebras intacta per urbes
Alba Palaestino sancta columba Syro?" 5_33

The fish was sacred to Atargatis, who undoubtedly had been represented in that shape at first, as Dagon always was. 5_34 The fish were kept in ponds in the proximity of the temples.

5_35 A superstitious fear prevented people from touching them, because the goddess punished the sacrilegious by covering their bodies with ulcers and tumors. 5_36 At certain mystic repasts, however, the priests and initiates consumed the forbidden food in the belief that they were absorbing the flesh of the divinity herself. That worship and its practices, which were spread over Syria, probably suggested the ichthus symbolism in the Christian period. 5_37

However, over this lower and primordial stratum that still cropped out here and there, other less rudimentary beliefs had formed. Besides inanimate objects and animals, the Syrian paganism worshiped personal divinities especially. The character of the gods that were originally adored by the Semitic tribes has been

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ingeniously reconstructed. 5_38 each tribe had its Baal and Baalat who protected it and whom only its members were permitted to worship. The name of Ba'al, "master," summarizes the conception people had of him. In the first place he was regarded as the sovereign of his votaries, and his position in regard to them was that of an Oriental potentate towards his subjects; they were his servants, or rather his slaves. 5_39 The Baal was at the same time the "master" or proprietor of the country in which he resided and which he made fertile by causing springs to gush from its soil. Or his domain was the firmament and he was the dominus caeli, whence he made the waters fall to the roar of tempests. He was always united with a celestial or earthly "queen" and, in the third place, he was the "lord" or husband of the "lady" associated with him. The one represented the male, the other

the female principle; they were the authors of all fecundity, and as a consequence the worship of the divine couple often assumed a sensual and voluptuous character.

As a matter of fact, immorality was nowhere so flagrant as in the temples of Astarte, whose female servants honored the goddess with untiring ardor. In no country was sacred prostitution so developed as in Syria, and in the Occident it was to be found practically only where the Phœnicians had imported it, as on mount Eryx. Those aberrations that were kept up until the end of paganism, 5_40 probably have their explanation in the primitive constitution of the Semitic tribe, and the religious custom must have been originally one of the forms of exogamy, which compelled the woman to unite herself first with a stranger. 5_41

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As a second blemish, the Semitic religions practised human immolations longer than any other religion, sacrificing children and grown men in order to please sanguinary gods. In spite of Hadrian's prohibition of those murderous offerings, 5_42 they were maintained in certain clandestine rites and in the lowest practices of magic, up to the fall of the idols, and even later. They corresponded to the ideas of a period during which the life of a captive or slave had no greater value than that of an animal.

These sacred practices and many others, on which Lucian complacently enlarges in his opusculum on the goddess of Hierapolis, daily revived the habits of a barbarous past in the temples of Syria. Of all the conceptions that had successively dominated the country, none had completely disappeared. As

in Egypt, beliefs of very different date and origin coexisted, without any attempt to make them agree, or without success when the task was undertaken. In these beliefs zoolatry, litholatry and all the other nature worships outlived the savagery that had created them. More than anywhere else the gods had remained the chieftains of clans 5_43 because the tribal organizations of Syria were longer lived and more developed than those of any other region. Under the empire many districts were still subjected to the tribal régime and commanded by "ethnarchs" or "phylarchs." 5_44 Religion, which sacrificed the lives of the men and the honor of the women to the divinity, had in many regards remained on the moral level of unsocial and sanguinary tribes. Its obscene and atrocious rites called forth exasperated indignation on the part of

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the Roman conscience when Heliogabalus attempted to introduce them into Italy with his Baal of Emesa.

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How, then, can one explain the fact that in spite of all, the Syrian gods imposed themselves upon the Occident and made even the Cæsars accept them? The reason is that the Semitic paganism can no more be judged by certain revolting practices, that perpetuated in the heart of civilization the barbarity and puerilities of an uncultivated society, than the religion of the Nile can be so judged. As in the case of Egypt we must distinguish between the sacerdotal religion and the infinitely varied popular religion that was embodied in local customs. Syria possessed a number of great sanctuaries in which an

educated clergy meditated and expatiated upon the nature of the divine beings and on the meaning of traditions inherited from remote ancestors. As their own interests demanded, that clergy constantly amended the sacred traditions and modified their spirit when the letter was immutable, in order to make them agree with the new aspirations of a more advanced period. They had their mysteries and their initiates to whom they revealed a wisdom that was above the vulgar beliefs of the masses. 5_45

Frequently we can draw diametrically opposite conclusions from the same principle. In that manner the old idea of tabu, that seems to have transformed the temples of Astarte into houses of debauchery, also became the source of a severe code of morals. The Semitic tribes were haunted with the fear of the tabu. A multitude of things were either impure or sacred because, in the original confusion, those two notions

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had not been clearly differentiated. Man's ability to use the products of nature to satisfy his needs, was thus limited by a number of prohibitions, restrictions and conditions. He who touched a forbidden object was soiled and corrupted, his fellows did not associate with him and he could no longer participate in the sacrifices. In order to wipe out the blemish, he had recourse to ablutions and other ceremonies known to the priests. Purity, that had originally been considered simply physical, soon became ritualistic and finally spiritual. Life was surrounded by a network of circumstances subject to certain conditions, every violation of which meant a fall and demanded penance. The anxiety to remain constantly in a state of holiness or regain that state when it had been lost, filled

one's entire existence. It was not peculiar to the Semitic tribes, but they ascribed a prime importance to it. 5_46 And the gods, who necessarily possessed this quality in an eminent degree, were holy beings (ἅγιοι) 5_47 par excellence.

In this way principles of conduct and dogmas of faith have frequently been derived from instinctive and absurd old beliefs. All theological doctrines that were accepted in Syria modified the prevailing ancient conception of the Baals. But in our present state of knowledge it is very difficult indeed to determine the shares that the various influences contributed, from the conquests of Alexander to the Roman domination, to make the Syrian paganism what it became under the Cæsars. The civilization of the Seleucid empire is little known, and we cannot determine what caused the alliance of Greek thought with the Semitic traditions. 5_48 The religions of the neighboring nations

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also had an undeniable influence. Phœnicia and Lebanon remained moral tributaries of Egypt long after they had liberated themselves from the suzerainty of the Pharaohs. The theogony of Philo of Byblos took gods and myths from that country, and at Heliopolis Hadad was honored "according to Egyptian rather than Syrian rite." 5_49 The rigorous monotheism of the Jews, who were dispersed over the entire country, must also have acted as an active ferment of transformation. 5_50 But it was Babylon that retained the intellectual supremacy, even after its political ruin. The powerful sacerdotal caste ruling it did not fall with the independence of the country, and it survived the conquests of Alexander as it had previously lived through the Persian

domination. The researches of Assyriologists have shown that its ancient worship persisted under the Seleucides, and at the time of Strabo the "Chaldeans" still discussed cosmology and first principles in the rival schools of Borsippa and Orchoë. 5_51 The ascendancy of that erudite clergy affected all surrounding regions; it was felt by Persia in the east, Cappadocia in the north, but more than anywhere else by the Syrians, who were connected with the Oriental Semites by bonds of language and 'blood. Even after the Parthians had wrested the valley of the Euphrates from the Seleucides, relations with the great temples of that region remained uninterrupted. The plains of Mesopotamia, inhabited by races of like origin, extended on both sides of an artificial border line; great commercial roads followed the course of the two rivers flowing into the Persian Gulf or cut across the desert, and the pilgrims came to Babylon, as Lucian tells us, to perform their devotions to the Lady of Bambyce. 5_52

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Ever since the Captivity, constant spiritual relations had existed between Judaism and the great religious metropolis. At the birth of Christianity they manifested themselves in the rise of gnostic sects in which the Semitic mythology formed strange combinations with Jewish and Greek ideas and furnished the foundation for extravagant superstructures. 5_53 Finally, during the decline of the empire, it was Babylon again from which emanated Manicheism, the last form of idolatry received in the Latin world. We can imagine how powerful the religious influence of that country on the Syrian paganism must have been.

That influence manifested itself in various ways. First, it introduced new gods. In this way Bel passed from the Babylonian pantheon into that of Palmyra and was honored throughout northern Syria. 5_54 It also caused ancient divinities to be arranged in new groups. To the primitive couple of the Baal and the Baalat a third member was added in order to form one of those triads dears to Chaldean theology. This took place at Hierapolis as well as at Heliopolis, and the three gods of the latter city, Hadad, Atargatis and Simios, became Jupiter, Venus and Mercury in Latin inscriptions. 5_55 Finally, and most important, astrolatry wrought radical changes in the characters of the celestial powers, and, as a further consequence, in the entire Roman paganism. In the first place it gave them a second personality in addition to their own nature. The sidereal myths superimposed themselves upon the agrarian myths, and gradually obliterated them. Astrology, born on the banks of the Euphrates, imposed itself in Egypt upon the haughty and unapproachable clergy of the most conservative of all nations. 5_56 Syria received

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it without reserve and surrendered unconditionally; 5_57 numismatics and archeology as well as literature prove this. King Antiochus of Commagene, for instance, who died 34 B. C., built himself a monumental tomb on a spur of the Taurus, in which he placed his horoscope, designed on a large bas-relief, beside the images of his ancestral divinities. 5_58

The importance which the introduction of the Syrian religions into the Occident has for us consists therefore in the fact that indirectly they brought certain theological doctrines of the Chaldeans with them, just as Isis and Serapis carried beliefs of

old Egypt from Alexandria to the Occident. The Roman empire received successively the religious tribute of the two great nations that had formerly ruled the Oriental world. It is characteristic that the god Bel whom Aurelian brought from Asia to set up as the protector of his states, was in reality a Babylonian who had emigrated to Palmyra, 5_59 a cosmopolitan center apparently predestined by virtue of its location to become the intermediary between the civilizations of the Euphrates and the Mediterranean.

The influence exercised by the speculations of the Chaldeans upon Greco-Roman thought can be asserted positively, but cannot as yet be strictly defined. It was at once philosophic and religious, literary and popular. The entire neo-Platonist school used the names of those venerable masters, but it cannot be determined how much it really owes to them. A selection of poems that has often been quoted since the third century, under the title of "Chaldaic Oracles" 1 combines the ancient Hellenic theories with a fantastic

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mysticism that was certainly imported from the Orient. It is to Babylonia what the literature of Hermes Trismegistus is to Egypt, and it is equally difficult to determine the nature of the ingredients that the author put into his sacred compositions. But at an earlier date the Syrian religions had spread far and wide in the Occident ideas conceived on the distant banks of the Euphrates. I shall try to indicate briefly what their share in the pagan syncretism was.

We have seen that the gods from Alexandria gained souls especially by the promise of blessed immortality. Those from Syria must also have satisfied doubts tormenting all the minds of that time. As a matter of fact the old Semitic ideas on man's fate in after-life were little comforting. We know how sad, dull and hopeless their conception of life after death was. The dead descended into a subterranean realm where they led a miserable existence, a weak reflection of the one they had lost; since they were subject to wants and suffering, they had to be supported by funeral offerings placed on their sepulchers by their descendants. Those ancient beliefs and customs were found also in primitive Greece and Italy.

This rudimentary eschatology, however, gave way to quite a different conception, one that was closely related to the Chaldean astrology, and which spread over the Occident towards the end of the republic. According to this doctrine the soul returned to heaven after death, to live there among the divine stars. While it remained on earth it was subject to all the bitter necessities of a destiny determined by the revolutions of the stars; but when it ascended into the upper regions, it escaped that fate and even the limits of time;

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it shared equally in the immortality of the sidereal gods that surrounded it. 5_60 In the opinion of some, the soul was attracted by the rays of the sun, and after passing through the moon, where it was purified, it lost itself in the shining star of day. 5_61 Another more purely astrological theory, that was undoubtedly a development of the former, taught that the soul descended to earth from the heights of heaven by passing through the spheres of the seven planets. During its passage it

acquired the dispositions and qualities proper to each planet. After death it returned to its original abode by the same route. To get from one sphere to another, it had to pass a door guarded by a commandant 1 5_62 Only the souls of initiates knew the password that made those incorruptible guardians yield, and under the conduct of a psychopompus 5_63 they ascended safely from zone to zone. As the soul rose it divested itself of the passions and qualities it had acquired on its descent to the earth as though they were garments, and, free from sensuality, it penetrated into the eighth heaven to enjoy everlasting happiness as a subtle essence.

Perhaps this doctrine, undoubtedly of Babylonian origin, was not generally accepted by the Syrian religions, as it was by the mysteries of Mithra, but these religions, impregnated with astrology, certainly propagated the belief that the souls of those worshipers that had led pious lives were elevated to the heights of heaven, where an apotheosis made them the equals of the luminous gods. 5_64 Under the empire this doctrine slowly supplanted all others; the Elysian fields, which the votaries of Isis and Serapis still located in

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the depths of the earth, were transferred into the ether bathing the fixed stars, 5_65 and the underworld was thereafter reserved for the wicked who had not been allowed to pass through the celestial gates.

The sublime regions occupied by the purified souls were also the abode of the supreme god. 5_66 When it transformed the ideas on the destiny of man, astrology also modified those

relating to the nature of the divinity. In this matter the Syrian religions were especially original; for even if the Alexandrian mysteries offered man just as comforting prospects of immortality as the eschatology of their rivals, they were backward in building up a commensurate theology. To the Semitic races belongs the honor of having reformed the ancient fetichism most thoroughly. Their base and narrow conceptions of early times to which we can trace their existence, broaden and rise until they form a kind of monotheism.

As we have seen, the Syrian tribes worshiped a god of lightning, 5_67 like all primitive races. That god opened the reservoirs of the firmament to let the rain fall and split the giant trees of the woods with the double ax that always remained his emblem. 5_68 When the progress of astronomy removed the constellations to incommensurable distances, the "Baal of the Heavens" (Ba'al šamîn) had to grow in majesty. Undoubtedly at the time of the Achemenides, he was connected with the Ahura-Mazda of the Persians, the ancient god of the vault of heaven, who had become the highest physical and moral power, and this connection helped to transform the old genius of thunder. 5_69 People continued to worship the material heaven in him; under the Romans he was still simply called

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[paragraph continues] Caelus, as well as "Celestial Jupiter" (Jupiter Caelestis, Ζεὺς Οὐράνιος), 5_70 but it was a heaven studied by a sacred science that venerated its harmonious mechanism. The Seleucides represented him on their coins with a crescent over his forehead and carrying a sun with seven rays, to symbolize the fact that he presided over the course of

the stars; 5_71 or else he was shown with the two Dioscuri at his side, heroes who enjoyed life and suffered death in turn, according to the Greek myth, and who had become the symbols of the two celestial hemispheres. Religious uranography placed the residence of the supreme divinity in the most elevated region of the world, fixing its abode in the zone most distant from the earth, above the planets and the fixed stars. This fact was intended to be expressed by the term Most-High 1 applied to the Syrian Baals as well as to Jehovah. 5_72 According to this cosmic religion, the Most High resided in the immense orb that contained the spheres of all the stars and embraced the entire universe which was subject to his domination. The Latins translated the name of this "Hypsistos" by Jupiter summus exsuperantissimus 5_73 to indicate his preeminence overall divine beings.

As a matter of fact, his power was infinite. The primary postulate of the Chaldean astrology was that all phenomena and events of this world were necessarily determined by sidereal influence. The changes of nature, as well as the dispositions of men, were controlled according to fate, by the divine energies that resided in the heavens. In other words, the gods were almighty; they were the masters of destiny that governed the universe absolutely. The notion of their

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omnipotence resulted from the development of the ancient autocracy with which the Baals were credited. As we have stated, they were conceived after the image of an Asiatic monarch, and the religious terminology was evidently intended to display the humility of their priests toward them. In Syria

we find nothing analogous to what existed in Egypt, where the priest thought he could compel the gods to act, and even dared to threaten them. 5_74 The distance separating the human and the divine always was much greater with the Semitic tribes, and all that astrology did was to emphasize the distance more strongly by giving it a doctrinal foundation and a scientific appearance. In the Latin world the Asiatic religions propagated the conception of the absolute and illimitable sovereignty of God over the earth. Apuleius calls the Syrian goddess *omnipotens et omniparens*, "mistress and mother of all things." 5_75

The observation of the starry skies, moreover, had led the Chaldeans to the notion of a divine eternity. The constancy of the sidereal revolutions inspired the conclusion as to their perpetuity. The stars follow their ever uncompleted courses unceasingly; as soon as the end of their journey is reached, they resume without stopping the road already covered, and the cycles of years in which their movements take place extend from the indefinite past into the indefinite future. 5_76 Thus a clergy of astronomers necessarily conceived Baal, "Lord of the heavens," as the "Master of eternity" or "He whose name is praised through all eternity" 5_77--titles which constantly recur in Semitic inscriptions. The divine stars did not die, like Osiris or Attis; whenever they seemed to weaken, they were

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born to a new life and always remained invincible (*invicti*.)

Together with the mysteries of the Syrian Baals, this theological notion penetrated into Occidental paganism. 5_78 Whenever an inscription to a *deus aeternus* is found in the

Latin provinces it refers to a Syrian sidereal god, and it is a remarkable fact that this epithet did not enter the ritual before the second century, at the time the worship of the god Heaven (Caelus) 5_79 was propagated. That the philosophers had long before placed the first cause beyond the limits of time was of no consequence, for their theories had not penetrated into the popular consciousness nor modified the traditional formulary of the liturgies. To the people the divinities were beings more beautiful, more vigorous, and more powerful than man, but born like him, and exempt only from old age and death, the immortals of old Homer. The Syrian priests diffused the idea of a god without beginning and without end through the Roman world, and thus contributed, along lines parallel with the Jewish proselytism, to lend the authority of dogma to what had previously been only a metaphysical theory.

The Baals were universal as well as eternal, and their power became limitless in regard to space as it had been in regard to time. These two principles were correlative. The title of "mar'olam" which the Baals bore occasionally may be translated by "Lord of the universe," or by "Lord of eternity," and efforts certainly have been made to claim the twofold quality for them. 5_80 Peopled with divine constellations and traversed by planets assimilated to the inhabitants of Olympus, the heavens determined the destinies of the

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entire human race by their movements, and the whole earth was subject to the changes produced by their revolutions. 5_81 Consequently the old Ba'al šamîn was necessarily transformed into a universal power. Of course, even under the Cæsars there existed in Syria traces of a period when the local god was the

fetich of a clan and could be worshiped by the members of that clan only, a period when strangers were admitted to his altars only after a ceremony of initiation, as brothers, or at least as guests and clients. 5_82 But from the period when our knowledge of the history of the great divinities of Heliopolis or Hierapolis begins, these divinities were regarded as common to all Syrians, and crowds of pilgrims came from distant countries to obtain grace in the holy cities. As protectors of the entire human race the Baals gained proselytes in the Occident, and their temples witnessed gatherings of devotees of every race and nationality. In this respect the Baals were distinctly different from Jehovah.

The essence of paganism implies that the nature of a divinity broadens as the number of its votaries increases. Everybody credits it with some new quality, and its character becomes more complex. As it gains in power it also has a tendency to dominate its companion gods and to concentrate their functions in itself. To escape this threatening absorption, these gods must be of a very sharply defined personality and of a very original character. The vague Semitic deities, however, were devoid of a well-defined individuality. We fail to find among them a well organized society of immortals, like that of the Greek Olympus where each divinity had its own features and its own particular

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life full of adventures and experiences, and each followed its special calling to the exclusion of all the others. One was a physician, another a poet, a third a shepherd, hunter or blacksmith. The Greek inscriptions found in Syria are, in this regard, eloquently concise. 5_83 Usually they have the name of Zeus accompanied by some simple epithet: kurios 1 (Lord),

aniketos 2 (invincible), megistos 3 (greatest). All these Baals seem to have been brothers. They were personalities of indeterminate outline and interchangeable powers and were readily confused.

At the time the Romans came into contact with Syria, it had already passed through a period of syncretism similar to the one we can study with greater precision in the Latin world. The ancient exclusiveness and the national particularism had been overcome. The Baals of the great sanctuaries had enriched themselves with the virtues ^{5_84} of their neighbors; then, always following the same process, they had taken certain features from foreign divinities brought over by the Greek conquerors. In that manner their characters had become indefinable, they performed incompatible functions and possessed irreconcilable attributes. An inscription found in Britain ^{5_85} assimilates the Syrian goddess to Peace, Virtue, Ceres, Cybele, and even to the sign of the Virgin.

In conformity with the law governing the development of paganism, the Semitic gods tended to become pantheistic because they comprehended all nature and were identified with it. The various deities were nothing but different aspects under which the supreme and infinite being manifested itself. Although Syria remained

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deeply and even coarsely idolatrous in practice, in theory it approached monotheism or, better perhaps, henotheism. By an

absurd but curious etymology the name Hadad has been explained as "one, one" ('ad 'ad). 5_86

Everywhere the narrow and divided polytheism showed a confused tendency to elevate itself into a superior synthesis, but in Syria astrology lent the firmness of intelligent conviction to notions that were vague elsewhere. The Chaldean cosmology, which deified all elements but ascribed a predominant influence to the stars, ruled the entire Syrian syncretism. It considered the world as a great organism which was kept intact by an intimate solidarity, and whose parts continually influenced each other.

The ancient Semites believed therefore that the divinity could be regarded as embodied in the waters, in the fire of the lightning, in stones or plants. But the most powerful gods were the constellations and the planets that governed the course of time and of all things.

The sun was supreme because it led the starry choir, because it was the king and guide of all the other luminaries and therefore the master of the whole world. 5_87 The astronomical doctrines of the "Chaldeans" taught that this incandescent globe alternately attracted and repelled the other sidereal bodies, and from this principle the Oriental theologians had concluded that it must determine the entire life of the universe, inasmuch as it regulated the movements of the heavens. As the "intelligent light" it was especially the creator of human reason, and just as it repelled and attracted the planets in turn, it was believed

to send out souls, at the time of birth, into the bodies they animated, and to cause them to return to its bosom after death by means of a series of emissions and absorptions.

Later on, when the seat of the Most-High was placed beyond the limits of the universe, the radiant star that gives us light became the visible image of the supreme power, the source of all life and all intelligence, the intermediary between an inaccessible god and mankind, and the one object of special homage from the multitude. 5_88

Solar pantheism, which grew up among the Syrians of the Hellenistic period as a result of the influence of Chaldean astrolatry, imposed itself upon the whole Roman world under the empire. Our very rapid sketch of the constitution of that theological system shows incidentally the last form assumed by the pagan idea of God. In this matter Syria was Rome's teacher and predecessor. The last formula reached by the religion of the pagan Semites and in consequence by that of the Romans, was a divinity unique, almighty, eternal, universal and ineffable that revealed itself throughout nature, but who's most splendid and most energetic manifestation was the sun. To arrive at the Christian monotheism 5_89 only one final tie had to be broken, that is to say, this Supreme Being residing in a distant heaven had to be removed beyond the world. So we see once more in this instance, how the propagation of the Oriental cults leveled the roads for Christianity and heralded its triumph. Although astrology was always fought by the church, it had nevertheless prepared the minds for the dogmas the church was to proclaim.

V. SYRIA.

BIBLIOGRAPHY: The Syrian religions have been studied with especial attention to their relation with Judaism: Baudissin, *Studien zur semitischen Religionsgeschichte*, 2 vols., Leipzig, 1876. The same author has published veritable monographs on certain divinities (Astarte, Baal, Sonne, etc.) in the *Realencyclopädie für Prot. Theol.*, of Herzog-Hauck, 3d ed.--Bäthgen, *Beiträge sur semitischen Religionsgeschichte*, Berlin, 1888.--W. Robertson Smith, *The Religion of the Semites*, 2d ed., London, 1894.--Lagrange, *Etudes sur les religions sémitiques*, 2d ed., Paris, 1905. The results of the excavations in Palestine, which are important in regard to the funeral customs and the oldest idolatry, have been summarized by Father Hugues Vincent, *Canaan d'après l'exploration récente*, 1907.--On the propagation of the Syrian religions in the Occident, see Réville, *op. cit.*, pp. 70 et Passim; Wissowa, *Religion der Römer*, pp. 299 ff.; Gruppe, *Griech. Mythol.*, pp. 582 f.--Important observations will be found in Clermont-Ganneau, *Recueil d'archéologie orientale*, 8 vols., 1888, and in Dussaud, *Notes de mythologie syrienne*, Paris, 1903. We have published a series of articles on particular divinities in the *Realencyclopädie* of Pauly-Wissowa (Baal, Balsamem, Dea Syria, Dolichenus, Gad, etc.). Other monographs are cited below.

5_1. Lucian, *Lucius*, 53 ff.; *Apul., Metam.*, VIII, 24 ff. The description by these authors has recently been confirmed by the discovery of an inscription at Keft-Hauar in Syria: a slave of the Syrian goddess "sent by her mistress (κυρία)," boasts of having brought back "seventy sacks" from each of her trips (Fossey, *Bull. corr. hell.*, XXI, 1897, p. 60; on the

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meaning of πήρα, "sack," see Deissmann, *Licht von Osten*, 1908, p. 73).

5_2. Cf. Riess in Pauly-Wissowa, s. v. *Astrologie*, col. 1816.

5_3. Cato, *De agric.*, V, 4.

5_4. On dedication of Romans to Atargatis, see *Bull. corr. hell.*, VI, 1882, p. 497, No. 15; p. 498, No. 17.

5_5. Since the year 187 we find the Syrian musicians (*sambucistriae*) mentioned also at Rome. Their number grew steadily (Livy, XXXIX, 6; see Friedländer, *Sittengesch.*, III6, p. 346.

5_6. Florus, II, 7 (III, 9); cf. Diodorus Sic., fr. 34, 2, 5.

5_7. Plut., *Vit. Marii*, 17.

5_8. Juvenal, VI, 351; Martial, IV, 53, 10; IX, 2, 11, IX, 22, 9.

5_9. CIL, VI, 399; cf. Wissowa, *op. cit.*, p. 201.--Suetonius, *Nero*, 56.

5_10. A temple of the Syrian gods at Rome, located at the foot of the Janiculum, has been excavated very recently. Cf. Gauckler, *Bolletino comunale di Roma*, 1907, pp. 5 ff. (Cf. Hülsen, *Mitt. Inst. Rom.*, XXII, 1907, pp. 225 ff.); *Comptes Rendus Acad. Inscr.*, 1907, pp. 135 ff.; 1908, pp. 510 ff.; 1909, pp. 424 ff., pp. 617 ff.; Nicole and Darier, *Le sanctuaire des dieux orientaux au Janicule*, Rome, 1909 (Extr. des "Mél. Ecole franç. de Rome," XXIX). In it have been found dedications to Hadad of the Lebanon, to the Hadad Ἰκροπεΐτης, and to Maleciabrudus (in regard to the latter see Clermont-Ganneau, *Rec. d'archéol. or.*, VIII, 1907, p. 52). Cf. my article "Syria Dea" in *Daremberg-Saglio-Pottier*, *Diction. des antiquités gr. et rom.*, 1911.

5_11. I have said a few words on this colonization in my *Mon. rel. aux myst. de Mithra*, I, p. 262. Courajod has considered it in regard to artistic influences, *Leçons du Louvre*, I, 1899, pp. 115, 327 ff. For the Merovingian period see Bréhier, "Les colonies d'orientaux en Occident au commencement du moyen âge" (*Byzant. Zeitschr.*, XII), 1903, pp. 1 ff.

5_12. *Kaibel Inscr. gr.*, XIV, 2540.

5_13. *Comptes Rendus Acad. Inscr.*, 1899, p. 353 = *Waltzing*, *Corporations professionnelles*, II, No. 1961 = *CIL*, III S.,

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[paragraph continues] 141658.--Inscription of Thaïm of Canatha: *Kaibel*, *Inscr. gr.*, XIV, 2532.

5_14. *Gregory of Tours*, *Hist. Fr.*, VIII, 1.--On the diffusion of the Syrians in Gaul, see Bréhier, *loc. cit.*, p. 16 ff

5_15. Cf. Bréhier, *Les origines du crucifix dans l'art religieux*, Paris, 1904.

5_16. *Adonis*: *Wissowa*, p. 300, n. 1.--*Balmarcodès*: *Pauly-Wissowa*, *Realenc.*, s. v.; *Jalabert*, *Mél. fac. orient. Beyrouth*, I, p. 182.--*Marnas*: The existence at Ostia of a "Marneum" can be deduced from the dedication *CIG*, 5892 (cf. *Drexler* in *Roscher*, *Lexikon*, s. v., Col. 2382).--On *Maleciabrudus*, cf. *supra*, n. 10.--The *Maiuma* festival was probably introduced with the cult of the god of Gaza, *Lydus*, *De Mensib.*, IV, 80 (p. 133, *Wünsch* ed.) = *Suidas* s. v. Ματουμῆσ and *Drexler*, *loc. cit.*, col. 2287. Cf. *Clermont-Ganneau*, *Rec. d'archéol. orient.*, IV, p. 339.

5_17. Cf. *Pauly-Wissowa*, s. v. "Damascenus, Dusares."

5_18. *Malalas*, XI, p. 280, 12 (Bonn).--The temple has recently been excavated by a German mission; cf. *Puchstein*. *Führer in Baalbek*, Berlin, 1905.--On the Hadad at Rome, cf. *supra*, n. 10.

5_19. *CIL*, X, 1634: "Cultores Iovis Heliopolitani Berytenses qui Puteolis consistunt"; cf. *Wissowa*, *loc. cit.*, p. 504, n. 3; *Ch. Dubois*, *Pouzzoles antique*, Paris, 1906, p. 156.

5_20. A list of the known military societies has been made by Cichorius in Pauly-Wissowa, Realencycl., s. v. "Ala" and "Cohors."

5_21. CIL, VII, 759 = Buecheler, Carmina epigr., 24. Two inscriptions dedicated to the Syrian Hercules (Melkarth) and to Astarte have been discovered at Corbridge, near Newcastle (Inscr. gr., XIV, 2553). It is possible that Tyrian archers were cantoned there.

5_22. Baltis: Pauly-Wissowa, Realencycl., s. v.

5_23. Pauly-Wissowa, Realenc., s. v. "Aziz"; cf. Wissowa, op. cit., p. 303, n. 7.

5_24. On the etymology of Malakbel, see Dussaud, Notes, 24 ff. On the religion in the Occident see Edu. Meyer in Roscher, Lexikon, s. v.

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5_25. Kan, De Iovis Dolicheni cultu, Groningen, 1901; cf. Pauly-Wissowa, Realencycl., s. v. "Dolichenus."

5_26. Réville, Relig. sous les Sévères, pp. 237 ff.; Wissowa, op. cit., p. 305; cf. Pauly-Wissowa, s. v. "Elagabal."--In a recent article (Die politische Bedeutung der Religion von Emesa [Archiv für Religionsw., XI], 1908, pp. 223 ff.) M. von Domaszewski justly lays stress on the religious value of the solar monotheism that arose in the temples of Syria, but he attributes too important a part in its formation to the clergy of Emesa (see infra, n. 88). The preponderant influence seems to have been exercised by Palmyra (see infra, n. 59).

5_27. Cf. infra, n. 59.

5_28. Cf. Curtiss, Primitive Semitic Religion To-day, Chicago, 1902; Janssen, Coutumes des Arabes du pays de Moab, Paris, 1908, pp. 297 ff.

5_29. Cf. Robertson Smith, passim; Lagrange, pp. 158-216; Vincent, op. cit., pp. 102-123; 144 f.--The power of this Semitic litholatry equaled its persistence. Philo of Byblus defined the bethels as Λιθοὶ ἔμψυχοι (2, §20, FHG, III, p. 563): Hippolytus also tells us (V, I, P. 145, Cruice), that in the Syrian mysteries (Ἀσσυρίων τελεταί) it was taught that the stones were animated (οἱ λίθοι εἰσὶν ἔμψυχοι· ἔχουσι γὰρ τὸ αὐξητικόν), and the same doctrine perpetuated itself in Manicheism. (Titus of Bostra, II, 60, p. 60, 25, de Lagarde ed.:

Οὐκ αἰσχύνεται δὲ καὶ τοὺς λιθοὺς ἔμψυχῶσαι λέγων καὶ πάντα ἔμψυχα εἰσηγούμενος).

During the last years of paganism the neo-Platonists developed a superstitious worship of the bethels; see Conybeare, Transactions of the Congress of Hist. of Rel., Oxford, 1908, p. 177.

5_30. Luc., *De dea Syria*, c. 41. Cf. the inscription of Narnaka with the note of Clermont-Ganneau, *Etudes d'arch. orient.*, II, p. 163.--For bull worship in Syria cf. Ronzevalle, *Mélanges fac. orient. Beyrouth*, I, 1906, pp. 225, 238; Vincent, *op. cit.*, p. 169.

5_31. Philo Alex., *De provid.*, II, c. 107 (11, 646 M.); cf. Lucian, *De dea Syria*, 54.

5_32. For instance on Mount Eryx in Sicily (Ael., *Nat. Anim.*,

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[paragraph continues] IV, 2).--Cf. Pauly-Wissowa, *Realenc.*, s. v. "Dea Syria," col. 2242.

5_33. Tibullus, I, 7, 17.

5_34. Lucian, *De dea Syria*, 14; 54. Cf. Diodorus, II, 4, 2; Ovid, *Met.*, IV, 46; V, 331.

5_35. Pauly-Wissowa, *loc. cit.*, col. 2241; W. Robertson Smith, p. 175.

5_36. The ancient authors frequently alluded to this superstition of the Syrians (the texts have been collected by Selden, *De dis Syris*, II, C. 3, pp. 268 ff., ed. of 1672). W. Robertson Smith (*loc. cit.*, p. 449), is right in connecting it with certain ideas of savages. Like many primitive beliefs, this one has continued to the present day. It has been pointed out to me that at Sam-Keui, a little west of Doliché, there is a pond fed by a spring and well stocked with fish, which one is forbidden to take. Near the mosque of Edessa is a large pond where catching fish is prohibited. They are considered sacred, and the people believe that any one who would eat them would die instantly. (Sachau, *Reise in Syrien*, 1883, pp. 196 ff. Cf. Lord Warkworth, *Diary in Asiatic Turkey*, London, 1898, p. 242). The same is the case at the mosque of Tripoli and elsewhere (Lammens, *Au pays des Nosaïris* [*Revue de l'Orient chrétien*], 1908, p. 2). Even in Asia Minor this superstition is found. At Tavshanli, north of Aezani on the upper Rhyndacus, there is to-day a square cistern filled with sacred fish which no one is allowed to take (on the authority of Munro). Travelers in Turkey have frequently observed that the people do not eat fish, even when there is a scarcity of food (Sachau, *loc. cit.*, p. 196) and the general belief that their flesh is unhealthful and can cause sickness is not entirely unfounded. Here is what Ramsay has to say on the subject (*Impressions of Turkey*, London, 1897, p. 288): "Fish are rarely found and when found are usually bad: the natives have a prejudice against fish, and my own experience has been unfavorable. . . . In the clear sparkling mountain stream that flows through the Taurus by Bozanti-Khan, a small kind of fish is caught; I had a most violent attack of sickness in 1891 after eating some of them, and so had all who partook." Captain Wilson, who spent a number of years in

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[paragraph continues] Asia Minor, asserts (*Handbook of Asia-Minor*, p. 19), that "the natives do not eat fish to any extent." The "totemic" prohibition in this instance really

seems to have a hygienic origin. People abstained from all kinds of fish because some species were dangerous, that is to say, inhabited by evil spirits, and the tumors sent by the Syrian goddess were merely the edemas caused by the poisoning.

5_37. On the Ἰχθύς symbolism I will merely refer to Usener, *Sintflutsagen*, 1899, pp. 223 ff. Cf. S. Reinach, *Cultes, mythes*, III, 1908, pp. 43 ff. An exhaustive book on this subject has recently appeared: Dölger, *IXΘΥΖ, das Fischesymbol in frühchristlicher Zeit*, I, Rome, 1910.

On sacred repasts where fish was eaten see Mnaseas, fragment 32 (*Fragm. histor. graec.*, III, 115); cf. Dittenberger, *Sylloge*, 584: Ἐὶν δέ τις τῶν ἰχθύων ἀποθάνη, καρπούσθω, and *Diog. Laert.*, VIII, 34. There were also sacred repasts in the Occident in the various Syrian cults: *Cenatorium et triclinium* in the temples of Jupiter Dolichenus (*CIL*, III, 4789; VI, 30931; XI, 696, cf. *Mon. myst. Mithra*, II, p. 501); *promulsidaria et mantelium* offered to the Venus Caelestis (*CIL*, X, 1590); construction of a temple to Malachbel with a *culina* (*CIL*, III, 7954). Mention is made of a *δειπνοκρίτης, δείπνοις κρείνας πολλὰ μετ' εὐφροσύνης*, in the temple of the Janiculum (*Gauckler, C. R. Acad. Inscr.*, 1907, p. 142; *Bolletino comunale*, 1907, pp. 15 ff.). Cf. Lagrange, *Religions sémitiques*, II, p. 609, and Pauly-Wissowa, *Realenc.*, s. v. "Gad."

5_38. W. Robertson Smith, pp. 292 ff.

5_39. An inscription discovered at Kefr-Hauar (Fossey, *Bull. corr., hell.*, 1897, p. 60) is very characteristic in this respect. A "slave" of the Syrian goddess in that inscription offers his homage to his "mistress" (κυρία).

5_40. Notably at Aphaca where they were not suppressed until the time of Constantine (*Eusebius, Vit. Const.*, III, 55; cf. *Sozom.*, II, 5).

5_41. Much has been written about the sacred prostitutions in paganism, and it is well known that Voltaire ridiculed the scholars who were credulous enough to believe in the tales of Herodotus. But this practice has been proven by irrefutable

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testimony. Strabo, for instance, whose great-uncle was arch-priest of Comana, mentions it in connection with that city, (*XII, 3, 36, p. 559 C*), and he manifests no surprise. The history of religion teaches many stranger facts; this one, however, is disconcerting. The attempt has been made to see in it a relic of the primitive promiscuity or polyandry, or a persistence of "sexual hospitality," ("No custom is more widely spread than the providing for a guest a female companion, who is usually a wife or daughter of the host," says Wake, *Serpent Worship*, 1888, p. 158); or the substitution of union with a man for union with the god (*Gruppe, Griech. Mythol.*, p. 915). But these hypotheses do not explain the peculiarities of the religious custom as it is described by more reliable authors. They insist upon the fact that the girls were dedicated to the temple service while virgins, and that after having had strangers for lovers, they married in their own country. Thus Strabo

(XI, 14, § 16, p. 532 C.) narrates in connection with the temple of Anaitis in Acilisena, that θυγαρέρας οἱ ἐπιφανέστατοι τοῦ ἔθνους ἀνιεροῦσι παρθένους, αἷς νόμος ἐστὶ καταπορνευθείσαις πολὺν χρόνον παρὰ τῆς θεῶς μετὰ δίδοσθαι πρὸς γάμον, οὐκ ἀπαξιοῦντος τῆς τοιαύτης συνοικεῖν οὐδενός. Herodotus (I, 93), who relates about the same thing of the Lydian women, adds that they acquired a dowry in that manner; an inscription at Tralles (Bull. corr. hell., VII, 1885, p. 276) actually mentions a descendant of a sacred prostitute (ἐκ προγόνων παλλακίδων) who had temporarily filled the same office (παλλακεύσασα κατὰ χρησμὸν Διὶ). Even at Thebes in Egypt there existed a similar custom with striking local peculiarities in the time of Strabo (XVII, 1, § 46), and traces of it seem to have been found in Greece among the Locrians (Vurtheim, De Aiakis origine, Leyden, 1907). Every Algerian traveler knows how the girls of the Ouled-Nail earn their dowry in the ksours and the cities, before they go back to their tribes to marry, and Doutté (Notes sur l'Islam maghrébien, les Marabouts, Extr. Rev. hist. des relig., XL-XLI, Paris, 1900), has connected these usages with the old Semitic prostitution, but his thesis has been attacked and the historical circumstances of the arrival of the Ouled-Nail in Algeria in the eleventh century render it very doubtful (Note by Basset).--It seems certain (I do not know whether this explanation has ever been offered)

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that this strange practice is a modified utilitarian form of an ancient exogamy. Besides it had certain favorable results, since it protected the girl against the brutality of her kindred until she was of marriageable age, and this fact must have insured its persistence; but the idea that inspired it at first was different. "La première union sexuelle impliquant une effusion de sang, a été interdite, lorsque ce sang était celui d'une fille du clan versé par le fait d'un homme du clan" (Salomon Reinach, Mythes, cultes, I, 1905, p. 79. Cf. Lang, The Secret of the Totem, London, 1905.) Thence rose the obligation on virgins to yield to a stranger first. Only then were they permitted to marry a man of their own race. Furthermore, various means were resorted to in order to save the husband from the defilement which might result from that act (see for inst., Reinach, Mythes, cultes, I, p. 118).--The opinion expressed in this note was attacked, almost immediately after its publication, by Frazer (Adonis, Attis, Osiris, 1907, pp. 50 ff.) who preferred to see in the sacred prostitutions a relic of primitive communism. But at least one of the arguments which he uses against our views is incorrect. Not the women, but the men, received presents in Acilisena. (Strabo, loc. cit.) and the communistic theory does not seem to account for the details of the custom prevailing in the temple of Thebes. There the horror of blood clearly appears. On the discovery of a skull (having served at a rite of consecration) in the temple of the Janiculum, see the article cited above, "Dea Syria," in Dict. des antiquités.

5_42. Porphyry, De Abstin., II, 56; Tertull., Apol., 9. Cf. Lagrange, op. cit., p. 445.

5_43. Even in the regions where the cities developed, the Baal and the Baalat always remained the divinities πολιοῦχοι, the protectors of the city which they were supposed to have founded.

5_44. Le Bas-Waddington, 2196.--Suidas, s. v. Φυλάρχης (II, 2, Col. 1568, Bernhardt). Cf. Marquardt, Staatsverwaltung, I, p. 405, 409.

5_45. Hippolytus, Adv. Haeres., V, II, § 7: Ἀσσυρίων τελεταί; § 18: Ἀσσυρίων μυστήρια (pp. 145,148, ed. by Cruice). Cf. Origen, Contra Celsum, 1, 12. Pognon (Inscrip. sémitiques,

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[paragraph continues] 1907, No. 48) has recently published a Syrian epitaph that is unfortunately mutilated, but which seems to be that of an adept of the pagan mysteries; see Nöldeke, Zeitschrift für Assyri., XXI, 1907, p. 155.

5_46. On the Semitic notion of purity, W. Robertson Smith has written admirably and convincingly (pp. 446 ff. and passim). The question has been taken up from a different point of view by Lagrange, pp. 141 ff.--The development of the notion of purity in the ancient religions has been recently expounded by Farnell, The Evolution of Religion, 1905, pp. 88 ff., especially pp. 124 ff. Cf. also supra, p. 91 f. An example of the prohibitions and purifications is found in the Occident in an inscription, unfortunately mutilated, discovered at Rome and dedicated to Beellefarus (CIL, VI, 30934, 31168; cf. Lafaye, Rev. hist. relig., XVII, 1888, pp. 218 ff.; Dessau, Inscr. sel., 4343). If I have understood the text correctly it commands those who have eaten pork to purify themselves by means of honey.--On penances in the Syrian religions see ch. II, n. 2_31.

5_47. M. Clermont-Ganneau (Etudes d'archéologie orientale, IT, 1896, p. 104) states that the epithet ἅγιος is extremely rare in pagan Hellenism, and almost always betrays a Semitic influence. In such cases it corresponds to שָׂרָק. which to the Semites is the epithet par excellence of the divinity. Thus Eshmon is שָׂרָק; cf. Lidzbarski, Ephemer für semit. Epigraph., II, p. 155; Clermont-Ganneau, Recueil d'archéol. orient., III, p. 330; V, p. 322.--In Greek Le Bas-Waddington, 2720, has: Οἱ Κάτοχοι ἁγίου οὐρανίου Διός. Dittenberger, Orientis inscript., 620, Ζεὺς ἅγιος Βεελ βωσῶρος. Some time ago I copied at a dealer's, a dedication engraved upon a lamp: Θεῶ ἁγίῳ Ἀρελσέλω, in Latin: J. Dolichenus sanctus, CIL, VI, 413, X, 7949.--J. Heliopolitanus sanctissimus, CIL, VIII, 2627.--"Caelestis sancta," VIII, 8433, etc.--The African Saturn (= Baal) is often called sanctus.--Hera sancta beside Jupiter Dolichenus, VI, 413--Malakbel is translated by Sol sanctissimus, in the bilingual inscription of the Capitol, VI, 710 = Dessau, 4337. Cf. deus sanctus aeternus, V, 1058, 3761, and Comptes Rendus Acad. Inscr., 1906, p. 69.--See in general Delehay, Analecta Bollandiana, 1909, pp. 157 ff -

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5_48. As curious examples of Greco-Syrian syncretism we may mention the bas-relief of Ed-Douwaïr in the Louvre, which has been analyzed in detail by Dussaud (Notes, pp. 89 ff.), and especially that of Horns in the Brussels museum (ibid., 104 ff.).

5_49. Macrobius, I, 23, § II: "Ritu Assyrio magis quam Aegyptio colitur"; cf. Lucian, *De dea Syria*, 5.--"Hermetic" theories penetrated even to the Sabians of Osrhoene (Reitzenstein, *Poimandres*, 166 ff.), although their influence seems to have been merely superficial (Bousset, *Göttingische gelehrte Anzeigen*, 1905, 704 ff.--The existence of *κάτοχοι* at Baetocécé and elsewhere appears to be due to Egyptian influence (Jalabert, *Mélanges de la fac. orient. de Beyrouth*, II, 1907, pp. 308 ff.). The meaning of *κάτοχος* which has been interpreted in different ways, is established, I think, by the passages collected by Kroll, *Cat. codd. astrol. graec.*, V, pars 2, p. 146; cf. Otto, *Priester und Tempel*, I, p. 119; Bouché-Leclercq, *Hist. des Lagides*, IV, p. 335. It refers to the poor, the sick and even the "illuminated" living within the temple enclosures and undoubtedly supported by the clergy, as were the refugees of the Christian period who availed themselves of the right of sanctuary in the churches (cf. *Comptes Rendus Acad. Inscr.*, 1907, p. 454).

5_50. Cf. *infra*, n. 5_59.

5_51. Strabo, XVI, I, 6. Cf. Pliny, *H. N.*, VI, 6: "Durat adhuc ibi Iovis Beli templum." . Cf. *my Mon. myst. Mithra*, I, pp. 35 ff.; Chapot, *Mém. soc. antiq. de France*, 1902, pp. 239 ff.; Gruppe, *Griech. Mythol.*, p. 1608, n. 1.

5_52. Lucian, *De dea Syria*, c. 10.

5_53. Harnack, *Dogmengeschichte*, I, pp. 233 ff. and *passim*.

5_54. On the worship of Bel in Syria cf. *Comptes Rendus Acad. Inscr.*, 1907, pp. 447 ff.--Cf. *infra*, n. 5_59.

5_55. On the Heliopolitan triad and the addition of Mercury to the original couple see Perdrizet, *Rev. études anc.*, III, 1901, p. 258; Dussaud, *Notes*, p. 24; Jalabert, *Mélanges fac. orient. de Bayrouth*, I, 1906, pp. 175 ff.--Triad of Hierapolis: Lucian, *De dea Syria*, c. 33. According to Dussaud, the three divinities came from Babylon together, *Notes*, p. 115.--The existence of a Phoenician triad (Baal, Astarte, Eshmoun or Melkarth),

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and of a Palmyrian triad has been conjectured but without sufficient reason (*ibid.*, 170, 172 ff.); the existence of Carthaginian triads is more probable (cf. Polybius, VII, 9, 11, and von Baudissin, *Iolaos [Philotesia für Paul Kleinert]*, 1907, pp. 5 ff.--See in general Usener, *Dreiheit (Extr. Rhein. Museum, LVIII)*, 1903, p. 32. The triads continued in the theology of the "Chaldaic Oracles" (Kroll, *De orac. Chald.*, 13 ff.) and a threefold division of the world and the soul was taught in the "Assyrian mysteries" (*Archiv für Religionswiss.*, IX, 1906, p. 331, n. 1).

5_56. Boll, *Sphaera*, p. 372.--The introduction of astrology into Egypt seems to date back no further than the time of the Ptolemies.

5_57. The Seleucides, like the Roman emperors later, believed in Chaldean astrology (Appian., *Syr.*, 28; Diodorus, II, 31, 2; cf. Riess in Pauly-Wissowa, *Realenc.*, s. v. "Astrologie," col. 1814), and the kings of Commagene, as well as of a great number of Syrian cities, had the signs of the zodiac as emblems on their coins. It is even certain that this pseudoscience penetrated into those regions long before the Hellenistic period. Traces of it are found in the Old Testament (Schiaparelli; translation by Lüdke, *Die Astron. im; Alten Testament*, 1904, p. 46). It modified the entire Semitic paganism. The only cult which we know in any detail, that of the Sabians, assigned the highest importance to it; but in the myths and doctrines of the others its influence is no less apparent (Pauly-Wissowa, *Realencycl.*, s. v. "Dea Syria," IV, col. 2241, and s. v. "Gad"; cf. Baudissin, *Realencycl. für prot. Theol.*, s. v., "Sonne," pp. 510-520). To what extent, for instance, the clergy of Emesa had been subjected to its ascendancy is shown by the novel of Heliodorus, written by a priest of that city (Rohde, *Griech. Roman3*, p. 464 [436]), and by the horoscope that put Julia Domna upon the throne (*Vita Severi*, 3, 8; cf. A. von Domaszewski, *Archiv für Religionsw.*, XI, 1909, p. 223). The irresistible influence extended even to the Arabian paganism (Nöldeke in Hastings, *Encyclop. of Religion*, s. v. "Arabs," I, p. 661; compare, *Orac. Sibyll.*, XIII, 64 ff., on Bostra). The sidereal character which has been attributed to the Syrian gods, was borrowed, but none the less real. From very early times the Semites worshiped the sun,

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the moon, and the stars (see Deut. iv. 19; job xxxi. 25), especially the planet Venus, but this cult was of secondary importance only (see W. Robertson Smith, *op. cit.*, p. 135, n. 1), although it grew in proportion as the Babylonian influence became stronger. The polemics of the Fathers of the Syrian Church show how considerable its prestige was in the Christian era (cf. Ephrem, *Opera Syriaca*, Rome, 1740, II, pp. 447 ff.; the "Assyrian" Tatian, c. 9 ff., etc.).

5_58. Humann and Puchstein, *Reise in Klein-Asien und Nord-Syrien*, 1890, pl. XL; *Mon. myst. Mithra*, I, p. 188, fig. 8; Bouché-Leclercq, *Astrol. gr.*, p. 439-

5_59. Cf. Wissowa, *op. cit.*, p. 306-7.--On the temple of Bel at Palmyra, cf. Sobernheim, *Palmyrenische Inschriften* (*Mitt. der vorderasiat. Gesellsch.*, X), 1905, pp. 319 ff.; Lidzbarski, *Ephemeris*, I, pp. 255 ff., II, p. 280.--Priests of Bel: Clermont-Ganneau, *Recueil d'arch. orient.*, VII, p. 12, 24, 364. Cf. supra, n. 5_54. The power of Palmyra under Zenobia, who ruled from the Tigris to the Nile, must have had as a corollary the establishment of an official worship that was necessarily syncretic. Hence its special importance for the history of paganism. Although the Babylonian astrology was a powerful factor in this worship, Judaism seems to have had just as great an influence in its formation. There was at Palmyra a large Jewish colony, which the writers of the Talmud considered only tolerably orthodox (Chaps, *Gli Ebrei di Palmira* [*Rivista Israelitica*, I], Florence, 1904, pp. 171 ff., 238 f. Cf. "Palmyra" in the *Jewish Encycl.*; *Jewish insc. of Palmyra*; Euting, *Sitzb. Berl. Acad.*, 1885, p. 669; Landauer, *ibid.*, 1884, pp. 933 ff.). This colony seems to have made compromises with the idolaters. On the other hand we see Zenobia herself rebuilding a synagogue in Egypt (*Revue*

archéologique, XXX, 1875, p. iii; Zeitschrift für Numismatik, V, p. 229; Dittenberger, *Orientalis inscript.*, 729). This influence of Judaism seems to explain the development at Palmyra of the cult of Ζεὺς Ὑψιστος καὶ ἐπήκοος, "he whose name is blessed in eternity." The name of Hypsistos has been applied everywhere to Jehovah and to the pagan Zeus (supra, 62, 128) at the same time. The text of Zosimus (I, 61), according to which Aurelian brought from Palmyra to Rome the statues of Ἡλίου τε καὶ Βήλου (this has been wrongly changed to read τοῦ καὶ Βήλου), proves that the

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astrological religion of the great desert city recognized a supreme god residing in the highest heavens, and a solar god, his visible image and agent, according to the Semitic theology of the last period of paganism (supra, p. 134).

5_60. I have spoken of this solar eschatology in the memorial cited infra, n. 5_88.

5_61. This opinion is that of Posidonius (see Wendland, *Philos Schrift über die Vorsehung*, Berlin, 1892, p. 68, n. 1; 70, n. 2). It is shared by the ancient astrologers.

5_62. This old pagan and gnostic idea has continued to the present day in Syria among the Nosaïris; cf. Dussaud, *Histoire et religion des Nosaïris*, 1900, p. 125.

5_63. The belief that pious souls are guided to heaven by a psychopompus, is found not only in the mysteries of Mithra (*Mon. myst. Mithra*, I. p. 310), but also in the Syrian cults where that rôle was often assigned to the solar god, see Isid. Lévy, *Cultes syriens dans le Talmud* (*Revue des études juives*, XLIII), 1901, p. 5, and Dussaud, *Notes*, p. 27; cf. the Le Bas-Waddington inscription, 24,42:

"Βασιλεῦ δέσποτα (= the sun), ἴλαθι καὶ δίδου πᾶσιν ἡμῖν ὑγίην καθαράν, πρήξις ἀγαθὰς καὶ βίου τέλος ἔσθλόν."--

The same idea is found in inscriptions in the Occident; as for instance in the peculiar epitaph of a sailor who died at Marseilles (Kaibel, *Inscr. gr.*, XIV, 2462 = *Epigr.*, 650):

"Ἐν δέ [τε] τεθνηοῖσιν Ὀμηγύρι [ές] γε πέλουσιν
δοιαί · τῶν ἑτέρη μὲν ἐπιχθονίη πεφόρηται,
ἢ δ' ἑτέρη τείρεσσι σὺν αἰθερίοισι χορεύει,
ἣς στρατιῆς εἴς εἰμί, λαχῶν θεὸν ἡγεμονῆα."

It is the same term that Julian used (*Césars*, p. 336 C) in speaking of Mithra, the guide of souls: ἡγεμόνα θεόν. Cf. also infra, n. 5_66 and ch. VIII, n. 8_24.

5_64. The Babylonian origin of the doctrine that the souls returned to heaven by crossing the seven planetary spheres, has been maintained by Anz (*Zur Frage nach dem Ursprung des Gnostizismus*, 1897; cf. *Mon. myst. Mithra*, I. pp. 38 ff., p. 309; Bousset, *Die Himmelsreise der Seele* [*Archiv für Religionsw.*, IV], 1901, pp. 160 ff.) and "Gnosis" in

Pauly-Wissowa, Realencyclopädie, col. 1520. It has since been denied by Reitzenstein (Poimandres, p. 79; cf. Kroll, Berl. philol. Wochensch.,

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[paragraph continues] 1906, p. 486). But although it may have been given its precise shape and been transformed by the Greeks and even by the Egyptians, I persist in believing that it is of Chaldean and religious origin. I heartily agree with the conclusions recently formulated by Bousset, (Göttingische gelehrte Anzeigen, 1905, pp. 707 ff.). We can go farther: Whatever roots it may have had in the speculations of ancient Greece (Aristoph., Pax, 832, Plato, Tim., 42B, cf. Haussoullier, Rev. de philol., 1909, pp. 1 ff.), whatever traces of it may be found in other nations (Dieterich, Mithrasliturgie, pp. 182 ff.; Nekyia, p. 24, note; Rohde, Psyche, II, p. 131, n. 3), the idea itself of the soul rising to the divine stars after death certainly developed under the influence of the sidereal worship of the Semites to a point where it dominated all other eschatological theories. The belief in the eternity of souls is the corollary to the belief in the eternity of the celestial gods (p. 129). We cannot give the history of this conception here, and we shall limit ourselves to brief observations. The first account of this system ever given at Rome is found in "Scipio's Dream" (c. 3); it probably dates back to Posidonius of Apamea (cf. Wendland, Die hellenistisch-römische Kultur, p. 85, 166, n. 3, 168, n. 1), and is completely impregnated with mysticism and astrolatry. The same idea is found a little later in the astrologer Manilius (I, 758; IV, 404, etc.). The shape which it assumed in Josephus (Bell. Judaic., V, 1, 5, §47) is also much more religious than philosophical and is strikingly similar to a dogma of Islam (happiness in store for those dying in battle; a Syrian [ibid., § 54] risks his life that his soul may go to heaven). This recalls the inscription of Antiochus of Commagene (Michel, Recueil, No. 735, l. 40):

Σῶμα πρὸς οὐρανίους Διὸς Ὠρομάσδου θρόνους θεοφιλῆ ψυχὴν προπέμψαν εἰς τὸν ἄπειρον αἰῶνα κοιμήσεται

It must be said that this sidereal immortality was not originally common to all men; it was reserved "omnibus qui patriam conservaverint adiuverint, auxerint" (Somn. Scip. c. 3, c. 8; cf. Manil., I, 758; Lucan, Phars., IX, 1 ff.; Wendland, op. cit., p. 85 n. 2), and this also is in conformity with the oldest Oriental traditions. The rites first used to assure immortality to kings and to make them the equals of the gods were extended little by little as a kind of privilege, to the important

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persons of the state, and only very much later were they applied to all who died.

Regarding the diffusion of this belief from the beginning of the first century of our era, see Diels, Elementum, 1899, p. 73, cf. 78; Badstübner, Beiträge zur Erklärung Senecas, Hamburg, pp. 2 ff.--It is expressed in many inscriptions (Friedlander, Sitteng., III, pp. 749 ff.; Rohde, Psyche, p. 673, cf. 610; epitaph of Vezir-Keupru, Studia Pontica, No. 85; CIL. III (Salone), 6384; supra, n. 5_63, etc.) It gained access into Judaism and paganism

simultaneously (cf. Bousset, *Die Religion des Judentums im, neutest. Zeitalter*, 1903, p. 271, and, for Philo of Alexandria, Zeller, *Philos. der Griechen*, V, p. 397 and p. 297).--During the third century it was expounded by Cornelius Labeo, the source of Arnobius and Servius (Nieggetiet, *De Cornelio Labeone* [Diss. Munster], 1908, pp. 77-86). It was generally accepted towards the end of the empire; see *infra*, n. 5_25.--I hope soon to have the opportunity of setting forth the development of this sidereal eschatology with greater precision in my lectures on "Astrology and Religion in Antiquity" which will appear in 1912 (chap. VI).

5_65. According to the doctrine of the Egyptian mysteries the Elysian Fields were in the under-world (Apul., *Metam.*, XI, 6).--According to the astrological theory, the Elysian Fields were in the sphere of the fixed stars (Macrobius, *Comm. somn. Scip.*, I, 11, § 8; cf. *infra*, chap. VIII, n. 8_25). Others placed them in the moon (Servius, *Ad Aen.*, VI, 887; cf. Norden, *Vergils Buch VI*, p. 23; Rohde, *Psyche*, pp. 609 ff.). Iamblichus placed them between the moon and the sun (Lydus, *De mens.*, IV, 149, p. 167, 23, Wunsch).

5_66. The relation between the two ideas is apparent in the alleged account of the Pythagorean doctrine which Diogenes Laertius took from Alexander Polyhistor, and which is in reality an apocryphal composition of the first century of our era. It was said that Hermes guided the pure souls, after their separation from the body, εἰς τὸν Ὑψιστον (Diog. Laert., VIII, §31; cf. Zeller, *Philos. der Griechen*, V, p. 106, n. 2).--On the meaning of Hypsistos, cf. *supra*, p. 128. It appears very plainly in the passage of Isaiah, xiv, 13, as rendered by the Septuagint:

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Εἰς τὸν οὐρανὸν ἀναβήσομαι, ἐπάνω τῶν ἀστέρων θήσω τὸν θρόνον μου . . . ἔσομαι ὅμοιος τῷ Ὑψίστῳ.

5_67. Originally he was the thunder-god, in Greek Κεραυνός. Under this name he appeared for instance on the bas-relief preserved in the museum of Brussels (Dussaud, *Notes*, p. 105). Later, by a familiar process, the influence of a particular god becomes the attribute of a greater divinity, and we speak of a Ζεὺς Κεραύνιος (cf. Usener, *Keraunos*, *Rhein. Museum*, N. F., LX, 1901).--This Zeus Keraunios appears in many inscriptions of Syria (CIG, 4501, 4520; Le Bas-Waddington, 2195, 2557 a, 2631, 2739; cf. Roscher, *Lexikon Myth.*, s. v. "Keraunos").

He is the god to whom Seleucus sacrificed when founding Seleucia (Malalas, p. 199), and a dedication to the same god has been found recently in the temple of the Syrian divinities at Rome (*supra*, n. 5_10).--An equivalent of the Zeus Keraunios is the Zeus Καταβάρτης--"he who descends in the lightning"--worshiped at Cyrrhus (Wroth, *Greek Coins in the British Museum: "Galatia, Syria"*, p. 52 and LII; Roscher, *Lexikon*, s. v.)

5_68. For instance the double ax was carried by Jupiter Dolichenus (cf. *supra*, p. 147). On its significance, cf. Usener, *loc. cit.*, p. 20.

5_69. Cf. Lidzbarski, *Balsamem*, *Ephem. semit. Epigr.*, I, p. 251.--Ba'al Samain is mentioned as early as the ninth century B. C. in the inscription of Ben Hadad (Pognon, *Inscr. sémit.*, 1907, pp. 165 ff.; cf. Dussaud, *Rev. archéol.*, 1908, I, p. 235). In Aramaic papyri preserved at Berlin, the Jews of Elephantine call Jehovah "the god of heaven" in an address to a Persian governor, and the same name was used in the alleged edicts of Cyrus and his successors, which were inserted in the book of Esdras (i. I; vi. 9, etc.)--If there were the slightest doubt as to the identity of the god of thunder with Baalsamin, it would be dispelled by the inscription of Et-Tayibé, where this Semitic name is translated into Greek as Ζεὺς μέγιστος κεραύνιος; cf. Lidzbarski, *Handbuch*, p. 477, and Lagrange, *op. cit.*, p. 508.

5_70. On the worship of Baalsamin, confused with Ahura-Mazda and transformed into Caelus, see *Mon. myst. Mithra*, p. 87.--The texts attesting the existence of a real cult of

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heaven among the Semites are very numerous. Besides the ones I have gathered (*loc. cit.*, n. 5); see Conybeare, *Philo about the Contemplative Life*, p. 33, n. 16; Kayser, *Das Buch der Erkenntniss der Wahrheit*, 1893, p. 337, and *infra*, n. 5_75. Zeus Οὐράνιος: Le Bas-Waddington, 2720 a (Baal of Bétocécé); Renan, *Mission de Phénicie*, p. 103.--Cf. *Archiv für Religionswissenschaft*, IX, 1906, p. 333.

5_71. Coins of Antiochus VIII Grypus (125-96 B. C.); Babelon, *Rois de Syrie, d'Arménie*, 1890, p. CLIV, pp. 178 ff.

5_72. All these qualities ascribed to the Baals by astrological paganism (ὤψιστος, παντοκράτωρ, etc.), are also the attributes which, according to the doctrine of Alexandrian Judaism, characterized Jehovah (see *supra*, n. 5_66). If he was originally a god of thunder, as has been maintained, the evolution of the Jewish theology was parallel to that of the pagan conceptions (see *supra*, n. 5_69).

5_73. On this subject cf. *Jupiter summus exsuperantissimus* (*Archiv f. Religionsw.*, IX), 1906, pp. 326 ff.

5_74. Ps.-Iamblichus, *De mysteriis*, VI, 7 (cf. *Porph., Epist. Aneb.*, C. 29), notes this difference between the two religions.

5_75. *Apul., Met.*, VIII, 25. Cf. *CIL*, III, 1090; XII, 1227 (= Dessau, 2998, 4333); *Macrobius, Comm. somn. Scipionis*, I, 14, §2: "Nihil aliud esse deum nisi caelum ipsum et caelestia ipsa quae cernimus, ideo ut summi omnipotentiam dei ostenderet posse vix intellegi."--"Ἡλιος παντοκράτωρ: *Macrobius*, I, 23, 21.

5_76. *Diodorus*, II, 30: Χαλδαῖοι τὴν τοῦ κόσμου φύσιν αἰδίον φασι εἶναι κ. τ. λ.; cf. *Cicero, Nat. deor.*, II, 20, § 52 ff.; *Pliny, H. N.*, II, 8, § 30. The notion of eternity was correlative with that of εἰμαρμένη; cf. *Ps.-Apul., Asclep.*, 40; *Apul., De deo Socratis*, c. 2: "(The planets) quae in deflexo cursu . . . meatus aeternos divinis vicibus efficiunt."--This

subject will be more fully treated in my lectures on "Astrology and Religion" (chaps. IV-V).

5_77. At Palmyra: De Vogüé, *Inscr. sem.*, pp. 53 ff., etc.--On the first title, see *infra*, n. 5_80.

5_78. Note especially CIL, VI, 406 = 30758, where Jupiter Dolichenus is called Aeternus conservator totius poli. The

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relation to heaven here remained apparent. See *Somn. Scip.*, III, 4; IV, 3.

5_79. Cf. *Rev. archéol.*, 1888, I, pp. 184 ff.; *Pauly-Wissowa*, s. v. "Aeternus," and *Festschrift für Otto Benndorf*, 1898, p. 291.--The idea of the eternity of the gods also appeared very early in Egypt, but it does not seem that the mysteries of Isis--in which the death of Osiris was commemorated--made it prominent, and it certainly was spread in the Occident only by the sidereal cults.

5_80. The question has been raised whether the epithet מרא עלמא means "lord of the world" or "lord of eternity" (cf. Lidzbarski, *Ephemeris*, I, 258; II, 297; Lagrange, p. 508), but in our opinion the controversy is to no purpose, since in the spirit of the Syrian priests the two ideas are inseparable and one expression in itself embraces both, the world being conceived as eternal (*supra*, n. 5_76). See for Egypt, *Horapoll.*, *Hieroglyph.*, I (serpent as symbol of the αἰών, and κόσμος). At Palmyra, too, the title "lord of all" is found, מרא כל (Lidzbarski, *loc. cit.*); cf. Julian, *Or.*, IV, p. 203, 5 (Hertlein): Ὁ βασιλεὺς τῶν ὀλῶν, and *infra*, n. 5_81; n. 5_87. Already at Babylon the title "lord of the universe" was given to Shamash and Hadad; see Jastrow, *Religion Babyloniens*, I, p. 254, n. 10. Nöldeke has been good enough to write me as follows on this subject. "Daran kan kein Zweifel sein, dass עלם zunächst (lange Zeit) Ewigkeit heisst, und dass die Bedeutung 'Welt' secundär ist. Ich halte es daher für so gut wie gewiss dass das palmyrenische מרא עלמא, wenn es ein alter Name ist, den 'ewigen' Herrn bedeutet, wie ohne Zweifel אל עולם, Gen., xxi. 33. Das biblische Hebräisch kennt die Bedeutung 'Welt' noch nicht, abgesehen wohl von der späten Stelle, Eccl. iii. 11. Und, so viel ich sehe, ist im Palmyrenischen sonst עלמא immer 'Ewigkeit,' z. B. in der häufigen Redensart לבריד שמה לעלמא. Aber das daneben vorkommende palmyr. מרא כל führt allerdings darauf, dass die palmyrenische Inschrift auch in מלא עלמא den 'Herrn der Welt' sah. Ja der syrische Uebersetzer sieht auch in jenem hebräischen אל עולם 'den Gott der Welt! Das Syrische hat nämlich einen formalen Unterschied festgestellt zwischen 'ālmā, dem Status absolutus, 'Ewigkeit,' und 'ālmā [ālemā] dem Status emphaticus 'Welt.'--Sollte übrigens die

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[paragraph continues] Bedeutung Welt diesem Worte erst durch Einfluss griechischer Speculation zu Teil geworden sein? In der Zingirli-Inschrift bedeutete בעלם noch bloss 'in seiner Zeit.'"

5_81. Cf. CIL, III, 1090 = Dessau, Inscr., 2998: "Divinarum humanarumque rerum rectori." Compare *ibid.*, 2999 and Cagnet, *Année épigr.*, 1905, No. 235: "I. O. M., id est universitatis principi." Cf. the article of the *Archiv* cited, n. 73. The Asclepius says (c. 39), using an astrological term: "Caelestes dii catholicorum dominantur, terreni incolunt singula."

5_82. Cf. W. Robertson Smith, 75 ff., *passim*. In the Syrian religions as in that of Mithra, the initiates regarded each other as members of the same family, and the phrase "dear brethren" as used by our preachers, was already in use among the votaries of Jupiter Dolichenus (*fratres carissimos*, CIL, VI, 406 = 30758).

5_83. Renan mentioned this fact in his *Apotres*, p. 297 = *Journal Asiatique*, 1859, p. 259. Cf. Jalabert, *Mél. faculté orient. Beyrout*, I, 1906, p. 146.

5_84. This is the term (*virtutes*) used by the pagans. See the inscription *Numini et virtutibus dei aeterni* as reconstructed in *Revue de Philologie*, 1902, p. 9; *Archiv für Religionsw.*, loc. cit., p. 335, n. 1 and *infra*, ch. VIII, n. 8_20.

5_85. CIL, VII, 759 = Bücheler, *Carm. epig.*, 24.--Cf. Lucian, *De dea Syria*, 32.

5_86. Macrobius, *Sat.*, I, 23, § 17: "Nominis (Adad) interpretatio significat unus unus."

5_87. Cicero, *Somnium Scip.*, c. 4: "Sol dux et princeps et moderator luminum reliquorum, mens mundi et temperatio." Pliny, *H. N.*, II, 6, § 12: "Sol . . . siderum ipsorum caelique rector. Hunc esse mundi totius animam ac planius mentem, hunc principale naturae regimen ac numen credere decet," etc. Julian of Laodicea, *Cat. codd. astr.*, I, p. 136, l. 1:

Ἡλιος βασιλεὺς καὶ ἡγεμὼν τῷ σύμπαντος κόσμου καθεστώς, πάντων καθηγούμενος καὶ πάντων ὧν γενεσιάρχης.

5_88. We are here recapitulating some conclusions of a study on *La théologie solaire du paganisme romain* published in *Mémoires des savants étrangers présentés à l'Acad. des Inscr.*, XII, 2d part, pp. 447 ff., Paris, 1910.

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5_89. The hymns of Synesius (II, 10 ff., IV, 120 ff., etc.) contain peculiar examples of the combination of the old astrological ideas with Christian theology.
