

CHRISTIANITY AND ISLAM IN THE THOUGHT OF LOUIS MASSIGNON

THOMAS MERTON became one of the most famous American Catholics of the 20th century. During his lifetime he was well known as a spiritual writer of the monastic tradition, who developed an acute sense of the importance of Christian witness in the public square, a creative engagement between theology and politics. Towards the end of his life, Merton developed an interest in Buddhist and other Far Eastern approaches to mysticism and contemplation, and their relation to Christian mysticism. Today Merton is recognised in the field of religious studies for his immense contribution to Buddhist-Christian dialogue; and for being able to recognize parallels between Oriental mysticism and Western Christian tradition. During this later phase Merton also developed a keen awareness of Islam, particularly in its often-orphaned mystical tradition. The sentiment expressed in a 1962 letter of Merton's to his Pakistani Muslim correspondent Abdul Aziz is as relevant today as it was then:

It seems to me that mutual comprehension between Christians and Moslems is something of vital importance today, and unfortunately it is rare and uncertain, or else subjected to the vagaries of politics.¹

Among the books that Merton was reading on his Asian journey, which ended with his death, was the French Catholic Islamicist, Priest, and Mystic Louis Massignon's classic study in comparative mysticism, *Essai sur les origines du lexique technique de la mystique musulmane*. Originally published in Paris by J. Vrin in 1964, it has now been reissued as *Essai sur les origines du lexique technique de la*

mystique musulmane, Les Éditions du Cerf, 1999, which has also translated into English his *Essay on the Origins of the Technical Language of Islamic Mysticism*, Translated from the French with an introduction by Benjamin Clark, Notre Dame, Indiana, University of Notre Dame Press 1998. It is a book that concentrates on the technical vocabulary of Islamic mysticism in the Arabic language. But along the way the author clarifies the terms he studies by comparing them to earlier Christian usage, and sometimes by putting them side by side with the expressions Hindus and Buddhists use to describe similar mystical phenomena. By 1968 such an approach to the study of Christian religious life was very congenial to Merton. And in *The Asian Journal of Thomas Merton* there are two quotations from Massignon's book. Merton was struck by the Islamic critique of monasticism, expressed in part in the famous phrase attributed to Muhammad, "there is no monasticism in Islam". Early Muslim mystics had to justify their own behaviour in the light of this dictum, and to explain its original import. Although one of Massignon's students (and to whom Merton is partially indebted to for his material on Sufism) challenged his master's view, it was the Iraqi Jesuit Paul Nwiya, who in his *Exegese coranique et language mystique: nouvel essai sur le lexique technique des mystiques musulmans* (Beirut: Dar el-Machreq, 1970) detected monastic tendencies in early Islam. In his important study the American Catholic scholar from the Catholic University of Washington, DC, Sidney H. Griffith writes that Merton was

also challenged in other ways:

Here is just one example of the insightful challenge to Christian life and thought that one can find abundantly in Islamic texts. Given Merton's concern for the reform of monastic life, it is no wonder that his eye lingered long enough over Massignon's discussion of the issue in the works of early Muslim writers to mark the spot and to highlight a telling phrase or two. The issue reminds the reader of the even more far reaching critiques of Christianity one can find in Islamic texts. And the Muslim critic sometimes opens a way to a deeper appreciation of truths at the very heart of the Christian's own response to God.²

Another passage in Massignon's *Essai* that took Merton's attention in 1968 and caused him to reach for pen and notebook is one in which the author explained his approach to the study of the early Muslim mystics. He was after "experiential knowledge", he said, by an "introspective method" that seeks to examine "each conscience 'by transparency'". The method was to search "beneath outward behaviour of the person for a grace which is wholly divine". Again, this idea struck a responsive chord in Merton. It expressed the sympathy Merton felt for Massignon himself that persisted from their first acquaintance in 1959, through Massignon's death in 1962, right up to Merton's final months in 1968. And that further while Merton's use of Massignon's pithy phrase "*le point vierge*" has received attention, its origins in the study of the martyr mystic of Islam, al-Husayn ibn Mansur al-Hallaj (d.922), has gone unremarked for the most part. From Massignon's perspective, Islam and Islamic mysticism, encountering the God of Abraham, pose a challenge for purity of heart to Christians. In concrete terms, Sufism poses this challenge to Christian monasticism. Perhaps that is why in Merton's case he began, in 1967 and 1968, reading steadily in Islamic literature and giving lectures to the

monks at Gethsemani on Sufism. And it is why he was still reading Massignon and wondering about the Islamic view of Christian monasticism on his Asian journey. Merton finally thought he understood it this way:

The Moslem interpretation of this: that Allah did not prescribe the monastic life but some disciples of Jesus invented it, with its obligations, and once they accepted its obligations they were bound to them in His sight. The moral being: how much more will He require others to keep what He has prescribed.³

It is the life and work of this close spiritual contact and friend of Merton that I want to outline here so that one can get a context for the encounter.

II

Louis Massignon (1883-1962) was arguably one of the most important scholars of Arabic and Islam in the European tradition of the twentieth century, who was a dominant presence in the field of Islamic Studies, and whose career which began in 1900, spanned more than sixty years.⁴ However, distinguished as his career was, today his name would probably be known only within the scholarly world as related to Islamic studies, were it not for a life whose range defies easy categories. He made a special contribution to our knowledge of Islamic mysticism, Sufism, and sociology and had deep and lasting influence upon Islamic studies in general, particularly in France. However his most lasting contribution was to how Islam was to be understood and interpreted within the Christian tradition and in particular within his own Catholic community.⁵ By the force of his personality and the originality of his ideas, Louis Massignon was perhaps the only Islamicist scholar who was a

central figure in the intellectual life of his time.

Abbé Harpigny in his important study *Islam et Christianisme selon Louis Massignon*,⁶ divides Louis Massignon's itinéraire into three episodes: *le cycle hallagien*—which ended with the submission of his doctoral thesis: *La Passion d'al-Hosayn-ibn Mansour al-Hallāj, martyre mystique de l'Islam* in 1922; *le cycle abrahamique*—up until his ordination as a priest in the Greek Catholic Melkite church in Cairo in 1950; and *un cycle gandhien*—a period of political activism which ended with his death in 1962.

However we understand or measure the work and personality of Louis Massignon, there was a deep symmetry between his writings, his acts, and his beliefs.⁷ At the centre of Massignon's scholarly endeavour was the search for what was, or is, original in a person, a society or a work. Authenticity, where present, was one of the qualities he sought: there took place what was worthwhile and essential. Such authenticity could lie in the subject matter, which was expressed, or in the way in which such subject matter was expressed. His interest was aroused by the particular traits pointing to a certain authenticity. Behind such originality or authenticity Massignon could detect, in some cases, a testimony and sensitivity to such *temoignage*. This sensitivity was at the basis of his never ending attention to expressions of the human soul, especially those of a religious connotation. Massignon's research constantly faced the methodological difficulty of proving that something was or was not a borrowing from something else. This was particularly true in the debates between the Spanish Catholic priest-scholar Miguel Asín de Palacios and Louis Massignon over the connection between Christian

antecedents of Islamic mysticism.⁸ However, if Massignon could not present strict evidence, he always attempted to discover other hypotheses than those of direct literary or historical derivation, in order to explain similarities between different phenomena without any apparent relationship. For example, he showed considerable interest in such coincidences as existed both in Islam and in Christianity and sought to link them with each other or find some connection between them at a deeper level.⁹

A clear record of how Massignon reconciled his scholarly work on Islam with his Orthodox Christian and Catholic beliefs is found in *Les trois prières d'Abraham: Seconde prière*, which is a meditation on Abraham's prayer for Ishmael, as reported in Genesis. He stresses that Ishmael's exile took place after he had been circumcised and had received God's blessing in response to Abraham's prayer (Genesis 17:18-20). Massignon sees in Muhammad's own forced emigration, or *hijra*, from Mecca, a repetition of Ishmael's banishment at the instigation of Sarah. He suggests that, when Muhammad encountered the Jews in Medina, he therefore declared before God that he drew his inspiration from Abraham and claimed Abraham's entire spiritual and temporal heritage for the Arabs alone. In later years, he became particularly interested in those phenomena which show a convergence or dialogue between Islam and Christianity: the meeting of Muhammad and the Christians of Najran, the cult of Fatima as a parallel to the veneration of the Virgin Mary, the veneration of the Seven Sleepers of Ephesus by Christians and Muslims alike, vocations within Islam of mystical compassion and substitution like that of al-Hallāj. Massignon, who was very interested in biography, liked

to plot on the graph of what he called *Curve de vie* or 'the curve of life' of the life stories which attracted his attention and of which he also thought that there are Christic figures within Islam who could ultimately play a role in bringing Muslims to confess the divine sonship of Jesus, the Christ – if only at the last judgement – such figures included Salmān Pāk, al-Hallāj, al-Ghāzali and others.

The renewal of Massignon's Christian religious consciousness was directly linked in his own mind to Islam. Al-Hallāj, particularly, had moved forever beyond the realm of mere academic interest to become an actual guiding fraternal force. Their extraordinary friendship: "filled the heart of Massignon and shaped his mind so thoroughly that he can be seen as the greatest Muslim among Christians and the greatest Christian among Muslims" (Ibrahim Madkour). Massignon – with his involvement in the political issues of his time: Jerusalem, Palestine, Morocco, Algeria – was not just a radical activist, but a radical exemplar of a Hallājian synthesis, old but little known in our world, of the heart and mind, *qalb* and *aql*, unalienated from one another. This was his full achievement as a human being and the simplest, profoundest fruit of his friendship with al-Hallāj. In a letter to the American mystic and Trappist monk Thomas Merton, he wrote:

My case is not to be imitated; I made a duel with our Lord, and having been an outlaw (against nature in love), against law (substituted to Moslems), and Hierarchy... (leaving my native proud Latin community for a despised, bridled and insignificant Greek Catholic Melkite church), I die lonely in my family, for whom I am a bore... I am a gloomy scoundrel!¹⁰

He died during the night of 31 October / 1 November 1962.

III

In his childhood, Massignon had received his religious education from his mother, as his father was not a practising Catholic. Through his father, however, he came into contact with J.K. Husymans who had 'reconverted' or rediscovered the Catholic Faith. He also met E. Psichari and later Charles de Foucauld, who had done the same. Although the university atmosphere was anti-clerical, Massignon practised his religion, at least in his early student days, but by the time he arrived in Egypt, he did not.

It is, in the very nature of the case, impossible to know the inner development of a young man of so many decades ago, for which so little data exists. It seems important to us, that he had already taken up the study of al-Hallāj with ardour in March 1907, and that a fragment of February 1908 describes al-Hallāj as an example to follow. The particular inner experiences which Massignon underwent in May 1908, as a result of being arrested by the Ottoman Turkish authorities on suspicion of spying; an abortive attempt – according to some – to escape, and a dangerous fit of malaria could only be judged after careful investigation. Apparently, the person involved looked all this upon as providential.

On returning to France in July 1908, Massignon having recovered his faith became once more a loyal member of the Catholic Church. He proceeded to destroy his writings of earlier years informed friends and colleagues of his conversion, sought the company of persons who had taken the same step, and stood by his belief for the rest of his life.

As may have become clear, our

aim is not to study the particular conversion of Louis Massignon, its nature and bearings. It should be stressed, however, that it had taken place among Arabs and that he had encountered a religious loyalty on the part of the Muslims in Mesopotamia. Private Muslim prayers were said when he was lying on what appeared to be his deathbed. Throughout his life, Massignon maintained solidarity with the Arab people. The study of al-Hallāj already started came now in its full proportions: as the study of an "intercessor" of a witness to "the God of love" in Islam, representing on a mystical level what Jesus did in Judaism, albeit in subordination to him. Consequently, the Hallāj research became one of the most existential studies in Orientalism, having as its ultimate aim the discovery of the spiritual truth and reality of which al-Hallāj had been a witness and martyr. The intense *soif d'absolu* of this *homme de prière et de désir* was devoted to Christ basically, and then to al-Hallāj, the truth of the latter only reinforcing that of the former.

IV

It is with regard to Islam that one may speak of a "vocation" of this scholar, which meant a transcending of age-old barriers. Reaching out towards an absolute, he arrived at a cruelly difficult position, not only culturally and politically, but also intellectually and spiritually. Here we simply want to indicate how various aspects of his work, in turn, seem to have helped Massignon realise his "vocation". In the first place, there is the scholarly research of Islam as a civilization but in particular a religious tradition. From the scholarly point of view, already before his conversion, Massignon had

shown great ability, which was to bear fruit during the rest of his life. It is just as striking that his mind, being at all times on the frontline of research, working on so many and so very different subjects never enabled him to write a handbook or synthesis of his many findings. His devotion, then, went especially to Islamic spirituality through the Qur'an, the mystics and thinkers, without neglecting archaeology, sociology and socio-economic history. Through its spirituality, however, Islam as such had significance for him, a significance that, from time to time, determined his interpretation of particular phenomena.

His interpretation of Islam suggests, therefore, a few remarks. Massignon pleaded for recognition of the "conditional authority" of the Qur'an and he sought for a partial recognition of Muhammad as a prophet. But Muhammad had declared the divine essence as absolutely inaccessible to man, rejecting doctrines like those of the Trinity and Incarnation, as well as of mystical union. It was only three centuries after Muhammad, that such mysteries were opened up by al Hallāj within Islam, and this 'fulfilment' of the work Muhammad by Hallāj is at the core of Massignon's thought. Here, already, one finds his conviction that Islam is not closed to the workings of grace, but that conversions "from within" – as opposed to conversions to another religion – are possible, in particular through the saints, of whom Hallāj is the chief. This vision is put into a historical – *heilsgeschichtliche* – perspective, when the claim of Islam, to descend from Abraham through Ishmael is accepted as valid: Islam has indeed a share of the promise of God to Abraham and to Hagar (Gen. 16: 10-12 and 21: 11-13, 18). The place of al-Hallāj within Islam, and the

place of Islam with regard to Abraham, determine Massignon's theological interpretation of Islam, which is as little "heathen" as the religion of Israel. Islam is the monotheism of those who have been excluded from the privileges awarded to Isaac and so to Israel and the Christian Church, and it calls these two to account for the use made of their privileges. There is no question of an "absence of God" in Islam with its "Abrahamic" consciousness of God. Predestination works in Islam too, where hearts are called to a zealous faith in divine transcendence. Such a faith may burn with indignation against all idolatry of pseudo-absolutes, or it may turn into a mystical love.

Thirdly, we should mention the attitude of Massignon to contemporary developments in the Islamic world, and the action he consequently took. He was intensely sensitive to the effects on the Muslim mind of the clash between modern Western and traditional Muslim society. Morally and religiously wounded, runs the risk of becoming a *parte de l'âme*. So he found it necessary to participate in the reconstruction of Muslim culture, religion and personality – although this might go against "colonial interest". As for the Church, Massignon pleaded for recognition of the religious vocations that take place within Islam and an acceptance of Islam into a common adoration of God. He advocated a broadening of the doctrinal position of the Catholic Church with regard to Islam, and had audiences with the Pope on several occasions. The new current formula of "dialogue" with Islam may be seen as lying within Massignon's vision. He formed a Christian sodality on the basis of prayer and compassion with regard to Islam.

It should be borne in mind that it was in his Church and in contact with some

great Catholic converts, that Massignon found the way to the essential mystery of the self-communication of God to man, and the possible communion of man – through Christ – with God. Against this background, his personal experience and "communion with the saints" became what amounted to a vocation. And gave him such grace as to make him acceptable to others. From a crucially difficult position "between" Christians and Muslims, he strove first for sanctification and then for a dialogue with Islam, "in the presence of God". From this point of departure, his search for a theological formula for inter-religious relations can best be understood.

Although his spiritual experiences came to him through Islam, Massignon arrived at attitudes of thought and action, which went beyond a particular Arab and Muslim context. These can be studied separately as the spiritual content of the many situations and encounters, which he experienced.

A number of themes run through his work, which may be, called the components of Massignon's spiritual universe. Some of them represent such essential features of life, as speech, thought, friendship, hospitality, destiny, anguish, suffering, death, sacrifice, idolising. Another group related the realm of the spirit, comprised justice, truth, purity, vows, pilgrimage, predestination; compassion and substitution; vocation and witnessing. Mention is often made of God's transcendence, His mystical reality, His exclusiveness, His word and grace. This aspect of Massignon's thought could be greatly elaborated. His "interiorist" approach to reality and especially religion, his study of the rules of the degree of authenticity of testimonies of any kind, were applied on the basis of internal criteria. A few

words may perhaps be said on some values, which he considered especially important.

One such value is *hospitality*, which he considered a basic structure of human behaviour and a code of inter-human relations in a world where the "other" tends to become foreign. Besides its importance for individual relations between societies or between society and the individual, it may also become an expression of a mystical relationship between God and man. Whereas hospitality is the admission of the "other" unto oneself, *compassion*, is reaching out to the "other" and participating in his suffering. To be affected by the suffering of other men – whether one is aware of it or not – becomes an act whereby one man takes another's suffering upon himself by "transference". The effect is an alleviation of the suffering itself. If Islam brought hospitality to Massignon's mind, it was certainly Christianity – via al-Hallāj – in which he found the mysteries of passion and compassion. A further step is the idea of *substitution* where one person carries, both positively and negatively, the weight of another: a doctrine, which Massignon found in both Christianity and in al-Hallāj. So his thought developed on the theme of an "apotropean" chain of saints in the history of mankind, an extension of the Catholic and Orthodox idea of the role of the saints in the Church.

Massignon was singularly attached to France and it would be difficult to imagine him as belonging to any other nation. One could hardly imagine him elsewhere than in Paris, with some weeks in the summer spent in Brittany and some weeks in winter in the Arab world. The honour of France was to him something of an absolute; he suffered deeply from the crucial dilemmas of

France's Arab policy, specifically, in so far as he saw it as a "betrayal" of the Arabs, and an attempt to exploit them. He suffered for both – not to speak of the tension between the fidelity to his Church and his loyalty to Islam – and so arrived at a type of action, which may be called "religiously heroic".

Massignon was influential in changing the attitude of the Catholic Church towards Islam. He formed a group of Arabists highly qualified in the study of Arabic and Islamic civilization. He conducted numerous missions for cultural exchanges between France and the Islamic world. But it now appears that the bases of his action – and it no doubt could have been otherwise – were too absolutist to yield visible results in the political world. The apolitical character of his stand was interwoven with loyalties, which politicians on either side could hardly appreciate. The drama of colonisation and decolonisation was geared to a purely earthly logic.

Massignon participated in the drafting of the Sykes-Picot agreement and saw hopes for an Arab kingdom evaporate. He had to acquiesce in the dismemberment of Syria and to participate in the Algerian celebrations of 1930. He then came, more and more, to oppose and protest against political imprisonment after the Madagascar massacres (1947); the Western attitude over the Palestine question (1948); the sending of Muhammad V in exile (1953); the repression in Morocco and Tunisia; and finally the Algerian killings. The Algerian drama was a special nightmare.

In those years, his intellect outraged, he resorted to prayer and to non-violent action. He had seen the value of this last in the example of Gandhi for whom he had the greatest respect. Since 1953,

moreover, he kept a day of fasting once a month to be observed by both Muslims and the Christians who were members of his sodality—'Baddaliyya'. Many persons can testify to events in his life in those years. On one occasion, he took part in a public 'sit-down action' and spent the night in prison. Another time, when giving a lecture, he was assaulted and bruised about the face.

V

Massignon held a view of history, which sees the handing on of knowledge of God from one individual to another as the only significant process and therefore most deserving of study. Louis Massignon developed this theme of history in a series of letters to Paul Claudel between 1908-1909 in which the meaning of history is to be found not in the impersonality of social evolution, but in the divine word in the individual seed. Such encounters can take place within the ordered framework of an established tradition, but they can also be sudden confrontations: the unexpected 'Other' breaks in on ordinary life, shattering and transforming it. In a moment of illumination a man can transcend his worldly images and see beyond them another beauty. Story is a chain of witness entering each other's lives as carriers of a truth beyond themselves, and a chain that can run across the habitual frontiers of different religions. Massignon believed that he himself had been drawn into this chain, in an event of which it is difficult to accept all the details as he has described them, but which certainly decided the direction of his life. The event was his initiation as a witness, a participant in the mystery of substitution, by which a man can provide for others what they cannot

obtain for themselves. Having acquired through Muslims the knowledge of transcendence, how could he himself serve as a channel through which they could come to knowledge of incarnation?

Massignon used to speak about religion, ethics and personal experiences. He did not speak of a strictly personal 'vocation' which he had to fulfil, but rather of things, which had overcome him. It seems to us, however, that his life, which would appear to the most biting cynic as exceptional, would show on closer investigation not only a strange destiny, but also the realization of a vocation. Using this word we deprive it of all its idealistic overtones: for how can we call it "ideal" when a vocation such as his brought so heavy a burden.

Notes and References

1. B. Thurston, 'Thomas Merton's Interest in Islam: the example of the *dhikr*', in *Thomas Merton and Sufism: the untold story*, Edited by R. Baker & G. Henry, Louisville, KY: Fons Vitae, 1999, p. 40. In an excellent essay by Sidney H. Griffiths included in this volume, "'As One spiritual Man to Another': The Merton-Abdul Aziz Correspondence", pp. 101-129, traces the correspondence between Merton and a young Pakistani Muslim, Abdul Aziz, which lasted from 1960 up until Merton's death in 1968. Griffiths describes their correspondence as "one of the most interesting epistolary exchanges between a Muslim and a Christian in the twentieth century" p.102. It is truly inter-faith dialogue in which Merton also shared personal information and discussed world problems along with issues of faith and practice and Griffiths quotes extensively from their correspondence in this latter area.
2. S.H. Griffiths, 'Merton, Massignon and the challenge of Islam', in *Thomas Merton and Sufism: the untold story* p.51-52
3. For those wishing to continue the study of Merton relationship with Louis Massignon and his engagement with Islam there are two updated papers in a recent collection published in France: Sidney H. Griffith: 'Un entretien sur toutes choses humaines et divines au travers de la correspondance de Louis Massignon et de Thomas Merton', pp. 259-278; and Herbert Mason, 'Louis Massignon and Thomas Merton', pp. 247-258 and Massignon et Merton, pp. 351-362 (which is a French translation of the former) in the

volume *Louis Massignon au cœur de notre temps*. Sous la direction Jacques Keryell, Paris Éditions Karthala 1999.

4. Since his death from a heart attack on the night of October 31st, 1962, many memoirs, appreciations, scholarly and biographical studies of Louis Massignon have appeared, attempting to capture and convey something of his range of ideas, interests, and personal imprints on others. Because of the complexity of his life and thought, though he kept nothing of either secret from anyone, he remains richly elusive. And perhaps because of the devotion of his intellectual and spiritual disciples, anything approaching an objective, let alone full, biography is difficult to achieve. On Louis Massignon see the following studies:

Mansour Monteil: *Le Linceul de Feu, Louis Massignon (1883-1962)*, Paris: Vega Press 1987; C Destremau & J Moncelon: *Massignon*, Paris: Plon 1994; and Sister Mary Louise Gude's important study in English: *Louis Massignon: The Crucible of Compassion* (Notre Dame University Press 1996).

5. Neal Robinson: *Massignon, Vatican II and Islam as an Abrahamic Religion, Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations*, Vol 2, 1991 pp. 182-205.

6. G Harpigny: *Islam et Christianisme selon Louis Massignon* (Louvain: Université Catholique de Louvain 1981)

7. For an attempt to assess Massignon's mysticism see: J Keryell: *Jardin Donné, Louis Massignon à la recherche de l'Absolu* (Paris-Fribourg: Éditions Saint-Paul 1993).

8. Mikel de Epalza: *Massignon et Asin Palacios: une longue amitié et deux approches différentes de l'Islam* (in: *L'Herne Massignon* (ed) J-F Six (Paris, 1970, pp 157-169)

9. Louis Massignon's bibliography as a scholar is impressive. For the complete bibliography of see: Youakim Moubarac: *L'Oeuvre de Louis Massignon*; Pentalogie Islamo-Chrétienne I (Beirut: Éditions du Cénacle Libanais,

1972-73). Amongst his studies, the first place must go to his two doctoral theses of 1922: *La Passion d'al-Hosayn-ibn Mansour al-Hallāj, martyre mystique de l'Islam* Paris: Geuthner, 1922, First Edition, 2 Vols. Massignon continued to work on a new edition of this work until his death in 1962. After his death, the new edition was assembled by a group of scholars working together with the Massignon family and friends, which was published as: *La Passion de Husayn ibn Mansur Hallāj, martyre mystique de l'Islam* Paris: Gallimard 1975, Second Edition, 4 Vols. The second edition was translated into English by Herbert Mason as: *The Passion of al-Hallāj: Mystic and Martyr of Islam* Bollingen Series XCVIII. Princeton University Press 1982, 4 Vols. An abridged version appeared as: *Hallāj: Mystic and Martyr* edited and translated by Herbert Mason. Princeton University Press 1994. And *Essai sur les origines du lexique technique de la mystique musulmane*. First Edition: Paris: Geuthner 1922; Second Edition: Paris: Vrin 1954; Third Edition: Paris: Vrin 1968. Now being translated into English by Benjamin Clark as: *Essays on the origins of the technical language of Islamic mysticism*. University of Notre Dame Press 1999. One important edition to this bibliography is: *Testimonies and Reflections: Essays of Louis Massignon*. Selected and translated by Herbert Mason. University of Notre Dame Press 1989.

10. Louis Massignon to Thomas Merton, 31 December 1960, Thomas Merton Study Centre, Bellarmine College, Louisville, Kentucky quoted in Sidney H. Griffith: 'Thomas Merton, Louis Massignon and the Challenge of Islam', *The Merton Annual*, Vol 3 (1990) pp 151-172.