

N. Arabia of A.D. 31,¹ where it has precisely this meaning of *copy* which we find for the Akk. *nushu*, and it was doubtless from this technical use of the word in N. Arabia that the word came into use in Arabic (Zimmern, *Akkad. Fremdw.*, 29).

نَصَارَى (*Naṣārā*).

ii, 59, 105, 107, 114, 129, 134 ; iii, 60 ; v, 17, 21, 56, 73, 85 ; ix, 30 ; xxii, 17.

Christians.

This name occurs only in Madinan passages, and except for iii, 50, only in the plu. form.

It is taken by the Muslim authorities as a genuine Arabic formation from نَصْر, derived either from the name of the village نَاصِرَة,² which was the native village of Jesus, or from اَنْصَار *helpers*, the name of the Disciples (cf. Sūra, iii, 45).³

Sūra, v, 85, would seem conclusive evidence that the word was in use in pre-Islamic times, and indeed the word occurs not uncommonly in the early poetry. The question of the origin of the name, however, is exceedingly difficult to solve.

The Talmudic name for Christians was נוֹצְרִים, a name derived probably from the town of Nazareth, though some would derive it from the name of the sect of *Ναζαπαῖτοι*.⁴ It is possible that the Arabs learned this word from the Jews, though as the Jews used it more or less as a term of contempt this is hardly likely. Also we find the Mandaeans calling themselves נוֹצְרֵאִי,⁵ which may be from the *Ναζωπαῖτοι* of the N.T., though, as it is difficult to imagine the Mandaeans wanting to be known as Christians,⁶ it may be that this

¹ *CIS*, ii, 209, l. 9 ; Lidzbarski, *Handbuch*, 453 ; Euting, *Nab. Inschr.*, No. 12 ; Cook, *Glossary*, 82, and cf. Horovitz, *JPN*, 224.

² Yāqūt, *Mu'jam*, iv, 729 ; Rāghib, *Mufradāt*, 514 ; ath-Tha'labī, *Qisṣaṣ*, 272.

³ The Commentaries on ii, 59. See Hirschfeld, *Beiträge*, 17, and Sprenger, *Leben*, ii, 533.

⁴ Krauss in *JE*, ix, 194.

⁵ Lidzbarski, *Mandäische Liturgien*, xvi ff. ; Brandt, *ERE*, viii, 384.

⁶ Lidzbarski, *ZS*, i, 233 ; Noldeke, *ZA*, xxxiii, 74, says : " aber wie die Mandäer zu dem Namen *Nasoraye* gekommen sind, bleibt doch dunkel." Pallis, *Mandaean Studies*, 1926, p. 161, suggests that the Mand. נַצְרֵאִי is simply the Arabic نَصَارَى, which name was assumed by the Mandaeans in Islamic times to escape Muslim persecution, and this is very likely the truth.