

**DISCOURSES OF QUR'ĀNIC SCIENCES IN
'ENCYCLOPAEDIA OF THE QUR'ĀN'**

(An analytical study)



A Dissertation Submitted to the Department of Tafsir
Faculty of Islamic Studies (Usūluddīn) in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirement for
The Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

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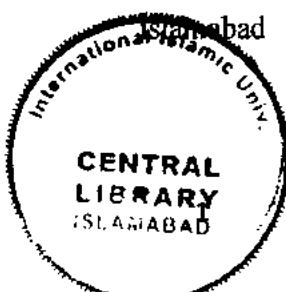
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2019

Department of Tafsir, Faculty of Usūluddin

International Islamic University



Accession No TA2456



PhD

297.1228

IFD

The viva voce was held in Dr. Mahmood Ahmad Ghazi seminar room, International Islamic University, on the 17th of Rajab, 1439 A.H, which was on 22 April, 2018 C.H.

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To

My husband whose unwavering encouragement and constant support in daily basis family affairs helped me accomplish my task. May Allay bless him with the best of rewards in this world and the Hereafter.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

All praises belong to Allah Almighty for He has created Man and blessed him with the Knowledge. He is The Great who taught Man with pen. I am filled with a deep sense of gratitude to Allah, who out of His benevolence, enabled me to serve knowledge

I would like to express my gratitude to my Supervisor Dr Junaid Hashmi for his support and guidance. I am highly grateful to my co-supervisor Dr Ayaz Afsar for his meticulous supervision and endorsements that made this work viable.

I further owe a great debt of gratitude to Dr Muhammad Al Ghazali (Islamic Research Institute) for his benevolence, readily guidance and precious insights to help me comprehend the basic issues of Qur'anic scholarship. My thanks also go to Dr Rizwan Nadvi, Kazi Zulkader Siddiqi (Massachusetts Institute of Technology), Dr Darakhshan Azam (Islamic Research Institute) and Dr Muhammad Bilal (International Islamic University). I am very much obliged to my brother Dr Sajjad Zahir (University of Amsterdam) for his reviews and corrections despite his tiring schedules. I am thankful to Sayyad Matin Ahmad for providing ample time to me for transliteration learning. He also has been kind enough to provide e-books.

Mention should be made of the library of State Bank, Karachi more significantly Mr Bashir Zia and Miss Zahir Fatima for their voluntarily assistance in providing books. I would not be able to access the fresh and significant Western works without their support. May Allah Almighty bless them.

I also want to express my deepest gratitude and special thanks for my intimate friend Taimia for her continues backing, encouragements and prayers. I owe special thanks to my friends and colleagues more significantly Soumia and Qudsia for their moral support and intellectual insights.

My list of obligation to my family is long. Immediately, I owe special thanks to my husband for his cooperation, help and more specifically his tolerance. Thanks are due to my parents in law, my sisters in law and my brothers and sisters.

I am obliged to my young kids Anas, Zainab, Mirab and Amina for their cooperation and patience. I pray Allah Almighty to bless them with steadfastness on the Right Path. They truly have been a source of stimulation for their sacrifices of the moments I should have spent with them.

The most of all, my deep prayers are for my late parents who have inculcated in me the love for knowledge. I pray Allah to raise their ranks in Jannah and make them a constant source of inspiration for me to the path of knowledge.

ABSTRACT

مباحثات علوم القرآن في دائرة المعارف القرآنية لـ "بريل" (دراسة تحليلية)

إن للقرآن الكريم مكانة كبيرة في العالم بحيث يحترم حوالي سُكّان العالم القرآن العظيم ويعتبرونه أعلى مصدر روحي وديني . وقد اعترف بهذه الحقيقة الأساسية علماء الغرب الذين اعتبروا بالدراسات القرآنية .

وعندما ننظر إلى الجانب المُميز لهذا الكتاب من حيث تطوير المجتمعات الإسلامية وتكاملها، فإنه لا يمكن للعلماء الغربيين أن يظلوا بعيدين عن التحقيق والبحث مفصل عنه. وهذا الاهتمام الغربي الذي بدأ منذ القرن الثاني عشر قد نتج عن حجم كبير من المؤلفات التي تم تأليفها بناءً على الواقع الأكاديمية واللاهوتية.

و خلال القرن الحالي على وجه الخصوص قد تم التركيز على استخدام الأساليب العلمية والموضوعية في مجال الدراسات القرآنية، وتم إنجاز عدد من الأعمال البحثية المشتركة بمشاركة العلماء المسلمين. ومن بين تلك الإنجازات البارزة و نتيجة الجهود المشتركة موسوعة القرآن الكريم لـ "بريل" (Encyclopaedia of the Qur'an) وهذه الموسوعة التي تم إعدادها خلال فترة 13 سنة، في الواقع إنجاز كبير للعلماء الغربيين في مجال الدراسات القرآنية كما أنه اجتذب العلماء المسلمين أيضاً. ومن ملامح رئيسية لهذه الموسوعة، كما أعلن عنها فريق إدارتها، بأنه اسس على الموضوعية والمشاركة من قبل العالم الإسلامي.

مشكلة البحث تدور حول السؤال الأساسي و هو

" هل موسوعة المعارف القرآنية تعد من المؤلفات الغربية التي اهتمت بالموضوعية والأكاديمية والعلمية والتي اتبعت أصول الأبحاث العلمية في البحث حول القرآن؟".

ويهدف هذا البحث تقييم المواد المتعلقة بموضوعات علوم القرآن في هذه الموسوعة والتي تغطي على وجه التحديد موضوعين رئيسيين منها وهما: تاريخ النص القرآني والنص نفسه.

و المنهج الذي يقوم عليه هذا البحث هو التحليلي و التقدى بخصوص الباب الثالث و الرابع.

و مجال هذا البحث محدد على الموضوعات المتعلقة بعلوم القرآن فقط. و في هذا اختيرت خمسة من المقالات التي تخص بموضوع علوم القرآن.

يركّز الباب الأول من هذا البحث على تاريخ الدراسات القرآنية منذ القرن الثاني عشر إلى عصرنا الحاضر. و أيضاً يحتوى على تعريف الموضوعات التي قام الباحثون الغربيون بمعالجتها في مؤلفاتهم. و مزيداً يلقى الضوء على الإتجاهات المهمة والمناهج المستعملة في الغرب في مجال الدراسات القرآنية .

ويتضمن الباب الثاني مقدمة عامة عن الموسوعة و دراسة بعض معالجتها بالنظر في المقالات العامة . كما يشير إلى أهم أفكار الذين شاركوا في كتابة مقالاتها من المسلمين و غيرهم . و تحقق عند الباحثة بعد دراسة و تحليل المواد بأن دعوى مشاركة المسلمين الأساسية في إنجاز هذه الموسوعة دعوى مجردة من الحقيقة . و كذلك قد أتت بعض الدراسات حول القرآن على الأسس المفاهيم القديمة عند الغرب .

ويختص الباب الثالث و الرابع بفحص المواد المتعلقة بباحثات علوم القرآن و ما تاريه جمع القرآن و نقد نص القرآن . و لهذا اختارت الباحثة خمسة من المقالات المختلفة المتعلقة بهذين الموضوعين . و هذه المقالات الخمسة كتبت حول هذين الموضوعين من الجوانب و الإتجاهات المختلفة ولكن مشتركة في شئ واحد وهو النتائج . و على هذا هذه الرسالة تنتهي على أن دائرة المعارف القرآنية حاول بعض كاتبواها بأن يتلزموا بأصول البحث العلمي في الإحاطة بموضوعاتهم . ولكن في الأصول الأخرى المتعلقة بالبحث العلمي خاصة الموضوعية و العلمية فلم تجد الباحثة التزام المؤلفين بها .

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1. INTRODUCTION

Al Qur'ān, being the nucleus of the Muslim world, has been a primary object of vigilant study throughout the Islamic history. The traditional Muslim savants created bulky volumes illuminating the fundamental themes concerning the Qur'ān and its sciences.

From medieval times to the modern and post modern era, the Western scholars too, have wielded their extreme labors in the Qur'ānic research. A substantial body of literature produced by the Western academia is an indication of their grave interest in Qur'ānic studies. At present, one can observe a massive upsurge in producing academic literature on the Qur'ān covering its history, manuscripts, literary styles, themes etc. Hence, it becomes undeniably difficult to neglect the Occidental scholarship in the field of Qur'ānic studies.

The history of Western studies of the Qur'ān shows that it has been directed, by and large, by polemic motifs as indicated by many of the Muslim and non- Muslim scholars alike.¹

The classical polemical works, produced both by the Eastern and Western Christian writers, had lingering effects in two folds. On the one hand, it influenced the entire corpus of the Western studies of Islam in the sense that from time to time, we see a reflection of those works in the contemporary academic and non- academic researches.

While, on the other side, it has influenced the Muslim thought in a way that mostly they reject the Western academic scholarship setting it in the same old prototype of old polemic tradition. Despite the acknowledgment of certain positive aspects of non-Muslim scholarship by some Muslim intellectuals, its validity is still contentious and debatable. Majority of the Muslims do not rank the Western Qur'ānic scholarship in high

¹ Clinton Benner, "New Directions". In Clinton Bennet, ed. *The Bloomsbury companion to the Islamic studies* (Bloomsbury: New York. 2013), 260. Andrew Rippin, "Western scholarship and the Qur'ān", *The Cambridge*, 236. There are countless writers who illustrated to this fact such as Norman Denial, Edward Said, Angelika Neuwirth and others.

regard with an outlook that the tradition of Orientalism have not tried to study Islam according to the understanding of its adherents and hence, it has its match in the medieval Qur'ānic studies.

They are of the view that in spite of the claims of scientific approaches and objectivity, the Western scholars have presented Islam with their own lens, the fact that is acknowledged by recent Western writers.² It is also argued that the so- called academic study of the Qur'ān is a presentation of the old views in new guise and appearance of the old wine in a new bottle.³

While, a glance backward demonstrates towards an evolution in the phases of the Western Islamic studies. The medieval image of the Prophet Muhammad from the false Prophet and a mere fraud has developed in the modern ages to his recognition as a sincere leader. Even in many writings, he has been acknowledged as a true prophet although for his own time. For instance, the traces of this approach can be found in the works of Thomas Carlyle (d.1881), and Karen Armstrong⁴.

Moreover, their description of the Qur'ān as an absurd and patchwork has changed to its recognition as a great book that had its lasting influence on the world civilization. At present, one can observe a massive upsurge in producing academic literature on the Qur'ān covering its history, manuscripts, literary styles, themes etc.

This transformation of style and approaches in the study of Islam in general and the Qur'ān in specific is an aftermath of the grave change in the entire paradigm of the Western studies of art, science and religion in Modern Times.

Besides, another factor that influenced the overall methodological approaches towards the Qur'ānic studies is the Muslim contribution in the Western academia. It is quite

² See for instance. Buland Senay, "Another Introduction to Islam: The Myth of Value-free Study of Religion." *The American Journal of Islamic Social Sciences* 15, no. 2, 83-92. 2

³ See for instance the works of A. L. Tibavi and Pervaiz Manzur under the caption of "English speaking Orientalist s " and ... respectively in this regard..<http://www.pmanzoor.info/Method-Truth.htm>

⁴ A British scholar and former Roman Catholic religious sister (b. 1944), known for her works on comparative religions. She has produced several books on Islam and its history.

evident that many of the renowned Muslim scholars such as Sayyed Husien Nasr,⁵ Fazlur Rehman(d.1988), Mustansir Mir,⁶ Abdullah Saeed⁷ have affected the Western academia to some extent with their contribution.

Anyhow, the distorted presentation of Islam by the classical writes is so entrenched in the West that according to a Western writer of nineteenth century, Muhammad was still considered a false prophet by populace.⁸ Many of the Western intellectuals have discussed the issue of the pejorative treatment of Islam by the classical and modern writers in their seminal works and highlighted the sole reasons behind that.⁹

It is worth noting that the recent Western scholarship, as well, is well aware of this reality. Several scholars denote to the increase of the Muslim sensitivity to Islamic studies in the West. Accordingly, many attempts are made to defend the Western Qur'anic scholarship against the charges laid on them by the Muslim academics.¹⁰ Same has been observed by many noted scholars such as Dr Schimmel (d. 2003), Carl Ernest,¹¹ Angelika Neuwirth¹² and others.

At the present, the situation is that the Western scholarship, having acknowledged the pejorative results of the polemic history, attempts to introduce its findings in an academic and non -polemical manner.

⁵Seyyed Hossein Nasr is currently University Professor of Islamic Studies at the George Washington University, Washington D.C. dw

⁶ Originally from Pakistan, he is professor of Islamic studies at Youngstown State University. His areas of interest are Qur'anic and Iqbal studies.

⁷He is an Australian academic and scholar of Islamic studies who is currently the Sultan of Oman Professor of Arab and Islamic Studies at the University of Melbourne. He has produced many works in the genre of Qur'anic studies.

⁸ Tor André, Muhammad, the man and his faith. Trans. Theophil Menzel (London: George Allen and Unwin Ltd,1936)

⁹See for instance:Norman Daniel, Islam and the West: the making of an image (Oxford: One World, 1997) Bernard Lewis,*Islam and the West*. (New York: Oxford University Press. 1993)Clinton Bennett, ed. The Bloomsbury Companion to Islamic Studies. (Britain: Bloomsbury, 2013)

¹⁰ One fine example of this is the work of Andrew Rippin, "The Reception of Euro-American Scholarship on the Qur'ān and tafsīr": An Overview. *Journal Of Qur'ānic Studies* 14, no. 1 (2012):1-8.

¹¹Professor of Islamic studies at the Department of Religious Studies at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

¹²A professor of Qur'anic studies at Freie University, Berlin, Germany. She has written many articles and edited books on the subject of Qur'anic studies.

To judge the reliability of the recent scholarship, it is vital to examine the parameters and standards of the modern Western academia and its research on the Qur'ān. It is of grave significance to assess the foundations upon which the Western academia builds its entire structure. Moreover, the question that whether on the basis of old works, the Muslims should equate the recent academic works with the past works of Orientalists approach is also of consequence. Another significant concern is to evaluate that is there really a substantial change in the Western treatment of the Qur'ān as a result of the enlightenment or it is merely a so-called slogan of objectivity and detachment. To address these issues in a better and scholastic way, it is essential to evaluate and assess the recent academic works.

On the Muslim side too, it is essential to discard the behavior of mere criticism and to assess the works according to a systematic framework. Hence, with the application of a proper framework for analytical study of these works, the Muslims would be able to welcome the constructive endeavors to understand Islam and its Holy Book and discard the polemical works. Since, it is a solid reality that there were, among the Western thinkers, some figures who made valuable efforts to interpret Islam, to some extent, according to the Muslim understanding and requested their contemporaries as well to follow the rules of justice and impartiality in this regard.¹³

1.1. Significance of the study

The 21st century witnessed an excess of academic publications in the field of Qur'ānic Studies in the West. The Western scholars are of the opinion that the Muslims should analyze these works with a positive approach and not equate the latest treatises in the field of Qur'ānic studies with the works of past centuries as the fresh works are more academic in their treatment of the Qur'ān.

¹³For instance Cantwell Smith endorses the application of justice and fairness in the studies of other religion and more significantly Islam. *Islam in Modern History* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1957) See also his book; *The meaning and end of Religion* (New York: Macmillan Company, 1964)

Moreover, it is claimed that the contribution of the Muslim scholars in the Western academia has resulted in a remarkable transformation in approaches, methodologies, styles and tones of the present researches on the Qur'ān.¹⁴

It is sound reality that various factors led towards the advancements in Islamic studies. The modern scholars had to transform their style and tone regardless of the fact that they were bound to do that out of their increasing relations to the Muslim countries¹⁵ or it was a thoughtful act as a result of increasing number of the Muslims in the West and social contacts with them as sees Sayyed Hussein Nasr.¹⁶

The aforementioned debate concerning the reception of the Western Qur'ānic scholarship motivated the present researcher to seek for a fair approach through a close scrutiny of the Western literature on the Qur'ān. Besides, the present study aims to locate the status of the recent Western Qur'ānic scholarship. As it is not viable to evaluate the entire literature, I selected this century's one of the notable achievements of the Western scholars in the genre of Qur'ānic studies i.e. Encyclopaedia of the Qur'ān. It is the first and foremost work entirely devoted to Qur'ān. It is a major outcome of the joint endeavors of the specialists in the genre of Qur'ānic studies. Another important feature of this work is the contribution of the some Muslim scholars from around the world.

Being a massive project and the major contribution of this century, it has captured the attention of the scholars and received a diverse reception from across the world. There are scholars, who count this compendium to be the century's major contribution towards Qur'ānic Sciences. While, many of the Muslim scholar, if not all, entirely differ from the Western scholars in their approach regarding EQ as they consider it nothing except a

¹⁴ Carl Ernest, *Reading strategies for introducing the Qur'ān as literature in an American University*. (Pakistan: Islamic Research Institute, 2007), 2.

¹⁵ As Watt admits in the following words; "we have to change our style now as a result of contacts with Muslims and we no longer can continue the old propagandas". Montgomery Watt, Muhammad at Mecca.

¹⁶ "Muslims and Western studies of the Qur'ān: the Qur'ān in the Contemporary World Seyyed Hossein Nasr in Conversation with Muzaffar Iqbal". *Islam and Science* 8, no. 2(2010):119. According to him, these steps must be appreciated by the Muslims as they have at least tried to free themselves from the chains of history.

continuation of old notions. Abdul Rahim Kidwai¹⁷ expresses his views in this regard and declares that EQ retains, rather resurrects most of the Orientalist's misperceptions about the Qur'ān. He also sees that many of the contributors are found repeating the same old ideas about the supposed borrowing in the Qur'ān from the Bible and the Old Testament.¹⁸

A recent Pakistani scholar, Munir Wasti¹⁹ while expressing his views about the advancement in the field of Qur'ānic studies and publications of bulky volumes, says that these publications still have polemic tone and are hostile to Islam. Hence, he sees these works as propaganda rather than learning. The EQ comes under this category according to him.²⁰

From the above mentioned quotes, it becomes evident that the majority Muslim standpoint concerning this work is entirely different from the Western opinion. Hence, it becomes necessary to examine the factors behind this approach. Subsequent to this, it is essential to build a judicious approach towards this voluminous work as it is considered a reflection of the entire Western academia in the realm of Qur'ānic Studies. Having said this, the present study aims at locating the status of the EQ in the recent Western erudition and its contribution towards the subject of Qur'ānic Sciences.

Moreover, as states Muhammad Arkoun (d. 2010) in his entry vis-à-vis contemporary critical practices in Qur'ānic studies, that the EQ constitutes a basis of data that will undoubtedly, like every work of scholarship, be subject to discussions, additions and revisions.²¹ Therefore, inspired entirely with the scholarly approach this research aims at assessing the contribution of Encyclopaedia of the Qur'ān in the genre of Qur'ānic Sciences.

¹⁷ Professor of English at the Aligarh Muslim University in India and the well-known author of many works on the Qur'an and Islam.

¹⁸ Abdul Rahim Kidwai, "Reference Works on the Qur'ān in English: A Survey." *Journal of Qur'ānic research and studies* 1, no. 2 (2006): 2-21.

¹⁹

²⁰ Munir Wasti, *The Qur'ān; The book free of doubt* (Gujrat: University of Gujrat Press. 2009), 243.

²¹ EQ, vol. 1. 428.

1.2. Statement of the Problem

In the abovementioned scenario of Muslim skepticism towards the recent western scholarship and the western protest of the Muslim's dealing with the polemic and academic works alike, the present study attempts to trace the answers of the following question.

- Does the Encyclopaedia of the Qur'ān offer an erudite, academic, self-sufficient and rigorous scholarship of the Qur'ān following the basic principles of research methodology and hence represent an evolution in the Western thought concerning the Qur'ān?

To answer this problem some specific issues concerning the EQ material are addressed as stepping stones.

- i. Is the EQ writers' position clear on the issue under discussion or do they use authoritative, imprecise and confused language leaving the reader in the state of bewilderment?
- ii. Is it an independent study based on fresh conclusions or the work is mere replica of the previously established stereotypes?
- iii. How much an article is consistent and logical in advancing its arguments? Moreover, do the writers try to persuade the readers through implicit arguments?
- iv. What is the level of accuracy in the usage of the sources with regard to a fair representation of the facts, its distortion or over generalization?
- v. Does the writer attempt to establish his findings prior to the presentation of the Qur'ānic notion in detail?
- vi. Does the EQ represent the majority the Muslim point of view and the contrary stance to same extent?
- vii. Being a collaborative enterprise of the Muslims and non- Muslims as highlighted by many scholars, do we find strong influence of the Muslim thought on the overall representation of the Qur'ān?

Except from the last two, all questions are designed according to the criteria of critical and academic writing. Moreover, I have selected these questions according to the rules

and features of EQ mentioned in the preface by the general editor of EQ. Specifically, the feature of the EQ being ‘academic, and ‘rigorous’ in research are chosen for critical analysis.

The theme of the last two points is also culled from the claims of the editor, Brill website and other scholars who have emphasized on the Muslim contribution in this work.

For instance, the general editor, McAuliffe, articulates that in the past there was a gap between the Western and the Muslim scholarship and each of them was studying Islam in isolation. The situation is, according to her, no more like that as the Muslims and non-Muslims are now collaborating with each other in this regard and producing joint works. Discussing the basic factors for creating EQ, the general editor states that the EQ is planned to bridge this intellectual gap. Hence, she deems that the EQ will be a combination of scholarly work produced by the Muslims and non- Muslims.²² Moreover, the back cover of the EQ declares the same as following; “hundreds of the scholars both the Muslims and non- Muslims have collaborated in the creation of this work”.

With this perspective, the present work also aims at evaluating the level of the Muslim contribution in the EQ and its nature. These very essential inquiries will help tracing the status of the EQ in recent academic works that are produced purely for the sake of scholarly interests according to the western academia.

1.3. Work Scope and limitation

The Encyclopaedia of the Qur’ān is a voluminous and inclusive work covering numerous terminologies of the Qur’ān or related to the Qur’ān. It also has given due attention to the discipline of Uloom ul Qur’ān. The science of Uloom ul Qur’ān is central to the other Islamic disciplines and hence, is a guiding light in the faultless understanding of the Qur’ān. Looking at the significance of Uloom ul Qur’ān in the western scholarship and the consideration it has received in the recent western academic circles, this study aims to evaluate the articles that revolve around the subject matter of ‘Uloom ul Qur’ān (sciences of the Qur’ān) in its technical sense as the title of this work indicates.

²² EQ, vol. 1. Preface, iii.

The discipline of ‘Ulūm ul Qur’ān covers numerous topics from the meaning of revelation to the study of diacritical marks and verse numbering of the Qur’ān. As it was hard to cover the entire list of ‘Ulūm ul Qur’ān due to time limitations, this work aspires to discuss the two basic themes of ‘Ulūm ul Qur’ān that are: the history of the text of the Qur’ān and the text of the Qur’ān itself. The basic reason for the selection of these two ideas lies in the fact that they are the most attended issues in the most influential western works such as the treatises of Theodore Noldeke (d. 1930), Richard Bell(d. 1952), Regis Blachere (d. 1973) and John Wansbrough (d. 2002). More significantly, the issue of the history of compilation of the Qur’ān is perhaps the most addressed point in the western books and the translations of the Qur’ān. Majority of the translators have drawn attention to this facet of the Qur’ān in their introductions.

The text of the Qur’ān also received a great deal of consideration in the monographs of these scholars. In the present researches, an emphasis on the text of the Qur’ān can be noticed evidently. More significantly, the recent anthological collections such as ‘The Blackwell companion to the Qur’ān’,²³ ‘The Qur’ān in its historical context’,²⁴ ‘The Cambridge companion to the Qur’ān’,²⁵ and ‘The Qur’ān in Context’²⁶ contain fresh works with an emphasis on the text of the Qur’ān such as foreign vocabulary and textual emendations. For a detailed examination of the articles related to these two issues, five entries are opted as specimens.

Alongside, through a general study of the articles on the issues of the Qur’ānic sciences in the entire Encyclopaedia, some of the insights are shared. This is done so to acquaint the reader that the highlighted features of this compendium are not only restricted to the specific subject matter. Yet, the aim was to demonstrate the fact that the identical views are presented in entire work.

²³ Andrew Rippin, ed. (USA: Blackwell Publishing, 2006)

²⁴ Gabriel Said Reynolds, ed. (USA: Routledge, 2008)

²⁵ Jane Dammen McAuliffe, ed. (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006)

²⁶ Angelika Neuwirth, ed. (Leiden: Brill Academic Publication, 2010)

1.4. Literature Review

AS this study aims to evaluate the most recent collective work in the genre of the Qur'ānic studies; very few precious works can be noticed on it.

Perhaps, the most influential of them is the analysis of Muzaffar Iqbal²⁷, who wrote two articles on EQ. He describes the EQ as the most extensive and ambitious work ever undertaken by the western academia. Mainly, Iqbal rejects the work on the premise that there is no room for an 'objective' and scientific study of the Qur'ān because of the fact that one cannot claim to be neutral about the Qur'ān. For him, to blur the line between the Muslim and non- Muslim is not viable as the Qur'ān itself declares only two positions. One has to either believe in its Divine nature or deny that and naturally, according to him, the second stance affects the mindset of any researcher. After an exhaustive criticism and statistical analysis, he powerfully negates the EQ to be objective and pluralistic in approach by inserting instances from inside the material of EQ.²⁸

According to him, many of the claims of EQ about the contribution of the Muslim scholars are fake as all of the fundamental Qur'ānic themes are discussed by the non-Muslim scholars.

The level of his rejection of this work was so strong that he himself initiated the task of producing an encyclopedic work on the Qur'ān with the title of 'Integrated encyclopedia of the Qur'ān'.

The EQ is analyzed in detail by some scholars in Iran as well. Many critical articles are written in the journal of 'Qur'ān from the Orientalist's point of view' on variety of its entries such as archeology and religious pluralism. Likewise, Ali Rezaie Esfahaani, an Iranian scholar, made a thorough investigation of EQ in which he highlights the flaws of this work.

²⁷ He is a Pakistani-Canadian Muslim scholar known for his work on the subject of Islam and science literature and Qur'ānic studies. He is the founding president of the centre for Islam and Science. His recent project is 'Integrated encyclopedia of the Qur'ān'.

²⁸ Muzaffar Iqbal, "Western Academia and the Qur'an: Some Enduring Prejudices." *The Book Review* 30, no. 1 (2009): 6-18.

Simultaneously, he mentions certain positive points as well. The original paper is in Persian and is accessible on Journal's website. He claims inconsistencies in the EQ and views that it is an echo of the old ideas related to the Qur'ān and its history. However, he also states that on some certain points, a disapproval of Orientalist's point of view can be witnessed.²⁹

However, the EQ incorporates issues that were the focusing points in the previous western works as well. In this regard, some of the general works of the Muslim scholars to counteract these views are worth mentioning such as 'The history of the Qur'ānic text' by Mustafa A'zami,³⁰ 'The sublime Qur'ān and Orientalism' by Muhammad Khalifa³¹ and 'The Qur'ān and the Orientalism' by Muhammad Mohar Ali.³² Numerous works in Urdu and Arabic can be located on the issue of the Qur'ān and Orientalism. In some of these works, defensive approach is quite evident. More specifically, some of the works in Arabic can be mentioned in this regard.³³ However, majority of the Muslim scholars have tried to counter the arguments of the western scholars using historical approach.

The most influential work that addressed the issue of the Qur'ānic studies in the West is that of 'Azimi's work. His work can be declared entirely as academic based on scientific approach. By making a comparison between the previous scriptures, especially the Old and New Testaments, he attempts to prove the validity of the Qur'ānic text. Moreover, in his work, one can find various methods to prove the historicity of the Qur'ān such as his close assessment of the Qur'ānic manuscripts. Besides, he also endeavors to address the issue by his study of the inscriptions.

²⁹ See: <http://Qur'ān-journal.com/Orientalist /index>

³⁰ Originally from India, he is Professor Emeritus at King Saud University. A best known scholar for his critical works on the theories of the Western scholars' criticism of the Qur'ān and Ḥadīth.

³¹ He is a renowned Egyptian scholar. He has a PhD degree in Electrical Engineering from Toronto University, Canada. Currently, he is a fellow of the American Institute of electrical & electronics engineers.

³² (IPSWICH: Jam'iyyatul Minhajul Sunnah, 2004)

³³ For detail; see chapter two 'Reception of the Western scholarship in Muslim world'.

1.5. Methodology

This research is a combination of descriptive and critical analytical research. It is descriptive as it aims to describe the state of affairs in the past and at the present. Particularly, the first chapter is a historical description of the western approaches to the Qur'ān with a very succinct analysis. It also intends to briefly depict the developmental stages of the Qur'ānic studies in the West with the explanation of the causes that led to this transformation.

It is analytical as it aims to study available data with critical appraisal and present the conclusion based on it. Mainly, the analytical critical approach is central in this work particularly in second and third chapter. Keeping in mind that the critical analysis highlights the positive feature as well as the flaws of the evaluated work, I have attempted to emphasize the constructive elements as well in evaluation of the material. For the critical evaluation of data, the fundamental principles of the academic research methods and critical thinking have been the guideline of the present analysis.

Additionally, this research is based on critical thematic analysis used in qualitative research to help focus on exploring themes within the data of EQ and its assessment. To answer the research question, except from the marginal themes, three essential issues of primary nature in Qur'ānic sciences are selected from the entire material.

The present work offers close readings of the texts and their assessment focusing on the way of data collection, themes presentations, and the argumentations. This way, the work deals with the five entries exclusively with a review of the past and recent works on the related themes.

Additionally, in the present research, arguments are based on the classical Islamic sources. The views of some recent western scholars are also described to support the argumentation.

1.6. Outline of the study

This study is divided mainly into five chapters including the introduction. The first chapter provides a historical survey of the movement of the Qur'ānic studies in the West that emerged during the twelfth century and thus, helps contextualize it with a description of the major factors behind the movement. The significance of this presentation lies in its demonstration of how the stereotypical western understanding of the Qur'ān is ingrained in its history. Moreover, the major themes of Qur'ānic studies and the methods employed in this field have been given prominence. Moreover, the issue of the reception of the western Qur'ānic studies in the Muslim world is addressed as well.

The second chapter aims to underscore the general characteristics and features of the Encyclopaedia of the Qur'ān. Moreover, this chapter presents an extensive assessment of the ideas of the managing team including the editor. On the basis of close assessment of the works of the members, this chapter argues that the managing team of the EQ is among the proponents of the autonomy and freedom in Qur'ānic research that regards religions as irrelevant in the academic matters.

With regard to the academic style, it is viewed that the majority of the contributors have exerted extreme labors in data collection and its analysis and made thorough examinations of the past and present works concerning their topic. By a presentation of the specimens from the EQ material, chapter two argues that the Muslim participation in the fundamental themes of the Qur'ānic studies has been marginal. Additionally, it is viewed that many old ideas concerning the nature of the Islam, Qur'ān and the Prophet hood are reiterated.

The third and fourth chapters deal specifically with the works on the 'Uloom ul Qur'ān. In the third chapter titled as 'The Encyclopaedia of the Qur'ān on the history of the Qur'ān', three entries related to the issue of the collection of the Qur'ān are evaluated. The three works are diverse in nature; however the basic thread of the three works is the same, i.e. the manifestation of doubt and rejection of the collection reports. It is also showed that the articles on the essential themes of 'Uloom ul Qur'ān are written by the non-Muslims. Not a single entry is written by any Muslim scholar. Hence, in this chapter,

the claim of establishment of the research based on variety of approaches is declared as void.

The forth chapter treats the entries on the text of the Qur'ān itself. Two main ideas are culled for assessment. The first section covers the topic of foreign vocabulary in the Qur'ān and the modern stance on the issue. The second section discusses the problem of textual criticism, its background and application of this method on the Qur'ānic text. It is demonstrated that the two methods initially discovered for the examination and restoration of the Old and New Testaments are applied to Qur'ānic text. It has also been showed with a comparative study that in principle this method has been mistakenly employed in the Qur'ānic studies. Finally, the observations and the findings are shared in the concluding remarks.

1.7. Analytical tools

The essential tools that are applied for the analytical study of the EQ material are taken from the basic criteria of research methods in religious study and that of the critical thinking.

The two basic works followed in this regard are 'The Routledge handbook of research methods in the study of religion'³⁴ and 'Critical thinking and communication: the use of reason in argument'.³⁵ As research is an academic, intellectual and moral activity, some of the related principles are set as criteria to evaluate the encyclopaedia. More significantly, the scholars have laid down some ethical rules to conduct research on any religion. Academic research of any religion does not mean the engagement with the texts and architecture. Yet, what it represents in reality is the involvement with the people who have a spiritual affiliation with that faith. Hence, the academic study demands from a researcher, may he be secular or committed, to observe some fundamental ethical principles.³⁶ It is quite evident that the role of ethics cannot be overlooked in argumentation or reasoning, many scholars have emphasized its observance by the

³⁴ Michael Stausberg and Steven Engler (New York: Routledge, 2014)

³⁵ Barbara Warnick and David S. Heineman (New York: McMillan Publishing Company, 2009)

³⁶ Stausberg and Engler, The Routledge, 81.

researchers. Moreover, every scholar is supposed to follow some technical rules in an academic writing. Overlooking these principles can influence excellence of the work. A blend of few is as followings:

- A researcher is supposed to communicate and represent others honestly. In doing he is ought to respect the dignity of the subject as the subject has the right to be represented truthfully and at least to the level they desire to be represented.
- Objectivity is among the most significant requisites of any scholarship. It mainly refers to the tendency of holding a fair and undistorted view on a question. A scholar is supposed to express a minimum level of objectivity towards his subject.
- It is the duty of the scholar to exercise the judgments about the subjects sensibly.
- He or she must NOT misrepresent the evidence or suppress the relevant data or plagiarize the works. Moreover, he must NOT persuade his readers by compelling expressions or argumentative trickery.
- A scholar should comprehend that the task of his scholarship is the development of a better understanding and is NOT putting the others down.

In the present work, I have evaluated the Encyclopaedia of the Qur'ān according to the above mentioned criteria. Plus, some others features are examined according to the standards set by the general editor of the EQ.

1.8. Explanation of the some essential terms

- **'Uloom ul Qur'ān**

In its general expressions, the term Uloom ul Qur'ān refers to the sciences which are derived from the Qur'ān or to the field of knowledge that serves as a fundamental tool to illuminate the Qur'ānic message. The former relates to the sciences that are drawn from the Qur'ānic ayahs. This refers to, in the expression of many traditional scholars, that the Qur'ān combines all of the sciences such as history, social sciences, commerce and many others. What they meant is that one can trace out the origins of all sciences in the Qur'ān. Mainly, this stance is derived from a Prophetic tradition, transmitted by Ibn Mas'ūd;

“whosoever wants knowledge has to scrutinize the Qur’ān because it contains the knowledge of the first and the last.”³⁷

The later denotes to the themes that are helpful in understanding an overall structure of the Qur’ān. In this sense, it is a wide- ranging science involving various themes such as the revelation, history of the Qur’ān, occasion of revelation, Abrogation, Makkan and Madinan etc. This is the technical description of ‘Uloom ul Qur’ān.

The present work, as previously said, has taken the term in its technical sense. During the era of compilation, many works were generated on the subject of Uloom ul Qur’ān. As the discipline of exegeses is interrelated to sciences of the Qur’ān, the early writers have proffered reflective and thorough discourses on this genre in their forwards. One of the fine specimens is the work of Ibn Jarīr al Tabarī (d.310/923) who expounded extensively these sciences in his introductory chapter. Scattered illusions can also be located in other works on this matter. An excellent example in this kind is the work of ‘Alī bin Sa‘eed al Ḥūfī (d.430 A.H) in tenth century A.D. under the caption of Al Burhān fī Tafsīr ul Qur’ān. The Work is extent in manuscript form.³⁸

In the early centuries, independent works related to this discipline, were also introduced by many savants. Some fine examples of such works were Nasikh wal Mansūkh by Qatada bin Di‘āma al Sudūsī (d.117 A.H),

Faḍā’lul Qur’ān by Abū ‘Ubaid Qāsim bin Salām (d.224/838) and Asbāb ul Nuzūl (occasions of revelation) by ‘Alī bin al Madīnī (d.423/849).

In subsequent centuries, many valuable voluminous monographs appeared compiling these sciences in one place. However, the first systemized work recorded in the list of Ibn Nadīm is also the work of tenth century by Abū Bakr Muhammād bin Khalf with the title of Al Havī fī ‘Ulom ul Qur’ān.³⁹

³⁷ Qasim Ibn Salām, Faḍā’l ul Qur’ān, ed. Al ‘Atīyya, Marwān. (Damascus: Dār Ibn Kathīr, 1995), 96.

³⁸ Ḥāfiẓ Khalīfa, Kashafa al Zunūn. (Baghdād: Makataba al Muthanna, 1941), vol. 1. 241. This work has been mistakenly mentioned as Al Burhān fī ‘Ulom ul Qur’ān in Manahil ul ‘Irfān, vol. 1. 27-8.

³⁹ Abul Farj Ibn Nadīm, Al Fehrist, ed. Ramaḍān, Ibrāhīm. (Lebanon: Dar ul Ma‘rifa, 1997), vol. 1. 114.

These key works were succeeded by many other significant volumes such as *Jamalul Qurra* by 'Alamuddin al Sakhāvī (d.643), *Al Murshad al Wajiz* by Abū Shama al Maqdasi(d. 665/1268) and *Al Burhān fī 'Ulūm al Qur'ān* by Badaruddin Al Zarkashi(d.794) and etc. The work that acquired a fundamental status in this regard and became the slandered source of the upcoming generations is done by Jalaluddin Al Siyī(d.794/1392)titled as *Al Itqān fī 'Ulūm il Qur'ān*.

For the next centuries, the discipline saw a little development. However, in the twentieth century onwards, many eminent scholars benefited the discipline with their insights. The scholars from all over the world, more significantly, from Middle East and sub- continent contributed dynamically in the legacy of Qur'ānic knowledge. Among some of the noteworthy of them are Shah Walliullah Al Dehlavi(d.1762), Sayyed Qutub(d.1966), Abdullah Daraz(d.1958) and many others.

- **Western**

Another significant oft- repeated term that needs to be elaborated is the phrase 'western' or Western Qur'ānic studies. It has become quite fashionable for contemporary scholars to use the phrase for a blend of the Muslim and non- Muslim academic study of the Qur'ān. The reason lies in the fact that the socio- geographical changes and the contribution of the recent Muslim scholars into academy has blurred the line between Muslim and non- Muslim. Perhaps, the discussion on what is meant by this term started in the late twentieth century with the participation of some eminent Muslim scholars to the western academia. Before that it was quite obvious that the term denotes to the non- Muslim study of the Qur'ān. At present, according to the western scholars, it can no longer be tied to the non- Muslims specially the Christians.⁴⁰ The fact referred by them cannot be overlooked in this regard. However, in the present work, whenever the term is employed it refers to the non- Muslim study of the Qur'ān. The reason underlies is the fact that this work begins with the history of the western Qur'ānic scholarship instigated by the non- Muslims more specifically the Christians with polemical motives. Many

⁴⁰ Andrew Rippin, "Western scholarship and the Qur'ān",235.

western intellectuals such as Bennet and Leemhuis demonstrated to this truth.⁴¹ Moreover, as the Encyclopaedia of the Qur'ān is a work undertaken by the non- Muslims, the usage of this expression for the non- Muslims is preferred.

1.9. Important Notes

- For the translation of the Qur'ānic ayahs, I have consulted mostly the English translation of Abdullah Yousuf Ali and for the citation of the verses of the Bible, I have relied on King James Version.
- In translating the quotes from the classical and contemporary Arabic works, I have attempted to convey the idea and doing so mostly, it is not the verbatim version of the original.
- For transliteration, I have followed the scheme of the journal of Islamic Studies. Noted names are not included in transliteration.
- One will find frequent references to the term of Qur'ānic studies. In the discipline of Islamic studies, Qur'ānic studies mainly break up into two chief branches i.e. Tafsir and 'Uloom ul Qur'ān. As the western works interchange these terms occasionally, I also employed Qur'ānic studies oftenly for Qur'ānic sciences.
- In the third chapter and forth while quoting the phrases from the entries, I have italicized them wherever emphasis was needed.
- The main concern of this work has been to consult and cite the original (English) sources without relying on Arabic or Urdu translation of any work.
- I also have tried in assessment of theories and thoughts, to reference the view of other western scholars as well in analysis of the arguments along with classical and the contemporary Muslim sources.
- With regard to the biographies of the persons mentioned, I have followed one consistent scheme and mentioned the date of the death of traditional Muslim and

⁴¹Clinton Bennet, "New approaches", 260.

Fred Leemhuis, "From palm leaves to the Internet" *The Cambridge*, 157.

non- Muslim scholars. The dating system is mixture of Gregorian and Hijri calender.

Abbreviations

EI: Encyclopedia of Islam, New Edition. Edited P.J. Bearman. 12 vols & Index. Leiden: Brill, 1960-2004.

EQ: Encyclopaedia of the Qur'ān. Edited Jane Dammen McAuliffe. 5 vols & Index. Leiden: Brill, 2001-2006

2. History of the Qur'anic Studies in the West

2.1. Introduction

This section aims to throw light on the sole factor behind the emergence of the Qur'anic studies in the West. The rest of this chapter is organized as follows. Section 2.2 provides an outline of the origin and succinct history of the western Qur'anic scholarship highlighting some key figures in this regard. This section also attempts to underline the grave impact of the medieval works on upcoming centuries. Section 2.3 throws light on contemporary scholarship introducing some significant ideas in regard to Qur'an. Section 2.4 introduces key western scholars of Qur'anic studies discussing the impact of their view on future works. Section 2.5 deals with major themes dealt in the western works concerning Qur'an. Section 2.6 introduces the research methods employed in the study of Qur'an. Finally, in section 2.7 a discussion is conducted on the issue of perception of the western Qur'anic scholarship by the Muslim world.

The study of Islam in the West has a long and deep seated history. The western scholarship of Islam has mostly been considered as a part of Orientalism⁴² that traces its history to medieval times. The Campaign was initiated with political, religious and military purposes as denoted by Edward Said (d.2003) in his well-known book and by many other western scholars in their treatises.⁴³ Said frequently uses the term Orientalism for those studying the East and Islam. He also describes that Orientalism has its own aims and objectives although he has been criticized by many western writers for his approach. Several Muslim intellectuals agree with his theses. In a Muslim expression, "it was a

⁴² The term Orientalism was coined in 1769 and denotes to both the artists who represented the Orient in their paintings and the scholars who specialized in the Eastern cultures, religions and languages.

⁴³ Edward Said, *Orientalism; Western Conceptions of the Orient with New Afterwards* (London: Penguin books, 1995) See also the works of Norman Daniel, *Islam and the West; The Making of an Image*. (Oxford: One World, 1997)

R.W. Southern, *Western views of Islam in the middle ages* (England: Harvard University Press, 1978) There are many others who have critiqued Orientalism as a discipline. But among Western scholars there are some who have advocated it in the sense that they pointed out the vast corpus of literature produced by Orientalism in the form of translations and edited works such as Albert Hourani and Lewes Bernard.

project of malice that bred out of frustration and it has been a plan to dislodge the noble scripture from its firmly enriched position in the Muslim world".⁴⁴

The western thinkers and academic institutions confess the flaws of the classical Orientalism and hence try to distance themselves from their predecessors. Consequently, its practice has been abandoned by the western intellectuals in twenty-ninth international congress of Orientalists in 1973.⁴⁵ Rather, the terms such as area studies and more recently, religious studies are being used.⁴⁶

The Qur'ān enjoys the fundamental status of Islamic world. Not only by the Islamic world, but its influential power over the global passage of history is acknowledged by many western scholars as writes Arthur Arberry "Its influence on the course of history has obviously been immense, and will obviously continue to be extremely great".⁴⁷

Many among them believe that it is essential to have recourse to the Qur'ān if one desires to understand Islam.⁴⁸ The level of the western interest in Islam and the Qur'ān can be perceived by the fact that almost 60,000 books have been written by the western pen covering the either topics (Islam and Qur'ān) during 19th to mid of 20th century.⁴⁹

Having felt the importance of the Qur'ān, the western scholars are engaged in various fields of the Qur'ānic studies with different dimensions and approaches. In early medieval times, the Qur'ān was introduced as production of Prophet Muhammad who was charged with epilepsy. The idea was later followed by Springer with a bit change of the word hysteria.⁵⁰ Sale (d.1736) announced that the author and chief contriver of the

⁴⁴ Pervaiz Manzur, "Method against Truth: Orientalism and the Qur'ānic Studies"<http://www.pmanzoor.info/Method-Truth.htm>

⁴⁵ Bernard Lewis, *Islam and the West* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993), 103.

⁴⁶ Despite of the fact that Western scholars have abandoned the term and changed their strategies and methods, many Muslim scholars still consider Occidental scholarship of the Qur'ān as a new weapon for old war. See for instance: AbdulHalim Uwais, "Al Isteshrāq Fi Ghazwa Jadida." *Al Dirasat al Islamia* 18, no. 6 (1983), 65.

⁴⁷ Arthur Arberry, *The Koran Interpreted* (New York: George Allen & Unwin, 1995), vol. 1. 33.

⁴⁸ Gerhard Endress, *Islam an Historical Introduction*. Trans: Carole Hillenbrand (New York: Columbia University Press, 2002), 22.

⁴⁹ Said, *Orientalism*, 64.

⁵⁰ Denial, *Islam and the West*, 77.

See also: John Tolan, "European accounts of Muhammad's life", in Brockopp, Jonathan E., ed. 2010. *The Cambridge Companion to Muhammad* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 233-234.

Qur'ān is Muhammad.⁵¹ The idea was later reiterated by Bell(d.1952)⁵². Montgomery Watt (d.2006) described it as a result of creative imagination.⁵³ Others suggested that he borrowed the Qur'ān from outsiders. Who they were, there are no consensus among them. Jewish scholars attempted to prove that the Judaism was the basic source of the Qur'ān⁵⁴ while the Christians tried to confirm the Christianity as the basic spring.⁵⁵ It is equally true that the entire history of the West has been quite painful in dealing with the holy book of the Muslims.

The fact that the Eastern Christianity was dominant in forming the attitude of the western Christianity regarding the Qur'ān is recognized by many. Two foremost works that influenced the western Christianity in great deal were the work of Abdul Masih b.Ishaq al-Kindi⁵⁶ and John of Damascus (d.749)⁵⁷. Al- Kindi, in his treatise, Risala, tried to prove the inauthentic and unoriginal nature of the Qur'ān. He also mentioned the story of the Christian monk Sergius in his work. The second was the work of John of Damascus. His work was as influential as Risala of Al-Kindi. His works are considered as 'stock in trade in the West'.⁵⁸

A study of the medieval period shows that Islam was taken the most misunderstood religion in the past. It was titled as pagan and heretic religion. The Prophet of Islam was portrayed as an imposter and false prophet who conquered the world with the power of his magic. He was, according to the famous traditions, merciless towards his enemies and had lust for power and women. It was impossible to imagine the person of Muhammad without sword whose only purpose was either to kill his opponents or conquer them. He

⁵¹George Sale, *The Koran, Commentary Called Al –Qur'ān with Preliminary Discourses* (London: 1734)

⁵² Richard Bell, *The Origin of Islam in Its Christian Environment* (Britain: Frank Cass & Co, 1968), 96.

⁵³ Montgomery Watt, *Muhammad: Prophet and Statesman*. (Oxford: 1961), 15

⁵⁴ Abraham Geiger, *Was Hat Mohammad Auf Dem Judentum Aufgenommen*. (Leipzig: 1902)

⁵⁵ Richard Bell, *The origin of Islam in its Christian environment* (London: Frank Cass & Co Ltd, 1968

⁵⁶Abdal Mahish al-Kindi is pseudo-name of an Iraqi Christian writer of the 10th century. His work has been known as Risalat al Kindi (letters of al-Kindi).he wrote these letters to his Muslim friend who invited him to accept Islam. In these letters, he made a detail refutation of Islam and he invited his Muslim friend to convert to Christianity. The Arabic text of these letters had a significant impact on Latin European views of Islam via its translation by Peter, The Venerable. see:

⁵⁷Tolan, "European accounts", 233-234.

⁵⁸ Andrew Shryock, *Islamophobia/Islamophilia*: Indiana University Press. 30

was also charged with paganism and idolatry. The stories of bull that carried the new law between his horns were famous.⁵⁹ His followers were introduced as idolaters in literary works and even were not called with their original name as Muslims. Instead, they were called with some particular titles such as Saracens, Hagarians and Muhammadens.⁶⁰ In the Song of Roland they worshiped three gods, Tervagan, Mahomet and Apollo.⁶¹ As far as the holy Qur'ān was concerned, it was considered as false, absurd and immoral. It was held to be incompatible with reason and other revelations. It was recognized as strange, unfamiliar and freak thing.⁶² The causes of this propagation lie in the hands of clergy men who out of their fear and complex allowed themselves to exceed the moral limits. One of the earliest biographers of Muhammad Giubert of Nogent (d.1124) has been reported to say: "it is safe to speak evil of one whose malignity exceeds whatever ill can be spoken".⁶³ The religion of Islam has been attributed with ethnic names of pagans and infidels that show that it did not have its identity as a religion among them. The orthodox clergy frequently emphasized that the Muslims were idol worshippers.

Another very common and communal view considered Islam as the offshoot of Christianity. The generator of this view was John of Damascus who tried to prove Islam in his works as a Christian heresy.⁶⁴ He tried to accuse Islam with idolatry and reported to have said that Prophet of Islam is a false Prophet.⁶⁵ The accusation of Islam with ethnic names of idolatry and paganism shows that they even did not admit it as a religion.

The pejorative treatment of Islam has its own roots and causes. Historical accounts reveal that it was the fear of enemy and 'know the enemy' strategy that gave birth to Islamic

⁵⁹ Southern, Western Views of Islam, 29-31

⁶⁰ The term muhammadens has been so abundantly attributed to Muslims that the usage of this term in numerous Western works has been observed by many writers of even 19th and 20th century. For instance see: Cantwell Smith, The meaning and end of Religion (New York: Macmillan Company, 1964), 79

⁶¹ Southern, Western views, 32

⁶² Daniel, Islam and the West, 7

⁶³ Southern, Western views, 32

⁶⁴ Albert Hourani, Islam in European Thought. (Oxford: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 10.

⁶⁵ Jonathon Lyons, Islam through Western eyes, from the Crusades to the War on Terrorism (New York: Colombia University Press, 2012) 57

studies in the West. Bernard Lewes, similarly, counts this reason to be the very basic factor behind Arabic and Qur'ānic scholarship.⁶⁶

In another work, he elaborates that Christendom studied Islam for the two purposes. First was to protect the Christians from the Muslim blandishments and second was to convert the Muslims to Christianity. For this ambition, the Christian scholars created literature with regard to the faith, the prophet, and the book. The literature, polemic in tone and often abusive, aimed to discourage rather to inform.⁶⁷ The scenarios of Crusades, the contacts with the superior culture of the Muslims and the defeat awakened the clergy men and they realized the importance of knowing the Muslims. They now knew very well that to confront the Muslims they really need the weapon of knowledge regarding Islam and the Qur'ān.⁶⁸

2.2. Origin of the Western Qur'ānic scholarship

In the beginning of the 12th century, the Christian theologians began to study Islam in order to refute it. They, in fact, made an effort to made sound assaults on Islam by studying directly fundamental texts of Islam, particularly the Qur'ān. Instead of presenting an imaginary picture of Prophet with a bull, it was determined to overthrow Islam on intellectual and rational bases.⁶⁹ Indeed, the western scholarship on the Qur'ān started with the first translation of the Qur'ān in the 12th century. The motive behind the very first rendering was the defense of the Christian faith on rational basis. The outcome could be the same as in the past but they at least admitted the understanding of the Qur'ān worthwhile. This willingness may be called a step forward for self-defense.

⁶⁶Bernard Lewis, *Islam and the West* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993) In his assessment of this treatment, he states; "It was fear, more than any other factor, which led to the beginnings of Arabic scholarship Europe, to the discipline which centuries later came to be known as Orientalism." 13

⁶⁷ Daniel, *Islam and the Wests*, 86

⁶⁸Endress, *Islam*, 6.

⁶⁹ JohnTolan, "European accounts". 232

In Medieval times, systematic study of the Qur'ān became necessary for the Christian clerics in order to combat the Islamic threat.⁷⁰ The first half of the twelfth century was a milestone in the history of the oriental enterprise in the Qur'ānic studies. The step was in fact taken on the initiative of Peter, The Venerable (d. 1156) who, like his predecessor John of Damascus, considered Islam a heresy that should be countered. He tried to justify the translation project to be in the interest of Christendom. He ordered his scholars to translate the early polemical works of John of Damascus and Al-Kindi against Islam that are famous now as Toledan Collection. Along with those works, the Qur'ān was first translated in Latin on his expense by the English scholar, Robert of Ketton (d. 1160), and completed in July 1143.⁷¹ Robert also translated some other works of Islamic scholarship related to different sciences.⁷² The polemic zeal is evident from the title of this translation, *Lex Mahumet seudoProphete* (The Religion of Muhammad, pseudo Prophet).⁷³ Scholars are of the view that this translation provided the basis for other translations until the seventeenth century⁷⁴ and had been used as a major source by almost all of the significant European refuters of Islam.⁷⁵ By browsing the pages of the translation, one finds a plenty of the ridiculous notes. The hostility is clear from the words used in these notes. The favorite noun is *mandex* ("liar"), and adjective *stultissimus* ("extremely stupid").⁷⁶ The translation has many technical defects and has been criticized by many western scholars. Sale describes this translation as having numberless faults of omissions and commissions.⁷⁷ In the words of professor Arberry, "it abounds in inaccuracies and misunderstandings".⁷⁸

⁷⁰ Fazlur Rehman, "Some Recent Books on the Qur'ān by Western Authors." *The Journal of Religion* 64, no. 1 (Jan, 1984): 73-95

⁷¹ Southern, Western views, 34-5

⁷² Eugene A. Myers, *Arabic Thought and Western Learning in the Golden Age of Islam* (New York: Frederick Unger Publishing co, 1964), 81

⁷³ Thomas Burman, *Reading the Qur'ān in Latin Christendom; 1140- 1560* (Philadelphia: Pennsylvania University Press, 2007), 15.

See also: Southern, *Islam through Western eyes*. 85

⁷⁴ GerhardEndress, *Islam: an historical introduction*, Trans. C. Hillenbrand (New York: Columbia University Press, 2002), 7.

⁷⁵ Hartmut Bobzin, "A Treasury of Heresies". In Wild, Stefan, ed. *The Qur'ān as Text* (New York: E.J.Brill)

⁷⁶ Burman, *Reading the Qur'ān*, 60

⁷⁷ George Sale, *The Koran*. (London: Dalziel Brothers & Camden Press), vi.

⁷⁸ ArthurArberry, *The Koran Interpreted*. (New York: George Allen &Unwin LTD, 1955), 7.

Some scholars are of the opinion that despite the polemic zeal, Robert tried to understand the Qur'ān from the Muslim commentaries, including Tabari's.⁷⁹ In any case, in the expression of a famous sage of the 20th century, "such was the inglorious beginning of English renderings of the Holy Book of Islam inspired by hostile intention".⁸⁰

This translation has been widely read throughout Europe from mid-twelfth to late seventeenth century.⁸¹ Many other translations such as Italian (1547), German (1616) and Dutch (1641) were based on it.⁸² This translation was followed by another complete Latin translation by Mark of Toledo (d. 1216) around the year 1210 under the orders of Archbishop Rodrigo Jimenez de Rada (d. 1247).⁸³ This rendering, too, aimed at denouncing Islamic faith. The project was undertaken in the hope that it would be used as an instrument for the upholding of the Christian faith.⁸⁴ It was titled as *Liber Alchorani* (The Book of the Qur'ān). It had a preface in which the author tried to draw a sketch of the biography of the Prophet of Islam and a short account of the expansion of Islam. But he had no kind words to say about Islam in his preface.⁸⁵

In the following century, we find another important figure in the Qur'ānic scholarship. Spanish theologian, John of Segovia (d. 1458), translated the Qur'ān into Latin in the last five years of his life. According to Southern, the translation is lost now.⁸⁶ It is worthy to note that John was also of the view that the conversion of Muslims should be based on intellectual basis. Thus, for him the deep and thorough study of the Qur'ān was essential.⁸⁷

Mention should be made of the German thinker Nicholas of Cusa (d. 1464) who was contemporary of John of Segovia. He wrote the *Cribratio Alchorani* (1461) to analyze the

⁷⁹ Burman, Reading the Qur'ān, 36-7

See also: Bruce Lawrence, *The Qur'ān, A Biography* (London: Atlantic Books, 2006), 35, 101

⁸⁰ Arberry, *The Koran*, 7

⁸¹ Burman, Reading the Qur'ān, 15

⁸² S. M. Zwemer, "Translations of the Koran." *The Muslim World*, V, (1915): 244-61

⁸³ Joséand Martínez, Andrew Gray, "Translations of the Qur'ān and Other Islamic Texts before Dante": (Twelfth and Thirteenth Centuries). *Dante Studies, with the Annual Report of the Dante Society*, 125 (2007.): 85

See also: Burman, Reading the Qur'ān, 17

⁸⁴ Joséand and Andrew, *Translations of the Qur'ān*, 87

⁸⁵ Burman, Reading the Qur'ān, 17-23

⁸⁶ Southern, *Western vies of Islam*, 86-7

⁸⁷ Burman, Reading the Qur'ān, 178-182

text and prove the three strands in the Qur'ān: the first is basic Nestorian Christianity, second, anti-Christian sentiments introduced by the Jewish advisor of Muhammad; and third, corruptions introduced by Jewish correctors after Muhammad's death.⁸⁸ He also tried to verify the validity of Gospel through the Qur'ānic text.⁸⁹ He argued that the Qur'ān was a valuable introduction to Gospel.⁹⁰

In the first half of the sixteenth century, a number of works were produced on Islam and the Qur'ān. With the invention of printing, Arabic text of the Qur'ān was published in 1537 at Vince. The Latin translation of Robert was also published in 1543 by Zurich scholar Theodor Bibliander (d. 1564), who was the editor of the printed edition of the Qur'ān, along with other works. He was one of the strong proponents of the systematic Qur'ānic studies for refutation. After a long and hard controversy, he was authorized to print the Qur'ān.⁹¹ Quite identical to his views was Martin Luther (d. 1546) who expressed his opinion regarding the translation of the Qur'ān in the following words:

“It has struck me that one is able to do nothing more grievous to Mohammad or the Turks, nor more to bring them to harm (more than with all weaponry) than to bring their Koran to the Christians in the light of day, that they may see therein, how entirely cursed, abominable, and desperate a book it is, full of lies, fables and all abominations that the Turks conceal and gloss over. They are reluctant to see the Koran translated into other languages, for they probably feel that it would bring about apostasy in all sensible hearts”.

For if indeed we had been able to have the necessary document here, it would finally have come to light, and if such a book should be kept in restraint by you (which God may prevent) we will find it somewhere and still release it . . . if the holy fathers don't get the heretical book to read, how would they take steps against its secret poison.”⁹²

⁸⁸ Southern, Western views ,92-3

⁸⁹ Gerhard, Islam an historical introduction ,7

⁹⁰ Abdullah Saeed, Qur'ān, an Introduction (London: Routledge, 2008),103

⁹¹ Bell, Introduction to the Qur'ān , 173. See also: Harry Clark, "The Publication of the Koran in Latin a Reformation Dilemma" *The Sixteenth Century Journal*. 15, no. 1 (1984): 3-12. 3

⁹² Luther an den Rat zu Basel, October 27, 1542 as quoted by Hagenbach, in "The Publication of the Koran in Latin: A Reformation Dilemma", 299

The 17th century also witnessed progress in the field. Joseph Justus Scaliger (d.1609) argued that the holy book of the Muslims should be read in order to understand history and language. William Bedwell (d.1632), an English priest and scholar, produced a catalogue of the standard Muslim numbering and naming of the Qur'ānic chapters.⁹³

First English translation was made by Alexander Ross (d. 1654) in 1649. But this translation was not based directly on Arabic. Instead it was based on French translation of Du Ryrr (d. 1660).⁹⁴ Du Ryer is reported to have proficiency in Arabic and Turkish but his translation too abounds in mistakes.⁹⁵ Ross' translation is considered extension of the mistakes to those of Du Ryer.⁹⁶

Ross too, frequently uses the harsh and piercing titles for the Prophet in his rendering. His expressions for the Qur'ān such as "A gallimaufry of errors," "Misshapen issue of Mahomet's brain," or "Corrupted puddle of Mahomet's invention" evidently demonstrate his polemic treatment.⁹⁷ It is worth mentioning that his translation was the first version of the Qur'ān in America, which came out in Massachusetts in 1806 and enjoyed a vast circulation until Sale's translation became the standard text.⁹⁸

Later, another English professor of Arabic, Abraham Wheelock (d.1653) created a rendering and refutation of The Qur'ān.⁹⁹ The Italian priest Ludovici Marracci (d. 1700) produced a careful Latin translation of the Qur'ān, along with the Arabic text, under the title 'Refutation of the Qur'ān' in 1698.¹⁰⁰ He is reported to have spent forty years of his

⁹³Saeed, Qur'ān, 103

⁹⁴World bibliography of translations, xxiv

⁹⁵ Moher, The Qur'ān, 327

see also: Sale, The Koran, viii

⁹⁶Sale, The Kora, viii

⁹⁷. See: Alexander Ross, "A needful Caveat," appended to the translation of the Alcoran of Mahomet, (1649) cited in Henry Stubb, *An account of the rise and progress of Mahomatenism*, ed. Shairani, H. M. K. Lahore: Orientala. 1954: 253

⁹⁸ Ibrāhīm Kalin, "Roots of misconception by Ibrahim" In E.B.Lombard, Joseph, ed. *Fundamentalism and the Betrayal of Tradition* (Lahore: Suhail academy, 2007), 157-8

⁹⁹Saeed, The Qur'ān, 103

¹⁰⁰He entirely followed in his edition the Islamic system of numbering of the surahs and Āyāt.
<https://exhibitions.cul.columbia.edu/exhibits/show/Qur'ān/Qur'āns/printed>

life on Qur'ānic studies. He was also familiar with chief Qur'ānic commentators.¹⁰¹ His purpose was highly polemical as he studied Islam in order to destroy it with its own weapons.¹⁰²

It is quite remarkable that the majority of the early translations were titled as 'Mohamed's Qur'ān', 'The Qur'ān of the Turks', or 'Book of the Turks'. Another noteworthy thing is that most of the translations have a preface or discourse in which the translators tried to occupy the reader's mind and fill him with some presumptions regarding Islam and the Prophet(S). An example can be seen in the translation of John Rodwell (d. 1900) in which he stressed over the origin of Islam and tried his best to prove that it is the mixture of the Christian and Judaic teachings.¹⁰³ Even the western intellectuals acknowledge the existence of anti- Islamic spirit in these works.¹⁰⁴ It was George Sale who recommended the Christians to avoid the ill words and reproachful language for a deepest impression¹⁰⁵.

Moreover, we see a state of confusion and ambiguities in those works. Admiring the Prophet(S) for his qualities and simultaneously, blaming him of being criminal in imposing a false religion.¹⁰⁶ On the one hand, it is admitted that the Qur'ān deserves the highest praise due to its wisdom and on the other; it is declared daringly that it justifies blood shedding and persecution.¹⁰⁷

It is worth mentioning point in recent times there are many earnest scholars who have honestly endeavored to produce translations in real academic meaning.¹⁰⁸

Next to the translation, the western literature falls in to three main categories: (1) works that seek to trace the Jewish-Christian influence on the Qur'ān; (2) works that try to rebuild the chronological order of the Qur'ān; (3) works that examine the text or content

¹⁰¹ Montgomery Watt, ed. Bell's Introduction to the Qur'ān (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1970), 174.

¹⁰² Bernard, Islam and the West, 88

Burman, Reading, 150

¹⁰³ Rodwell, The Qur'ān, 9

¹⁰⁴ A Bausani, "On Some Recent Translations of the Qur'ān". *Nuwmen* 4, no. 1 (1957): 75-81

¹⁰⁵ Sale, The Qur'ān, viii

¹⁰⁶ Sale, The Qur'ān, vi

¹⁰⁷ Rodwell, The Koran, 15

¹⁰⁸ Muhammad Asad, The Message of Qur'ān (Dārul Anduls: Gibraltar. 1980), 3

of the Qur'ān.¹⁰⁹ The prominent experts of these fields were H. Ewald (d. 1875) Gustav Flugel (d. 1870), Gustav Weil (d. 1889), William Muir (d. 1905), Theodore Noldeke , J. Wellhausen (d. 1918) Ignaz Goldziher (d. 1921) H. Hirschfield (d. 1934), Fr. Schwally (d. 1919), G. Bergstresser (d. 1933) Springer and etc. They produced their works regarding the Qur'ān and its sciences. This century also witnessed the Orientalist s' study of the chronology of the Qur'ān. The three scholars, who were engaged with this genre, were Aloys Springer, Hirschfield and Noldeke.¹¹⁰

H. Ewald was the first to apply the science of textual criticism on The Qur'ānic studies. He also established the school of criticism for Islamic and The Qur'ānic sciences. His eminent students were Theodore Noldeke and J. Wellhausen.¹¹¹

The second edition of Arabic text of Qur'ān was published by Gustav Flugel (d. 1870) in 1834 with a significant translation¹¹² that was later criticized by Arthur Jeffery (d. 1959) for its unscientific basis.¹¹³ He also published a concordance of the Qur'ān in 1842.¹¹⁴ Either of his works were later evaluated and critiqued by scholars for his opposition to traditional surah arrangement and verse numbering system in his edition of Arabic text that later had a great impact on his concordance.¹¹⁵

In 1844 Gustav Weil, produced his work regarding the arrangements of Qur'āic chapters. In his work, *Historische-kritische Einleitung in den Koran*, he intended to place the Qur'ān in its historical context.¹¹⁶

In 1851 Aloy Sprenger wrote biography of the Prophet in German under the title, *Das Leben und die Lehr des Mohammad* in three volumes. Some of the pages were devoted to the Qur'ān. He discussed the distinction between Makkān and Madinān sūras and collection of The Qur'ān in those pages.

¹⁰⁹Rehman, Major Themes, v

¹¹⁰Naseem Rafiabadi, Challenges to Religion and Islam (New Delhi: Sarup & Sons, 2007),356

¹¹¹Khlifā, dirāsatul Qur'ān, 10

¹¹²Saeed, Qur'ān, 105

¹¹³Arthur Jeffery, Materials for the history of the text of Qur'ān (Leiden: E.J.Brill. 1973)

¹¹⁴Gustav Flugel, Concordance of the Koran (Lahore: Al Birūnī. 1978)

¹¹⁵Abdul Rehman Alkaf, Sayyed Hamid. "A Critical Study of Gustav Flugel's Concordance of the Koran." *Radiance Views Weekly*. no, 1, (2010)

¹¹⁶Andrew Rippin, "Western scholarship and the Qur'ān", In McAuliffe, Jane Dammen, ed. *The Cambridge Companion to the Qur'ān* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006)

Muir, who had for long been in India, produced a work relating to the testimony of Qur'ān for the Bible. It is narrated that the work was an outcome of his attending many of the Christian and the Muslim scholar's debates in India. After witnessing the Muslim argumentation regarding the alterations on the Bible, he thought of the idea of creating such a treatise entitled as "The testimony borne by the Coran to the Jewish and the Christian Scriptures". His intention was to create a work with the Qur'ānic references for validity of the Bible.¹¹⁷

In the same year, Theodore Noldeke wrote an essay regarding the history of the text of The Qur'ān in a contest and won the prize. Later he published his work in 1960 as *Geschichte des Qorans* (History of the The Qur'ān).¹¹⁸

The history of Qur'ānic Studies, spanning over centuries from medieval times to modern period, proved itself to be a ground for the upcoming centuries. It was, however, predominated by the polemic fervor of the priests and clergy men. By the passage of time, the bustle was joined by academics with a merger of polemic and intellectual zest.

2.3. Contemporary Qur'ānic scholarship from 20th to 21st century

As mentioned earlier, that sale, in his preface has advised the Christians to adopt a new strategy to study the Qur'ān and Islam. His approach was followed in the upcoming centuries as Watt too, suggested his fellows to change the style regarding the Qur'ān. He elucidates that western writers have stopped saying that the Qur'ān is Muhammad's own book, not because they admitted that, but because of the fact that the Christian- Muslim contacts have increased and so has trade.¹¹⁹ Therefore, a transformation in style is implemented by the scholars of twentieth century onward.

In this century, we see the development of much more interest and concentration in the field of the Qur'ānic studies and its sciences. The Qur'ānic studies emerged as a significant area of the western scholarship. A rapid growth of literature in relation to The

¹¹⁷ Avrill A. Powell. *Muslims and Missionaries in Pre- mutiny India* (New York: Routledge Corzon, 2003) 162.

¹¹⁸ Bell, *Introduction to the Qur'ān*, 174

¹¹⁹ Bell, *Introduction*. v

Qur'ānic exegesis and sciences can be noticed. Arthur Jeffery, Richard Bell and Regis Blachere(d. 1973) were the eminent scholars of the field. Arthur Jeffery dedicated his life to the Qur'ānic vocabulary and readings. His most important work relates to the variant readings of the Qur'ān. Richard Bell, set out the first fruits of his work in the form of his lectures on 'The Origin of Islam in its Christian environment'.¹²⁰Another detailed work of Bell is 'Introduction to the Qur'ān' revised by Montgomery Watt.

Regis Blachere created a French translation in which he arranged the Surahs according to the chronological order.¹²¹One more eminent scholar is German intellectual Rudi Paret, (d. 1983) who studied the Qur'ān for a long time. He composed a short account of Prophet's life in which he discussed those aspects for which he found the Qur'ānic material as well. He also produced a translation of the Qur'ān in French and German between 1966 and 1971 respectively.¹²²

Mention should be made of the contribution of 'The Muslim World' in the field of Qur'ānic studies. It was launched, as cited earlier, in 1911 by Samuel Zwemer (d. 1952). The journal, originated with missionary zeal, includes thousands of articles related to the Qur'ān and its sciences. Generally, what one sees is that the contributors of this journal also hold the traditional Christian stance regarding the Qur'ān, its history and collection. But, at present, it has developed a welcoming stance for the Muslim contributors although with critical approach towards the western image of Islam.¹²³

In the second half of the 20th century, some new ideas appeared on the horizons of the western scholarship that were highly controversial for both the western and Muslim scholarships. In other words, the western scholars were divided in two groups. They can be titled as traditional and revisionist¹²⁴ scholars. This lack of consensus has its origins from the very beginning of scholarly investigation of the Qur'ān by the western scholars

¹²⁰ Richard Bell, *The origin of Qur'ān in its Christian environment*(London, Freank Cass & Co Ltd, 1968)

¹²¹ Bell, Introduction, 112.

¹²² Bell, Introduction, 177.

¹²³ For further detail: Abdullah Abdul Karīm and Mustafa Aābi. "Egocentric or Scientific: The Christian Perspective of the Qur'ān." *Journal of Qur'ānic Research and Studies*. 1, no. 1 (2006): 1-16

¹²⁴ In historiography, the term means to reinterpret the historical events opposing traditional view. <http://www.thefreedictionary.com/revisionist>. The application of this term to the second group has been criticized and declared as to be a loose term by recent writers. Angelika Neuwirth, Nicolai Sinay, Michael Marx, ed. *The Qur'ān in Context*(Leiden: Brill, 2011), Introduction

in the nineteenth century. However, for many years, most of the western scholars adopted a view of the Qur'ān and its origins that was presented by the Islamic tradition itself. This group of the scholars, although with critical approach, however comes under the category of traditionalist scholars.¹²⁵ The later, being different in their approaches and styles, denied the authenticity of the master narrative of the Qur'ān and questioned the vary origin of Islam. They not only declared that the Qur'ān is the production of human mind but also developed the theory that it took gradually the position of the authorized text in two centuries after Prophet's demise. Their works were criticized even by the non-Muslim scholars. Among these debatable works were the theories of Günter Lüling (b. 1928) Alphonso Mingana (d. 1937), Yahuda Nevo (d. 1992) John Burton (d. 2001) John Wansbrough, Christophe Luxenburge, Patricia Crone (d. 2015) and Michael Crook.¹²⁶

The 21st century proved to be a breaking down of traditional divide between the West and Islam. Scholars started collaborating each other in their researches and findings. One can observe an excess of publications, encyclopedias, journals and companions related to the holy the Qur'ān. The movement, which started in 12th century to refute the book of 'infidels', adopted diversities of styles now. This new era is witnessing the combination of traditional and the western approaches in the study of the Qur'ān. Many joint efforts to understand the Qur'ān are appearing on the stage of knowledge. The western scholarship has approached the variation of ways over the twentieth century. Many scholars explored the general areas related to the Qur'ān without questioning the Muslim accounts of its origin. While there are others, who tried to apply the methods to the Qur'ānic studies, that were used to Biblical studies.¹²⁷

Somehow, intellectuals believe that at the dawn of 21st century, the Qur'ānic studies is entering a new era as the old norms of the western scholarship are changed now and challenged in the context of intellectual globalization. Furthermore, involvement of the Muslim scholars in academic activities can be a dynamic factor for

¹²⁵ Actually traditional Western scholars do not accept the Divine origin of Qur'ān. But, what they simply believe is that Muhammad (S) was a sincere and honest person. He truly believed that he was receiving Revelation. But, did the Archangel came to him with Revelation really, is according to them, a disputed issue.

¹²⁶ Gabriel. *The Qur'ān*, 129-30

¹²⁷ Saeed, Qur'ān, an Introduction, 105

transformation.¹²⁸ Even though, we observe, from time to time, the reflection of ancient and ingrained notions in recent works regarding Islam in general and Qur'ānic studies in specific. Many intellectuals could not liberate, despite the assertions of objectivity, themselves from the preconceived notions of classical period.

It is quite worth mentioning that out of the vast corpus of Orientalists' scholarship, the work related to the contents of the Qur'ān is very few.¹²⁹ The reason, according to the scholars, is their indulgence in the chronology and history of the text of the Qur'ān itself. He further says that the interest of the western savants in the sources and history of the Qur'ān only caused a kind of stagnation in their works.¹³⁰ History of the Qur'ān gained their interest to extent that no other subject has gained.¹³¹ At present, scholars have focused on themes of Qur'ān as well and produced voluminous works.¹³²

2.4. Contribution of key western scholars to Qur'ānic sciences

The scholars in their treatment of Islamic sources and Qur'ān are of two kinds as mentioned earlier. For a brief introduction, some of them are selected according to the nature of their views.

One of the most influential scholars of the field whose deep impact can still be observed in contemporary academic works is Noldeke. In each and every publication of the West concerning the Qur'ān and its sciences, that the basic lines are established upon his methodology. With the publication of his work 'Die Geschichte des Qorans' in 1860 he became a foremost authority in the Qur'ānic studies and in particular on the history of the Qur'ān. In this work, he not only advanced the existing theories, but set a standard for the chronological order of the Qur'ānic chapters by dividing the revelation period in five

¹²⁸ John Voll, "Changing Western approaches to Islamic Studies". In Mumtaz Ahmad, ZahidBukhari and SulaymanNyang, eds. *Observing the Observer, the State of Islamic Studies in American Universities*. (London: The international institute of Islamic thought, 2012), 29

¹²⁹ Pervez Manzur, "Method against Truth: Orientalism and Qur'ānic Studies." *Muslim World Book Review*.7, no. IV (1987)

¹³⁰ Khalifa, The Sublime Qur'ān, 58

¹³¹ Khidhar Shaib, Nubuwwatu Muhammad FilFikrī Isteshrāqī Al Muā'sir (Riyadh: Maktaba tul Abika, 2002), 280.

¹³² Andrew Rippin, "Qur'ānic Studies". In Clinton, Bennett, ed. *The Bloomsbury Companion to Islamic Studies* (Bloomsbury: New York. 2013), 68-9

phases.¹³³ Despite his controversial theories and ideas, many Muslim scholars acknowledge his profound knowledge and reflective research.¹³⁴

He is of the view that the Qur'ān is work of Muhammad which he himself considered to be the word of God and his consciousness was brighter than it afterwards became. This idea of receiving Divine revelation, Noldeke sees, never forsook the Prophet. While discussing the order of the Qur'ān, he says, that Muhammad always made a crude attempt to represent to himself the unconscious process by which his idea arose and took shape in his mind. So, it is not surprising that his confused imaginary resulted in a text that is not self-consistent.¹³⁵

He further says that in the early career of Muhammad, revelations must have burst from him in overwhelming excitement, so that he could not probably regard them otherwise than as divine inspirations. In his analysis of Prophet, he resembles him a poet who sometimes intends to modify his previous works and edit them. According to him, Muhammad had been changing the styles according to his taste.

He alike his predecessors and fellows, was of the proponent of the so-called notion of borrowing. He says that the view has already been expressed that Muhammad did not make use of written sources. But there is strong evidence for the support of oral communications from the Jews who knew a little and the Christians who knew nothing.¹³⁶

Another scholar of the Qur'ānic Studies is Richard Bell whose work gravely influenced later academics. Among his famous and important works is his translation of the Qur'ān.¹³⁷ He is well known for the rearrangement of the text in his translation in which he attempted to understand the text of the Qur'ān by dividing it into small fragments and reconstruct a document that was formed from the parchments according to him. He also

¹³³N.A. Newman, ed. *The Qur'ān: An Introductory Essay by Theodore Noldeke* (Pennsylvania: Interdisciplinary Biblical Research Institute, 1992), Preface

¹³⁴ Muhammad Hussain Ali Al Saghir, Al Mustaeshreqūn wa dirasāt al Qur'ānia (Bairut: Dār al Muarrikh al Alarbī, 1999), 85

¹³⁵ Saghir, Al Mustaeshreqūn 3-4

¹³⁶ Saghir, Al Mustaeshreqūn 9-10

¹³⁷The Qur'ān. Translated, with a critical re-arrangement of the Surahs (Edinburgh University Press: Edinburgh, 1937)

speculates that scraps may have been misplaced and so forth. Moreover, he believes that the revelations of the earlier times might intermingled with the later ones as a result of the writing down of the verses on the front and back of the pages. Hence, he made an attempt to reorganize the contents passage by passage. He was criticized for his work as it affected the integrity of the Qur'ān.¹³⁸ Despite his utmost efforts and various techniques, he could not manage to date many of the passages of Qur'ān.¹³⁹

Another prominent work of Bell is Introduction to the Qur'ān revised and edited by Watt. The book describes the historical background of the Prophet and the revelation. Bell, in his preface, admits the status of the Qur'ān and says that very few books have exercised a wider influence than the Qur'ān.¹⁴⁰ Moreover, the book explicates the views of the western intellectuals regarding the Prophet, history of the Qur'ān and criticizes the previous scholars such as Alois Springer (d. 2006), Samuel Margoliouth (d. 1940) and others for their imprudent ideas of hysteria and epilepsy against the Prophet Muhammad. What he himself suggests is that the Prophet was sincere in his efforts believing that the Message came to him from God.

He also takes the word Wahy in its literal meaning only and proposes that it was God who suggested the ideas to the Prophet and it was left to him to find the precise wording for that. In general, Bell says, Prophet was convinced that these suggestions were from God.¹⁴¹ Bell, like other western scholars, is convinced of the influence of the external factors upon Prophet. Accordingly, he says that collections of the Muslim traditions that contain many stories and sayings are of the Christian origin.¹⁴²

He further cites many Prophetic traditions which, he assumes, have the Christian origin from Old and New Testaments.¹⁴³ Moreover, he tries to show the Christian influence on the traditions regarding eschatology. He writes that Muhammad was deeply impressed by these ideas and introduced them in the Qur'ān which he believed were from God.¹⁴⁴

¹³⁸Rippin, Western Scholarship, 242.

¹³⁹Berg, Herbert, "Muhammad".193

¹⁴⁰Watt, Bell's Introduction, xi

¹⁴¹Bell, Introduction, 17-24

¹⁴²Richard Bell, The Origin of Islam in Its Christian Environment (Frank Cass & Co. Ltd, 1968)

¹⁴³Bell, The origin, vii

¹⁴⁴Bell, The origin, 201-204

Another savant who considers the same is Kenneth Cragge (d.2012).¹⁴⁵ Among his well known treatises are; The Call of Minaret,¹⁴⁶ Readings in the Qur'ān,¹⁴⁷ Event of the Qur'ān¹⁴⁸ and The Mind of the Qur'ān - Chapters in Reflection¹⁴⁹

Critical evaluation of his works was conducted by many Muslim scholars. Particularly a convert to Islam from Judaism, Maryam Jamila (d. 2012) has made a thorough evaluation of his works.¹⁵⁰

Cragge suggests that Muhammad was influenced by the external world in the formation of the new religion. He expatiates that the anti-idolatrous sentiments of Hunāfa had been an important factor in the background of Muhammad's experience.¹⁵¹ Besides, it was the People of the Book who, according to him, played an essential task in the development of his mission. He deems that it was Muhammad's conviction to have a book for his countrymen like the Jews and the Christians. In this scenario the word Ummi can be better taken as the people without book.¹⁵² The similar idea can be located in his other works. Cragge articulates in his another book that in order to prove the miraculous nature of the Qur'ān, Muslims held the view that their Prophet was illiterate. Had he been given already the knowledge and skills, it would have been less manifestly a book of God.¹⁵³

He also discusses the status of the Qur'ān through centuries. How one can understand its meaning is an important issue that should be taken seriously. For this, he suggests that importance should be given to the Occasions of Revelations. The circumstances with which the revelation is associated should be taken into account. He further says that the Muslim orthodoxy has understood the Qur'ān sharply in its literal form. He also informs that among the features of the present times is that some commentators have tried to break through the classical margins as symbols of imprisonment and tried to appeal the

¹⁴⁵Cragg (d. 2012), was a clergy man who succeeded Samuel Zwemer as co- editor of The Muslim World and produced many books regarding Islam and more significantly Qur'ān.

¹⁴⁶(Oxford University Press. Galaxy Books, 1956)

¹⁴⁷(Collins Liturgical Publications, 1988)

¹⁴⁸ (George Allen &Unwin, 1971)

¹⁴⁹ (George Allen &Unwin, 1973)

¹⁵⁰Islam and Orientalism (Lahore: Muhammad Yusuf Khan and Sons, 1981)

¹⁵¹ Cragge, The Call, 68

¹⁵² Cragge, The Call, 66

¹⁵³ Cragge, Readings in the Qur'ān, 19

text directly.¹⁵⁴ He assumes that the classical Muslims have attempted so often to exempt the Qur'ān from historical circumstances because of their religious anxiety to prove the eternity of their Book. But for him, it is the result of the fear. Nonetheless, he resolves the problem by saying that we do not intend to exclude the Qur'ān from 20th century when we associate it with time and history.¹⁵⁵ Hence, he can be considered among the proponents of contextual study of the Qur'ān that endeavors to comprehend it in the light of the then socio-cultural environment.

Among the revisionist group the British scholar John Wansbrough was a prominent scholar of the Qur'ānic studies. His most renowned work was 'The Qur'ānic Studies: Sources and methods of scriptural interpretations'.¹⁵⁶ He has contributed many articles to scholarly journals of the western academia e.g. 'The Bulletin of the school of Oriental and African Studies' and 'The Muslim World'. He was one of the proponents of the revisionist approach to the Qur'ān.¹⁵⁷ His research has been very influential in the West. There are many scholars who have used his analytical tools for their research e.g. Andrew Rippin, Norman Calder (d. 1998) and Christopher Buck.¹⁵⁸ His theories were extremely objected by Muslim scholars and criticized by non-Muslims as well.¹⁵⁹ On the contrary his work was appreciated and defended by some recent scholars as they argue not to reduce his work to only his theory of the late emergence of the canonical text as his work is multi-dimensional and multi-faceted.¹⁶⁰

In his work, Wansbrough made an attempt to address the questions that were not raised previously. His most reflective impact was opening up new modes for dealing with the Qur'ān. He assumes that the structure of the Qur'ān itself supports the presumption

¹⁵⁴ Cragge, Readings, 27

¹⁵⁵ Cragge, The event, 17

¹⁵⁶ (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1977)

¹⁵⁷ Saeed, Qur'ān, 108

¹⁵⁸ Christopher Buck teaches in the Department of Religious Studies and the Center for Integrative Studies in the Arts and Humanities at Michigan State University. He has contributed to the field of Islamic studies with many of his works.

¹⁵⁹ For a detailed of the critics one can see for example Estelle Whelan. "Forgotten Witness: Evidence for Early Codification of Qur'ān." *Journal of American oriental society*. vol.118, no. 1 (Jan-1998):1-14. Among Muslim scholars Fazlul Rehman and Fard Esack has made a critical assessment of his work in their works "Major themes of Qur'ān" and "The Territory of the Qur'ān" respectively.

¹⁶⁰ Neuwirth, The Qur'ān. Introduction

of composition over a short period of time.¹⁶¹ He was criticized for his usage of Jewish terms while discussing the *Tafsīr* tradition. Farid Esack¹⁶² points out in his discussion, regarding the issue, that Wansbrough applies many of the terms to *Tafsīr* tradition (Haggadic, Halakhic, Masoretic, etc.) that are purely described as Judaic in the shorter Oxford English Dictionary and have no meaning outside this tradition.¹⁶³

John Burton presented totally a diverse theory that is considered quite radical in the term that none of any scholar has ever presented identical views. He believed that it was the Prophet who himself compiled and collected the *Qur'ān* and the *Qur'ān* was in its comprehensive form in the time of the Prophet before his death.¹⁶⁴

He is of the opinion that individual variants were fabricated by the later legal scholars. They invented the idea in order to defend their interpretations.¹⁶⁵ He states in another article that it was the result of the activities of *Qass* (story tellers) that the *Qur'ān* came to be seen as live and meaningful, connected with the actual events and situations.¹⁶⁶

There are other intellectuals also who questioned the origins of Islam following the footsteps of Wansbrough. Patricia Crone and Michael Crook in their joint research suggested that Islam is one sect of Judaism.¹⁶⁷ They, in order to support the ideas, said that the close relationship of Muhammad(S) with the Jews of Madina conform the hypotheses. The Jews appeared in the constitution of Madina as forming one community with believers upholding their own beliefs.¹⁶⁸ They also presented the view that even the

¹⁶¹ Abdul- Karim and Hawting, *Approaches*, 18.

¹⁶² Farid Esack is a South African Muslim scholar and writer. Among his books on the *Qur'ān* are 'The *Qur'an: A Short Introduction*' (Oxford, 2002) and 'The *Qur'an: A User's Guide*'. (Oxford, 2005)

¹⁶³ Farid Esack, "The Territory of the *Qur'ān*: "citizens," "Foreigners" and "Invaders" in Mumtaz Ahmad, ed. *Observing the Observer*, the State of Islamic Studies in American Universities (London: The international institute of Islamic thought, 2012), 61

¹⁶⁴ John Burton, *The Collection of the Qur'ān* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1977), 239-240

¹⁶⁵ Burton, *Collection*, 191-212

¹⁶⁶ John Burton, "Law and Exegesis: The penalty for adultery in Islam". In Abdul-Kader, G.R. Hawting, eds. *Approaches to the Qur'ān* (U.S.A: Routledge. 1993), 270

¹⁶⁷ Patricia Crone and Michael Crook, *Hagarism, the Making of the Islamic World* (Sydney: Cambridge University Press, 1977), 1

¹⁶⁸ Crook and Crone, *Hagarism*, 7, 5

name Umar Al Farūq was used by the People of the Book. Later it slipped on the tongues of the Muslims.¹⁶⁹

The worth noting point is their stance on the text of the Qur'ān. Either of the scholars is convinced of the late compilation of the Qur'ān. To state in other words, they hold the view that the extent Qur'ānic text is an outcome of the gradual development that was finalized in the Ummayad period. The formation of this opinion is based upon the claim that the first reference of the Qur'ān found in the Christian writings relate to the late Ummayad period.

Furthermore, they view that the evidence of the existence of the Qur'ānic text in the seventh century does exist but, they cannot be trusted exclusively.¹⁷⁰

After the publication of this work it was the target of the stern criticism from both Muslim and non- Muslim scholars. As the book contains highly controversial ideas it was deeply disparaged even by their fellows like Wansbrough and Stephen Humphreys¹⁷¹. Wansbrough critically analyzed the methodological assumptions of this book.¹⁷² It was also the victim of the attacks because of its reliance on hostile sources.

2.5. Major themes and approaches to the Qur'ān

A glance on the history of the Qur'ānic studies made it easier to summarize the major themes and outlooks with regard to Qur'ānic studies in the western academia. The campaign that was initiated with the translation of the Qur'ān, has adopted diverse approaches and themes. Almost all of the western works, from Medieval to recent times and from the prefaces of translations to the publications of massive compendiums, focus on those specific pivotal points and themes.

¹⁷⁰ Crook and Crone, Hagarism, 18

¹⁷¹Stephen Humphreys is an Associate Professor of International Law. His areas of interest are international critical theories and laws

¹⁷²Saeed ,Qur'ān, 109

2.5.1. Origin of the Qur'ān

The idea that Muhammad (S) is the sole author of Qur'ān¹⁷³ and he developed the essence of Qur'ānic teachings from the sources extant at the then time in Arabia, is quite well-known in the history of the western scholarship.

In the works of the western scholars, the theory of the origin of the Qur'ān appears in abundance. By having a look on history, one can observe a consensus upon the idea of the foreign origin of the Qur'ān in the West. Nonetheless, there exist some inconsistencies in the essence of those sources as one can observe the Jewish scholars asserting emphatically for the Jewish origin¹⁷⁴ and the Christian, on contrary, declaring Christianity as the key substance.¹⁷⁵ Perhaps, the most conversed issue in the academic history of the West is the origin of the Qur'ān.

From the time of John of Damascus and Peter, The Venerable, to the age of Noldeke and Bell, it has been a well-conceived notion in the western academia. The echoes of pronouncements of so-called borrowing can be heard very clearly till recent stage of advanced approaches and methodologies. Almost all of the western scholars have dealt with this idea more or less with minute discrepancies in their works and majority meant to disprove Divine origin of the Qur'ān. The first modern scholar who treated the theory was Ibrahim Geiger who focused on the Jewish sources of the Qur'ān in his work; "What did Mohammed take from Judaism?"¹⁷⁶

¹⁷³ Scholars in the West have attributed the composition of Qur'ān to the Prophet since long. Mingana narrates a well known Western wording about the origin of Qur'ān; "we hold the Qur'ān to be as truly as Muhammad's words as the Mohammedans hold it to be the word of God". Alfonse Mingana, *Transmission of the Kur'ān*, 25

Hatwing Hirschfield, *New Researches into the composition and exegesis of Quran* (London: Royal Asiatic Society. 1902), 5

¹⁷⁴ Theodore Noldeke, *The history of the Qur'ān* (Leiden: Brill. 2013), 7

¹⁷⁵ Bell, *The origin*

¹⁷⁶ Ali, *The Qur'ān and the Orientalist*, 26

He was later followed up by many other scholars of the field such as William Muir,¹⁷⁷ Noldeke,¹⁷⁸ Richard Bell,¹⁷⁹ Hartwig Hirschfield¹⁸⁰ C. C. Torrey¹⁸¹ and many others. The desire to prove that the Qur'ān is no more than an echo of Judaism or Christianity is quite dominant even in scholarly and excellent works.¹⁸² Meant for this motive, it can be noticed that the traditional Muslim view of the Prophet's illiteracy has been denied by some western scholars who tried to prove presence of written sources for Muhammad(S) and his access to them¹⁸³ unlike others who were of the opinion of presence of oral traditions for Prophet.¹⁸⁴

Contrasting to the previous thoughts, a quite different view, regarding the origin of the Qur'ān, presented by William Muir, Margoliouth and later on by Montgomery Watt in their celebrated works.¹⁸⁵ They were of the view that the Qur'ān was the product of Prophet's strong will and resourcefulness. Imagination, resolve and consciousness are the most common words found in their works.¹⁸⁶

Related to the theory of the Christian origin of the Qur'ān, another challenging idea was presented in 1974 by Gunter Lulling. According to him, the Qur'ān preserves within its text early Christian writings. His approach was that the text of the Qur'ān has four parts or levels. Two of them consist of, either, the Christian hymns that has been composed by the Christian residents of Madina at that time, or the hymns that were adopted by Muhammad and later Islamized by him. What he proposed was the reinterpretation of the Qur'ānic text by digging the levels of the Qur'ān so as to get the original meaning. His

¹⁷⁷The Life of Muhammad (London: Smith, Elder, & Co, 1861)

¹⁷⁸The History of the Qur'ān.

¹⁷⁹The Origin of Islam in its Critian environment.

¹⁸⁰Jüdische Elemente im Koran(Berlin: Selbstverl, 1878)

¹⁸¹The Jewish foundation of Islam (New York, 1933)

¹⁸² Rehman, Major Themes, iv.

¹⁸³ See for example: KennethCragge, The call of the Minaret (Oxford: One World., 2000), 66

¹⁸⁴Newman, The Qur'ān, 9

¹⁸⁵ Christopher Buck, "Discovering". In Rippin, Andrew, ed. *The Blackwell Companion to the Qur'ān* (USA: Blackwell Publishing, 2004), 39

¹⁸⁶ Bauben Jamal, Image of the Prophet Muhammad in the West, a study of Muir, Margoliouth and Watt. (Saudi Arabia: the Islamic foundation united kingdom, 1996)

theory has been criticized by even the western academia for not providing sound proofs.¹⁸⁷

Another theory related to the origin, seeks to expose the social and cultural milieu of Arabia in order to trace the practical elements of the Qur'ānic principles. Its proponents tried to find out the religious environment of the then Arabia and hence, proved that Prophet followed the traditions and trends of his time.¹⁸⁸

The question seems to be not only sensitive but also reductionist as it has only increased the tension between the traditional Muslims and the academic world of the West. One of the modern scholars express his point in the following words; "the tension between traditional the Muslim and western academic approaches is perhaps nowhere more intense than in discussing this question".¹⁸⁹

2.5.2. History and chronological order

One of the most essential themes addressed by the western scholars was the chronological order of the Qur'ān. As it is well known that the traditional Muslim view regarding the Qur'ānic revelation is that it has been revealed in parts over the period of 23 years and that the recent order of the Qur'ān is quite different from its chronological order as the Prophet did not mean to retain the chorological order.

The study of the chronological order is quite significant as it helps in depth understanding of the Qur'ān regarding certain places. Both, Muslims and non- Muslim scholars have shared their scholarly insights in this regard. But, neither of the western efforts for rearrangement hasshowed satisfactory results. Rather, some of the works of non-Muslims have provoked Muslims' resentment.

A number of the prominent western figures in this regard are William Muir, Gustav Weil, Theodore Noldeke, Hirschfield, J.M.Rodwell, Regis Blachere, and Richard Bell. The object of this rearrangement was reconstructing the historical sequence of its original

¹⁸⁷ Fred Donner, "The Qur'ān in recent scholarship" in *The Qur'ān in its historical context*, 29- 50

¹⁸⁸ M. A. Draz, *Introduction to the Qur'ān*(London: I. B. Tauris, 1011), 99

¹⁸⁹ Buck, *Discovering*, 25

structure.¹⁹⁰ Among them, some have tried to change the order of the verses too.¹⁹¹ These scholars were of the view that the present order of the Qur'ān is a hodgepodge of verses and hence has lost its coherence. Hence, they tried to rearrange the verses and Surahs by following the Muslim traditions partly and by giving considerations to the subject matter.¹⁹² These steps were not welcomed by Muslim scholars as, according to them, they were not based on sound proofs. Scholars see that the task behind was to show an evolutionary process in the mind of the Prophet that influenced on the mode of expression in the book composed by him.¹⁹³

The struggle to place the verses in chronological order can be an outcome of unfamiliarity with The Qur'ānic style as it, unlike other books, does not present its themes and topics in an arranged form and consequently appears to the western scholars as scattered, uneven, irregular and patchy. Some other scholars worked on this scheme with the hypotheses that although Qur'ān was collected by redactors with great care but there remained confusion in that process. As the Book was collected from scattered pieces, the text was partially disordered and there remained the possibility of the insertion of the passages mistakenly. Hence “pieces were cut off from a passage and wrongly placed or written on the back of the others and were read continuously”.¹⁹⁴ In order to maintain coherence and consistency, many labors have been spent to rearrange it but at the end it has been admitted that no final result can be acquired in establishing the exact order of the Qur'ānic contents.¹⁹⁵

Some contemporary scholars believe that the urgency of the task in the 'Uthmānic period led towards a much less systematic ordering of the contents. At that time it was more important to collect the text than to arrange it in systematic order. The task of rearrangement of the contents according to comprehensive sequence was left to later

¹⁹⁰ Arberry, *The Koran*, 14

¹⁹¹ Hawting Hirschfield, *New researches into the composition and exegeses of Qur'ān* (London: Royal Asiatic Society, 1902), 142

¹⁹² Rodwell, *The Koran*, 2.

¹⁹³ Arthur Jeffery, *The Koran: Selected Suras* (New York: The Limited Edition Club, 1958), 9-21
See also: Gustav Weil. “An Introduction to the Qur'ān”. *The Biblical World*. 5, no. 3 (Mar 1895): 181-191
, John E. Merrill, “Dr Bell's critical analysis of The Qur'ān”. *The Muslim World*: 134-148

¹⁹⁴ Bell, *The Qur'ān*, vi

¹⁹⁵ Bell himself admitted in his work that he could not solve all the problems of the chronology. Many other recent scholars have mentioned this point in their works.

Muslim scholars.¹⁹⁶ There are others who, after many past efforts for restructuring the Qur'ānic contents, still endorse the need of rearrangement for a better understanding of the text.¹⁹⁷

2.5.3. Compilation of the Qur'ān

In the past centuries, the issue of the compilation was discussed by the western scholars rather frequently. The accounts of their scholarship can be divided into two groups i.e. the traditional scholars and revisionist scholars.

The first category builds their research on the basis of the Muslim accounts related to the collection of The Qur'ān, although, they do not accept those records entirely and show a kind of suspicion and consider that their accrued changes in the original text. Among them are Noldeke, Regis Blachere, Arthur Jeffery, Richard Bell and more recent is Angelika Neuwirth.¹⁹⁸

The second genre totally rejects the traditional Muslim accounts regarding the issue. In divert ways, they tried to propose that historically, master narrative of the origin of the Qur'ān is not reliable and consistent. Hence, there is a need to reinterpret those traditions. At the forefront of this group is John Wansbrough, who forcefully discard the Islamic accounts and of the view that the Qur'ān was compiled after 150 years the Prophet. Some other prominent scholars are Mingana, Gunter Luling, Norman Calder, Patricia Crone, Michael Cook and John Burton who not only rejected the Muslim accounts regarding the collection, but came up with the theory that the holy Qur'ān that we have in our hands is compiled by the Prophet himself or compiled after many centuries.

These theories have generated controversy in the field of Qur'ānic studies. Yet, the trend has benefited the field as many recent scholars are trying to address the questions put by those revisionists.¹⁹⁹ The issue of compilation is addressed by recent scholars as well. The

¹⁹⁶ Buck, "Discovering", 38

¹⁹⁷ Neuwirth, Angelika, "Structure and emergence of Community". In *The Blackwell Companion to the Qur'ān*. 153.

¹⁹⁸ Donner, Fred. *The Qur'ān*, 31

¹⁹⁹ Reynolds, *The Qur'ān*, 18

modern scholarship too, opines that the traditional Muslim view of the preservation of the Qur'ān is simply wrong.²⁰⁰ Majority hold the view that by the demise of the Prophet, it was not committed to writing²⁰¹ and one cannot be certain about the state of the Qur'ān because of the scarcity of evidence.²⁰² Accordingly, they consider that a scientific and undisputed history of the Qur'ān remains to be written.²⁰³

2.5.4. Multiple readings of the Qur'ān²⁰⁴

Though, contradictory to this view, the western scholars of the Qur'ānic studies consider them as part of the history of the text. To say differently, it is assumed that the readings did not develop until the fourth century and the existence of discrepancies in readings, according to them, is no more a record of early tradition than the results of exegesis activity. Quite identical to this is the views of recent scholars who consider readings as the result of exegetical activities.²⁰⁵ Besides, their contention is that the absence of symbols to represent certain vowels in the early copies of the Qur'ān resulted the variation in reading.²⁰⁶

²⁰⁰ Andrew Rippin, *The Qur'ān and its Interpretive Tradition* (Great Britain: Ashgate, 2001,) xv

²⁰¹ The Rise of Islam in "Blackwell Companion to the history of Middle East" ed. Youssef Choueiri, (Blackwell Publishing Limited: U.S.A, 2005),10

²⁰²"Qur'ān" *The Encyclopedia of Religion* (New York: Macmillan Publishing Company.),166-76

²⁰³*The Brill Dictionary of Religion.* (Leiden: Brill, 2006)

²⁰⁴The traditional Muslim belief is that multiple readings of the Qur'ān are the part of revelation and that the Prophet himself taught readings to his companions. Mostly the Western scholars use the word 'variants' for readings. According to a celebrated Muslim scholar, to use the term multiple readings is more suitable than variants. He believes that the variants denotes to uncertainty resulted from corruption in the text or scribal error. On contrary, the case of readings is rather different in the sense that they are authentic was part of revelation. See; A'zami, Mustufa. *The history of the Qur'ānic text, from revelation to compilation.* England: Islamic Academy. 155.

²⁰⁵ Reynold, Gabriel, *The Qur'ān.* 7

see also: Rezvan, E. December," Texts and Manuscripts: Descriptions and Research".

ManuscriptaOrientalia. 11, no, 4 (2005):5-9. See also: Goudarzi, Behnam Sadeghi& Mohsin. *San'a 1 and the Origins of the Qur'ān*[cited 8/2/2015. Available at <https://www.scribd.com/doc/110978941/Sanaa-1-and-the-Origins-of-the-Qur-An>.

²⁰⁶ Ignác Goldziher, *Madhaheb al tafsīr al Islāmī* (Egypt: Maktaba Khānjī, 199), 6

The western academics made many efforts in finding the variant readings of the Qur'ān from time to time. Significant figures who dealt with the genre of multiple readings are Ignác Goldziher (d. 1921), Alphonse Mingana (d. 1937), Arthur Jeffery, and Gerd Piun.²⁰⁷

Perhaps, that most influential of all was Arthur Jeffery, who studies readings throughout of his life. In his book “Materials for the history of the text of the Qur'ān”, he has collected readings from the codices of Ibn -e Mas'ūd, Ubayyi, 'Ali Ibn Abbas and others. His main source was Kitabul Musahif by Ibn Abi Dawud. His intention was to publish a text of the Qur'ān with the addition of those readings that he had compiled from several sources.²⁰⁸

For this reason, he collected 6000 readings from commentaries, individual codices and other books of linguistics. Despite his claim of rival codices for the codex of 'Uthman and is painstaking efforts for that, he failed to announce the results of the final report of his archive who has been working through 42000 copies of the Qur'ān. The results showed no significant discrepancies among them.²⁰⁹

In 1972 some significant parchments of the Qur'ān were discovered in the great mosque of San'a in Yemen. The then authority of the country took care of those fragments and invited the scholars from Germany to start their research over the parts. Those two scholars were Gerd Piun and H.C. Bothmer²¹⁰ who pointed towards a few minute differences in the variations²¹¹ Anyhow, these findings as they consider are tentative and suggest that existence of these manuscripts indicates that the text or parts of it were existed in the eight century and from this skeleton text of manuscripts, the final text of the Qur'ān was developed over next two centuries.²¹² Among recent scholars, John

²⁰⁷ He is a German scholar of the Qur'ānic historical orthography. He is also a specialist in Arabic paleography.

²⁰⁸ Arthur Jeffery, *Materials for the history of the text of Qur'ān* (Leiden: E.J. Brill. 1937), Preface

²⁰⁹ Muhammad A. Chaudhary, “Orientalist on variant readings of Qur'ān: The case of Arthur Jeffery”. *The American Journal of Islamic social sciences*. 12, no. 2 (1995): 170-184. 181.

²¹⁰ He is a German scholar and a specialist in manuscript study. He was invited to conduct a research on the San'a fragments together with Gerd Piun.

²¹¹ Gerd Piun, “Some observations on San'a fragments”. In Wild, Stefan, ed. *The Qur'ān as Text* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1996), 107-111.

²¹² Rippin, *The Qur'ān*. x-xi

Burton, Wansbrough and his student Rippin, following the theory of Goldziher, are of the opinion that readings were fabricated by jurists to fortify their arguments.²¹³

2.5.5. Foreign Vocabulary

One more genre, dealing with the Qur'ānic Studies is of those who dealt with the vocabulary of the Qur'ān. There is voluminous literature that discusses the supposedly foreign lexis in the Qur'ān. A general view about the Qur'ānic terms is that every word, for which native philologists or commentators have failed to find a solitary meaning and instead they offered multiple meaning, has a foreign origin. Hence, modern scholars have tried to trace an origin for that word and suggested the meanings according to supposed source.²¹⁴ They traced many words of foreign vocabulary and still there are additions to that. Almost 322 words have been counted in Jeffery's Material for which it suggested that they have Hebrew, Aramaic and Syriac origins.²¹⁵

After the publication of the work of Mingana under the title "Syraic influence on the style of the Qur'ān" the theory that created a chaos in the field of The Qur'ānic scholarship was presented by pseudonym of Christophe Luxenburge. The work became the center of attention in the popular press and was published in the leading journals of North America and Europe. He was of the conviction that the Qur'ānic language has Aramaic origin and henceforth, it should be understood with the perspective of that source. With the publication of his work, he intended to solve all of the riddles of the Qur'ānic language.²¹⁶ In his book, he made an attempt to suggest the meanings in the light of Syro-Aramaic. For instance, he sees that the term Hur should not be seen as a reference to the virgins of Paradise but, in the light of Aramaic term, to white grapes.²¹⁷ Some recent view is that there are several words that are derived from Chinese.²¹⁸

²¹³Burton, *The Collection*, 199-212

Rippin, *The Qur'ān*, xviii

²¹⁴ Walid Saleh, "The Etymological Fallacy and Qur'ānic Studies: Muhammad, Paradise and Late Antiquity", in *The Qur'ān in context*, eds. Angelika Neuwirth, Nicolai Sinai and Michael Marx. (Leiden: Brill, 2001), 649- 98. 649

²¹⁵ Michael Carter, "Foreign Vocabulary". In *The Blackwell Companion to the Qur'ān*, 122.

²¹⁶ Christophe Luxenberg, *The Syro-Aramaic readings of the Qur'ān* (Berlin: Schiler. 2007), 3

²¹⁷Luxenberg, *The Syro-Aramaic*, 247-253

²¹⁸Luxenberg, *The Syro-Aramaic*, 121

2.5.6.Emendations of the Qur'ān/ Textual Criticism

Emendation is a process of dealing with any text with the possibility that there are errors in the text as a result of corruptions and suggesting the possible correct meaning. With regard to the Qur'ān, the western scholarship deals the issue academically and do not consider the sensitivity of the subject. On contrary, it is more than a sensitive topic for Muslims as according to them the Qur'ānic text has been preserved under the Divine care and there could not be any chance for any mistake. According to the western intellectuals, the Qur'ān is not immune to human errors and that the Muslim argument of perfect and complete preservation of the text from errors is absolutely flat.²¹⁹

The western academic world believes that historical texts contain some corruptions and they are in need of emendations. The Qur'ānic studies, in their view, has not benefited much from the science of textual criticism because of the Muslim belief in the sacredness of the Qur'ān. The scholars are of the view that the Qur'ān is open to same copyist errors problems that can occur in any other ancient text. Consequently, the issue should be considered as an academic activity far from any bias.

Among a handful of scholars, who have given attention to this subject, the most prominent is James A. Bellamy²²⁰. Bellamy suggested 29 emendations in the series of his articles dating from 1973 to 2002. He believes that there are a set of serious copyist mistakes in the Qur'ān that need scholarly attention. He, mostly, after scrutinizing these mistakes, proposes new words by establishing the roots in biblical material.²²¹

2.5.7. Apprehension of the contents and themes

A quite recent trend in the field of Qur'ānic studies is the research on the themes of the Qur'ān. Many works have emerged discussing the essential subjects of the Qur'ān. Thus a shift in the western Qur'ānic approach can be witnessed, the lack of which has been

²¹⁹ DevinStewart, "Notes on emendations of the Qur'ān" *The Qur'ān in its historical content*, 228-9

²²⁰ He is Professor Emeritus of Arabic Literature at the University of Michigan.

²²¹ See for detail: James A.Bellamy, "Textual Criticism of Qur'ān". *Journal of the American Oriental Society*. no. 1. 121, (2001):1-6.

highlighted earlier by Muslim scholars.²²² In doing so, the authors address the Qur'ānic themes with multiple approaches and perspectives. The task of exposition of these threads can be limited to one theme or overall topics of Qur'ān.²²³ A good example of this approach that has dealt the fundamental themes of the Qur'ān is 'The great themes of the Qur'ān' by Jacques Jomier (d. 2008).²²⁴ Rippin also illustrates to the increasing interests of the western scholars in the thematic study of Qur'ān.²²⁵

2.6. Methods and models in Qur'ānic Studies in the West

Throughout the western history of Qur'ānic Studies, two types of groups were involved. First genre was comprised of clergy men and priests who were associated with Church and the sole purpose of whom was to serve the Church. The works produced by the clerics and clergy men were highly polemical. Influence deeply with antagonism and hostile approaches towards Qur'ān, they played crucial role in the deformation of Qur'ān. The second category included the secular humanist scholars²²⁶ who studied religions exclusively for academic interests and were free from dogmatic constraints. This genre, in their study of religions, applied all those methods that have been used in human and social sciences.²²⁷

Originally, the methods of biblical criticism are embedded in Renaissance when the western man liberated himself from revelation. As the Reformation was the offshoot of Renaissance, the critical approaches were advanced in this era by Spinoza, Richard Simon and many others who sow the seeds of doubt towards the Bible. There is also a view that the biblical criticism traces its origins into the Medieval Muslim scholarship as

²²² The late Fazlul Rehmān was of the view that this genre has received the least attention of the Western scholars. The major themes, xii

²²³ See for instance the works of; Tamara Soan, "Introducing" and Buck, Christopher " Discovering" in *Blackwell* . These works have in general dealt with the basic topics of the Qur'ān. The article of Denial Madigan on the themes of Qur'ān specifically represents the idea of God and His attributes in the Qur'ān. See: McAuliffe, Jane, ed. *The Cambridge companion to the Qur'ān*.79-98

²²⁴ Originally, the work was produced in 1997 in French. It was translated into English by Zoe Hersov.

²²⁵ AndrewRippin, 'Qur'ānic Studies'. InBennett, Clinton, ed. *The Bloomsbury companion to Islamic studies* (London: Bloomsbury, 2013), 88

²²⁶ Humanist is the scholar believing in Humanism. Humanism is a philosophical approach developed in Modern times that believes in value and agency of human beings and generally deals doctrines of faith with critical approach giving priority to human rationale. It also believes in the capability of human beings to lead their moral and ethical life without the help of religious dogmas.

²²⁷ Hasan, Khalifa. *Dirasatul Qur'ānul Karim*. 4-5

there is plethora of Muslim works applying these methods on biblical studies. More specifically, the critical works of Ibn Hazam (d. 1064) and ibn Qayyam al Jawziyya (d.1350) are cited as fine examples of these works²²⁸

Nonetheless, the seventeenth century criticism of the Bible did not hold the traditional views of Christianity and Judaism about the origin and sources of the Old and New Testaments. The scholars of this period replaced the idea of Divine origin of Scriptures by viewing it as a historical literary text that needs critical scrutiny. ²²⁹

The methods of biblical criticism were later developed in eighteenth century although the controversy around their application in Biblical studies was still on progress. The traditionalist or conservative group that believed the Holy Books to be the direct words of God, considered these techniques as incompatible with their belief. Hence, these methods were opposed by them firmly. While there were others who did not consider it as opposition to the Bible.²³⁰ However, modern scholars are also of the stance that the critical readings in the Biblical texts do not contradict religiosity.²³¹

The emergence of the critical methods affected the overall European religious studies. However, they were not implemented immediately on Qur'ānic studies as the notion of the medieval periods of Islam as a Christian derivative was still sustaining. Exception to this was philological studies of Qur'ān in Germany.²³²

Somehow, the methods of Biblical criticism that were exercised in Qur'ānic Studies are as following:

Historical criticism or historical -critical method is branch of literary criticism that seeks to investigate earlier texts. This method is further divided in to higher criticism and lower criticism. The two terms were commonly used in the eighteenth century while in twentieth century onwards the frequent exercise for the two methods is historical

²²⁸ Hava Lazarus, *Intertwined Worlds; Medieval Islam and Bible Criticism* (New Jersey: Princeton Legacy Library, 1992), 130-32.

²²⁹ *The Cambridge history of the Bible: The West from the fathers to the Reformation*, ed. Lamp, G.H.W. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1969) 238-40 to check

²³⁰ Edgar Krentze, *The historical- critical method* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1977) 16-17

²³¹ Neuwirth, Angelika, ed. *The Qur'ān in context*. introduction.

²³² Rippin, Andrew, *Western scholarship*, 239.

criticism and textual criticism.²³³ Higher criticism involves the methods such as source, redaction, tradition criticism and form criticism. Source criticism conducts research to acquire the knowledge of the source of the written collection of the text. The practice of these methods was the outcome of intense intra- text contradictions and confusions that scholars explored in their close readings of the

The Bible and hence, the application of these methods generated tremendous results on the subject of the origin, authorship date and place of the scriptures. Scholars such as Julius Wellhausen challenged the divinity of Torah by applying the methods of higher criticism. Various other theories such as the multiple sources of Old and New Testaments were introduced though they were not unanimously accepted.²³⁴

Among the other methods is redaction criticism that involves the research about compiling a text, gathering information, modifying and finally creating a final text. While, tradition criticism goes behind the written sources to trace the progress of oral tradition, phase by phase, from its primary state to further developments. The form criticism aims to discover the process of transmission of traditions from its diffusion to its final form.²³⁵

With the passage of time, the methods were applied to other holy texts as well. In nineteenth century, the historical critical method with its sub divisions was implemented to Qur'ānic Studies.²³⁶ It would not be erroneous to say that majority of the western scholars of Qur'ānic studies made attempts to employ this method in their researches on Qur'ān but very few had expertise and excellence in this field. Among the earlier scholars who applied this method on Islamic studies and subsequently on Qur'ānic studies are Gustave Weil, Alloys Springer and William Muir in their works of the biographies of the Prophet. They presented some critical theories on the nature and origin of the Qur'ān and ḥadīth collection. Another critical scholar who applied the same method to Qur'ān was

²³³ N. Richard Soulen, *A handbook of biblical criticism* (Cambridge: James Clark & Co, 2002.)158-59.

²³⁴ Thomassen, Einar. "Philology" in Stausberg, Michael, ed. *The Routledge handbook of research methods in the study of religion* (New York: Taylor and Francis.2011), 349.

²³⁵"Biblical Criticism." *The Encyclopedia of Religion*. Vol. 12. (New York: McMillan Publishing Company, 2010) 196.

See also: www.Britannica.com/topic/historical-criticism-literary-criticism

²³⁶ Khalifa. *Dirasatul Qur'ānul Karim*. 10.

Wellhausen, who along with his studies of Old Testament, made the Qur'ān an object of his intense studies.²³⁷

The application of Source- critical method in Qur'ānic studies directed the scholars to break down the Qur'ānic revelation to Jewish, Christian, Zoroastrian and other religions. By employing this technique, various approaches found their way in to the field such as comparative, contextual and literary perspectives. The comparative study of Qur'ān further breaks up either in comparison of the Qur'ānic words or contents with the Bible or their assessment in relation to the Christian or Jewish milieu of Arabia.²³⁸

The tendency of the comparative study of Islam, Christianity and Judaism has a rich and in the words of Bazzano 'notorious' history.²³⁹ More specifically, the trend to study the Qur'ān in comparison to Old and New Testaments has its traces in the past centuries. In the entire history of Qur'ānic studies in the modern and the post modern era, the theme of the origin of the Qur'ān was of great magnitude. The western scholars, by applying this method, have thoroughly evaluated the Qur'ānic contents by tracing their bases in either biblical or Jewish traditions. Many of the recent works focus on those contents comparison to the Bible specifically. Nevertheless, it appears that with the examination of the biblical themes, efforts were made to prove the borrowed nature of Islam.²⁴⁰

Textual criticism

The lower criticism or Textual criticism deals with various copies of the transmitted text are compared with the conviction that they may contain errors. The researcher makes a

²³⁷ Khalifa, *Dirasatul*, 19-20

²³⁸ There are numerous works that have approached this theme. An instance of the recent works that are entirely dedicated to this theme is 'The Qur'ān in context'.

²³⁹ "Research methods and problems". In Clinton, Bennet, ed. *The Bloomsbury companion to Islamic studies* (London: Bloomsbury, 2013), 39

²⁴⁰ Perhaps, one instance will suffice here. Following the idea of Noldeke, Kavin Blader says that the prophet must have heard orally the story of Alexander The great as the story was already circulating in the surroundings of Makkah. "The Alexander Legend in the Qur'ān". In *The Qur'ān in its historical context*, 175

In the same book, many examples based on this concept can be located. See for instance; Samir Khalil, 'The Theological Christian influence on the Qur'ān', 141. Another recent work that conducts a comparative study of the Qur'ānic contents with Christian poetry of thence Arabia is "An early Christian Arabic account" in *The Qur'ān in context*, 349

comparison and implies the most suitable vocabulary from the same language or from even a cognate language.

In literary analysis, alike comparative approach, labors were exerted to find out the foundations of the Qur'ānic vocabulary in Syraic and other languages. One can locate numerous works on the issue of literary investigation in Qur'ān. It can be noticed that in the course of application of these methods on Qur'ānic studies, the western scholars employed the biblical and Jewish terminologies such as canonization, recession, textual criticism that are purely related to the historical studies of the Old and New scriptures.

Social sciences methods

With the emergence of social sciences in nineteenth century and its further development in twentieth century, biblical scholars soon realized the significance of these sciences in the thorough comprehension of the historical and social background of the Bible. Many of the scholars applied the social sciences research methods to interpret the biblical texts.²⁴¹ As popular attitude towards Qur'ān was influenced by religion, the academic studies of Qur'ān were naturally molded by these trends. The present day scholars, too, emphasize on the usage of various methods such as anthropological, archeological, philosophical and sociological in Qur'ānic Studies.²⁴²

At present, another method that can be better called as social sciences case study research is prevalent. The method aims at the case study research of the smaller Muslim society with regard to their relationship with Qur'ān. Many scholars have focused in their works the role of Qur'ān in everyday Muslim life and its function in the integration of the Muslim society. More significantly, the endeavor to discover the reasons and factors for Muslims' extreme devotion for their holy texts is rather visible.

²⁴¹ The new Cambridge history of the Bible; from 1750 to the present, ed. Riches, John (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press) 160- 62.

²⁴² WilliamAl-Sharif, Rethinking Qur'ānic Studies (Scotland: Jerusalem Academic Publications), 7

Sometime employing statistical methods, the researcher tends to provide a paradigm of Muslim societies in regard to Qur'ān.²⁴³ Consequently, a shift can be observed from the study of Islam and Qur'ān entirely from the texts to the study of Muslim societies.

In this regard, the mention should be made of the issue of the *Journal of Qur'ānic Studies* in 2013 that was dedicated to the study of Qur'ānic exegesis in Africa. Moreover, the trend to investigate the Socio-Qur'ānic terms in the light of its connections with Muslim society is also common.²⁴⁴

2.7 Reception of the western scholarship in Muslim world

As mentioned before that the recent western scholarship of the Qur'ān is considered by majority of the Muslims as part of Orientalism which itself has a pejorative meaning. Consequently, it could not gain appreciation and veneration among Muslim societies. It has been rejected vigorously by majority of Muslim scholars even though, with the acknowledgment of the constructive contribution of the western scholarship to the Qur'ānic sciences' legacy. In Muslim world, the upsurge of strong critiques can be observed very clearly. Muslim scholars, in the previous two centuries, tried to produce a vast body of literature to defend or clarify the position of Islamic accounts.

In the line of the countries confronted with the West in regard of the specific issue of defense of Islamic accounts, the Sub- continent particularly India, stands at the fore front. The academic efforts to meet the challenge of the then called Orientalism, Indian Muslims thinkers produced a bulk of works with a multitude of offensive and defensive approaches.²⁴⁵ Among them, some noted scholars are Rehmatullah Kairanvi (d. 1891),

²⁴³ See for instance: Jamro Houtsonen, "Traditional Qur'ānic Education in a Southern Moroccan Village". *International Journal of Middle East Studies*. 26, no. 3 (Aug., 1994), pp. 489-500. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/163701>.

See also: Yahya Oyewole, "The Tradition of Qur'ānic Learning in Borno". *Journal of Qur'ānic Studies*. 6, no. 2 (2004), pp. 96-102. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/25728152>

²⁴⁴ See for instance: Elizabeth Urban, "The foundations of Islamic society as expressed by the Qur'ānic term Mawla". *Journal of Qur'ānic Studies*. 15, no. 1. 1-22.

The writer has attempted to show that how this term identify the bonds of help, cooperation and assistance that united the early Muslim society as one entity.

²⁴⁵ Abu ul Hasan Ali Nadvi, *Islamic Studies, Orientalism and Muslim scholars*. Tran: M. Ahmad(Lucknow: Academy of Islamic Research and Publications, 1983), 18

Shibli Naumani (d. 1914), Amir Ali (d. 1928) and Sulaiman Nadvi (d. 1953). Mostly, their works relate to the Sira and the refutation of the orientalists in this regard. The works of Manazir Ahsan Gilani (b. 1892), Abdul Majid Darya Abadi (d. 1977) and Muhammad Hamidulla (d. 2002) revolve around the subject of Qur'ānic studies.

In the Arab world, we see a vast range of books and doctoral theses covering the topic of Orientalism and evaluating critically the works and findings of those works. It is the fact that many of the Muslim works consist of the pejorative and harsh phrasings pertaining the issue of the western scholarship of Islam.²⁴⁶ In Iran, the recent scholarship has focused the academic works of western thinkers and started examining their theories and concepts on micro level.

The ongoing antagonism towards the western scholarship has some very logical grounds. Muslims are of the view that western schema of the Qur'ānic studies is based on stereotypes²⁴⁷ and by using that frail basis, Islam has always been misinterpreted.²⁴⁸ The academic interest has been considered by Muslims as a prelude to practical application for the purpose of power over Orient.²⁴⁹ Ultimately, among the consequences is denunciation of the western Qur'ānic scholarship by the Muslims.²⁵⁰

Jeffery Lang, in his analysis of the western scholarship, says that the Muslims consider the Orientalists as enemies of Islam as a result of the policies adopted by the western scholars. He, nevertheless, admires the efforts of recent scholarship for their endeavors for objectivity and justice.²⁵¹

The fact that the early western studies mostly distorted the image of Islam is observed by many non-Muslim scholars too. It is observed that for many centuries the common image of Islam in the West was based entirely on the distorted reports of fanatical Christians.

²⁴⁶ One can easily find the expressions like Makar (deception), Iftera (falsehood or slander), and dhahad (falsification) in the titles of the Arabic books.

²⁴⁷ Ali binlbrāhim Namla, Al. Ishāmatul Musteshreqin Fi Nathr Et Turāth Al 'Arabiā (Riyadh: Maktabatul Malik Fahad al Wataniyya, 1996), 15

²⁴⁸ See for example: Ibrahim, Ishāmāt. 15. See also: Adnan, Wazzan. Alisteshrāqwaal musteshreqūn, Introduction.

²⁴⁹ M. Faruk Zein, Christianity, Islam and Orientalism, 165

²⁵⁰ Saeed, Qur'ān, 98

²⁵¹ Jeffery Lang, *Struggling for Surrender* (Lahore: Suhail Academy, 2000), 94

What was good in Muhammad was entirely ignored and what was not good, in their eyes, was exaggerated.²⁵²

Another reason behind Muslims reaction is the disparaging attitude of the western authorities towards Muslim scholarship. Abdul Rauf articulates in this regard that they often try to belittle the status of long tradition of Muslim scholarship by applying the terms ‘objective’, ‘scientific’ and ‘scholarly’ to their works only. Moreover, they approach the Muslim works with a skeptical eye and criticism.²⁵³

Even the unbiased non- Muslim scholars express the identical views regarding the undeserved treatment of Islam and its Holy Book by the western intelligentsia. An expert of the field of Islamic studies, famous for her objectivity and sympathetic tone, Schimmel articulates her views regarding this atmosphere of misunderstanding by saying that the West has been dealing many religions but the most misunderstood and attacked one is Islam.²⁵⁴ A premier modern-day specialist of the field shares her findings and says that “Qur’ān has been, for centuries, subjected to the Christian bias”.²⁵⁵ Carl Ernest, another contemporary significant scholar conveys his findings and says that the English-Language scholarship has been and, miserably still, follows the norms of Oriental scholarship or works for polemical theological agenda.²⁵⁶

While discussing the negative reception, it should not be neglected that many Muslim scholars have recognized the services of occidental academia regarding Islam. Mentioning the works of objective scholars, Hasan Ali Nadvi states that they have rendered many services to Islam and several among them have studied Islam for the satisfaction of their academic interests. They have contributed to further studies and researches and for this, several Arab scholars too have highlighted the same point.²⁵⁷ Certainly, many of them have enriched the library on Islam to great extent. Many

²⁵²Sale, *The Koran*, vii

²⁵³ Muhammad Abdul-Rauf, “Outsider’s interpretation of Islam: A Muslim’s point of view”. In Martin, Richard C., ed. *Approaches to Islam in Religious Studies* (Oxford: One World. 2006), 185

²⁵⁴ Annemarie Schimmel, *Islam an Introduction* (New York: Colombia University Press, 2012), 1

²⁵⁵ Angelika Neuwirth, “Orientalism in Oriental Studies? Qur’ānic Studies as a Case in Point.” *Journal of Qur’ānic Studies*. 9, no. 2 (2007): 115-27. 120.

²⁵⁶ Reading strategies , 2.

²⁵⁷Nadvi, *Islamic Studies*,

fair-minded scholars have made efforts to highlight the contribution of Islamic civilization to the journey of knowledge, the fact admitted by even those Muslim scholars who protest against the western academic assaults.²⁵⁸ In this regard, the Muslims do not doubt that there have always been, in all ages, a small number of reliable non-Muslim western scholars whose sincerity, sympathy and goodwill are beyond doubt".²⁵⁹

It is worth noting that the recent western scholarship, as well, is well aware of this reality. Many scholars denote to the increase of Muslim sensitivity to Islamic studies in the West.²⁶⁰ Rippin also illustrates to that fact and attempts to defend the western scholarship against the charges laid on them by Muslim academics.²⁶¹

He very skillfully notices the hostile responses to the western Qur'ānic scholarship and describes the causes saying that the general reception of the western scholarship of the Qur'ān is based on some negative events in the past.

Simultaneously, he mentions that the Muslim world has accepted the scholarship of Toshihiko Izutsu without evaluation and no one questioned the authenticity of his works.²⁶²

The underlying reason is the history of Orientalism and its biased studies. Centuries old literature had played an important role in shaping the common depiction of Islam in the West. Not only religious but their literary works presented Islam as false religion and Prophet Muhammad as a combatant and warrior.

It is true that the centuries old reservations will take some time to move off. The polemical works of John of Damascus, Petrus Alfonsi(d. 1110) and Peter the Venerable had a deep influence in shaping the medieval concepts of Islam.²⁶³ Even the literary works e.g. The Song of Roland of Turolodus, The Divine Comedy" of Dante, The

²⁵⁸Abdul-Rauf, Outsider, 185

²⁵⁹ ShabirAkhter, The Qur'ān and the secular mind; a philosophy of Islam. Oxon: Taylor and Francis group. 2008. 5

²⁶⁰ Charles Adam, Approaches to Islam in Religious Studies, ed. Richard Martin (One Wolrd: 2001), Forward

²⁶¹Rippin, Andrew. "The Reception, 1-8.

²⁶² Rippin, Reception, 1, 7.

²⁶³ Lyons, Islam through Western eyes , 66-71.

Pilgrim's Progress of John Bunyan, Man of Law's Tale of Chaucer, and The Fall of Princes of John Lydgate too presented a ridiculous and scornful picture of Islamic teachings, its founder and followers.²⁶⁴

A brief study of the works written by European scholars with reference to the misrepresentation of Islam can make a reader well aware of the fact that, from medieval times onward, the emotions of resentment are ingrained in the western minds.²⁶⁵ As a result of biased works, resistance and rejection to the western Qur'ānic scholarship can be discerned clearly. Manzur's article is a sound illustration of Muslim suspicion in European studies of the Qur'ān.

As far as the works of Izutsu's are concerned, the reason for welcoming Muslim stance lies, as many Muslims scholars view, in his unbiased approach for Islam and its Holy Book. Moreover, he didn't write from the western perspective and manage to distance himself from the effects of tradition of Orientalism that has been dominating the western Islamic studies since long.²⁶⁶

It is noteworthy that the followers of the three sacred religions i.e. Judaism, Christianity and Islam, have many common things to share but this common legacy was not able to prevent the negative feelings among them. The responsibility lies on the shoulders of the learned ones among the adherents of Christianity and Judaism as they never succeeded to remove the causes of hatred and hostility. Instead, mostly they have been the factor to increase that.²⁶⁷

The new approach of study and objectivity is being admired and criticized simultaneously by Muslim scholarship and intellectuals. There are scholars who show a welcoming stance for new efforts. They see their attempts a step ahead towards new dispassionate

²⁶⁴For critical study of these works, see: Johnson Galen, "Muhammad and ideology in Medieval Christian literature". *Islam and ChristenMuslims relations* 11, no, 3 (2003), 333-346.

See also:Jamal, Image of the Prophet, Introduction.

²⁶⁵ Hafiz Abid Masood, "Islam in Medieval and Early Modern English Literature; A select bibliography". *Islamic Studies*. 4, no, 44 (Winter, 2005).

²⁶⁶ Ismail Albayrak, "The Reception of Toshihiko Izutsu's Qur'ānic Studies in the Muslim World: With SpecialReference to Turkish Qur'ānic Scholarship". *Journal of Qur'ānic Studies*14, no, 1. (2012.):73-116. 80.

²⁶⁷Tibavi, English Speaking Orientalists, 196.

approach.²⁶⁸ Still, there are many who perceive this method a new weapon that has been adopted with the mentality of offence as the best defense. They opine that still the western work is a propaganda more than learning and that the occidental scholarship has only restructured the wordings for old ideas and their new activities too are the part of the long series of hostility and resentment towards Islam and the Qur'ān.²⁶⁹

The fact is that, although, there are still many drawbacks and pitfalls in the works of the western academia, their struggles, for dispassionate study of Islam should be welcomed. There are works that truly can be called as gems and contribute considerably to scholarly study of The Qur'ān. Besides, there are several among them, who are trying to develop the trend to understand Islam from its own sources and are calling their fellows to study the Qur'ān by themselves and comprehend it in order to have peaceful relations with Muslims and to get rid of old biased stereotypes of Islam.²⁷⁰

Furthermore, the genesis of Islamophobia in the West is old traditions of hostility towards Islam and Muslims that shaped the European mentality as a whole. Hence, a great awareness of those factors is essential to any intellectual schema that struggles to overcome it.²⁷¹

H.R. Reland, a professor of Theology, warmly recommends the application of justice in historical research towards Islam and its sources. In his Latin sketch of Islam, he vigorously endorses the need of justice in the study of Islam and demanded his fellows to allow this religion to speak for itself. In his words “no religion is more calumniated than Islam”.²⁷² In sum, the words of a western scholar “the purpose of scholarship is to strive

²⁶⁸ Sana Ullah Hussain, *Qur'ān E Hakīm or Musteshreqin* (Islamabad: Allama Iqbal Open University, 2010), 201.

²⁶⁹ Ismail Salim, "Al Musteshreqūn wa Al -Qur'ān." *Dawatul Haqq* 104 (1990):15-17.

See also: Abdur Rehman Doi, *The Sciences of Qur'ān* (South Africa: Dar al-Salam Islamic Research Centre), 295-6, Wasti, *The Qur'ān*, 242.

²⁷⁰ See for instance the preface of 'The Essential Qur'ān' as the author advises his contemporaries to adopt just approaches in the study of Islam. viii.

²⁷¹ Andrew Shryock, *Islamophobia/Islamophilia*: (Indiana University Press)

²⁷² Snouck Hurgronje, *Mohammedanism: Lectures on Its Origin, Its Religious and Political Growth and Its Present State* (New York: G.P. Putnam's sons, 1937)

<http://answering-Islam.org/Books/Hurgronje/hurgronje1.htm>. 2-3.

for truth for its own sake”²⁷³ can be the best guidelines for scholars and whenever any person fulfills the conditions of justice, fairness and impartiality, there is no way to discard his scholarship.

2.8. Conclusion

The history of the western Qur’ānic scholarship of medieval times, influenced by the highly polemical works of Eastern scholars, demonstrates that the Qur’ān has been the victim of distortion and misinterpretation. This fact is acknowledged by many recent western scholars as well. The extremely distorted images of Islam by the Christian missionary have resulted in an antagonism that has affected the entire history of the relationship of the East and the West.

Mainly, the western Qur’ānic scholarship started with the emergence of the first rendering of Qur’ān followed by a long series of translations. Indeed, the translators of the Qur’ān, from Medieval to modern times, can be declared among the most accountable authorities in the process of deformation as most of them have presented a pejorative conception of Islam in their preliminary discourses and prefaces.

With the emergence of academic approaches in the modern times, the intensity of bitterness and hostility in the writings style of the western scholars reduced to greater extent. At the dawn of 21st century, a great transformation in the western academia emerged in the form of the Muslim contribution in various projects.

It is a fact that majority of the Muslims do not regard the western studies as objective and academic due to the reason of biased western treatment of Qur’ān. However, there are few scholars, Muslims and non- Muslims, who are optimistic in this regard. They are of the view that with the involvement of Muslims in the western academia and the increase in the collaborative activities, it is expected that the western scholars will liberate themselves from the old prejudices for a better comprehension of Qur’ān leading in future to optimistic and constructive results. In this regard, the Encyclopaedia of the Qur’ān is affirmed a magnificent achievement by the western academy.

²⁷³ Maxime Rodinson, *Europe and the Mystique of Islam* (London: I.B. Tauris, 1988), 40.

3. Introduction to 'The encyclopedia of the Qur'ān'

Introduction

A glimpse over the history of the Islamic and Qur'ānic studies in the West demonstrates evidently that the western scholars, have not only exerted their efforts in acquiring knowledge from the Muslim sources but they have utilized their time, energies and expertise in producing their own works regarding Islam. No doubt, their endeavors have been quite fruitful in this regard as they produced a plethora of voluminous and huge works extant in the libraries.

The past few centuries, particularly 19th and 20th, are worth mentioning in this regard. The emergence of an enormous body of literature revolving around the subject of Islamic in general and Qur'ānic studies in specific is the live witness for that. At present, the western academic writings, in the field of Islamic scholarship, are quite on parallel lines in comparison to the Muslim scholarship.

Another significant change in the western academy is the emergence of anthologies and 'companions' as a result of joint endeavors. At present, many works merged that shows increasing interests of the western scholars in the field of Qur'ānic studies.

In addition, it is quite manifest that the tragic event of 9/11 generated distress and hatred for the Muslims but, simultaneously, it was a major factor for rapid fame of the Qur'ān among the western populace and academia. The richness of academic works on Islam in general and on the Qur'ān in particular, demonstrates the fact that it has become the spotlight of the western studies in recent times. In this regard, some of international institutions have played a vital role. Brill, as a publishing house, founded in 1683, with the mission statement of 'to be a leading internationally publishing house in all domains of sciences', has published many reference works of this kind. Although, most of these works, if not all, are criticized by the Muslim scholars.

Brill has published various books in the genres of Islamic studies. 'The Qur'ān concordance' by Thomas Milo and 'The Dictionary of Qur'ānic Usage' edited by Elsaid

Badawī and Muhammad Abdel Haleem are reference works created by Brill. Correspondingly, it has published valuable books covering numerous themes of the Qur’ān and Qur’ānic studies. Some of the best recent instances can be given of ‘Materials for the History of the Text of the Qur’ān’,²⁷⁴ ‘God of Justice. A Study on the Ethical Doctrine of the Qur’ān’,²⁷⁵ ‘The Qur’ān as Text’,²⁷⁶ ‘The Qur’ān in Context’,²⁷⁷ ‘The transmission of various readings of Qur’ān’,²⁷⁸ ‘The Yemeni Manuscript Tradition’,²⁷⁹ and ‘A Qur’ān Commentary’ by Ibn Barrajān of Seville (d. 536/1141)²⁸⁰ under the series ‘Text and Studies on the Qur’ān’.²⁸¹

An academic peer reviewed journal “Al Bayan” is issued by Brill that mainly focuses on the Qur’ānic and Hadith Studies and publishes its articles in three languages namely English, Arabic and Malay. It covers a wide range of topics from compilation of the Qur’ān to its coherence and linguistic beauty. Brill also focuses on the publications of encyclopedias for their significance as reference. Encyclopedia of Hinduism,²⁸² Encyclopedia of China,²⁸³ Encyclopedia of Judaism²⁸⁴ and Encyclopedia of Christianity²⁸⁵ are the finest examples. To recent, Brill has produced two extensive compendiums related to Islam i.e. The Encyclopedia of Islam²⁸⁶ and The Encyclopedia of the Qur’ān.

The major project of joint efforts undertaken by Brill during the previous century has been ‘The Encyclopedia of Islam’ prepared by a number of leading Orientalists such as H.A.R. Gibb, J.H. Kramers and J. Schacht as described on the cover page. This vast compendium encompasses all aspects of Islam and Islamic world and its history. It is

²⁷⁴ Arthur Jeffery, (Leiden: Brill, 1937)

²⁷⁵ Daud (Leiden: Brill, 1960)

²⁷⁶ Stephen Wild (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1996)

²⁷⁷ Angelika Neuwirth, ed. (Leiden: Brill Academic Publication, 2010)

²⁷⁸ S. Nasser, (Leiden: Brill Academic Publication, 2013)

²⁷⁹ D. Hollenberg, (London: Brill Academic Publication, 2015)

²⁸⁰ Gerhard Böwering (Yale University, 2015)

²⁸¹ Gerhard Böwering, ed. (Yale University, 2015)

²⁸² Jacobsen, K. Brill's Encyclopedia of Hinduism. Leiden: Brill, 2009.

²⁸³ D. Leese, (Leiden: Brill, 2009)

²⁸⁴ J. Neusner, (Leiden: Brill Academic Publication, 1999)

²⁸⁵ E. Fahlbusch, Grand Rapids, (Mich: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1999)

²⁸⁶ (Leiden: Brill, 1960)

well said that it is encyclopedia about Islam and Islamic world but is not a Muslim or an Islamic encyclopedia.²⁸⁷

It has 9000 alphabetically arranged articles. To the present day, its three editions are published. The EI is translated into major languages of the world. The EI is considered a major source of information about Islam in the West and is used frequently by academicians. It can be observed that immediately after its publication, a strong reaction from Muslim side appeared on print and electronic media. The project is taken as a continuity of the centuries old oft- repeated ideas. This work is evaluated in- depth especially by Arab world. Numerous books and articles appeared highlighting its flaws and faults. The intensity of rejoinder can be better sensed from the title of the books written by an Arab scholar, “Encyclopedia of Islam *adālīl wa abātil* (deviations and delusions)” by Ibrāhīm al ‘Iwād. The work dealt with EI in general while, some others assessed the EI specifically with regard to its treatment of Qur’ān. In “Al Qur’ān ul Karīm fī Dairatul Ma‘ārif al Islamia” (The Noble Qur’ān in the Encyclopedia of Islam), the writer Hamid bin Nasir concludes that Qur’ān is not given its due status and is portrayed as the collection of the stories and myths taken from the Bible and Torah. Moreover, according to the author, the EI presents the Qur’ān in contrary to the well established notion of traditional Islam.²⁸⁸ The EI could not obtain high rank in Muslim circles as, according to Muslim point of view, it has failed to present the true picture of Islam and its Holy Book.

Although the EI is considered an extensive and wide-ranging project that covers all most all of the aspects of Islam, the need to launch the Encyclopedia of the Qur’ān was sensed strongly by the western academia. The motive was to produce a work in narrower and limited scope than the EI.

The Encyclopaedia of the Qur’ān is the second work that is compiled after a long and ambitious effort of 13 years. It stands as the only reference work on the Qur’ān in English. If the EI is considered to be a marvelous accomplishment of the 20th century, the

²⁸⁷http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Encyclopaedia_of_Islam. It is said so because since the publication of the work, it has faced many objections from the Muslim world for its polemic tone and judgmental remarks about the Qur’ān and its themes.

²⁸⁸ Al Qur’ān fi Dāeratul Ma‘ārif, 80. <http://islamhouse.com/ar/books/450153/>

EQ, undoubtedly, is counted as an excellent and remarkable success of 21st century in the intellectual western circles. By looking upon the response to EI, EQ was designed to be more ‘academic’ and ‘scientific’ in approach and style. It is an extensive project related to Qur’ān and Qur’ānic studies. It is enormous and massive having almost 2919 pages in five volumes with an additional index volume of 860 pages. The back cover claims EQ to be the first multi- volume reference work on Qur’ān with nearly 1000 entries. The pronouncement of the participation of hundreds of scholars from both Muslims and non-Muslims illustrates that the plurality of perspectives abounds in EQ. It combines alphabetically arranged articles about the contents and themes of the Qur’ān that lie within the arena of Qur’ānic studies.

3.2. Reception of the EQ by Muslims and non- Muslims

By means of first source in the western languages regarding Qur’ān, it has become an indispensable tool for academics. Frequent references to this work in the recent academic treatises indicate its grave significance for the researchers. The worth of this work is enhanced by the western academic circles by declaring it as the most user-friendly encyclopedic work of reference ever published by Brill.²⁸⁹

Andrew Rippin, among the forceful proponents of the modernity, declares the Encyclopaedia as reflection of the spirit of modernism. Moreover, he believes, it (EQ) regards the religion to be a personal matter and expresses indifference to dogmatic views in scholarly investigations. He further says illustrating towards EQ;

“The common characteristic of all such work is that it takes its subject seriously and leaves its readers to draw their own conclusions as to whether (or to what extent) the Qur’ān is a work which will be life motivating to the individual. That, of course, does reflect a modern attitude towards religion itself, and means that the study of the Qur’ān, as it is found in the academy today, is undoubtedly one fully imbued with the spirit of modernism that regards religion to be a personal matter for the individual”.²⁹⁰

²⁸⁹E. Ernst, *Reading Strategies*, 6

²⁹⁰Western Scholarship, ed. *The Cambridge*, 245.

The managing committee likewise claims a fabulous accomplishment of EQ as readers from all over the world has welcomed it. Moreover, its value can be witnessed, as they maintain, by its continuous citation in voluminous scholarly works.²⁹¹

The significance of this work is truly considered by the Muslim world. In this case too, we observe the many of the erudite Muslim scholar expressed their views and shared their worthy opinions. But, most of them entirely differ from the western scholars in their approach regarding EQ. Unlike the western scholars, they do not consider it an enormous source of knowledge determining the new approaches and styles of objectivity and detachment in the new era of 21st century. However, among the Muslim scholars, there are many appreciate the work by declaring the EQ as the best example of collaborative research. In this regard, one of the examples can be given of Abdullah Saeed who holds the identical views.²⁹²

Muhammad Arkoun, author of many books, stresses upon the need of generating such work. In his analysis of Qur'ānic studies, he says that 'elites' of Muslim world are not prepared to initiate the new policy of intellectual shifts and as far as the traditional dogma prevails over the intellectual activities, they will be able to produce only an Islamic encyclopedia of Islam or Islamic encyclopedia of the Qur'ān.

By Islamic, he means legitimate features of a long and rich historical experience, conditioned by subjective and mythical driving forces. He further says that the task to produce an encyclopedia in its real terms of scientific investigations remains there. The Encyclopaedia of Qur'ān is a scholarly, intellectual, scientific and hopefully spiritual answer to the ideological theory of the "clash of civilizations".²⁹³

Another Muslim scholar and member of the advisory board, Nasr Hamid, follows Arkoun in his opinion as he too shows highly cherishing remarks for EQ. He believes that EQ

²⁹¹<http://www.umich.edu/~aos/ProspectusEQSuppl%20.html>

²⁹² The Qur'ān: An Introduction, 112

²⁹³Arkoun, Muhammad. 2009. Islam: To reform or to subvert? 1st ed. New Delhi: Viva Books. 90

contains tremendous scholarly material that presents diversity of approaches and variable explanations.²⁹⁴

On contrary, it can be observed that an indication of disapproval has been given to the EQ from behalf of the Muslim scholars. In the words of Abdul Rahim Kidwai the EQ retains, rather resurrects most of the Orientalists' misperceptions about the Qur'ān. He also sees that many of the contributors are found repeating the same old ideas about the supposed borrowing in the Qur'ān from the Bible and Old Testament.²⁹⁵

A recent Pakistani scholar, Munir Wasti, expressing his views about the advancement in the field of Qur'ānic studies and publications of bulky volumes, states that these publications still have polemic tone and hostile to Islam. Hence, these works can be a remarkable propaganda rather than learning. The EQ comes under this category according to him.²⁹⁶

There is no room to doubt in the significance of the EQ as it's the first, inclusive and wide- ranging reference work on the Qur'ān in English language produced by highly erudite and learned academia. However, as a recent research, its authenticity and accuracy is reviewed in Muslim circles. Especially, its features of 'objectivity', 'accuracy' and plurality of perspectives as highlighted by editor and her team are the focusing points of queries.

3.3.A brief summary of preface

The general editor of the EQ is Jane Demmen McAuliffe²⁹⁷, a renowned scholar of the field of Qur'ānic Sciences. McAuliffe has made some very significant explanations in her preface for a better comprehension of the EQ.

²⁹⁴Nasr Hamid, "Towards understanding the Qur'an's worldview: an autobiographical reflection". In Gabriel Said Reynolds, ed.*New perspectives on the Qur'ān* (London: Routledge 2011)

²⁹⁵ Abdul Rahim Kidwai, "Reference Works on the Qur'ān in English: A Survey." *Journal of Qur'ānic research and studies* 1, no. 2 (2006): 2-21.

²⁹⁶

²⁹⁷ McAuliffe is known scholar of Qur'ānic studies. She has served at many significant institutions such as University of Toronto and George Town College. She has also offered her services to Bryn Mawr College as its eighth president. The focus of her interest in Qur'ānic studies is exegesis and interfaith dialogue.

In her preface, she inaugurates her speech by describing the holiness of the Qur'ān for Muslims as she states that for generations, Muslim families have greeted their newborn by whispering the words from the Qur'ān in his ears. Here, it can be noted that she fell victim to confusion in this regard as it is quite famous that Muslims welcome their newborns with 'adhān (call for prayer) and not with the words from the Qur'ān.

A well balanced and detailed introduction of the Qur'ān is followed with the elucidation of its division in the form of sections and verses. In between the lines, McAuliffe shows uncertainty regarding the authenticity and history of Qur'ān by saying: "the history of the text pronunciation and transmission, as well as, the relationship of this history to that of its earliest phases of interpretation remains the matters of scholarly controversy".²⁹⁸ She considers the question of Islamic origins as most contentious topic within the field of Qur'ānic studies. Moreover, she expresses her doubts concerning the traditional scholarship of the Qur'ān and declares that it is drawn from the sources that postdate it by several generations.²⁹⁹

The editor, in brief, demonstrates the qualms and reservations of the western academia and managing team of the EQ about the present state of the Qur'ānic studies. A glimpse on these lines about the uncertain nature of Islamic scholarship shows the first impact of these statements on the formation of the reader's ideas. The selection of the phraseology reveals the fact that an attempt is made to persuade the reader in the very outset of the EQ.

A short talk regarding the Qur'ānic scholarship in the West is also conducted. The editor acknowledges that the past interests were nurtured by polemic concerns and the mentality of 'know the enemy' was prevailing in medieval times. But later, in post-enlightenment period, there emerged the academic disciplines to study religions. Much of the material to be found in EQ, she admits, builds upon the scientific works begun in those academic centers.

²⁹⁸EQ, vol. 1. iii.

²⁹⁹EQ, vol. 1. iii

Creating the EQ

Discussing the basic factors for creating EQ, the general editor, articulates her views by saying that till the end of 20th century, the Muslim and non-Muslim scholarship of the Qur'ān have been self-contained and there was lack of sustained collaborative conversation. But in recent times, to bridge this intellectual gap, a new strategy of cooperation and collaboration is adopted. Mutual conferences and diversity of names in journals are strong proofs for that. Moreover, the number of Muslim scholars, taking advanced degrees in Euro-American institutions is increased. In addition, according to her, the rough polarity of the Muslim and western has become even more blurred.

Having this perspective, the editor and her team were ambitious to create a work that would be a combination of scholarly work by Muslims and non-Muslims both. A project that can be quoted as an epitome of work that grew from a plurality of perspectives and presuppositions. In her view, the writers of the EQ have truly attempted to capture the plurality of perspectives within the pages of the EQ. Hence, the back cover of the EQ also describes, rather ambiguously: "hundreds of scholars, both Muslim and non-Muslim, have collaborated in the creation of this work".

While, defining the second initiative for the EQ, general editor explains, they desired the field of Qur'ānic studies to flourish in the new millennium. It can be observed, she states, that the different fields of literary studies have produced thousands of reference works for readers. But not is the case with Qur'ānic studies. The number of reference works in European languages remains quite small and partial.³⁰⁰ Hence, it was decided to create a balanced and cohesive reference work in the field of Qur'ānic Studies and to generate a work that would be not only the century's great achievement, but, a leading source for the academicians in approaching times too.³⁰¹ In addition 'to make the world of Qur'ānic studies accessible to scholars and students from a broad range of humanistic and social sciences disciplines'.³⁰²

³⁰⁰ EQ, vol, 1. x

³⁰¹ EQ, vol, 1. iii

³⁰² EQ, vol, 1. xi

The third initiative was to introduce a work that can be truly declared a rigorous and academic work. As mentioned above, the Qur'ān was studied with the purpose of defense and refutation in medieval times onwards. She acknowledges that there had been lack of academic studies in the West so it was the need of time to produce a work that could be a combination of 'scientific' and 'academic' research.

To sum up, the key tasks of this encyclopedia were;

- I. To create a work with the plurality of perspectives and variety of approaches
- II. To flourish the Qur'ānic research in upcoming centuries
- III. Introduction of a rigorous and academic work in the genre of Qur'ānic studies

Significant directives have been;

- I. Diversity of perspectives and outlooks has been a deliberate choice of the advisory team as the long history of Muslim and non- Muslim scholarship of Qur'ān indicates that Qur'ānic research had been in complete isolation from each other. It was the need of time to create a collaborative work by Muslims and non-Muslims.
- II. EQ contains two kinds of entries. The first kind consists of those articles that deals with the important concepts found within the Qur'ānic text. For instance; Prayer, Fasting, Divorce etc. The second genre deals with the topics that might have not been mentioned in the Qur'ānic text but that has a connection with Qur'ān and can be correlated with it. "Ahmadiyya", "African literature" and "Contemporary critical practices" are few examples.
- III. This is not an encyclopedia of exegesis as the focus of research has been the Qur'ān itself. Furthermore, the existence of abundantly Tafsir works makes it, in her view, quite needless. But as there is no clear division between the two, editor states, almost every article makes numerous illustrations towards the exegetical treatises and exegetes.

3.4. Introduction to the advisory board

In introducing any collective work, it becomes indispensable to study the minds that have fashioned that work. In such kind of joint projects, diverse approaches, thoughts, considerations and methods work that automatically provide a more systemized and structured result. Having this idea in background, the present section aims to introduce the leading scholars and their approaches that have directed the entire project. As it was much demanding to acquaint with all of them and present a gist of their thoughts, some of them are selected as specimen. From the entire team and advisory board, a blend of Muslims and non-Muslims scholars is preferred in order to show the matches and variations in their approaches and views. Among non- Muslims, three foremost personalities that are at the forefront of this field are chosen for this purpose and amongst the Muslims, two notable Muslims scholars, being member of advisory board, are selected.

3.4.1. Jane Demmen McAuliffe

She is a renowned scholar of the field who enriched the field of Qur'ānic studies with her contributions. Some of her noteworthy works are 'Cambridge Companion to the Qur'nā'³⁰³ and 'Qur'ānic Christian: An analysis of classical and modern 'exegesis.³⁰⁴ Besides, she has written numerous articles in academic journals and edited several books.

In her writings, she shows quite balanced tone in dealing Qur'ānic studies. In many of her works, she acknowledges the beauty of Qur'ān whole heartedly and expertly describes the status of Qur'ān in religious books. While, writing about the rhetorical beauty of Qur'ān, she admits that aesthetically, it is considered undoubtedly, a first-rate performance.

³⁰³(Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006)

³⁰⁴ (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991)

She holds belief in scholarly freedom and disinterestedness in the field of Qur'ānic studies. She, akin to others, differentiates between the recent non-Muslim study of Qur'ān and the works undertaken in the past. Hence, she acknowledges that the motive of past study was 'now the enemy' but in recent times it has its own scientific objectives. For instance, examining the value of Goldziher's works ^s, she draws a line between him and Peter the Venerable by saying that a greater gulf spans the distance between the two in their reasons for attending the Qur'ān. According to her, the engagement of the scholars of past two centuries with the Qur'ān was due to academic interests.³⁰⁵

She is of the view that Muslim exegetes, while explaining the verses relishing the Christians for their acceptance of Islam and believe in Muhammad, attempt to speak generally of the attestations of the Old and New Testaments to the Prophethood of Muhammad. This transmission of the preserved truth from generation to generation stands, according to her, in stark contradiction with the typical charges of the Christian's distortion of scripture. Further, Muslim scholars are unable to specify the contents of the Bible with prediction of the Prophet.³⁰⁶

In her another articles, she describes the situation of recent Muslim exegetical scholarship and says that 'a back to the sources' sentiment that seeks for breakdown of distances between contemporary context and The Founding Movement has become progressively prominent in the past century. In this effort, it mostly disregards the intellectual achievements of intervening centuries. And if medieval exegetical authorities are cited, it is limited to a few authors.³⁰⁷

It seems that the position of Muslim scholarship, as McAuliffe sees, is dubious to a certain degree. Muslim intellectuals at times, according to her, fail to support their argumentations with sound evidences and their exegesis is often at risk of inconsistency and contradiction. Moreover, the recent scholars' efforts to link the contemporary issues with the Main Source (Qur'ān) are not factual according to her.

³⁰⁵The Cambridge Companion, Introduction. 9-10.

³⁰⁶Qur'ānic Christians, 258.+-+

³⁰⁷"Tasks and Traditions of interpretation", The Cambridge, 202-3.

3.4.2. Andrew Rippin³⁰⁸

The second figure leading the approaches and methodologies of contemporary Qur'ānic studies is Andrew Rippin. His works 'The Qur'ān: formative interpretation'³⁰⁹ 'The Blackwell companion to the Qur'ān'³¹⁰ and 'The Qur'ān and its Interpretative Tradition,'³¹¹ are declared as excellent efforts by the western scholars.³¹²

He has dealt the genre of *Aṣbāb ul Nazūl* (Occasion of Revelations) as well in many of his works.³¹³

Rippin is one of the influential proponents of the so-called academic approach towards the Qur'ān and Islam, that, of course, invites academicians to broaden the horizons of their research in Qur'ānic studies and challenges the dogmas of divine origins of the Qur'ān. Hence, he is among the strong defenders of the new tendencies and approaches in religious studies especially the Islamic and Qur'ānic studies.

For instance, he explicitly declares in the introduction of his work that it aims to extend the boundaries of what might be deemed to be "accepted" approaches towards Qur'ānic text.³¹⁴

In his works, he very manifestly supports the works of the past western scholars such as Richard Bell and Wansbrough and their methodological approaches. In his "Reading the Qur'ān with Richard Bell", he highly acclaims the insight and visions of Bell. While

³⁰⁸ Andrew Rippin is a Canadian scholar of Islam. He is former Professor of History and Dean of the Faculty of Humanities at the University of Victoria, British Columbia, Canada. He has contributed to the arena of Qur'ānic studies with many of his notable works.

³⁰⁹ (Aldershot: Ashgate/Variorum, 1999)

³¹⁰ (USA: Blackwell Publishing, 2006)

³¹¹ (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2001)

³¹² Karen Bauer, "Review Article". *Journal of American oriental society* 129, no. 2 (April-June, 2009):307-311
See also: Toby Mayer, "Review article". *Journal of Qur'ānic Studies* 4, no. 2. (October, 2002): 91-104.

³¹³ His two articles related to this category are the following: "The Exegetical Genre *asbāb al-nuzūl*: A Bibliographical and Terminological". *Survey Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 48, no. 1(1985.):1-15

"The Function of "Asbāb al-nuzūl" in Qur'ānic Exegesis". *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 51, no. 1(1988):1-20.

³¹⁴ Rippin, The Blackwell, x.

defending him against the charges of a Muslim writer, he articulates that the approaches of like-minded people, in fact, reflect that they did not understand the basic principles of his scholarship.³¹⁵ The implicit impact of Bell's view on his approaches can be very clearly observed in his writings as he advocates Bell's theories with regard to the origins of Islam and historical process of the Qur'ānic text.³¹⁶

With regard to Wansbrough, he considers his theories and approaches more radical and comprehensive with comparison to his intellectual rivals as he tried to free the study of Qur'ān from uniquely fundamentalist drift of majority of the modern dealings of Qur'ān.³¹⁷

Whilst, assessing the work of Toby Lester,³¹⁸ and the San'a fragments discovered in 1972 in Yemen, he writes that their existence indicates the late existence of the Qur'ānic text by the eight century. He does not accept the Muslim accounts with respect to the basic notion of collection of the Qur'ān. He is of the view that the physical collection of the Qur'ān was not parallel to the oral collection of the Qur'ān.³¹⁹ Similarly, he is of the conviction that the Qur'ān was formed in the authoritative structure through a process of canonization over two centuries³²⁰ and elements of that process can be traced back in the various texts of Qur'ānic interpretations.³²¹

In account of acceptance of Muslim traditions, he strongly supports the challenging views to dominant paradigm of debates. While discussing the works of Wansbrough and

³¹⁵ Andrew Rippin, "Reading the Qur'an with Richard Bell" *Journal of American Oriental Society* .112, no.4 (1992.):639-647.

³¹⁶ In his "Reading the Qur'an with Richard Bell" he summarizes Bell's views with regard to origin and says that Bell believes in the Christian origins of Islam and he came to this insight because of the untrustworthy nature of Islamic tradition. Moreover, Rippin confirms the idea that Muhammad was also taking part in the formation of the Qur'ān and his deliberate reorganization of the Qur'ān resulted in unevenness and duplication in the text. 640-41.

³¹⁷"Literary analysis of Qur'ān, Tafsir and Sīra: The methodologies of John Wansbrough". In Martin, Richard, ed.*Approaches to Islam in Religious Studies* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1985)

³¹⁸ "What is the Qur'ān". *The Atlantic Monthly*. (January, 1999)

<http://www.theatlantic.com/past/issues/99jan/koran.htm>

³¹⁹The Qur'an and its Interpretive Tradition (Great Britain: Ashgate, 2001) xi.

³²⁰ Rippin, The Qur'ān, xiv.

³²¹ Rippin, The Qur'ān, xvi. In this point he follows the view of Wansbrough. See: Qur'ānic Studies, vi.

Muhammad Arkoun amongst Muslims, he states that they, in real sense, challenged the dominant traditional views.³²²

3.4.3. Uri Rubin³²³

Another scholar in the field of Qur'ānic Studies and member of the advisory board of the EQ is Uri Rubin. His most familiar work is *The Eye of Beholder*.³²⁴ Moreover, he has contributed to Qur'ānic scholarship by his various articles published in academic journals. He seems to hold the similar views of other renowned scholars regarding the Qur'ān, Sīra and other major issues of Islam.

His works as well has cast doubts on the historical accounts specifically concerning the life of the Prophet. In his exploration of the relationship of Sīra and the Qur'ān, he rejects the primary position of the Qur'ān in Sīra traditions. He is of the conviction that the Qur'ānic elements in Sīra cannot be considered the original part of Sīra. Rather, they later became the part of Sīra in the process of Qur'ānization. To elaborate further, he has held a comparative study of the two incidents mentioned in both the Qur'ān and Sīra as the cave story in another article.³²⁵ He very explicitly declares that this story is a typical case of the exegetical expansion of an ambiguous Qur'ānic passage. In his analysis of the either stories, he concludes that as the manners of description are not consistent, there is no link between them. Moreover, in his conviction, the Sīra story has been designed to ensure the successful escape of the Prophet from Makkah.³²⁶

He, too, gives the impression that the Islamic traditions have been designed later to fulfill some specific agendas. While talking about the cave story and the role of Abū Bakr in the entire event, he states that the narrative was contrived to justify the political position of Abu Bakr as the Prophet successor. In sum, this so-called event of cave has non-

³²² Rippin, *The Qur'an*, xiv.

³²³ Uri Rubin (b.1944) is a Professor in the Department of Arabic and Islamic Studies at Tel Aviv University in Israel. His fields of interest are early Islam, Qur'an exegesis, and early Islamic tradition.

³²⁴ *The Eye of the beholder: life of Muhammad as viewed by the early Muslims. Studies in late antiquity and early Islam* (Princeton: The Darwin Press, 1995)

³²⁵ 9: 40. The verses indicate to the migration of the Prophet to Madīna. His companion mentioned in the Qur'ān was Abū Bakr al-Šiddīq.

³²⁶ *The eye*, 42-46

exegetical material in it on the basis of which it can be said that the Qur'ān cannot be regarded as ultimate origin of Sīra narratives.³²⁷

Likewise others, he insists that the post-Qur'ānic activities, specifically exegesis, were involved in achieving various tasks. Among them was the presentation of the image of the Prophet, via reinterpretations, in a new Muhammad. The exegetes, in his view, were inspired by the idea that the Prophet was not only able to threat the non- believers with the warnings of Hellfire but also he was able to offer a strong reaction to their behaviors by his possession of supernatural powers.³²⁸

To support his view, he presented his analysis of the some of the ayahs that, according to him, relate to the Last Day but later exegetes have tried to present those ayahs in a historical rather eschatological frame.³²⁹ Aiming at the glorification of the Prophet, the scholars have been defining those ayahs in historical perspective. Apart from this interpretation, as he states, the contemporary explanations of these verses in the context of all kinds of calamitous events are endeavors to prove the validity of Divine text.³³⁰

In his works, he articulates his reservations regarding the authenticity of Islamic accounts. He writes in the same article that the Qur'ān and Sīra seem to be using one origin and that is the communal memory of Islamic Ummah. "This communal memory, he says, pertains to a series of occurrences that constitute the remembered history of the birth of Islam. By "remembered" history I do not necessarily mean "true" history".³³¹ He

³²⁷ The eye, 46-50

³²⁸ "A day when heaven shall bring a manifest smoke": a comparative study of the Qur'ānic and post-Qur'ānic image of the Muslim Prophet. In Boekhoff Nicolet, ed. *The transmission and dynamics of the textual sources of Islam 9* Leiden: Brill, 2011) 251.

³²⁹ The specific ayah that he has taken for his analysis pertains to the smoke warning. In 44: 10-11, Allah says: "keep waiting for a day when heaven shall bring a manifest smoke, (10) that shall overtake the people; this is a painful punishment. (11) According to him, this ayah refers to the warnings of Hellfire but the later exegetes have defined it in the context of the trials of the opponents of the Prophet from god due to their opposition and hostility towards him.

³³⁰ Comparative study, 275.

³³¹ "The life of Muhammad and the Quran: the case of Muhammad 'shijra'". *Jerusalem studies in Arabic and Islam* 28 (2003): 56

elucidates the logic behind this view stating that the communal memory and even the memory of one particular group can change under various circumstances.³³²

The well-known theory of the borrowing is also manifest in this study. While assessing the cave story, he has tried to trace the roots of the events of migration in Biblical stories.³³³

3.4.4. Muhammad Arkoun³³⁴

He is a scholar of anthropology, sociology and religion and is author of various books in English, Arabic, French and Dutch. Some of his renowned treatises are ‘Rethinking Islam: common questions, uncommon answers’³³⁵ ‘Present-day Islam between its tradition’ globalization³³⁶ and ‘Islam to reform or to subvert?’³³⁷

As far as his theories are concerned, he has received a multiple treatment. Mostly, he is appreciated by the western academia for his critical approach to Islamic sources and for the same, is criticized by the Muslim scholars. In the works of Arab scholars, his thoughts are analyzed in detail. He is criticized for his usage of complicated terms related to the sciences of anthropology and sociology in Qur’ānic studies and thus making the comprehension of the text difficult.³³⁸ Furthermore, he is not generally respected by traditionalist Muslim scholars due to his secular approach to the analysis of the Qur’ān.³³⁹ Besides, Arkoun is known for his disapproval of Orientalists and their methodologies. On contrast, it is observed that he accepts many of their findings and

³³²“The life”, 56

³³³“The life”, 57-61

³³⁴ Arkoun(1928-2010) was an Algerian Professor Emeritus of the History of Islamic Thought at the Sorbonne. He wrote extensively on Islam and modernity with a critical approach. He passed away in 2010 in Paris.

³³⁵(Boulder: West view Press, 1994)

³³⁶ F. Daftary, ed. (New York: I.B. Tauris, 2000)

³³⁷(New Delhi: Viva Books, 2009)

³³⁸Wasti, The Qur’ān, 195

³³⁹Saeed, The Qur’ān, 228.

conclusions. Therefore, the scholars charge him of his dual approach towards Orientalism.³⁴⁰

As aforesaid that he is famous for his challenging views for tradition, the same approach can be found in his discussions of Qur'ānic studies. He considers the present status of Qur'ānic studies in impasse and thus, demands for scholarly investigations in the field. Qur'ānic studies, as he expresses, has distanced itself from scientific and rational revolutions in order to maintain the orthodox believes. Muslims always reject and resist to comparative and scientific study of the Text but we, no longer, can stick to those traditional frameworks as the need to a rational process in the Qur'ānic phenomenon is increasing.³⁴¹ He labels the sciences of the Qur'ān, Shari'a and Ḥadīth as taboo subjects that need to expand its horizons for a critical and scientific approach that can easily and freely test the mysteries of these sciences that it has produced itself.³⁴²

He considers the Qur'ānic studies to be occupied with the traditional dogmatic believes that nobody dare to question. He criticizes the Orientalists for their acceptance of the same dogmas related to Closed Official Corpus. Not only Muslims, states Arkoun, are imprisoned within dogmatic enclose but the Orientalist scholarship has also contented itself with the ideas of dominant Sunni Islam. Hence, the dogmatic enclosure remains untouched.³⁴³

In his book (Rethinking Islam) he, while scrutinizing the reason for which the Qur'ān was written and by whom, declares that it was gathered at the death of Prophet, but it seems that that *some* verses were put into writing and *partial* compilations were made on *unsatisfactory* material.³⁴⁴ The paragraph provides the reader an ambiguous concept of compilation as pulls him towards a confusion. Moreover it clearly disagree the traditional Muslim approach. In another point he illustrates that the great *Tafsīr* works of Tabari and Razi had not been the subject of scientific study and this proves that Muslims do not

³⁴⁰ Mustafa Kaihal, *Al Ansinawa Al Ta'wil fi fikr Muhammad Arkoun* (Qusantina : JamiaMantori, 2001)337-3

³⁴¹ Arkoun, Muhammad.Islam To reform or to subvert (New Delhi: Viva Books, 2009), 54-56

³⁴² Arkoun, Islam, 61.

³⁴³ Arkoun, Islam, 86-87.

³⁴⁴ Robert D.Lee, ed. *Rethinking Islam: common questions, uncommon answers* (Oxford: West view Press, 1994),35

want the tradition to be subject of scientific study.³⁴⁵ Here too, the sense of ‘scientific’ remains quite ambiguous.

Similarly, he sees the figure of Prophet Muhammad as difficult and controversial as the Qur’ān itself. Furthermore, he states that the Muslim portrayal of Prophet is the result of cultural presuppositions and mythical historical knowledge.³⁴⁶

Moreover, he views that the past and present historical writings of the Muslim authors are reinforced by political sciences and hence impose a rigid and irreversible image of Islam that assigns the legal and divine status to thoughts that are the production of the men in society.³⁴⁷

From the above citations, the factors for disapproval of his scholarship by majority of the Muslim scholars can be comprehended very evidently. Most of his views are considered contradictory to the well established Islamic notions and perhaps for that reason his views could not gain acceptance by the majority of the Muslims.

3.4.5. Nasr Hamid Abu Zaid

Perhaps, Nasr is one of the controversial personalities in the contemporary Muslim world. His approaches and methods in the Qur’ānic studies sparked controversies in religious, academic and political circles. On the basis of his work ‘A Critique of Religious Discourse’ (Naqd al-Khitāb al- Dīnī); he was highly criticized in Egypt as well as in Muslim world. According to Muslim scholars, his work was in fact disrespect to a long tradition of respected Islamic scholarship, as well as a serious injustice to its primary text, the Qur’ān.³⁴⁸

His other works include ‘Critique of Religious Discourse’³⁴⁹ and ‘Imam Shafā‘i and the Establishment of the Moderate Ideology’.³⁵⁰

³⁴⁵Lee, Rethinking, 41.

³⁴⁶Lee, Rethinking, 43.

³⁴⁷ Arkoun, Muhammad, “Present- day Islam between its tradition and globalization”. in Farhad Daftary, ed. *Intellectual Traditions in Islam* (New York: I. B. Tauris, 2000), 202.

³⁴⁸ Charles Hirschkind, Heresy or Hermeneutics: the case of Nasr Hamid Abu Zayd. SEHR 5 1(1996).

³⁴⁹(Casablanca: Arab Cultural Center, 2006)

In contrast, his proponents saw in his work freedom of intellect and considered the denial of his promotion an act against human rights.³⁵¹ In his views, departures from the traditional orthodoxy are quite evident. He believes that the original content of God's word is sacred but when it is expressed in Arabic, it is by no means sacred. He is of the vision that in the Qur'ānic structure, human dimension is more obvious as it responded to the needs of the people of that time. Another aspect of that dimension is its entire arrangement by human hands.³⁵²

He was, according to him in an interview, influenced by the science of interpretation and the western hermeneutics. To him, it is the reader who fixes the meaning of the text in his context. Once the context is gone away, the text will be hanging in the air.³⁵³ He is of the view that Muslims have given the commentators a holy status as if the opinion of the interpreter is the measure to which we have to submit ourselves.³⁵⁴

In his discussion of the works of traditional scholars of Islam, he articulates that their task was the compilation of the early works of their predecessors and they performed their duty in response to their social conditions. Our age, according to him, has its own demands and necessities. The most important of them is modernity.

He further continues by stating that the traditional demand of the implementation of Shari'awas actually the consequence of unawareness of its objectives. Hence, the call for application of Absolute text to absolute present is vague. This stance shows Nasr tendency to hermeneutical approach of the Qur'ānic text. As immediately after that he states that consequently, we have to search for the new meaning as we cannot stick to the old ones generated by our tradition and predecessors. The application of the new meaning to the text does not invalidate the traditional interpretations.³⁵⁵

³⁵⁰(Cairo: Sinai, 1992)

³⁵¹Naqd, 21.

³⁵² Nasr AbuZayd, "The Qur'an: God and Man in Communication", Lecture (Leiden: Leiden University, 2000)

³⁵³AymanBakr, Elliott Colla and Nasr Hamid Abu Zayd. Nov-Dec 1993. "Silencing is at the Heart of My Case". Middle East Research and Information Project (MERIP). 28

³⁵⁴Ayman Bakr, "Silencing ", 28

³⁵⁵ Nasr Hamid Abu Zaid, *Mafhūmūn Nass: Dirāsa fī Uloomil Qur'ān* (Egypt: Al Hai'a Al 'ama al MisriyyalKitab, 1990), 266

In his another important work, he critically evaluated the religious discourse and its activities. He sees a difference between religion and religious discourse and says the religious people use Islam to further their power and influence. The conservative religious discourse has distorted modern ideas that resulted separation between Islam and modernity.³⁵⁶

3.4.6. Similarities between the members of management team

Human beings are blessed with diverse natures, faculties and aptitudes. Alongside, there are likenesses as well that are the aftermath of socio- cultural relationships and intellectual influences. A quick look on the above mentioned outlooks reveals some of the connections and matches that can be perceived very obviously.

With regard to the academic career, all of the scholars are highly educated and possess fame in their fields. They all are authors of many books and articles published in international academic journals. They all are associated with academic field since long in famous universities of the world.

As far as their approaches to Islam are concerned, here too, a coherence and uniformity in their approaches on some key issues of Islamic and Qur'ānic studies can be found.

As pointed out in the first chapter that the secular humanist approaches insist on the employment of academic freedom in religious matters. The proponents of this slogan claimed that along with other religions, the doctrines and sources of Islam should also be investigated and the traditional approaches should be revised too. The articulation of this approach, from McAuliffe's works to that of Nasr's, is very evident. Perhaps, the most influential of all, is the voice of Rippin and Arkoun, who endorse the critical Qur'ānic scholarship in order to get some 'new' insights.

Rippin, in his writings, seems to be a strong promoter and defender of the theories of John Wansbrough. His visions, according to Rippin, are more radical and thorough as he has attempted to free the Qur'ānic study from traditional dealings of Qur'ān. Moreover,

³⁵⁶Nasr Zaid, *Naqd al Khitāb al Dīnī* (Cairo: Sinai, 1994), 35

he sees declares that an openness that separates the scholarly works from that of the polemic ones.³⁵⁷ Arkoun, as well, appears as exponent of the same policy of freedom and autonomy in Qur'ānic research. In liberal circles, he has been admired for his rethinking of traditional views and ideas.

In sum, these scholars call for scholarly investigations in the genres of Qur'ānic studies. In their view, it has turned out to be static as an outcome of the traditional approaches of Muslims that hang no-entry signs on the boundaries of the Qur'ān and Sunnah. In addition, the desire for the dissolution of Islamic tradition and the passion to know 'what really happened'³⁵⁸ is quite dominant in their writings.

Secondly, the conception of the conventional Muslim scholarship and religious authorities is quite questionable for them. By and large, Muslims held the classical scholars in high regard for their services to intellectual religious discourses. On contrast, the writings of the members of EQ's board present them in a perplexing portrayal working for various tasks and multi- dimensional motives. The most important of them were to design the narrations with the intention of fortification of the social and political positions of personalities, be it for the person of the Prophet Muhammad or his Companions. Another objective of Muslim scholarship, according to them, was to establish their hegemony and supremacy over laymen.

Together with the non-Muslim intellectuals, the Muslim members as well show the similar stance in this matter. Arkoun for instance, sees that the recent portrayal of the Prophet is the outcome of the legendary historical knowledge. Furthermore, he demands for revision of traditional exegeses as in his view, Muslims have avoided the scientific research so as to maintain the primitive classical believes. Uri Rubin seconds him and holds the same views as he states that the Muslim exegetes interpret the verses with the impetus of exaltation of the Prophet by giving an impression of him as a successful leader.

³⁵⁷Rippin, Western scholarship, 245.

³⁵⁸ Rippin, *The Qur'ān*, 151-152.

The third common motif, which runs not through these writings only but is quite dominant in many of the western scholar's' works, is the uncertain position of Muslim historical accounts. Rippin appears to be admiring the challenging voices of Arkoun and Wansbrough against traditional established views. He, himself too, declare that Muslim accounts as doubtful concerning the collection of the Qur'ān. He seems to be serious in perusing 'what really happened' in Muslim history.

Equivalent to him, Rubin as well, regards communal history of Ummah as vulnerable to mistakes and changes. Another embodiment of this approach is McAuliffe's statements in which she explicitly shows her concerns about the traditional scholarship.

One more significant issue that relates to the Qur'ān and is being assessed in intellectual circles is the interpretation of the Holy Text. In this regard, the slogan of modernity is raised strongly on behalf of the modernist scholars. They assert that modernism is the requirement of the scientific age and respond to this demand has become crucial. The Muslim and western scholars alike have engaged with the issue from 20th century onward. In this regard, Arkoun and Nasr appear to insist on the modern interpretation of the Text that can match the needs of the recent times as it is impossible, according to them, to stick to the old traditional meanings.

3.5. Important features of the EQ

3.5.1. Number of the entries and contributors

By having a glimpse on the claims and actual numbers of the entries and contributors, one can realize that there is a variance in actual numbers and the number claimed. On the back cover of the EQ, it is stated that it comprises almost 1000 entries. Brill's website also illustrates the same. But the fact is that there are 694 essays in total.

The editor, exploring the reaction of the Muslim world, states delightfully that very few Muslims opposed the plan while majority welcomed this project and hundreds of scholars from both Muslims and non-Muslims have contributed in the formation of the EQ. While when counted; Muslims partaking is roughly seventeen percent in comparison to the entire number .To elaborate further, it is be observed that almost 278 contributors have

written in the EQ. Among them Muslim authors are 50 and overall number of their entries is 111 out of 694. This demonstrates that among the entire material of the EQ, the data coming from Muslim pen is only almost fifteen percent.

Another worth mentioning point is that the participation of the Muslim scholars with regard to the subject matter is peripheral and marginal. While browsing the pages of the EQ, one can realize that the issues of actual importance have been dealt by non-Muslim scholars. For instance none of the essential issues such as related to essential creeds have been inscribed by Muslim pen. In contrast, all significant matters regarding the origin, authorship, compilation and history of the Qur'ān are written by non-Muslims. Muslim scholars dealt the secondary topics such as sand, Samson and the people of the Elephant and Najrān.

It is generally observed by Muslim scholars that the most of the material is produced by the pen of the specific writers having particular perspectives and approaches regarding the Qur'ān. They also opine that even among the Muslim writers, there are some who seem to be strongly influenced by the approaches of Orientalists in their treatment of the Qur'ān as human production and not the sacred text as traditional orthodoxy believes. So there personalities are controversial and generally a question mark is put on the legitimacy of their writings such as Muhammad Arkoun and Nasr Hamid Abu Zaid. The stance might be true with regard to some specific persons but there are some other scholars as well who have a good fame in Muslim circles such as Mustansir Mir and Abdullah Saeed. However, it is a fact that these scholars, as well, are not provided the chance to present their research on the fundamental Islamic issues.

3.5.2. Religion and academia

The academic discourse on religion has witnessed various episodes of 'isms' such as Rationalism³⁵⁹, Empiricism,³⁶⁰ Positivism³⁶¹ and ultimately shaped by them. The waves of these philosophies had affected the whole schema of religious research in the West. A

³⁵⁹ It is a philosophical movement of the seventeenth century. In epistemology, rationalism refers to the belief that regards reason as the chief source of knowledge.

³⁶⁰ A theory that regards the sensual experience as the origin of all knowledge.

³⁶¹ Positivism is the view that the only authentic knowledge is scientific knowledge.

due course of this series was the consideration of religion nothing except an amalgamation of myths and superstitions that needs to be reevaluated and reinterpreted.

The very beginning of this matter goes back to the emergence of critical looks towards religion in the reformation period first and to the 19th century when the Bible was first studied with the perspective of historical analysis.³⁶² Not only Christianity, but several other religions and cultures have been evaluated and assessed by the western academy on the ground that religion also needs a scientific and critical study and that the religious matters are not above the scientific research. Yet, the pivotal and focusing point of intellectual research has been Islam.

Regardless of the fact that academic and scientific approach is significant in the study of religion, the point is that the step towards over consciousness and doubtfulness can lead to the denial of the religion itself. Although, the growth of positive philosophy has resulted the denial of transcendent truth, nonetheless no society can relinquish the religion completely. It is also a fact that in postmodern era a remarkable shift has occurred in the study of religion seeking its crucial role in the formation of societies. Many sociologist and religious scholars attempted to define religion with its basic features and essential qualities.

As far as the study of Islam is concerned, the public, as well as academic interest in Islam is increased especially in the first decade of 21st century. It is being studied as a major religion of the world in almost all of the foremost European universities. The situation, according to Richard Martin, was not like that before.³⁶³

The critical study of Islam is a sensitive subject and it has received multiple responses from the Muslim world. In recent era, a known scholar of the field, Andrew Rippin, knowing the reactions and responses, illustrates the point by saying that there is no relevance of insider or outsider approach towards religion in scholarly assessment. He further states that religion is the personal matter for individuals in the modern era and

³⁶²C.S. Adcock. *The Limits of Tolerance: Indian Secularism and the politics of religious freedom* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 67.

³⁶³Martin, *Approaches to Islam in religious studies*, 1

scholarly research can address anything, may it be religion or sacred book. He also believes that the scholarly work should be free from polemics or religious spirit.

According to him, the Qur'ān also falls in the category of the sacred and ancient texts that need critical analysis. It, as well, is not above the scientific research and in a scholarly milieu; the basic assumptions of the Muslims about the Qur'ān can be questioned. According to him, in the modern attitude toward religion, the study of the Qur'ān is totally imbued with the spirit of modernism. Moreover, he admits that the western study of the Qur'ān in the past was initiated with the purpose of defense against enemy. But, in recent times, he believes, it has changed its motives and styles. It is no longer polemic.³⁶⁴

To justify the study of Islam and the Qur'ān, it is argued that in the past the perspectives of theological scholasticism shaped Islamic studies, While, the atmosphere of enlightenment in the eighteenth century onward, has changed the style and set new frameworks for the study of Islam. The centuries old established concepts has been changed now and comparatively a coherent picture of Islam is being established.³⁶⁵

In another article, he expresses his thoughts regarding the recent situation of the western scholarship of the Qur'ān and its reception by Muslim world. He says that there exists a kind of resistance to the western Qur'ānic scholarship among Muslims as contemporary Muslim writings present the case of the western academic scholarship of the Qur'ān as dangerous as Orientalism.³⁶⁶ Moreover, pseudo- academic Islam phobic approaches have given rise to tension in the field of Qur'ānic studies. It also has resulted negative responses to true academic scholarship.

He is of the vision that the polemic approaches totally differ from academic ones as the later deal with Islam from entirely different perspective. It does not challenge the true nature of Islam. But the polemic approaches in the guise of academic scholarship have deceived many and as a result an overall denunciation to the western academic

³⁶⁴See: Rippin, Andrew. "Western scholarship and the Qur'ān". In McAuliffe, Jane Demmen, ed. *The Cambridge Companion to the Qur'ān*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 237- 245

³⁶⁵John Voll, "Changing Western approaches, 29

³⁶⁶AndrewRippin, "The Reception of Euro-American Scholarship on the Qur'an and Tafsīr: An Overview." *Journal of Qur'ānic Studies* 14, no. 1 (2012): 1-18. Accessed January 5, 2015

scholarship can be discerned clearly.³⁶⁷ He interprets the Muslim critical reactions and responses as ‘apologetic modes of response’ and states that this mode may have some basis but it totally misses the balanced academic approaches. Moreover, these approaches can be seen as ‘a part of broader protest against the western scholarship’³⁶⁸

Carl Ernest, while describing the pedagogy of Qur’ānic studies in a classroom, asserts that this should be based on academic rather faith- based policy. All those issues that are considered as sensitive by traditional and contemporary Muslim scholarship should be touched in academic way. In his view by freeing the notions of chronology, inimitability of the Qur’ān and related issues from dogmatic constraints better results can be achieved.³⁶⁹ It is also argued that with the contribution of Muslim scholars in the West, transformation in the study of religion, particularly of the study of Islam, has occurred.³⁷⁰

With this background, the general editor of the EQ also declares that while starting this task, she was frequently asked that whether she feels uneasy or at risk. The reason was, she states, that was sensitive position of the text of the Qur’ān. Yet, the study of a text sacred to millions of Muslims was a complex job. For that reason, she states, only *some* Muslims feel that non-Muslim cannot touch the Qur’ān, to say nothing of reading.³⁷¹ But others, among Muslims, welcome non-Muslim scholarship on the Qur’ān. *Scholarly research, she affirms, can no longer be pinned to religious identity.* Academia is something above from religious attachments. A good scholarship, she states, is flourishing in the field.³⁷²

She further admits that there are scholars who, out of their fears, try to write about the Holy Book in a manner that is not offensive but, simultaneously, there are others who have operated the issue with the supposition that there is no room for these sentiments in the realm of academic discourse. Hence, the pluralities of approaches and methods in the pages of the EQ is a deliberate choice of editor.

³⁶⁷ Rippin, The Reception, 4

³⁶⁸ Rippin, The Reception, 5-7

³⁶⁹ Ernest, Reading strategies. 16-17

³⁷⁰ Voll, Changing approaches, 29

³⁷¹ EQ, Preface, xiii

³⁷² EQ, preface, xiii

The idea that the western academy has the right to conduct researches on Islam and more specifically on the Qur'ān can be acceptable to some extent but, the behavior of belittling the long course of Islamic scholarship only on the basis of premise that their guns are bigger than Muslims is in no way acceptable for the Muslim community.

The tendency to conduct academic research on Islam and the Qur'ān can be fruitful with the condition that it should be purely academic and free from every kind of bias. In doing so, one cannot expect the western scholars to enter the course of Islam. Thus what Muslims expect from the western academia and their passion for academic study of Qur'ān is to conduct the research at least to the extent that fulfills the basic criterion of justice and fairness as pointed out by Cantwell Smith. In his argument about religious studies, he states that the attempt to interpret religion academically must be an attempt to find the position that will do justice both to intellectual coherence and to all observed facts.³⁷³

3.5.3. Objectivity and impartiality

The issue of religious impartiality is attached to the question of religious studies and its scope. Also, the question of objectivity arises when a researcher intend to study a religion or theory diverse from his own. The term emerged in 19th century when the project of the scientific study of religion was framed.

The origin of this field is attributed to Max Muller (d. 1900) who is credited as father of the science of religions.³⁷⁴ He repeatedly introduces the term 'scientific' and 'impartiality' in his works while discussing the religious studies.³⁷⁵ Smith, denotes to the acceptance of this method widely by the western academia stating that it has become quite fashionable in the western Academia to insist that the interpretation of any phenomenon should be 'objective' and 'positive'.³⁷⁶

³⁷³ Willfred Cantwell Smith, *Islam in Modern History* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1957), 8

³⁷⁴ Anis Malik Thoha, "Objectivity and the Scientific Study of Religion" *Intellectual Discourse* 17, no. 1 (2009): 83-92. 83-4

³⁷⁵ Max Muller, *Introduction to the science of religions* (Oxford: Longmans Green and Co, 1882) See for instance: Preface, B, P, L, 4, 69, 128.

³⁷⁶ Smith, *Islam in Modern History*. 7

The new approach of objectivity and scientific could not manage to escape from many critiques that considered it as flawed and impossible. Debates arose in academic circles regarding the plausibility and probability of the idea. Even some scholars considered the idea as a myth and declared that value free study of any object is impossible.³⁷⁷ Yet, there still exists insistence in the West the notion of objectivity with no compromise indication. Briefly, a general idea of objectivity is to be free of bias and be just while describing the beliefs of any other religion.

In the present scenario, the very basic question arises that as far as religious impartiality and objectivity is concerned, whether a non-Muslim faithfully treats these terms. Most of the Muslim scholars and intellectuals opine that except in rare cases, a non-Muslim cannot be just and impartial in his study of the Qur'ān. The, they reason, is preoccupied with centuries old stereotypes images of Islam.

The is taken as serious and sensitive by Muslims since they hold the Holy Qur'ān as sacred and the Actual Word of God and consequently, any activity related to this Text is important in this regard. The claim of scientific study can be true with regard to any religion, as perceived by Muslim scholars, but not in the case of Islam. The establishment of chairs for Islamic studies and Arabic is a source to legitimize for non-Muslims understanding of Islam. On the basis of these facts, they strongly discard non-Muslim scholarship on the Qur'ān.³⁷⁸

A convert Muslim, Jamal Zorbovo, describes his experience of studying Islam from non-Muslim sources by saying that they are forced to praise Islam and the Qur'ān but they always try to find faults in the basis of Islam.³⁷⁹

It is also argued that there is no room for neutral scholarship of the Qur'ān as person's spiritual position defiantly affects his intellect and one's scholarly output is often framed by his commitments. Particularly, in the case of the Qur'ān, it affirms the importance of division between believers and non-believers and to blur the division between believers

³⁷⁷ BulendSenay, "Another Introduction to Islam: The Myth of Value-free Study of Religion." *The American Journal of Islamic Social Sciences* 15, no. 2, 83-92

³⁷⁸ In this regard, the best example can be given of the work of Pervaiz Manzur who very convincingly nullifies the Western scholarship on the Qur'ān.

³⁷⁹The Miraculous Qur'ān (2 of 11): The Qur'ān and Orientalist shttp://www.Islamreligion.com

and non-believers for the purpose of so called objective scholarship is to annul the consequences of belief and disbelief. On the basis of these facts, he invalidates the declaration of the general editor that 'scholarly perspectives can no longer be pinned to religious identifications'.³⁸⁰

A prominent penman, Fazlur Rehman, was of the opinion that non-Muslim should not study the Qur'ān.³⁸¹ In his 'Major Themes of the Qur'ān' he says that most of the western study of the Qur'ān is undertaken to 'prove' the human nature of the Qur'ān and many few have tried to understand content, theme and spirit of the Qur'ān.³⁸² While discussing the Qur'ānic scholarship in the West, he says that those attempts are nothing except uncontrolled and wishful thinking with indifference to the canons of objectivity and scholarship.³⁸³

Concerning the issue of objectivity, he believes that the demand of objectivity from an observer is not legitimate as he cannot have a full share in other's religious experiences. Hence, his view is that it seems more applicable to aspire for intellectual understanding or appreciation. For this also, some conditions can be laid down to be fulfilled in a scholarly work. The most important are the honesty and unbiased perception of object.³⁸⁴

A Muslim intellectual, Murad Hofmann, illustrates towards religious pluralism in the West and asserts that occident has become pluralistic especially after the announcement of Persian king Frederick II in eighteenth century that everybody can enjoy his own way. His advice was heeded but, he states, but the case of Muslims is different. One can be devoted to any religion but better for him not to be a Muslim. In fact, modern pluralism and its limitless tolerance disappear abruptly in the face of Islam.³⁸⁵

³⁸⁰Iqbal, "Western Academia and the Qur'an: Some Enduring Prejudices and the Encyclopaedia of Qur'ān". *The Muslim World Book Review*. 30, no. 1(2009):6-18. 9

³⁸¹ As narrated by Seyyed Hossein Nasr in an interview. "Muslims and Western studies of the Qur'ān: the Qur'ān in the Contemporary World; SeyyedHossein Nasr in Conversation with Muzaffar Iqbal". *Islam and Science*.8, no. 2(2010):111-128

³⁸² Rehman, Major Themes, 6-7

³⁸³Rehman, Fazlur. "Some Recent Books on the Qur'ān by Western Authors". *The Journal of Religion* 64, no. 1 (Jan, 1984.):73-95. 75

³⁸⁴Rehman, Fazlur. "Review Essay", *Approaches to Islam*, 192-193

³⁸⁵ MuradHofmann, "The European mentality and Islam". *Islamic Studies*. 35, no. 1(Spring 1996):87-97

Furthermore, the collective works of Orientalists and polemists have created a kind of resistance and rejection to the western Qur'ānic scholarship as a whole. Indeed, the western intelligentsia is the sole responsible for the blames and assaults from the Muslim world. The Orientalists in the past, out of their bias, have created an atmosphere of uncertainty. In the terms of the western tradition itself, the Orientalists approach was dominant till the first half of the 20th century.³⁸⁶ Those assaults are truly interpreted as 'scholarly injuries' inflicted upon the Muslims by Farid Esack³⁸⁷.

Presently, there are scholars, who seem to compensate for those injuries with their efforts. They have to work hard to take out those roots of detestation and hatred from the western basis. Hence, their struggles should be appreciated by the Muslim world which mostly they do.

A contemporary scholar, Hussain Nasr, expresses his view regarding the issue and says that there had been a specific reason for the Qur'ānic studies in the West and that was not to understand it but to destroy it. But, in recent times, he says, we have many scholars who show a reverence to the Qur'ān and want to read it sincerely for its own beauty and from deep down of their hearts believe that the Qur'ān is the word of God.

It can be expected from them that they will be just to the Qur'ān even without being part of it.³⁸⁸ But, immediately after this statement, he acknowledges that majority of the researchers do not fall in this category.³⁸⁹ In another place, he denotes towards the prejudices of the West against Islam saying that the prejudices that have marred the study of Islam in the West since the time of Peter the Venerable, even earlier, must be overcome if comprehensive understanding is to be achieved. Unluckily, the western scholarship remains distorted due to many old prejudices.³⁹⁰

³⁸⁶ Voll, *Changing approaches*, 31

³⁸⁷ Esack, *Territory*, 58

³⁸⁸ Muslims and Western studies of the Qur'ān: the Qur'ān in the Contemporary World Seyyed Hossein Nasr in Conversation with Muzaffar Iqbal. 2010. *Islam and Science* 8 (2):111-128

³⁸⁹ Nasr, Hossein, *Muslim and Western studies*, 124

³⁹⁰ Nasr, Hossain. "Origins and Development of Islamic Studies in the U.S.: A Historical Overview of Trends and Institutions", *Observing the Observer*, 23

Another Muslim scholar, Mustafa Subai, as well, illustrates towards this reality saying that, no doubt that there are scholars among the westerners who study Islam purely with scholastic objectives but they are quiet few, he admits.³⁹¹

Briefly, in the period of intellectual globalization, the Muslim are supposed to respond towards academic study of the Qur'ān in constructive way and for the sake of intellectual honesty, productive efforts to understand Islam and the spirit of pluralistic approach should be encouraged. In addition, a critical approach to those studies should remain there in order to highlight the slips and pitfalls. Moreover, on the part of the western scholars, it is expected from them to value the essential principles and ethics of the religious researches in this regard. In the words of Iqbal; "What Muslim long for is that at least a basic level of detachment, humility and respect should be observed while treating a sacred book of one fourth of humanity."³⁹²

3.5.4. Language Schema

Another important decision regarding the structure of the EQ is the change of language schema. In her scrutiny of the difficulties faced by English readers in browsing the pages of EI, the editor states that although it has been a norm in reference works to use the transliterated Arabic words, it led towards some difficulties. Especially when English readers consult the EI, they can find difficulty in searching the related word to their research or study. Hence, they are poorly served when they attempt to learn anything. Consequently, the team decided finally to use English language entry words having in view that this would lead towards controversy.³⁹³

True was there concern, as this scheme was indeed assessed and critiqued by the Muslim scholars. The drawback of this scheme is inclusion of irrelevant concepts in the EQ and absence of extremely imperative terms from the compendium. For instance, as viewed by the Muslim intellects, the EQ is claimed to be the encyclopedia of important themes but it

³⁹¹Suba'i, Mustafa. *Al Isteshrāq wa Al Musteshreqūn: Al Maktab al Islāmī*. 30-31

³⁹²Iqbal , The Qur'ān, 26

³⁹³EQ, Preface, x

misses the core concept of the Qur'ān i.e. Tawheed (Oneness of Creator). It has an entry on God but does not on Allah which is central point of the Qur'ān. Thus the entry of some certain concepts is considered extraneous, irrelevant and peripheral.³⁹⁴ The general editor herself admits that this system leads to the lack of accuracy and precision.³⁹⁵

On the other hand, this plan is hoped to be advantageous as well. As far as the general English readers are concerned, translation system has brought a kind of ease to them in using this work. For instance, it would be difficult for a beginner to search for the word Christian if he is unacquainted with the Qur'ānic term 'Nasara' for that. But, he would easily find the entry Christian in the EQ.

Keeping in mind the advantages and disadvantages of both translation and transliteration, it would be better for the editor to combine the either using the English translation for entry with original Qur'ānic word in parenthesis. Nevertheless, the publication of the 6th volumes sufficed the need of the transliterated words.

3.5.5. The EQ sources

Almost every article in the EQ contains a long list of primary and secondary sources. They are of two kinds. The first kind comprises of the classical and contemporary Muslim sources of diverse nature such as exegetical works, Sīra literature, historical accounts etc. This truly seems a step forward towards understanding Islam and its holy book as its adherents do in the light of Islamic sources. Moreover, being an encyclopedia of the Qur'ān it was a need of scholarly work to base the work on the Muslim sources as well. But, it is observed that the usage of various types of scholarly works having divergent nature of weak or authentic has created a kind of confusion and contradictions. Ultimately, this has led the writers, sometimes, to the claim of inconsistencies and discrepancies in Muslim accounts. Moreover, it has directed the authors to use the skeptical words regarding Muslim accounts.³⁹⁶

³⁹⁴ Kidwai, Reference works, 25

³⁹⁵ EQ, Preface, x

³⁹⁶ Iqbal, The Qur'ān, 36-37

It is also noted that there are certain entries that are of very basic nature concerning the Qur'ān but are based entirely on the western sources without a single mention of the Muslim accounts.³⁹⁷

The second category, upon which, the EQ builds its material is the writings of the Orientalists of post- enlightenment era, the fact that is acknowledged by the general editor in her preface. She, while discussing the sources of the EQ says that much of the work of the EQ is founded on those works of the “scientific” studies.³⁹⁸

Despite the fact that a clear demarcation is built between the classical and the post- enlightenment era’s works on the basis of polemical and academic features, some recent writers including either Muslims and non- Muslims resist this view vigorously. They are of the conviction that the recent works are a mere continuation and extensions of the old notions of classical period.³⁹⁹

This is quite true in the sense that one can find illusions towards some of the ideas in various entries. The notion of Judo- Christian influence is a prominent instance for this persistence and with the exception of some entries; majority has given value to the western writes by favoring their views in concluding remarks.⁴⁰⁰ The notable point here is that there are authors who construct their own independent research without any reference to old ideas.

3.6. A general look on EQ material, methodology and sources

1. The articles begin, in majority cases, with a general introduction to the topic, term and concepts with the mention of the number of times it occurs in the Qur'ān followed by establishing its roots. The entries also review the grammatical

³⁹⁷ For instance, the entire entry ‘Book’ describes the meaning of the word Kitāb without any reference to Arabic dictionary.

³⁹⁸ EQ, Preface, vii

³⁹⁹ See for instance views of Norman Denial who frequently mentions this point in his work.

⁴⁰⁰ Take for instance the entry on ‘Last Judgment’. The write has given priority to Western writers in defining the *correct* meaning of Yawm al –Din and determining the real origin of this idea. He says: “M. Gaudefroy was correct when he translated Yawm al-din as “the day when god gives a direction to each human being” and” Gibb is certain that the doctrine of the Last Day was derived from Christian sources. See: vol. 4. 136-144

position of the terminology. Light is thrown on other synonyms of the term in the Qur'ān and related ideas. This style gives a uniformity and consistency to the entire EQ. Moreover, illustrations are made to various places in which the term has been used with an allusion to implication of expression in that context. In most of the entries, we notice that a brief, yet inclusive comprehensive, background is given in order to familiarize the general readers to the notion. Thus, the writers effectively attempted to elaborate the Qur'ānic notions or concepts. The length of the articles varies to great extent. Some articles were given few lines though they were of much importance and required expansion.

2. While defining the meanings, importance is given to classical Muslim writers with the indication of difference of opinion. Views of all sects of Islam are cited in controversial issues. Plenty of space is given to modern Muslim writers as well. In a sense the EQ can be considered a moderate anthology of classical and modern works.
3. There are certain entries that dually fulfilled the demand for a scholarly research. A very comprehensive and thorough examination of the works of classical Muslim and non- Muslim authors along with their biographies is included. Minor details about these works have been mentioned in comparison to other authors. It truly appears that they have exerted pains in data collection and its analysis. Although it has been elaborated that this compendium will focus only on the Qur'ān and not the exegesis, frequent mentions of the great Muslim commentators and their works are located.
4. A very manifest specialty of the EQ is its assertive stance towards modern research of Qur'ān and objectivity. The term 'modern' has been elucidated by dispassionate and non- polemical study of the Qur'ān.⁴⁰¹ Moreover, it is defined as the treatment of the Qur'ān separately from the Muslim tradition.⁴⁰² Majority of the writers are observed fulfilling this very criterion of the modern examination as they mostly attempted to base their independent research separate from the Islamic tradition. The thread of objectivity is scattered throughout the EQ as there

⁴⁰¹ EQ vol, 4. 187.

⁴⁰² EQ, vol, 4. 194

are various writers who have illustrated towards this feature in their research such as Scholler, Rippin, Arkoun and etc.⁴⁰³ The spirit of objectivity is so influential that the scholars such as Noldeke, who is considered precursor of modern study of Qur'ān, could not manage to escape from the critique for his partial acceptance of the Muslim Traditions.⁴⁰⁴

5. A strong writing usually evaluates other alternative and prevailing arguments too with regard to the specific issue. The mention of the opposing arguments in the entries has increased the worth of writings. But, more often a favorable tendency towards opposing opinions to mainstream Islam can be witnessed.
6. An in-depth, thorough and systematic introduction of the history of the Qur'ānic Studies in the West is provided with a blend of appreciative and critical tones in various entries. The detailed evaluation of the works of key western brains is conducted with the mention of their achievements, flaws, and consequences. For instance, in conducting the evaluation of the writings of Noldeke, the writer criticizes him for his view point about the literary style of the Qur'ān which is similar to that of Thomas Carlyle, who considered it a wearisome of confused jumble. In comparison to that, the writer continues, the modern study has considered the beauty of this Book and acknowledged the Qur'ān as highly artful literature.⁴⁰⁵ Many of the writers offer proposals for future studies as well. An overview of the works of Classical and Modern Muslim scholarship are provided alike.
7. There are authors who used piercing phrases and expressions and based their works heavily on the western sources only. Specifically, the entries that raise the slogan of borrowing theme and the uncertainty of Islamic sources announce assertively Islamic notion nothing but a replica of biblical sources and nullify Muslim accounts in totality. Most of the writers tried to find out the origins of the Qur'ānic terminology either in Christianity or Judaism. Some others found out the roots in Zoroastrianism too.⁴⁰⁶

⁴⁰³ EQ, vol, 4. 185, vol, 1.412, respectively.

⁴⁰⁴ EQ, vol, 4. 189

⁴⁰⁵ EQ, vol, 4. 194

⁴⁰⁶ EQ, vol, 3. 456

8. Numerous references can be located around a specific terminology in several areas. For instance if one is interested to accumulate material about the history of the Qur'ānic text, he will find references to the related issues such as multiple readings and codices as well in the very specific entry.
9. As, it is clear that the core of the research was the Qur'ān, the Sacred Book of Muslims, it would be better to consult primarily the Muslim sources. In cases, where they are cited, the core conclusions are based upon the modern western research that indicates that Muslim sources are overlooked. There are entries in which complete negligence of primary Muslim sources e.g. dictionaries and commentaries can be observed.⁴⁰⁷
10. Another shared element of most of the articles is the treatment of the Qur'ānic notions with vague, uncertain and doubtful expressions. One can discover very easily the wording such as 'perhaps', 'it is not clear' 'it is highly probable' 'it's problematic', 'it remains doubtful' and likewise.⁴⁰⁸ It is quite understood that the use of skeptical language put question marks on the competency of the writer and raise doubts concerning his academic experience and skills.

In this regard, a well-known Muslim scholar, while discussing the work of Orientalist s and their works, declares those works as speculative. He further elaborates the point by saying that they base their writings and researches on scrapes, clues, inferences and guesswork that are never satisfactory in academic works.⁴⁰⁹ One cannot initially identify the nature of this skepticism. As it might be a collective choice of the writers to articulate the like expressions or it can be an innate upshot of the milieu in which the western academy has flourished.

In this regard, it seems that most of the writers are amateur in dealing the Muslim history and the Qur'ānic text as they have presented frequently these sources as problematic, complicated, ambiguous and confusing.

In the entry, enjoining good and forbidding bad, the writer states:

⁴⁰⁷ Book , asceticism, Peace

⁴⁰⁸ See for instance; vol, 5. 437, vol, 5. 438, vol, 1. 182, vol, 4. 35, vol, 4, 93, vol, 4. 399, vol, 3. 318, vol, 3. 183/, vol, 4. 399, vol, 4. 409.

⁴⁰⁹Tibavi, English speaking, 19.

*“Just what is intended in the relevant Qur’ānic passages is somewhat unclear...we are not told to whom the commanding and forbidding are to be addressed and there are no further specifications of the right and wrong to which they are related”*⁴¹⁰

The writer of “Illiteracy” finds confusion and uncertainty in the Qur’ān. In his discussion of the plausibility of Prophet’s literacy he insists that this issue cannot be established on historical- biographical and Qur’ānic evidences as they are equivocal and unclear.⁴¹¹ Further, he continues “The core meaning, as well as the *actual etymology of Ummi is problematic*”⁴¹².

While defining the meaning of seven letters (Ahruf), the author after quoting some traditions ending to the Prophet, writes that *we are not sure* that Muhammad ever uttered such a declaration, but what interests us here is the point that these traditions were one way to show the conviction that the Qur’ān contains knowledge of all things.⁴¹³

The last instance of this confusion is manifest in “Religious pluralism”. The writer, after discussing the meaning and the Qur’ānic attitude towards non-believers, says in concluding remarks that the Jews and the Christians have been banned from entering the limits of two sacred cities of Muslims. *But, whether Muhammad intended such a situation is difficult to determine.*⁴¹⁴

11. Classical Muslim scholarship, although have been cited frequently by way of a demand for scholarly writing, has not been given a due status in the sense that in various locales, judgmental remarks are passed regarding traditional Islamic scholarship. It seems that most of the writers have a unanimous approach regarding the role of Muslim exegetes in history. It is declared that the exegetes, out of their desires and longings, have been inventing legends and making laws to reinforce some specific ideas and readings. While discussing the signs of the last

⁴¹⁰ EQ, vol, 5. 436.

⁴¹¹ EQ, vol, 3. 492.

⁴¹² EQ, vol, 3. 493

⁴¹³ EQ, vol, 5. 321.

⁴¹⁴ EQ, vol, 4. 416.

Day, the writer asserts that later Islamic literary genres *added* other signs to the previous ones.⁴¹⁵

Nevertheless, it can be observed that, very frequently, the impression of evolutionary process in Islamic creeds is reinforced. Here is another sample for that development. While discussing the idea of Houris and their connection to Jihad, the writer declares that as early as the first part of second/eighth century, the promise of Paradise virgins was *connected* to the motivation for holy war".⁴¹⁶ Even in the material regarding God, the writer could not refrain from declaring that Prophet Muhammad's vision of god was intertwined with the legends that were *developed* around his nocturnal journey".⁴¹⁷

At another point, Islamic scholarship is considered liable for developing a negative approach towards non-Muslim and the people of the book. The writer updates his readers that the Qur'ān does not show a negative behavior towards the People of the Book. *However, it is the later exegetical literature that has formed the lenses* through which the Qur'ān is viewed. In the exegetical literature, according to him, the Muslims encouraged reading of the Qur'ān that can support an antagonistic attitudes towards people of the Book and non-Muslims.⁴¹⁸

The writer of "illiteracy" confirms the same image of the Muslim scholarship and declares that the traditional interpretation of Ummi focuses simply on illiteracy. Rather, this interpretation reflects a *post-Qur'ānic approach* that seems to have evolved in some circles of the Muslim learning not before the first half of the second/eighth century and that has been further shaped under the influence of the Muslim apologists.⁴¹⁹

12. In many articles, Islamic notions are presented as a product of a gradual development either in Prophet's mind or after him. The role of later generations, particularly exegetes, has been determined in this regard as well. This thought is

⁴¹⁵EQ, vol. 4. 138.

⁴¹⁶EQ, vol. 3. 457.

⁴¹⁷EQ, vol. 3. 324.

⁴¹⁸EQ, vol. 4. 416.

⁴¹⁹ EQ, vol. 3. 499.

not new as many Orientalists and Islamists have dealt Islamic concepts with this approach.

In the course of his discussion regarding the notion of God, the writer Isaac Hasson has presented the Prophet as mastermind of the idea in ascribing the title Abdullah to God. He also considers the idea as a gradual product of his mind. The writer says:

“The explicit message of god’s oneness, the core of Islamic monotheism, however, increasingly became the focus as the Qur’anic proclamation progressed throughout Muhammad’s Prophetic career”.⁴²⁰

In another place the same is reiterated. The belief in the last Day of Judgment and its characteristics are considered a production of evolutionary process in Prophet Muhammad’s mind. It is assumed that Prophet, at the beginning of his career tried to convince the audience by the idea of resurrection and later by considering their reactions he added the idea of the Day of Judgment. The ideas of French Orientalists Paul Casanova regarding the abundance of Qur’anic references to the Last Day and its impact on the Prophet⁴²¹ are not only narrated but given an important position without mentioning the fact that Casanova’s ideas were rejected even by his own contemporaries.⁴²²

13. The western academia, from modern times till now, has established a consensus upon some basic notions regarding Islam. A complete harmony and unanimity in academic works regarding some very core issues of Islam can be perceived. Those issues are the authorship of the Qur’ān, probability of Islamic sources, compilation of the Qur’ān etc. The EQ, as declared by academia, is an academic

⁴²⁰ EQ, vol. 3. 328.

⁴²¹ Casanova is famous for his views of the last Day of Judgment that he presented in his work under the title “ *Mohammed et la fin du monde* (Paris, 1911-24). He was of the opinion that there is abundance of Qur’ānic material regarding the Last Day. The plenty of references to this theme had led the Prophet to conclude the close end of this world. He announced that the Last Hour will come in his life, but, when his death falsified his prophecy, his followers added some material according to which his mortality could be proven. For this reason of close end of world, Prophet did not appoint a successor. See: Hurgronje, C. Snouck. 1937. Mohammedanism: Lectures on Its Origin, Its Religious and Political Growth and Its Present State (New York: G.P. Putnam's sons)<http://answering-Islam.org/Books/Hurgronje/hurgronje1.htm>. 4-5

⁴²² Bell, Introduction. 46-7, 136/4

and independent work. But, by its heavy dependency on the western sources in deriving the conclusions, it could not prove itself to be a breakthrough in the Western scholarship of the Qur'ān. Numerous reflections of following the stereotypes can be traced with favorable considerations.

14. As mentioned earlier, efforts are made towards building the academic approach and style. It seems that there is a great concern for Muslim's sensitivity towards their Holy Book but simultaneously, in many entries, this principle is overlooked by the usage of piercing phrases. The same can be observed in the narration of the remarks of earlier writers in their polemic treatises without any disapproval. For instance, the writer says that John of Damascus presents the marriage of the Prophet with Zainab b. Haritha as an example of Prophet's *simmoral personality*.⁴²³ Many others, he continues, have based their opinion on this argument to prove *Muhammad's adulterous*⁴²⁴ behavior in the similar way.

In the same entry, after mentioning the arguments of the Christian Dominican Ricoldo about the unauthentic nature of Qur'ān, the author declares his work as systematic and classic. The academic or detached style demands both criticism and approval which is lacking in this entry.

In some entries, an independent research is conducted without the mention of the earlier western works. For instance, in the article "Alexander"⁴²⁵ even a slightest indication towards Noldeke's view is missing who was of the conviction that the Prophet Muhammad must have heard this story along with other biblical material as they were famous in Makkah.⁴²⁶

3.7. The EQ stance on fundamental Qur'ānic issues

This section means to present a general and overall stance of EQ for the basic creeds of Islam. For this purpose, some of the entries are selected for a close examination.

⁴²³ EQ, vol. 5.

⁴²⁴ EQ, vol. 5.

⁴²⁵ EQ, vol. 1. 61-2.

⁴²⁶ Kevin Bladel, "The Alexander legend in the Qur'ān", *The Qur'an in its historical context* He also has critiqued the recent works for neglecting Noldeke's theory and specifically, he criticizes the entry in the EQ for this reason as, in his view, there was no more appropriate place for the mention of Noldeke's view than the EQ. 175

3.7.1. Foreign origin of Islam

With reference to the sources of Islam, the western scholars are unanimous upon the foreign origin of Islam. From the time of John of Damascus in East, who did not consider Islam except a heretical sect of Christianity, to the modern times of Noldeke, nearly all of the leading experts of the field have discussed the issue in their works and tried to trace out the origin of Islam.⁴²⁷

The Muslim scholars are of the opinion that this is very basic issue upon which the western writers tend to create ill- feelings among the Muslims and hence become an obstacle in the way of intellectual traffic between the two sides.⁴²⁸

A centuries old idea about the origin of Islam, attributed to the Peter The Venerable in is as follows:

“Satan gave success to evil and sent the monk Sergius, who had been expelled from the church because of his heresy, across the regions of Arabia to join the false Prophet. So he joined Muhammad and filled him with what he acquired from the sacred scriptures, the Old and New Testaments”.⁴²⁹ It further says:

*“Muhammad was instructed by the best Jewish and heretical doctors. By this, he was able to produce the Qur’ān”.*⁴³⁰

This view has always worked as the foundations upon which the entire building of the western works, polemic and academic along, is established.

As far as the EQ is concerned, the idea of foreign origin of the Qur’ān is reiterated in numerous articles. In this regard, skeptical language is used in various place and

⁴²⁷ For detail see the works of; Weil, Gustav. “An Introduction to the Qur’ān”. *The Biblical World* 5, no. 3(Mar 1895.):181-191, Jeffery, Arthur. *The Koran: Selected Surahs* (New York: The Limited Edition Club, 1958) Bell, Richard. *The origin of Islam*.

Cragg, Kenneth. *The Call of the Minaret*. Oxford: One World, 2000.

⁴²⁸ Tibavi A. L. “English Speaking Orientalists”. *The Muslim World*. L, no. 111(1963.):185-204. 193

⁴²⁹ James Kritzeck, Peter the Venerable and Islam. New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1964. 131.

⁴³⁰ Kritzeck, Peter, 132.

illustrations are made to multiple origins. Discussing the very basic element of Islam, the Testimony, the writer represents the testimony as the replica of Biblical sources;

“This formula can be traced back indirectly-via a *supposed* Jewish-Arabic version of Aramaic translations- to Deuteronomy ⁴³¹ creedal prayer....” (Witnessing and Testifying)⁴³² In this paragraph the italicized word can itself be a good proof for weakness of argument.

In another point the same is repeated. The writer has very compellingly made an attempt to declare the night worship of Prophet as an echo of the Christian teachings without convincing arguments. He declares twice that the Muhammad’s night prayers and the notion of prayer mark on the faces of the believers is the echo of the Eastern Christian teachings. Though, He himself acknowledges the weakness of the claim and states’ *it is not clear* that how all of this influenced the Qur’ānic material.⁴³³

In the same article, the writer, while discussing aspects of asceticism, articulates that in the case of weeping it has been pointed out that *there is clear evidence of historical continuity between the two traditions, from Coptic and Syrian monks to the ‘weepers’ of early Islam.*⁴³⁴ Though, here too, the dearth of evidence is quite visible as the author did not mention the means of communication between Syraic monks and the early Muslims.

Allusions are made to other possible origins too but it seems that majority of the writers have unanimous attitude in favoring the Christian origin. In the entry “Houris”, the writer refers to multiple opinions regarding the origin and elaborates that scholars have proposed Zoroastrian, Syriac, Aramaic and Pahlavi origins for both the word and the idea.⁴³⁵

⁴³¹The fifth book of the Pentateuch, containing a second statement of the Mosaic law.

⁴³² EQ, vol. 5. 500.

⁴³³ EQ, vol. 1. 182

⁴³⁴ EQ, vol. 1. 183

⁴³⁵ EQ, vol. 3. 456

3.7.2. Oneness of Allah

The very central foundations of Islam is the concept of Tawheed (Oneness of Allah) upon which the entire structure of worship and rituals is based. The foremost point related to this issue is that there is no entry under the original title Allah. Instead, the name is translated into ‘God’ that does not perfectly offer the actual meaning. The article is written by Gerhard Bowring, one of the important members of advisory board of the EQ.

Some of important highlights of this entry are as follows:

The writer, throughout the article, presents the Prophet Muhammad (S) as the author of the Qur’ān who has infused this basic concept into the Qur’ān with the basic title ‘Allah’. Some specifics may elaborate the point;

*“From his youth, Muhammad was intimately familiar with this name for the supreme God since his father’s name was Abdullah, “servant of Allah”. It seemed more natural to him, therefore, to employ the word Allah for god in his Qur’ānic proclamation, rather than to introduce a new name for his monotheistic concept of god”.*⁴³⁶

He continues while saying: “in keeping with Muhammad’s insistence upon a strictly monotheistic understanding of Allah, God is called in the Qur’ān “The One”.⁴³⁷

He further states that the Divine names in the Qur’ān give expression to Muhammad’s rich and multi-faceted perception of that ultimate reality which he personally experienced as the Only God. This experience filled him with awe before the transcendent God, who could not be known in his very self, yet could be glorified by his names. The overpowering transcendence and intimate immanence of Allah in Muhammad’s religious experience was transformed in his Qur’ānic proclamation into the praise of the most beautiful names.⁴³⁸

While discussing the possibility of Aramaic origin of the word Allah and Rehmān, he articulates that these words may have been the names of God given by two groups of pre-

⁴³⁶ EQ, vol. 3. 317

⁴³⁷ EQ, vol. 3. 320

⁴³⁸ EQ, vol. 3. 222

Islamic believers, Alaha in Hijaz and Reḥmanān in Yemen. Muhammad, acquainted with these two names has fused the two in introductory formula of the Qur'ān.⁴³⁹

Thus the writer struggles through these passages to describe the concept as the result of Prophet Muhammad's religious experience in which he himself has been enjoying the status of the authorship of the Qur'ān. The idea does not possess any novelty as many of the western writers have described the revelations as the result of his personal mysterious experiences and involvements. One of the major proponents of this idea are Watt and Bell.⁴⁴⁰ It seems that the writer is influenced strongly by this view and consequently he has imparted the idea in this article.

While describing the very principal concern of Islam, he did not refer to any Muslim account except the Sīra of Ibn e Ishaq. Instead, the western sources from classical to recent times are his central springs.

In addition, the concept of borrowing and the foreign origin frequently appears in this article. While talking about the word Allah, he declares that majority of the scholars express skepticism regarding the Aramaic origin of the Qur'ān. But, it must remain doubtful that some secondary form of Syriac or Hebrew influence may have been combined with the primary usage of Allah.

The writer has been using the doubtful expressions repeatedly in his article. It would have been better if any polished and skilled scholar would have dealt with this entry. While defining the variance between the two names Reḥmān and Rahīm, the writer states that that as the either words have been derived from the same roots, Arabic grammar could not decide the difference between the two.⁴⁴¹ The point shows his ignorance, conscious or unconscious, of long tradition of Islamic scholarship about the meaning and difference of the two names.⁴⁴²

⁴³⁹ EQ, vol. 3. 318

⁴⁴⁰ Bell, Introduction, 21-22.

⁴⁴¹ EQ, vol. 3. 318

⁴⁴² See for example the

3.7.3. Image of Prophet

In the history of the western scholarship of Islam, the Prophet of Islam has been the center of European scholarship. The classical authors, dominant with their polemic agendas, constantly presented him in the form of a warrior and imposter. The early work of Humphrey Prideaux (d.1697) is a noticeable example of this tone, which frequently used the terms ‘impostor’ and ‘atheist’.⁴⁴³

Even the works that appreciate Islam as a civilization treated the figure of the Prophet Muhammad with harsh and exaggerated wordings as a result of the persistent misrepresentation of Islam.⁴⁴⁴ However, with the passage of time, some of the western writers began to write about him in quite a scholarly and sympathetic tone with an access to the original sources such as Thomas Carlyle, Karen Armstrong and many others.

The belief in the Prophethood of Muhammad is the core creed of Islam and attached with the belief in Tawheed in the first Testimony (Kalima Tayyaba). In addition, the faith in him as a Seal of the Prophets is second essential element of that Testimony. As far as the EQ is concerned, a multiple demonstration of his characteristics can be observed. His mention, direct or indirect, can be found in numerous entries.

For instance, in the entry ‘Muhammad’ the writer has introduced selected descriptive data from both the Muslim and non- Muslim writings with a well balanced approach. Nonetheless, in his concluding remarks, following the old approach concerning the issue of literacy of the Prophet, he affirms that perhaps this idea has been generated to refuse the charge of plagiarism.⁴⁴⁵

On the other hand, in another entry ‘informants’, it is attempted to trace out some folks who have been providing knowledge to Prophet. The writer of this entry, Claude Gilliot, is a well-versed scholar and one of the significant members of the advisory board of the EQ. However, it can be detected very easily that he very frequently establishes his

⁴⁴³P.M.Holt. *Studies in the history of Near East* (London: Frank Cass), 3

⁴⁴⁴Galen Johnson, “Muhammad and ideology in medieval Christian literature”. *Islam and Christen – Muslims relations* 11, no. 3(2003):1

⁴⁴⁵ EQ, vol. 4. 451

arguments on guesswork. The Qur'anic verses that are quoted to support the idea of borrowing, itself indicate to the negation of the claim. The writer has mentioned many narratives regarding the issue of informants of which some are of weak origins.⁴⁴⁶ The writer also assumes that these narratives with their apologetic features are connected to 'supposed' Occasions of Revelation developed by Islamic tradition. While elaborating the issue he writes that these accounts were used in apologetic view in the sense that the same Addās who is reported to teach Muhammad recognized him (according to the Muslim tradition) as a Prophet.⁴⁴⁷

He further asserts that as the Qur'anic mention of the informants does not place Muhammad in favorable position; *there is no reason to think that the exegetes have invented everything regarding these stories.*⁴⁴⁸

Concerning the Prophet's contacts with slaves, he maintains that *there is no reason to doubt that Muhammad could have spoken with slaves and he may have had contacts with the people outside his milieu and he may have received information from these 'down-trodden' who would have been more willing to talk to him than with the elites.*⁴⁴⁹

He finally concludes that on the bases of these narrations, the possibility that the whole section of the Maccan chapters could contain elements originally established by a group of deprived who possessed either biblical or post- biblical information cannot be excluded. He does not satisfy with this and adds that people like Waraqa ibn Nowfal and Khadija may have also participated in this common enterprise.⁴⁵⁰

In another article, *Sīra and the Qur'ān*, the mention of the Prophet Muhammad can be located. The writer inaugurates his article by defining the term *Sīra* with biblical terms and says that the *Sīra* literature is devoted to the earliest salvation history of Islam. He further defines the linguistic meanings and mentions accordingly, its occurrences in the Qur'ān.

⁴⁴⁶ They are weak as they have been narrated by Muqatil bin Sulaman and al-Saib al-Kalbi. Muslim scholars of sciences of Rijal have declared these two as weak and unreliable.

⁴⁴⁷ EQ, vol. 2. 513

⁴⁴⁸ EQ, vol. 2. 516

⁴⁴⁹ EQ, vol. 2. 516

⁴⁵⁰ EQ, vol. 2. 517

After pointing to the important sources of *Sīra*, the writer states that the large part of *Sīra* has been originated in reaction to the Bible as some scholars have pointed out that the Bible and the literature around it were the first scriptural influence in more *Sīra* passages that have been realized before.

Here again, the charge goes against Islamic scholarship as writer states that as *Sīra* compilers were increasingly embarrassed by the original background of their material, they removed or replaced the Biblical references by the Qur'ānic ones.⁴⁵¹

Explaining the Biblical influences on *Sīra*, the writer indicates towards other genres of *Sīra* that may have been influence of the Bible. For instance, in *Maghāzī* genre he shows how the narratives concerning the event of Badr were influenced by biblical events. Hence, as a whole, *Sīra* literature is not more than a replica of the Bible in his view.⁴⁵²

While concluding his essay, the writer mentions the attitude of Orientalists towards *Sīra* and early sources of Islam. He declares that the early Orientalists were quite naïve in dealing with this genre as they trusted early Islamic sources by admitting as “it had really been”. He finally appreciates the critical approaches towards Islamic history saying that these methods are in real sense up-to-date research methods.⁴⁵³

In sum, there are several articles that speculate the status of *Hadīth* and do not show confidence in Islamic accounts by just describing them confusing or problematic. One last example for this stance is the entry ‘asceticism, in which the author says that in evaluating extra Qur'ānic material, one have to face the problem of the authenticity, historicity and reliability of *Hadīth*.⁴⁵⁴

3.7.4. Key terms of worship

Frequent mentions of the various forms of worship frequently can be located in the Qur'ān especially *Ṣalāh* (Prayer), *Ṣawn* (Fasting), *Hajj* etc. Although, efforts are made

⁴⁵¹ EQ, vol. 5. 35

⁴⁵² EQ, vol. 3. 45

⁴⁵³ EQ, vol. 3. 49

⁴⁵⁴ EQ, vol. 1. 181

towards a fair study of these concepts in some entries, however, a quick review of these concepts in the EQ reveals a blend of confusing remarks.

The entry about fasting is one fine illustration to that perplexity. This article begins with this basic feature as he expresses his views in the following words: "*the question of the origin of the fast of Ramadan is complicated and conclusive evidence is scarce*". He then tries to locate its origin in Judaism and says that the fast of Ramadan has its roots in Judaic penitential fasting but the point of difference is that in the Qur'ān it is associated with gratitude.⁴⁵⁵

He continuously articulates the same uncertainty as, explaining the second phase of fasting, states that the rule to simply redeem fast by paying ransom betrays the same *uncertainty* that accompanied the rule of the change of the Qibla.⁴⁵⁶

Describing the notion of I'tekaf and Laila tul Qadr, he affirms that there are many arguments that very insistently locate these two in the month of Rajab instead Ramadan as Rajab, unlike Ramadan, was the month of the worships and sacrifices. The author has, very manifestly, contradicted the Muslim tradition in locating the two in Rajab basing his claim on a probable argument.⁴⁵⁷

In his concluding remarks, he connects the month of fasting with the earlier religions and declares that the extension of fasting from ten days to one month must be seen against the background of the popularity of fasting by the Jews and the Christians.⁴⁵⁸

3.8. A general depiction of Qur'ānic sciences

The image of Qur'ānic studies

The articles on the issue of Qur'ānic sciences can be split into two categories.

With regard to the Qur'ānic studies in the West, two entries are dedicated to the issue.

⁴⁵⁵ EQ, vol. 1. 183

⁴⁵⁶ EQ, vol. 1. 182

⁴⁵⁷ EQ, vol. 1. 183

⁴⁵⁸ EQ, vol. 1. 184

1. Pre-1800 preoccupations of Qur'ānic studies
2. Post- enlightenment academic studies of Qur'ān in the West

The first article deals with the state of Qur'ānic studies in the West before enlightenment period. The fact, that Qur'ānic Studies has been the object of intense research and inquiry from centuries in the West is recognized by the author. He also confirms that in the history of this study, polemical debates have received most attention. However, he carries on; looking at the sensitivity of the Muslim attachment with this book, the Arab Christians and Jewish authors had to be in the confinements of expressions. According the author, in the modern times, (approximately from 1500- 1800) this research was directed by academic and scientific motives as a result of easy access to Islamic historical sources and the development of Arabic philology.⁴⁵⁹ He subsequently introduces the Christian writers and their works in Arabic, Greek, Latin and then English. Key figures, in the history of the Christian polemics, are introduced with a precise survey of their treatises. He acknowledges the influence of the Eastern Christian polemics upon the western works especially those by John of Damascus.⁴⁶⁰

He furthermore narrates the themes of those works and describes that those authors held the view that the Qur'ān is inferior to early scriptures as it was compiled from Jewish sources.⁴⁶¹ The writer briefly introduces some of the vital works of the seventeenth and forthcoming century.

The second article in this category comes under the heading of Post- enlightenment academic study of Qur'ān. The splitting up of the western study of the Qur'ān under the caption of pre -1800 and post- enlightenment shows that post- enlightenment studies are considered academic, scientific and dispassionate in the light of the EQ, the fact that is explained by the author of this entry as he follows Rippin's description⁴⁶² and defines the term 'academic' as a critical, dispassionate and non- polemical research, unconstrained

⁴⁵⁹ EQ, vol. 4. 235

⁴⁶⁰ EQ, vol. 4. 238

⁴⁶¹ EQ, vol. 4. 238

⁴⁶² Rippin, *Western scholarship*, 239

by ecclesiastical institutional priorities".⁴⁶³ Moreover, he defines the term academic as the study that will be separated from the Islamic tradition.⁴⁶⁴

It is quite worth mentioning that modern and post- modern scholars distinguish their research with the characteristics of 'academic' and 'dispassionate' from polemics. Moreover, to be academic is often defined to be far from Islamic tradition. Hence, it denotes the fact that the modern western studies do not recognize the reliability of the Muslim historical accounts in establishing the facts. On contrast, it means that any study that weighs the Islamic tradition for the constructions of the scientific facts will automatically lose the feature of being academic.

In this article, the writer has offered a well- balanced survey of the development of Qur'ānic studies as an academic discipline and the facets of the western research in this regard. Likewise, he has presented the positive, as well as, negative aspects of the western works with a proposal for further studies.

He also does justice when he confirms that the modern efforts to rearrange the Qur'ānic contents were not very convincing. While summing up the efforts of 19th century, he asserts that these efforts have been based on philological interests, a point on which Muslim scholars disagree.⁴⁶⁵

Another article that lies under the category of academic studies of the Qur'ān is "contemporary critical practices and the Qur'ān" by the pen of Muhammad Arkoun, a well- known yet controversial Muslim intellectual.

In his article, he deals with the recent critical approaches of Qur'ānic studies in the West. In his work, he presents a procedure that should be followed by a reflective researcher in his exploration of the Qur'ān. As aforementioned that he is often criticized by scholars for his usage of highly philosophical terminologies, here too, these terms appear in abundance. He is of the view that it is people and tradition which has elevated the religion to the status of sacred and untouched. He argues that the religious scholars, out

⁴⁶³ EQ, vol. 4. 190

⁴⁶⁴ EQ, vol. 4. 190

⁴⁶⁵ Mostly, the Muslim scholars view that the endeavors of rearrangement of the Qur'ān on behalf of the Western intellectuals were based on the polemical motives. reference?

of their monopoly, has made the dogmatic research unlawful and ultimately this approach has created mysteries and myths in religion that should be investigated by reason.

Moreover, he argues that the Qur'ānic study in the Muslim world, as well as in the West, was conducted with some specific contexts. In the Muslim world, it has been serving the interests of Ulama and state who claim to be the administrator of orthodoxy.⁴⁶⁶

He stresses over the need to question all those basic assumptions that relate with the Truth. In the case of the Qur'ānic studies too, the reason, he thinks, should be given a capacity much enough to decipher the mysteries that are produced in it. Hence, it is important to liberate the problematic of the Qur'ān from its isolation of untouched.⁴⁶⁷

He presents the discipline of Qur'ānic studies in a way that needs to be explored according to the scientific methods.⁴⁶⁸

Furthermore, he argues that the Qur'ānic studies as a discipline is reserved for some specific powers to explore. Common people were kept away from any inquiry in this field.⁴⁶⁹ He also declares that orthodoxy has laid some taboos on Qur'ānic studies.⁴⁷⁰ This behavior of imposing limitations and prohibitions will push Qur'ānic studies towards backwardness and dependency.⁴⁷¹ The article, in general, shows a repulse towards traditional religious works. On contrary, it inculcates the need to explore the discipline of Qur'ānic studies with the help of scientific tools.

Moreover, the traces of various misconceptions or, better called, stereotypes are found in the EQ concerning the various issues of Qur'ānic sciences.

The very evident thread that can be found in numerous entries is the alleged fabrication of the Islamic historical reports. In the genre of Qur'ānic sciences, one astonishes on plenty of such proclamations as majority of the writers have given the impression that the

⁴⁶⁶ EQ, vol. 1. 413

⁴⁶⁷ EQ, vol. 1. 414

⁴⁶⁸ EQ, vol. 1. 415

⁴⁶⁹ EQ, vol. 1. 416

⁴⁷⁰ EQ, vol. 1. 420

⁴⁷¹ EQ, vol. 1. 428

accounts related to this genre are originated by the later Muslim scholarship. Following are some of the instances;

The entire entry ‘Hadith and the Qur’ān’ is occupied with such statements. The author G.H.A. Joynboll believes that Islamic accounts are nothing except forgery. Discussing the hijab verses and their occasion of revelation, the author states; “Muqātil b. Sulaimān may have a hand in the proliferation of an early background story..... we may tentatively infer that the story originated during his Muqātil lifetime, if we do not want to attribute it to him directly”.⁴⁷²

While talking about the Tafsir traditions attributed to Ibn ‘Abbās, the same author express his views that these are mostly late originated. Besides, these traditions were indeed the sayings or opinions of Ibn ‘Abbās disciples such as ‘Ikrama and Hasan al Baṣrī that later turn up Ibn ‘Abbās traditions..... Traditions that sing Ibn ‘Abbās praises, i.e. so-called Faḍā’il traditions, meant to corroborate his supposed expertise, are likewise relatively late and cannot be dated more precisely than to a time in the second half of the second/ eighth century at the earliest”.⁴⁷³

Moreover, one can trace some minor misconceptions in the material on the issue of Qur’ānic sciences. In the entry ‘The traditional discipline of Qur’ānic studies’, the author while mentioning the work of Saeed al Hūfi states on the authority of Zurqānī that Al Hūfi has originally named his book ‘Al Buhān fī ‘Uloom il Qur’ān’.⁴⁷⁴ The fact is that one cannot trace such statement in Manāhil ul ‘Irfān. Zurqānī has mistakenly mentioned it with this title but he did not pass such statement. The original title of this work is Al Burhān fī Tafsīr ul Qur’ān as mentioned in Kashf al Zunūn.⁴⁷⁵

3.9. Conclusion

The project of encyclopaedia of the Qur’ān was initiated with the desire of producing a collaborative work of both the Muslims and non- Muslims. In order to produce a

⁴⁷² EQ, vol. 1. 392

⁴⁷³ EQ, vol. 1. 389

⁴⁷⁴ EQ, vol. 5. 325

⁴⁷⁵ Hājī Khalīfa, vol. 1. 241.

cohesive work, some of the essential features were set to incorporate in the pages of this compendium. The most important among them are ‘plurality of perspectives’, ‘academic’ and ‘rigorous’. As far as the presentation of the topic in academic style is concerned, a close scrutiny demonstrates that writers successfully arranged their material and presented their works basing on a variety of sources. As far as the establishments of the conclusions is concerned, there is no doubt that the findings of the western intellectuals are given precedence.⁴⁷⁶

In addition, according to the statistical survey of the indices, the Muslim contribution does not appear to be an outstanding feature of the EQ in comparison to the non- Muslim involvement. Besides, it does not stand in conformation to the slogan of the general editor that hundreds of Muslim scholars have participated in the formation of this work.

Moreover, the recourse to the Muslim sources is also a positive step. However, the claim of drawing the Qur’ānic research on the rich Muslim intellectual legacy stands in stark contrast as it is limited to the mere mention of the Muslim opinions in many articles. In numerous entries, the Muslim historical sources are interpreted as problematic and uncertain and therefore the conclusions are based on western views.

To position the Muslim scholars in a hierachal state seems to be the continuation of the previous ideas with the stance that the Muslim scholarship always worked for some specific interests and had read the texts in that scenario.⁴⁷⁷ In this way, a sign of disapproval for the classical Muslim scholars can be very manifestly observed on the behalf of the managing team.

In the discourses of the EQ, an echo of the necessity of re-reading of the Qur’ān with the reinforcement of freedom and liberty in dogmatic premises can be heard. Hence, a need to re-reading of the text is quite essential according to the EQ. In this regard, the majority of the writers show a convivial stance for fresh approaches in the reinterpretation of the Qur’ān. In this regard, the EQ reinforces modern stance towards reinterpretation of the

⁴⁷⁶ There are numerous entries that establish its research or findings on Western views. However one can trace this attitude in the following pages; 200/1, 204/1, 207/1, 4/136.

⁴⁷⁷ See for instance the works of Kenneth Crag, John Burton and many others who held the similar views about Muslim scholarship.

Qur'ān that believes the text as dynamic rather static. Hence, it is believed that it should be reformed and meanings should be reconstructed by the community that deals with it. In addition, it is supposed that humans, in each era, have responded to this text in a way that accorded that period. Likewise, this is true for recent day scholar who should not confuse scholarly activities with religious dogmas.⁴⁷⁸

The discipline of Qur'ānic studies is presented as static and taboo subject that needs a great deal of reformation. The field is declared to be occupied by some particular authorities who, out of their desire of control, do not allow others to reinterpret the Qur'ān. Therefore, according to the EQ, the discipline of Qur'ānic studies cannot flourish unless it frees itself from the constraints of traditional approaches and styles.

⁴⁷⁸ Rippin, Western scholarship, 246

4. Encyclopaedia of the Qur'ān on history of the Qur'ān

4.1. Introduction

It has been mentioned previously in the introduction that the EQ encompasses entries that are either related to the Qur'ānic terms in the sense that they are mentioned in the text or the terminologies having close association with Qur'ānic sciences.

The third and fourth chapters aim to focus on the discourse of the Qur'ānic sciences in the EQ. In the total number of 694 entries, the articles associated with the Qur'ānic sciences are approximately thirty-six.⁴⁷⁹ Except three, all of these essential articles have been contributed by non- Muslim scholars, thus making ninety-two percent of the overall contribution. Furthermore, essentially significant entries such as revelation, collection and chronology of the Qur'ān are predominantly written by the non- Muslims.

In these chapters, an attempt is made to take up the aspects of Qur'ānic sciences that revolve around the basic theme of the history of text of the Qur'ān and text of the Qur'ān itself.

It is a well- established fact that in the sciences of the Qur'ān, many major themes are integrated and interlinked. While analyzing one theme, a researcher needs to possess thorough acquaintance with the related ideas as well. For instance, in the discourse of collection of the Qur'ān, some other matters such as revelation and abrogation cannot be overlooked. Consequently, one finds an indication or introduction of related themes in the discussion of 'abrogation' or 'revelation' in EQ.

To examine a subject, the articles which are directly related to the topic are reviewed first. Similarly, the works that dealt with the theme as a result of its correspondence with them are assessed too. In doing so, the number of entries varies depending upon the nature of the issue.

⁴⁷⁹There are numerous other entries that deal indirectly with Qur'ānic sciences and within its contents.

It is stated in the research question that the study aims to examine the level of the Muslim contribution in EQ and more specifically in the discussions of the fundamental and essential concerns of Qur'ānic sciences.

It also examines the point that how far the perspectives of the Sunnite point of view are incorporated in this research. For this purpose, it is indispensable to have a quick look on some notable theories in this regard. Therefore, in the present chapter, each section incorporates the established position of the Muslim scholarship proceeded by an analysis of the western overview. Consequently, the chapters present a summary of EQ entries related to the matter endeavoring to cover the key points. Finally, a critical examination is made to highlight the major characteristics of the work.

In this section, the critical methodology is mainly followed to evaluate the EQ essays in thematic order. To assess the data critically, some of the fundamental principles and rules, drawn from the science of critical thinking,⁴⁸⁰ are observed.

In addition, the material is to be assessed in the light of the features described by the general editor in her preface. A few significant terms were introduced by the editor in this regard. The EQ was declared as possessing the scholarly characteristics such as 'plurality of perspectives', 'rigorous' and 'objectivity'⁴⁸¹. In the analyses, attempt is made to observe the existence of these basic elements in the data.

4.2. History of the Qur'ān

4.2.1. The Muslim stance on history of the Qur'ānic text

The history of the text covers a range of subjects such as the origin, process of compilation, multiple readings and codices of Companions. The third chapter is meant to underline the issue of the collection of the Qur'ān that has been the focal point of the western examination due to its vitality and significance. To elaborate the point, the collection or preservation of the text is considered as core question due to the fact that all

⁴⁸⁰ In the process of critical thinking a person analyzes, evaluates data and applies the rules of creative thought to form an argument or solve a problem or reach a conclusion. <http://edglossary.org/critical-thinking/>

⁴⁸¹ EQ, vol. 1. Preface, xi- xii

other matters subordinate to it. Hence, hardly ever one finds a western treatise on Qur'ānic sciences devoid of the reference to this theme. The works of Noldeke, Bell, Blachere and Wansbrough are some of the fine examples in this regard.

The theme of history of the Qur'ānic text is of great magnitude for the Muslim and non-Muslim scholars. The modern western scholars have treated the matter of compilation with critical historical approaches as for them the Qur'ān is a source of historical information. To be more specific, the method of source criticism with its sub questions was employed in the research of Qur'ānic origin, authenticity and compilation history. In this regard, the issue of collection of the Qur'ān is fundamental in assessing the authorship and date of compilation of the Qur'ān. Besides, the western scholarship has delved in the matter of discussing some essential points of redaction criticism. However, prior to discussion of the western stance on the matter at question, it is appropriate to first present the summary of the Muslim point of view.

The Qur'ān was revealed piecemeal in the time period of almost twenty three years. The most powerful and sound proof is the text itself. There are ayahs that clearly state that it has been sent to the Prophet gradually. For instance, in response of the objection of disbelievers, it is declared;

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 gradually, in stages.⁴⁸²

Since it was not revealed in one go, its preservation in one compiled form was unattainable. There arises, thus, the question that how the segregated content was put together. Moreover, whether existing Qur'ān represents the same text and what was the procedure for the preservation of Qur'ānic text. The Muslim traditions report all these issues. Here, only the essential details of the traditional Sunnite view are outlined.

The word that is used for the entire course of the preservation of the Qur'ān is Jam' that stands for collection, assemblage and gathering.⁴⁸³ In Qur'ānic Sciences, this term refers

⁴⁸² 25: 32

⁴⁸³ *Almawrid Alwasit* (Bairut: Darul Ilm, 2002), 268

to each of the acts of memorization of the Qur'ān and its writing. The word with its connotation of the writing denotes three historical phases.

1. The age of the Prophet
2. The period of the caliph Abū- Bakr
3. The era of caliph 'Uthmān

The tradition states that the Qur'ānic text was preserved by the means of memorization and writing. During the age of the Prophet Muhammad, he used to memorize each and every word of the Qur'ān and so do his companions. At the time of his decease, there were numerous companions who had memorized either the entire text or some parts of it. Many of the Muslim savants have mentioned the names of those companions.⁴⁸⁴

As far as the writing is concerned, the Muslims are unanimous on the point that whenever the revelation descended, the Prophet ordered his scribes to record that in writing. Historical accounts have listed at least 40 scribes who have accompanied the Prophet for this purpose.⁴⁸⁵ It is reported that different material was used for writing such as 'Usub (bark of palm trees), likhāf (stones), Adīm (leather) Riq' (Parchment), Aktāf (bones), and Aktāb (pieces of saddle-wood).⁴⁸⁶

At the time of the Prophet's death, the entire the Qur'ān was written down but it was not in the form of a complete book. During the reign of Abū- bakr, as a result of the deaths of various ḥuffāz, it was feared that most of the parts might be lost unless a written copy was prepared. Consequently, Zaid bin Thābit was appointed to collect the Qur'ān in one place. In the process of collection, he took extraordinary precautionary measures to make

⁴⁸⁴ Shamsuddin Al Jazarī, Al Nasher fil Qir'āt al 'Asher (Almakṭba' al tijariyya alkubra) vol, 1. 6

⁴⁸⁵ Qāsim, Bin Salām, Faḍā' ul Qur'ān (Bairut: Dār ibne Kathīr, 1995), 280

⁴⁸⁶ Ibn Jarīr, Al Ṭabarī, ed. Shakir, Aḥmad, Tafsīr Tabarī. (Mo'ssisatī Risala, 2000), vol, 1. 59
Jalaluddin, Al-Suyut, *Al-Itqān fi 'Uloomil Qur'ān* (Egypt: Al Ḥai'a al Miṣriyya, 1974), vol, 1, 202 Al-Badaruddin, Al Zarkashi, Al-Burhan fi 'Uloomil Qur'ān, ed, Muhammad, Ibrāhīm. (Egypt: Dār Ihya al-Kutub al 'Arabiyya, 1957), vol, 1, 297

sure the accuracy and precision. In these copies the verses were arranged but the surahs were not. Instead, every surah was written and kept separately that was called *Şuhuf*.⁴⁸⁷

During the time of ‘Uthmān, disputes arose among people in the recitation of the Qur’ān. When he was informed about these clashes by his general Hudhayfah ibn al-Yaman, he constituted a committee of four people, Zaid being their leader, to prepare copies from the *Şuhuf* that were in the possession of Hafsa, the daughter of ‘Umar and the wife of the Prophet. He also ordered his committee to prepare these copies in the dialect of Quraish.⁴⁸⁸

On the completion of the task, he dispatched these copies to important cities and ordered all other Maṣahif to be burnt. Thus, the Muslims hold the view that the present Qur’ān is the facsimile of the revelation to the Prophet.

4.2.2. The western views on collection of the Qur’ān

This is important to note that the subject of the collection of the Qur’ān has a close connection with the ḥadīth sciences. Accordingly, the apprehension of the entire matter is based on the collection of the narratives in the canonical anthology. By and large, the western scholars in their discourses referring to the case of compilation have discussed these reports and expressed their skepticism and doubts. Yet, some of them stepped forward and declared the traditions as nothing except forgery such as John Burton, Joynboll and others.

The scholars who have discussed these reports are initially influenced by the past theories inaugurated by Gustave Weil, Alloys Springer, William Muir and Ignaz Goldziher in nineteenth century⁴⁸⁹ and more significantly by Joseph Schacht (d. 1969) in twentieth century. The nineteenth century scholars expressed their skepticism towards the historicity of Prophetic reports and declared that the transmission of Hadith remained oral

⁴⁸⁷ Muhammad bin Isma’il al Bukhārī, Al Jame’ al Ṣahīh, ed. Muhammas Zuhair (Dār Ṭawqul Nijat, 1422), vol. 6. 183. 4987. Ibn Hajar, ‘Asqalānī, Fathul Bārī (Bairut: Dārul M’erifa), vol. 9. 1379. Siyuṭī, Itqān, vol. 1. 60

⁴⁸⁸ Bukhārī, Al Jame’ al Ṣahīh, vol. 6. 183. 4988

⁴⁸⁹ The former three scholars, in general, presented the theory of the unauthentic nature of ḥadīth. But, it was Goldziher and Schacht approach that affected gravely on the course of ḥadīth studies.

in earlier centuries. Among them, Goldziher correlated the political aspect of the Muslim society with tradition asserting that the political view found its expression in the form of Hadith. In contrary, Schacht with entirely diverse perspective presented the idea of fabrication of Hadith establishing his research on Islamic Jurisprudence and its development. He proposed the idea that Prophetic traditions were originated by the second half of the first century in contrast to the saying of the Companions. Moreover, according to him, Isnād system shows a tendency to project back the narration to the Prophet in order to gain higher status.⁴⁹⁰

The seminal treatise which remained the basis of all the subsequent works has been produced in the West was that of Theodore Noldeke's monograph on the history of the text of the Qur'ān. The award winning book, later revised by many scholars of the field, is indeed an extensive piece of work that comprises almost all of the major topics of Qur'ānic sciences and that has been based on the Primary Muslim sources.

In general, Noldeke is convinced of the written collection of the Qur'ān, However, what seems to be important for him is the lack of reliable detailed information. He is of the view that the Prophet himself composed the individual units into larger surahs.

He thinks that in the early Makkan period the Prophet was fighting for his cause and it was difficult for him to keep the complete record of revelations. Moreover, it was hard for him to keep his memory under the pressure of the tough circumstances. For this reason, he seems to console his followers and promise for some alternative revelations in the case he forgot earlier.⁴⁹¹

Furthermore, there were few believers, according to him, who have memorized considerable portions of the Qur'ān and were able to save the revelations that earlier had been lost.

Noldeke, following the norms of the western scholarship, declares the reports on the matter in question to be noticeably contradictory. Moreover, he states that at the time of

⁴⁹⁰ The origin of Mohammeden jurisprudence (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1950) 4-5

⁴⁹¹ Theodor Noldeke et al, ed. Wolfgang H., *The History of the Qur'an* by (Leiden: Brill, 2013), 210- 211

the Prophet's death the condition of the whole Qur'anic material was scattered which, as he believed, was gathered by Abū- Bakr for his personal use. Besides, he does not recognize the traditions that attribute the collection to 'Ali or other companions and finally concludes that amidst the chaos and contradictions, it is quite challenging to discover historical facts.⁴⁹²

As far as the third phase of compilation is concerned, he considers that it was the caliph 'Uthmān who first collected the text. But, as he was an unpopular leader in the view of majority of the Muslims, the collection was attributed to his predecessors, sometimes to 'Umar and more often to Abū- Bakr.⁴⁹³ In all his work, he mostly has based his work on Siyūti's work *Al- Itqān*.

Richard Bell, famous for his rearrangement of the Qur'ān, is of the conviction that at first these messages were simply memorized but later the Prophet used to get them written by his scribes.⁴⁹⁴ According to him, a general reliance can be placed on the story of the collection of the Qur'ān as the story of the conversion of 'Umar, if to be trusted, demonstrates that some of the parts were written down in the Makken period.⁴⁹⁵ However, he declares the matter to be open for research. He is of the opinion that the Prophet himself has arranged some surahs, although, not very much identical with the present day order. Later, embellishments were made to those embryonic contents.⁴⁹⁶

As far as the collection of Abū- Bakr is concerned he is uncertain in this regard as there are, according to him, many discrepancies in the narratives about the issue in discussion.⁴⁹⁷ The last, but not the least, point that goes against this collection is that this had been in the possession of Hafsa who was 'Umar's daughter. If it was an official collection, it would have been passed to official possession then.⁴⁹⁸ Bell appears to support the idea that it was 'Uthman who first collected the Qur'ān, though, opposing Hafsa's copy as bases.

⁴⁹² Noldeke, *The history*, 213-233

⁴⁹³ Noldeke, *History*, 254-255

⁴⁹⁴ But he did not specify the time period meant by 'first' and 'later'.

⁴⁹⁵ Bell, *introduction*, 37

⁴⁹⁶ Bell, *introduction*, 38

⁴⁹⁷ Bell, *Introduction*, 41

⁴⁹⁸ Bell, *Introduction*, 43

Regarding the matter of the authenticity of the Qur'ānic text, he confirms that the 'Uthmanic recension honestly carried out what the Prophet had delivered. Modern study has shown, he says, no serious critique to the authenticity of the text itself except few verses. He finally sums up that we accept the Qur'ān as historically authentic because it fits into that historical experience. With this fact, there remains question that whether it contains all what is revealed to the Prophet or not. The answer to this question, he states, is difficult as there are many evidences that fortify the idea that the Prophet had forgotten some of these and the possibility remains that he must have lost some of the parts.⁴⁹⁹

Another scholar who has dealt with this subject was Arthur Jeffery. Jeffery, too, accepts the Islamic traditions partially on topic of the history of the text. He considers the Islamic narratives as fictitious and put forwards his doubts. He is quite confident that there was no Qur'ān left ready as the heritage of the Muslim community as the Prophet transmitted, mostly, his revelation orally. Some of the parts that were of liturgical nature have been written down, while others remained with his companions in oral or written form. He attributes the first collection to Abū- Bakr but, shows his reservations regarding its official nature and declares it to be a personal collection.

Next, the question arises pertaining to the compilation of 'Uthmān. He approves these accounts but, again, expresses his speculations about narrative. He declares that the matter was not merely of dialectical peculiarities but it was wholly of political nature. In fact, 'Uthmān wanted to bring all populace together upon one standard text to serve some specific reasons. He also believes in the existence of many other parallel codices during his reign.⁵⁰⁰

The second group of scholars have totally rejected the reliability and accuracy of Islamic accounts and critiqued their predecessors for their reliance on Islamic accounts and their approval, although partial, for master narrative of the collection of the Qur'ān. The fact is that, although their theories have brought novelty in the field of research, these ideas were not accepted widely and could not gain the support of other western scholars.

⁴⁹⁹ 45-55

⁵⁰⁰ Jeffery, Material, 7- 10

One of these theories is the theory presented by Alfonse Minganain his treatise on the transmission of the Qur'ān. In the very beginning of his article, he states that the data regarding the collection of the Qur'ān came to us not by historical accounts but via an oral Ḥadīth. He thinks that prior to the time of Būkhari and Muslim, nothing was known with firmness about the compilation of the book. He also believes that the reports about the collectors are quite contradictory as some of the reports attribute the collection to the Prophet himself, while, others state that it was the third caliph who compiled the Qur'ānic text.⁵⁰¹

He criticizes the tradition of Būkhari on this issue in discussion and claims that as it appeared after 238 years after the Prophet's death, it cannot be reliable. The weak point of the western scholarship, as he sees, is its acceptance of traditional reports albeit partially.⁵⁰²

While quoting the Christian writers of the seventh century, he fortifies his argument that had these writers been acquainted with any holy book of the Muslims, they would have mentioned that in their texts. He states that until the time of 690/71, the Christian writers did not know any sacred book of Arabs and similar is the case of the historians of the eighth century. It was only, according to him, by the end of the eighth century that historians knew about the Qur'ān and made it the centre of their conversations. In sum, he does not consider the Qur'ān except the product of the later centuries and collection of few oracles of the Prophet that were written down by his followers after many years of his death and took the shape of the book at the time of Hajjāj ibn Yūsuf(d. 95) What supports this idea, in his view, is the familiarity of the Muslims with the writing as a result of their intercourse with the Christians and the Jews. The point that some other material, in his consideration, was added to those oracles of the Prophet cannot be neglected.⁵⁰³

Quite identical to this idea was the theory that was put forth by John Wansbrough. His main concern was not the compilation of the Qur'ān. Instead his focus was to identify

⁵⁰¹ Mingana, *Transmission*, 4

⁵⁰² Mingana, *Transmission*, 29

⁵⁰³ Mingana, *Transmission*, 38-39

how and when the Qur'ān came to be accepted as canonical scripture. He was of the view that Qur'ān gradually emerged as a canonical scripture in the Muslim society and in order to prove that he analyzed *Tafsīr* text applying the method of form criticism.⁵⁰⁴ He believed that the positive evidence for this can be find in the emergence of exegetical tradition that testify to a gradual solidification of the Qur'ān over the period of several centuries.⁵⁰⁵ Accordingly, he deems the Qur'ān not a single literary unit but an amalion of the prophetic logia.

He was also of the view that the idea of the chronology of the Qur'ān or in other words, the notion of Makkan and Madinan Surahs is misguided and even the very idea of the Makkah as the birth place of Islam is a myth.⁵⁰⁶ Instead, the Qur'ān was compiled from the monotheistic traditions in eighth century Mesopotamia after 150 years of the Prophet's death.⁵⁰⁷ The whole story of the compilation was made-up and projected back to the earlier times in order to endorse the text. He further argues that the derivation of law from scripture was a phenomenon of the third /ninth century.⁵⁰⁸

Hence, his work appeared as a challenge to orthodox theories regarding the origin of the Qur'ān. He was of the view that the master narration of Qur'ānic origins is not reliable historically and contemporary scholars should not trust those narrations⁵⁰⁹ Quite identical to this was the idea of Crone and Crook who put forward the theory of the late compilation of the Qur'ān in the year 851 /232.⁵¹⁰

Another important figure that has discussed the notion of collection in his work is John Burton whose theory of abrogation is to be dealt in the following section. Many of the other scholars, too, have followed the above mentioned premises. Among them are Crone and Crook, Norman Calder, Andrew Rippin and Angelika Neuwirth⁵¹¹.

⁵⁰⁴ Qur'ānic Studies, vi

⁵⁰⁵ Rippin, Western Scholarship and Qur'an , 243-44

⁵⁰⁶ Wansbrough, Qur'ānic Studies, 2, 21,160.

⁵⁰⁷ Wansbrough, Qur'ānic Studies, 50

⁵⁰⁸ Wansbrough, Qur'ānic, 50, 202, 145.

⁵⁰⁹ Abdul-Kader, Approaches, 8.

⁵¹⁰ Crook and Crone, Hagarism, 18.

⁵¹¹ It is quite worth mentioning with regard to the last write Angelika Neuwirth that she partially acknowledges the collection tradition as she admits the 'Uthmānic collection but, with this she considers

The above theories can mainly be summarized as follows;

- The scholars who have relied, to some degree on the Muslim historical sources, generally recognized the traditional accounts on the subject of the preservation of the Qur'ān in its first phase namely the Prophetic period. Nevertheless, they have expressed their multiple reservations with reference to the details of the procedure. It can be inferred that they are suspicious about the perfection of that process.
- The three scholars, Noldeke, Bell and Jeffery, agreed upon the premise that the collection of Abū- Bakr was nothing except a personal copy.
- With regard to the collection during the period of 'Uthmān, every single scholar have accepted that to be an official endeavor. Jeffery, however, have announced the 'Uthmānic collection to be solely of political nature.
- The second group, in short, with its rejection of the Muslim accounts, has introduced multiple theories with respect to the codification of the Qur'ān based on a variety of evidences. Many of these theories have been dismissed by other western scholars because of the scarcity of sound evidences. Moreover, as the revisionists themselves could not present satisfactory alternatives, these approaches led to what Neuwirth deems as 'paralysis in research'.⁵¹²

4.2.3. The stance of EQ on collection of the Qur'ān

Collection of the Qur'ān

The article that deals entirely with the theme of compilation is 'collection of the Qur'ān' by John Burton.⁵¹³ The writer, after elucidating the term collection, expresses his doubts regarding the collection reports as following: "Muslim traditions on the collection of the

the ascription of the fixation of text to 'Abdul Malik (685- 705) more realistic. See: Angelika, Neuwirth. "Structure and Emergence of the community", The Blackwell, 143

⁵¹² The Qur'ān in Context, 9

⁵¹³

Qur'ān must, like any other ḥadīth, be tested by exposure to the wider background of Islamic definition from which they emerged".⁵¹⁴

Immediately after this reservation, leaving an ambiguity about the identification of the anonymous commentators, he says that most influential commentators and majority of the legal scholars held the view that the entire Qur'ān was never collected.⁵¹⁵

Burton's foremost claim is that the reports on the collection of the Qur'ān, either made by Abū Bakr or by 'Uthmān, were placed to serve some specific tasks. The collection narrations, as he believes, have been created by the Muslim legal scholars to explicate legal doctrines that are not found in the Qur'ān. In his works, he has presented a detailed analysis of the relevant reports and pointed out the discrepancies in them. Explicating the motives to invent these narratives, Burton states that to validate the practices that had no base in the Qur'ān and had been disputed for that reason, the Muslim jurists claimed that they are based on the verses the wording of which is abrogated. This idea presupposed a situation that required the exclusion of the Prophet from collection.⁵¹⁶ He states; "to accommodate the theory of abrogation, the collection had to be deliberately placed in the period following the Prophet's death, a motif that scholars (Jurists) were keen to emphasize by repeating it in the collection tradition".⁵¹⁷

To strengthen his claim, Burton articulates that the reports pertaining to the issue of the collections reveal inconsistencies and discrepancies, an indicator to the fabrication. To further elaborate the point, he brings forward some of the traditions and treats them as supplementary reports such as related to the collection of Abū Bakr, 'Umar, 'Uthmān and 'Alī. He views all relevant traditions as a part of the drama that has been designed to support abrogation theory. The western scholarship, he expounds, has shown reservations about these reports. He himself declares that this is not the normal duplication of attribution. But, it was an attempt to report more than one aspects of the text.

⁵¹⁴ EQ, vol. 1. 351

⁵¹⁵ EQ, vol. 1. 352

⁵¹⁶ The collection, 232

⁵¹⁷ EQ, vol. 1. 360

Analyses

John Burton has focused his work on the specific dimension of the Prophetic reports connecting it with jurists and abrogation theory. He has based the present work on the 'Materials' of Jeffery and on his own work published in 1977 under the title of "The collection of the Qur'ān". In his work, he discusses the notion of collection in detail interconnecting the abrogation theory and collection reports.⁵¹⁸ Although his core theory is, to a certain extent, similar to other scholars, he has come up with this theme from quite a different angle using the notion of abrogation.⁵¹⁹ Burton's another work that focuses on this concern is "The sources of Islamic Law; theories of abrogation".⁵²⁰ The treatise has been considered the first detailed, though too technical, western work on the theme of abrogation.⁵²¹ He has dedicated both of his works to the notion of abrogation and its application in Islamic law. In both of his works, he strongly endorses the view that the Jurists, in order to prove the operational status of the stoning rule, have introduced the third mode of abrogation i.e. omission of wording without ruling.⁵²²

The writer seems to be deeply influenced by the views of his predecessors as the theory of forgery of the traditions is the replica of old works. Consequently, one can easily witness the reiteration of related phraseology such as forgery, fabricated, designed etc.

Burton's claim can be examined on many grounds. Firstly, to evaluate the argument it is essential to explore the fact on historical basis. The writer, by a close critical textual examination of the collection reports, concluded that all reports are contradictory, the view that led him to declare all to be fabricate. In proclaiming so, he has attributed the fabrication of the collection reports to jurists and according to him it was a group of jurists who placed the narratives to fortify the notion of abrogation. A vigilant survey of the argument reveals the fact that it lacks the historical dimensions. To elaborate more, the first book of Islamic jurisprudence is Al Risāla of Imam Shafā'ī(d.204/820) written

⁵¹⁸ For this: see the fifth and sixth chapters in the above mentioned book.

⁵¹⁹ For instance, Jeffery as well, declares the reports of collection to be fictitious as mentioned earlier in the section 'views of Western scholars'.

⁵²⁰ (Edinburg: Edinburg University Press, 1990)

⁵²¹ Louay Fatoohi, *Abrogation in the Qur'ān and Islamic law; a critical study on the concept of Naskh and its impact* (New York: Routledge, 2013), 6

⁵²² "Law and Exegesis", in *Approaches to the Qur'ān*, 282.

in the second quarter of the second century. In the developmental stages of Islamic Jurisprudence, this period is to be considered as the first phase. He was followed by the scholars of the fourth and fifth century such as Muḥammad bin Ishāq al Shāshī (d.344) Aḥmad bin ‘Alī al Jaṣṣāṣ (d.370) and Abū ‘Alī al Ḥanbālī (d.428). One can observe that in fact, the development in this discipline took place in the fifth century by the emergence of abundance of works in this regard.

Even if it is admitted that Burton intended an early date for this development in the beginning of the third century as Motzaki illustrates, then also we have on our disposal sources prior to the development of jurisprudence.

Hence, it is very evident that the discourses of the jurists on the theory of abrogation started when the collection traditions were already known.

If one goes back to the earlier references of the collection reports, he finds that these narratives were in circulation by the first half of the second century and even earlier. For instance, the earlier sources for these reports are *Kitāb Hadhfin min Nasab Quraish* of Al-Mu'arrij as-Sadusi (d. 195)⁵²³, *Musnad* of Ṭiyālisi (d.204)⁵²⁴, Muṣṣanaff of ‘Abdul Razzāq (d. 211)⁵²⁵ and *Musnad* of Aḥmad bin Ḥambal (d. 241)⁵²⁶. Even the oft-repeated and key source of his works *Kitābul Maṣāḥif* of Abū Dā'ūd (d.316) predate the development of jurisprudence discourses. Burton, although using the plural noun of scholars or jurists, mentioned the statement of Khaṭṭābī (d. 388)⁵²⁷ in this regard with the reference of *Fathul Bārī*.⁵²⁸ The statement is as follows;

"يَحْتَلُّ أَنْ يَكُونَ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ إِنَّمَا لَمْ يَجْمِعُ الْقُرْآنَ فِي الْمَصْحَفِ لِمَا كَانَ يَتَرَقَّبُهُ مِنْ وَرُودِ نَاسِخٍ لِبَعْضِ أَحْكَامِهِ أَوْ تَلَاوَتِهِ"⁵²⁹

⁵²³ 7.

⁵²⁴ Abu Daūd, Ṭiyālisi (Egypt: Dār Hīr, 1999), vol, 1, 5. H, no. 3.

⁵²⁵

⁵²⁶ (Moessesatul Risala, 2001), vol, 1. 238. H, no. 76

⁵²⁷ He is Imam Abū Sulaimān Aḥmad bin Ibrāhīm al Khaṭṭābī. One of the legal scholars belonged to Shāfi'i school of thought.

⁵²⁸ Collection, 132.

⁵²⁹ Ibn Hajar, *Fath*, vol. 9. 12.

“Probably, the Prophet could not collect the Qur’ān in one copy as there always remained expectation of revelation abrogation some rulings or wordings.”

Many of the other later scholars of jurisprudence and Qur’ānic sciences followed Khaṭṭābī in this view and expressed the same reason along with other factors. This demonstrates the fact that he can be considered as the key source of this opinion. Now, by looking at the time period of Khaṭṭābī, one can easily apprehend the fact that he cannot be considered the originator of the reports in discussion as they were already in circulation before him. Besides, Burton right through his works mentions the plural noun of scholars that indicate to his perception of a group of jurists that placed the tradition to fortify their position. Hence, the interconnection of abrogation with the collection reports and subsequently with fabrication is invalid on historical basis.

Secondly, the dearth of historicity is quite visible throughout the article. The second point to be examined is to see whether the theory of Naskh, introduced by Scholars of late centuries as Burton believes, has no root in the earlier period of Prophet and his Companions. To answer that, it can be stated that the Qur’ānic text itself has the root word Naskh and the concept was well-comprehended by the Successors.⁵³⁰ One instance is sufficient here. It is narrated about ‘Ali bin Ṭālib that upon seeing a man in the mosque expounding the meaning of the Qur’ān for people, asked him that had he knowledge of Nasikh and Mansūkh.⁵³¹

Moreover the earlier works on this subject such as Qatāda bin D‘ama (d. 117), Al Nasikh wa Al Mansūkh and of ‘Aṭā bin Muslim (d. 115) dismiss the validity of the claims put forward by the author.

Thirdly, it can also be observed that he has supposed four stages for his claim.

- I. Scholars have invented the theory of abrogation specifically the third mode (abrogation of ayah with continuation of law) to fortify their assertions.
- II. For this purpose, they have invented verses claimed to be abrogated

⁵³⁰ See: 2: 106

⁵³¹Qatada bin Da‘ama, Al Nasikh wal Mansukh (Baghdad: Moessesatul Risala, 1998), 9

III. They have excluded the Prophet from collection

IV. They have designed numerous multiple reports about collection.

The above mentioned process denotes towards an attempt of designing a long series of fabrications in order to prove a single or few rulings. For the sake of argument, if it is acknowledged that the jurists had fabricated an abrogated ayah or few to fortify their claim, was not that far easier for them to find their way by simply forging a ḥadīth instead of going through a long procedure of forging many verses and mass of traditions followed by collection reports.⁵³² It is rather illogical that the jurists have designed a complex system of chains and texts in order to fortify the claims or rulings the number of which is approximately not more than three.⁵³³

Fourthly, the scholars who have discussed the collection of the Qur'ān in the scenario of abrogation were not jurists only but, the specialists of the sciences of the Qur'ān also have talked about this topic. These scholars, with their understanding, tried to justify the compilation process after the demise of the Prophet. These Muslim scholars have endeavored to offer, according to their comprehension, some other factors also for compilation after the death of Prophet. This include that the Prophet could not compile the Qur'ān himself due to the absence of adequate writing material for that. Some others added that as revelation was in pieces and according to situations, the Prophet could not gather that in one copy. It is narrated as well that there was the gap of total 81 days between his death and last revelation, thus this short time period was insufficient for the task of compilation.⁵³⁴

Moreover, it can be noticed that although majority of the scholars have accepted the third mode of abrogation, there are scholars and jurists who have shown their reservation

⁵³² Ali, *The Qur'ān*, 243

⁵³³ Scholars have enlisted almost three examples in the category of the third mode of abrogation e.g. omission of wording without ruling. The most common examples are the adultery, and fasting with consecutive days. As far as the second and first mode is concerned, Burton's theory does not apply on this as the abrogation of the wording with ruling as well, was of no use for any ruling.

⁵³⁴ Abdul 'AzīmZurqāni, *Manāhil ul 'Irfān fi 'Uloomul qur'ān* (Bairut: Dār ul Kitāb al 'Arbi. 2002), vol. 1. 202.

relating to the possibility of third mode of abrogation.⁵³⁵ Hence, it can be noticed that if one group of scholars have placed the reports to justify the third mode, the second group could also have expressed their disapproval and rejection in the matter of this issue. The absence of these denunciation and criticism in the vast corpus of Islamic accounts shows the weakness of the claim.

Furthermore, the author did not specify group that invented the reports and its time period. He did not explicitly declare that whether they existed in same generations or belonged to several generations. Further, if they were from one generation how far was it practicable for them to communicate with each other on the same matter in the age where the distances were of the journeys of months and not the one single day? The geographical conditions of that time do not support the claim. Burton did not fix the time period too. Did they not face any protest or opposition? The well-known history of Islam does not admit the existence of this absurd situation.⁵³⁶

Furthermore, to have a glimpse of academic tendency, intellectual enthusiasm and historical consciousness, it is vital to mention some of the basic features of the traditional Muslim society. In this regard Abbot, describing the intellectual achievements of the second century, declares that these accomplishments could not have been possible without initial steps of companions and without intellectual heritage.⁵³⁷ A neutral succinct look over the classical period of Islam reveals the academic trends of that era. From companions to successors and later generations, one finds not in hundreds but thousands of students, out of their academic zest, travelling from region to region for acquiring even

⁵³⁵ Shihab ul Dīn Ālūsi, Rūhul Ma’āni, ed. ‘Āli bin ‘Ābdul Bārī (Bairūt: Dārul kutub al ‘Ilmia. 1415), vol. 1. 351

See also: Ahmad bin ‘Alī Al Ḥanafī, Al Fāṣil fil ‘Usūl (Kuwait: Wazaratul Awqāf al Kūwaitiyya), vol. 2. 253 ‘Abdul ‘Aziz Al Ḥanafī, Kashful Asrār (Darul Kitāb Al Islāmī), vol. 3. 191

⁵³⁶ I have taken help in the formation of my ideas from the works of Muhammad Mohr ‘Ali and Moulana Gohar Rehman and the work of Herald Motzaki. See bibliography.

⁵³⁷ Nabia Abbot, *Studies in Arabic literary papyri* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1957), Introduction

one narration. Even, for one narration, numerous chains can be traced with minute differences.⁵³⁸

The intellectual and educational milieu of the Muslim societies was so cognizant that the very subtle rules have been formed by scholars to determine the illegibility of a student of Ḥadīth and more significantly, the science of ‘Illal al Ḥadīth had been designed to establish the credibility, vigilance and reliability of a transmitter.⁵³⁹ In an academic world where a slightest and delicate deficiency in transmitter results in his denunciation, it was hard for a single rather, a group of scholars to fabricate a narration and ascribe it easily to the Prophet. Abbot describes the measures taken by specialist of Ḥadīth that at that time oral tradition went hand in hand with the written one, not as an aid to memory only but, as control against oral fraud.⁵⁴⁰ Moreover, this cultural heritage does not comprise some decades or few years yet, it is spanning over fourteen centuries. Consequently, it is not an easy task to just assume a narration fabricated as one has the burden of proving evidence.

Fuat Sezgin, says in this regard that to determine the validity of a narration, one has to adopt a clear methodology. But, first of all, he has to free himself from old prejudices and mere assertions of fabrication.⁵⁴¹ So, here also it should be examined that whether it is excessive doubt and ‘scientific method’ that has been followed throughout the research or it is objectivity. As far as the general presentation of the notion of collection is concerned, the work has positive points with the predominance of academic faults.

It is a norm of the articles in the EQ to offer the general concept of the terminology in discussion with the illustration of the Muslim view on this theme primarily and then to proceed towards other theories in this regard. This facet can be considered as a positive

⁵³⁸ In the science of Ḥadīth, it is called Ḥuruq ul Taḥammul. Scholars have categorized eight ways for narrating a tradition. see:

⁵³⁹ Among these traits the noticeable are; prayers in congregation, refraining wine, not to be lawless in life, to be truthful, having no mental defect as defined by the great Imam Ibnul Mubārak. See: Al Baghdādī, Khatīb. Al Kifāya fi 'Ilm al Riwaya. Ed. Al Madanī, Ibrāhīm. Madīna: Al Maktaba al 'Ilmiyya. Vol. 1. 79.

⁵⁴⁰ Nabia, Studies, 9

⁵⁴¹ Sezgin, Fuād, Tākhul Turāth al 'Arabī, Trans, Mehmud Hijazi (Riyādh: Idāratul Thiqāfa wal Nasher, 1991), vol. 1. 151

sign and a step forward in the scholarly field. Yet, the significant point is to assess the manner and style of representing the Muslim stance.

In the very beginning of his article, the writer comments that "it was held by most influential scholars and commentators that the entire Qur'ān was never collected". The attribution of the consensus that their Holy Book was never collected to anonymous Muslim scholars and commentators is very obviously a deformation of the fact as an unacquainted reader is misled by this over-generalization. Moreover, the addition of the phrase "most influential scholars and commentators, needs elucidation and clarification. For the sake of accuracy, the author is supposed to identify the persons to whom he is referring. The methodology of inverting the ideas has been considered as flawed and questionable by the experts of critical thinking as it draws a reader, unless well-informed, to confusion and uncertainty.

As far as the interpretation of Burton for Islamic belief is concerned, he has based his interpretation on *Faṭḥul Barī*, one of the major commentaries for the text of *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*. In doing so, he has been successful to some extent. But, at one very basic point he has been victim of misrepresentation, intentional or accidental. Likewise, he has made the reader suspicious by indicating towards the discrepancies in reports of collection.

Taking into consideration the text of Ibn Hajar, the reader apprehends that the basic factor for the first collection of the Qur'ān was the death of various companions and the fear of 'Umar that the text would be lost if the situation remained the same. As Ibn Hajar quotes;

"فِيذَهَبُ كَثِيرٍ مِّنَ الْقُرْآنِ" that stands for "lest it might be lost".⁵⁴²

Now coming to the phrase that Burton has used, one can easily notice that he has totally altered the sentence as he says: "to provide a summarized version of the Muslim reports.....those passages had neither been written down nor had the Prophet's successor collected the text. Consequently, those passages had been lost."⁵⁴³ In another place, he says

⁵⁴² Ibn Hajar, *Faṭḥul Bārī*, vol. 9. 11.

⁵⁴³ EQ, vol. 1. 355

that “Abū- Bakr assembled the text for the fear of *further* loss”⁵⁴⁴ in the connection of the first paragraph that denotes towards the aforesaid statement about the loss of some passages.

In a scholarly article in an encyclopaedia, the work demands for a high accuracy in the narration and citation of the sources, the lack of which affects the standard of the work. In the previous clause, the author had committed two mistakes in citation. One is related to the translation of the exact text and second is linked with the fallacy of addition in citation. Moreover, in description and explanation of the idea, one has to be very accurate and factual and free from passing value- judgments. Though , it also has been observed at least in the entire data related to the Qur’ānic sciences that authors have attempted to commence the discussion with the remarks that alerts the reader’s mind and reveals the fact that the writers are instilled with the spirit of doubt. Hence, one can find a plethora of the sentences such as “one has to be careful”, “one should not accept the traditions as fact value”, “narratives are dubious” and etc. The identical expressions are observed in this article as Burton frequently reiterates his reservations and doubts throughout his work.

While narrating the remaining Ahādīth, he has relied on the works that have been listed in the category of secondary references in his bibliography. Hence, to establish the primary results on secondary sources is totally irrational. The main spring of these narrations in his secondary sources is *Kitāb ul Maṣāḥif*,⁵⁴⁵ the work that has been a major source of the earlier western works too. His second source is *Material of Jeffery* who has edited *Kitāb ul Maṣāḥif* with a preface. The worthy to note point is that both of these sources are not the first hand sources. Furthermore, *Material of Jeffery* has been assessed by many

⁵⁴⁴ EQ, vol, 1. 356

⁵⁴⁵ The narrative regarding the dictation of Ubayy for Zaid had been quoted in *Kitābul Masahif*. H. no, 29. 168.

Second tradition about the inquiry of ‘Umar about an Ayah and his order of collection is also mentioned in the same book. See H. no 30. 171. This has been declared as *Maqtu’*. See *Fatul Bāri*, vol, 9. 13

The ḥadīth regarding the allegiance of ‘Ali and his collection has also been quoted from the same source. The compiler has stated that collection here in its context stands for memorization. H. 31. 170. *Ibn e Hajar* commented the narrative saying “this is a weak Hadīth for the breakage in chain”. See: vol, 9. 13

scholars and declared as unreliable for his over generalization, heavy reliance on unauthentic and limited sources.⁵⁴⁶

It is quite worth mentioning that a researcher, while representing the views of other, is free to offer his views too. Yet, in a scholarly piece of work, one is obliged not to pass value judgments. In doing so only, he can fulfill the academic and scientific requirements of the work. In the case of Burton, he could not manage to escape from the presuppositions and assumptions. He, after reporting the western uncertainties on the Muslim reports, comments that the entire drama has been planned to serve some specific purposes. Furthermore, reports and counter-reports were designed to achieve some particular goals. The author himself, while passing his judgments, could not offer any sound evidence for the alleged forgery. An unbiased reader can judge himself about the phraseology used for this purpose.

The worth mentioning point is that the theory presented by Burton has been dismissed by the western scholars too. For instance, a modern scholar of ḥadīth Herald Motzki declares his discourse as artificial and implausible. A quote from him may elaborate the issue. Motzaki writes;

“A historical dimension is completely lacking in Burton’s study of the traditions concerning the collection of the Qur’ān. He arranges different traditions to create a discourse which he thinks took place between scholars over a long period of time..... However Burton did not try to check whether his scheme of evolution historically corroborated by the sources”⁵⁴⁷

Finally, in the citation of canonical reports, he has not followed one consistent scheme as he has mentioned the main and primary source in ḥadīth narration *Fatul Bārī*, but, on the contrary, in the narration of many reports he has relied on secondary sources such as

⁵⁴⁶ For instance, the only oft-repeated source in his material is *Kitābul Muṣāḥif*. This book is famous for its narrations of weak traditions and generalization for the author calls even two or few readings of Companions as *Muṣḥaf*. Based on this book, Jeffery too, has used the title of *Muṣḥaf* even for two readings. Moreover, Jeffery has committed interpolations in the main text of *Kitābul Muṣāḥif* while editing this book.

⁵⁴⁷ The collection of the Qur’ān; a reconsideration of Western views in the light of recent methodological developments. 15. Retrieved on 27/10/ 015. <https://www.scribd.com/doc/97592549/The-Collection-of-the-Qur-an-a-Reconsideration-of-Western-Views-in-Light-of-Recent-Methodological-Developments>

materials of Jeffery and the Collection of the Qur'ān. This fluctuation in the plan has affected the standard of the work. Likewise, in his primary sources, the first book he has mentioned is *Kitāb ul Maṣahif*. Nonetheless, he did not mention this work in his text directly despite the fact that most of the reports he has narrated from this source.⁵⁴⁸

Hadith and the Qur'ān

The second article is written by G.H.A Juynboll⁵⁴⁹ under the caption of 'Hadīth and the Qur'ān'. The article, divided into eleven sections, relates to the overall ḥadīth material as regards to the Qur'ān. One of its fraction deals with the traditions on the topic of the collection.

The author, in the very beginning, proffers a general introduction of Hadith tradition, traces the date of the ḥadīth canonization and comes up with theory following his predecessors that the certain collections of ḥadīth were compiled in the third / ninth century.

To elaborate the matter, he has designed some diagrams describing various parts of a chain introducing some specific terminologies in this regard such as single strand⁵⁵⁰, spider⁵⁵¹, common link⁵⁵² and Isnād bundle⁵⁵³ With reference to the specific portion that has dealt with the compilation of the Qur'ān, he exposed the Muslim stance first and then

⁵⁴⁸ See: bibliography; EQ, vol. 1. 361

⁵⁴⁹ Joynboll (1935-2010), is a famous author on ḥadīth and its transmission. His major works are *Encyclopedia of canonical ḥadīth*, *Studies on the origins and uses of Islamic Hadīth and Muslim Tradition*. His contributions in ḥadīth Studies are considered groundbreaking by some Western scholars, but, many recent scholars have criticized his theories.

⁵⁵⁰ It denotes to one master with one pupil and then with one pupil so on. That means the whole chain has been narrated by single person in all its phases. The existence of a common link in chain denotes towards the fact that the narrative was originated in his time. see: EQ, vol. 1. 380

⁵⁵¹ In any given tradition, when several single strands comes together at the level of common link that structure will be called spider. EQ, vol. 1. 381

⁵⁵² The term 'common link' denotes to the person where a single strand, from the Prophet to the successor, starts to branch out to a number of names. Joynboll believes that the existence of common link in the chain indicates that he is the originator of that narration as it is highly improbable that only a single narrator has transmitted that tradition from the Prophet and nobody heard it from him. See: EQ, vol. 1. 379

⁵⁵³ When all pupils of the common link themselves have more than one pupil there chains will be called as Isnād bundle. EQ, vol. 1. 379

put forward his own analysis of the traditions in this regard. It was, as he narrates the Muslim stance, Muhammad's desire to keep the matter open so that the revelations pertaining abrogation could be inserted into *Mushaf*. His stance is that the traditions pertaining to the collection of the *Qur'ān* by the caliphs do not permit hard and fast rules as to chronology and authorship of the *Qur'ān* due to inconsistencies.

On the subject of the collection, he elaborates, there are two reports cited in many of the historical sources with the mention that the Muslims have accepted all without questioning the authenticity of the sources. Many of the western scholars had presented, according to him, diverse views in connection to these reports. He illustrates towards them with a mention of less skeptical view.

He also declares that there are embellishments in these traditions that make us conscious to accept all as a fact value. To second his opinion and for the sake of evidence, he has enlarged his point with his detailed study of the chain of these two narratives. Here in this chain, he declares *Zuhrī* as common link. He believes that in the first chain there is a totally obscure and fictitious transmitter between *Ibne Shihāb al Zuhrī* and the companion *Zayd b. Thābit* i.e. 'Ubayed b. al-Sabbāq.⁵⁵⁴ Hence, this report should be dealt with caution as he believes.

In his study of the second report, his view is that this report too is overwhelmed with ahistorical embellishments. In this chain, according to him, the link between *Zuhrī* and 'Uthmān is more dubious than the first chain for many considerations. He points out that *Zuhrī* cannot be held responsible here for the wording. Instead, he says, his (*Zuhrī*) kinsman *Iibrāhīm* is more responsible for the wording.⁵⁵⁵

Hence, the overall conclusion, as he draws, is that these reports remain a matter of dispute among specialists of the field and the basic criterion, according to his, is the availability of the ancient manuscripts evidence that can trace the historicity of these reports.

Analysis

⁵⁵⁴ EQ, vol. 1. 383 These terminologies have been used by his predecessor Schacht as well.

⁵⁵⁵ EQ, vol. 1. 384

The author, Joynboll has not only delved profoundly with the questions raised by Schacht but, by embracing his theories openly acknowledges his debt to Schacht.⁵⁵⁶ As it has been aforementioned that Schacht seems to be paying tribute to Goldziher in the formation of his views⁵⁵⁷, here Joynboll emerges to be influenced extremely by Schacht. Hence, an unbroken chain of the transmission of the views and thoughts is rather noticeable.

Joynboll, building his methodology on Schacht approach in the treatment of ḥadīth chains, attempts to find out the real originator of the traditions. Though, his approach is quite different from that of the Schacht as the latter presented the Common Link theory to date the tradition with the possibility that someone else might have used the name of supposed common link.⁵⁵⁸ But, in the case of Joynboll, he attempts to seek the date of that tradition with the assumption that common link is the fabricator himself.⁵⁵⁹

The treatment of the writer with ḥadīth chains and more significantly his Common Link theory has been criticized by the western scholars and the Muslim savants alike such as SC Lucas, Herald Motzaki and Jonathon Brown. Many others as well critiqued him for his extreme skeptical look for traditions and over- generalization of the conclusions while relying on few sources.⁵⁶⁰ Although, the theories that have been offered by the author about the issue of ḥadīth also need to be evaluated, yet this section deals with his views on the reports of collection of the Qur’ān.⁵⁶¹

As far as his theory of Common Link and conclusions are concerned, it has been analyzed by many scholars and considered as flawed. Introducing this theme, the author states that when all Isnād strands found in the collections in support of one specific tradition are put together beginning at the bottom with the names of oldest transmitters, a picture similar to other emerges. When a single strand starts to branch out on the authority of person, he is considered as common link. The writer’s approach regarding

⁵⁵⁶ G.H.A. Joynboll, *Muslim tradition*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press,1983) Introduction, 1

⁵⁵⁷ Schacht, *Origin*, v

⁵⁵⁸ Schacht, *Origin*, 175

⁵⁵⁹ EQ, vol. 1. 379

⁵⁶⁰<https://islamclass.wordpress.com/2013/11/30/a-review-of-juynbolls-Muslim-tradition/>

⁵⁶¹ It has been mentioned earlier that he has been criticized for his bold assertions about the origin of ḥadīth by many of his contemporaries. A look on those works will suffice concerning his theories with the addition of the work of Mustufa A’zami that he has written in the refutation of Schacht views. See: Mustufa A’zami, *On Schacht origin of Mohammadan Jurisprudence* (Lahore: Suhail Academy, 2004)

common link is that the more transmitters a common link has, the more probable the authorship of the tradition is ascribed to that common link. In his view the transmitter in order to get his narration accepted has projected it backward.⁵⁶²

The term, as scholars view, is not novel in a sense that the Muslim scholars of ḥadīth were well acquainted with it and they have acknowledged the existence of the common link, at times, in chain. This theory is termed by them as ‘Taffarud’⁵⁶³ and the person as ‘Madār al Sanad’. This genre is among the most significant branches of ‘Ilal ul Ḥadīth as has been observed by the Muslim scholars. Hence, they have dealt with the problem in a way that if the Madār is weak, it defiantly undermines the tradition and where Madār is reliable and beyond doubt the narrative is declared as sound. Almost all of the foremost scholars of Ḥadīth and jurists have showed their consensus on the validity of this genre with some conditions.⁵⁶⁴ The scholars have indicated towards the generalization of Joynboll theory as he having this perspective, generalizes the rule and considers all traditions having common link as fabricated.⁵⁶⁵

Furthermore, in his analysis of the chains of the Hadith and more specifically, collection reports, he has depended on the work of Jamaluddin Al Mizzi(d. 742) neglecting earlier voluminous Hadith- analysis works such as Ibn Abi Ḥātim al Rāzī (d. 327/938) and Ibn ‘Adī (d. 365/ 975)

In the expression of an eminent Hadith specialist, to dismiss the classical Muslim scholarship of ḥadīth and rely on Ṭuhfah is just as calling the whole society disorganized

⁵⁶² EQ, vol. 1. 380-381

⁵⁶³ The traditional scholars have used the terms ‘Gharīb’ and ‘Fard’ as synonyms. Gharīb narration is that in which a single reporter is found relating it at some stage of the isnād. If this happens in the beginning of the chain that is ‘from successor to the Prophet’ than it is called Al Fard al Muṭlaq and if Gharāba occurs in between the chains then it is called Al Fard al Nisbī. See: Ahmad ibn Hajar Al ‘Asqalānī, Nukhbatul Fikr, ed. ‘Ammād Sayyad, (Cairo: Dārul Ḥadīth, 1997), vol. 4. 722

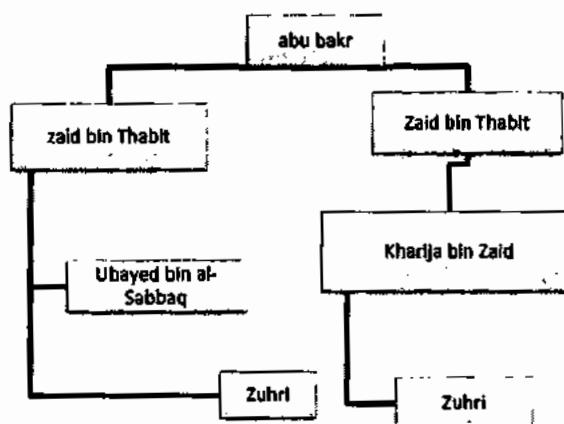
⁵⁶⁴ Abu ul Fidā, Ibn Kathīr, ed. Ahmad Shākir. Ikhtisār fī ‘Uloom ul Ḥadīth (Bairūt: Dār ul Kutub Al ‘Ilmiya), vol. 1.16. see also: Al ‘Asqalānī, Ahmad ibn Hajar. Nukhbatul Fikr. Ed. Sayyad, ‘Ammād. Cairo: Dārul Ḥadīth. 1997, vol. 4. 722. See also; Qāsimī, Jamāluddin Muhammad. Qawa‘ed al Teḥdīth (Bairut: Dār ul Kutub al ‘Ilmiyya), vol. 1. 147

⁵⁶⁵ See: Brown, Ḥadīth. 216

See also: Al, Hamoudi. “The theory of Common Link” PhD Diss (McGill University, 2004)

by simply looking at its well ordered and complex phonebook. Moreover, it can be considered a methodological collapse of his approach.⁵⁶⁶

While examining the chains of the first narratives concerning the collection by the first caliph, he has offered his analyses via a diagram while relying on various sections of *Tuhfah*. The number of sections is as following: 3703, 3729, and 6595 (he has quoted the last as 6594)



The author has wielded labors in compiling all chains for the formation of the above diagram. Nevertheless, he has committed an error and mixed up two chains connected to two diverse incidents. It is quite apparent that the common link from which fan out all other chains is *Zuhri*. As far as the first chain is concerned it is as follow:

عن الزهري عن عبيد بن السباق عن زيد بن ثابتأن أبي بكر.....

Zuhri from 'Ubayed from Zaid bin Thābit that Abū Bakr and is related to the first collection by Abū Bakr.

The second chain is coupled with the third collection by 'Uthmān that informs us about the lost verse of Sūra tul Aḥzāb.

⁵⁶⁶<https://islamclass.wordpress.com/2013/11/30/a-review-of-juynbolls-Muslim-tradition/>

It is as follow:

عن الزهري عن خارجة بن زيد عن ثابت أنه فقد آية من الأحزاب.....

Zuhrī from ‘Ubayed from Khārijā bin Zaid from Zaid that he lost one of the ayah from Ahzāb.....

Scholars stated that here, the transmitter Ammāra bin Ghaziya(عمارة بن غزية) merged the chains of three diverse incidents. Hence the chain is incorporated.⁵⁶⁷

In this plan, the common link, as he believes, is Zuhrī who is originator of the wording. In other words, the writer is implicitly illustrating towards his unreliability.

It is more appropriate to quote the exact wording. He says: “Ibn Shihāb Zuhrī, who with a strand down to the young companion Zaid bin Thābit via totally obscure and therefore fictitious, transmitter, Ubayed, may conceivably be held responsible for the skeleton of the wording as well as for this strand, if it is not the handiwork of an unidentified transmitter who is evidently also responsible for Khārijā bin Zaid strand.

The merger of explicate and implicit statements indicated that in his analysis, Joynboll has invalidated the three transmitters in these chains by considering first Zuhrī as fabricator, secondly, declaring a famous Successor as fictitious and thirdly, considering the narrative a creation of an unidentified transmitter present in both strands of Kharijā bin Zaid and Ubayed bin al Sabbaq.

Now, coming to the position of the three transmitters, it would be significant to have a glimpse over them. To start with, the supposition about Zuhrī is not novel in its nature as he has been victim of distrust of the western scholars in the past centuries as well. Zuhrī, who is from the second generation of the followers, has transmitted numerous traditions of this kind. The number of traditions regarding this specific form reaches to ninety. Before examining his chains, one has to first conduct a serious and neutral research as regards to the person of Zuhrī, his intellectual aptitude and meticulous academic methodology in chain’s scrutiny.

⁵⁶⁷ Ibn Hajar, *Fatḥul Bārī*. Vol. 9. 12

Muhammad bin Muslim al Zuhri was born in the year 50A.H. He was only fifteen years old when he started attending Ḥadīth lectures of the distinguished and leading scholars of his time such as ‘Urwa bin Zubair and Anas bin Mālik and others. The great critic of narrators Yahya Ibn Mu‘īn has been reported to said about him that he never have seen a student younger than Zuhri⁵⁶⁸ He was famous for his tremendous power of memorization of Ḥadīth, zeal for knowledge and reverence for scholars. It is narrated that the distinguished Imam Anas bin Mālik used to give him precedence over all other students.⁵⁶⁹ Moreover, he is counted as one of the foremost scholars who compiled traditions in the second half of the first century to counter the fraud of fabrication.⁵⁷⁰ He was a notable and illustrious savant of his time who is reported to have said, while illuminating the academic methods for acquiring tradition, ‘there are defects and dilemmas of Ḥadīth knowledge. The defect is its forgetfulness and dilemma is to fabricate it’.⁵⁷¹ One can imagine the status of Imam Zuhri by the fact that his chain has been reckoned one of the most veritable, sound and integrated chains by Ḥadīth scholars.⁵⁷² The great critic of Ḥadīth narrators ‘Ali Ibnul Madīni is reported to say that all the chains center on the six persons. Among them, as he declared, is Zuhri.⁵⁷³

His reports at discussion are cited by almost twenty leading scholars of Ḥadīth including Ṭiyyālī (d.204),⁵⁷⁴ ‘Abdul Razzāq (d.211),⁵⁷⁵ Ibn Abī Shaiba (d.235),⁵⁷⁶ Ahmad bin Ḥambal (d.241),⁵⁷⁷ Muhammad bin Ismā‘īl Bukhārī (d.256),⁵⁷⁸ Ibn Ḥabbān

⁵⁶⁸ Abū Muhammad Rāmhurzāī, Al Muḥaddith al Fāṣil bainal Rāvi wal Wāṭī, ed. Muhammad Khaṭīb, (Bairūt: Dārul Fikr), vol. 1. 185.1404.

⁵⁶⁹ ‘Abdul Reḥmān Al Mizzī, Tehzībul Kamāl, ed. Ma’rūf, Basshār (Bairūt: Moessatul Risāla, 1980), vol. 1. 161.

⁵⁷⁰ Sezgīn, Tārīkh, 121.

⁵⁷¹ Abū Faḍl ‘Ayyād, Al ‘Ilma’ ila Ma’rifat Usūlul Riwāya, ed. Ṣaqr, Ahmad (Dārul Turāth: Cairo), vol. 1. 219.

⁵⁷² Burhanuddīn Al Ja‘barī, Rasūm ul Taḥdīth fī ‘Uloom ul Ḥadīth, ed. Al Maṭīlī, Ibrāhīm (Bairūt: Dār Ibn Ḥazām), vol. 1. 57.

⁵⁷³ Abī Ḥātim Rāzī, Al Jarḥ wa al T’adīl (Bairūt: Dārul Turāth al ‘Arabi, 1952), vol. 1. 34.

⁵⁷⁴ Abū Daūd Al Ṭiyyālī, Musnad abī Daūd, ed. Turkī, Muhammad (Egypt: Dār Hijr, 1999), vol. 1. 499-50.

⁵⁷⁵ Aabū Bakr Al Ṣan‘ānī, Tafsīr, ‘Abdul Razzāq, ed. ‘Abduḥū, Muhammad (Bairūt: Dārul Kutub al ‘Ilmiyya, 1419), 1

⁵⁷⁶ ‘Abdullah bin Muḥammad Abī Shaiba, Al Kitāb al Muṣannaf fil Ḥadīth wal Aathār, ed. Yusuf, Kamāl. (Riyādh: Maktaba al Rushd, 1909), 25363.

⁵⁷⁷ Muhammad bin Ḥambal al Shaibānī, Musnad, ed. Al Arnaūt, Shu‘aib (Bairūt: Moessatul Risāla, 2001), 58

⁵⁷⁸ Bukhārī, Al Jāmī’, 1422. 2679, 4424, 4721

(d.354),⁵⁷⁹ Abū ‘Isā Tirmizi(d.694)⁵⁸⁰etc in their encyclopedic works at more than eighty places with minute differences.⁵⁸¹ In the age of seditions and turmoil he stood as a sound barrier in the way of fabricators. Given that a specific person has originated the narration and given that the authentication of the scholars is not valid in any case how then the author would be able to justify his dual and paradoxical approach. The author has been visibly inconsistent in his methodology for his acceptance of the great critic Ibn Ma‘in’s objection in the case of a specific narrator Ibrāhim and for his ignorance or rejection of the same scholar authentication for Zuhrī. Consequently, the author acceptance of the critique of Ibn Ma‘in for Ibrāhim bin Sa‘ad and his refusal to accept Ibn Ma‘in verification for Zuhrī puts a question mark on his methodological approach.

Secondly, Zuhrī has narrated from a celebrated and renowned Successor, ‘Ubayed bin al Sabbāq. Almost all major works of traditional sciences of Hadith count him as Hadith expert, authoritative and reliable. It is more accurate to cite some of them to throw sufficient light on the point. For instance some of the scholars who mentioned him with words of admiration are Muhammad bin Ismā‘īl al Bukhāri,⁵⁸² Ibne Abī Ḥātim al Rāzi(d. 372),⁵⁸³ and Ahmad ibn Hajar.⁵⁸⁴ Not only Zuhrī, but various transmitters have narrated from him. The matter then shows that regardless of the issue of his the trustworthiness of ‘Ubayed, his biography was well-known to the scholars. Therefore, the author’s declaration about him as an unknown and fictitious figure without any sound proof is considered as academic dishonesty.

Thirdly, the person whom the author is declaring as unidentified and declared the second report about the collection by ‘Uthmān to be his handiwork is Ibrāhim bin Sa‘d (d.183).⁵⁸⁵ The author has made a slight indication to Ibn Mu‘īn (d. 233) reservation about him without any detail with the reference of Ibn Hajar’s *Taqrīb*. A careful assessment of the statement that has been attributed to Ibn Ma‘in reveals the fact that this is not his

⁵⁷⁹ Muhammad bin Ḥabbān Dārmi, *Al Iḥsān fi Taqrīb Ṣaḥīḥ ibn Ḥabbān*, ed. Al Ar naūt, Shu‘aib (Bairūt: Moessatul Risāla,) 1988.4584.

⁵⁸⁰ Abū ‘Isā Al Tirmidhī, *Sunan*, ed. Shākir, Ahmad (Egypt: Shakir, Muṣṭuṭa Al Ḥalbī), 1975.3175,

⁵⁸¹ I have taken help from Arabic software Al Jame‘ Al Ḥadīth al Nabavī. www.sonnaonline.com

⁵⁸² *Tarīkh ul Kabīr* (Dakkan: Da‘ratul M‘arif al ‘Uṣmānia), vol. 5. 893

⁵⁸³ *Al Jarh wa T‘dīl* (Bairūt: Dar ‘hya ul Turāthul ‘Arabī, 1952), vol. 5. 1886

⁵⁸⁴ *Tqrībul Tehzīb* (Syria: Dar ul Rashīd, 1980), vol. 1. 543

⁵⁸⁵ He is Ibrāhim bin Sa‘ad bin Ibrāhim al Zuhrī al Madni.

view, yet, it was ibn ‘Adī who told that Ibrāhim sometimes exchanges the names of Successors. Moreover, this statement is mentioned in Mizānul E’tedāl of Zahabī and not in Taqrīb of Ibn Ḥajar⁵⁸⁶ Here too, the author has been victim of misunderstanding as the scholars whom he mentioned have declared Ibrāhim as reliable and trustworthy as he not only narrated from Zuhrī but from many other leading scholars of his time as well. Scholars of the science of Jarḥ wa Ta‘dīl has held him as authority in Ḥadīth, trustworthy and reliable.⁵⁸⁷

Summing up, a dearth of academic objectivity is quite apparent in the author’s comments in connection to the narrators. To say differently, the writer has attempted to present, with compelling statements, a distorted portrayal of the historical facts by declaring well known persons as unknown and fictitious. Hence, he issues the warning for the readers not to trust the reports as reliable.

As far as his description of the Muslim views on the topic of collection is concerned, he, like Burton, has become the victim of perversion and inaccuracy although in minor details. He, in his general introduction, seems to make an endeavor to create doubt in reader’s mind with regard to the Muslim accounts and persuade him towards a specific point of view. The author, pretending not to do so, repeatedly informs that ‘the reports are contradictory’, ‘we should not accept them as face value’ and ‘we are suppose to deal with the reports with caution’ etc and thus creates a mind over conscious for Islamic history. In academic fields it is known that to form a hypothesis and subsequently establish the entire research with that mindset is a hindrance in attaining valuable works. Perhaps, the tendency to do so is the outcome of a general western behavior that considers the historical events uncertain and vague.

Secondly, in his explanation of concerned narratives of collection, he quotes that Muhammad’s desire to keep the matters open so that cases of abrogation certain laws could still be inserted is given as the reason why the verses could not be gathered in one

⁵⁸⁶. See: Shamsuddin Al Dhahabī, Mizānul E’tedāl fī ‘Ilm il Rijāl, ed. Al Bajāvī Muhammad (Bairūt: Dārul Ma’rifa, 1663), vol. 1.34- 35.

⁵⁸⁷ Abul Ḥasan Al ‘Ajlī, Tārikh ul Thiqāt (Dārul Bāz: 1984), vol. 1. 177.
Al Dhahabī. Mizānul E’tedāl, vol. 1.34- 35.

book. While doing so, he cites Ibn Hajar as his source. A careful assessment of the *Fathul Bārī* reveals the fact that there is no mention of such a rationale in the narrative. This has not been mentioned as Prophet's longing. Rather, it been expressed by some later scholars, as mentioned earlier.⁵⁸⁸ To quote a specific statement and attribute it to someone else is a practice to be avoided in academic study.

Thirdly, in overall discussion of the matters there is a lack of precision and accuracy. For instance, in his discussion of the narration in relation to the commencement of revelation, Joynboll states;

"The best-known tradition about the beginning of the revelation depicts how the Prophet was visited by the angel Gabriel who gave him a short text to recite".⁵⁸⁹

A careful reading of the Arabic text of the best-known narration demonstrates the fact that there is not any reference to such text that was given to Prophet. It states;

فجاءه الملك فقال: اقرأ، قال: ما أنا بقارئ⁵⁹⁰

The Archangel came to him and said; Read, he (Prophet) said; I cannot read.

The accuracy of citation is a primary requirement of an academic work. The academic rigorous scholar is expected to meet at least the basic criteria of scholarly expertise and that is not in the case of this entry.

In the entire article, the thread of discrediting the traditions is overriding and dominant although he asserts in the very beginning of the article that it would deal with the chains with less skeptical appraisal. It appears that writer has formed the Common Link theory and attempted to apply his presupposition on all of the traditions as he declares all traditions as fabrications of the common links.

Moreover, a vigilant look over the sources illustrates that the author has consulted some irrelevant sources as primary. For instance, as knows a cautious researcher, to cite *Hilyatul Awlia* and *Ihya* of *Ghazāli* in the *Hadīth* subject clearly demonstrates the lack of

⁵⁸⁸ See page:

⁵⁸⁹ EQ, vol. 2. 381

⁵⁹⁰ *Bukhārī*, *Şahīh*. The book of revelation. *Hadīth* no. 3.

expertise. The citation of the works that relate to the subject matter of the biographies of the saints and collection of religious sermons in the study of Ḥadīth and related discussions is rather inappropriate.

Finally, the writer shows his dissatisfaction in this regard and says that the matter is of great dispute, yet the solution is the discovery of the ancient manuscripts dating back to the Muslim. In this regard too, many of the western scholars witness the authenticity of the extent Qur'ānic manuscripts dating back to the first century.

It is essential to present here a witness among the western scholars themselves who acknowledges the scientifically proved existence and accuracy of collection reports;

A well-known scholar, Joseph Lombard, in an interview, expresses his views on the accuracy of the collection reports and the early manuscripts as follows;

"The western scholars express their reservations concerning the collection stories without studying the manuscripts of the Qur'ān. As more and more manuscripts has become available to us, we have been able to confirm with greater accuracy, scientifically and empirically, as one can, that the compilation stories of the Qur'ān are to the most part are accurate. This is, he says, the better explanation of the data that is available to us than any other theory one can propose".⁵⁹¹

Moreover, talking about the accuracy and early dating of the manuscripts by carbon dating, he elaborates that the most recent documents that have been found are the one at San'a. There was a lot of speculation when they were found that how they would inform us about historical facts. In the recent times, they have been studied, although not all of them. One of the folios that have gone through rigorous analysis and that analysis has demonstrated through carbon-dating that it does come from the time that the Muslims say the Qur'ān was compiled."⁵⁹²

The above discussion is so lucid that there is no need to elaborate it more.

⁵⁹¹<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=klr3Jy2e3mk>

⁵⁹²<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=klr3Jy2e3mk>

Book

Another article that addresses this theme is ‘Book’ written by Daniel Madigan.⁵⁹³ The author has implicitly discussed the theme with an exclusively different approach. In this essay, he has dealt one aspects of the Qur’ān that can be regarded among the most momentous facets of preservation and collection process. His present work is, to say appropriately, an abridgment of his previous works as his doctoral research was also related to study of the term Book. Furthermore, he has presented a detailed extensive examination of this term in his treatise “The Qur’ān’s self- image.

The writer, through his semantic analysis of the Qur’ān to understand the word ‘Book’, has endeavored to reveal that the Muslim understanding of Kitāb as written document and its interconnection with the process of preservation is not compatible with the Qur’ān’s own understanding of this term. To grasp the notion of ‘Book’, he believes, it is better to comprehend it as the Qur’ān itself does. He advances his research by discussing the meaning of Kitāb in its various contexts. According to him, the word expresses purely a Divine activity in the sense of Divine knowledge, Divine authority and revelation and very rarely used for human writing.

In his discussion of the notion of the Qur’ān as Kitāb, he has presented a summary of the western views with a sense of disapproval as most of them have taken the meaning of Kitāb as written book although many of them accepted the idea to some extent or with some reservations and doubts.⁵⁹⁴

He also has criticized the collection notion and said that although the Muslim tradition has understood that Prophet intended the written collection, yet the reports are paradoxical as some of them inform that the manuscript tradition is unbroken authenticated by the Prophet. While other state that this process was imperfect and was totally dependent on oral tradition.

⁵⁹³ Denial Madigan is an Australian Jesuit and the associate professor in Georgetown University.

⁵⁹⁴ EQ, vol. 1. 249

According to him, when the Qur'ān speaks about itself as Kitāb, it seems to be talking not about the form in which it is sent down but rather about the authority it carries as a manifestation of the Knowledge of God.⁵⁹⁵

Analysis

The foremost claim of author is that the Qur'ān is God's authoritative word symbolized by writing. However, as writing involves emendation and rephrasing, it is not the exact wording of what has been revealed to the Prophet. Rather, it can be considered a token of His message. In the series of the claims and argumentation, the writer has discussed the notion of compilation of the Qur'ān and the authenticity of the collection reports.

He has supported his argument with the evidence of his semantic study of the term Kitāb that has been employed in the Qur'ān as one of the key characteristics of the Qur'ān itself. In his conviction, the Muslim understanding of the Qur'ān as written document or a book form does not accord with the notion of Kitāb.

In doing so, he has adduced some supporting reasons that are as following;

- I. The word Kitāb has extensive metaphorical uses in the Qur'ān which leads to the ending that it functions on several levels at times.
- II. In the Qur'ānic usage, the word k, t, b, (to write) represents purely a Divine activity and applies only rarely to human beings.⁵⁹⁶
- III. The āyāt that informs us that God has the knowledge of everything and all is in Kitāb mean that all is in His knowledge as there is close connection between knowledge and Kitāb.⁵⁹⁷
- IV. In his understanding, the āyāt that discuss the recording of the deeds of people and that everything is in Kitāb refer to the knowledge of God more convincingly than to an archive with registers.

⁵⁹⁵ EQ, vol, 1. 250

⁵⁹⁶ EQ, vol, 1. 241

⁵⁹⁷ EQ, vol, 1. 243

V. As far as the *āyāt* that inform us about the prophetic missions and the books they brought with them, he interprets them with entirely a different approach. In his conviction, the *Kitāb* of revelation is also linked with Divine knowledge and authority as it is the symbol of his power. He sends through the Prophets an authoritative word to solve the current problems and address the prevailing problems. Then the Prophets are supposed to recite the words, which remain oral, to the people. This prophetic address contains the name *Kitāb* not because of its form but because of its origin.⁵⁹⁸

VI. As seen earlier that the author has made an attempt to prove that the word *Kitāb* in the *Qur’ān* denotes to the Divine knowledge and authority in all cases. While coming to the concept of the *Qur’ān* as *Kitāb*, he tries to demonstrate the same. So, he states, when the *Qur’ān* speaks about itself as *Kitāb* it means that it carries a manifestation of God’s knowledge.

It can be observed that the overall argument is established on semantic study of the word *Kitāb*. No doubt that the writer has presented vigilantly a survey of the *Qur’ānic* contents pertaining to the term *Kitāb*. Nonetheless, like any other work, it requires an assessment and appraisal. To start with, it is vital to comprehend some of the rules of Arabic language and interpretation.

As far as the notion of metaphor is concerned, it is defined as a figure of speech in which a word literally denoting to a specific meaning is used for another object because of some similarities between the both.⁵⁹⁹

Metaphor is used in nearly every language for a forceful impression. More significantly, the use of metaphor in Arabic is in abundance. A plethora of literature has discussed its existence in the *Qur’ān* defining some rulings in this regard.

⁵⁹⁸ EQ, vol. 1. 246

⁵⁹⁹ Al Jinnī Abul Fath, Al Khaṣāeṣ (Egypt: Al Ḥai'a al 'Amma al Miṣriyya li'l Kitāb), vol. 2. 444.

See also: Yusuf Ibn Abi Bakr Ḥanfi, Miftāḥ 'Ulūm (Bairūt. Dārul Kutub al 'Ilmiyya, 1987), vol. 359. 1.

Aḥmad bin 'Alī Al Jaṣṣāṣ, Al Faṣūl fil Aṣūl (Kuwait: Wazaratul Awqāf, 1994), vol. 1. 46

The primary rule is that every root word has a basic meaning that travels to the various verbs and noun. With adding up a vowel, the word is used for a more precise meaning. Such as Kitāb, Kātib and Maktūb from the root word Kataba.

It is vital to interpret a word according to its well-known meaning for which it has been placed. In this regard, the Qur'ānic usage of the term was based on the original and explicit meanings that were famous among Arabs.⁶⁰⁰ According to the language parameters, to grasp the meaning and perfect sense of the word, it is essential to see how it has been comprehended by its adherents and more significantly by recognized scholars of that language. An interpretation of a term proffered by an outsider is subject to be based on reliable sources and its compatibility with the well established opinion. By rejecting all the prime notions related to that phrase and declaring totally a new meaning for that word might put a question mark on the theory. More significantly, in the exegesis of Qur'ānic words it is to be decided according to Arabic language rules. A well known companion Ibn 'Abbās says in this regard that Tafsīr has four kinds relating to its interpretation. The first genre that relates to language can be known by Arabs only.⁶⁰¹

Additionally, in all languages it is common to determine the meaning of a term that accords with the context. Mostly, every language contains numerous phrases that have more than one meaning. The general rule is to infer the expression according to its usage in its context. To assign a term the meaning that does not fit in the whole context is a proclamation without sound rationale.⁶⁰²

Another standard ruling with respect to the metaphor is the existence of the evidence (Qarīna) in the presence of which, it is not viable to interpret the word in its original meaning despite the fact that there is a likeness between both of the elements.⁶⁰³ Besides,

⁶⁰⁰ Muhammad bin Idrīs. Shāfi'ī, Al Risāla, ed. Shākir, Aḥmad (Egypt: Maktaba al Ḥalb, 1940), vol. 1. 50

⁶⁰¹ Abul Ḥussain Al Māwardī, Al Nukat wal 'Uyūn, ed. Raḥīm, 'Abdul (Bairūt: Dār ul Kutub al 'Ilmiyya), vol. 1. 36.

⁶⁰² Muhammad Ṭāhir, Asbābul Khaṭa fī Al Tafsīr (Bairūt: Dār Ibnul Jawī), vol. 3. 992-994.

⁶⁰³ Muhammad bin Aḥmad Al Sarkhasī, Uṣūlul Sarkhasī (Bairūt: Dārul Ma'rifa), vol. 1. 33.

AbūḤāmid Al Ghazālī, Al Muṣṭafā, ed. 'Abdul Salām, Muḥammad (Dārul Kutub al 'Ilmiyya, 1993), vol. 1. 190. See also: Al Jaṣṣāṣ, Al Faṣūl, vol. 1. 46.

it has been asserted by the scholars that the claim of the existence of metaphor in proper nouns is not valid.⁶⁰⁴

Having said that, to have a careful examination of the argument, it is essential to go through the lexical meaning of the word Kitāb and then proceed to its denotation in the Qur’ān in several contexts.

The literal meaning of the term as described by the linguists is as follows:

Al Kitāb and Kitāba is a verbal noun. The root word k, t, b stands for:

‘To collect’ and Katiba is an army جمع الشئ الى شيء و الكتبة الجيش⁶⁰⁵

‘To copy’⁶⁰⁶ اكتب بمعنى انسخ

‘To write’⁶⁰⁷ كتب اى خطه

The phrase يكتب الناس اي يعلمهم الكتابة means ‘he teaches them the writing skills’.⁶⁰⁸

Kitāb is in which to write الكتاب لما يكتب فيه⁶⁰⁹

As the word Kataba denotes to gathering of the things, Kitāba is to join the words in writing and Kitāb is name of the sheets written in.⁶¹⁰ It is also held that as far as the root k, t, b, denotes to join, unite or combine, the term does not necessitate Kitāb to be in written form. The oral wording as well is titled as Kitāb because of the amalgamation of the letters and words with each other.⁶¹¹

⁶⁰⁴ Jalāluddin Al Syutī, Al Muzhir fī ‘Uumil Lugha, ed. ‘Alī Fuād (Bairūt: Dārul Kutub al ‘Ilmiyya), vol. 1. 286. Abul Hasan Al Āmdī, Al Eħkām fī Uṣulul Aħkām (Bairūt: Al Maktab al Islāmī, 1993), vol. 1. 33. Al Ghazālī. Al Muṣṭafā, vol. 1. 186.

⁶⁰⁵ Abu al- Hussain Qazwinī, Maqāṣul Lugha, ed, Muhammad hārūn (Bairūt: Dārul Fikr, 1979), vol. 5. 158 Zainuddin Al Ḥanafī, Mukhtār al Ṣīḥah, ed. Muhammad Yusuf, (Bairūt: Al Maktaba al ‘Aṣriyya, 1999), vol. 1. 266

⁶⁰⁶ Abu al- Qāsim Zamakhsharī, Asāsul Balāgha, ed, Bāsil, Muhammad (Bairūt: Dārul Kutub al ‘Ilmiyy, 1998), vol. 2. 121

⁶⁰⁷ Muhammad ibn Manzūr, Lisān ul ‘Arab (Bairūt: Dār Ṣādir, 1414), vol. 1. 698

⁶⁰⁸ Zamakhsharī. Asāsul Balāgha., vol. 2. 121

⁶⁰⁹ Zainuddin Al Ḥanafī, Mukhtār ul Ṣīḥah (Bairūt: Al Maktaba al ‘Aṣriyya, 1999), vol. 1. 266

⁶¹⁰ Abu al- Qāsim Al Isfahānī, Al Mufrādāt fī Gharībul Qur’ān (Damascus: Dārul Qalam, 1412), vol. 1. 699.

⁶¹¹ Abū’Abdullah Rāzī, Mafatīḥul Ghaib (Bairūt: Dār Eħya ul Turāth ul ‘Arabī, 1420), vol. 6. 375. Al Isfahānī, Al Mufrādāt, vol. 1. 699.

To sum up, the literal and explicit meaning of the word *Kitāb* is a handwritten work on papers or sheets bound or fastened together. By and large, in Arabic the word is understood initially in this meaning. However, it has numerous connotations such as knowledge, decree, rulings, evidence etc.⁶¹²

The foremost argument of the writer is that the verses which inform us that everything that has occurred or will occur in future is in *Kitāb* refer to the Divine knowledge. Moreover, the contents that discuss the recording of the deeds in *Kitāb* also illustrate toward His encompassing knowledge. The author has attempted here to prove that the Qur'ān does not so much contain reference to a heavenly archive with registers as it does to the omniscience of God.

The validity of this argument is more likely to be assessed in the light of understanding of indigenous linguists of Arabic and classical commentators. Moreover, the appropriate method is to go through some of the verses and look into the lexical meaning in the entire context. Allah says:

"Do you not know that Allah knows what is in the heaven and the earth? Indeed, that is in *Kitāb*. Indeed that, for Allah, is easy".⁶¹³

The term *Kitāb* is rendered by majority of the commentators as *Al- Loh*.⁶¹⁴

In another verse, it is stated: "And there is nothing concealed within the heaven and the earth except that it is in a clear *Kitāb*".⁶¹⁵

Traditional commentators have interpreted, here too, the term as *Al- Loh*.⁶¹⁶ The term has been defined by classical lexicons as the sheet written for writing.⁶¹⁷ Hence, we observe

⁶¹² *Iisfahānī*, *Mufradāt*, vol, 1. 700- 701

⁶¹³ 22: 70

⁶¹⁴ *Abū Abdullāh al-Qurtubī*, *Al Jām' le Aḥkām al Qur'ān*, ed. *Albārdūnī*. *Aḥmad* (Cairo: Dārul Kutub al Miṣriyya, 1664), vol, 12. 95

⁶¹⁵ 27: 75

⁶¹⁶ *Abu al- Ḥayān Al- Undulūsī*, *Al Baḥrul Muḥīṭ*, ed. *Jamī*, *Muhammad* (Bairūt: Dārul Fikr, 1420), vol, 8. 267 *Qurtubī*, *Jā'm*. vol. 13. 231.

⁶¹⁷ *Nāṣir ul Dīn Al Baidāwī*, *Anwārul Tanzīl*, ed. *'Abdul Rehmān*, *Muhammad* (Bairūt: Dar Ehya ul Turāth al 'Arabi, 14180, vol, 2. 161.

⁶¹⁷ *Ibn Manzūr*, *Lisān ul 'Arab*, vol, 1. 698

that whenever there is mention of Loh or Kitāb in the Qur’ān, the verb ‘write’ has been connected with it.⁶¹⁸

The majority of the translators have assigned the similar meanings to Kitāb in their English renderings.

“And with Him are the keys of the unseen; none knows them except Him. And He knows what is on the land and in the sea. Not a leaf falls but that He knows it. And no grain is there within the darknesses of the earth and no moist or dry [thing] but that it is in clear Kitāb”.⁶¹⁹ It is quite noticeable that most of the English renderings as well, have taken the term for the expression of book.⁶²⁰

Therefore, the well established understanding of the concept of Loh is that it is a heavenly archive in which everything is written. The writer might be true in his stance about the existence of metaphor because the traditional commentators have sometimes interpreted the word as Divine knowledge in some occurrences but they also have rendered the verses with same phraseology as heavenly archive as well. Hence, in this context too, majority has understood the notion of book in its original sense. The author, on the bases of one case only, has attempted to generalize his conclusions by stating that the term has been applied allegorically in to the entire Qur’ān.

The second point of the writer is that the recording of the deeds also illustrates the fact that Allah has overarching knowledge and here too, the term Kitāb is used symbolically as it has a deep connection with knowledge.

By having a thorough look over the whole prospect described in the Qur’ān shows the validity of the argument. Allah proclaims in the book that every deed of the humans, evildoers or righteous, is being recorded/ written in the heavenly archive.⁶²¹ On the Day of Judgment, when the Book of deeds will be placed⁶²² and people will be ordered to take their books. The pious will be granted their books in their right hands and the

Zamakhsharī, Aāasul Balagha, vol. 2. 183.

⁶¹⁸ Al Razī. Mafātīhul Ghaib, vol. 9.379.

⁶¹⁹ 5: 59

⁶²⁰ See for instance: Pickthall, Marmaduke. The Glorious Qurān (Lahore: Taj Company)

⁶²¹ 78: 29

⁶²² 18: 49

transgressors will be given in left hands or from their backs.⁶²³ [It will be said to them] read your book.⁶²⁴ The virtuous will read his book with pleasure and he will announce his success calling others to read his book⁶²⁵ while the wrongdoers would fill with regret if he had not be given his book in right hand.⁶²⁶

It does not seem appropriate to go far beyond the point and declare that the term 'book' in the entire matter has been applied metaphorically as it does not settle with the context. To say differently, the 'book' in the above clause has been used as an object for various verbs that are incomprehensible in its allegorical sense. Consequently, the plausibility of metaphor here is scarce. To say more bluntly, the author has coated the verses that can, in his understanding, be taken in the sense of metaphor. Yet, he did not cite several that are not intelligible in its metaphorical meaning.

Besides, keeping in mind the condition of the validity of metaphor, it can be said that there is no barrier in taking the original meaning in both of the cases. If the writer is acknowledging the idea of the omniscience and omnipotence of God, it is far easier to admit the existence of a heavenly archive created by God.

One more significant evidence brought forth by the author is his assessment of the verses as to the notion of revelation and people of the book. As aforementioned, the writer does not take the term for its impression of their possession of physical books. Rather, he believes that they orally recited the words from God. On the basis of this proclamation, he says that "the people of the book" refers to the people who have access to Divine knowledge and not the people who have the possession of book.

It is rather obvious that the writer is refusing the expression of merely the Qur'ānic term "Ahlu Kitāb" as the people of the book. Otherwise his proclamation appears to be self contradictory as he is, at the same time, admits the fact that the Jews and the Christians had the possession of codices and scrolls. He, by his illustration towards this fact, says

⁶²³ 69: 19, 25

⁶²⁴ 17: 14

⁶²⁵ 69: 19

⁶²⁶ 69: 25

that it is recognized that the Jews put their Kitāb on papyri. However, their possession of physical book does not constitute the term Ahlul Kitāb.⁶²⁷

To weigh up the soundness of the argument, it is crucial to see how the traditional commentators have understood the term. The assessment that whether there is any compatibility with the language rules and more significantly, the rulings regarding authenticity of metaphor, is essential.

The fact that the Qur’ān discusses the people of the book in numerous contexts with multiple titles is rather evident. At some places, the books given to them are named with the titles such as Zabūr, Torah and Injīl that are considered to be proper nouns. It is aforementioned that linguists are in agreement upon the point that existence of metaphor cannot be claimed in proper nouns as they are used for identification and indication to specific objects. Consequently, the assertion that the Kitāb is used as metaphor is invalid as Torah and Injīl are rendered as proper nouns for these two scriptures.⁶²⁸

Similarly, the Jews and the Christians were recognized among Arabs as possessors of physical books. Modern writings as well, suggest that the presence of Physical books within the peninsula.⁶²⁹ As mentioned above that the Qur’ān always grants precedence to original expressions, it certainly meant the physical books whenever mentioned Ahlul Kitāb. A famous scholar of the 6th century states that the term Kitāb is used to suggest Torah and Injīl specifically. So when it is connected with Prophet Moses, Jesus and Ahlul Kitāb, it gives the impression of Torah and Injīl specifically.⁶³⁰

⁶²⁷ EQ, vol. 1. 247, 249

⁶²⁸ Muhammad bin Aḥmad Abū Mansūr, Tehzībul Lughā, ed. ‘Iwaḍ, Muḥammad (Bairūt: Dār Eḥyāul Turāth al ‘Arabāī, 2001), vol. 9. 209.

Ibn Mazūr, Lisanul ‘Arab, vol. 1. 129

⁶²⁹ At the present, there has been a tendency to prove the origin of Qur’ān either Christianity or Judaism. The scholars discussing the details, sometimes, declare the presence of Scriptures in the possession of Jews and Christians in Madīna and surroundings. Some believe in the existence of Arabic version as well. But, majority does not accept that as it was translated into Arabic after the demise of the Prophet in eighth century. See for instance: Stewart, Devin. “Notes on medieval and Modern emendations of The Qur’ān”, ed. Reynolds, Gabriel. *The Qur’ān*. 225- 248.

Sidney H Griffith, “The Gospel In Arabic: An Enquiry Into Its Appearance In The First Abbasid Century” *Oriens Christianus* 69 (1985) 131-132.

⁶³⁰ Abū Mansūr, Tehzībul Lughā, vol. 9. 97. Isfahānī, Mufradāt, vol. 1. 701.

In the light of the above discussion it becomes manifest that interpretation of this term metaphorically seems to be unsteady as it cannot be applied to all verses with the identical theme. The writer appears to be perplexed as to the meaning of Kitāb by his association of the term with physical form only. For that reason, he is of the opinion that sending down (Inzāl or Nuzūl) of Kitāb cannot be understood in its literal sense. According to the lexical meaning, as mentioned before, the term Kitāb does not inevitably denotes to physical form only. Rather, verbal revelation as well contains the title Kitāb. Hence, the word does not need to be interpreted on metaphorical grounds.

However, here too, the recognized fact that Moses has been granted inscribed tablets of Ten Commandments should be kept in mind. The fact has been mentioned in the Qur'ān as well as in The Book of Exodus. The Qur'ān states;

"And We wrote laws for him on the tablets in all matters, both commanding and elucidating all things, (and said): 'Take and hold these with firmness, and enjoin thy people to hold fast by the best in the precepts.⁶³¹

The Book of Exodus narrates it in the following way;

"And He gave unto Moses, when He had made an end of speaking with him upon Mount Sinai, the two tables of the testimony, tables of stone, written with the finger of God".⁶³²

Moreover, it is recognized fact that the scripture prior to the revelation of the Qur'ān were written. The Jews and the Christians had been not only the reciters but the readers and writers of their scriptures. There are several writings that witness the fact of existence of the scripture at the time of the advent of the Prophet Muhammad.⁶³³

It was their possession of the physical book about which the Qur'ān states that they have changed its wordings. The Qur'ān comments on this issue in the following words;

⁶³¹ 7: 145

⁶³² 31: 18

⁶³³ See for example: John Shelbey, *The Gospel of Jesus: In search of original teachings*. Rev. Davidson, John (Clear Books: India, 2004), 52

Then woe to those who write the Book with their own hands, and then say: "This is from Allah," to traffic with it for miserable price! - Woe to them for what their hands do write, and for the gain they make thereby.⁶³⁴

As far as the practice of this term for the Qur'ān is concerned, a researcher can locate detailed discourses pertaining to the term the Qur'ān and its expressions along with its other proper names in almost all of the major commentaries and the seminal works of Qur'ānic sciences. The foremost worth mentioning point is that, in these discussions, Kitāb has been declared as the proper name of the Qur'ān by scholars.⁶³⁵ Consequently, by principle the occurrence of metaphor is invalid here.

Furthermore, though majority has defined this term as book, yet, the term Kitāb for the Qur'ān is not interconnected with the notion of writing only. Rather, it carries the name Kitāb since the letters and Surahs are joined with each other or because it is assortment of all the sciences in the Qur'ān.

Moreover, it can be Kitāb as it is collection of legal rulings and laws.⁶³⁶ The renowned scholar Siyuṭī states elucidating the term: "it has been titled as Kitāb because it covers a wide range of various genres of sciences such as stories of the past nations and news about future"⁶³⁷

Consequently, specialists of Qur'ānic sciences and language agree on the point that the Qur'ān is titled as Kitāb even though it is not written.⁶³⁸ An eminent commentator Rāzī defines Kitāb stating Al Kitāb is 'the revealed and recited'.⁶³⁹ Hence, the Qur'ān is Kitāb since it is written and it is Kitāb because the letters, words, verses and surahs are joined together. This demonstrates the fact that in the understanding of Kitāb, the Muslim scholarship has not confined itself to the expression of 'written' merely as being its name

⁶³⁴ 2: 78-79

⁶³⁵ Al Māwardī, Al Nukat wal 'Uyūn, vol, 1. 23. See also: Syūṭī, vol, 1. 103.

⁶³⁶ IlmuddinSakhāwi, Jmālul Qurrā wa Kamālul Iqrā (Bairūt: Dārul Ma'mūn, 1997), vol, 1.81
GoharRehmān, 'Uloom ul Qur'ān (Mardān: Maktba Tafhīm ul Qur'ān, 2003), 50.

⁶³⁷ Siyuṭī, Itqān, vol, 1. 103.

⁶³⁸ Isfāhānī, Mufradāt, vol, 1. 699

⁶³⁹ Mafātiḥ, vol, 6. 375

the recitation would is also called Kitāb. But, the point should be clear that the primary meaning of Kitāb in reference to the Qur’ān is book.

Furthermore, regardless of the fact that the endeavor to comprehend a concept connected with the Qur’ān in the light of the Qur’ān itself is a remarkable, it should be kept in mind that there are numerous other features that have been described as the basic traits of the Qur’ān. The Classical, as well as, contemporary Muslim scholarship has considered all those characteristics indispensable for comprehensive understanding of the Qur’ān. Thus, for a perfect comprehension, one has to go through all names and attributes of the Qur’ān lest the one be a victim of self contradictory understanding of the Qur’ān.

To take in consideration the foremost and primary title of the revelation sent down to the Prophet Muhammad is the Qur’ān that has occurred sixty nine times. The term is verbal noun from قرآن (reading) or قرن (to collect).⁶⁴⁰ The reading of the content certainly requires a text. Thus, this very fundamental characteristic illustrates towards the fact that form is an important element in the understanding of the Muslim tradition. Moreover, has the writer, according to his claim, truly made an effort to understand the Qur’ān as it itself does, he would have noticed numerous verses witnessing written form of the Qur’ān. For instance, in the very beginning, it has been declared that there is no doubt in this book.⁶⁴¹ Although the commentators have differed in determining the meaning of (ذلك),⁶⁴² the majority has taken the expression of ‘this’ rather ‘that’ witnessing from Arabic poetry.⁶⁴³

Moreover, there are many Surahs prior to the migration of the Prophet that point out the writing down of the Qur’ān it is said while narrating the objections of disbelievers;

And they say: "Tales of the ancients, which he has caused to be written: and they are dictated before him morning and evening." ⁶⁴⁴ However this may be, the verse denotes to

⁶⁴⁰ Majiddīn Fairozābādī, Baṣāer Zawai al Tamīz, ed. Alī, Muhammād (Cairo: Lajna tul Ehya ul Turāthul Islāmī, 1996) vol, 263. 4

⁶⁴¹ 2: 2

⁶⁴² The term is used to illustrate towards an absent (that). For present the term **هذا** is used that means this.

⁶⁴³ Samarqandī, Bahrul ‘Ulūm, vol, 1. 12. See also: Al Māmardi, Nukat, vol, 1. 67.

⁶⁴⁴ 5: 25

the act of writing pointed out by the worst opponents who knew that the revelation was being written.

Many of the Prophet's Sayings are clear in this regard that the early Muslim community had a very transparent conception of the written form of the Qur'ān. The extraordinary care of the Prophet for the revelation to be written down, appointment of numerous Companions for this task and his constant revision with them shows that he indeed meant the Qur'ān to be written. Many of the early traditions fortify the existence of the written verses with Companions. Some of them suffice to elaborate the issue;

It is narrated that the Prophet prohibited his Companions to accompany Muṣḥaf while travelling to the land of enemy.⁶⁴⁵

The prophet is also mentioned to have said that the reward of the recitation by looking at the Muṣḥaf is as the reward of the obligatory prayer over voluntary.⁶⁴⁶

It seems that the author rejects the meaning of the book for Kitāb as it denotes to an organized compilation in its complete form, the reality that he is not prepared to accept. Here too, he has endeavored to demonstrate that the writing of any author develops through a process of rewriting, rephrasing and emendations. In the same way, the Qur'ānic text has also developed as it involved abrogation that required rewriting and rephrasing. A quick vigilant look in abrogation theory reveals the fact that it is not so. The abrogation along with its one kind only requires omission as abrogation of ruling excluding verse does not require even omission. As far as the second kind abrogation of verse except ruling is concerned, there is difference of opinion among the scholars. Given it is accepted, the number of abrogated verses is very rare not more than three. Hence, the process of abrogation did not necessitate rewriting, emendations and rephrasing. Therefore, the premise that the Qur'ān is a symbol of Divine revelation and not the facsimile of it is not valid.

⁶⁴⁵ Abū 'Ubaid, Qāsim bin Salām, *Faḍā'lul Qur'ān*, ed. Marwan 'Atiyya, (Bairūt: Dār Ibn Kathīr, 1995), vol. 1. 103.

⁶⁴⁶ Abū 'Abdul Rehman Nisātī, *Faḍā'lul Qur'ān*, ed. Fāruq Ḥamāda (Bairūt: Dār Eḥyāul 'Ulūm), vol. 1. 114.

It is quite evident that the author through his analysis of the term *Kitāb* in some verses made an attempt to over generalize the metaphorical sense of God's knowledge in all verses that is by principle questionable.

While, coming to the theories presented by author in his analysis of the reports of collection, the entire section is occupied with the phraseology of confusion and self contradictory statements. For instance, he expresses his disquiet with reference to the reports and declares that had Prophet ever thought of producing a book, there would have appeared some early attempts to do so. Moreover, if it was his primary duty to produce a canonical text, how then he could have placed any duty above this.

The author, immediately having said that, states that the scrapes of wood, bones and other raw material suggest that this material was no more than an *aide memorié*. It is evident that he is denying idea of writing down and mentioning, simultaneously, the effects of the idea. The author himself has brought forward the evidence that is rather deteriorating his own argument. The writing material of bones and wood forcefully endorse the idea of compiling the recitations in book form. To elaborate, writing the revelations on whatever sources available shows the intensity and urgency of the task and Prophet's conscious attempt to get it be written. Otherwise, he could have left the project for the future in hope of suitable writing material.

Quite remarkable is the view of Hamidulla in this regard as he writes in the outcome of his French translation of the Qur'ān that one of the themes of the first revelation is the 'praise of the pen as a means of human knowledge' which would explain the Prophet concern for the preservation of the in writing.⁶⁴⁷

Last, but not the least, is the point that in dealing a word semantically one is supposed to consult the concerned primary and major lexicons of that language. A glimpse over the sources of the author reveals the fact that he did not consult even a single primary category. His entire sources of information are in either English or German languages that are second-rate and do not provide reliable ground for decision making. Rationally, it

⁶⁴⁷ Dr Hamidullah translation/ see The Bible, The Qur'ān and science 128.

looks bizarre for a researcher who is going to conduct semantic research on the Arabic term without using a single Arabic reference.

4.3. Conclusion

Human endeavor cannot be announced as perfect, ideal and faultless as to err is an indispensable part of human. Every human attempt has its plus points and drawbacks. Hence, to address these characteristics becomes crucial for a better understanding of the matters. Some of the significant peculiarities are as following;

The foremost quality of the three entries is detailed, thorough and profound knowledge of the writers of the themes discussed in their articles. It must be acknowledged that the writers have provided direct and exhaustive references of the Muslim sources. In addition, all of the three have touched their subject with multiple approaches quite diverse from each others.

Secondly, it is necessary, for a better comprehension of the matter, to draw attention to few significant points regarding the nature of critical approaches to the Qur'ān in the West. Many of the scholars gave prominence to the fact that the recent approaches related to either field of Ḥadīth or Qur'ānic studies trace their roots, more or less, in the past and more significantly in the Reformation Period.⁶⁴⁸ Among the major outcomes of that period was the treatment of religious traditions and scholarship with skepticism and uncertainty.

René Guénon (d. 1951) considers that dilemma of the western civilization and expresses his views about this era saying that it has, in general influenced the conception of entire human history in pejorative sense. History has been considered as legendary for which, the modern writers do not allow themselves to obtain any certainty. The modern period has produced purely a material mind that denies supra- rational things. Hence, he declares Modern look towards history as anti- tradition.⁶⁴⁹

The problem augmented when this approach was generalized in treating the traditions and texts of other religions and more significantly Islam. The profound influence of the

⁶⁴⁸There are scholars who consider the renaissance and reformation of the same nature and results. Hence, they date the modern period to thirteenth century rather fifteenth. See for instance: Guénon, René. *The Crisis of the Modern World*. Trans: Pallis, Marco. London: Luzac & Co., 1942.

⁶⁴⁹Guénon, Crises. 10- 14

modern philosophies has resulted in the way that they try to see everything with their own lens of skepticism that lead them to the excessive doubt and even rejection of historical facts. Consequently, the thread of the fabrication of the Islamic narration could be seen throughout the history of treatment with Islam and in the present encyclopaedia as well. The three articles are the manifestation of this treatment. Each of the authors has expressed his dissatisfaction with the findings of the traditional Muslim conclusions in regard to the discussed topic and emphatically attempted to prove the accuracy and precision of his own findings.

Thirdly, the pejorative conception of the Church authorities resulted in the ill-treatment of overall classical scholarship. Despite the fact that the positive academic contribution of the Muslim scholarship in the world's civilizations has been admitted by even many western scholars,⁶⁵⁰ there is still a tendency of misrepresentation of the Muslim scholars. It is a reality that the occidental scholarship does not place the classical Muslim intellectuals in high regard in the sense that their role is mostly perceived as working for their own interests and agendas. A thorough look into the works of foremost scholars reveals the fact that to inculcate the doubts about the classical Muslim scholars is a common feature of the western scholarship. Some of instances of the patronizing behavior towards the Muslim scholarship are; "They have invented the readings to fortify their verdicts",⁶⁵¹ "they have been twisting the Qur'ānic text for their specific agendas" and "they did not have sound and solid knowledge"⁶⁵²

Bennett, in his discussion of the outcome of eighteenth century Humanist scholarship, illustrates the fact that although the secular wave did open some new ways to the study of Islam, by and large, the overall behavior remained critical and subjective. They, illustration to scholars, even did not attempt to understand the Muslims beliefs from their perspective. A tendency of 'we knew better' and they (Muslims) could not be trusted to identify Islam was there.⁶⁵³ Though, the author's comments relate to past, the echoes can

⁶⁵⁰ See for instance the introduction of Nabia Abbot in which she has presented a highly esteemed portrayal of Muslim savants. *Studies in Arabic* , 11- 31

⁶⁵¹ Wansbrough, *Qur'ānic Studies*.

⁶⁵² Reynolds, *The Qur'ān*, 172

McAuliffe, *Qur'ānic Christians*, 258

⁶⁵³ Bennett, "New Directions", 88

be heard in the material at discussion. The example of the present articles fortifies this observation as the first both writers have very insistently charged the Muslim scholars of forgery and falsification of the facts. In the third case, the writer throughout his article gives the impression that the original meaning is only the one he has proffered. On contrary, the three writers have attempted to present the western scholarship in high regard continuously using the phrases such as the 'outstanding western works' and 'western Experts' leaving an impression of the western supremacy over all works and findings.

Fourthly, the fundamental problem of misunderstanding lies in the generalization of rules and methods laid initially for the treatment of biblical texts. An eminent scholar of the comparative studies, Khalifa Hasan, elaborates the point saying that the main dilemma of the western scholarship is the application of the methodological approaches in to the Qur'ānic Studies that were employed in the treatment of their own sacred books. They have applied the textual criticism and higher criticism on the Qur'ān despite the fact that these methods are purely developed for the treatment of the text of Old and New testaments.⁶⁵⁴

In connection to the application of methods of biblical criticism, he elucidates that to compare the Qur'ān with the Old and New Testaments in historical perspective is injustice to the historical facts. It is well known fact that history of these texts covers a long span of time that is spread over many centuries. While, the matter of the Qur'ān is totally different as it does not constitute history in the sense that the time period of its composition was the same period as that of its revelation.⁶⁵⁵

Another contemporary scholar, Hussein Nasr complains of the inappropriate methodology of the western scholars. According to Nasr, to claim a history of the Qur'ānic text is not only to misunderstand the nature of the Qur'ān but also to go against historical facts. He states that the rules of biblical criticism do not apply to the Qur'ān as it does not have a history. What corresponds the Bible is the ḥadīth as it has been

⁶⁵⁴ Dirasatul Qur'ān Karīm, 4-9.

⁶⁵⁵ Dirāsatul Qur'ān, 13-15

compiled after the death of the Prophet as the Bible was compiled after Jesus. Quite identical to this is the view of Mauriac Bucaille expressed in his noted work, 'The Bible, The Qur'ān and science'.⁶⁵⁶

To generalize the conclusion based on the studies of some specific figures is counted as a methodological fallacy by the experts of the critical sciences. The three authors by the examination of few cases have endeavored to oversimplify the conclusions.

Fifthly, a policy of 'pick n choose' is evident in the materiel of the EQ. For instance, the author of the entry Ḥadīth and the Qur'ān has narrated the statement of the great critic of the narrators to nullify one narrator. On contrary, he has not accepted the verification of the same scholar for another transmitter without the mention of any sound reason for that.

Finally, a dearth of rigorous and academic scholarship is rather visible in the entries on the collection of the Qur'ān. The accuracy of citation, precision in interpretation of the views, use of relevant sources, and the internal consistency are the basic elements of any serious scholarship that one is supposed to follow. Instead, the writers of EQ are observed as committing frequently the intellectual fallacies that has undermined the worth of their works such as the persuasion of reader, self contradictory statements, reliance on limited sources and generalization of the conclusions.

⁶⁵⁶<http://www.firstthings.com/blogs/firstthoughts/2010/09/quran-historical-criticism>, see also;

5. Discourses of the EQ on text of the Qur'ān

5.1. Introduction

In the history of the western Qur'ānic scholarship, the researchers delved into the text of the Qur'ān from diverse perspectives. The study on the text of the Qur'ān includes the analysis of the Qur'ānic etymology, stylistics, articulacy, coherence and eloquence of its language. In this regard, a multiplicity of the approaches is noticeable. At a specific historical moment in the West, the language of the Qur'ānic text was declared as absurd, irregular and clumsy and confused jumble.⁶⁵⁷

The renowned western scholar Noldeke sees an ebb and flow of emotions and expressions in Qur'ānic text as sometimes the revelation have burst from the Prophet in uncontrollable excitement and at times it was not like that. He is of the conviction that the earlier Qur'ānic contents had more lucid and coherent expressions than the latter parts and it contained what he called as 'a wild force of passion'.⁶⁵⁸

While there are numerous western scholars appeared to be highly influenced by the magnificent style, fluency of expressions and fabulous phraseology. Consequently, one can notice many complimentary remarks about the literary merits of the Qur'ān in the western works. Arthur Arberry expresses his view concerning the beauty of the Qur'ān declaring it as "the supreme classic of Arabic literature an inimitable symphony".⁶⁵⁹ Voluminous works, classical as well contemporary, have been produced with regard to the rhetorical marvels of the Qur'ān.

Conversely, many of the western intellectuals are fervent to focus on the critical examination of Qur'ānic text as they have been to the Old and New Testaments.⁶⁶⁰ For instance, Arthur Jeffery was the most enthusiastic in preparing the critical edition of the Qur'ān. To achieve his task, he collected multiple readings of the Qur'ān from 170

⁶⁵⁷ Thomas Carlyle, On Heroes, Hero-Worship and the Heroic in History, 64-67

⁶⁵⁸ Noldeke, The Qur'ān, 5-8.

⁶⁵⁹ The Koran Interpreted, 14, <http://www.iqballyberlibrary.net/pdf/QA.pdf>

⁶⁶⁰ Mingana, Syraic influence on the style of Qur'ān.

volumes of almost thirty scholars among authentic and mostly non authentic sources to collect the variants.⁶⁶¹

Alongside, the western academia has exercised painstaking efforts in tracing out the foreign vocabulary in the Qur'ān. For instance, Jeffery was of the strong conviction that a sound interpretation of the Qur'ān is not practicable without an exhaustive study of the vocabulary of the Qur'ān and its etymology.⁶⁶² He was convinced that the Qur'ān abounds in material borrowed from the great religions extant at that time. Thus, building his work on this theory, he was able to trace out the roots of various words in Aramaic, Hebrew, Persian and many other languages.

The Qur'ānic script has also been a spotlight of western interests. The topic of the defective script of Qur'ānic text has been the focal point of arguments by many scholars. The assumption of the defectiveness of the Qur'ānic script led some of the western scholars to assert that the multiple readings are the aftermath of flawed script.⁶⁶³

The theme of the origin of Arabic script received the western attention to a great extent and majority of scholars, in this regard too, attempted to assign foreign sources to Arabic script. Alphonse Mingana appears to be an active proponent of the idea of Syraic origin of Arabic script.⁶⁶⁴ Mingana is supported by the work of Luxenberg who proffered in his book the identical idea. On contrary, Noldeke and Abbot have showed the Nabataean origin of Arabic script.⁶⁶⁵ Another famous claim constitutes that the Qur'ānic script evolved in a time span of three hundred years.⁶⁶⁶

⁶⁶¹ Azami, 155

⁶⁶² Jeffery, *Foreign Vocabulary of Qur'ān* (Baroda: Oriental Intitute,1938), vii

⁶⁶³ Goldziher, *Madhaheb*, 2-6.

⁶⁶⁴ *Transmission of the Qur'ān*, 45

⁶⁶⁵ See: *TheRise of the North Arabic Script*, 16. Some of the Muslim scholars have generally accepted the second opinion but A'zam has opposed this view in his work and attempted to proved that the Nabataean originally spoke Arabic language. He supported his view by the historical fact that Nabataeans were the descendants were Ismā'il and it is known that he spoke Arabic. Hence, the Nabataean language is originally one form of Arabic. A'zami, *The history of the text of Qur'ān*, 118-121. Another recent scholar, Mustafa Shah expresses the same in his work on the language of the Qur'ān. See; *The Arabic language*. <http://eprints.soas.ac.uk/5814/1/shah/pdf>

⁶⁶⁶ Luxenberg, *Syro-Aramaic readings*, 37

Another highly significant genre relating to the text of the Qur'ān is the critical study of Qur'ānic manuscripts that has found increasing emphasis in the recent decades.⁶⁶⁷ Despite the fact that many of them acknowledge the early dating of Manuscripts such as Abbot has dated the oldest manuscript to the early first century.⁶⁶⁸ Yet, majority of the western scholars are of the conviction that they are nothing except forgery.⁶⁶⁹

In 20th century, among the significant approaches, the method of textual criticism or lower criticism was applied to the text of the Qur'ān. A glance at the history of the West reveals the fact that the early Christians and Jews dealt their scriptures only with dogmatic and historical perspectives. Monasteries were the only places where the study of the Old and New Testaments was fostered. It was only in reformation when the right of the individual to read the Bible was declared by Luther. During the reformation and onward, when the Bible became the object of study, the critical western scholars soon realized the existence of the discrepancies and inconsistencies in it that needed to be resolved. To examine those confusions for the improvement of the biblical texts they developed the critical methods of text analysis called textual criticism. In other words, to accommodate the concept of inspired scriptures or writing, this method was developed.⁶⁷⁰ Many western scholars have produced exhaustive works concerning the Bible and Old Testaments aiming to establish the original wordings of the biblical texts insofar as possible. In doing so, the endeavors are wielded to the extent that the versions, sometimes, seem more stylistic and influential than the original.⁶⁷¹

History records that with the development of biblical critical methods, tension emerged between the scientific scholars and the traditional followers of Christianity who deemed the new approach contradictory to the dogmatic view of the Bible. However, in course of time, these scholars recognized the grave utilization of critical methods in reconstruction

⁶⁶⁷ The study of manuscripts has two tasks. On the one hand manuscripts are examined to date any historical text and on the other, they are studied in order to reconstruct the text in case of the variations.

⁶⁶⁸ Abbot, papyri, 3

⁶⁶⁹ See: FrancoisDeroche, "Written Transmission", in *Blackwell* ,172. One can imagine the level of the objectivity and detachment in the Western works as among 250,000 complete or partial manuscripts of Qur'ān, they do not consider even some reliable and make a an entirely irrational claim of forgery.

⁶⁷⁰ The companion to the history of the Bible 308-9

⁶⁷¹ Akhtar, the Qur'ān, 4

of the text and consequently, the critical approaches soon freed itself from the religious constraints.⁶⁷²

In the present chapter, the two highly significant themes in regard to the Qur'ān are selected for critical appraisal. They include textual criticism of the Qur'ān and etymology of the Qur'ānic vocabulary. The two ideas are selected due to their sensitivity for the Muslims and excessive focus they are receiving from the western academia at present. The first section of the present chapter 5.2 addresses the issue of the foreign vocabulary of the Qur'ān together with the related aspects. Section 5.3 deals the theme of Textual criticism with a prologue to the method proceeding then to the assessment of the concerned article in the EQ.

5.2. Foreign vocabulary of the Qur'ān

Primarily, the study of the foreign words is connected to the branch of etymology that seeks to investigate the history of the word, its origin and examines the changes through which the specific word has gone. A linguist, by applying the comparative methods seeks the origin, root and meaning of the specific term in the light of the language in question or the cognate languages. In this way, one is able to trace out that whether the specific word is taken from any other language and hence, foreign or it has its own history in the same language.

It is a worldwide and social phenomenon that all languages of the world contain the foreign words as an outcome of the social, commercial and academic connections with others nations. For instance, the English language abounds the foreign vocabulary borrowed from Italian and French, German and Spanish through its commercial and intellectual relationships with these languages. Hence, the etymology of the word can be good enough to assist for a firm grasp of expressions and detection of the nature of the word as foreign.

⁶⁷²E. von Dobshutz, "Bible in the Church" The Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics, (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1911), vol. 2. 592-94.

A glance backward at the western studies of the Old and New Testaments, demonstrates that initially it was the biblical scholars who, in order to gain a better interpretation of the Bible, hunted for the original expressions by tracing the roots of the words in the cognate languages.⁶⁷³ By employment of this method on the Qur'ānic studies, scholars were of the conviction that this would work for a sound interpretation of the Qur'ān. In this regard, Jeffrey states that the examination of the foreign terms in the Qur'ān assists in better understanding of the Qur'ān.⁶⁷⁴

5.2.1 The Muslim standpoint

The debate on the issue of the foreign vocabulary is entrenched in the traditional Muslim scholarship. One can trace out chapters on this issue in the voluminous commentaries, the books of Qur'ānic sciences and the works of philologists. The foundation of diverse outlooks on this theme is the claim of the Qur'ān itself as it states in many places that it has been sent down in pure Arabic. For instance, the Qur'ān declares;

*Verily, We have sent it down as an Arabic Qur'an in order that you may understand.*⁶⁷⁵

In another place it is stated;

*And thus We have sent it down as a Qur'an in Arabic.*⁶⁷⁶

In regard to the interpretation of the ayahs, various views are expressed. Mainly three standpoints can be summarized as follows;

- 1- One group of the scholars, basing their premise on the above mentioned ayahs, held the view that the entire language of the Qur'ān is pure Arabic and hence, denied the existence of the foreign languages. On the forefront of this genre are

⁶⁷³The method is criticized by many experts with the argument that it intended to ignore the changes to the meaning made in course of time and further, it overlooks the expression of the word under discussion in its specific context. Moreover, according to these scholars, the etymology of the word is a poor indication for its expressions in the contemporary text. On this issue, a profound discussion can be viewed in the work of James Barr, Comparative philology and the texts of Old Testament (Eisenbrauns: 2001), 90.

⁶⁷⁴ Foreign Vocabulary, Introduction, 1.

⁶⁷⁵ 12: 2

⁶⁷⁶ 20: 113

famous jurist Shāfa‘ī (d. 204), Ṭabari, Fakhar al Rāzī, Abū ‘Ubaida Ma‘mar bin Muthanna (d. 209) and Ibn Fāris. They viewed that the entire Qur’ān is in pure Arabic and there is not a single word from other language. Abū ‘Ubaida is reported to say; whoever suggested the occurrence of the foreign words in the Qur’ān, has made charge against the God and the Qur’ān.⁶⁷⁷ These savants were of the conviction that there can be similarities in the languages and there is always a possibility of the usage of the same words in two or more languages by coincidence. The fundamental reason for their forceful opposition for this notion is various Qur’ānic ayahs that negate the existence of non- Arabic words in the Qur’ān as Shāfa‘ī demonstrates.

Moreover, among the basic factors for their denial was the view that the Qur’ānic principle of sending the message in tongue of its recipients necessitated the pure Arabic Qur’ān. Thus, how it could be claimed that the Qur’ān has unknown words? To sum up, one cannot say about a specific term that it is Coptic or Persian and not the Arabic. But, one is supposed to say that the term is Arabic and Coptic as well for instance.⁶⁷⁸

- 2- On contrary, there are scholars who do not hesitate to admit the existence of these words in the Qur’ān absolutely as according to them the earlier authorities such as Ibn ‘Abbās(d.68) and his pupils Mujāhid(d. 103), ‘Ikrama and Saeed ibn Jubair(d. 95) have acknowledged the occurrence of non- Arabic words in the Qur’ān. The classical exegete Ṭabarī has declared many words, on the authority of Ibn ‘Abbās and Said ibn Jubair, to be foreign. Moreover, they are reported to state that the Qur’ān contains words from every language.⁶⁷⁹ There are many works comprising the lists of the foreign words in the Qur’ān. For instance, the works of Siyūṭī and Ibnul Jawzī contain comprehensive catalogs of these words. Their view is that although the Qur’ān is declared to be in sheer Arabic, the appearance of some words does not affect its Arabic nature. To elaborate, the words of the Qur’ān,

⁶⁷⁷ See: Abū‘Ubaida Al Başarī, Majāzul Qur’ān, ed. Fuad Sezgin (Cairo: Maktabtul Khānji, 1381), vol. 1. 17.

⁶⁷⁸ Abū‘Ubaida, Majāzul Qur’ān, vol. 1. 17.

Abū Ahmād Al Sāmri, Lughāt fil Qur’ān, ed Salāhuddīn (Cairo: Matabatul Risāla, 1946), vol, 1. 19.
Muhammad bin Idris Shāfi‘ī, Risāla, ed. Ahmad Shākir (Egypt: Maktabatul Ḥalbi, 1940), vol, 1. 40-46.
Ṭabarī, Al Jāme‘, vol. 1. 13-15.

⁶⁷⁹ Jāme‘ ul Bayyān, vol, 1. 13.

they argue, are 77934 among which the number of the foreign terms is only approximately 119. Consequently, they cannot influence the nature of the Qur'ān.⁶⁸⁰

3- The third group of scholars such as Abū 'Ubaid Qāsim bin Salam (d.224) attempted to reconcile between both opinions suggesting that there are words in the Qur'ān originally from other languages but, they have been incorporated in Arabic and became part of it. The Arabs, by their adaptation, altered them according to their language and hence, in the course of adaptation they have undergone alterations and modifications.⁶⁸¹

The identical view has been demonstrated by the famous exegete Ibn 'Attiya as he states; "indeed these words are non- Arabic in its origin. Arabs would go to various places for commercial affairs such as Syria and Abyssinia and adopt multiple terms. With the passage of time, they altered the form of these words by omitting some letters, adding some and lightening the heaviness of the foreign words and ultimately, used them in their poetry. When the Qur'ān revealed, they knew the meanings".⁶⁸²

At present, one can find the proponents of the both approaches. Yet, the majority tends to lean towards the solution proffered by Abū 'Ubaid. A recent scholar, Mohr Ali elaborates in this regard stating that in fact Arabic, Aramaic and Syraic have the same origin as they all belong to the Semitic languages. They have number of words and expression in common yet, there connotations have undergone changes according to the influence of time and place.⁶⁸³

Another recent scholar explicates in this regard that some of the scholars strictly opposed the occurrence of non- Arabic words in the Qur'ān. Most probably, what they meant is its existence in the Qur'ān without alterations according to the rules of Arabic.⁶⁸⁴

⁶⁸⁰ Jalāluddin Siyūtī, *Al Muhazzab fīma Waqa'a fil Qur'ān minal Mu'arrab* (Saudi Arabia: Maktaba Fadala), vol. 1. 57.

⁶⁸¹ Ahmad Ibn Fāris, *Al Ṣahibī fī Fiqhul lugha*, ed. 'Ali, Muhammad (1997), vol. 1. 33. Siyūtī, *Al Muhazzab*, vol. 1. 65.

⁶⁸² Al Muḥarrar, vol. 1, 51.

⁶⁸³ See: The Orientalist s and the Qur'ān, 306

⁶⁸⁴ Ibrāhīm Ṣāleḥ, *Dirāsāt fī Fiqhul Lugha* (Bairūt: Dārul 'Ilm lil Malayyīn, 1960), vol. 1. 317

Accordingly, it can be observed that the early exegetes, when ever declared any word to be of non- Arabic, added the phrase that the Arabs have arabized this term according to their rules.⁶⁸⁵ This denotes the fact that not a single word of non- Arabic origin, contradicting the rules and syntax of Arabic, is used in the Qur’ān.⁶⁸⁶

To sum up, it seems that the later scholars did not hesitate to admit the occurrence of the foreign terminology in the Qur’ān viewing that it does not go against the eloquence and coherence of the Qur’ān and it endorses the idea that as the Qur’ān comprises the knowledge of everything, in the same manner it contains the words from every language that demonstrates its universality. Moreover, it is not considered a drawback in reference to the Qur’ān as had it been so the Muslim scholarship would have attempted to hide this problem.

As a social phenomenon, every language adopts some vocabulary from other languages as is the case of the major languages of the world. To reject the idea of adaptation means to declare any language as dead. In this sense, Arabic does contain the borrowed terms and the Qur’ān has employed those terms at the time of its revelation. The scholars who have rejected the idea of the non- Arabic terms in the Qur’ān were probably predominated by their religious zeal as they adhered to the apparent meanings of the ayahs and did not investigate the issue from the linguistic angle.⁶⁸⁷

5.2.2 The western views

The idea that Prophet Muhammad is the sole author of the Qur’ān has unanimously been established by the western scholars. Moreover, they consider that in the composition of the Qur’ān, he took help from the extent sources of that time. This view is addressed from diverse and multiple approaches. To closely examine the influence of those sources, the study of the non- Arabic terms in the Qur’ān is considered to be vital and crucial.

From the nineteenth century onwards, the western works concentrated on the theme of foreign vocabulary of the Qur’ān as a result of etymological investigations. It is

⁶⁸⁵ See for instance: Rāzī, Mafātīḥ, vol, 17. 347.Zamakhsharī, Kashāf, vol, 4. 140

⁶⁸⁶ Zuhailī, Wahba. Al Tafsir Al Munīr (Bairūt: Dārul Fikr al Mu’āşir, 1418), vol,1. 34

⁶⁸⁷ ShukaibHilālī, Ma Waq'a fil Qur'ā min ghair lughatil 'Arab (Madina: Al Jamia al Islamiyya, 1970), 21

aforementioned that the issue was not a fresh as the traditional Muslim scholarship has produced many works long before the western scholars. Though, the difference is only that of the outlooks and approaches. The classical scholarship did not ever associate the issue with the Divine nature of the Qur'ān. Conversely, the western scholars raised this issue in order to prove the foreign sources of the Qur'ān designating the authorship of the Qur'ān to the Prophet Muhammad. Among the western scholars who addressed this theme are Springer, Fraenkel, Noldeke and Jeffery. Probably, the most prominent of them is Jeffery who has created a summation of the earlier works in this regard.

The theory of the foreign vocabulary or loan words is established on the premise of supposed superior and sophisticated Christian and other civilizations that influenced the Qur'ānic phraseology in great deal. Moreover, it is supposed that it was the Prophet who first used these words or introduced them in the Qur'ān as a result of his contacts with some of the Christians and others.

The majority of the western scholars hold the view that the Prophet Muhammad himself composed the Qur'ān and by doing so he got help from whatever sources were extant at that time. Accordingly, by employing historical-linguistic approaches, attempts are made to trace out the origin of Qur'ānic vocabulary in other languages. The western scholars addressed the issue with the mindset that study of the foreign words would be helpful understanding the influences of the sources that Prophet Muhammad used to come up with his religion as Jeffery declares.⁶⁸⁸ Therefore, an emphasis in the modern scholarship can be witnessed on the theory of interconnections of Arabia with the other world at the advent of the Prophet.

The western historian H. A. R. Gibb also seems to support this opinion stating that it would be natural to imagine that the splendid religious ideas were carried to Makkah through Caravans and in the Qur'ān there is a great number of vocabulary that support this idea.⁶⁸⁹ Worthy of mention in this regard is the work of Alphonse Mingana who has attempted to locate the origin of all Qur'ānic religious terms in Syraic.

⁶⁸⁸ Jeffery, 2

⁶⁸⁹ Mohammadanism Historical Survey (London: 1961), 37

Recent scholarship, as well, has focused its attention towards the text itself. The present day stance is not unlike past works in the sense that it has also attempted to find out the social, cultural, religious and commercial influences of thence society on the text of Qur'ān with the premise that this method would assist gaining a firm understanding of the context of the Qur'ān.⁶⁹⁰

For instance, an attempt has been made by Marfred Kropp to reveal the theological influences of the Ethiopic Christianity on the religious terms of the Qur'ān. In his examination of some specific terms, he demonstrates that the Prophet, through his contacts with the Christians, was influenced with the Christian theology, the impact of which is very apparent in his usage of these terms. Though, he admits that there are only loose and vague allusions to the oral transmission of these contents to the Prophet.⁶⁹¹

In the context of discussion, one noticeable point is that the western scholarship is not settled on one point concerning the most influential and dominant language on text of the Qur'ān. Some, like Mingana, are of the strong view that it was the Christian sway that appeared in the text while, others such as Geiger and Torry try to seek the origin in Judaism. In addition, to support the assumption of influence, even some scholars have focused on pointing out that the written Christian sources especially the Greek, Latin and Syraic versions of the Bible were in circulation in Arabia. However, it was Syraic, according to them, in most of the cases that influenced the most. A contemporary scholar, Walid Saleh declaring the method unruly, points out the competition in assigning the origin of the Qur'ān to Judaism or Christianity saying that by only reading the titles of the works about this issue one realizes that there is a race as to who could claim Islam as their progeny.⁶⁹²

⁶⁹⁰ The writers who have worked in this regard are many. For a brief study see: Mikhail Bukharin, "Mecca on the Caravan Routes in Pre-Islamic Antiquity" in *The Qur'ān in context*, 115- 134. Samir Khalil, "The theological Christian influence on the Qur'ān: a reflection" in *The Qur'ān in historical context*, 141- 162.

⁶⁹¹ "Beyond single words: *Ma'ida* – *Shaytan* – *jibt* and *taghut* Mechanisms of transmission into the Ethiopic (GY'Yz) Bible and the Qur'ānic text", *The Qur'ān In its historical context*, 204- 216.

⁶⁹² "The etymological fallacy and Qur'ānic studies: Muhammad, Paradise and late antique", *The Qur'ān in context*, 649-698. 653 (footnotes)

The fundamental factor for this attitude might be the subjective approaches of the scholars and overlooking of philological rules. In this regard, scholars see that the findings of the western scholars are the reflections of their settings. Those who incline to attribute the Christian background to Islam would prefer Syraic etymology and those who favor Jewish milieu would choose Hebrew as the mainspring of the Qur'ān.⁶⁹³

Another significant aspect of the western scholars' approach is that they remarkably disagree in number of the foreign words in the sense that the Muslim scholars have detected almost one hundred and nineteen words of foreign origin. On the contrary, observation of only Jeffery's work demonstrates that he has determined more than three hundred words of non-Arabic origin. More additions are also expected on the behalf of the western philologists in upcoming works.

The basic criterion for the detection of the loan or non- Arabic terms for the western philologists is absence of unanimous approach of the medieval Muslim exegetes on the expression of the term. According to them, this is an indication that the word was a foreign to them and hence, it is of non-Arabic origin. Jeffery, in his explanation of the term 'Furqān' describes that the early savants has shown uncertainty in determining the meaning of this term. Consequently, this confusion and uncertainty is itself sufficient to suggest that the word is problematic and hence, foreign.⁶⁹⁴ This datum has worked as a yardstick for the future academics.

The standard offered by Jeffery is however challenged by the recent philologists. According to the recent scholarship, to assume disagreement of the early exegetes on one meaning as the criterion for locating non- Arabic words is inappropriate. To allow this condition to work would ultimately demand to declare all those words as foreign that do not have one agreed meaning and hence, we have to declare a large amount of the Qur'ānic terminologies as foreign without historical proofs.⁶⁹⁵ To elaborate the point, the anthological nature of the exegesis works shows that the early scholars very rarely agreed

⁶⁹³ Walid, The etymological fallacy, 653

⁶⁹⁴ Foreign Vocabulary, 225

⁶⁹⁵ Walid, The etymological, 651

on one meaning of the terms because of the vast expression of the Arabic language. Hence, their disagreement does not symbolize their ignorance and dearth of knowledge.

The important point to note is the differences of the Muslim and western approaches in this regard. For traditional Muslims, even who denied the existence of the foreign words in the Qur'ān; the issue was not of dogmatic in nature as it did not affect the Divine nature of the Qur'ān. Instead, for them, it was only the matter of reconciling the ayahs of the Qur'ān that inform about the Pure Arabic nature of the Qur'ān with the notion of the occurrence of loan words therein.

As aforementioned that the work of Jeffery is the most influential in this regard and hence, its grave influence can be witnessed on the upcoming western works concerning the issue of foreign vocabulary. It is thus vital to present some of the highlights of his works. Jeffery, with wide linguistic knowledge, attempted to present his old hypotheses of the sources of the Prophet with new methodology.

It is quite clear from the above discussion that the fundamental line that distinguishes the western views from that of the Muslim standpoint is the authorship of the Qur'ān. The western works attempt to ascribe the Qur'ān to the Prophet. In this regard Jeffery says; “In the 6th century, Arabia was surrounded by the higher civilizations and religions and both the Christians well as Jewish doctrines were at work in his time. As a young boy, he was highly impressed by the great ideas of that time. Consequently, it was natural that the Qur'ān would contain the religious and cultural term borrowed from other religions more specifically the Judaism and Christianity. In addition, to assign the term a fresh and new look, the Prophet attempted to change them according to his own perceptions”.⁶⁹⁶

Jeffrey supports his statement with narrations that report the Prophet's journeys to Syria and other places. Moreover, in doing so, he attempts to show the contacts of the Prophet's with merchants, slaves and even the Christian churches.⁶⁹⁷

Another significant thread that runs throughout his book is his depiction of the traditional Muslim scholarship. He, quite frequently, reiterates the point that the Muslim scholars

⁶⁹⁶ Foreign, 38

⁶⁹⁷ Foreign, 13, 22

indeed failed to attain success in tracing out the origins of the terms. He deems that the Muslim scholars assigned those terms the foreign origin about which they did not have the clear knowledge and in order to cloak their ignorance, they attributed it to any language they wished.⁶⁹⁸ The worth mentioning point is that he could not refrain from attributing the fabrication to the earlier scholars saying that some of the scholars assigned the origin of words to other languages and placed it back in the mouth of Ibn 'Abbās.

His attitude towards the Muslim philologists' efforts and works has been considered as 'patronizing' by recent scholars and his criticism of the Muslim savants as 'motivated by a desire to conceal ignorance' is directed towards Jeffery himself by Tritton regarding his designation of some of the terms as non- Arabic.⁶⁹⁹

On contrary to his stance for the Muslim scholars, Jeffery places the Modern western scholarship in high regards and affirms that the recent scholars have detected much more foreign terminology in the Qur'ān that the Muslim scholars could not notice.⁷⁰⁰

5.2.3. The stance of EQ on foreign vocabulary of the Qur'ān

The article 'Foreign vocabulary of the Qur'ān' is written by Andrew Rippin, a renowned scholar of Qur'ānic studies and author of many celebrated works on the Qur'ān. Rippin, after providing a background to the theme puts forward the question that why the Muslim scholars assigned some words to foreign origins despite the Qur'ānic assertion about Arabic nature of the Qur'ān. He believes that this practice arose out of some specific considerations. According to him, it was the exegetes who created the problem not necessitated by the exegesis of the actual Qur'ānic text.⁷⁰¹

In his discussion of the factors that led the exegetes to the affirmation of foreign words in the Qur'ān, he counts the following factors;

⁶⁹⁸ Foreign, 18

⁶⁹⁹ A.S. Tritton, Review of The Foreign Vocabulary of the Qur'ān by Arthur Jeffery, *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 10, no. 4 (1942), 1009-1011

⁷⁰⁰ See for instance: 32, 30, 37, 28

⁷⁰¹ EQ, vol. 1. 227

The early exegetes other than Arabs, specifically Persians, noticed the similarity between Arabic and their spoken language and hence, declared correctly these words as foreign.

Another reason as he deems can be the relationship of the meaning between Arabic and the known language. The early Arab exegetes and grammarian had a language other than Arabic as their mother tongue and it was their knowledge of other languages that brought the study of loan words in Arabic.

Among these factors was the rise of grammatical studies that led to the understanding of the forms which, in turn, indicated to the aberrance. The consequences were that words violating these grammatical rules were declared as foreign.

According to him, the designation of the foreign has hermeneutical significances because if the word is to be declared as foreign, it is open for a broader interpretation. It is also clear, Rippin states, that the Muslim scholars could not succeed in their designation of loan words. Mainly, they attributed the words to other languages without historical and linguistic grounds. He elaborates the point by giving a specimen of Hebrew language. In his view many of the biblical characters that relate to Hebrew were assigned to other languages instead of Hebrew. Also, the Muslim attributed certain words to Coptic because of their social conceptions of Coptic as deceptive nation.

The Muslim scholars, according to him, have also ignored the apparent relationships in assigning the origins. Sometimes, it happened that the words were located wrongly by the earlier scholars who have no knowledge. When those who came later with better knowledge, it was not possible for them to reject the tradition. The reason for this behavior as he sees is that the Muslims have elevated tradition to the level that they simply could not throw away anything from tradition. In this sense, the exegetical tradition cannot be declared as acquisitive.

Analysis

In his work, Rippin did not deal with a list of the foreign words determining its origins. The reason might be that he does not consider the etymological knowledge indispensable for the comprehension of the Qur'ānic message as he has shown in his another work

concerning the meaning of Ḥanīf. Rather, he criticizes the approaches that seek to the origin of this word to understand the word in its Qur’ānic context and declares that as ‘Problematic’.⁷⁰²

The work can be considered a succinct yet comprehensive in its nature as Rippin surveys the earlier literature on this issue expounding the salient features of these works. In a modern scholar’s observation, the recent works on foreign vocabulary seldom go far beyond Jeffery’s work.⁷⁰³ This implement truly on the present article as Rippin, as well, seems to be contingent on the former’s work in the formation of his several views if not all. Mainly, his work can be considered an extension of the ideas offered by Jeffery in his monograph. More specifically, his comments concerning Persian designations of the words, Greek commercial influence on the Muslims, perception of Coptic community and dearth of knowledge in the Muslim scholarship are verbatim of Jeffrey’s remarks. Nonetheless, the present author does not indicate to the key source of his ideas.

As it is pointed out previously that Jeffery has discussed some of the aspects of the Muslim philologists’ methodology, Rippin does so but, to some extent, in different way.

As the former’s remarks concerning the Muslim savants are declared as patronizing in the sense that frequently he informs his readers about the incapability of the Muslim scholars in this field, Rippin on contrast, attempted to underline the key features of their methodology concerning this genre. In his analysis, he shows that exegetes had a set of rules in declaring any word as foreign. By doing so, he attempts to support the Muslim scholarship with a description of their set methodology with a good measure of knowledge in detection of foreign expressions. However, on some issues as mentioned, he also could not manage to escape from offering pejorative remarks.

As far as the contentions of Rippin about the knowledge of the Muslim scholars are concerned, his statements, again, are the echo of Jeffery’s remarks. According to him, the little knowledge of other languages, bias, and dearth of historical observations of the Muslim scholars resulted in designations of the words to other languages incorrectly.

⁷⁰²In his analysis of the term ‘ḥanīf’, he does not trace its etymological roots. Instead, he endeavors to understand the word in the Qur’ānic context. “Reḥmān and Ḥanīf”. In W. Halaq and P. D. Little, eds. *Islamic studies presented to Charles J. Adams* (Leiden: Brill, 1991), 153- 168.

⁷⁰³Carter, “Foreign Vocabulary”, In *Blackwell companion to the Qur’ān*, 121

Jeffrey, as mentioned in the previous clause, also charges the Muslim scholarship of the identical points in various clauses of his book such as a work of mere guesswork, based on personal bias and lack of linguistic knowledge.⁷⁰⁴

This observation is true in regard to some of the cases such as incorrect designation of some words or over-conciseness in citation, but, this is not always the case. He may be true in this argument to some extent as the recent scholars as well indicated to these problems in their works.⁷⁰⁵ Moreover, they also illustrated that the earlier philologists and exegetes mingled the Qur'anic vocabulary with the secular in their treatises.⁷⁰⁶ A quick browsing of the pages of these classical works proves the validity of this observation. Scholars such as Al Maqdasī (d. 582)⁷⁰⁷ and others did not distinguish between the vocabulary of the Qur'ān and Arabic language. Additionally, there is another observation, made by the editor of Al Jawālīqī's work, that in some cases the Muslim philologists mistakenly attributed the words to non- Arabic roots.⁷⁰⁸

But, as it is said that this was unlikely in most of the cases, the Muslim scholars have produced a rich legacy on the subjects of philology, grammar and lexicography. A recent scholar convincingly defends the earlier scholarship writing that the earlier linguists and philologists did not address the issue technically as they cited the foreign words with very little elaboration without the mention of historical factors. However, this does not suggest that they overlooked the issue of non- Arabic words. There were experts who excellently dealt this genre by producing exhaustive works. Moreover, they established the rules of Arabic grammar and syntax to identify the non- Arabic terms.⁷⁰⁹

He cites some of the works as specimen such as the work of Ibn Jinnī (d. 392) who had a firm grasp of Greek and Persian as his father was a Roman and he had a Persian teacher.⁷¹⁰

⁷⁰⁴ See for instance; *Foreign vocabulary*, 13, 18.

⁷⁰⁵ Hilālī, *Ma Waq'a fil Qur'ān*, 23. Also: Ṣabīḥ Ṣāleḥī, *Dirāsāt*, 318

⁷⁰⁶ Carter, "Foreign Vocabulary", 121

⁷⁰⁷ Abū'Abdullah, *Fi Ta'rīb wal Mu'arrab*, ed. Ibrāhīm Sāmarāī (Bairūt: Moassatul Risāla)

⁷⁰⁸ Abū Mansūr al Jawālīqī, *Al Mu'arrab*, ed. Abdul Raḥī (Damaucus: Dārul Qalam, 1990), 6

⁷⁰⁹ Abdul Ṣabūr Shāhīn, *Al Qira'āt Al Qur'ānia fi ḥaw 'Ilm ilugha al ḥadīth* (Cairo: Maktaba al Khanjī.), 336

⁷¹⁰ Shāhīn, *Al Qira'āt*, 337

In his work, Rippin illustrates another point that the lexicographers such as Rāghib al-İsfahāni entirely ignored the description of the foreign words or described in brief without going into details. The basic factor might be, as elaborated by scholars, that they considered those words as Arabic after they had been in the use of Arabs since long and did not think it necessary to mention its foreignness.⁷¹¹

Putting aside this issue of ignorance of the Muslim scholars for a moment, the assessment of the arguments itself reveals the validity of the claims. Talking in a like manner about the Muslim scholarship, Rippin illustrates that the traditional Muslims declared any word foreign without putting necessary historical investigations. Following the footsteps of Jeffery, the author affirms that the Muslim scholars attributed some Words that are undoubtedly of Arabic origin to Coptic as a result of their negative conception of that community. The same has been uttered by Jeffry as he himself narrates the view of a nineteenth century German scholar;

“Dvorak, arguing from the fact that the philologists stated that الآخر meant اآخر in Coptic, and اآخر meant الولي, suggests that the Muslims simply made these statements in order to throw contempt on the Coptic community”.⁷¹²

It seems that Rippin, while charging the Muslim scholarship of the scarcity of historical investigation, himself expressed the same approach as he transmitted the earlier scholars' statement without estimation. This proclamation illustrates that the earlier scholarship declared the words of pejorative sense such as Ghassāq (pus) to Coptic because of their disdain for them. On contrary, the words that have been declared by the Muslim scholars as Coptic are pure Arabic.

A glance at historical accounts demonstrates that this was not the actual case. The historical accounts inform that prophet would send his messengers and viceroys to nearby countries with his letters. To the Coptic king (Maqqas), was sent Hātib bin Abī Baltā accompanied with another companion. Influenced by the message of Islam, the king sent

⁷¹¹ Shāhīn, Al Qira'āt, 343

⁷¹² Foreign, 29

some of the gifts to him including Maria Qibtiyya and her sister, honey, crystal goblet, a mule and a donkey.⁷¹³

The Prophet married with Maria and had a son from her.⁷¹⁴ Later, the Prophet advised his followers to always be kind and benevolent to the Coptics.⁷¹⁵ Consequently, the Muslim conception of Coptic was not pejorative. Rather, they always tried to follow the Prophet's advice in their treatment of the Coptic.

Secondly, the three scholars could not proffer historical factors for this pejorative conception if it was there. What was the fundamental factor for this perception and whether it originated in later period or at the Prophet age are the crucial points one has to counter.

Thirdly, if for the sake of argument, it is admitted that the conception of Coptic was a negative one that what is the possible justification Rippin and similar scholars can give for the word 'Moses' that is declared by the Muslim scholars as Coptic.⁷¹⁶ The fact strikingly reveals the point that the author based his views by looking at few terms or, to be exact, has followed the 'pick n choose' strategy as he referred to the pejorative expressions (according to him) merely and did not cited the word Mūsa in this regard.

Besides, Rippin comments the extreme importance of tradition for the Muslims declaring that the earlier authorities *did not have* the knowledge of languages and hence, assigned the words erroneously. The later philologists possessed better information but they simply could not discard the tradition. Consequently, following the footsteps of their predecessors, they also announced the term as foreign. In this sense the Muslim exegesis cannot be declared as acquisitive.

Furthermore, he elaborates that Suyūtī cites words attributing to various authorities without any questioning. The fact demonstrates the power of tradition in a way that nothing could be left if comes from tradition.⁷¹⁷

⁷¹³ Ibn Khaldūn 'Abdul Rehman, *Tārīkh ibn Khaldūn* (Bairūt: Dārul Fikr, 1988), vol. 2. 87

⁷¹⁴ Tabarī, *Tarikh ul Tabarī*, vol. 3. 167

⁷¹⁵ Muslim ibnul Ḥujjāh, *Al Musnad al Ṣahīḥ*, ed. Fuad, 'Abdul Bāqī (Bairūt: Dār Ihya ul Turāthul 'Arabī, 1970), vol. 4, . H, no. 2543

⁷¹⁶ Ibnul Jawzī, *Funūnl Afnān*, 351

⁷¹⁷ EQ, vol. 1. 232

It is a fact that the Muslims rank tradition in high regard acknowledging the grave importance of tradition in any society. Nonetheless, one cannot generalize this phenomenon. Some specifics may elaborate the point;

The first and the foremost source of inspiration in this regard is the Qur'ān that frequently directs the believers not to believe anything blindly without necessarily questioning. Even the very fundamental creeds are established on rational grounds.

As far as the Prophetic traditions are concerned, undoubtedly, it has a particular status in the Muslim scholarly works including exegesis and jurisprudence. Yet, a rapid survey of the forwards of the earlier works, including *Tafsīr*, ḥadīth and *fiqh*, makes it clear that the acceptance of the Prophetic traditions is also conditional with the authentication of the chains. Further, the Muslims are advised to utilize their own insights and rationale while following the tradition. Even in the comprehension and interpretation of the Qur'ānic texts, an inquisitive approach is encouraged.

Ibn 'Āshūr, a notable exegete, explicate in this regards saying that there it is evident from the debates of Islamic jurisprudence that the early authorities elucidation for any ayah should not avert the later scholars to express their views about the ayah in question. Moreover, he cites that 'Umar would ask the companions about the connotation of the ayahs without putting the condition to narrate from the Prophet.⁷¹⁸ The anecdote shows that the early generations were encouraged to participate in theological and other discourses expressing their own opinions.

The division of the genre of *Tafsīr* into *Tafsīr bil Diraya* and *Bil Riwaya* in itself is a convincing proof that not all of the stock of exegesis is based on tradition. The inclusion of the second category of numerous works denotes the vital significance of opinion in *Tafsīr*.

The extent voluminous and exhaustive critical works of the scholars on various issues such as the authenticity of reports, reliability of the transmitters, rationality of the statements, possibility of the events etc are the live examples of vigilance of the classical Muslim savants. In fact the sciences of 'Ulūm ul Qur'ān itself is a valid and sound proof for the critical observations of the Muslim scholarship. Moreover, one can find numerous

⁷¹⁸ Al Tahrīr wa Tanwīr, vol. 1. 32

debates in exegetical works, criticizing specific opinions and preferring one on other on the basis of soundness of the evidences.

Simply, the division of *Tafsir* into two genres *Bil Riwāya* and *bil Diraya* illustrates the vital role of opinion in this science. In the concern of the foreign words too, one can observe the critiques of later scholars to the lists of loan words offered by *Siyūtī* and other scholars. Rather, *Siyūtī* himself has critiqued some scholars for declaring the pure Arabic terms as non- Arabic.⁷¹⁹ To cite some specimen in this regard may illuminate the point;

In his discussion of the proper nouns, *Al Jawalīqī* declares that all of the proper names in the *Qur’ān* are non- Arabic except the four; Adam, *Shu‘aib*, *Şāleḥ* and *Muhammad*. He deemed these words to be pure Arabic.⁷²⁰

Despite his prolific knowledge, he was criticized by the later philologists such as *Zamakhsharī* and *Al Baidāwī*. *Zamakhsharī* rejects this view in relation to the name ‘Adam’ and affirms that this is purely a non Arabic term.⁷²¹

Similarly, in relation to the term *Iblīs*, the noted scholars such as *Rāghib al Isfahānī* and *ibn ‘Arfa* state that this is solely Arabic word. They further reinforce their claim by tracing its roots into the Arabic on the basis that it is derived from *Iblās*.⁷²² Again, it is *Baidhāvī* who refuses this explanation and declares the word to be foreign saying that the *Iblīs* is of non- Arabic origin and does not come from *Iblās*.⁷²³ The anecdotes show that in the genre of the foreign vocabulary too, the scholars have been vigilant and observant enough in acceptance of any tradition or discarding it.

Moreover, the discussion confirms that the exegetes did not always accept the traditions without delving into the issue of authentication, reliability and sagacity. Consequently, they did throw away the traditions not fulfilling these criteria. Moreover, the *Tafsīr* tradition has been inquisitive throughout its history.

At present too, the Muslim scholars express great deal of reverence for the early scholarship reserving for them the right for difference of opinion. What they emphasize is

⁷¹⁹ See for instance the works of; *Itqān*, *Şiyūtī*, vol.2. 134. *Ibrāhīm*, *Dirāsāt*, vol.1. 318.

⁷²⁰ *Abu Mansur*, *Al Mu‘arrab*, 102

⁷²¹ *Al Kashāf*, vol. 1. 125, *Anwārul Tanzīl*, vol. 1. 69. The discussion relates to the proper noun Adam ,2: 31.

⁷²² *Ibn Manzur*, *Lisān*, Root, (س, ل, ب), 343

⁷²³ *Anwārul Tanzīl*, vol. 1. 69

that despite the traditionalists great services, the possibility of the lapses in their works cannot be ruled out. Hence, their works can also be examined on critical basis.⁷²⁴

5.3. Textual criticism

For a profound conception of this subject of textual criticism, it is critical to underline some of the historical facts with regard to Old and New Testaments.

The Old Testament consists of three parts namely The Pentateuch, The Prophets and The Writings. These three parts comprise the chief texts of the law, history, prophecy, and wisdom literature of the ancient people of Israel. Torah is an important part of these books specifically believed to be Divine and written by Prophet Moses himself.⁷²⁵

The written tablets, according to the biblical traditions, were given to Israelites and more specifically the Levi Tribe was held responsible for the protection of the written Torah. Innumerable injunctions are cited in the Bible narrating how frequently Moses advised his followers to hold it fast.⁷²⁶

The history of the Judaism reveals the fact that due to specific circumstances, they could not abide by the advice. The basic factors for the missing of the original text were the chaotic political and military situations from which the Israelites suffered. The historical records confirm the loss of the scripture for twice and its recovery on the hands of King Josiah (640-609) for the first time and by Ezra second time in 444 B.C.E after its destruction during Babylonian exile.⁷²⁷ Consequently, the disappearance of the text for long period of time up to more than five centuries and its restoration and standardization in the tenth century C.E led the inconsistencies a way in to the text.⁷²⁸ At recent, many

⁷²⁴ Maudūdī, Abul a'la. *Tafhimāt* (Lahore: 2006) , vol. 1. 356. to check

⁷²⁵<http://www.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/english/old-testament>

⁷²⁶ See for instance: Deuteronomy, 31: 9-13

⁷²⁷ Dictionary of the Bible, 441

⁷²⁸ Dictionary, 954.

biblical scholars believe that the Old Testament was written and edited in the Persian period around fifth century B.C. based entirely on oral traditions.⁷²⁹

Earlier Jews believed their scripture to be purely of Divine nature for centuries. Yet, because of the contradictions and inconsistencies, critical approaches towards Old Testament developed very early although they were later suppressed by the way of reconciliation.⁷³⁰

During the reformation period and more specifically in seventeenth century, uplift in these approaches towards Old Testament concerning its authorship, original language and sources extremely challenged by critical scholars such as Bruch Spinoza, Richard Simon and Julias Wellhausen etc.

Quite identical to this, has been the case of the New Testament. At present, the Gospel contains the four books including Mark, Matthew, Luke and John. These books comprise of moral teachings and the historical accounts on the life of Jesus compiled by unknown authors around 100 A.D based on oral traditions.⁷³¹ But, it was not until the 107 A.D. that the four Gospels acquired the canonical status as before that nobody knew that they ever existed.⁷³²

Scholars are of the view that by the end of the second century C.E, each of the church had its own version with suitable variations. The biblical scholars, with no qualms, admit the interpolations and corruptions in the text of the New Testament made on theological basis. Moreover, it is also acknowledged that or, intentional or unintentional also took place in the text.⁷³³ The biblical scholars have acknowledged almost 300,000 variants in the Greek, Latin and other manuscripts of New Testament.⁷³⁴

⁷²⁹ H. Shanks. "is this man a biblical archeologist", *Biblical archeology review*. 35 as cited by A'zami 231.

⁷³⁰ Yehfa Hava, *Intertwined worlds*, 11. the author mentions a text from Deuteronomy that it was asked ' is it possible that Moses whilst still alive would have written " So Moses dies there" (34: 5).it was replied in (menahoth 30a) that up to this wrote Moses. From this point wrote Joshua, the son of Nun. 10.

⁷³¹ The riddles of the New Testament, 196

⁷³² The Bible, The Qur'ân and science, 77

⁷³³ F. F. Bruce, Textual criticism. *The Christian Graduate* 6.4 (Dec. 1953): 135-139, 3

⁷³⁴ Daniel Wallace, The majority text and the original text; Are they identical?

<https://bible.org/article/majority-text-and-original-text-are-they-identical>

The biblical scholars recognize the importance of the method of textual criticism for the biblical texts admitting the slips of the textual errors in the texts. They are of the view that in the process of the copying the biblical texts and translating them, the occurrence of the errors and mistakes are not unlikely as the copyists or translators were not infallible.⁷³⁵ Hence, these errors can be better called as scribal errors in which the role of the scribe is crucial who makes mistakes either by not hearing well to dictation or not viewing the words accurately. Even, in many cases, it is observed that the omission of an entire sentence is ascribed to scribal unintentional mistake.⁷³⁶ Apart from the unintentional mistakes, history of these scriptures reveals the undeniable fact of the deliberate interpolations in the texts as a result of the mutual political and dogmatic differences.⁷³⁷

Thus, in the absence of the original texts, attempts have been made to restore the original text of the Old and New Testaments by reconciling the discrepancies that are definitely outcome of the intentional and scribal errors according to the biblical scholars. By doing so, the methods of textual criticism were employed by the biblical scholars.

A succinct description of Textual criticism

The science of textual criticism deals purely with the text supposing the existence of the errors, deliberately or unintentionally, in the text. It aims to establish the wordings of the original text focusing to determine where, when and how the changes occurred in the original text.⁷³⁸

Ehrman Bart, explicating the basic factor for the emergence of this discipline writes that the Reformation scholars insisted on the significance of the words of Scripture, but they

⁷³⁵ F. F. Bruce, "Textual criticism". *The Christian Graduate* 6.4 (Dec. 1953): 135-139, 135

⁷³⁶ See for instance in the discussion of the omissions in Hebrew Bible where scribes has omitted the long sentence from Samuel but it is present in Vulgate. Phillip Hayat, "Textual criticism of the Old Testament". In *The Encyclopedia Americana* (Danbury: Grolier Incorporated., 1829), vol. 3, 660-662.

⁷³⁷ See: the fifth chapter of the Metzger's book on the history of the New Testament. Bruce Metzger and Bart Ehrman, *The Text of the New Testament, its transmission, corruption and restoration*. 195-206 to check

⁷³⁸ Ehrman, Bart. *Studies in the Textual Criticism of New Testament* (Leiden: Brill, 2006), 1

also recognized that the words did not exist intact. The fact eventually directed the scholars to devise the methods for the restoration of original text.⁷³⁹

According to some scholars, textual criticism is not an exclusively biblical discipline as it has to be invoked in the study of most ancient literature, and some recent literature as well as explains Bruce in his work. Yet, it has little to do with these works according to him and more to do with biblical studies.⁷⁴⁰

Dr Maurice Bucaille elucidates in this regard saying that for centuries the Old and New Testaments were believed to be of divine nature and any critical look or questioning concerning the texts of these scriptures deemed to be a sin. The critical methods of biblical studies are recent and had been quite valuable in discovering the problems.⁷⁴¹

In the previous centuries, more significantly during eighteenth and subsequently times, attempts were made to locate these problems. One of such endeavor was made was John Mill (d. 1707) who indicated to thirty thousand places of variations in almost hundred Greek manuscripts and early versions for which he was severely criticized with the assumption of attacking the integrity of the text.⁷⁴² Afterward, the critical approaches, similar to Mill, were targeted with the accusations of working for some hidden agendas.⁷⁴³

In the course of time, the matter was settled down as majority of the intellectuals soon recognized the method. As far as this method is concerned, the Old and New testaments provide the most obvious examples of the contribution of the human hands in it by means of adaptations, made at different historical events based on oral traditions.

Accordingly, the biblical scholars, having acknowledged the fact of interpolation and interruptions in the Old and New Testaments, endeavor to resolve the problem of contradictions by recovering the text. The Western scholars more often, trying to rationalize the contradictions, declare these confusions as an upshot of the scribal errors. According to them, written documents are not always reproduced accurately. The scribal

⁷³⁹Studies in the Textual Criticism, 2

⁷⁴⁰Bruce, Textual criticism, 2

⁷⁴¹The Bible, v

⁷⁴²Ehrman, Studies in textual criticism, 2

⁷⁴³Jeffery. L.Morrow, The Politics of Biblical Interpretation: A 'Criticism of Criticism' DOI:10.1111/j.1741-2005.2009.01342.x

errors, they believe, if once made, are inherited by those who later copy those texts resulting contradictions between the various copies. Evidently, to locate such variants is not an easy task and they can hardly be reconstructed. The clue, according to them is to check which variant gives the better sense.⁷⁴⁴

As the method of textual criticism involves two cases, the second form does not necessitate the variant and based entirely on one text. In this regard, Thomassen expatiates that more often textual critic do not shy to detect the error in the text if no variant is found. In such cases the emendation is offered, that is to say based on conjecture (the least technique in textual criticism) only.⁷⁴⁵ In this process too, the basic clue to detect an error is dearth of a good sense. Consequently, in emendation process, the critic follows the same method of reconstruction of the text and suggests the term that offers better sense. To sum up, the task of the textual criticism is either to reconcile the text's contradiction or to reconstruct the text to make sense by locating first the inconsistencies in the text.

It is quite evident that some scholars, despite the importance of the methods and its significance for biblical studies, show their reservation concerning the certainty of the results that it provides. In this context, Einar elucidates that the aim of this method is to create a critical edition with improvements in the text but in practice, it is only approximated. The illustration can be given of the Old Testament that has been the object of textual criticism more than any other document, yet no satisfactory results could be accomplished. In addition, the standard version of the New Testament as well, is no more than a scholarly hypothesis.⁷⁴⁶

The above clause demonstrates the fact that the method of textual criticism does not provide certain results. Some of the western scholars such as Kieth Small declare the method of textual criticism and reconstruction of the text has resulted original texts.

⁷⁴⁴ Ehrman, *Studies in textual criticism*, 73

⁷⁴⁵ Thomassen, *The Routledge handbook*, 348

⁷⁴⁶ Thomassen, *The Routledge handbook*, 349.

Nonetheless, this claim is rejected by many critics viewing the impossibility of recovering the original text.⁷⁴⁷

Reservations concerning the application of the method in right directions are also expressed by scholars. One of such is the view that conveys Dr Bucaille about the proper employment of these techniques. He expounds the theory stating that despite the fact that this method has been functional in detecting the problems of Old and New Testaments; the outcomes have been quite disappointing. Even the works of critical nature merely provide passages of an apologetic nature by means of which one contrives to hide this dilemma. Attempts are made to retain or uphold the passages riddled with errors. ⁷⁴⁸

The foremost point one has to be attentive for is that the approach of the proposing emendations is a matter of dispute among scholars with regard to its provision of sure and accurate results. Thus, one can find a debate among the experts over the nature of this method as science or art. Many biblical scholars acknowledge the fact that despite merits of this method, they still could not achieve the original texts of Old and New Testaments. Hence, many of them are also of the conviction that the goal of the method ‘to reconstruct the original text,’ should be reevaluated. In addition, the objective of recovering original text is declared as a mirage that disappeared when one approaches it.⁷⁴⁹

One of the significant scholars of textual criticism declares that the original biblical text cannot be recovered.⁷⁵⁰ The emerging lack of consensus among the scholars of this science reveals the fact that in fact the goal of this method is unattainable in its full form.

5.3.1. Traditional Muslim stance on Qur’ānic text

As far as the Qur’ān is concerned, the Muslim point of view is entirely in contrast to the western scholars. The Muslims believe the Qur’ān to be the word of Allah and his final message revealed to the Prophet Muhammad conveyed verbatim to the humanity. Since it is declared as guidance to all for all times, the Muslims consider it to be timeless. It is

⁷⁴⁷<http://www.huntingforthewordofgod.com/keith-small--misquoting-islam.html>

⁷⁴⁸ The Bible, The Qur’ān and science. v.

⁷⁴⁹ Sami Amri, Hunting for the Word of God, 13

⁷⁵⁰ Robert Grant, “The Bible of Theophilus of Antioch,” *Journal of Biblical Literature* 66, no. 2 (Jun, 1947), 173. http://biblicalstudies.org.uk/pdf/jbl/1947_grant.pdf

preserved in its original tongue and there is not a single chance for any emendation, alteration or interpolation. This confidence is attached to the pronouncement of Allah in the Qur'ān as He declares;

إِنَّا نَحْنُ نَزَّلْنَا الْكِتَابَ وَإِنَّا لَهُ لَحَافِظُونَ⁷⁵¹

Verily, We, it is We Who have sent down the Dhikr (i.e. the Qur'an) and surely, We will guard it (from corruption).

One of the major commentator Ṭabarī elaborates the ayah saying that nothing can be added to its text and likewise no omission can be made.⁷⁵² Almost all of the commentators deem the same meaning for this ayah as it is a guarantee of the preservation of the Qur'ān till the Last Day from corruption, addition, change or omission.⁷⁵³ The declaration is considered to be a specific peculiarity of the Qur'ān in the sense that Allah had not promised the previous prophets to safeguard their books. Those books were handed down to the followers who could not ultimately guard the books from alterations.⁷⁵⁴

This section intends to examine the precautionary steps taken by the Muslim community for the preservation of the Qur'ān. The historical accounts report that the two steps were taken for the preservation of the Qur'ān were writing down of the revelations instantly and memorizing the text. In this regard the scholars have put the emphasis on both of the facets saying that Allah has guaranteed for the protection of Qur'ānic text in the form of memorization and writing. It is fact that the written form of the Qur'ān was an embedded concept in the mind of the Prophet and his Companions and hence, they took extraordinary measures for that.

According to a western scholars, Herald Motzki, there are three types of empirical evidences that can prove the collection process; the text of the Qur'ān, the manuscripts and the historical Muslim records.⁷⁵⁵ Hence, many internal evidences can be located in the

⁷⁵¹ 15:9

⁷⁵² Jām'ul Bayyān, vol, 17. 68

⁷⁵³ See for instance. Al Māwardī, Al Nukat, vol, 3. 149. Samarqandī, Bahrul 'Uloom, vol, 2.251. Muḥarrar al Wajīz, Ibn 'Atiyya, vol, 3. 352

⁷⁵⁴ Zamakhsharī, Kashāf, vol, 2. 572

⁷⁵⁵ The collection of the Qur'ān. Although, Motzki does not consider that Qur'ānic text to be a sound proof for the collection process.

Qur'ānic texts that reinforce the notion of written compilation. Many eminent scholars have directed to the notion of writing down of the revelations through these evidences.

A recent scholar, Abdullah Daraz, stresses the significance of the written form stating that the sacred text is not the assemblage of the oral recitations conserved exclusively in the memories of the men. But, it is also a 'Kitāb', a 'Scripture' and a 'Book'. The two aspects, memorization and writing, are supporting and controlling each other equally.⁷⁵⁶

Elsewhere in his works, he mentions that the title 'Qur'ān' denotes to a special consideration for the aspect of its recitation with tongues as the written dimension has been highlighted by its designation with 'Kitāb'.⁷⁵⁷

Furthermore, he explains that the revelation has been allotted these two names to inform its recipients that it should be preserved in two ways, memorization and writing. No memorization is accepted without the verification of the script and similarly, no written is accepted without its correspondence with the memorization of huffāz.⁷⁵⁸ Indeed, he mentioned in this respect an extremely vital and fundamental ruling concerning the authorization of any text. This elementary statute has been followed by the traditional scholars through the entire Islamic history.

As far as the memorization is concerned, it has its own significance in human history and more specifically in Arab's historiography. The Prophet, concerned with its grave role in preservation, inculcated in his companions a zest for preserving the Qur'ān in their hearts. The historical accounts demonstrate that the utmost concern of the Prophet for this aspect too. The eminent contemporary scholar, Taqi Usmani, says in this regard that the Qur'ān is saved in the hearts of the men as no calamity can perish it as happened in the case of Torah and Gospel.⁷⁵⁹

The appointment of the more than forty companions is itself a grave evidence for the activity of preservation of the Qur'ān by writing. Alongside, the continuous memorization of the Prophet and his companions for the fresh reveled parts are the facts

⁷⁵⁶ Introduction to the Qur'ān, 14

⁷⁵⁷ Muhammad bin Abdullah Daraz, *Al Naba al 'Azīm*, ed. Ahmad Mustufa (Dārul Qalam, 2006), 42

⁷⁵⁸ Daraz, *Al Naba*, 42

⁷⁵⁹ An approach to the Qur'ānic sciences (Karachi: Darul Ishā'at, 2000), 186

preserved in the pages of the history. This movement was further supplemented by the constant recitations of the Qur'ān in congregational prayers.

To summarize, the Muslim well-established outlook, based on the notion of preservation, is that Qur'ānic text is safe from corruptions and errors. The Muslims are of the conviction that the most convincing attestation for the safety of the text is its transmission throughout the fourteen centuries without a single variation. This is valid for the memorization as well as the written form.

In this regard, a recent scholar says that the western reservations about the textual integrity of the Qur'ān are very logical in the sense that there are no chances of mistakes in either of the oral transmission as well as the written archives. For them, the assertion is very natural as changes have occurred in their scriptures. The recent biblical scholars, he continues, no longer believe that it is historically accurate. Yet, what distinguishes the Qur'ān from previous scriptures is its existence in both of the oral transmission and written manuscripts. A comparative analysis of the recitations of some hundred people living far in remote areas can prove the solidity of the argument as it is impossible to detect a single variation in their recitation. The same hold true for the written copies of the Qur'ān⁷⁶⁰

At present, many of the western academics have recognized the fact that the entire Qur'ān had been preserved in writing in the early seventh century.⁷⁶¹

5.3.2. The western views on textual criticism/emendations of the Qur'ān

It is generally perceived by the Muslims that the western application of the critical textual methods on the Qur'ān are to counter the Qur'ānic proclamations of the corruption of their scriptures.⁷⁶² The western scholars express their great enthusiasm for the textual analysis of the Qur'ān. They are also well aware of the fact that the traditional Muslim dogmatic view forcefully rejects the critical western scholarship.

⁷⁶⁰<http://tune.pk/video/6170413/Western-textual-criticism-of-quran-nouman-ali-khan>

⁷⁶¹ For instance, Estelle Whalen has made an attempt to prove through historical inscriptions on the Dome of the rock and the Great Mosque of Madina that with minor variations, these Qur'ānic passages reflect the text as known from the standard Cairo edition. http://www.islamic-awareness.org/History/Islam/Dome_Of_The_Rock/Eswitness.html. Retrieved: 4/1/016

⁷⁶² Azami, The history of the Qur'ānic text,

In this regard, Wansbrough states that the critical biblical methods are still unknown to the Qur'ānic document. There are doctrinal obstacles that have impeded the research in this field. Rather, the entire Islamic historiography has discouraged the examination of Qur'ān as traditional literary document.⁷⁶³

As mentioned earlier, the critical textual behavior towards the text of Qur'ān is originally stemmed from a secular as well as Judo-Christian milieu. Overwhelmed with critical zeal, the western academia has yielded many works in this regard as well. Many western scholars treat the supposed scribal errors as the evidence of corruption in the Qur'ān. They are of the view that the matter of the Qur'ānic text is identical to the interpolations and changes in the Bible.

Devin J. Stewart says in this regard that the Qur'ān is open to the copyist errors and other problems that occur in the communication of any other text transmitted by humans and the present condition of the Qur'ānic text itself demands emendations. One may also point out Qur'ānic passages where the established text does not make satisfactory sense and an apt emendation can provide a better reading.⁷⁶⁴

He also mentions some of the reservations of the western scholars and their reluctance in this regard. Nonetheless, he criticizes them for their acceptance of the Muslim claims of the reliability of the Qur'ānic text. Furthermore, he continues, many of the scholars have argued that the Qur'ān is not immune to human errors and it has not been miraculously preserved by oral transmission. Among the earlier scholars who expressed the identical views are Noldeke, Margoliouth and F. Rosenthal (d. 2003). The scholars who have treated the Qur'ānic text in this regard and offered their proposed emendations include Jacob Barth (d. 1914), Joseph Horovitz (d. 1931), Luxemburg and James Bellamy. Some of them proposed emendations in reference to a phrase of Qur'ān while others emendations relate to the single word as mostly has done Luxemburg. Among the most famous of these works are of the Luxemburg who suggests emendations on the basis of the premise that the present language of the Qur'ān has been derived from the Christian Aramaic texts and henceforth, it should be understood with the perspective of that source. With the publication of his work, he intended to solve all of the riddles of the

⁷⁶³Wansbrough, *Qur'ānic Studies*, xxi to check

⁷⁶⁴ "Notes on medieval and modern emendations of The Qur'ān". In *The Qur'ān*, 225

Qur'ānic language. In doing so, he admits that his works does not solve the entire puzzles.⁷⁶⁵

In his book, he made an attempt to suggest the meanings in the light of Syro-Aramaic. Luxemburg, by his application of Syraic etymologies for the Qur'ānic terminology, derives the meaning accordingly. For instance, he sees that the term Hur should not be seen as a reference to the virgins of Paradise but, in the light of Aramaic term, to white grapes.⁷⁶⁶ An observation of the fresh outlooks with regard to the methodology of using etymology in derivation of the meaning reveals the fact that it has been, by and large, discarded by scholars now with the argument that the meaning changes in the course of time and acquire meaning very different from their prototypes in the parent language.⁷⁶⁷ This work has been criticized by many for not providing the satisfactory evidences.⁷⁶⁸ Moreover, one drawback of this work is heavy dependence on non-Arabic sources in dealing with Arabic lexis.⁷⁶⁹

Keeping in mind the sensitivity of the issue for the Muslims, the western scholars attempt to justify their work in terms of scholarly research and investigations. More often, they try to correlate the Muslim response with their lack of knowledge of textual criticism.

5.3.3. Encyclopaedia of the Qur'ān on emendations of the Qur'ān

The present article is written by James Bellamy. In this entry as well, he has proposed some emendations of the Qur'ān that he believes to be the copyist errors or the errors from the originals from which the parts of the Qur'ān were copied. The author commences the article offering a brief definition of the term explicating the process of emendation and its basic elements. It appears that he has based the entire work on the premise of the *defective script* of the Qur'ān. In this concern, he describes that the early script was devoid of vowels, skeletal dots and diacritical marks. *Some of the parts*, if not all, were copied at the dictation of the Prophet. He further states that the scribes did not

⁷⁶⁵ Luxenberg, The Syro-Aramaic readings, 3

⁷⁶⁶ Ibid. 247-253

⁷⁶⁷ Behnam Sedeghi, "Criteria for Emending the Text of the Qur'ān", ed. Michael Cook. *Law and tradition in classical Islamic thought* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan), 21-41. 22

⁷⁶⁸ For instance see his methodology has been victim of severe criticism of Walid Saleh, Devin Stewart and many others.

⁷⁶⁹ By having a quick glance on his bibliography, one can perceive that the entire list does not have Arabic sources.

use the dots and marks probably because *they had to write speedily*. Moreover, the deficient features of dots and diacritical marks in the script resulted in the *uncertainty of the individual words*.⁷⁷⁰

He is of the view that as the oral tradition has been the norm throughout, nobody paid attention to the written errors. There is no proof, he continues, and that somebody ever recited from a written copy in public. This led to the transmission of errors, from the Prophet's time, in to the 'Uthmānic text. Talking about the sacrality of the 'Uthmānic text, he asserts that the Muslims transmitted it despite the existence of errors in it.⁷⁷¹

As for Ballamy, the errors are the outcome of defective script, it is vital to trace those mistakes. For the scrutiny of the words, Bellamy fixes a criterion before him according to which three conditions are crucial for proposing an emendation. These clues are;

- i. The first and most important is the lack of good sense in the word and resulting variety of opinion about the exact expression of the word.
- ii. Transmission of the word in more than one form as this situation suggests that the word is wrong.
- iii. When it is declared as foreign. This suggests that the word in discussion was unfamiliar to the scribes and probably is a mistake. This also suggests, according to the author, academic pretentiousness of the lexicographers.

The third phase of this procedure informs about the condition for the acceptance of emendation. In doing so, Bellamy as he asserts, sets some guidelines for him that are as follow;

- i. it must make a better sense than the received text
- ii. It must be in harmony with the style of the Qur'ān
- iii. It should be paleographically justifiable
- iv. It should show how corruption has occurred

⁷⁷⁰ EQ, vol. 5. 238

⁷⁷¹ EQ, vol. 5. 238

This is the criterion for the emendations of Bellamy for Qur'ānic text. Followed by these conditions, he has proposed some emendations of the words mostly viewing them not providing good sense as a result of copyist error such as Ḥaṭab, Abbā etc.

5.2.4 Analysis

Among the scholars who have applied this method on the Qur'ān is James Bellamy. He has pointed out towards textual errors of the Qur'ān and suggested emendations in a series of articles published in 'The Journal of American Oriental Society'.⁷⁷² He declares in his work that despite the importance of this discipline in the improvement of the Biblical texts, scant attention has been paid to the Qur'ānic text. Moreover, the earlier commentators, according to him did acknowledge the errors in the Qur'ānic text but they did not emend them.⁷⁷³

Mainly, his approach can be considered as an alternate proposal for the foreign vocabulary of the Qur'ān. He is of the view that in case of confusion in the meaning of the term, it is more appropriate to declare it a mistake instead of assigning the term a foreign root and propose an emendation.⁷⁷⁴

Bellamy mostly suggests the emendations for the individual words that, according to him, do not give a good sense. His general method, as declared by the western scholars of religious research, is based on conjecture and speculation.⁷⁷⁵ Accordingly, some of his emendations are declared as highly unlikely by scholars.⁷⁷⁶

The entire argument that justifies proposed emendations of Bellamy is the uncertainty of Qur'ānic script that led the scribes afterwards to make errors in the text. The noteworthy point here is that after assigning the vagueness to script dictated by the Prophet, the author did not mention clearly that at what stage, the scribes committed mistakes while copying this script. In doing so, he immediately shifts to the 'Uthmānic copy, leaving an ambiguity in between the two phases.

⁷⁷² Vol. 121, No. 1 (Jan-Mar, 2001), p. 562-573.

⁷⁷³ Some proposed emendations, 562-3

⁷⁷⁴ Carter, Foreign vocabulary, 135.

⁷⁷⁵ See the clause ; 4.4 'A forward to textual criticism'

⁷⁷⁶ Stewart, "Notes on medieval, 237

His later statement suggests that he also want to indicate implicitly that there were errors in the master copy dictated by the Prophet. It is so because he, as elsewhere in his works, describes that "*I shall try to restore the original form..... In the Qur'ān, "original form" means, of course, the form the word or phrase had it was first uttered by the Prophet*".⁷⁷⁷

Another key argument advanced by the writer is Muslims' mere reliance on oral tradition because of which, the written error remained unnoticed. In this regard he says; "*The oral tradition dominated until a written official version..... but even thereafter, the oral remained of primary importance.*

Moreover, to strengthen this argument, he states; "*Historical accounts reveal that in early period, nobody read from a written copy of the Qur'ān*".⁷⁷⁸ Yet, Bellamy implicitly denotes to the dearth of writing activities in relation to the Qur'ānic text that resulted in the constant existence of the errors in the text.

Initially, before heading to the aforesaid points, it is of vital role to assess the need of this discipline for Qur'ānic text. It has been frequently argued that the scholars of the Old and New Testaments acknowledge that they do not possess the original of these scriptures. Henceforth, in order to overcome textual variations and contradictions they are in grave need of this discipline.

A biblical scholar Paul Mass describes the present situation and says; "We have *no* autograph scripts of the Greek and Roman classical writers which have been collated with the original; the manuscripts we possess derive from the originals through unknown numbers of intermediate copies and are of questionable trustworthiness."⁷⁷⁹

A contemporary well-known biblical scholar Bart Ehrman holds the same in one of his talk and says; the fact is that we do not have the original books of the Old or the New

⁷⁷⁷ Some proposed emendations, 563

⁷⁷⁸ EQ, vol. 5. 234

⁷⁷⁹ Textual Criticism (Oxford, 1958), 1

Testament.. We have only the copies that were made centuries later and hence, have a lot of differences. We also do not know who wrote these books.⁷⁸⁰

The fact that the biblical scholars having no original texts of their scriptures devised the method of textual criticism is quite evident. On contrast, as the Muslims strongly believe that what they possess today is the original text of the Qur'ān, there is no need to employ this discipline. The copy of the extent Qur'ān, according to the Muslim historical accounts, is verbatim of what Prophet Muhammad dictated to his Companion. Hence, in its appearance, the Muslims have the real autograph of the Prophet, not written by his hand but, dictated by him.

The fact that the dictation of the author is also considered as autograph is generally acknowledged by the scholars of Textual studies. An identified biblical scholar, Paul Mass expounds the issue in the following words;

“The dictation revised by the author must be regarded as autograph”.

Hence, according to the rulings of the textual criticism itself, one cannot apply this technique on the Qur'ān and any effort to do so would be considered as invalid principally.

A Muslim scholar elucidates the issue saying; “the Muslim reluctance (to apply textual criticism to the Qur'ān) is thought to be connected to religious obscurantism. In fact, there is no need for this discipline. The Qur'ān, unlike the Bible, is not the heterogeneous work of many hands, in several genres, in trio of languages, in varied geographical locals, stretching over millennia and surviving only in uncertain fragmentary forms. It is a unified canon, revealed in just over two decades, addressed to a man fully known to his contemporaries, a man living only in two geographical locations in the same country and written in one language.⁷⁸¹

⁷⁸⁰<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8Ln-S7ZraUc>. A talk with Bart Ehrman about why he left Christianity.

⁷⁸¹Shabbir Akhtar, *The Qur'ān and the secular mind; A philosophy of Islam* (London: Routledge, 2008), 123

Secondly, the important point in this regard is to elucidate that the compilation of the Qur'ān in its entire phase of revelation was not based merely on oral tradition. The state of affairs was not as Bellamy and likeminded scholars suppose by saying that the Qur'ān was in fact based on oral tradition without writing activities. Moreover, it is vital to examine the argument that the extent text is the collated copy of the original, revised by the Prophet himself.

From the very outset of the revelation, the Prophet was concerned to get it written down. According to the historical accounts, among the persons appointed for the writing of the revelation, more than twenty six were Makkans. This illustrates that the Prophet's concern for writing down the revelations even in the hardest situations of Makkah. Many Muslim scholars denoted to the grave significance of written collection by their indication to the event of hijra. They are of the view that when the Prophet left Makkah, at that intense situation too, he did not forget to take the writing material with him and what indicates to this fact is his encounter with Suraqa bin Ja'sham in which he gave Suraqa a letter of protection on his demand.⁷⁸²

Nevertheless, it was natural for him to care for writing as the very first revelation denoted to the significance of the Pen. It says;

*"Recite in the Name of your Lord Who created man from a dot. Recite and your Lord is Most Generous. Who taught by the pen, taught man what he knew not."*⁷⁸³

This was followed by another Ayah;

*Nūn, by the pen and that which they inscribe, by the grace of your Lord you are not a man possessed.*⁷⁸⁴

Alongside, there are several other Makken ayahs that support the written collection of the Qur'ān frequently denoting to the concepts of writing, book, written sheets and etc.⁷⁸⁵

⁷⁸² Jamaluddin Ibn Hissām, ed. 'Abdul Hafiz Shalbī, Al Sīra al Nabawiyya (Cairo: Shirka Maktaba, 1955) vol. 1. 490

⁷⁸³ 96: 1-5

⁷⁸⁴ 68: 12

⁷⁸⁵ See for instance; 25:5, 96: 1-5, 80:13, 87:18,

In addition, it is reported to that whenever the revelation came down; the Prophet would call immediately the scribes and order them to place the verse with other verse mentioning the number of the verse. Traditions narrate that to ensure the accuracy of dictated words; the Prophet would ask the scribes to reread what had been dictated to him to guarantee that no scribal error has crept in.⁷⁸⁶

Again, one can find constant enthusiasm in the Companions to write down the fresh revelations for them. The famous statement of the Prophet about writing down the Qur'ān only refers to this fact. It is reported that he said;

"Do not write from me except the Qur'ān and whosoever has written anything should erase it".⁷⁸⁷

This tradition reveals the fact that it was widespread practice of the companions to write down the fresh revelations and to write along with the saying of the Prophet. The Prophet, as precautionary measure prohibited them to write his narrations with the Qur'ān lest it should not be mixed. Accordingly, this anecdote illustrates to the early writing practices. Many recent researches as well endorse the idea of written compilation of the Qur'ān in the early time.

In her analysis of a literary papyrus of the first century, Abbot while denoting to the writing activities of the first century, articulates that this papyrus is dated on the basis of paleography and this single fragment alone is slim evidence for the first- century practices. Moreover, she likens this fragment's script with that of the earliest known Qur'āns.⁷⁸⁸ The statement in itself is an irrefutable proof for the early writing activities concerning the Qur'ān. Hence, one cannot declare that the early transmission based merely on oral tradition. It was not only that the companions used to fortify their preservation of the Qur'ān with writing but, they were simultaneously mindful for its precision too.

⁷⁸⁶ Sulaimān bin Aḥmad Ṭabarānī, Al Mu'jam al Awsat, ed. Muhammad Ṭāriq (Cairo: Dārul Ḥaramain), vol, 2 . 554.

⁷⁸⁷ Muslim, Ṣaḥīḥ, Kitabul Zuhud, vol, 4. 72. H, no. 2298

⁷⁸⁸ Studies, 3

Moreover, the compilation process in the age of Abū- Bakr left no ground for the existence of any error. The entire process was based on the condition of eye witness rule as Zaid was ordered to accept written material along with two witnesses who bear the testimony that it was written in the presence of the Prophet. Again, it was Zaid's practice to tally the written with his own written material and his memory.⁷⁸⁹ Next to this process, lies the second collection by the caliph 'Uthmān. If, for the sake of argument, it is admitted that there left any slip in the written copies, this moment too, the collection procedures was so scrupulous that it left no grounds for the existence of the errors.

In this process too, the text was passed through various spheres of close scrutiny. The newly Muṣḥaf was shown to a group of twelve companions for proofreading including Sa'īd bin al 'Aa, 'Abdullah bin 'Amr, 'Abdullah bin 'Amr bin al 'Aṣ, Mālik bin 'Amir and others for proofreading.⁷⁹⁰

Finally, on the completion of the task, the final copy was again read to the companions in the presence of 'Uthmān.⁷⁹¹ Besides, he did not send mere copies to the cities. Rather, one teacher was accompanied with the copy in order to teach the inhabitants of that city.⁷⁹²

The whole exhausting and laborious process was undertaken in order to gain precision and accuracy in the final collection.

As far as the script is concerned, it is a fact that it was devoid of diacritical marks and vowels. But, it is a fact too that the absence of diacritical marks and vowels did not make a serious difference. It could only make a verb either active or passive or in some cases masculine or feminine. Hence, it was hardly of any great consequences since the context determined the exact meaning of the word as Bellamy himself admits.⁷⁹³

A native of Arabia can determine the textual meaning even in the absence of the marks and dots. Yes, it might be uncertain for the present day readers, but this uncertainty was

⁷⁸⁹ Sakhāwi, Jmālul Qurrā, vol. 1. 161

⁷⁹⁰ Sadusi, Kitib Hadhfin minNasab Quraish, 7. Muhammad bin Tayyab Bāqilānī, Al Inteṣār, ed. Muhammad 'Isā (Ammān: Dār ul Fath, 2001) 96

⁷⁹¹ Ibn Kathīr, Fadā'l, 89.

⁷⁹²

⁷⁹³

soon disappeared with the evolution of Arabic script and additions of diacritical marks and dots. It is narrated that the early scholars opposed addition of anything in the ‘Uthmānic script but when the fear of mistakes in recitation arose as the result of great number of Conversion of non- Arabs, they permitted to add dots and diacritical marks.⁷⁹⁴

It is also worth mentioning that the early scholarship has deep interest and concern for the script as well as the correct pronunciation of the letter or word. Specifically, the Companions appeared to be very alert and vigilant in this regard. It is attributed to the second caliph ‘Umar that he used to stress on the correct learning of the letters and words. In this regard, he states;

“Learn the syntax, declension and the cases of words like your memorization of the Qur’ān”.⁷⁹⁵

“Acquire the knowledge of the grammatical mistakes, obligations and Prophetic practices as you learn the Qur’ān”.⁷⁹⁶

Ibn Fāris, a well known linguist, narrates in this regard that in early period, people used to avoid committing Al Lahñ (writing mistakes) as one avoids from sins. ⁷⁹⁷

Following the footsteps of their predecessors, the traditional Muslim scholarship has produced a vast body of literature concerning the Qur’ānic script and its peculiarities. One can find a detailed chapter devoted to subtleties of the ‘Uthmānic script.⁷⁹⁸

It is vital, for the sake of argument, to assess the emendation procedure in the light of the rules that the author has fixed. In this regard, the first rule of Bellamy in emending the word is dearth of good sense in the extent word.

Of his emendations, one specimen will suffice her. The Qur’ān declares;

إِنْكُمْ وَمَا تَعْبُدُونَ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ حَصَبٌ جَهَنَّمُ أَنْتُمْ لَهَا وَارِدُونَ⁷⁹⁹

⁷⁹⁴ Zarkashī, Badaruddīn. Al Itqān fī ‘Ulūm ul Qur’ān, ed. Ibrāhīm, Muhammād. Bairūt. Dār Ihya ul Kutub. 1957. vol. 1. 379.

⁷⁹⁵ Qāsim bin Salām, Faḍā’l. vol. 1.349.

⁷⁹⁶ Qāsim bin Salām, Faḍā’l .vol. 1.349.

⁷⁹⁷ Ibn Fāris, Ṣahībī. vol.1.35.

⁷⁹⁸ some of the significant works in this regard are;

Discussing the term **Haşab** (حسب), in the ayah

إِنْكُمْ وَمَا تَعْبُدُونَ مِنْ دُوْنِ اللَّهِ حَصَبٌ جَهَنَّمُ أَنْتُمْ لَهَا وَارِدُونَ⁸⁰⁰

Verily ye, (unbelievers), and the (false) gods that ye worship besides Allah, are (but) fuel for Hell! to it will ye (surely) come!

He expresses his view saying that the word here does not give a good sense and it seems that this is scribal mistake. **Haşab** cannot occur in the meaning of fuel as for this meaning, the Qur'ān has used elsewhere the word **Haṭab** (حطب).

وَأَمَّا الْقَاسِطُونَ فَكَانُوا لِجَهَنَّمَ حَطَبًا⁸⁰¹

But those who swerve,- they are (but) fuel for Hell-fire'

He is of the conviction that the copyist omitted the vertical stroke of țā, turning into şād. Before assessing this view, it is better to cite the ayah here. The Qur'ān states;

In suggesting so, his sole argument is that the word lacks good sense as in other places the Qur'ān used the term **haṭab** (wood) for the fuel. Perhaps, Bellamy's understanding of this ayah is that as the literal meaning of the term **haşab** is stones and as the stones cannot be fuel of the Hell, it shows that it is a scribal error who should have written **haṭab** as wood is used for fuel.⁸⁰²

The first point is that a close observation of this argument shows that the ruling itself is problematic. A systematic study of the Qur'ānic text informs that the Qur'ān never used one single term for the same expressions. Rather, multiple words are used for the identical expressions in numerous places. A beginner of Arabic language would know the fact that in order to attain the rhetorical beauty, it uses plentiful synonyms. The Qur'ān has adopted the same in the usage of its terminology. This method has its own specific peculiarities.

⁷⁹⁹ 21:98

⁸⁰⁰ 21:98

⁸⁰¹ 72: 15

⁸⁰²

A variety of literature can be located on the discussion of the synonyms and its occurrence in the Qur’ān. For instance the Qur’ān employs more than three different terminologies for the expression of doubt.

It says;

ذَلِكَ الْكِتَابُ لَا رَيْبَ⁸⁰³

“This is a book; there is no doubt in it”.

Again, it says;

أَلَا إِنَّهُ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ مُحِيطٌ أَلَا إِنَّهُمْ فِي مِرْيَةٍ مِنْ لِقَاءِ رَبِّهِمْ⁸⁰⁴

“Ah indeed! Are they in doubt concerning the Meeting with their Lord? Ah indeed! It is He that doth encompass all things”!

وَإِنَّ الَّذِينَ اخْتَلَفُوا فِيهِ مِنْ شَكٍّ لِفِي مُذْكُورٍ⁸⁰⁵

“and those who differ therein are full of doubts”.

These examples show the general Qur’ānic methodology in treatment of the lexis as for one expression three terms are employed. Consequently, to assume the word as error on the basis of this premise is methodologically incorrect.

Secondly, another clue to indicate that the word is a mistake is as suggested by the author, difference of opinion on the expression of the term. The fact, according to him, in turn shows that they were not familiar with the word because of its mistaken inscription. In this regard too, a researcher having acquaintance with the nature of the Tafsīr works can simply conclude that it was a common practice of the exegetes to offer multiple meanings for the term. One can simply pick up any medieval exegetical work and see that the anthological nature of these works in itself was the result of this method. One can hardly find unanimity among the exegetes on a term. Yet, as later Muslim scholars have indicated, this difference was not, by and large, conflicting in nature. Conversely, it was

⁸⁰³2:2

⁸⁰⁴41:54

⁸⁰⁵4:157

in fact the variation of opinion that can be reconciled in majority of the cases. Yet, what a researcher needs is the proper training in dealing with these works. A contemporary Muslim elaborates the point saying that the classical exegetical works are really helpful for a proper understanding of the Qur'ān but one cannot benefit with this intellectual legacy without a proper training. The reason for this, as he illustrates, is that when one encounter with a dozen apparently contradictory statements on a single topic in Ṭabarī or finds various diverse narrations from the Prophet in Tafsīr Ibn Kathīr, only the requisite training in the methodology of either of the sciences of Tafsīr and ḥadīth can keep him from being perplexed.⁸⁰⁶

Thirdly, as far as the meaning of ḥaṣab is concerned, a quick browsing of the pages of Arabic lexicons can easily witness that this word has more connotations than one, as Bellamy suggested in the sense of fuel. Moreover, the classical exegetes and grammarians have taken the word in various expressions according to the context.

The famous lexicographer Ibn Qutaiba says in this regard;

الحصب ما ألقى في النار و أصله من الحصبا و هي الحصي

و حصبت فلانا : اذا رميته حصبا و ما رميت به حصب⁸⁰⁷

Ḥasab is whatever is thrown into the Fire. Its origin is from ḥaṣbā that means pebble and when you throw gravel on someone, it is said حصبت فلانا. And what you throw is called ḥaṣab.

Another famous grammarian and lexicographer Al Sajistānī says explaining this term;

كل شيء ألقته في النار فهو حصب⁸⁰⁸

The famous imam Jawzī expressed the identical view in his work *Funūn ul Afnān*.⁸⁰⁹

⁸⁰⁶ "Introduction." *Integrated Encyclopedia of the Qur'an*. 1st ed. Vol. 1. Canada: Center for Islamic Studies, 2013. xiii.

⁸⁰⁷ Ibn Qutaiba, Abū Muammad. *Gharībul Qur'ān*, ed. Ṣaqr, Ahmad. Egypt: Dārul Kutub al 'Ilmiyya. 1978. vol. 1. 288.

⁸⁰⁸ Muhammad, Al Sijistānī. *Gharībul Qur'ān*, ed. Sumrān, Muhammad. Syria: Dār Qutaiba. 1995. vol.1. 194.

⁸⁰⁹ See: Ed, Ḥasan, Ziauddīn. *Dārul Bashā'ir al Islamiyya*. 1987. 349.

Many of the major commentators have taken this meaning and interpreted the ayah accordingly. The famous exegete Rāzī elaborates the term articulating that the ayah implies that they all will be thrown in the Hell as the pebbles are thrown. The non-believer are compared with pebbles that is jettisoned and when they are thrown like pebbles, they are depicted as the pebbles of Hell.⁸¹⁰ The same is cited by Ibn ‘Aṭṭiyya⁸¹¹ and Abu Sa‘ūd.⁸¹²

Another aspect that is explicated by the scholars is that when ḥatab (wood) is thrown in the fire it is called ḥaṣab. But, before throwing to fire it is called ḥaṭab.⁸¹³

The third meaning of the ayah is taken as fuel by exegetes. Bellamy's conviction is that gravel cannot be fuel of Hellfire. In the view of the scholars, this ayah is talking about the non-believers and their stone idols that they worship. There are two more ayahs in this context that informs them that the stone gods will be the fuel of Hellfire along with them.⁸¹⁴ Furthermore, the practice is not an unusual as in some places, the pebbles are used to increase the fire and to retain the heat for a long time after the fire is extinguished.⁸¹⁵

This discussion elaborates the point that the author, while offering his emendations, based his work on few sources only. It might be the case that by comparing this term with other ayahs, he personally reached to the conclusion that the term should be ḥaṭab here like other places. Moreover, he did not consult the classical lexicons in order to attain all of the possible meanings of the term. What one expects from the academic scholarship is to be equipped with basic tools of linguistics but, this is not the case here.

Moreover, as generally observed, most of the western writers apply, consciously or unconsciously, pure biblical terms to the Qur'ānic studies and attempt to understand and present the Qur'ān in entirely biblical paradigm. For instance, John Wansbrough has applied purely Judaic terms in his discourses of the Qur'ānic studies. A reader unfamiliar

⁸¹⁰ Mafatīḥul Ghaib, vol. 22. 188. See

⁸¹¹ Al Muḥarrar al Wajīz. vol. 4. 104.

⁸¹² Tafsīr Abi Sa‘ūd. vol. 6. 86.

⁸¹³ Bahrul Muhit. vol. 7. 441.

⁸¹⁴ 2:24, 6: 66

⁸¹⁵ Ali, Mohr. The Qur'ān. 319.

with this terminology becomes bewildered at the very outset of reading this work. Bellamy, likewise, many times employed the pure biblical terminology in the Qur'ānic studies such as version and recension. For instance, in browsing the expressions of recension, one finds that most of the dictionaries relate the term with biblical history.

The usage of the term is rejected by the Muslim scholars arguing that the Qur'ān's redaction and finalization were nominal as both were routine tasks requiring no critical judgments or additions. Similarly, to call the 'Uthmānic copy as recession is incorrect as there was no revision or emendation of the existing text.⁸¹⁶

⁸¹⁶ Akhtar, *The Qur'ān*, 124.

5. CONCLUDING REMARKS

In the history of the western Qur'ānic studies, a grave and gradual transformation in the methodological approaches, styles and tones of the works can be observed. Due to the fact that this movement was initiated by the Christian writers with the hostile motives, the medieval works were predominated by polemics. Along with other works, it was the translations of the Qur'ān throughout that exercised profound and pejorative effects on the western mind. With the emergence of the secular academic approaches as an aftermath of the reformation and enlightenment, the intensity of bitterness and hostility reduced to a great extent. From the proclamation of the Qur'ān as a fraud to its recognition as a sacred text is in itself a grave change that should be admitted. Many western intellectuals focus on the issue of Christian- Muslim relationship and endorse development of better mutual understanding. For instance, Watt recommends his fellows to reject the old distorted notions of Islam and develop its positive conception.⁸¹⁷ Moreover, it is a fact that many of the current western writers have attempted to rid themselves from the chains of bias and prejudice although they are very few such as Annemarie Schimmel, Karen Armstrong, John Esposito, Joseph Lombard, William Chittick etc. Likewise, there are many other who invite their counterparts to study Islam in a just and academic method.

Nevertheless, as indicated by many Muslims and non- Muslims writers alike, the classical works of the Christian scholars had intensely influenced the western thought in a way that despite an apparent change, reiteration of many of the classical ideas concerning the Qur'ān can be observed in recent works. Hence, along with the bias, there are many other factors that led to the misrepresentation of the Qur'ān such as influence of the past propaganda, misunderstanding and confusion. Accordingly, we cannot discard the entire western scholarship with the premise of the Orientalism.

Among many other factors that led to the transformation of the entire paradigm of the western Qur'ānic studies, the increasing contacts with the Muslim countries and contribution of the Muslim scholars in the western academia are of grave importance.

⁸¹⁷ Montgomery, Muslim- Christian encounters: perceptions and misperceptions (New York: Routledge, 1991), 148

Perhaps, this is the fundamental reason for the contribution of the Muslim scholars in the Encyclopaedia of the Qur'ān as this aspect of the EQ has been emphasized frequently by many. Also, this is the basic difference that can be noticed in the past and recent century. As it is narrated that when the editor of the Encyclopaedia of Islam was asked about the absence of any Muslim writing in the work. He replied that the work has been written by "the western pen for the western people".⁸¹⁸ The situation is no more like that as one can note the frequent participation of noted Muslim scholars such as Abdullah Saeed, Farid Esack and Abdulaziz Sachedina in the collective works. Same is true in regard to the scholarly journals on Islam and more particularly on the Qur'ān. The western academia shows a welcoming stance for the Muslim contributors to scholarly insights. Accordingly, it was the need of time to invite the Muslim scholars as well, although very few, to contribute in the project. The appearance of the Muslim scholars on the scenario and their contribution in the EQ is itself a step that should be welcomed along with the transformation in the styles of the western writers.

It is also perceptible that from a plethora of works in past on the Qur'ān, many few have attempted to evaluate the functional power of the Qur'ān through a systematic study of the themes and the contents of the Qur'ān. The grave change that Qur'ān brought in the individual and collective lives has been the least point in the discussions of the western works. A change in this method is quite discernible in the recent times. The EQ is the finest example in which an attempt is made to discuss the terminologies and the themes of the Qur'ān in detail. However, it can be noticed that in doing so, many Qur'ānic ideas of the grave importance are left such as there is no entry on the basic term 'Allah'. Moreover, many unrelated marginal themes are inserted such as furniture, Talent, African literature and etc.

Another matter of significance is that the western Qur'ānic studies is far ahead from the Muslim world. The extensive project of the EQ that took thirteen years of painstaking labors denotes to the high morale, enthusiasm, passion and endurance of the western scholars in this regard. Apart from the EQ, many anthologies on the subject of the Qur'ānic studies have appeared in the recent century. On contrary, in Muslim world,

⁸¹⁸ A'zami, The history, Introduction.

efforts for further researches and developments on the communal are very few. Hence, there is an extreme need to focus on the fundamental issues of this discipline at collective level. Apart from these general comments, there are some crucial issues that need to be addressed in the proper way. They are as follows;

The Muslim contribution in the EQ is highlighted frequently by the western scholars and mostly is introduced as an essential feature of the EQ. This work argues that the fact is not as claimed by the western academy. The statistical assessment of this contribution shows that in overall material the Muslim contribution is almost fifteen percent. While, with regard to the essential issues of the Qur'ānic sciences, it is only three percent.

It is also quite manifest that Muslim scholars' contribution has been marginal in overall material. The examination of the Qur'ānic terminologies demonstrates that all fundamental issues of the beliefs are written by the non- Muslims for instance God, Muhammad, Sīra, Hadīth and the Qur'ān etc. The Muslim scholars were assigned the topics of trivial nature such as 'Trips', 'Sinai', 'Ships', 'Barrier' and etc. Had the contribution of the Muslims factual, they could also have been given the essential themes of the Qur'ān to address.

It is also noticeable, that the scholars with a contentious position in the Muslim world are given significant and central rank in the formation of the EQ. More specifically, these scholars do not represent the well established Muslim point of view. It is acknowledged that many other noted scholars have contributed in the project; however, their contribution is too secondary and minor.

Besides, as a result of the pejorative effects of the traditional polemical works, an unbroken chain of ideas can be identified in many regards. Specifically, the idea of the borrowed nature of Islam and the Qur'ān and derogatory image of the Muslim scholarship is entrenched in the western works of the classical Christian scholars and contemporary works in identical way. With regard to the notion of the borrowing nature of Islam, Azami says that it is both assuming and aggravating that how determined

orientalists are to credit other cultures for each and every achievement of Islam- even something as simple as the separating one verse from next with a dot.⁸¹⁹

Particularly, in the recent works, the theme of the borrowed nature of Islam is studied applying new methods including such as comparative study of the texts that includes the examination of the Qur'ānic texts in comparison to the Arabic Christian poetry and biblical texts. With regard to the continuation of the stereotypes, EQ seems to maintain the classical western tradition in many issues. Among them, the issue of borrowing is quite apparent. The general study of the data shows that numerous writers, in their explanations of the Qur'ānic terms and ideas, attempted to attest that these views are borrowed from Christianity or Judaism. No independent study that claims otherwise is observed in this regard. Perhaps, this is the main and key problem of the western academic world that the borrowed nature of Islam has been accepted as an established fact without any reasonable questioning. Hence, there is intense need to rid from stereotypes by addressing this fundamental issue in true academic methods. The resemblance in the contents of the three religions does not necessitate borrowing. On contrary, this shows the same Divine origin. The internal inconsistencies in the claims of the western scholars itself is a proof for the weakness of the claim. Although the western scholars mostly haste to assign the foreign sources to the Qur'ān, still, they could not build a consensus upon the nature of the origin. For instance, Bell asserts a direct foreign source of the Prophet Muhammad,⁸²⁰ while Cragge nullifies the existence of the direct information.⁸²¹ Recent scholars illustrate to these differences and invite the scholars to form a uniform approach on this issue.⁸²²

Another worth mentioning issue is the image of the traditional Muslim scholarship. The point that the western writers often underestimate the significance of the traditional Muslim scholarship is even acknowledged by the contemporary western intellectuals.⁸²³ This is an established truth for the western scholars that the traditional as well as recent Muslim scholarship works for some specific agendas. Many recent

⁸¹⁹ The history of the text of the Qur'ān,

⁸²⁰ Introduction, 100.

⁸²¹ The call of the minarets, 66.

⁸²² EQ, 2/ foreign vocabulary

⁸²³ M. Wheeler, Brannon. Prophets in the Qur'ān (New York: Continuum, 2002), 2

scholars express the identical views concerning the Muslim scholars. The works of Muslim scholarship are mostly presented as contrary to the features of 'academic' and 'scientific'. The authors of the EQ, if not all, hold the similar views. Accordingly, many of them deem the Muslim scholarship as non- Academic and non- scientific. Arkoun articulates in this regard that if traditional dogma prevails, the Muslims would be able to produce an Islamic encyclopaedia only. By Islamic, he means the work that is subjected to mythical driving forces. On contrast, he deems Encyclopaedia of the Qur'ān as scholarly, intellectual, and scientific.⁸²⁴ This basic strand runs in the entire EQ from the preface to the closing. It seems that the main directive for this approach is taken from the preface in which the general editor, in the very outset, shows her reservations concerning the uncertain nature of the Muslim scholarship and authenticity of the traditional Muslim sources.⁸²⁵ Moreover, the identical views can be located in the writings of other influential western scholars as well. It seems that including McAuliffe, some others such as Rippin, Arkoun, and Rubin endorse the same view of contentious position of the Muslim scholarship.⁸²⁶ It really seems to be in stark contrast to the claims that the EQ draws upon the rich tradition of the Islamic scholarship.⁸²⁷ This stance also rejects the Majority Muslim viewpoint that the traditionalists have taken utmost care for transmission of knowledge in a methodological way.

Furthermore, a western scholar and contributor to the EQ, Rippin, describing the features of EQ articulates that the common characteristic of all such works is that it takes its subject seriously and leaves its readers to draw their own conclusions as to whether (or to what extent) the Qur'ān is a work which will be life motivating to the individual.⁸²⁸

With regard to this facet of the EQ, the views of the present researcher are quite contrary to this. Numerous instances can be located that treat the Qur'ān with vague, uncertain and doubtful expressions. One can discover very easily the wording such as 'perhaps', 'it is not clear' 'it is highly probable' 'it's problematic', 'it remains doubtful' and

⁸²⁴ Arkoun, Muhammad. Islam: To reform or to subvert? (New Delhi: Viva Books, 2009), 90

⁸²⁵ EQ, vol. 1.1

⁸²⁶ For reference, see chapter two.

⁸²⁷ This feature is described on the back cover of the EQ.

⁸²⁸ See chapter two.

likewise.⁸²⁹ It is quite understood that the use of skeptical language put question marks on the competency of the writer and raise doubts concerning his academic experience and skills. Moreover, this conduct itself affects the reader's psychology in the way that in the very outset, he reaches to the conclusion by his imagination of the Qur'ān and Muslim sources as problematic and doubtful. This methodology appears to be a polite way of rejecting the authenticity of the Islamic historical accounts. The EQ's depiction of the Muslim sources also misleads the reader towardsthe idea that there are no well established Muslim works that can be taken into consideration.

Besides, it is discernable that the in most of the articles the writers attempted to build the conclusions prior to the research and announce their findings in the very outset of their work. Specifically, the articles about the fundamental themes of the Qur'ānic sciences are best instances of this conduct. This shows that the authors are influenced by some specific thoughts concerning the image of the Qur'ān. In this regard, a western writer, Morrow Jeffery declares that the prior commitments of the scholars affect not only the conclusions they reach, but even the very methods they choose.⁸³⁰

The use of authoritative language in establishing the arguments and conclusions can be witnessed in majority of the entries. To elaborate more, the authors are much certain in their claims and arguments and use the phrases such as there is no reason to doubt, there must be, there is no reason to think etc. But when the matter comes to nullify the Muslim tradition, they are very assertive to announce that the whole traditional account is problematic, conflicting and confusing. A researcher should let his sources speak themselves. Sometimes, the entry gives the sense as the author is speaking louder than the sources by declaring his sources as uncertain and problematic or by his misrepresentation of the original sources. The apparent examples in this regard are the articles of Burton, Joynboll and Bellamy.

Coming to the specific subject of the Qur'ānic sciences, it is quite noteworthy that the very essential issues of the Qur'ānic sciences such as abrogation, collection of the Qur'ān

⁸²⁹ See for instance; 437/5, 438/5, 182/1, 35/4, 93/4, 399/4, 318/3, Religious Pluralism 399/4, 409/4

⁸³⁰ Morrow, Jeffery. *The Politics of Biblical Interpretation: A 'Criticism of Criticism'*.

and occasions of revelation are discussed by the non- Muslim writers. Refreshing in mind the grave significance of Qur'ānic sciences in the comprehension of the entire Qur'ān, one can complain of the absence of Muslim participation in this regard.

However, fact should be appreciated that the authors have attempted to discuss the issues thoroughly although they have committed mistakes. In this regard, multiple approaches are applied to address the topics.

With regard to the issue of the collection of the Qur'ān, the three writers showed a unanimous approach by expressing their doubts about the Muslim tradition. With slight differences in the approaches, the three writers agreed to reject the collection reports of the Muslim accounts. The first two very manifestly announced the reports nothing as forgery. It seems that these scholars have contented themselves with the established western notion about the uncertain nature of the Muslim accounts.

Moreover, it seems that the old tendency of 'we know better' is still working in the western academia as in the discourses of Qur'ānic sciences, identical illustrations are found. On contrary, the writers, in general, have adopted a complimentary position in respect to the western scholars. Their works are frequently declared as 'outstanding', classics and systematic. Furthermore, a dearth of rigorous and academic scholarship is visible in these entries with regard to the generalization, accuracy of the citation, precision of interpretation and internal inconsistencies.

Finally, this work concludes that the encyclopaedia of the Qur'ān presents wide-ranging, broad study of the Qur'ān and represents an evolution to some extent in the sense that an attempt is made to understand the essential concepts of the Qur'ān. However, it lacks a perfect, rigorous and thorough scholarship of the Qur'ān. It is also noted that in numerous issues concerning the Qur'ānic sciences, a dearth of self- sufficient research is evident as the writers based their works on stereotypes. Besides, because of the marginal participation of the Muslim scholars and distrust that the authors showed for the Muslim accounts and the Muslim scholarship, we cannot find any influence of the Muslim

thought in the discourses of Qur'ānic sciences. For this reason, despite the references of the Islamic sources, the majority conclusions are in contrast to the Muslim standpoint.

Further areas of research

Some of the basic issues need revisions and comprehensive study by the Muslim scholars. They are the followings;

1. The theme of foreign vocabulary necessitates the comprehensive understanding of linguistics. There is a vast room for investigation in this genre.
2. The issue of the writing material of the Qur'ān in the age of the Prophet itself is the basis of western claims about the collection. To elaborate, the majority of the Muslim scholars have mentioned the scattered material such as bones, leaves, stones and etc but the mention of the papyrus is very rare. The study concerning the use of papyrus in Makkah and other writing materials is of equal significance that should be investigated.
3. The problem of the collection reports that are narrated by the sole transmitter Zuhrī as it involves the issue of authenticity of Khabar wahid.
4. Very scant attention is paid to the issue of writing activities in Makkan period and the provision of ample evidences in its support. This became the foundation of the doubts concerning the early preservation of the Qur'ān.
5. According to the western scholars, the three possible empirical evidences concerning the collection and exactness of the Qur'ānic texts are Manuscript, Qur'ānic texts and the historical accounts. Issue of Qur'ānic manuscripts should be discussed in intellectual forums.
6. Moreover, the issue of western studies of the Qur'ān involves comparative study of biblical disciplines. At the level of PhD, the addition of the subject of comparative study of the Biblical history and the Qur'ān will be quite beneficial in this regard.

6. Index of Quranic Aāyāt

S.No	Ayah	No	Surah No
1	ذلِكَ الْكِتَابُ لَا رَبَّ	1	2
2		12	2
3		78	2
4	إِنَّ الَّذِينَ اخْتَلَفُوا فِيهِ لَفِي شَكٍ مُّنْهَىٰ	157	4
5		25	5
6		59	5
7		145	7
8	نَأَخْنُ نَزَّلْنَا الْكِتَابَ وَإِنَّا لَهُ لَحَافِظُونَ	15	9
9		14	17
10		49	18
11		70	22
12		75	27
13		18	31
14			
15		113	20
16	وَإِنَّ الْقَابِطُونَ فَكَثُرُوا إِلَيْهِمْ حَطَبٌ	72	15
17	أَلَا إِنَّهُمْ فِي مِزَانِهِ مِنَ الْقَاءِ رَبِّهِمْ	41	54
18		25	69

19		29	78
20	۵ إِنَّكُمْ وَمَا تَعْبُدُونَ مِنْ دُوْنِ اللَّهِ حَصَّبُ جَهَنَّمَ أَنْتُمْ لَهَا وَارِدُونَ	21	98

7. APPENDIX

Chronology of the Western Qur'ānic Scholarship

Century	Year	Significant events
12 th century	1143	The commencement of the serious scholarship of the Qur'ān. Compilation of the first Latin translation by Robert of Ketton commissioned by Peter the Venerable
13 th century	1286	The Syrian bishop, Bar Hebraeus, died whose work was one of the first in Arabic taken to Oxford by Edward Peacock.
14 th century	1311- 12	The council of Vienne called for chairs of Arabic in European leading universities.
	1450	John of Segovia (d. 1458), translated the Qur'ān in to Latin
	1461	Nicholas of Cusa (d. 146) wrote the <i>Cibratio Alchorani</i>
16 th century	1538	Gallium Postel (d. 1581) became the first Arabic professor in France.
	1543	The edition of the First Latin translation was published with

		preface by Martin Luther.
	1547	First Italian translation of the Qur'ān emerged by Andrea Arrivabene (d. 1570). It was mainly drawn upon the Robert's translation.
	1616	The first German translation of the Qur'ān by Solomon Schweigger appeared mainly derived from Ketton's translation.
	1625	William Bedwell (d.1632), an English priest and scholar, produced a catalogue of the standard Muslim numbering and naming of the Qur'ānic chapters
	1641	The first Dutch translation, derived from the German, of the Qur'ān appeared.
	1647	Andre du Ryer (d. 1660) produced the first French version.
	1649	Alexander Ross (d. 1654) translated Du Ryer version in to English. It was the first English translation.
	1698	Louis Marracci (d. 1700) produced the third Latin translation of the Qur'ān.
18 th century	1734	George Sale (d. 1736) produced his translation considered to be derived directly from Arabic.

	1792	The first Russian translation of the Qur'ān by Alexei Vasilyevich appeared but drawn upon Sale's translation
19 th century	1806	First English version of the Qur'ān printed in North America
	1822	Hungarian translation of the Qur'ān by Istevan Szokoly (d. 1904) indebted to Sale.
	1841	Gustav Flugel published his concordance to the Qur'ān. He also produced his critical edition different from the Muslim verse numbering.
	1844	Gustav Weil produced his work ' <i>Historische-kritische Einleitung in den Koran</i> '.
	1859/ 1860	Theodore Noldeke prize winning work launched.
	1873	John Penrice (d. 1892) published his dictionary of the Qur'ān.
	1885	John Rodwell produced his English translation titled as 'The Qur'ān.'
20 th century	1923	Gotthelf Bergstresser (d. 1933) began the Qur'ān archive in Munich, for which he collected photographs of ancient manuscripts of the Qur'ān
	1937	Arthur Jeffery wrote his famous 'Materials for the History of the

		Text of the Qur'ān' and 'Foreign vocabulary of the Qur'ān'. Richard Bell completed his translation of the Qur'ān 'The Qur'ān translated'.
	1964	Arthur Arberry produced his translation' The Koran interpreted'.
	1972	The workers at San'a found Qur'ān fragments. Experts from Germany were invited for a close scrutiny of these parchments.
	1977	Three significant works, considered to be the reflection of revisionist approach were published. 'Qur'ānic studies' of John Wansbrough, 'The collection of Qur'ān' by John Burton and 'Hagarism' by Crone and Crook.
	1988	'Approaches to the history of the interpretation of the Qur'ān' by Andrew Rippin was published.
	1996	Stephan Wild edited the Book 'The Qur'ān as text'
	1999	The 'Journal of Qur'ānic studies' was founded and published by Edinburg University Press
21 st century	2001	Brill began publishing the Encyclopaedia of the Qur'ān. Two other works 'The Qur'ān;

		styles and contents' and 'The Qur'ān in its interpretive tradition, were published.
	2004	Andrew Rippin edited 'Qur'ānic studies' of Wansbrough
	2006	<p>Emergence of the works</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 'The Blackwell companion to the Qur'ān' 2. 'The Cambridge companion to the Qur'ān' 3. 'The Qur'ān; an encyclopedia', by Oliver Leaman 4. A dictionary and glossary of the Qur'ān
	2007	'The poetic Qur'ān; Studies on Qur'ānic poetics' by Thomas Hoffman appeared.
	2008	'The Qur'ān in its historical context' by Gabriel Said Reynolds was published.
	2009	The work of Cuypers Michel 'The Banquet; A reading of the fifth Surah of the Qur'ān' was published.
	2010	'The Qur'ān in Context' edited by Angelika Neuwirth appeared.
	2015	'The Yemeni Manuscript Tradition' was written by D. Hollenberg. 'A Qur'ān Commentary' by Ibn

		Barrajān of Seville (d. 536/1141)' by Gerhard Bowring.
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