



**WHAT EVERYONE
SHOULD KNOW ABOUT
THE QUR'AN**

Ahmed Al-Laithy

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Dedication

**For my wife
& Children**

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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

FOREWORD

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الْوَاحِدِ الْأَحَدِ، الْفَرْدِ الصَّمَدِ، الَّذِي لَمْ يَلِدْ وَلَمْ يُولَدْ، وَلَمْ يَكُنْ لَهُ كُفُوًا أَحَدٌ، الَّذِي خَلَقَ الْإِنْسَانَ وَكَرَّمَهُ، وَأَنْعَمَ عَلَيْهِ بِالْحَيَاةِ وَالْعَقْلِ دُونَ سَابِقَةٍ مِنْ صَالِحِ عَمَلٍ أَوْ اسْتِحْقَاقٍ، وَأَشْهَدُ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَأَنَّ مُحَمَّدًا عَبْدُهُ وَرَسُولُهُ النَّبِيُّ الْأُمِّيُّ الَّذِي بَلَغَ الرِّسَالَهَ وَأَدَّى الْأَمَانَةَ وَآتَاهُ اللَّهُ جَوَامِعَ الْكَلِمِ فَتَهَلَّ مِنْ عِلْمِهِ الْعُلَمَاءُ، فَاللَّهُمَّ اجْرِهِ خَيْرَ مَا جَزَيْتَ نَبِيًّا عَنْ أُمَّتِهِ وَسَلِّمْ تَسْلِيمًا كَثِيرًا.

All praise is due to Allah who created us from nothing, presented us from His Infinite Bounty with the gift of life without any previous good deeds to deserve such a gift or make us worthy of His many other favours in this life and

in the Hereafter, and without whose *tawfi:q* this work would have been an impossibility.

Sincere thanks go to all those who have helped in the various stages of the production of this work, even with a mere word of encouragement. They are too numerous to record here. Therefore, for fear of unintentionally forgetting anyone of them, I apologise that none is singled out here. May their good deeds be considered in their balance on the Day of Judgement.

Transliteration

ء	'	د	d	ط	ṭ	م	m
ا	a	ذ	dh	ظ	ẓ	ن	n
ب	b	ر	r	ع	'	هـ	h
ت	t	ز	z	غ	gh	و	w
ث	th	س	s	ف	f	ى	y
ج	j	ش	sh	ق	q	ـَـ	a
ح	h	ص	ṣ	ك	k	ـِـ	i
خ	kh	ض	ḍ	ل	l	ـُـ	u

- is used to indicate that the vowel is a long vowel (i.e., slightly longer than the usual fathah, kasrah, or dammah).

This applies to all the words transliterated in this paper including Arabic reference titles and names of authors except when the author provides his own spelling for

his name, which may not conform to this transliteration system. Accordingly, a name like 'الخطيب' is written as 'Khatib', not 'Khati:b'.

Exception also extends to those Arabic words whose different spelling is already widely accepted in English, such as *Qur'an, Koran, Ayah, Surah (Surat), tafsir, Ummah, Islam, Ulema, Imam, Ramadan, Kufa, Mecca, Medina, Abu*, etc.

ة is transliterated as 'h' when final, hence, Ayah and Surah, except when difficulty in pronunciation arises especially, for example, when followed by a *maftu:h* vowel sound, it is then rendered 't'.

ال i.e., the definite article, whether the 'J' is pronounced or not, i.e., being *shamsiyyah* or *qamariyyah*, it is always written as 'l'.

Abbreviations

Lit. Literally.

Q is used before the Qur'anic Surahs and Ayahs numbers. So, Q55:9 means Surah

no.55 (Al-Rahma:n), Ayah no.9.

The Ayah numbers follow the Egyptian Standard Version although some of the translations used in this work follow a different system.

Notes

1. With regard to *tashki:l* 'تشكيل' (diacritical signs), the word processor used in writing this thesis does not support some of the features required to produce the Qur'anic Ayahs exactly as they appear in the Holy Book. However, every effort has been made so that the Ayahs are written in most cases as closely as possible to the Uthmani writing.

In the case of the (ل) in (لا), it was not possible to put any diacritical signs on it. For example, *shaddah* '◌◌◌' could not be placed on the second (ل) in words like *li'alla:* 'لِئَلَّا', otherwise, it would have looked like this 'لِئَلَّا'. Therefore, such a way of writing had to be completely avoided and no *tashki:l* was added.

2. The word 'فُرْآن' is commonly written as such, however, the *Uthmani* writing is 'قُرْآن' which is what is followed in this paper with regard to the Qur'anic Ayahs where the word occurs. However, following the *Uthmani* writing was not possible all the time with words such as 'آية', 'آيات', 'السَّمَاوَاتِ', 'الصَّلَاة', etc.

3. When transliterating words that have underlined letters, h, s, d, t, z, immediately following one another the letters are underlined jointly as in 'مُصْحَف' *mushaf*, 'الأضحى' *al-'Adha:*, 'أصحاب' 'asha:b, etc.

4. It is customary to follow the names of the Prophets and Messengers of Allah with 'ﷺ)' and the names of the companions of the Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) with 'ﷺ)'. Although this custom is not followed in this publication, the writer urges the reader to assume their existence.

On the other hand the addition of 'ﷺ)' after the name of the Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) is also commonly done away with in similar works to this. This practice is not followed in this publication as the writer feels strongly about this particular point. It is therefore kept here.

5. Several Arabic, and sometimes English, references have no publication date, others mention only the Hijri date, and therefore, they are referred to as such. The former are represented as “(n.d)”, and in the latter, the date is followed by “A.H”.

6. Following a widely accepted and followed convention Qur'anic Ayahs are written between decorative parentheses ﴿-﴾.

INTRODUCTION

Q11:1

﴿الرِّكَابُ أَحْكَمَتْ آيَاتُهُ ثُمَّ فُصِّلَتْ مِنْ لَدُنْ حَكِيمٍ خَبِيرٍ﴾

Q9:122

﴿وَمَا كَانَ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ لِيَنفِرُوا كَآفَّةً فَلَوْلَا نَفَرَ مِنْ كُلِّ فِرْقَةٍ مِّنْهُمْ طَائِفَةٌ لِّيَتَفَقَّهُوا فِي الدِّينِ وَلِيُنذِرُوا قَوْمَهُمْ إِذَا رَجَعُوا إِلَيْهِمْ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَحْذَرُونَ﴾

THE Book Of Guidance

The Qur'an has always been a Book to write about, and perhaps, it is the most studied and written about Book in the world. It is enough to say that a whole discipline known as '*Ulu:m al-Qur'an*' is based on and originated as a result of this Holiest of Books. For more than fourteen centuries, the Qur'an has inspired millions of people to study it and learn from its infinite wisdom in all walks of life.

In spite of the many Qur'anic references to science, history, law, agriculture, various religions, different cultures, commerce, ethics, etc., the Qur'an cannot be classified as a reference book for all, or as strictly belonging to some of the above mentioned fields or many others. The Qur'an is not even a mere book of guidance as it exceeds in excellence all the books that are believed to contain guidance between their covers. It is not just a book of guidance, it is **'the Book of Guidance'**.

Muslims in general, and rightly so, accept the Qur'an as the only true, complete and preserved Word of Allah (God) in existence nowadays, as no one is considered a Muslim without believing so. The Qur'an made the claim, that it is the Word of Allah, since the Prophet of Islam Muḥammad (ﷺ) started delivering the Message he (ﷺ) received

from the Lord of all beings, Allah (ﷻ). Since then, the Qur'an has always been the miracle of Islam.

Why We Believe The Miracles Of Moses (ﷺ) And Jesus (ﷺ)

All the Prophets of Allah before Muḥammad (ﷺ) were given 'A:ya:t' (signs) to support their claims with regard to the truthfulness of what they brought their people from their Lord. If such signs, like the parting of the water by the Prophet Moses or the bringing of the dead back to life by the Prophet Jesus, had not been mentioned in the Qur'an, Muslims would have hesitated to accept them as statements of fact. However, strictly speaking, such signs or miracles remain to the person who did not see them happen mere stories of old that could be equally true or false as no one can prove them true in any conceivable way apart from referring to the Book.

The Muslim, however, believes these stories because they are recorded in his Holy Book, in whose authenticity and genuineness he has no doubt. This means that such narratives are accepted as true based on the acceptance of the Qur'an as the true Word of Allah.

Why Is The Qur'an A Different Miracle?

Comparing the Qur'an, as the miracle of Islam, with the miracles of some of the Prophets of Allah prior to Muḥammad (ﷺ), we see the difference showing glaringly. Since they are incidents that took place in the past, the miracles of the Prophets Moses and Jesus cannot be proven true by either the Jew or the Christian due to the fact that those miracles cannot be subjected to examination. The Qur'an, on the other hand, is still in existence, and constitutes a challenge to everyone, urging those in doubt to examine it as thoroughly as they wish. Perhaps, this has always

been one of the reasons for the studying of that Holy Book at all times until the present day.

What Is A Miracle?

The nature of the miracle is one of the most important aspects of any miracle. This is because, for any unusual thing to be considered as such, it has to break what some people tend to call ‘natural laws’. (This does not mean that nature has made such laws, as nature itself is ‘created’ and not a ‘creator.’) Therefore, inventions for example are not miracles because they develop as a result of existing laws that come to the knowledge of the inventor when ‘Allah wills them to be revealed’, and at the end of the day, they do not break any “natural” laws.

Accordingly, no invention can lead to the parting of the water when it is hit by a stick (or at least, we have not seen this happen yet!); only the Prophet Moses could do that ‘with the permission

of the Creator and Controller of all laws'. Similarly, no man can bring the dead back to life by a mere touch of his hand but the Prophet Jesus, this also with a permission from his Lord and Creator, Allah. Therefore, miracles are challenges, not to people's intelligence but to their abilities to break the natural laws.

Also for a miracle to be accepted this way by people, it must involve something in which these people excel. The Egyptians, for example, excelled all nations in magic in the Prophet Moses's time, yet, his miracle defeated their magic, their excellence and expertise. The Israelites in the Prophet Jesus's time excelled all other nations in medicine, but their knowledge could not raise the dead. Yet, by a mere touch or a word the Prophet Jesus could do this; his miracle defeated everything they knew and experienced about medicine. Such miracles could only be understood by the eyewitness who knows his work but not

Allah's: these were achievements beyond the power and knowledge of humans. As this was very clear in the minds of Pharaoh's magicians, they believed in the Prophet Moses immediately and with no hesitation.

The nature of the Qur'anic miracle does not differ from the above. The Arabs by the time of the Prophet Muḥammad (ﷺ) had already perfected their language; they reached an unprecedented level with regard to mastering Arabic. The level of maturity of the Arabic language then is very hard to explain. The Arabs believed they were the most *fasi:h* (eloquent) of all nations. The literature they have left provides ample evidence. Yet the Qur'an was revealed, defeating their *fasa:hah*, (eloquence) and challenging their *bala:ghah* (rhetoric). The challenge was formidable because it was of the same nature as what they believed they had excelled all nations at, and all their attempts to produce something like it were doomed to failure.

This Booklet

Many are the works that have been written to point out the references to all sorts of scientific accuracy, or the miraculous scientific nature of the Holy Scripture. However, this work is mainly concerned with the history of the collection of the Holy Qur'an. It also explains some linguistic points that might be of interest to the reader who wants to know about the Qur'an but does not know where to start. This work paves the way for any reader who wants to study the Qur'an in any degree of depth.

It begins with a discussion of some of the Muslim Ulema's and linguists' views as to the derivation and meaning of the word 'Qur'an'. Then it refers to some of the other names the Qur'an is known by, in addition to the Qur'anic testimony with regard to its *'inza:l* (descending), then its revelation to the Prophet (ﷺ) over a period

of twenty years and discusses some of the reasons for the length of time of the revelation with a brief reference to the first and last revealed Ayahs of the Qur'an.

As the Qur'an makes the claim that it is the only preserved Word of Allah in existence which Man has, and that it will continue to be so without suffering the least corruption or distortion, this claim had to be put to the test in an attempt to establish whether such is the case or not. And although the truth of the matter is that since its revelation until the present day, the Qur'an has not changed, the history of its preservation has been researched. A great number of references of classical and modern scholars have been consulted to reveal the steps taken towards its preservation exactly as it was first revealed. Therefore, the first area of investigation was how the Prophet (ﷺ) memorised the Qur'an and taught it to his companions and had a number of them record it as

well as instructing them in how to do this and how to order the Ayahs and Surahs. The reports that have reached us indicate that the order of the Ayahs and the Surahs including even the names of the Surahs was according to instructions from the Prophet (ﷺ); this is known as *tawqi:fi* 'تَوْقِيْفِي'.

This publication goes on to investigate *jam'* *al-Qur'an* 'جَمْعُ الْقُرْآنِ', that is, the collection of the Qur'an and its putting together in the form of a Book, in all its stages. As the Qur'an is a collection of *Ayahs* and *Surahs*, the meanings of these two terms in addition to the four main divisions of the Qur'an, are discussed with a brief reference to the Surahs that are classified as either Meccan or Medinan.

The Qur'an makes another claim with regard to its being an Arabic Book in its entirety. Many works have referred to those words believed to be non-Arabic. Some of these works ignore the fact

that as the peoples of different languages come into contact an exchange of words and phrases is inevitable, and Arabic as a language was no exception. Words found in the Qur'an that are believed to be non-Arabic are either Arabic in actuality, as the converse could not be established, or of foreign origin then borrowed and incorporated into the language. By the time the Qur'an was revealed such words had already been used by the Arabs and were not considered foreign in the least. It is amazing that the Arabs challenged by the Qur'an did not raise such a question of non-Arabic words in the Qur'an.

It is clear by now that many of the above points with regard to the Qur'an are based on the Qur'anic testimony that it is the Word of Allah, and unless this claim is substantiated, it can hardly be accepted as true. That is why careful investigation of this particular takes place, in addition to discussing the Qur'anic challenge to

the Arabs and all other nations to produce something like it with reference to their utter failure in coming up with anything that is even remotely like it.

The Arabs were defeated though they were the masters of the Arabic language. The *faṣa:hah* and *bala:ghah* of the Qur'an bewildered them, and even the most extreme among them in his hatred for the new message and its deliverer had to admit that the Qur'an was unlike anything they knew. In spite of the fact that the Arabs knew what is considered non-*faṣi:h* and/or non-*bali:gh*, they still could not escape making mistakes in this area in their poetry. In contrast, the Qur'an, in spite of its more than six thousand Ayahs, and its revelation over more than twenty years, suffers no such shortcomings. Therefore, the Qur'an was rightly worthy of its place as the pinnacle of *bala:ghah*.

The making of this work did not prove an easy task although it must be said that it was not expected to be so in the first place. It was only the *tawfi:q* from Allah that kept me going and made possible what seemed impossible.

It remains to say that I pray to Allah to accept my work as it was conducted with no desire of earthly gain and to place it on the *mi:za:n* of my *hasana:t* on the Day of Judgement, and to satisfy the Prophet (ﷺ)'s saying with regard to the useful knowledge that one leaves behind, i.e., “عِلْمٌ يُنْتَفَعُ بِهِ”.

It goes without saying that whatever I have said that is correct, it is due to the blessing of Allah to Whom all Praise belongs; and whatever happens to be erroneous is my own doing, and for which I seek the forgiveness of Allah. May the peace and Blessing of Allah be upon our Prophet

Muhammad (ﷺ), his family and all his companions
till the Day of Judgement. My final prayer is:

“الحمد لله رب العالمين”

Praise be to Allah, the Lord of all beings.

Ahmed Allaithy
Earth: 2016



History of The Holy Qur'an

Al-Qur'an:

Definition & Derivation

Muslim Ulema agree that the Holy Qur'an is the Word of Allah,¹ revealed to the last of His Prophets and Messengers, Muḥammad (ﷺ), in word and sense, miraculous in nature; its *Ayahs* (Verses) are unique and inimitable, its recital is an act of worship; it has been handed down by unanimous assertion (*Tawa:tur* 'تَوَاتُر')² affording

certainty, and written down in the *Masa:hif* ‘المصاحف’ (Exemplars) from the beginning of Surat Al-Fa:tiḥah ‘الفاتحة’ to the end of Surat Al-Na:s ‘الناس’.³

However, linguists⁴ differ concerning the derivation of the word ‘قرآن’ Qur’an as follows:

(1) Al-Lahya:ni and others say that *Qur’an* ‘قرآن’ is the verbal noun of the verb *qara’a* ‘قرأ’, meaning ‘to read’ or ‘to recite’. The word *Qur’an* was then used as a Proper Name for the Revelations received by the Prophet Muḥammad (ﷺ). As a word meaning ‘Reading’, ‘Recitation’ or ‘Recital’, *Qur’an* is used in the Holy Book to this effect. Q75:17-18 read

إِنَّ عَلَيْنَا جَمْعَهُ وَقُرْآنَهُ * فَإِذَا قَرَأْنَاهُ فَاتَّبِعْ قُرْآنَهُ ﴿١٧﴾

“It is for Us to collect it and to recite (promulgate or give you the ability to recite) it. So, when We recite it, then follow you its recital (recitation)”.⁵

In one of his poems, Hassa:n ibn Tha:bit, on the death of ‘Uthma:n ibn ‘Affa:n, says:

“ضَحُوا بِأَشْمَطِ عُنْوَانِ السُّجُودِ بِهِ يَقَطُّعُ اللَّيْلَ تَسْبِيحًا وَقُرْآنًا”,⁶

that is, ‘They sacrificed an old man (‘Uthma:n) who was the symbol of devotion in worship (as manifested in prostration in *Sala:h*) as he used to spend his nights glorifying Allah and reciting (قُرْآنًا) the Qur’an’.

On the other hand, Qata:dah says: *Qur’an* means ‘Compilation’ as in: ‘قَرَأَ الرَّجُلُ’ when a person ‘compiles a speech’. He also explains ﴿قُرْءَانَهُ﴾ in Q75:17 to mean ‘its compilation’. An Arab poet, talking about a she-camel (whose womb has not ‘enclosed/contained’ a baby-camel), says referring to this meaning:

form the root of *Qur'an* 'قُرْآن', and its removal is only a matter of making the pronunciation easy 'تَخْفِيف', and the *hamzah* sound has been transferred to the vowelless sound 'الْحَرْفُ السَّاكِنُ' before it. As for *al* 'ال', these two letters at the beginning of the word *al-Qur'an* 'الْقُرْآن', are not the definite 'ال' meaning 'the', but they function as referent to the root of the word *Qur'an*.

(3) Al-'Ash'ari and others say: *Qur'an* is derived from the verb *qarana* 'قَرَنَ', meaning 'to link or relate' as in 'قَرَنْتُ الشَّيْءَ بِالشَّيْءِ', 'I linked (joined, related) one thing to another'. So, as the Surahs and Ayahs of the *Qur'an* are linked or relate to one another, the word was used as a name of the Holy Scripture of the Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ).

(4) Al-Farra:’ says: *Qur’an* is derived from *al-qara:’in* ‘الْقَرَائِنُ’ meaning ‘the likes or similar things’ as the Ayahs confirm, are like or similar to, one another.

According to these two opinions, the root of *Qur’an* is *qarana* which includes the letter *nu:n* ‘ن’, but not the *hamzah* ‘ء’ as it is the case in (1) and (2) above.

(5) Al-Sha:fi’i is reported to have said that ‘*Al-Qur’an*’ is a Name given to the Word of Allah that had been revealed to the Prophet Muḥammad (ﷺ). The word is neither derived from *qara’a* ‘قَرَأَ’ ‘to recite’, nor the *hamzah* ‘ء’ is one of its constituents. It is a name for the Book of Allah just like the *Torah* and the *Inji:l*.

The most likely of all the above-mentioned opinions are the first then the second. It is also of importance to know that the word *Qur'an*, which is mentioned in the Holy Book seventy times, does not only signify the Revelation in its totality but also single parts of it as well.

Other Names For The Qur'an

'*Al-Qur'an*' is not the only name given to the divine Revelations which the Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) received from Allah, as the Qur'an mentions other names for it.

Q2:2 mentions *Al-Kita:b* 'الْكِتَابُ', 'the Book', ﴿ذَلِكَ الْكِتَابُ لَا رَيْبَ فِيهِ﴾ "This is the Book (the Qur'an) whereof there is no doubt".⁸

Q15:9 gives the name *Al-Dhikr* ‘الذِّكْرُ’, ﴿إِنَّا نَحْنُ
نَزَّلْنَا الذِّكْرَ﴾ “Verily We: It is We who have sent down
the Dhikr (i.e. the Qur’an)”.⁹

Q25:1 mentions *Al-Furqa:n* ‘الْفُرْقَانُ’, ‘the
Criterion’, ﴿تَبَارَكَ الَّذِي نَزَّلَ الْفُرْقَانَ﴾ “Blessed be He
Who sent down the Criterion (of right and wrong,
i.e. the Qur’an)”.¹⁰

And Q26:192 gives a fourth name: *Tanzi:l*
‘تَنْزِيلٌ’, i.e., ‘Revelation’. The Ayah reads ﴿وَإِنَّهُ لَتَنْزِيلُ
رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ﴾, “And truly, this (the Qur’an) is a
revelation from the Lord of the ‘*A:lami:n*
(mankind, jinns and all that exists)”.¹¹

Stages of Revelation “Tanzi:l al-Qur’an”

Before the revelation of the Qur’an to the
Prophet Muḥammad (ﷺ), the Qur’an had been
‘inscribed’ in *al-Lawḥ al-Mahfu:z*,¹² ‘the

Preserved Tablet'. The Qur'an testifies to this in Q85:21-22 ﴿بَلْ هُوَ قُرْآنٌ كَرِيمٌ * فِي لَوْحٍ مَّحْفُوظٍ﴾, "Nay!

This is a Glorious Qur'an, (inscribed) in *Al-Lauh Al-Mahfu:z* (The Preserved Tablet)!"¹³

The Qur'an also says in Q56:77-80:

﴿إِنَّهُ لَقُرْآنٌ كَرِيمٌ * فِي كِتَابٍ مَّكْنُونٍ * لَا يَمَسُّهُ إِلَّا الْمُطَهَّرُونَ *﴾
﴿تَنْزِيلٌ مِنْ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ﴾,

"That is indeed a Qur'an most honourable, in a Book well-guarded, which none shall touch but those who are clean: a Revelation from the Lord of the Worlds"¹⁴

In this latter quotation the Qur'an, as a divine Revelation, is described by four characteristics:

"(1) It is most honourable, *Kari:m*, which implies, besides the fact that it is worthy of receiving honour, that it confers great favours on those who receive it. (2) It is well-guarded, *Maknu:n*; precious in itself, and well-preserved in its purity; (3) None but the clean shall touch it- clean in body, mind, thought, intention, and soul; only such can achieve real contact with its full meaning. (4)

It is a revelation from the Lord of the Worlds,
and therefore universal for all”.¹⁵

From *al-Lawh al-Mahfu:z*, which is “the General Record in which Allah had written what was, is, and will be”,¹⁶ the Qur’an descended to “*Bayt al-‘Izzah*”¹⁷ ‘بَيْتِ الْعِزَّةِ’ or the ‘House of Honour’. Then Gabriel, the Archangel, dictated the Qur’an to the angels.¹⁸ This writing by the honourable angels is referred to in Q80:15-16 which read ﴿بِأَيْدِي سَفَرَةٍ * كِرَامٍ بَرَرَةٍ﴾ “Written by the hands of Scribes- honourable and obedient”.¹⁹

The Qur’an was then revealed to the Prophet Muḥammad (ﷺ) through Gabriel, and the Prophet (ﷺ) in turn communicated it to his followers and companions, the *Saha:bah* ‘الصَّحَابَةَ’.

In short, the Qur’an has gone through three stages:

1. The whole Qur’an was inscribed on *al-Lawh al-Mahfu:z*.

2. The whole Qur'an descended to 'Bayt al-Izzah', in the 'nearest (or lowest) heaven' "السَّمَاءِ الدُّنْيَا",²⁰ in Ramadan, [Q2:185: ﴿شَهْرُ رَمَضَانَ الَّذِي أُنزِلَ فِيهِ الْقُرْآنُ﴾ "Ramadan is the (month) in which was sent down the Qur'an"²¹], on the Blessed Night [Q44:3 ﴿إِنَّا أَنْزَلْنَاهُ فِي لَيْلَةٍ مُبَارَكَةٍ﴾ "We sent it down during a blessed night"²²], of Al-Qadr (Destiny, Decree or Power), [Q97:1 ﴿إِنَّا أَنْزَلْنَاهُ فِي لَيْلَةِ الْقَدْرِ﴾ "We have indeed revealed this (Message) in the Night of Power"²³].²³

3. The Qur'an was then revealed to the Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) through the Angel Gabriel²⁴ over a period around the figure of twenty two years, five months and fourteen days".²⁵

The Qur'an tells us about these stages in Q26:192-195:

وَإِنَّهُ لَنَزِيلُ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ * نَزَلَ بِهِ الرُّوحُ الْأَمِينُ * عَلَى قَلْبِكَ لِتَكُونَ
﴿ مِنَ الْمُنذِرِينَ * بِلسَانٍ عَرَبِيٍّ مُبِينٍ ﴾

“And truly, this (the Qur’an) is a revelation from the Lord of the ‘A:lami:n (mankind, jinns, and all that exists),* which the trustworthy Ru:h (Gabriel) has brought down;* upon your heart (O Muḥammad (ﷺ)) that you may be (one) of the warners,* in the plain Arabic language”.²⁶

There is no doubt in the writings of the Ulema that although the whole Qur’an had been sent down from *al-Lawh al-Mahfu:z* to *Bayt al-Izzah*, that it took more than twenty years before the entire Qur’an was revealed to the Prophet Muḥammad (ﷺ). The Qur’an itself testifies to this long period of time giving also reasons for it.

Why Was Not The Qur’an Revealed All At Once?

Q17:106 reads:

﴿وَقُرْءَانًا فَرَقْنَاهُ لِتَقْرَأَهُ عَلَى النَّاسِ عَلَى مُكْثٍ وَنَزَّلْنَاهُ تَنْزِيلًا﴾

“And (it is) a Qur’an which We have divided (into parts from time to time) in order that you might recite it to men at intervals. And We have revealed it by stages”.²⁷

Also, Q25:32-33 show another very important factor in this respect which will be discussed in detail shortly. The Ayahs read:

﴿ وَقَالَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا لَوْلَا نُزِّلَ عَلَيْهِ الْقُرْآنُ جُمْلَةً وَاحِدَةً كَذَلِكَ لِنُثَبِّتَ بِهِ ﴾

﴿ فُؤَادَكَ وَرَتَّلْنَاهُ تَرْتِيلًا *

﴿ وَلَا يَأْتُونَكَ بِمَثَلٍ إِلَّا جِئْنَاكَ بِالْحَقِّ وَأَحْسَنَ تَفْسِيرًا

“And those who disbelieve say: “Why is not the Qur’an revealed to him all at once?” Thus, (it is sent down in parts), that We may strengthen your heart thereby. And We have revealed it to you in slow, well-arranged stages, gradually. And no question do they bring to thee, but We reveal to thee the truth and the best explanation (thereof)”.²⁸

As a preliminary conclusion, the above-mentioned Ayahs show clearly that continuous

contact between heaven and earth was of great importance for the new Message to achieve its goals.

Other reasons can be identified as follows:

(1) Many Ayahs in the Qur'an tell of the Prophet (ﷺ)'s extreme sadness because of the people's disbelief in him and his Message. Q18:6 refers to this:

﴿فَلَعَلَّكَ بَاخِعٌ نَفْسِكَ عَلَىٰ آثَارِهِمْ إِن لَّمْ يُؤْمِنُوا بِهَذَا الْحَدِيثِ أَسَفًا﴾

“Perhaps, you would kill yourself (O Muḥammad ﷺ) in grief, over their footsteps (for their turning away from you), because they believed not in this narration (the Qur'an)”.²⁹

On the other hand, Q35:8 consoles the Prophet (ﷺ), and calms him down:

﴿فَلَا تَذْهَبْ نَفْسُكَ عَلَيْهِمْ حَسْرَاتٍ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلِيمٌ بِمَا يَصْنَعُونَ﴾

“So, destroy not yourself in sorrow for them. Truly, Allah is the All-Knower of what they do”.³⁰

Q13:40 also reminds the Prophet (ﷺ) that his duty is *only* to deliver the Message of Allah ﴿فَإِنَّمَا عَلَيْكَ الْبَلَاغُ وَعَلَيْنَا الْحِسَابُ﴾ “Your duty is only to convey (the message) and on Us is the reckoning”.³¹ So, he (ﷺ) does not have to kill himself in sorrow if they do not accept his Message and become rightly guided.

Q2:272 indicates that guidance is in the Hands of Allah and nobody else: ﴿لَيْسَ عَلَيْكَ هُدَاهُمْ وَلَكِنَّ اللَّهَ يَهْدِي مَنْ يَشَاءُ﴾ “Not upon you (Muhammad ﷺ) is their guidance, but Allah guides whom He wills”,³² while Q28:56 goes to the extent that it is not because the Prophet (ﷺ) would like a certain person or persons to accept his Message that this has automatically got to happen; the Ayah reads: ﴿إِنَّكَ لَا تَهْدِي مَنْ أَحْبَبْتَ وَلَكِنَّ اللَّهَ يَهْدِي مَنْ يَشَاءُ وَهُوَ﴾
﴿أَعْلَمُ بِالْمُهْتَدِينَ﴾ “Verily! You (O Muhammad ﷺ) guide

not whom you like, but Allah guides whom He wills. And He knows best who are the guided”.³³

When the Prophet (ﷺ) was also faced by difficulties and suffered as a result of his preaching, Ayahs were revealed supporting him spiritually and psychologically, so that he (ﷺ) might exercise more patience and endurance taking example from the Prophets of Allah who went through similar experiences before him.

Q46:35 reads: ﴿فَاصْبِرْ كَمَا صَبَرَ أُولُو الْعِزْمِ مِنَ الرُّسُلِ﴾

“Therefore be patient (O Muhammad ﷺ) as did the Messengers of strong will”.³⁴ Q11:115 and Q16:127-8 testify to this as well.³⁵

(2) To make it easy for the Prophet (ﷺ) to know all that was being revealed by heart, so that he could deliver it to the people exactly as he had received it.

The Qur'an tells us of the Prophet (ﷺ)'s eagerness to receive the Qur'an and commit it to his memory as fast as possible to the extent that he used to recite word by word what Gabriel would have been reciting even before Gabriel finished his recital. Therefore, Ayahs were revealed to reassure the Prophet (ﷺ) and guarantee to him that he would be able to know the entire Revelation by heart without forgetting anything. Q20:114 reads:

﴿ وَلَا تَعْجَلْ بِالْقُرْآنِ مِنْ قَبْلِ أَنْ يُقْضَىٰ إِلَيْكَ وَحْيُهُ وَقُل رَّبِّیْ ﴾

﴿ زِدْنِي عِلْمًا ﴾

“And be not in haste (O Muḥammad ﷺ) with the Qur'an before its revelation is complete to you and say: “My Lord! Increase me in knowledge”.³⁶

Q75:16-19: ﴿ لَا تُحَرِّكْ بِهِ لِسَانَكَ لِتَعْجَلَ بِهِ * إِنْ عَلَيْنَا ﴾

﴿ جَمَعَهُ وَقُرْآنَهُ * فَإِذَا قَرَأْنَاهُ فَاتَّبِعْ قُرْآنَهُ ﴾,³⁷ is another example. So, here both the memorisation and understanding of the Qur'an have been guaranteed.

Many reports³⁸ also indicate that the Qur'an used to be revealed five Ayahs at a time, sometimes more, other times less.

The revealing of a small number of Ayahs at a time must have surely made it easy for the Prophet (ﷺ) and his companions to learn them by heart and to act accordingly.

(3) The Arab society before Islam was in dire need of an entire change and general reform especially in the fields of religion and ethics. Some of the old and bad habits that the Arabs had then took the form of worshipping idols and statues they had made by their own hands, associating partners to Allah, murder, drinking alcohol, prostitution, plundering, cheating, burying their female babies alive, killing their children for fear of poverty, waging wars against one another for the most trivial of reasons, abusing women, etc. Therefore, there was no social harmony or spirit of

co-operation between them. All these bad habits that die hard in which the great majority of the society was indulging were not going to cease immediately and at the same time because of one revelation.

The eradication of such bad habits that had been deeply rooted necessitated the taking of gradual steps. Al-Bukha:ri reports that 'Umm al-Mu'mini:n 'A:'ishah said: “(One) of the earliest revelations was a Surah from *al-Mufasssal* that mentioned Heaven ‘الْجَنَّةُ’ and the Fire ‘النَّارُ’. So, when the people had accepted Islam, then the Ayahs regarding what is *hala:l* ‘الْحَلَالُ’ (things allowed or permitted) and *hara:m* ‘الْحَرَامُ’ (things prohibited) were revealed. Had “Do not drink alcohol” been first revealed, they would have said: “We will never give up alcohol”. And if the first revealed Ayah had been “Do not commit

adultery”, they would have said: “We will never give up adultery””.³⁹

Also, the story of the prohibition of alcohol ‘**الْخَمْرُ**’,⁴⁰ which is too familiar to narrate here, gives a good example of the gradual proceedings taken in the process of leading people to give up their bad habits. It also shows the wisdom in revealing the Qur’an in stages and not all at once.

(4) Gradual prohibition of bad deeds and behaviour is also associated with gradual introduction of new teachings related to ethics, beliefs, acts of worship etc.

It was then that new rulings to do with Prayer (*Sala:h* **الصَّلَاة**), Poor Dues (*Zaka:h* **الزَّكَاة**), Fasting (*Sawm* **الصَّوْم**), Pilgrimage (*Hajj* **الْحَجَّ**), marriage, divorce, business, agriculture, debts, personal behaviour, family and neighbourly relations, Jihad,

etc., were introduced and easily accepted and abided by.

This would certainly not have been achieved if the whole Qur'an had been revealed all at once introducing such new doctrines to a people who had lived their entire life abiding and governed by no law except that of greed and personal interest.

(5) Unlike the Qur'an many authentic reports⁴¹ relate that the 'Torah', the Book of the Prophet Moses, had been revealed to him as a whole. His tablets had already been inscribed according to Q7:145 with 'explanation of all things' ﴿وَتَفْصِيلاً لِّكُلِّ شَيْءٍ﴾. Other Ayahs in the Qur'an also testify to this.⁴²

Al-Zarkashi reports that Ibn Fawrak said: "It has been said that the Torah had been revealed as a whole because the Prophet Moses (عليه السلام) knew how to read and write, while the Qur'an was revealed

piecemeal (in parts and at stages) because it was revealed unwritten and to a Prophet who was 'Ummi 'أُمِّي' (did not read or write)".⁴³

It is clear from many reports that when the Prophet Moses received the Torah and told his people of all the duties and obligations they had to observe, they refused to accept them. The Qur'an also tells of Allah raising the Mount of *al-Tu:r* 'الطُّورُ' in the Sinai Peninsula over them. And only then did the Children of Israel resign and accept them when they realised that the Mount was going to fall on them. Q2:63 reads: ﴿وَإِذْ أَخَذْنَا مِيثَاقَكُمْ وَرَفَعْنَا ﴿فَوْقَكُمْ الطُّورَ﴾ 'And when We took your covenant, and raised over you (the mount of) *al-Tu:r*'. This is also confirmed in Q7:171 that reads: ﴿وَإِذْ نَتَقْنَا ﴿الْجَبَلِ فَوْقَهُمْ كَأَنَّهُ ظِلَّةٌ وَظَنُّوا أَنَّهُ وَاقِعٌ بِهِمْ﴾ 'And when We raised the mount over them, as if it had been a

canopy, and they thought it was going to fall on them'. (*my translation*).

This shows the difficulty in accepting and abiding by new laws. This would have proven more difficult in the case of the Arabs who were not versed in the field of Divine Revelations like the Children of Israel.

The history of the Arabs indicates that very few Arabs were *Hani:fs* 'حنفاء', following the religion of the Prophet Abraham who had lived long before the Prophet Moses.

(6) Had the Qur'an been revealed to Muḥammad (ﷺ) written and all at once, the 'Ummi Prophet (ﷺ) would have found great difficulty in going through the pages of the written book looking for answers to questions asked by the disbelievers and the Jews who were very keen on opposing the new religion and trying very hard to

find fault in the Prophet (ﷺ) and/or the Qur'an. So, every time, whosoever came up with a question, Allah provided his Prophet (ﷺ) with the right answer and the best explanation according to Q 25:33.

The questions the Prophet (ﷺ) was asked to provide answers for were about:

- a) things that would confirm his Prophethood, such as: Q17:85, 18:83,⁴⁴ etc., and
- b) general things related to everyday life; Q2:186, 189, 215, 217, 219, 220, 222, Q33:63, Q5:4, Q7:187, Q8:1, Q20:105 and Q79:42 are but a few examples of this type.⁴⁵

As these questions were not asked at the same time, but at intervals, answers were also given accordingly for they were not going to be provided for unasked questions.

It could be asked here whether Allah could not have made the Prophet (ﷺ) know the entire Book by heart from *day one* since He was capable of doing everything and anything? The simple answer is that not everything that is possible must happen;⁴⁶ moreover no one can tell the Creator what to do and what not to do.

The First And Last Revealed Ayahs

In spite of all the superficial disagreement between reports⁴⁷ about the very first revealed Ayahs of the Qur'an, Q96:1-5 are accepted as the earliest of Revelations. The Ayahs read: ﴿اقْرَأْ بِاسْمِ رَبِّكَ الَّذِي خَلَقَ * خَلَقَ الْإِنْسَانَ مِنْ عَلَقٍ * اقْرَأْ وَرَبُّكَ الْأَكْرَمُ * الَّذِي عَلَّمَ بِالْقَلَمِ﴾, “Read! In the name of your Lord who created * Created man out of a clot of congealed blood * Read, and your Lord is the Most Generous * Who taught (the writing) by the Pen * taught man that which he knew not”.⁴⁸ The revelation

took place either on the 17th or 24th of Ramadan.⁴⁹

Unlike the first revealed Ayahs, there are no *hadi:ths* ‘أَحَادِيثُ’ ascribed to the Prophet Muḥammad (ﷺ) concerning the last revealed Ayahs. Reports⁵⁰ differ greatly in stating which Ayah was the last revealed. However, after scrutinizing the different reports available, it seems most likely that Q2:281 was the last revealed Ayah. It reads: ﴿وَاتَّقُوا يَوْمًا تُرْجَعُونَ فِيهِ إِلَى اللَّهِ ثُمَّ﴾ “And fear the Day when you shall be brought back to Allah. Then every soul shall be paid what it earned, and they shall not be dealt with unjustly”.⁵¹

With regard to how long the Prophet Muḥammad (ﷺ) lived after its revelation, reports differ again. The difference ranges from 81 days to 3 hours.⁵²

The Prophet (ﷺ) Memorises the Qur'an

The Qur'an relates the Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ)'s eagerness to receive and learn the Qur'an from Gabriel to the extent that for fear that a word would slip away, he would hasten the recitation before Gabriel finished. The Divine Revelations then reassured the Prophet (ﷺ) that Allah would retain the Qur'an in his memory and make it easy for him and explain what it means. Q75:16-19 read:

لَا تُحْرِكْ بِهِ لِسَانَكَ لِتَعْجَلَ بِهِ * إِنَّ عَلَيْنَا جَمْعَهُ وَقُرْآنَهُ * فَإِذَا قَرَأَهُ

﴿فَاتَّبِعْ قُرْآنَهُ * ثُمَّ إِنَّ عَلَيْنَا بَيَانَهُ﴾, "Move not your tongue

concerning (the Qur'an) to make haste therewith. It is for Us to collect it and to give you the ability to recite it (or to promulgate it). And when We have recited it to you (through Gabriel) then follow you its recital. Then it is for Us (Allah) to make it clear to you".⁵³

So, the Prophet (ﷺ) is here addressed and commanded to listen to Gabriel until Gabriel finishes his recitation, then he (ﷺ) is to recite while Gabriel is to listen. There are also many hadi:ths that state this.⁵⁴

Al-Bukha:ri ⁵⁵ reports that every night in Ramadan Gabriel used to meet the Prophet (ﷺ) to review with him such Revelations as had been received the previous year. Then in the last year of the Prophet (ﷺ)'s life, Gabriel reviewed the Qur'an twice with him. The Prophet (ﷺ) explained to his daughter Fa:timah that this meant that his death was imminent. The last reviewing of the Qur'an was witnessed by one of the Prophet (ﷺ)'s amanuenses, Zayd ibn Tha:bit.

The Saha:bah Memorise the Qur'an

Abu Shahbah states that:

“The Prophet (ﷺ) was wont to recite the Qur'an at all times: in daily and night prayers, in secret and in public, in solitude and in

company, in weal and woe. He spared no effort to recite the Qur'an again and again, to act on its injunctions and shun its prohibitions, to take warning by its admonitions and stories, to draw guidance from its parables and maxims, and to live up to its moral teachings. Thus, the Prophet (ﷺ) was for all Muslims, the final authority on the Qur'an.

Whenever the Prophet (ﷺ) received one, two, five or ten Ayahs, or even a Surah, he would learn them by heart, understand their meaning and adhere to them in action and conduct. Then he (ﷺ) would recite them before his companions, teaching them the manner of reciting them as well as their meaning, so that they might master the Qur'an both in word and meaning, initiate them into its mysteries, and indoctrinate them with the Qur'an's ideals so that they would model their lives according to them".⁵⁶

The *Saha:bah* were described as “monks by night, knights by day”,⁵⁷ as they vied with one another in memorising the Qur'an. Allah paid tribute to them in Q51:17-18 as they engaged themselves most of their nights in worship, and invoking their Lord (Allah), reciting the Qur'an, and praying. The Ayahs read:

﴿كَانُوا قَلِيلًا مِّنَ اللَّيْلِ مَا يَهْجَعُونَ * وَبِالْأَسْحَارِ هُمْ يَسْتَغْفِرُونَ﴾

“They used to sleep but little by night. And in the hours before dawn, they were (found) asking (Allah) for forgiveness”.⁵⁸ Q32:16 also asserts this: ﴿تَتَجَافَى جُنُوبُهُمْ عَنِ الْمَضَاجِعِ يَدْعُونَ رَبَّهُمْ خَوْفًا وَطَمَعًا وَمِمَّا رَزَقْنَاهُمْ يُنفِقُونَ﴾ “Their side forsake their beds, to invoke their Lord in fear and hope, and they spend (charity in Allah’s cause) out of what We have bestowed on them”.⁵⁹

There are numerous reports that a large number of the *Saha:bah* learnt the whole or most of the Qur’an by heart. This was due to the fact that the Qur’an, as well as the Prophet (ﷺ) encouraged the memorisation of the Divine Revelation.⁶⁰ The Prophet (ﷺ) even liked to listen to the Qur’an recited by his companions.⁶¹

The *Saha:bah* used to listen to the Prophet (ﷺ) recite the Qur’an, then after learning by heart the Ayahs or Surahs he (ﷺ) had recited, they taught others what they had learnt. “This type of

transmission had its model in the propagation of Ancient Arabic poetry since the art of writing was not widespread in pre-Islamic Arabia”.⁶² This is still the *sunnah* which has been followed in learning the Qur’an from the time of the Revelation until today, i.e., Oral Transmission.

As for the *Saha:bah* who knew the entire Qur’an, or at least most of it, by heart in the lifetime of the Prophet (ﷺ), reports vary; however, the following might be mentioned: Abu Bakr, ‘Umar, ‘Uthma:n, ‘Ali, ‘Abdullah ibn Mas‘u:d, Sa:lim, Mu‘a:dh ibn Jabal, ‘Ubay ibn Ka‘b, Zayd ibn Tha:bit, Abu Al-Darda:’, Ibn ‘Abba:s, Abu Zayd Qays ibn Al-Sakan, Tami:m Al-Da:ri, ‘Uba:dah ibn Al-Sa:mit, ‘Abdullah ibn ‘Amr ibn Al-‘A:ss , etc.⁶³

Al-Suyu:ti⁶⁴ also mentions the names of tens of other *Saha:bah* who knew, more or less, the entire Book by heart, in addition to some ladies as well. Among them may be mentioned: ‘A:ishah,

Hafṣah, 'Um Salamah and 'Um Waraqah bint 'Abdullah ibn Al-Ha:rith.

As an example of the large number of people who committed the Qur'an to memory especially in the lifetime of the Prophet (ﷺ), it has been reported that seventy of the Qur'an's *Qurra:*' *قُرَّاء*' ('reciters', or rather 'memorisers') were killed in the battle of *Bi'r Ma'u:nah* *بَيْرِ مَعُونَةَ*,⁶⁵ and another five hundred or seven hundred *Qurra:*' in the battle of *Yama:mah* against Musaylimah in the time of Abu Bakr.⁶⁶

Other reports refer to *Ahl al-Suffah* *أَهْلُ الصُّفَّة*' who dedicated their lives to learning, memorising, studying, understanding and teaching the Qur'an. Reports differ about their number. However, one report mentions four hundred.⁶⁷

It has now become clear that disregarding the names, the Qur'an was the main focus point for hundreds and hundreds of Muslims in whose

hearts the Qur'an was kept. This actually helped later when the scattered records that contained the Ayahs and Surahs of the Qur'an were collected and put together to form one Book in the times of Abu Bakr, 'Umar and 'Uthma:n, as will be explained shortly. Therefore, there is absolutely no doubt about the genuineness of the Revelations that have been handed down to us.

The Prophet (ﷺ)'s Amanuenses & The Preservation of The Qur'an

According to Q15:9, Allah has guaranteed the preservation of the Qur'an and its guarding from any corruption: ﴿إِنَّا نَحْنُ نَزَّلْنَا الذِّكْرَ وَإِنَّا لَهُ لَحَافِظُونَ﴾, “Verily We: It is We who have sent down the *Dhikr* (i.e. the Qur'an) and We will assuredly guard it (from corruption)”.⁶⁸ This, of course, would have been a point of attack and mockery unless fulfilled.

It is an astonishing fact that all the factors leading to the achievement of this have been made available throughout history until the present day. Firstly, the Prophet (ﷺ) himself not only memorised the Qur'an and encouraged the *Saha:bah* to do the same, but also committed the Revelations to writing. He (ﷺ) had many amanuenses whom he dictated whatever Qur'an he received through Gabriel. Among his amanuenses were: Abu Bakr, 'Umar, 'Uthma:n, 'Ali, Aba:n and Kha:lid (two sons of Sa'i:d ibn Al-'A:ss), Kha:lid ibn Al-Wali:d, Zayd ibn Tha:bit, Mu'a:wiya:h ibn Abi Sufya:n, 'Ubay ibn Ka'b and Tha:bit ibn Qays.⁶⁹

The Prophet (ﷺ) also instructed his amanuenses concerning where to place the revealed Ayahs, stating the correct places in such-and-such a Surah and between such-and-such Ayahs.

There is absolutely no doubt among the Ulema, and also judging by the numerous reports about the writing down of the Qur'an, that the **Ayah-Order** was dictated by the Prophet (ﷺ) who had been instructed by the Angel of divine Inspiration, Gabriel, following instructions from Allah (ﻋﻠﯿﻪ). This is referred to as *tawqi:fi* 'تَوْقِيْفِي'.

In spite of the fact that some of the Ulema differ concerning whether the order of the Surahs of the Qur'an that we have now is also *tawqi:fi* 'تَوْقِيْفِي' or not, it seems clear to me, and beyond any doubt in my mind, that from the many reports available that the **Surah-Order** is *tawqi:fi* as well.⁷⁰

Also, other reports⁷¹ indicate that the names given to the Surahs of the Qur'an are *tawqi:fi*, too.

The Holy Qur'an was written on the materials that were common to the Arabs at that

time, i.e. leafless palm-branches, thin flat stones, pieces of skin or tanned leather, parchment, cloth, broad bones of camels' or sheep shoulders, wooden boards used as back-saddles, etc. These scattered records were kept in the house of the Prophet Muḥammad (ﷺ). Zayd ibn Tha:bit is reported to have said: “... كُنَّا عِنْدَ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ ...”⁷² ‘In the presence of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ), we used to compile the Qur’an from small scraps ...’. This is a reference to bringing the scattered records that contained the Ayahs of the Qur’an together. Following the instructions of the Prophet (ﷺ), the Ayahs would be written in the right order.

Reports⁷³ also indicate that although these scattered records were kept in the house of the Prophet (ﷺ) and the Ayahs were put together to form Surahs, the records were not brought together compiling a single unified text to form a *Mushaf*

‘*مصحف*’,⁷⁴ mainly because for over twenty years Ayahs were being revealed for all sorts of situations and reasons, and some later Ayahs even abrogated earlier ones. Therefore, the making of one *Mushaf* without changing would have been impossible unless the entire Qur’an had been revealed to the Prophet Muḥammad (ﷺ) all at once, which was not the case as explained in some detail before.

The Qur’an in the Time of Abu Bakr

By the death of the Prophet (ﷺ), the matter was settled as it became clear that no more revelations were to descend. It was then possible to bring together all the records of the Qur’an to form a ‘Book’. However, this did not cross the minds of the *Saha:bah* until later, as the application of this idea became inevitable under Abu Bakr who had been advised and urged by

'Umar to collect the Qur'an "between two covers"⁷⁵ especially after the battle of *Yama:mah*, that took place in 12 A.H,⁷⁶ where either five hundred or seven hundred of the *Qurra:'* had been killed. 'Umar was impelled by the fact that if the number of *Qurra:'* kept decreasing due to their death in battle, the Qur'an would then be lost completely in no time. Therefore, he rationalised that the best way to preserve the Qur'an was to collect it. After some reluctance, but fully understanding the situation and finding that collecting the Qur'an was not against any Islamic Law, and a "good act" after all, Abu Bakr commissioned Zayd ibn Tha:bit to collect the Qur'an. Zayd, who was at the beginning like Abu Bakr reluctant to do something that the Prophet (ﷺ) himself had not done, began the work on that heavy undertaking. Zayd's own words were: "By Allah, if I had been commissioned to move a mountain (from its place), that would not have been hard on me as

what I had been commissioned to do of the collection of the Qur'an".⁷⁷

Many a reference shows that Zayd was the most suitable and the best equipped person for the hard task of collecting the Qur'an. There is a consensus that Zayd ibn Thabit was one of the amanuenses of the Prophet (ﷺ). He knew the entire Qur'an by heart and was also there when Gabriel reviewed the Qur'an for the last time with the Prophet (ﷺ). According to Abu Bakr's description, Zayd was "شَابٌّ عَاقِلٌ لَا نَتَهَمُكَ"،⁷⁸ i.e., 'a young and intelligent man, and we know nothing to your discredit'.

Numerous Islamic writings tell of Zayd's meticulous efforts in collecting the Qur'an from "الْعُسْبِ وَاللِّخَافِ وَصُدُورِ الرِّجَالِ"،⁷⁹ i.e. 'the leafless palm-branches, thin stones and the breasts of men' according to his own words.

The sheets which contained the entire Qur'an that Zayd compiled were tied together with a *string* and kept in Abu Bakr's house until his death. They were then passed to 'Umar then to Hafsa, the daughter of 'Umar's and the wife of the Prophet (ﷺ)'s, after her father's death and kept in her custody until her death in 45 A.H.⁸⁰

Abu Bakr's recension included:

“1-The unabrogated Ayahs as distinct from the abrogated ones.

2- All the Qur'an and nothing but the Qur'an.

3- The seven *ahruf* (reading variants) in which the Qur'an was revealed.

4- The Ayahs arranged in their present form”.⁸¹

The Surahs on the other hand, were not arranged but each was independent of the others, then all of them were tied together with a string.⁸²

The Revelations collected in Abu Bakr's time were commonly known by authorities and tradition as *Suhuf* 'صُحُف'.⁸³

'Uthma:n's Collection

In the time of the third Caliph, 'Uthma:n ibn 'Affa:n, the Islamic state kept expanding, and as a result many non-Arabs converted to Islam. In addition many of the Qur'an's *Qurra:*' dispersed into different regions and provinces, each reciting the Qur'an according to the way he had received from the Prophet (ﷺ).

Al-Miqda:d ibn Al-'Aswad taught the Qur'an to the people of Damascus and Hams; Ibn Mas'u:d taught those of Kufa; Abu Mu:sa: was in Basra, while the people of Greater Syria (Al-Sham) followed the reading of 'Ubay ibn Ka'b.⁸⁴

The different ways of reciting the same Arabic text that these *Qurra:*' were following led

those who learnt from them to differ in their modes of recitation. This was not a very serious problem until some of these ‘new’ reciters listened to one another’s recitation, or even met especially in the fields of Jihad against their enemies, each believing that his mode of recitation which he learnt from his *Qa:ri*’ (singular of *Qurra:*’), who had been taught by the Prophet Muḥammad (ﷺ) himself, was the only correct and authentic mode, while the others’ modes of recitation were wrong. The difference was so great that some of these subsequent reciters of the Qur’an fought one another over the right mode of recitation. The readings were so divergent that each reciter went to the extreme of branding the other as a disbeliever (*ka:fir*).

Having been told about this, ‘Uthma:n said: “If such is your difference while you are in my presence, it will be even greater with regard to those who live far away”.⁸⁵ His doubts were

confirmed when another incident took place. The Iraqi and Syrian soldiers who united to conquer Armenia and Azerbaijan in 25 A.H quarreled over the correct mode of recitation of the Qur'an. Hudhayfah ibn Al-Yama:n⁸⁶ reported the dispute to 'Uthma:n who had to take immediate action for fear that the problem might lead to a split in the Islamic Ummah.

According to Ibn Abi Da:wud, 'Uthma:n discussed the situation and its consequences, if left unsolved, with the Saha:bah. They unanimously agreed that one copy of the Qur'an should be made.⁸⁷

Anas and Ibn Abi Da:wud also report that 'Uthma:n asked Hafṣah to send him the Suhuf which were in her custody after her father's death and which had been compiled by Zayd ibn Tha:bit in Abu Bakr's time, so that they could be copied in other volumes. He said: “أَرْسَلِي إِلَيْنَا الصُّحُفَ نَنْسُخُهَا فِي

المصاحف". After a promise to return the *Suhuf* to her as soon as the copying work was finished, Hafṣah sent them to ‘Uthma:n.⁸⁸

The intention of ‘Uthma:n and the *Saha:bah* was to put an end to the ongoing dispute that threatened the Islamic Ummah then, and was inevitably going to lead to some irreparable schism.

‘Uthma:n commissioned four people to embark on that great task. They were Zayd ibn Tha:bit, ‘Abdullah ibn Al-Zubayr, Sa‘i:d ibn Al-‘A:ss and ‘Abd Al-Rahma:n ibn Al-Ha:rith ibn Hisha:m.⁸⁹ The three Qurayshite members were instructed by ‘Uthma:n in case they “differed with Zayd ibn Tha:bit in anything in the Qur’an to write it in the *tongue* of Quraysh, for it (the Qur’an) was revealed in their tongue”.⁹⁰

It is an astonishing fact that the thing they differed with Zayd about was not even a word but

only one letter. It was the letter (ت) at the end of the word «التَّابُوتُ» in Q2:248, that according to his dialect and way of writing, Zayd wanted to write as (هـ), thus «التَّابُوهُ». The matter was settled when ‘Uthma:n told them to write it in the *tongue* of Quraysh, hence «التَّابُوتُ».⁹¹

“The work of the council proceeded in accordance with the following general principles:

(1) The earlier recension was to serve as the principal basis of the new one, since it in turn had been made up of original materials written down during the lifetime of the Prophet (ﷺ). Thus none in the future would be able to accuse the council of ignoring the work done under the first Caliph.

(2) Additional written material not previously submitted was solicited, so that a wider range of material could be considered. Material thus submitted and duly authenticated provided valuable confirmation of the earlier recension, as well as in some cases a valuable supplement in the way of authentic variants.

(3) Variants conforming to the dialect of Quraish were to be chosen over all others, for reasons already given.

(4) The entire community was to be apprised of what was submitted, so that the work of final recension would be in effect a collective enterprise, and no one who possessed a portion of the Qur'an would be passed over. This would leave no ground for doubt concerning the reliability of the text, or for a possible claim that it was the product of individual effort rather than a communal act.

(5) Any doubt that might be raised as to the phrasing of a particular passage in the written text was to be dispelled by summoning persons known to have learned the passage in question from the Prophet (ﷺ). Thus, as before, the written text was to be confirmed by oral tradition.

(6) The Caliph himself was to supervise the work of the council".⁹²

When the task was accomplished, and *al-Mushaf al-'Imam* 'المُصْحَفُ الْإِمَامُ'⁹³ was written, Zayd reviewed it three times, and when he was absolutely sure that nothing was missing, he handed the *Mushaf* to 'Uthma:n who, in turn, compared it to the *Suhuf* he had got from Hafsa. Finding no disagreement between them, he sent back the *Suhuf* to Hafsa.⁹⁴

The *Suhuf* remained in Hafṣah's possession until her death in 45 A.H. It was then that Marawa:n ibn Al-Hakam got them from Hafṣah's brother, 'Abdullah ibn 'Umar, and burnt them, so that no doubt or argument would rise about the *Maṣa:hif* in the future.⁹⁵

Several copies were then made of that *'Ima:m*. Reports differ concerning the number of the *Maṣa:hif* sent to the chief Islamic centres then. While some reports mention only four, others record more.⁹⁶ The maximum total comes to nine copies, namely to: (1) Mecca, (2) Al-Sha:m (Greater Syria), (3) Basra, (4) Kufa, (5) Medina, (6) Medina (kept with 'Uthma:n), (7) Yemen, (8) Bahrain and (9) Egypt.

It has also been reported that to the first four regions and cities listed above, chief *Qurra:*' were sent with the *Maṣa:hif*. These were 'Abdullah ibn al-Sa:'ib, Al-Mughi:rah ibn Shiha:b Al-

Makhzu:mi, ‘A:mir ibn ‘Abd Al-Qays and Abu ‘Abd Al-Rahma:n Al-Salmi respectively, while Zayd ibn Tha:bit remained in Medina.⁹⁷ ‘Uthma:n also ordered all other records that contained any Qur’an to be gathered and burnt.⁹⁸ Thus by 25 A.H the matter was settled for good.

Other copies were then made of the ‘Uthma:ni *Mushaf* all over the Islamic world. For example, Al-Mas‘u:di reports that about five hundred copies of the *Mushaf* were raised on the top of the swords and the spears of the forces of Mu‘a:wiyyah in the battle of *Siffi:n* against the Caliph ‘Ali ibn Abi Ta:lib.⁹⁹ This battle is known to have taken place only seven years after ‘Uthma:n made the copies of the Qur’an.

The ‘Uthma:ni recension, however, had the following features:

- “1. The text was written in one dialect (tongue) viz. that of Quraish.
2. Nothing was written but the Revelations established by *Mutawa:tir*

reports, and according to the last reviewing attended by Zayd.

3. The Surahs and the Ayahs were arranged as they now stand in the *Masa:hif*. (As stated before, the arrangement was *Tawqi:fi*.)

4. The text was devoid of vowel and diacritical signs, as of everything other than the Qur'an in contradiction to the *Saha:bah*'s copies which contained besides the Qur'an some interpretations and explanations, etc".¹⁰⁰

5. The *Masa:hif* were not in disagreement with the *Suhuf* of Abu Bakr.¹⁰¹

What Is An Ayah?

The Surahs of the Qur'an consist of what are known as Ayahs (Arabic: *A:ya:t*), the singular being Ayah, commonly translated as 'verse'. The Qur'an testifies to this, as Q15:1 reads ﴿ تِلْكَ آيَاتُ ٱلْكِتَٰبِ ﴾, 'These are the *A:ya:t* (Ayahs) of the Book'. The word *Ayah* in Arabic means:

(1) a *sign*: that indicates the end of an utterance.¹⁰² Regarding the notion of *sign*, the

﴿إِنَّ آيَةَ مُلْكِهِ أَنْ يَأْتِيَكُمُ التَّابُوتُ﴾, Qur'an in 2:248 says:

“A sign of his authority is that there shall come to you the Ark of the Covenant”.¹⁰³ Al-Na:bighah, referring to the same meaning of sign also says:

”تَوَهَّمْتُ آيَاتٍ لَهَا فَعَرَفْتُهَا لِسِتَّةِ أَعْوَامٍ وَذَا الْعَامِ سَابِعٍ“¹⁰⁴

(which basically means: “I recalled the signs of the (place) and this is how I knew it after seven years of parting”.)

In that sense, as in Q2:248 above, Ayah also means a *wonder*. This is one reason that Ayah is used to refer to a Qur'anic verse.

(2) A *group*.¹⁰⁵ The Arabs say to this meaning “جِئْنَا بِآيَتِنَا” ‘We have all come (as a group)’ or “خَرَجَ الْقَوْمُ بِآيَتِهِمْ”,¹⁰⁶ i.e., ‘The people have left as a group’. Burj ibn Mushir Al-Ta:'i also says using Ayah to mean a *group*:

”خَرَجْنَا مِنَ النَّقَبَيْنِ لَا حَيٍّ مِثْلَنَا بِآيَتِنَا نُزَجِي اللَّقَاحَ الْمَطَافِلَا“¹⁰⁷

(We have all gone out of the two *naqbs* as a group, none
like us,
driving the camels old and young)

As the Ayah of the Qur'an consists of a *group* of letters or words put together, the word was used to refer to a Qur'anic verse.

Scholars differ about the total number of the Ayahs of the Qur'an. This is mainly due to their different ways of counting them and considering where every Ayah ends. The following numbers are suggested: 6000, 6177, 7204, 6210, 6212, 6214, 6216, 6217, 6218, 6219, 6220, 6225, 6226, 6227, 6232 and 6236.¹⁰⁸

The Ayahs of the Qur'an are of three main types:

1. Universal Ayahs: that lead to or show the greatness of the Creator. For example, Q30:22 reads: ﴿وَمِنْ آيَاتِهِ خَلْقُ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَاخْتِلَافُ أَلْسِنَتِكُمْ وَأَلْوَانِكُمْ﴾,

“And among His signs is the Creation of the heavens and the earth, and the variations in your languages and your colours”.¹⁰⁹ Q30:20-25 & 46, Q41:37-39 and Q42:29 & 323 are but a few other examples.

2. Ayahs to support the Prophets and Messengers of Allah, i.e., wonders or miracles. A good example can be found in Q3:49 about the Prophet Jesus:

﴿أَنِّي قَدْ جِئْتُكُمْ بِآيَةٍ مِّن رَّبِّكُمْ أَنِّي أَخْلُقُ لَكُمْ مِّنَ الطِّينِ كَهَيْئَةِ الطَّيْرِ فَأَنْفُخُ فِيهِ فَيَصِيرُ طَيْرًا بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ وَأُبْرِئُ الْأَكْمَهَ وَالْأَبْرَصَ وَأُحْيِي الْمَوْتَىٰ بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ وَأُنَبِّئُكُمْ بِمَا تَأْكُلُونَ وَمَا تَدَّخِرُونَ فِي بُيُوتِكُمْ ۗ﴾

“I have come to you with a Sign from your Lord, in that I make for you out of clay, as it were, the figure of a bird, and breathe into it, and it becomes a bird by Allah’s leave: and I heal those born blind, and the lepers, and I quicken the dead, by Allah’s leave; and I declare to you what you eat, and what you store in your houses”.¹¹⁰ Other

examples are Q21:69, Q2:60 & 160, Q20:77, Q26:63, etc.

3. Ayahs that tell about rules, laws, teachings, etc., of the religion, in other words, all other Ayahs of the Qur'an.

The Surahs & Their Divisions

When the Ayahs of the Qur'an are put together, they form *Surahs*. The Holy Qur'an consists of one hundred and fourteen Surahs.¹¹¹ The name for this Qur'anic unit is given nine times in the Qur'an. Q24:1 reads ﴿سُورَةٌ أَنْزَلْنَاهَا﴾, '(This is) a Surah (which) We have sent down'. Scholars differ about the derivation of the word Surah. The following views have been proposed:¹¹²

1. It is derived from the verb 'as'ara 'أَسَارَ' whose noun is *su'r* 'سُورٌ', meaning 'what is left or remained of a drink in the cup'. So, just as what

has remained of a drink was *part* of the drink, *Surah* is *part* of the Qur'an. Al-'A'sha: says regarding this meaning:

”فَبَانَتْ وَقَدْ أَسَارَتْ فِي الْفُؤَادِ صَدْعًا عَلَى نَائِبِهَا مُسْتَطِيرًا“¹¹³

(She has gone *leaving* a split in my heart).

2. It is derived from *su:r al-madi:nah* ‘سُورُ الْمَدِينَةِ’, that is, ‘the enclosure wall of a town’, as the Surahs enclose the Ayahs; or *su:r al-bina:* ‘سُورُ الْبِنَاءِ’, ‘the fence of a building’. The Surahs contain the Ayahs, as the fence surrounds the building.

3. It is derived from *al-suwa:r* ‘السُّوَارِ’, ‘the bracelet’ around the wrist.

4. It is a word that means ‘high rank or degree’. Regarding this meaning Al-Na:bighah says:

”أَلَمْ تَرَ أَنَّ اللَّهَ أَعْطَاكَ سُورَةً تَرَى كُلَّ مَلِكٍ دُونَهَا يَتَذَبَذَبُ“¹¹⁴

This basically refers to the much higher degree of the king he was praising compared to all other kings. So, the Surah is held to be of high esteem.

5. It is derived from *al-tasawwur* ‘التَّسْوُرُ’, that is, ‘climbing over a wall’. An example of this is Q38:21 which reads: ﴿إِذْ تَسَوَّرُوا الْمِحْرَابَ﴾, ‘when they climbed over the wall of the *mihra:b*’. So, also the reader goes up from one Ayah (degree, stage, level) to another just like climbing.

Technically speaking, according to Al-Ga‘bari¹¹⁵ a Surah:

- a) is a *group* of Ayahs from the Qur’an,
- b) has a beginning and an end, and
- c) consists of at least three Ayahs.

Another source says that a *Surah* is a group of Qur’anic Ayahs given a special name by the Prophet (ﷺ), i.e., it is *tawqi:fi*. The plural of the word Surah is *Su:ra:t* ‘سُورَات’, *Suwara:t* ‘سُورَات’, or

Suwar 'سُوْر' as in Q11:13. Using this last plural form Al-Ra:'i says: "سُوْدُ الْمَحَاجِرِ لَا يَقْرَأْنَ بِالسُّوْرِ"¹¹⁶ (Lit., (women) of black eyes who do not read the Surahs).

The Surahs of the Qur'an are divided into four main parts:¹¹⁷

1. *Al-Tuwal* 'الطُّوْل': these are very 'long' Surahs. They begin with Surat Al-Baqarah (no.2), and end with Surat Al-Tawbah (no.9), considering Surahs no.8 and 9 as one Surah, making a total of seven Surahs. However, Sa'i:d ibn Jubayr is reported to have counted Surat Yu:nus (no.10) as the seventh instead of Surahs 8 and 9. Another report includes Surat Al-Kahf (no.18) instead.

2. *Al-Mi'u:n* 'المِئُوْن': these are the Surahs that follow the Tuwal. they are called so because each of them consists of approximately one hundred

Ayahs. Although there is a consensus concerning the name given to these Surahs, the reason for the name is unconvincing to me as many Surahs classified under this category contain significantly less than a hundred Ayahs.

3. *Al-Matha:ni* ‘**الْمَثَانِي**’: these are the Surahs that come after the *Mi’u:n*, and all, apart from Surat *Al-Sa:ffa:t* (no.37), are under a hundred Ayahs. They are given this name either because the *Mi’u:n* come first in respect of them and therefore they come *second*, or because they are recited more often ‘**تُثْنَى**’ than the *Tuwal* and the *Mi’u:n*. They begin with either Surat *Al-’Ahza:b* (no.33) or Surat *Al-Hujura:t* (no.49) or Surat *Qa:f* (no.50).

4. *Al-Mufasssal* ‘**الْمُفَصَّل**’: these are the Surahs that come after the *Matha:ni*. They are short

Surahs in general. They are called *al-Mufasssal* (the divided) either because they form the biggest number of Surahs *divided* by “بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ”, or because they contain the least number of *mansu:kh* or abrogated Ayahs.

The *Mufasssal* Surahs are subdivided to:¹¹⁸

- a) *Long* Surahs: from either Surah 49 or 50 until Surah 85.
- b) Surahs of *Medium* length: from Surah 86 to Surah 98.
- c) *Short* Surahs: from Surah 99 until the end of Surah 114.

The Meccan And Medinan Surahs:¹¹⁹

The Surahs and Ayahs are classified as Meccan or Medinan. It was the *Saha:bah* and the *Ta:bi'i:n* who classified them as such. There are no hadi:ths that refer to the Prophet (ﷺ) saying that such and such a Surah or Ayah is Meccan or

Medinan. The Prophet (ﷺ) is known to have lived for thirteen years in Mecca and ten years in Medina receiving Revelations from Allah. The Ulema classify the Surahs in three different ways:

A) According to the time of revelation:

- 1- Meccan: is what was revealed in Mecca or any other place before the Hijrah, and before the Prophet (ﷺ)'s arrival in Medina.

- 2- Medinan: is what was revealed after the Hijrah, either in Medina or elsewhere including Mecca itself.

b) According to the place of revelation:

- 1- Meccan: is what was revealed in Mecca or in the areas nearby such as Mina, 'Arafat, Al-Hudaybiyah, etc., whether before or after the Hijrah.

2- Medinan: is what was revealed in Medina or places in its vicinity such as Badr, 'Uhud, Sal', etc. Therefore, what was revealed in areas that are not near Mecca or Medina does not fall under either classification.

c) According to the addressees:

1- Meccan: is what was revealed with regard to the people of Mecca before or after the Hijrah.

2- Medinan: is all that was revealed with regard to the people of Medina and the non-Meccans in general.

The first classification is the most commonly followed. However, due to these above-mentioned differences, the number of Medinan Surahs ranges between twenty-five and thirty; the rest of the one hundred and fourteen Surahs are obviously Meccan.¹²⁰ The Meccan and Medinan Surahs have

certain features that make them easy to distinguish them from one another most of the time.

The Features of Meccan Surahs:¹²¹

- 1- The phrase ﴿يَا بَنِي آدَمَ﴾, 'O Children of Adam' is always a feature of a Meccan Surah.
- 2- Surahs that have a *sajdah* Ayah, (when recited it is commendable that the reader and the listener prostrate themselves to Allah).
- 3- Surahs that have the word ﴿كَلَّا﴾, a form of 'no'.

﴿كَلَّا﴾ is repeated thirty three times in fifteen Surahs.

However, in most cases, Surahs that contain the phrase ﴿يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ﴾ 'O mankind', or tell the story of the Prophet Adam and 'Ibli:s (Satan), or begin with separate Alphabet letters, or whose Ayahs are short, or relate some of the stories of Prophets and

nations that existed before the Prophet Muḥammad (ﷺ), are Meccan.

The Features of the Medinan Surahs:¹²²

In most cases, Surahs that contain the phrase ﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا﴾, ‘O You who believe’, or whose Ayahs tend to be fairly long are Medinan.

It must be noted that there are Meccan Surahs that contain some Medinan Ayahs, and vice versa.¹²³

The Arabic of The Qur’an

The Arabs, among many other things, were men of trade who travelled to different places for business reasons. The Holy Qur’an tells us about their seasonal trade journeys in winter to the south and in summer to the North, in Surah 106 which is named after the tribe of Quraysh to which the Prophet (ﷺ) belonged.

Quraysh “had the custody of the Ka‘bah, the central shrine of Arabia, and their possession of Makkah gave them a triple advantage: (1) They had a commanding influence over other tribes; (2) their central position facilitated trade and intercourse, which gave them both honour and profit; and (3) the Makkah territory being, by Arabian custom, inviolable from the ravages of war and private feuds, they had a secure position, free from fear of danger. This honour and advantage, they owed to their position as servants of the sacred shrine of the Ka‘bah. They owed it to Allah.

In those days of general insecurity, their prestige as custodians of Makkah enabled them to obtain Covenants of security and safeguard from the rulers of the neighbouring countries on all sides -Syria, Persia, Yemen and Abyssinia- protecting their trade journeys in all seasons”.¹²⁴

Accordingly, “the Qurayshites became practised travellers and merchants, acquired much

knowledge of the world and many arts, and perfected their language as a polished medium of literary expression”.¹²⁵

It seems that what can be called a “Standard Literary Language”¹²⁶ was formed which selected its vocabulary, expressions, etc., very carefully. This language took most of its characteristics and features from the language of Quraysh, or the Hija:zi tribes in general. Therefore, it was collectively called the ‘language of Quraysh’ which most of the greatest literary figures in Arabia then used.¹²⁷

Three levels of linguistic analysis¹²⁸ can be used to distinguish features of the Qur’an that was revealed to an Arab, Muḥammad (ﷺ), from among the Arabs:

1- Pronunciation:

This is mostly Qurayshite, hence, the word «التَّابُوتُ» was favoured over ‘التَّابُوهُ’ as the

pronunciation of the word in the Qurayshite dialect necessitates the former spelling. It has also been reported that when ‘Umar ibn Al-Khatta:b learnt that Ibn Mas‘u:d was teaching the Qur’an to the people in the dialect of the tribe of Hudhayl ‘هُدَيْلٌ’, he sent to him saying: “The Qur’an was not revealed in the dialect of Hudhayl, so teach the Qur’an to the people in the dialect of Quraysh”. Ibn Mas‘u:d read ‘*atta hi:n*’ عَتَى حِينٌ instead of the Qurayshite pronunciation *hatta hi:n*, ﴿حَتَّى حِينٌ﴾.

Perhaps, the only exception to the Qurayshite pronunciation of the Qur’an is the clear utterance of the *hamzah* ‘ء’ which agrees with the dialect of Tami:m and other tribes in the east and middle of the Arab Peninsula, and is definitely not Qurayshite.

2- Grammar and Structure

This is mostly Qurayshite. In Q4:115 and Q8:13, we find the apocopated 'مَجْرُومٌ' verb *yusha:qiq* ﴿يُشَاقِقُ﴾ written with the letter *q:f* 'ق' repeated twice. The same applies to the letter *da:l* 'د' in Q2:217 in *yartadid* ﴿يَرْتَدِدُ﴾ which is a Qurayshite characteristic found abundantly in the Qur'an.

On the other hand, the *qa:f* 'ق' of *yusha:q* ﴿يُشَاقِقُ﴾ in Q59:4 and the *da:l* 'د' of *yartad* ﴿يَرْتَدُّ﴾ in Q5:54 are not repeated in writing, they have got instead a *shaddah* '◌◌◌' on top of the final letters.

This form of assimilation is a grammatical feature of the dialect of Tami:m.

3- Vocabulary

This is mostly Qurayshite. However, linguists differ in identifying some of the other

tribes from whose dialects the Qur'an quoted some words. Although there are words that are taken from about forty tribes, the mostly quoted from are: Quraysh, Hudhayl, Kina:nah, Himyar, Jurhum, Qays 'Ayla:n and Tami:m. From the rest of the tribes, the Qur'an uses less than eight words from each.

It is obvious therefore that the Qur'an contains words that were more commonly used by some Arab tribes than others.

Ibn 'Abba:s, for example, reported that he did not know the meaning of the word ﴿فَاطِرٌ﴾ in Q35:1 until he heard it used by an Arab Bedouin 'أَعْرَابِيٌّ' disputing with another over who began the digging of a well.¹²⁹

‘Umar also did not know what ﴿بَا﴾ in Q80:31 meant, while Abu Bakr refrained from attempting an explanation commenting that he did not know.¹³⁰

Does The Qur’an Contain Non-Arabic Words?

There is absolutely no doubt that the Qur’an in its entirety is in the Arabic tongue. Too many scholars to name here have discussed the question of the so-called non-Arabic words in the Qur’an in detail in their writings. The great majority, correctly and justifiably, agree that the whole Qur’an is Arabic and that it does not contain between its covers words in any other language.

As for the Qur’anic words that have been claimed to be non-Arabic, they are, in some cases, either of non-Arabic origin, or it so happened that the same words had been used both in Arabic and other languages as well.¹³¹ In either case, this does

not mean that such words are not part of the Arabic language.

As the Arabs had been in contact with many nations from time immemorial, it was inevitable that some sort of linguistic exchange would take place. Such words that the Arabs had borrowed from other ‘tongues’ were incorporated into their own language and became an inseparable, and probably indispensable, part of it, as these words were subject to the rules of Arabic grammar, modes of pronunciation, etc. When the Qur’an was revealed to the Prophet (ﷺ) it did not use words that were not already in the Arabic tongue.

Ibn ‘Abba:s, quoting Arabic lines of verse, answered the questions put to him by Na:fi‘ ibn Al-’Azraq and Najdah ibn ‘Umayr¹³² concerning the meanings of numerous words that they claimed they did not know and had not been used by the Arabs. He is the same Ibn ‘Abba:s who said he did not know the meaning of ﴿فَاطِرٍ﴾ in Q35:1 or ﴿اَفْتَحْ﴾

in Q7:89,¹³³ which are Arabic in origin, until he heard them used by other Arabs in different contexts.

However, in other situations, not only did he explain the meanings of words like *al-Jibt* ﴿الْجِبْتِ﴾ of Q4:51, *hasab* ﴿حَصَبٌ﴾ of Q21:98, *ra:‘ina:* ﴿رَاعِنَا﴾ of Q2:104, *malaku:t* ﴿مَلَكُوتٌ﴾ of Q6:75, *hayta lak* ﴿هَيْتَ لَكَ﴾ of Q12:23, etc., but also stated their origins in their foreign languages, namely, Ethiopic ‘حَبَشِي’, Zinji ‘زِنْجِي’, Hebrew, Nabatean and Coptic respectively.¹³⁴

This actually means that judging a language depends mainly on how much the person passing the judgement knows of that language,¹³⁵ hence, the acceptance of the Qur’anic testimony to its being Arabic in its entirety.

Al-Suyu:ti¹³⁶ records one hundred and eighteen words from the Qur’an whose origins,

some scholars claim, are non-Arabic. Those words actually belong to the languages of the countries with whom the Arabs were in immediate contact, and the great majority of them are Semitic,¹³⁷ which means that these words must have become part of the Arabic language through contact and usage for a considerable length of time. Thus, they cannot be considered non-Arabic.

On the other hand, there are some serious studies that traced many foreign languages, strange as it may seem yet worth considering, back to Arabic and therefore these studies consider Arabic to be the mother language or the origin of all other languages not only the Semitic ones.¹³⁸ I do not either support or oppose such a view. However, if this proves to be the case, this means that all the so-called words of non-Arabic origin are in actuality pure Arabic, deeply rooted in the language and a reminder of its old history.

Ibn Abi H:tim reported that Sufya:n Al-Thawri said commenting on the status of the Arabic language: “ لَمْ يَنْزِلْ وَحْيٌ إِلَّا بِالْعَرَبِيَّةِ وَكُلُّ نَبِيٍّ تَرَجَّمَهُ ”¹³⁹ that is, ‘No Revelations ever descended except in Arabic and every Prophet translated to his people (in their tongue)’. In spite of the fact that it is extremely difficult, if not impossible, to prove the truth of this saying, it is worth considering. However, the Qur’an does not mention that all divine Revelations were in Arabic; it only testifies that all the Messengers of Allah delivered the Message in the languages of their peoples. Q14:4 reads ﴿ وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَا مِنْ رَّسُولٍ إِلَّا بِلِسَانِ قَوْمِهِ ﴾¹⁴⁰ “And We sent not a Messenger except with the language of his people, in order that he might make (the Message) clear for them”.

Here is a logical and common-sensical Qur’anic testimony that as the Message of Allah

and the teachings of the religion have to be explained to the people in the clearest possible way, the language, which is the most important means of communication, used by a Prophet must not only be understood but also be the people's mother tongue, own language: ﴿بِلِسَانِ قَوْمِهِ﴾. So, Muḥammad (ﷺ) was an Arab and his Book was/is in Arabic.

In ten Surahs, the Qur'an refers to this fact eleven times namely:

Q12:2 ﴿إِنَّا أَنْزَلْنَاهُ قُرْآنًا عَرَبِيًّا لَعَلَّكُمْ تَعْقِلُونَ﴾

Q13:37 ﴿وَكَذَلِكَ أَنْزَلْنَاهُ حُكْمًا عَرَبِيًّا﴾

Q16:103 ﴿لِسَانِ الَّذِينَ يُلْحِدُونَ إِلَيْهِ أَعْجَمِيٌّ وَهَذَا لِسَانٌ عَرَبِيٌّ مُبِينٌ﴾

Q20:113 ﴿وَكَذَلِكَ أَنْزَلْنَاهُ قُرْآنًا عَرَبِيًّا وَصَرَّفْنَا فِيهِ مِنَ الْوَعِيدِ﴾

Q26:195 ﴿بِلِسَانٍ عَرَبِيٍّ مُبِينٍ﴾

Q39:28 ﴿قُرْآنًا عَرَبِيًّا غَيْرَ ذِي عِوَجٍ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَتَّقُونَ﴾

Q41:3 ﴿كِتَابٌ فَصَّلْتُمْ آيَاتِهِ قُرْآنًا عَرَبِيًّا لِقَوْمٍ يَعْلَمُونَ﴾

﴿ وَلَوْ جَعَلْنَاهُ قُرْءَانًا أَعْجَمِيًّا لَقَالُوا لَوْلَا فُصِّلَتْ آيَاتُهُ ۖ أَأَعْجَمِيٌّ وَعَرَبِيٌّ ۗ ﴾

﴿ أَأَعْجَمِيٌّ وَعَرَبِيٌّ ۗ ﴾

Q42:7 ﴿ وَكَذَلِكَ أَوْحَيْنَا إِلَيْكَ قُرْءَانًا عَرَبِيًّا ﴾

Q43:3 ﴿ إِنَّا جَعَلْنَاهُ قُرْءَانًا عَرَبِيًّا لَعَلَّكُمْ تَعْقِلُونَ ﴾

Q46:12 ﴿ وَهَذَا كِتَابٌ مُصَدِّقٌ لِّسَانًا عَرَبِيًّا لِّنذِرَ الَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا ﴾

Why was The Qur'an Revealed in Arabic?

Q41:44 above explains why the Arabic language was chosen. Had the Qur'an been revealed in a language other than Arabic, the Arabs would have questioned the whole matter, and would have had solid grounds for the rejection of the new Message: a Book they understood nothing of, and an Arab, the Prophet (ﷺ), speaking a foreign language?

The Arabs, as addressees of the Qur'an had to understand what the Qur'an was about; and this could not have been achieved unless it was in a language they understood perfectly. Also, when

the Qur'an, as indicated in Q42:7 and Q64:9 referring to the *Day of Assembling* ﴿يَوْمَ الْجَمْعِ﴾ promises a good reward for its followers and warns of a severe punishment for its rejectors, this surely had to be in a language the Arabs would be able to understand.

Looking again at the same situation from the other side, if the Deliverer of Allah's Message was a non-Arab, whose mother-tongue was any language other than Arabic, and he recited the Word of Allah in Arabic, the Arabs would still have had a reason to reject what he had brought them, because the whole matter would not have made any sense.

Q26:198-9 refer to this situation in very clear terms showing the lack of logic and sense in the argument: ﴿وَلَوْ نَزَّلْنَاهُ عَلَىٰ بَعْضِ الْأَعْجَمِينَ فَقَرَأَهُ عَلَيْهِمْ مَا كَانُوا بِهِ﴾ ﴿مُؤْمِنِينَ﴾, "And if We had revealed it (the Qur'an)

unto any of the non-Arabs, and he had recited it unto them, they would not have believed in it".¹⁴¹

By way of conclusion, it can be said that understanding any message necessitates two important steps:

1. Correct and complete reception of the message; in the case of the Qur'an, word and sense.
2. Decoding the message received, i.e., grasping its meaning/s properly.

It is only through the combination of the two elements of reception and decoding, that proper understanding of the message can be achieved.¹⁴²

The Word of Allah: Accusations And a Challenge

From the very first Revelations, the Qur'an asserted its status as the Word of Allah. The Prophet (ﷺ) himself never claimed that the Qur'an was his own composition; rather he was a mere

deliverer of the Message. Q17:93 makes this clear ﴿قُلْ سُبْحَانَ رَبِّيَ هَلْ كُنْتُ إِلَّا بَشَرًا رَسُولًا﴾, “Say: Glory be to my Lord! Am I aught by a man- (sent as) a Messenger”.¹⁴³ Q41:6 also says: ﴿قُلْ إِنَّمَا أَنَا بَشَرٌ مِّثْلُكُمْ﴾, “Say: I am only a human being like you, it is inspired in me that ...”.¹⁴⁴ Accordingly, the only difference between Muḥammad (ﷺ) and the people he was addressing was the fact that Allah chose him to receive and deliver the divine Message of Islam.

The accusations frequently levelled at the Prophet (ﷺ) were that the Qur’an he recited was his own and not a Divine Inspiration, that he learnt it from others, that what he was saying was poetry or magic, that he was mad or possessed, etc.

To all such ungrounded accusations and more, the Qur’an gave answers. However, the Qur’anic answers would be meaningless to a non-believer unless they addressed man’s reason.

Firstly, in Muḥammad (ﷺ)'s life before becoming a Prophet, he was never known as a poet or a literary figure of any sort. It was only when he became forty years of age that he began telling the Meccans about the new Message. Q10:15-6 reason with the opponents and answer their unfounded and illogical argument:

﴿وَإِذَا تُلَىٰ عَلَيْهِمْ آيَاتُنَا بَيِّنَاتٍ قَالَ الَّذِينَ لَا يَرْجُونَ لِقَاءَنَا إِنَّا بُرْءَانِ غَيْرِ هَذَا
أَوْ بَدَّلْهُ فُلٌ مَّا يَكُونُ لِي أَلَّا أُبَدِّلَهُ مِن تِلْقَاءِ نَفْسِي إِن آتَيْتُ إِلَّا مَا يُوْحَىٰ إِلَيَّ إِنِّي
أَخَافُ إِن عَصَيْتُ رَبِّي عَذَابَ يَوْمٍ عَظِيمٍ * قُلْ لَوْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ مَا تَلَوْتُهُ عَلَيْكُمْ وَلَا
أَدْرَاكُمْ بِهِ فَقَدْ لَبِثْتُ فِيكُمْ عُمُرًا مِّن قَبْلِهِ أَفَلَا تَعْقِلُونَ﴾

“And when Our clear Ayahs are recited unto them, those who hope not for their meeting with Us, say: “Bring us a Qur’an other than this, or change it”. “Say (O Muḥammad): “It is not for me to change it on my own accord, I only follow that which is revealed unto me. Verily I fear if I were to disobey my Lord, the torment of the Great Day. Say (O Muḥammad): “If Allah had so willed, I should not

have recited it to you nor would He have made it known to you. Verily, I have stayed amongst you a lifetime before this. Have you then no sense?”.¹⁴⁵

The pagan Meccans also said that the Prophet (ﷺ) learnt the Qur’an from a non-Arab who was a sword-maker in Mecca.¹⁴⁶ The Qur’an responds to this ridiculous claim that it is not logical that a non-Arabic speaking person could have taught Muhammad (ﷺ) anything. Reason is lacking in this argument. Q16:103 ﴿وَلَقَدْ نَعْلَمُ أَنَّهُمْ يَقُولُونَ إِنَّمَا يُعَلِّمُهُ﴾
﴿بَشَرٌ لِّسَانُ الَّذِي يُلْحِدُونَ إِلَيْهِ أَعْجَمِيٌّ وَهَذَا لِسَانٌ عَرَبِيٌّ مُبِينٌ﴾ may translate: “And indeed We know that they (polytheists and pagans) say: “It is only a human being who teaches him (Muhammad ﷺ). The tongue of the man they refer to is foreign, while this (the Qur’an) is a clear Arabic tongue”.¹⁴⁷ This accusation actually reflects the inability of the Arabs to respond to the Qur’anic challenge, as will be explained shortly.

As a matter of fact, there is no evidence from history or any other source that the Prophet of Islam, Muḥammad (ﷺ), learnt anything related to his Message from another human being. The logic is that if the Qur'an was Muḥammad (ﷺ)'s composition, or that he received it from another person, it was very likely, as it is the nature of humans, that contradictions would occur, especially when one considers the sheer size of the Qur'an disregarding all other aspects, like the fact that Muḥammad (ﷺ) could not read or write, etc. Q4:82 urges the listeners/readers and all the seekers of the Truth to consider this important point: أَفَلَا يَتَذَكَّرُونَ الْقُرْآنَ وَلَوْ كَانَ مِنْ عِنْدِ غَيْرِ اللَّهِ لَوَجَدُوا فِيهِ ﴿﴾ *اختلافًا كثيرًا*, 'Do they not consider the Qur'an carefully? Had it been from other than Allah, they would surely have found therein much contradictions'.

Therefore, Allah in the Qur'an sets the challenge to the masters of the language who used to meet annually in the *su:qs* of 'Uka:z and Marbad¹⁴⁸ where all the great poets competed with one another showing the highest standard of eloquence and rhetoric.

Their mastery of the Arabic language and their ability to make it respond to their expressional purposes were a cause of pride to them. There was no better honour given to a poet than when his poem was hung on the walls of the Ka'bah.

Yet amongst all this came the Qur'anic challenge. Q17:88 states plainly:

﴿قُلْ لَّيِّنَ اجْتَمَعَتِ الْإِنْسُ وَالْجِنُّ عَلَىٰ أَن يَأْتُوا بِمِثْلِ هَٰذَا الْقُرْآنِ لَا يَأْتُونَ بِمِثْلِهِ وَلَوْ
كَانَ بَعْضُهُمْ لِبَعْضٍ ظَهِيرًا﴾

“Say: “If the whole of mankind and Jinns were to gather together to produce the like of this Qur'an, they could not produce the like thereof, even if

they backed up each other with help and support”.¹⁴⁹ This Ayah sets the challenge stating the impossibility of producing something similar to the Qur’an and urging the proud Arabs to try.

As they accused the Prophet (ﷺ) of fabricating the divine Revelations, Q52:33-4 says: ﴿أَمْ يَقُولُونَ نَحْنُ نَنْشَأُ الْقُرْآنَ كَمَا نَشَأُ الْحَدِيثَ تَكْفُورًا﴾, “Or do they say: “He (Muhammad) has forged it (the Qur’an)? Nay! They believe not! let them produce a recital like unto it (the Qur’an) if they are truthful”.¹⁵⁰

As is well-known the Qur’an was using a language which they were familiar with; it was the same language which they used in their orations, poetry, prose, every-day life, etc., and the meanings and ideas were taken up by their sages, speakers and poets. In spite of all this, this first challenge was not met.

The Qur'an then went one step further to make it easier for them to try and meet the challenge. Q11:13-4 say:

﴿أَمْ يَقُولُونَ افْتَرَاهُ قُلْ فَأْتُوا بِعَشْرِ سُوْرٍ مُّفْتَرِيَاتٍ وَّادْعُوا مَنِ اسْتِطَعْتُمْ﴾

﴿مَنْ دُونِ اللّٰهِ اِنْ كُنْتُمْ صَادِقِيْنَ﴾

“Or they say, “He (Muhammad ﷺ) forged it (the Qur'an)”. Say: “Bring you then ten forged Surahs like unto it, and call whosoever you can, other than Allah (to your help), if you speak the truth”.¹⁵¹ The

Qur'an then goes on to state

﴿فَاِنْ لَّمْ يَسْتَجِيبُوْا فَاِنَّ لَكُمْ فَاَعْلَمُوْا اَنْمَّا اُنزِلَ بِعِلْمِ اللّٰهِ﴾

﴿لَكُمْ فَاَعْلَمُوْا اَنْمَّا اُنزِلَ بِعِلْمِ اللّٰهِ﴾, “If then they answer you

not, know then that the Revelation (the Qur'an) is sent down with the knowledge of Allah”.¹⁵² Yet, again, the challenge was not met, and their mastery of rhetoric was of no avail. Therefore, the Qur'an went on, as Q10:38-9 shows, making it even easier for the opponents:

أَمْ يَقُولُونَ افْتَرَاهُ قُلْ فَأْتُوا بِسُورَةٍ مِّثْلِهِ وَادْعُوا مَنِ اسْتَطَعْتُمْ مِنْ

﴿دُونِ اللَّهِ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ صَادِقِينَ﴾

“Or do they say: “He (Muhammad ﷺ) has forged it?” Say: “Bring then a Surah like unto it, and call upon whosoever you can, besides Allah, if you are truthful”.¹⁵³

The Qur’an then repeats the same challenge with one Surah, (considering that a Surah can only be three Ayahs). Q2:23-4 read:

﴿وَإِنْ كُنْتُمْ فِي رَيْبٍ مِّمَّا نَزَّلْنَا عَلَىٰ عَبْدِنَا فَأْتُوا بِسُورَةٍ مِّثْلِهِ وَادْعُوا شُهَدَاءَكُمْ مِنْ

﴿دُونِ اللَّهِ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ صَادِقِينَ * فَإِنْ لَمْ تَفْعَلُوا وَلَنْ تَفْعَلُوا فَاتَّقُوا النَّارَ﴾

“And if you (Arab pagans, Jews and Christians) are in doubt concerning that which We have sent down (i.e. the Qur’an) to Our slave (Muhammad ﷺ), then produce a Surah of the like thereof and call your witnesses (supporters and helpers) besides Allah, if you are truthful. But if you do not, and you can never do it, then, fear the Fire”.¹⁵⁴

It is striking that Q8:31 tells of the Arabs saying:

﴿وَإِذَا تُتْلَىٰ عَلَيْهِمْ آيَاتُنَا قَالُوا قَدْ سَمِعْنَا لَوْ نَشَاءُ لَقُلْنَا مِثْلَ هَذَا إِنْ

﴿هَذَا إِلَّا أَسَاطِيرُ الْأَوَّلِينَ﴾,

“And when Our Ayahs (of the Qur’an) are recited to them, they say: “We have heard this (before); if we wish we can say the like of this. This is nothing but the tales of the ancients”,¹⁵⁵ but they never fulfilled their claim. Even those few who tried to imitate the Qur’an, and gave their composition no other name but Qur’an, attempting as well a Qur’anic pattern, the Arabs themselves laughed at the naïvity of their attempts.¹⁵⁶

In short, the result was an utter defeat and feeling of shame as the Qur’anic style was indeed unique. Many of those who opposed Muḥammad (ﷺ) and the Qur’an could not help but praise the divine Revelation admitting that it was nothing like their poetry or the *Saj‘* (rhythmical, rhymed

utterances) of the Soothsayers, or magic, etc., as their ignorance and stubbornness led them to falsely claim.¹⁵⁷

It is absolutely amazing that until this very day the Qur'an still presents the same simple and uncontested claim that it is the Word of the Creator, Allah. The challenge has not changed and will never change until the Day of Judgement.

Notes

1. **Allah:** the **name** of God in Islam.
2. According to Muhammad M. Abu Shahbah, 'Collection of The Kuran, and Refutation of Suspicions Cast Upon it', in "The Seventh Conference of the Academy of Islamic Research" (1973), p.41:
"A *mutawa:tir* 'متواتر' Reading is one which has been transmitted by independent "chain" ('*asa:ni:d* أسانيد) of authorities on a scale sufficiently wide as to rule out the possibility of error. The principle entailed in this definition is that a large number of readers scattered over a wide area could not possibly concur on an erroneous and fabricated Reading. Therefore, the Ulema are generally agreed that a *mutawa:tir* report affords certainty. The *Tawa:tur* may be verbal or in meaning. The entire Qur'an comes under the verbal category".

See also: Shahbah, *al-Madkhal li Dira:sat al-Qur'an al-Kari:m* (1992), p.7. Cf. Labib as-Said, *The Recited Koran. A History of The First Recorded Version*, translated and adapted by Bernard Weiss, M. A. Ruaf and Morroe Berger (n.d.), pp.53-54.
3. See Shahbah, *Collection*, p.41. Shahbah, *al-Madkhal*, p.7. Bakri S. Ami:n, *al-Ta'bi:r al-*

Fanni fi: al-Qur'an (1976), p.11.

4. See Arthur Jeffery (ed.), *Muqaddimata:n fi: 'Ulu:m al-Qur'an* (1954), p.282. Ami:n, *Ta'bi:r*, p.11. Shahbah, *al-Madkhal*, pp.19-20. Helmut Götje, *The Qur'an and its Exegesis, Selected Texts with Classical and Modern Muslim Interpretations*, translated and edited by Alford T. Welch (1976) p.5.

According to Shahbah and Gätje, it is said that *Qara'a* 'قَرَأَ' has its origin in the Aramaic language, one of the Semitic languages to which Arabic belongs; *Qara'a* had then been Arabicized long before Islam and became part of the Arabic language and subject to Arabic rules of grammar and pronunciation.

On the other hand, Arthur Jeffery in *A Reader on Islam: Passages from Standard Arabic Writings Illustrative of The Beliefs and Practices of Muslims* (1962), p.18 says that '*Qur'an*' is a borrowed word in Arabic, coming from the Syriac *qeryana* meaning "Scripture Lesson".

5. Cf. Abdullah Yusuf Ali, *The Meaning Of The Holy Qur'an* (1992). Muḥammad M. Khan and Muḥammad T. Helali, *Interpretation of The Meanings of The Noble Qur'an* (1993). Arthur J. Arberry, *The Koran Interpreted* (1991).
6. *Di:wa:n Ḥassa:n ibn Tha:bit al-'Anṣa:ri* (1961),

p.248. Al-Ja:hiẓ, *al-Baya:n wa al-Tabyi:n* (1949), v.3, p.262. In Jeffery, *Muqaddimata:n*, p.283 the word ‘يَقْطَعُ’ is written ‘يَقْطَعُ’.

7. According to Ibn Manzu:r, *Lisa:n al-‘Arab*, under *h-j-n* ‘هَجَنَ’, the poet is ‘Amr ibn Kulthu:m. The line reads: “ذِرَاعِي عَيْطَلٍ أَدْمَاءَ بَكْرٍ ... هِجَانِ اللَّوْنِ لَمْ تَقْرَأْ” “جَنِينَا”. He also says that a camel described as *hija:n* means it is purely white. In his wording: “وَالْهَيْجَانُ مِنَ الْإِبِلِ الْبَيْضِ الْكَرَامِ. وَقَالَ ابْنُ سَيْدِهِ: وَالْهَيْجَانُ مِنَ الْإِبِلِ” “الْبَيْضَاءُ الْخَالِصَةُ اللَّوْنِ”.

Under *q-r-* ‘قَرَأَ’ he says:

"وَمَا قَرَأَتْ جَنِينًا قَطُّ، أَيْ لَمْ يَضْطَمَّ رَجْمُهَا عَلَى وُلْدٍ وَأَنْشَدَ: هِجَانِ اللَّوْنِ لَمْ تَقْرَأْ جَنِينًا وَقَالَ: قَالَ أَكْثَرُ النَّاسِ مَعْنَاهُ لَمْ تَجْمَعْ جَنِينًا أَيْ لَمْ يَضْطَمَّ رَجْمُهَا عَلَى الْجَنِينِ. قَالَ: وَفِيهِ قَوْلٌ آخَرَ لَمْ تَقْرَأْ جَنِينًا أَيْ لَمْ تَلْقِهِ. وَمَعْنَى قَرَأَتْ الْقُرْآنَ: لَفِظَتْ بِهِ مَجْمُوعًا أَيْ أَلْقَيْتَهُ".

According to Jeffery, *Muqaddimata:n*, the line reads:

ذِرَاعِي بَكْرَةٍ إِذْ مَاءُ بَكْرٍ ... هِجَانِ اللَّوْنِ لَمْ تَقْرَأْ جَنِينًا

8. Khan and Helali, *Qur'an*.
9. Khan and Helali, *Qur'an*.
10. Khan and Helali, *Qur'an*.
11. Khan and Helali, *Qur'an*.

12. Description of *al-Lawh al-Mahfu:z* may be found in: M. A. Al-Sa:bu:ni, *Mukhtasar Tafsir Ibn Kathi:r* (abridged) (1396 A.H.), p.626.
13. Khan and Helali, *Qur'an*.
14. Yusuf Ali, *Qur'an*.
15. Yusuf Ali, *Qur'an*, p.1416.
16. Shahbah, *al-Madkhal*, p.45.
17. Cf. Al-Zarkashi, *al-Burha:n fi: 'Ulu:m al-Qur'an* (1988), v.1, p.290. Al-Suyu:ti, *al-Itqa:n fi: 'Ulu:m al-Qur'an* (1967), v.1, p.116-127. Shahbah, *al-Madkhal*, p.47.
18. See Suyu:ti, *Itqa:n*, v.1, p.127.
19. Yusuf Ali, *Qur'an*. Khan and Helali, *Qur'an*.
20. See Zarkashi, *Burha:n*, v.1, p.290. Shahbah, *al-Madkhal*, pp.45-50.
21. Yusuf Ali, *Qur'an*.
22. Yusuf Ali, *Qur'an*.
23. Yusuf Ali, *Qur'an*.
24. Q2:97: {قُلْ مَنْ كَانَ عَدُوًّا لِجِبْرِيلَ فَإِنَّهُ نَزَّلَهُ عَلَى قَلْبِكَ بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ}.

Q16:102: {قَالَ نَزَّلَهُ رُوحُ الْقُدُسِ مِنْ رَبِّكَ بِالنُّوحِ}.

Q26:193: {نَزَلَ بِهِ الرُّوحُ الْأَمِينُ}.

Q53:4-7: {إِنَّهُ هُوَ إِلَّا وَحْيٌ يُوحَى * عَلَّمَهُ شَدِيدُ الْقُوَى * ذُو مِرَّةٍ

{فَاسْتَوَى * وَهُوَ بِالْأُفُقِ الْأَعْلَى}.

Q81:19-21: {إِنَّهُ لَقَوْلُ رَسُولٍ كَرِيمٍ * ذِي قُوَّةٍ عِنْدَ ذِي الْعَرْشِ مَكِينٍ *

{مُطَاعٍ ثَمَّ أَمِينٍ}.

25. According to Shahbah, *al-Madkhal*, p.53:

“The period of revelation has been calculated as follows: Muḥammad (ﷺ) was born on the 12th of Rabi:‘ Al-’Awwal, then became a Prophet on the same day some forty years later; and he received the first revelation on the 17th of Ramada:n. This makes six months and five days. The last revealed Ayah, that of Q2:281 was either nine, eleven or twenty one days before his death (ﷺ). Taking an average, this gives a period of six months and sixteen days during which no Qur’an was revealed. As he lived exactly sixty three years, we are left with twenty years, five months and fourteen days of divine revelation”.

However, according to Ami:n, *Ta‘bi:r*, p.27:

Al-Bukha:ri reported that ‘A:’ishah and Ibn ‘Abba:s said: “The Prophet (ﷺ) received revelations in Mecca for ten years and in Medina for ten years”. This, accordingly, gives a period of only twenty years.

This report is found in *Sakhr*, *Mawsu:‘at Al-*

Hadi:th Al-Shari:f (1997), Al-Bukha:ri, *hadi:th* no. 4105:

"عَنْ عَائِشَةَ وَابْنِ عَبَّاسٍ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمَا أَنَّ النَّبِيَّ (ﷺ) لَبِثَ بِمَكَّةَ عَشْرَ سِنِينَ يُنَزَّلُ عَلَيْهِ الْقُرْآنُ وَبِالْمَدِينَةِ عَشْرًا".

As for the time of Revelation, according to Musnad of Imam Ahmad, in *Mawsu:‘ah*, *hadi:th* no. 16370: “The Prophet (ﷺ) said: “The *Suhuf* of Abraham were revealed on the first night of Ramadan, the Torah on the sixth of Ramadan, the *Inji:l* (of Jesus) on the thirteenth of Ramadan and the *Furqa:n* (Qur’an) on the twenty fourth of Ramadan”.

"عَنْ وَاثِلَةَ بْنِ الْأَسْفَعِ أَنَّ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ (ﷺ) قَالَ: أَنْزَلْتُ مُحْفُفُ إِبْرَاهِيمَ فِي أَوَّلِ لَيْلَةٍ مِنْ رَمَضَانَ وَأَنْزَلْتُ التَّوْرَةَ لَيْسَتْ مَضِينٍ مِنْ رَمَضَانَ وَالْإِنْجِيلُ لِثَلَاثَ عَشْرَ خَلَّتْ مِنْ رَمَضَانَ وَأَنْزَلَ الْفُرْقَانَ لِأَرْبَعٍ وَعِشْرِينَ خَلَّتْ مِنْ رَمَضَانَ".

26. Khan and Helali, *Qur'an*.
27. Khan and Helali, *Qur'an*.
28. Khan and Helali, *Qur'an*.
29. Khan and Helali, *Qur'an*.
30. Khan and Helali, *Qur'an*.
31. Khan and Helali, *Qur'an*.

32. Khan and Helali, *Qur'an*.
33. Khan and Helali, *Qur'an*.
34. Khan and Helali, *Qur'an*.
35. Q11:15 reads {وَأَوْبِرْ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُضِيعُ أَجْرَ الْمُحْسِنِينَ}.
 And Q16:127-128 read:
 {وَأَوْبِرْ وَمَا بَرَكْ إِلَّا بِاللَّهِ وَلَا تَحْزَنْ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا تَكُ فِي ضَلَالٍ مِمَّا يَمْكُرُونَ*
 إِنَّ اللَّهَ مَعَ الَّذِينَ اتَّقَوْا وَالَّذِينَ هُمْ يُسْتُونَ}
36. Khan and Helali, *Qur'an*.
37. The translation of these Ayahs can be found under “**The Prophet (ﷺ) memorises the Qur'an**”.
38. Suyuti, *Itqan*, v.1, pp.124-5 relates that ‘Ikrimah said: “Allah sent the Qur'an down in parts, three Ayahs, four Ayahs and five Ayahs at a time”.
 Abu Sa'iid Al-Khudri and ‘Umar have also been reported to have said the same about the revelation of five Ayahs at a time.
39. See Zarkashi, *Burhan*, v.4, p.23. Jeffery, *Muqaddimata*, p.34. Shahbah, *al-Madkhal*, p.70. *Sakhr*, *Mawsu'ah*, Bukhari, *hadi:th* no. 4609.
40. Shahbah, *al-Madkhal*, p.69.

41. See Suyu:ti, *Itqa:n*, v.1, pp.122-3. Shahbah, *al-Madkhal*, pp.55-6.

The authors also state that other divine Books as well, namely, the *'Inji:l* of Jesus, the *Zabu:r* of David, and the *Suhuf* of Abraham had also been revealed as a whole, in one go to the respective prophets of Allah.

See also, Zarkashi, *Burha:n*, v.1, p.293.

42. {قَالَ يَا مُوسَىٰ إِنِّي أَخُطِّبْتُكَ عَلَى النَّاسِ بِرِسَالَتِي وَبِكَلامِي 5-144:7
فَخُذْ مَا آتَيْنُكَ وَكُن مِّنَ الشَّاكِرِينَ * وَكُنْتُمْ لَهُ فِي الْأَلْوَابِ مِن كُلِّ شَيْءٍ
مَّوعِظَةً وَتَفْصِيلًا لِّكُلِّ شَيْءٍ فَخُذْهَا بِقُوَّةٍ وَأْمُر قَوْمَكَ بِأَخْذِهَا بِحَسَنِهَا
سَأُورِيكُمْ دَارَ الْفَاسِقِينَ}

{... وَأَلْقَى الْأَلْوَابِ ...} 150:7

{وَلَمَّا سَكَتَ عَن مُوسَى الْغَضَبَ أَخَذَ الْأَلْوَابِ وَفِي نُسْحَتِهَا 154:7

هُدًى وَرَحْمَةً لِّلَّذِينَ هُمْ لِرَبِّهِمْ يَرْهَبُونَ}

{وَإِذْ نَتَقْنَا الْجَبَلَ فَوْقَهُمْ كَأَنَّهُ ظُلَّةٌ وَظَنُوا أَنَّهُ وَاقِعٌ بِهِمْ خُذُوا مَا 171:7

آتَيْنَاكُمْ بِقُوَّةٍ وَاذْكُرُوا مَا فِيهِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَّقُونَ}

43. Zarkashi, *Burha:n*, v.1, p.293.

44. {وَيَسْأَلُونَكَ عَنِ الرُّوحِ} 85:17

{وَيَسْأَلُونَكَ عَنِ الذِّقْرِينِ} 83:18

45. {وَإِذَا سَأَلَكَ عِبَادِي عَنِّي فَإِنِّي قَرِيبٌ} 186:2

{وَيَسْأَلُونَكَ عَنِ الْأَهْلِةِ} 189:2

{يَسْأَلُونَكَ مَاذَا يُنْفِقُونَ} 215:2

Q2:217 {يَسْأَلُونَكَ عَنِ الشَّهْرِ الرَّامِ}.

Q2:219 {يَسْأَلُونَكَ عَنِ الْخَمْرِ وَالْمَيْسِرِ} and {وَيَسْأَلُونَكَ مَاذَا يُنْفِقُونَ}.

Q2:220 {وَيَسْأَلُونَكَ عَنِ الْيَتَامَى}.

Q2:222 {وَيَسْأَلُونَكَ عَنِ الْمَحِيضِ}.

Q5:4 {يَسْأَلُونَكَ مَاذَا أُحِلَّ لَهُمْ}.

Q7:187 {يَسْأَلُونَكَ كَأَنَّكَ خَفِيٌّ عَلَيْهَا}.

Q8:1 {يَسْأَلُونَكَ عَنِ الْأَنْفَالِ}.

Q20:105 {وَيَسْأَلُونَكَ عَنِ الْجِبَالِ}.

Q33:63 {يَسْأَلُكَ النَّاسُ عَنِ السَّاعَةِ}.

Q79:42 {يَسْأَلُونَكَ عَنِ السَّاعَةِ أَيَّانَ مُرْسَاهَا}.

46. Cf. Zarkashi, *Burha:n*, v.1, p.293.
47. See Ibn Hajar, *Fath al-Ba:ri Bisharh Sahi:h Al-Bukha:ri* (1986), v.1, p.30, hadi:th no.3 and v.8, hadi:th no.4905. Zarkashi, *Burha:n*, v.1, pp.263-6. Suyu:ti, *Itqa:n*, v.1, pp.68-76. Jeffery, *Muqaddimata:n*, pp.8 & 11. Shahbah, *al-Madkhal*, pp.102-8. M. S. Muḥaysin, *Ta:ri:kh al-Qur'an al-Kari:m* (1402 A.H.), pp.26-31. Ami:n, *Ta'bi:r*, pp.13 & 24.
48. Cf. Yusuf Ali, *Qur'an*. Khan and Helali, *Qur'an*.
49. See Ibn Kathi:r, *al-Si:rah al-Nabawiyah fi al-Ta:ri:kh* (n.d.), v.1, p.208 and v.2, p.204. Jeffery, *Muqaddimata:n*, p.235. See also note: 25 above.

50. See Zarkashi, *Burha:n*, v.1, pp.266-8. Suyu:ti, *Itqa:n*, v.1. pp.77-81. Jeffery, *Muqaddimata:n*, p.41. Al-Qurtubi, *al-Ja:mi' li Ahka:m al-Qur'an* (1933), v.1, p.53. Shahbah, *al-Madkhal*, p.108-21. Muḥaysin, *Ta:ri:kh*, pp.31-42. Ami:n, *Ta'bi:r*, p.25.
51. Cf. Yusuf Ali, *Qur'an*. Khan and Helali, *Qur'an*.
52. See Zarkashi, *Burha:n*, v.1, p.267. Suyu:ti, *Itqa:n*, v.1. pp.77-81. Al-Zamakhshari, *al-Kashsha:f* (1987), v.1, p.323. Shahbah, *al-Madkhal*, p.109. Sa:bu:ni, *Mukhtasar*, v.1. pp.251-2. Abdul-Hami:d Kishk, *Fi Riha:b al-Tafsir* (1987), v.1, p.33 and v.3, p.532. Muḥaysin, *Ta:ri:kh*, p.42.
53. Cf. Yusuf Ali, *Qur'an*. Khan and Helali, *Qur'an*.
54. See Saḥr, *Mawsu:'ah*, Bukha:ri, ḥadi:ths no. 4, 4546, 4547, 4548, 4656 and 6970; Muslim, ḥadi:ths no. 679 and 680; Al-Tirmidhi, ḥadi:th no.3252 and Aḥmad, ḥadi:ths no. 1181 and 3023.
55. With regard to the annual reviewing of the Qur'an in Ramadan see Saḥr, *Mawsu:'ah*, Bukha:ri, ḥadi:ths no. 5, 1769, 3290, 2981 and 4613; Muslim, ḥadi:th no. 4268; Al-Nasa:'i, ḥadi:th no. 2068; Aḥmad, ḥadi:ths no. 2485, 3290 and 3358.

As for the last two reviewings in Ramadan

before the death of the Prophet (ﷺ), see Sakhr, *Mawsu:‘ah*, Bukhari, hadi:ths no. 4614, 3353 and 5812; Muslim, hadi:ths no. 4487 and 4488; Ibn Ma:jah, hadi:th no. 1759 and Ahmad, hadi:ths no. 1938, 2844, 2855, 8823 and 25209.

See also Zarkashi, *Burha:n*, v.1, pp.272 & 294. Qurtubi, *al-Ja:mi ‘*, v.1, p.50. Jeffery, *Muqaddimata:n*, p.25. Kishk, *Riḥa:b*, v.1, p.33. Shahbah, *al-Madkhal*, p.347. Shahbah, *Collection*, p.45.

56. See Shahbah, *Collection*, p.45. Shahbah, *al-Madkhal*, pp.348-9.
57. Kishk, *Riḥa:b*, v.1, p.11.
58. Khan and Helali, *Qur'an*.
59. Khan and Helali, *Qur'an*.
60. The hadi:ths collected by the hadi:th scholars are too numerous to narrate here. The following are but a very small sample; see: Sakhr, *Mawsu:‘ah*, Bukhari, hadi:ths no. 1257, 1261, 1266, 2144, 2488, 3345, 3473, 3462, 3771, 4462, 4556, 4598, 4652, 4632, 4637, 4638, 4639, 3630, 4642, 4671, 4672, 4673, 5007 and 5633; Muslim, hadi:ths no. 1328, 1329, 1335, 1337, 1338, 1353, 4819 and 4820; Al-Tirmidhi, hadi:ths no. 2017, 2791, 2801, 2806, 2807, 2808, 2810, 2829, 2830, 2832, 2833, 2834, 2837, 2839, 2842, 2843, 2850, 3049,

3050 and 3270; Al-Nasa'i, hadi:ths no. 933, 934, 1261 and 4952; Abu Da:wud, hadi:ths no. 1241, 1242, 1252, 1806 and 4191; Ahmad, hadi:ths no. 9824 and 10933 and Ibn Ma:jah, hadi:th no. 3770.

See also, Zarkashi, *Burha:n*, v.i, pp.539 and after. Jeffery, *Muqaddimata:n*, pp.256-261. Qurtubi, *al-Ja:mi'*, v.1, pp.4-8. Shahbah, *al-Madkhal*, pp.354-76. Kishk, *Riḥa:b*, v.1, p.11. Ami:n, *Ta'bi:r*, p.30.

61. See for example, Sakhr, *Mawsu:'ah*: Bukha:ri, hadi:ths no. 4562 and 4563, and Muslim, hadi:ths no. 1325, 1326 and 1327.

See also, Jeffery, *Muqaddimata:n*, p. 28. Shahbah, *al-Madkhal*, pp.353-4. Ami:n, *Ta'bi:r*, pp.29-30.

62. Gätje, *Exegesis*, p.24.

63. See Ibn Hajar, *Fath*, v.7 pp.127-8 & 157; Zarkashi, *Burha:n*, v.1, pp.304-6. Ibn sa'd, *al-Tabaqa:t al-Kubra* (1358 A.H), v.1, pp.170-2. Suyu:ti, *Itqa:n*, v.1, pp.127-8 & 157; Qurtubi, *al-Ja:mi'*, v.1, p.49. Shahbah, *al-Madkhal*, pp.238 & 352-3. Kishk, *Riḥa:b*, v.1, p.24.

64. See Suyu:ti, *Itqa:n*, v.1, pp.199-206. See also Ibn sa'd, *Tabaqa:t*, v.1, pp.170-2.

65. See Zarkashi, *Burha:n*, v.1, p.305. Suyu:ti, *Itqa:n*, v.1, p.200. Ibn Kathi:r, *Si:rah*, v.3, p.71.
66. See Zarkashi, *Burha:n*, v.1, p.305. Suyu:ti, *Itqa:n*, v.1, p.200. Qurtubi, *al-Ja:mi'*, v.1, p.43. Shahbah, *al-Madkhal*, p.291. Kishk, *Riha:b*, v.1, p.36.
67. See Shahbah, *al-Madkhal*, pp. 366-8.
68. Cf. Yusuf Ali, *Qur'an*. Khan and Helali, *Qur'an*.
69. See Ibn Kathi:r, *Si:rah*, v.4, pp.346-7. Shahbah, *al-Madkhal*, p.241. Muḥaysin, *Ta:ri:kh*, p.130. Ami:n, *Ta'bi:r*, p.31.
70. See Zarkashi, *Burha:n*, v.1, pp.307-32. Suyu:ti, *Itqa:n*, v.1, pp.172-183. Jeffery, *Muqaddimata:n*, pp.58-64. Shahbah, *al-Madkhal*, p.294. Ami:n, *Ta'bi:r*, p.28. Qurtubi, *al-Ja:mi'*, v.1, p.52.
- There are also ḥadi:ths that mention Surahs by name and in order as well; see for example Sakhr, *Mawsu:'ah*, Bukhari, ḥadi:ths no.3707, 4623-4, 4652, 4663. Muslim, ḥadi:ths no. 1340-1. Tirmidhi, ḥadi:ths no.2804, 2806, 2808, 2811-3. Abu Da:wud, ḥadi:ths no.740, 753, 1189. Ibn Ma:jah, ḥadi:ths no.1358-9. Aḥmad, ḥadi:ths no.7086, 15073, 16451, 16471, 16475-6, 16480, 26244. Da:rimi, ḥadi:ths no.1449, 3244, 3248, 3252, 3254, 3260, 3262-3, 3271-3, 3282-7, 3289.

71. See for example, Zarkashi, *Burha:n*, v.1, pp.308 and after. Suyu:ṭi, *Itqa:n*, v.1, pp.150-159 and pp.172-176. Jeffery, *Muqaddimata:n*, pp.39 and after. Shahbah, *al-Madkhal*, pp.289-91. Muḥaysin, *Ta:ri:kh*, pp.74-5.
72. See Zarkashi, *Burha:n*, v.1, p.299. Suyu:ṭi, *Itqa:n*, v.1, p.164. Jeffery, *Muqaddimata:n*, p.49. Ami:n, *Ta'bi:r*, p.32. Ahmed Von Denffer, *Ulum Al-Qur'an, an introduction to The Science of the Qur'an* (1989), p.41.
73. Suyu:ṭi, *Itqa:n*, v.1, pp.164-168.
74. For the meaning of the word *mushaf* 'مُصْحَفٌ' and how it came to refer to the Holy Book, see note no.93 below.
75. See Suyu:ṭi, *Itqa:n*, v.1, p.165. Qurṭubi, *al-Ja:mi'*, v.1, p.43. Jeffery, *Muqaddimata:n*, p.17. Shahbah, *al-Madkhal*, p.243. Ami:n, *Ta'bi:r*, pp.35-6.
76. See Muḥaysin, *Ta:ri:kh*, p.133. Ami:n, *Ta'bi:r*, p.35
77. See Suyu:ṭi, *Itqa:n*, v.1, p.165. Qurṭubi, *al-Ja:mi'*, v.1, p.43. Jeffery, *Muqaddimata:n*, p.18. Shahbah, *al-Madkhal*, p.244. Ami:n, *Ta'bi:r*, p.36.
78. See Zarkashi, *Burha:n*, v.1, p.295. Suyu:ṭi,

Itqa:n , v.1, p.165. Jeffery, *Muqaddimata:n*, p.25. John Burton, *The Collection of The Qur'an* (1977), p.118.

For more information about Zayd, see: Ibn Sa'd, *Tabaqa:t*, v.1, pp.174-5. Ibn Hajar, *al-'Isa:bah fi Tamyi:z al-Ṣaha:bah* (1907), v.3, pp.22-3.

- 79.** Zayd's efforts and method in collecting the Qur'an is described in detail in many references; see, for example, Zarkashi, *Burha:n*, v.1, p.295. Suyu:ṭi, *Itqa:n* , v.1, pp.165-9. Jeffery, *Muqaddimata:n*, pp.18 & 274. Mustafa Sa:diq Al-Ra:fi'i, *Ta:ri:kh A:da:b Al-'Arab* (1974), v.2, p.36. Shahbah, *al-Madkhal*, pp.244-5. Muḥaysen, *Ta:ri:kh*, pp.137-9. Ami:n, *Ta'bi:r*, p.36.
- 80.** See Suyu:ṭi, *Itqa:n* , v.1, p.165. Jeffery, *Muqaddimata:n*, p.18. Qurṭubi, *al-Ja:mi'*, v.1, pp.43-4. Al-Ra:fi'i, *Ta:ri:kh A:da:b*, v.2, p.36. Shahbah, *al-Madkhal*, pp.243-5. Muḥaysin, *Ta:ri:kh*, p.142. Ami:n, *Ta'bi:r*, p.37.
- 81.** Shahbah, *Collection*, p.51.
For more details about the seven 'Aḥruf, see Zarkashi, *Burha:n*, v.1, pp.269-87. Suyu:ṭi, *Itqa:n*, v.1, pp.223-6 & 131-41. Ibn Qutaybah, *Ta'wi:l Mushkil al-Qur'an* (1954), pp.26-35. Jeffery, *Muqaddimata:n*, p.265.
- 82.** Shahbah, *al-Madkhal*, p.246.

83. See Suyu:ṭi, *Itqa:n*, v.1, p.169. Shahbah, *Collection*, p.53.
84. See Al-Ra:fi'i, *Ta:ri:kh A:da:b*, v.2, p.36. Muḥaysin, *Ta:ri:kh*, pp.142-3.
85. See Suyu:ṭi, *Itqa:n*, v.1, p.170. Shahbah, *al-Madkhal*, p.247. Shahbah, *Collection*, p.52. Muḥaysin, *Ta:ri:kh*, pp.143.
86. See Zarkashi, *Burha:n*, v.1, p.298. Suyu:ṭi, *Itqa:n*, v.1, pp.169-70. Qurtubi, *al-Ja:mi'*, v.1, p.44. Jeffery, *Muqaddimata:n*, pp.18 & 22. Shahbah, *al-Madkhal*, p.247. Shahbah, *Collection*, p.52. Muḥaysin, *Ta:ri:kh*, pp.143.
87. See Suyu:ṭi, *Itqa:n*, v.1, pp.170-1. Qurtubi, *al-Ja:mi'*, v.1, p.45. Shahbah, *al-Madkhal*, p.247.
88. See Suyu:ṭi, *Itqa:n*, v.1, pp.169-70. Ami:n, *Ta'bi:r*, p.40.
89. See Ibn Hajar, *Fath*, v.9, p.19. Zarkashi, *Burha:n*, v.1, p.298. Suyu:ṭi, v.1, p.169. Muḥaysin, *Ta:ri:kh*, p.145.
Zarkashi also mentions Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqa:s instead of Sa'i:d ibn Al-'A:ss.

In Al-Ra:fi'i, *Ta:ri:kh A:da:b*, v.1, p.170, the author mentions that the members of 'Uthma:n's committee for the copying of the Qur'an were twelve men, but no names are given.

In Shahbah, *al-Madkhal*, p.249, the author says that according to Ibn Hajar in *Fath*, v.9, p.19, with regard to the names of the twelve men whose names were reported by Ibn Abi Da:wud in *Kita:b al-Masa:hif*, as members of ‘Uthma:n’s committee, only nine could be identified. In addition to the above mentioned four, five other men assisted in carrying out that task. These were: ‘Ubay ibn Ka‘b, Ma:lik ibn Abi ‘A:mir, ‘Anas ibn Ma:lik, Kathi:r ibn ‘Aflah, and ‘Abdullah ibn ‘Abba:s.

90. See Zarkashi, *Burha:n*, v.1, p.298. Suyu:ti, *Itqa:n*, v.1, p.169. Qurṭubi, *al-Ja:mi‘*, v.1, p.45. Jeffery, *Muqaddimata:n*, p.19. Shahbah, *al-Madkhal*, pp.248-9. Ami:n, *Ta‘bi:r*, p.40.
91. See Ibn Hajar, *Fath*, v.11, p.20. Zarkashi, *Burha:n*, v.1, p.457. Qurṭubi, *al-Ja:mi‘*, v.1, p.45. Jeffery, *Muqaddimata:n*, p.19. Shahbah, *al-Madkhal*, p.249. Muḥaysin, *Ta:ri:kh*, p.146.

Q2:248 reads ﴿ إِنَّ آيَةَ مُلْكِهِ أَنْ يَأْتِيَكُمُ التَّابُوتُ ﴾.

92. as-Said, *Recited*, pp.26-7.
93. According to Shahbah, *Collection*, p.53: “*Mushaf* ‘*مُصْحَفٌ*’ is derived from the verb ‘*ashafa* ‘*حَفَّ*’, and the plural form is *Masa:hif* ‘*مُصَاحِفٌ*’. Literally, a *Mushaf* ‘*مُصْحَفٌ*’ is a book in which *Suhuf* are put together. (*Suhuf* is the plural

of *Ṣahī:fah* which signifies a piece of skin or paper to write on.)

As a technical term, *Mushaf* ‘مُصْحَفٌ’ is commonly used for a book in which the Qur’an is collected (exemplar or codex). It would seem that the word *Mushaf* ‘مُصْحَفٌ’ was well known in the time of Abu Bakr, who after the Qur’an had been collected, consulted with the people on a suitable name for the codex. Some suggested *Sifr* ‘سِفْرٌ’ and *Injil* ‘إِنْجِيلٌ’, but these names were rejected because they had already been used by the Jews and the Christians respectively for their books. Some others suggested the originally Abyssinian word *Mushaf* ‘مُصْحَفٌ’ which was accepted by Abu Bakr. However, the Revelations collected in his time were commonly known by authorities and traditions as ‘*Suhuf*’, while those collected in the time of ‘Uthma:n were known as ‘*Masa:hif*’ ”.

For more information see also Zarkashi, *Burhan*, v.1, p.353. Suyu:ṭi, *Itqan*, v.1, p.149. Ami:n, *Ta‘Birr*, pp.37-8.

Zarkashi and Suyu:ṭi name the person who suggested the name *Mushaf* ‘مُصْحَفٌ’ as Ibn Mas‘u:d, (فَقَالَ ابْنُ مَسْعُودٍ: رَأَيْتُ بِأَبِشَةَ كِتَابًا يَدْعُونَهُ الْمُصْحَفَ، (فَسَمَّوْهُ بِهِ). However, it seems that Abu Shahbah was quoting above the report of Ibn ‘Ashtah in his book ‘*al-Masa:hif*’ where the person is not

named. see Suyu:ti, *Itqa:n*, v.1, p.149, for this report.

On the other hand, it seems to me that there was more to choosing this particular name than just the above reports. The name *Mushaf* 'مُصْحَفٌ' seems to have been used in the time of the Prophet (ﷺ) himself. According to Qurtubi, *al-Ja:mi'*, v.1, pp.24-5: "The Prophet (ﷺ) said: Give your eyes their share of worship. They said: O Messenger of Allah, and what is their share of worship? He (ﷺ) said: Looking into the *Mushaf*, pondering on [its Ayahs] and considering its wonders".

"رَوَى زَيْدُ بْنُ أَسْلَمَ عَنْ عَطَاءِ بْنِ يَسَارٍ عَنْ أَبِي سَعِيدٍ الْخُدْرِيِّ قَالَ: قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ (ﷺ): أَعْطُوا أَعْيُنَكُمْ حَظَّهَا مِنَ الْعِبَادَةِ. قَالُوا: يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ، وَمَا حَظُّهَا مِنَ الْعِبَادَةِ؟ قَالَ: النَّظَرُ فِي الْمُصْحَفِ وَالتَّفَكُّرُ فِيهِ وَالاعْتِبَارُ عِنْدَ عَجَائِبِهِ".

He also reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) forbade the saying of *Musayjid* and *Musayhif* "مُسَيِّجِدٌ وَمُصَيِّحِفٌ". Qurtubi quotes yet another hadith: "The Prophet (ﷺ) said: When you adorn your mosques (places of worship) and ornament your *Masa:hif*, expect a terrible end".

"عَنْ أَبِي الدَّرْدَاءِ قَالَ: قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ (ﷺ): إِذَا زَخَرَفْتُمْ مَسَاجِدَكُمْ وَحَلَيْتُمْ مَصَاحِفَكُمْ فَالدَّبَارُ عَلَيْكُمْ".

In Sakhr, *Mawsu:‘ah*: Ahmad, hadi:th no.6325, it is reported that a man came to the Prophet (ﷺ) and said: “My son spends his whole day reading from the *Mushaf* and sleeps all night! The Prophet (ﷺ) said: “What ails you that your son is in a constant state of remembering Allah, then sleeps in peace and safety!”.

"عَنْ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ بْنِ عَمْرٍو أَنَّ رَجُلًا أَتَى رَسُولَ اللَّهِ (ﷺ) بِابْنِ لَهُ، فَقَالَ: يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ، إِنَّ ابْنِي يَقْرَأُ الْمُصْحَفَ بِالنَّهَارِ وَيَبِيتُ بِاللَّيْلِ! فَقَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ (ﷺ): مَا تَنْقَمُ أَنَّ ابْنَكَ يَطْلُ ذَاكِرًا وَيَبِيتُ سَالِمًا؟".

94. Al-Ra:fi‘i, *Ta:ri:kh A:da:b*, v.2, pp.38-9.
95. See Shahbah, *al-Madkhal*, p.248. Ami:n, *Ta‘bi:r*, p.42.
According to Jeffrey, *Muqaddimata:n*, p.22, it was ‘Uthma:n who burnt Hafṣah’s *Suhuf* after her death.
This, of course, was very unlikely because ‘Uthma:n had died before Hafṣah. According to Al-Nuwayri, *Niha:yat al-‘Arab fi Funu:n al-‘Adab* (1955), v.18, pp.177-8: “Al-Du:la:bi said: “She (Hafṣah) died in the year 27 A.H”. Abu Ma‘shar said: “She died in Juma:da al-‘U:la, year 41 A.H”. Another said: “She died in Medina, in Sha‘ba:n, in the year 45 A.H; and it was Marawa:n ibn Al-Hakam, the ruler of Medina under Mu‘a:wiyah ibn Abi Sufya:n, who led her *Jana:zah* prayer and carried her coffin”. On the other hand, according to Ibn Hajar, *al-*

'*Isa:bah*, v.3, p.224: "Ibn 'Isha:q said: "(Uthma:n) was killed after exactly 11years, 11 months and 22 days of his Caliphate. This means that his death was on 22nd Dhu: al-Hijjah, year 35 A.H. It was also said that this took place on the 18th, according to ... Abu Ma'shar".

96. See for example, Zarkashi, *Burha:n*, v.1, p.303. Suyu:ti, *Itqa:n*, v.1, p.172. Al-Ra:fi'i, *Ta:ri:kh A:da:b*, v.2, p.39. Shahbah, *al-Madkhal*, p.252. Muḥaysin, *Ta:ri:kh*, p.149.

According to Al-Ra:fi'i, *Ta:ri:kh A:da:b*, p.318, footnote no.1, Ibn 'Asa:kir in *Ta:ri:kh Dimashq* recorded the names of twenty-three men who were the Prophet (ﷺ)'s amanuenses.

97. See Shahbah, *al-Madkhal*, p.253. Muḥaysin, *Ta:ri:kh*, p.51.
98. See Zarkashi, *Burha:n*, v.1, p.298. Shahbah, *al-Madkhal*, p.248.
99. See Al-Ra:fi'i, *Ta:ri:kh A:da:b*, v.2, p.41. This number of the *Masa:hif* may not be accepted if what is meant in this report is 'parts of the *Mushaf*'.
100. In the original quotation in Shahbah, *Collection*, p.53, the writer uses the word "collation" instead of *reviewing*. See also Shahbah, *al-Madkhal*, p.251. Zarkashi,

Burha:n, v.1, p.302. Suyu:ṭi, *Itqa:n*, v.1, p.171.

101. See Jeffrey, *Muqaddimata:n*, pp.22 & 301. Muḥaysin, *Ta:ri:kh*, p.142.
102. See Suyu:ṭi, *Itqa:n*, v.1, p.187. Qurtubi, *al-Ja:mi'*, v.1, p.57. Ibn 'Azi:z Al-Sijista:ni, *Ghari:b al-Qur'an* (1325 A.H), p.4. Jeffrey, *Muqaddimata:n*, p.284. Muḥaysin, *Ta:ri:kh*, p.114.
103. Yusuf Ali, *Qur'an*.
104. Karam Al-Busta:ni, *Di:wa:n al-Na:bighah al-Dhubya:ni* (1953), p.109. Qurtubi, *al-Ja:mi'*, v.1, p.57. Ibn Manzu:r, *Lisa:n al-'Arab*, under 'تَوَهُّمُ الشَّيْءِ: تَخَيُّلُهُ وَتَمَثُّلُهُ كَانَ فِي الْوُجُودِ أَوْ لَمْ يَكُنْ: وَهُمْ' says: “
105. See Suyu:ṭi, *Itqa:n*, v.1, p.187. Sijista:ni, *Ghari:b*, p.4. Jeffrey, *Muqaddimata:n*, p.284. Muḥaysin, *Ta:ri:kh*, pp.114-5. Muḥaysin quotes Al-Sha:ṭibi as he says: “
106. See Sijista:ni, *Ghari:b*, p.4. Jeffrey, *Muqaddimata:n*, p.284. Muḥaysin, *Ta:ri:kh*, p.115.
107. The poet's name is given in Qurtubi, *al-Ja:mi'*, v.1, p.57. The line is also found in Sijista:ni, *Ghari:b*, p.4, yet, the poet is not named. Ibn

Manzu:r, *Lisa:n al-‘Arab*, under ‘زَجَا’ says: “رَجَى
 الشَّيْءَ وَأَزْجَاهُ سَاقَهُ وَدَفَعَهُ”, and under ‘لَقَحَ’ he says:
 “الَلِّقَاحُ: اسْمُ مَاءِ الْفَحْلِ مِنَ الْإِبِلِ وَالْحَيْلِ”, and under ‘طَفَلَ’ he
 says:

الْمُطْفَلُ ذَاتُ الطِّفْلِ مِنَ الْإِنْسَانِ وَالْوَحْشِ مَعَ طِفْلِهَا وَهِيَ قَرِيبَةٌ عَهْدٌ
 بِالنِّتَاجِ”.

108. For details, see Zarkashi, *Burha:n*, v.1, pp.314-8. Suyu:ti, *Itqa:n*, v.1, p.189. Qurtubi, *al-Ja:mi‘*, v.1, p.56. Jeffrey, *Muqaddimata:n*, pp.15, 246 & 250. Muḥaysin, *Ta:ri:kh*, pp.111-4.
109. Yusuf Ali, *Qur’an*.
110. Yusuf Ali, *Qur’an*.
111. See Zarkashi, *Burha:n*, v.1, pp.314 & after. Suyu:ti, *Itqa:n*, v.1, pp.184 & after. Muḥaysin, *Ta:ri:kh*, p.64.
112. See Zarkashi, *Burha:n*, v.1, pp.332-3. Suyu:ti, *Itqa:n*, v.1, p.150. Qurtubi, *al-Ja:mi‘*, v.1, p.57. Jeffery, *Muqaddimata:n*, p.283. Shahbah, *al-Madkhal*, pp.285-6.
 Cf. Neal Robinson, *Discovering the Qur’an: A Contemporary Approach to a Veiled Text* (1996), pp.256-7.
113. This wording is found in Jeffery, *Muqaddimata:n*, p.282. However, in *Di:wa:n al-‘A’sha:* (n.d), p.12, the first part of this line reads

as follows: “وَيَانَتْ وَقَدْ أَثَارَتْ فِي الْفُؤَادِ”, while in Muḥammad Ḥusayn, *Di:wa:n al-’A’sha: al-Kabi:r* (1950), p.12, it reads: “وَيَانَتْ وَقَدْ أَوْرَثَتْ فِي الْفُؤَادِ”.

- 114 Al-Busta:ni, *Diwa:n al-Na:bighah al-Dhubya:ni* (1953), p.24. Ibn Manzu:r, *Lisa:n al-’Arab*, under ‘سُورٌ’ says:

"مَعْنَاهُ أَعْطَاكَ رَفْعَةً وَشَرَفًا وَمَنْزِلَةً وَجَمَعَهَا سُورٌ أَيْ رَفَعَ. قَالَ: وَأَمَّا سُورَةُ الْقُرْآنِ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ، جَلَّ ثَنَاؤُهُ، جَعَلَهَا سُورًا مِثْلَ غَرْفَةٍ وَغُرْفٍ وَرُتْبَةٍ وَرُتْبٍ وَزُلْفَةٍ وَزُلْفٍ فَدَلَّ عَلَى أَنَّهُ لَمْ يَجْعَلْهَا مِنْ سُورِ الْبِنَاءِ لِأَنَّهَا لَوْ كَانَتْ مِنْ سُورِ الْبِنَاءِ لَقَالَ: فَاتُّوا بِعَشْرِ سُورٍ مِثْلِهِ، وَمَ يَقُلْ {بِعَشْرِ سُورٍ}، وَالْقُرَاءُ مُجْتَمِعُونَ عَلَى سُورٍ، وَكَذَلِكَ اجْتَمَعُوا عَلَى قِرَاءَةِ سُورٍ فِي قَوْلِهِ {فَضْرِبَ بَيْنَهُمْ بِسُورٍ}، فَدَلَّ ذَلِكَ عَلَى تَمَيُّزِ سُورَةٍ مِنْ سُورِ الْقُرْآنِ عَنِ سُورَةٍ مِنْ سُورِ الْبِنَاءِ".

115. See Zarkashi, *Burha:n*, v.1, pp.332-3. Suyu:ti, *Itqa:n*, v.1, p.150.

116. This is the wording of Ibn Manzu:r, *Lisa:n al-’Arab*, under ‘سُورٌ’ and ‘قُرْأٌ’, he says that Al-Ra:’i says: “هُنَّ أَرَائِرٌ لَا رَبَّاتٍ أَحْمَرَةٌ ... سُودُ الْمَحَاجِرِ لَا يَقْرَأَنَّ بِالسُّورِ”. He then goes on to explain that what is meant is “لَا يَقْرَأَنَّ السُّورَ” with the addition of the *ba:’* ‘ب’ as in {تَنْبِتُ بِالذَّهْنِ} and {يَكَادُ سَيِّ بَرْقِهِ يَذْهَبُ بِالْأَبْصَارِ} that is ‘تَنْبِتُ الذَّهْنَ’ and ‘يَذْهَبُ الْأَبْصَارُ’. However, in Qurtubi, *al-Ja:mi’*, v.1, p.57, this part of the line

of verse reads “سُوْدُ الْمَحَاجِرِ لَا يُقْرَنُ بِالسُّوْرِ”.

117. See Zarkashi, *Burha:n*, v.1, pp.308-11. Suyu:ti, *Itqa:n*, v.1, pp.179-80. Qurtubi, *al-Ja:mi'*, v.1, p.99. Shahbah, *al-Madkhal*, p.291. Muḥaysin, *Ta:ri:kh*, pp.110 & 209.
See also Qurtubi's *tafsir* of Surat Al-Ḥijr, no.22.
118. See, Zarkashi, *Burha:n*, v.1, pp.308-11. Suyu:ti, *Itqa:n*, v.1, p.180, records twelve different opinions about the beginning of the *Mufasssal*. Suyu:ti also says that Ibn Ma'n said: "The long Surahs are up to {عَمَّ} 'Ammā (no.78), the Medium Surahs end with {وَالضُّحَى} *Al-Duḥā*: (no.93), and the Short Surahs are the remainder". However, Ibn Kathi:r, *Tafsi:r al-Qur'an al-'azī:m* (1988), pp.339-40, says that Surah {ق} *Qa:f* (no.50) is most likely the beginning of the *Mufasssal*.
119. See Zarkashi, *Burha:n*, v.1, pp.239-62. Suyu:ti, *Itqa:n*, v.1, pp.22-50. Muḥaysin, *Ta:ri:kh*, pp.48-60. Ami:n, *Ta'bi:r*, p.49.
120. See Zarkashi, *Burha:n*, v.1, pp.239-62. Suyu:ti, *Itqa:n*, v.1, pp.22-50. Muḥaysin, *Ta:ri:kh*, pp.48-60. Ami:n, *Ta'bi:r*, p.49.
121. See Zarkashi, *Burha:n*, v.1, pp.239-62. Suyu:ti, *Itqa:n*, v.1, pp.22-50. Muḥaysin, *Ta:ri:kh*, pp.48-60. Ami:n, *Ta'bi:r*, p.49.

122. Contrasting the references of note 119, we find that the Ulema agree on twenty Surahs being Medinan, namely: no.2, 3, 4, 5, 8, 9, 24, 33, 47, 48, 49, 57, 58, 59, 60, 62, 63, 65, 66 and 110. However, they differ about Surahs no.1, 13, 55, 61, 64, 83, 97, 98, 99, 112, 113 and 114. As for the remaining eighty-two Surahs, there is agreement that they are Meccan.
Cf. Robinson, *Discovering The Qur'an*, pp.69-75.
123. For details see for example: Zarkashi, *Burha:n*, v.1, pp.239-62. Suyu:ti, *Itqa:n*, v.1, pp.22-50.
124. Yusuf Ali, *Qur'an*, p.1702.
125. Yusuf Ali, *Qur'an*, p.1702.
126. Ahmad M. 'Umar, *Lughat al-Qur'an: Dirasah Tawthi:qiyyah Fanniyyah* (1993), p.109, quoting Ibrahi:m Ani:s, *Fi al-Lahaja:t al-'Arabiyyah* (1965), p.40, calls it “اللُّغَةُ الْأَدَبِيَّةُ الْفُصْحَى الْمُخْتَارَةُ”
”الألفاظ”.

On the other hand, Zarkashi, *Burha:n*, v.1, p.356, says that according to Al-Farra:' the Qurayshites used to pick from every other Arabic dialect what was best in it, this was why their speech was so refined:

”وَقَدْ فَضَّلَ الْقُرَاءُ لُغَةَ قُرَيْشٍ عَلَى سَائِرِ اللُّغَاتِ؛ وَزَعَمَ أَنَّهُمْ يَسْمَعُونَ كَلَامَ

العَرَبِ فَيَخْتَارُونَ مِنْ كُلِّ لُغَةٍ أَحْسَنَهَا، فَصَفَا كَلَامُهُمْ".

127. 'Umar, *Lughah*, p.109.
128. See Zarkashi, *Burha:n*, v.1, pp.355 and after. Suyu:ti, *Itqa:n*, v.2, pp.89-104. 'Umar, *Lughah*, pp.109 and after.
129. For more examples see Zarkashi, *Burha:n*, v.1, pp.368 and after. Jeffery, *Muqaddimata:n*, p.271.
130. For more examples see Zarkashi, *Burha:n*, v.1, pp.368 and after. Jeffery, *Muqaddimata:n*, p.271.
131. For examples of words used in different languages in the same way and having the same meaning, see 'Umar, *Lughah*, pp.119-123.
132. For these questions and answers, see Suyu:ti, *Itqa:n*, v.2, pp.55-88. Zarkashi, *Burha:n*, v.1, p.369, says that Al-'Anba:ri in his book *Al-Waqf wa Al-Ibtida:*' quoted them as well.
133. Jeffery, *Muqaddimata:n*, p.271.
134. For more examples see Suyu:ti, *Itqa:n*, v.2, pp.105-20.
135. According to Zarkashi, *Burha:n*, v.1, p.356, 'Umar once asked the Prophet (ﷺ) about how he used to come up with Arabic words that they did not know before though they were the 'real' Arabs, to which the Prophet (ﷺ) said: "Allah has

taught me and I learnt, ...”.

"وَذَكَرَ أَنَّ عُمَرَ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ قَالَ: يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ؛ إِنَّكَ تَأْتِينَا بِكَلَامٍ مِنَ كَلَامِ الْعَرَبِ وَمَا نَعْرِفُهُ، وَلَنَحْنُ الْعَرَبُ حَقًّا، فَقَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ (ﷺ): إِنَّ رَبِّي عَلَّمَنِي فَتَعَلَّمْتُ، وَأَدَّبَنِي فَتَأَدَّبْتُ".

Zarkashi also says that Al-Sha:fi'i in his book *Al-Risa:lah* says:

“لا نَعْلَمُهُ يُحِيطُ بِاللُّغَةِ إِلَّا نَبِيٌّ”, i.e., “We do not know of anyone who has thorough knowledge of the language except a Prophet”. Suyuṭī in *Itqa:n*, v.2, p.106, says the same in a slightly different wording: “لا يُحِيطُ بِاللُّغَةِ إِلَّا نَبِيٌّ”.

On the other hand, in his introduction to his book *The Foreign Vocabulary of The Qur'an* (1938), p.8, Arthur Jeffery says quoting, as he claims, Al-Sha:fi'i's *Al-Risa:lah*, (1312 A.H), p.13: “.... they (the Arabs) quote the dictum of ash-Sha:fi'i, لا يُحِيطُ بِاللُّغَةِ إِلَّا نَبِيٌّ, “None but a Prophet thoroughly comprehends a language”.

As is clear, Jeffery not only quoted the quotation at issue wrongly, as Al-Sha:fi'i was expressing his own view, but also gave the wrong translation as well, as the quotation is not about 'comprehension' only.

However, consulting the same edition of *Al-Risa:lah* that Jeffery referred to I found that what

Al- Sha:fi'i exactly says in his book is:

ولسانُ العربِ أوسعُ الألسنةِ مذهباً وأكثرها ألفاظاً ولا نعلمُ يحيطُ بجميعِ
”علمِهِ إنسانٌ غيرُ نبيِّ الله“

As is clear, Al- Sha:fi'i is saying that the Arabic language is the richest in vocabulary and he knows of no one who has a thorough knowledge of the Arabic language except the Prophet of Allah (ﷺ). The difference between the above statements, thus, becomes very clear.

136. See Suyu:ṭi, *Itqa:n*, v.2, pp.105-120.

137. See Clive Holes, *Modern Arabic: Structures, Functions and Varieties* (1995), pp.7-8:

“Arabic is a member of the Semitic language family, a term which designates a group of languages, some long dead, some still living, and some today having marginal status as liturgical languages, which all show sufficient degree of similarity of structure in their phonology, morphology and basic lexical stock for a common origin (‘proto-semitic’) to be supposed.

The exact geographical homeland of the putative Proto-Semitic ‘mother language’ is disputed, but the earliest texts written in languages which are presumed to have developed from it were composed in the Ancient Near East- Syria,

Palestine and Mesopotamia- and date from about 2500 BC.

The Semitic languages are traditionally divided on grounds of both their structural properties and geographical provenance into three groups: northwestern, northeastern, and southwestern. These areas cover respectively what are now the Levant (Modern Syria, Lebanon, *Palestine*, parts of Jordan); central-south Iraq; and the Arabian Peninsula and Ethiopia. Arabic is a member of the southwestern group.

The earliest definite textual evidence we have for the existence a distinct language identifiable as Arabic is an inscription on a tombstone found at Nemarain the Syrian desert. This has been dated to A.D.328- recent by the standards of Semitic languages. This does not necessarily mean, of course, that Arabic was merely a latecomer onto the linguistic scene, since a datable written text merely shows that the language in question could be written at the time of its composition: it tells us nothing about the antiquity (or even necessarily the structure) of the spoken language which must have coexisted with it”.

See the diagram showing the Semitic Family of Languages in: Ramādā:n Abdel-Tawwā:b, *Fuṣu:l fi Fiqh Al-Lughah Al-‘Arabiyyah* (1983), p.36:

138. See ‘Abba:s M. Al-‘Aqqa:d, *‘Ashta:t*

Mujtami'a:t fi al-Lughah wa al-'Adab (n.d), pp.14-28. Also in Abdel-Tawwa:b, *Fusu:l*, pp.40-9, the author supports the view that Arabic is the origin of all the Semitic languages, and that the homeland of the Semites is the Arabian peninsula.

It also seems that the view that Arabic may be the mother of all other tongues has its root back in history. We catches a glimpse of this in Al-Suyu:ti's *Itqa:n*, v.2, p.106, where he talks about those words regarded as being of non-Arabic origins: “ وَقَالَ أَبُو الْمَعَالِي عَزِيزِي بْنُ عَبْدِ الْمَلِكِ: إِيمًا “ وَجَدْتُ هَذِهِ الْأَلْفَاظَ فِي لُغَةِ الْعَرَبِ، لِأَنَّهَا أَوْسَعُ اللُّغَاتِ وَأَكْثَرُهَا أَلْفَاظًا، وَجَبَّوْزُ أَنْ يَكُونُوا سَبَقُوا إِلَى هَذِهِ الْأَلْفَاظِ” those words are found in the language of the Arabs because it is the richest in vocabulary. However, it is also possible that such words were in other languages before Arabic”. Here, we can see that as it is possible that these words were used in other languages before the Arabs, it is also possible that they were not.

- 139. Suyu:ti, *Itqa:n*, v.1, p.130.
- 140. Khan and Helali, *Qur'an*.
- 141. Khan and Helali, *Qur'an*.
- 142. Cf. Denffer, *Ulum al-Qur'an*, p.72.
- 143. Cf. Yusuf Ali, *Qur'an*. Khan and Helali, *Qur'an*.

144. Khan and Helali, *Qur'an*.
145. Khan and Helali, *Qur'an*.
146. See Al-Ra:fi'i, *Ta:ri:kh A:da:b*, v.2, pp.171-2.
147. See Khan and Helali, *Qur'an*. Yusuf Ali, *Qur'an*.
148. See Al-Ra:fi'i, *Ta:ri:kh A:da:b*, v.2, pp.95-7.
 'Uka:z became a cultural centre fifteen years after the year of the Elephant, about 540 A.D and remained as such until it was destroyed in 129 A.H by the Kharijites Al-Haruriyyah 'الْحَوَاجِ' 'أ' رُوِيَتْ led by Al-Mukhta:r Ibn 'Awf. It was located between Nakhlah and al-Ta:'if.
 A tent used to be set up for Al-Na:bighah who would be the judge in the poets' competition. After Islam, the *Su:q* of al-Marbad in Basra succeeded that of 'Uka:z.
149. See Khan and Helali, *Qur'an*. Yusuf Ali, *Qur'an*.
150. See Khan and Helali, *Qur'an*. Yusuf Ali, *Qur'an*.
151. Khan and Helali, *Qur'an*.
152. Khan and Helali, *Qur'an*.

153. Khan and Helali, *Qur'an*.
154. Khan and Helali, *Qur'an*.
155. See Khan and Helali, *Qur'an*. Yusuf Ali, *Qur'an*.
156. There are a few examples of these attempts; see Musaylimah al-Kadhdha:b's compositions in Al-Ra:fi'i, *Ta:ri:kh A:da:b*, v.2, pp.171-87. Al-Ba:qilla:ni, *'I'ja:z al-Qur'an* (1991), pp.199-200.
157. See Zamakhshari, *Kashsha:f*, v.4, p.649. Ba:qilla:ni, *'I'ja:z*, p.20. Aḥmad M. Al-Mara:ghi, *'Ulu:m al-Bala:ghah* (1962), p.3.

Appendix

Some English Translations of the Qur'an

1649	Alexander Ross.
1734	George Sale.
1861	John Medows Rodwell.
1880	Edward Henry Palmer.
1905	Mohammad Abdul Hakim Khan.
1910	Mirza Abul Fazl.
1912	Hairat Dehlawi.
1917	Maulvi Muhammad Ali.
1920	Al-Hajj Hafiz Ghulam Sarwar.
1930	Mohammad Marmaduke Pickthall.
1934	'Abdullah Yusuf 'Ali.
1936	Maulvi Sher Ali.
1937	Richard Bell.
1941	Abdul Majid Daryabadi.
1947	Mirza Bashir Ud-Din Mahmud Ahmad.
1955	Arthur Jeffery Arberry.
1956	N. J. Dawood.
1957	A. M. Daryabadi.
1964	Khadim Rahmani Nuri.
1967	Abu Al-A'la Mawdudi.
1969	M. G. Farid.
1970	Zafrulla Khan.
1971	M. Muhsin Khan & M. Taqi-ud-Din Al-Helali.
1974	Hashim Amir Ali.
1980	Muhammad Asad.
1981	Sayyid Imam Isa Al Haadi Al Mahdi
1981	Mahomodali Habib Shakir.
1984	Mohamed. M. Khatib.
1984	Ahmed Ali.
1985	T. B. Irving.

1988 Zafar Ishaq Ansari.
 1990 Rashad Khalifa.
 1990 Shah faridul Haque.
 1991 Muhammad Khalilur Rahman.
 1992 Q. Arafat.
 1993 Dr. Mir Aneesuddin.
 1996 Malachi Z. York.
 1996 Abdul Majeed Auolakh.
 1997 Colin Turner.
 1998 Thomas Cleary.
 1998 Abdalhaqq Bewley and Aisha Bewley.
 2000 Dr. Zohurul Hoque.
 2001 Dr. S.M. Afzal-ur-Rahman.
 2001 Mohammed S. Shakir.
 2001 Tahereh Saffarzadeh.
 2003 Shabbir Ahmed.
 2004 Muhammad Abdel-Haleem.
 2004 'Ali Quli Qara'i.
 2006 Ali Ünal.
 2007 Alan Jones.
 2007 Mufti Afzal Hoosen Elias.
 2007 Edip Yüksel, Layth al-Shaiban, Martha Schulte-Nafeh
 2007 Alan Jones.
 2007 Tahereh Saffarzadeh.
 2007 Laleh Bakhtiar.
 2007 Syed Vickar Ahamed.
 2008 Justice Mufti Taqi Usmani.
 2008 Muhammad Mahmud Ghali.
 2009 Usama Dakdok.
 2009 Tarif Khalidi.
 2010 P. JainulAbideen.
 2011 Muhammad Tahrir-ul-Qadri.
 2012 Talal Itani.

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