

a Jewish origin,¹ and there is much to be said in favour of this. Heb. **עולם** means any duration of time, and in the Rabbinic writings it, like Aram. **עֲלָמָא**, comes to mean *age* or *world*, as e.g. **העולם הזה** "this world" as contrasted with the next **העולם הבא** (Levy, iii, 655). Grünbaum also points out, *ZDMG*, xxxix, 571, that the common Qur'ānic **رب العالمين** is precisely the **רבון העולמים** of the Jewish liturgy. On the other hand, **עלמא** occurs in Palm. and **עלם** in Nab. inscriptions,² and the Syr. **ܥܠܡܐ**, which Fraenkel, *Vocab*, 21, suggested as its origin, means both *αἰών* and *κόσμος*, while the expression **ܕܥܠܡܝܐ** in the Christian-Palestinian dialect, is, as Schwally notes,³ a curiously close parallel in form to the Qur'ānic

للعالمين.

عَبَدَ ('*Abd*).

Of very frequent occurrence (also other forms, e.g. **عبادة**, etc.).

A worshipper.

The root is common Semitic, cf. Akk. *abdu*⁴; Heb. **עבד**; O.Aram. **עבד**; Syr. **ܥܒܕ**; Phon. **עבד**; Sab. **ܥܒܕ** (and perhaps Eth. **መበ**, Dillmann, *Lex*, 988).

The question of its being a loan-word in Arabic depends on the more fundamental question of the meaning of the root. If its primitive meaning is *to worship*, then the word retains this primitive meaning in Arabic, and all the others are derived meanings. There is reason, however, to doubt whether *worship* is the primitive meaning. In the O.Aram. **עבד** means *to make* or *to do*, and the same meaning is very common in Jewish Aram. and Syr. In Heb. **עָבַד** is *to work*,⁵ and so **עֲבָדִים** primarily means worker, as Nöldeke has pointed out,⁶ and the sense of *to serve* is derived from this.⁷ With **עבד** meaning *to*

¹ So de Sacy, *JA*, 1829, p. 161 ff. Pautz, *Offenbarung*, 105, n. 5, and see Sacco, *Credenze*, 28; Ahrens, *Muhammed*, 41, 129; Horovitz, *JPN*, 215.

² It occurs with the meaning of *age* or *time* in the Zenjirli inscription.

³ *Idioticon*, 67, 68 = *ἐς τοὺς αἰῶνας*.

⁴ Zimmern, *Akkad. Fremdw*, 47.

⁵ Notice particularly the Niph. **עָבַד** *to be tilled*, used of land.

⁶ *ZDMG*, xl, 741. He compares the Eth. **ገብረ** *to work* and **ገብረ** *a labourer*.

⁷ Gerber, *Verba Denominativa*, p. 14.