

## '**ABD AL-MASIH AL-ISRA'ILI (late 10th c.)**

An Apologist. According to the title of his *Book of Induction* (*Kitab al-istidlal*), 'Abd al-Masih was a Jew of al-[Raqqah](#) who was led to Christianity by the famous Christian physician Mansur ibn Sahlan (d. ca. 1004), who flourished under the early Fatimid caliphs. A precis (by Samir Khalil, "'Abd al-Masih") of 'Abd al-Masih's unpublished book suggests that it is a compendium of arguments for the [truth](#) of the Christian faith (in particular, the doctrines of the Trinity, the **Incarnation**, and the [Crucifixion](#) of Christ), much of it gathered from earlier Arabic Christian literature from outside Egypt.

The arguments range from the standard "proofs" for the true religion through prophecies and [miracles](#) to sophisticated apologetic exploitation of [notions](#) found in the (relatively recent) Arabic translations of Greek philosophical and mathematical works. As 'Abd al-[Masih](#) becomes better known, he will undoubtedly gain in stature as a pioneer of Arabic Christian apologetic literature in Egypt.

**GAWDAT GABRA**

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