

PART II

The history of the collection of the Qur'ān texts

6 The first collection

The history of the collection of the Qur'ān texts was discussed by the Muslim under the aegis of three views:

1. the virtually unanimous opinion that our present Qur'ān texts (the muṣḥaf) are incomplete;
2. the virtually unanimous acceptance of the proposition that the first stage in the history of the Qur'ān texts was marked by the circulation of a number of not quite identical recensions privately assembled and independently organised by a number of Muḥammad's contemporaries;
3. the unanimous assertion that there obtains conflict between the sources of the Fiqh: Qur'ān and Sunna.

The major European work in this field is the magisterial Geschichte des Qorans (1860) by Th. Nöldeke, as revised by Fr. Schwally's second edition, part 2 (Leipzig 1919). Since the publication of this edition no new suggestions on the history of the Qur'ān texts have been advanced.

'Abdullāh b. 'Umar reportedly said, 'Let none of you say, "I have got the whole of the Qur'ān." How does he know what all of it is? Much of the Qur'ān has gone [d h b]. Let him say instead, "I have got what has survived."¹

The intimate connection between this utterance and the classical hadīths on the collection of the Qur'ān texts

is illustrated by a remark attributed to Zaid b. Thābit, 'The Prophet died and the Qur'ān had not been assembled into a single place.'² For it is this same Zaid who plays the central role in all the hadīths on the post-Muhammadan collection(s) of the revealed texts variously attributed to the Prophet's first, second and third successor.

In these reports, two motives are insistent: the failure by Muḥammad to collect and edit the texts; and the suggestion of the incompleteness, potential or actual which might have been expected to follow.

Zaid reports, 'Abū Bakr sent for me on the occasion of the deaths of those killed in the Yemāma wars. I found 'Umar b. al Khaṭṭāb with him. Abū Bakr said, "'Umar has just come to me and said, 'In the Yemāma fighting death has dealt most severely with the qurrā' and I fear it will deal with equal severity with them in other theatres of war and as a result much of the Qur'ān will perish [d h b]. I am therefore of the opinion that you should command that the Qur'ān be collected.'" Abū Bakr added, "I said to 'Umar, 'How can we do what the Prophet never did?' 'Umar replied that it was nonetheless a good act. He did not cease replying to my scruples until God reconciled me to the undertaking." Abū Bakr continued, "Zaid, you are young and intelligent and we know nothing to your discredit. You used to record the revelations for the Prophet, so pursue the Qur'ān and collect it all together." By God! had they asked me to remove a mountain it could not have been more weighty than what they would now have me do in ordering me to collect the Qur'ān. I therefore asked them how they could do what the Prophet had not done but Abū Bakr insisted that it was permissible. He did not cease replying to my scruples until God reconciled me to the undertaking as He had already reconciled

Abū Bakr and 'Umar. I thereupon pursued the Qur'ān collecting it all together from palm-branches, flat stones and the memories of men. I found the last verse of sūrat al Tawba in the possession of Abū Khuzaima al Anṣārī, having found it with no one else, "There has now come to you..." to the end of the sūra.'

The sheets [ṣuḥuf] that Zaid prepared in this manner remained in the keeping of Abū Bakr. On his death, they passed to 'Umar who then bequeathed them on his death to his daughter Ḥafṣa.³

A number of points arising from this hadīth have been noted in the Muslim commentaries.

It reconciles a tradition that Abū Bakr was the first to collect the texts with variant traditions which ascribe the initiative to 'Umar.⁴

The repetition of the motif that the Prophet had not collected the texts, together with the reference to the deaths of the qurrā' or Qur'ān memorisers, and 'Umar's consequent fear that much of the Qur'ān would perish; the reference to the primitiveness of the materials on which the revelations had been recorded in the lifetime of the Prophet and upon which Zaid was partly dependent for the preparation of his recension - all these elements predispose one to an expectation that the edition prepared by Zaid might be incomplete. Yet such expectation is balanced by the assurance that our text is in actual fact complete.

Nöldeke exaggerated the role played by written documents in Zaid's activity, for we note here the emphasis placed upon the missing verse supplied by one man's memory. Zaid realised that a verse which he knew to be part of the revelation and which he recalled was not to be found among

Muḥammad's survivors. However he at last did discover it in one man's possession. The verse is therefore attested by two competent witnesses.

Reference is made explicitly to Zaid's youth. In addition, the information that Zaid had been employed to write down the revelations for the Prophet guarantees the isnād of Zaid's text. It is marfū', that is, received direct from the Prophet. Further, it dates from the Prophet's late period. As nothing to Zaid's discredit is known, his testimony is that of dū 'adlin.

But we also find in the Tradition the following:

'Umar b. al Khaṭṭāb enquired about a verse of the Book of God. On being informed that it had been in the possession of so-and-so who had been killed in the Yemāma wars, 'Umar exclaimed the formula expressing loss, 'We are God's and unto Him is our return.' 'Umar gave the command and the Qur'ān was collected. He was the first to collect the Qur'ān.⁵

The Qur'ān texts which come down to us from 'Umar's day are unquestionably incomplete.

Zuhrī reports that when slaughter befell the Muslims in the Yemāma it was Abū Bakr who feared that many of the qurrā' would perish.⁶ Suggesting that nothing of the Qur'ān had been lost, this report concurs with the report from Zaid in indicating that our Qur'ān texts are in actual fact complete.

It is said that upward of 700 Companions fell in the Yemāma. Sufyān reports that when Sālim was slain 'Umar hastened to Abū Bakr.⁷ But, as Sālim had already 'collected the Qur'ān into a single volume' - he was the first to collect the

Qur'ān, and gave it the name muṣḥaf, a word he had heard in Ethiopia⁸ - his death would have had no damaging effect for the texts.

'Alī reported that the stoning verse had been revealed but those who bore it together with other verses in their memories perished in the Yemāma.⁹

Two questions have therefore been broached: 1. the completeness/incompleteness of the muṣḥaf; 2. the first to have collected it. This was either Abū Bakr, or 'Umar or Sālim, or it might have been 'Alī who 'on the death of the Prophet vowed that he would not don outdoor clothes until he had collected the Qur'ān into a single volume'.¹⁰

The task, whoever first accomplished it, was merely one of assembling the Qur'ān which 'already in the lifetime of the Prophet was recorded in writing. Abū Bakr's contribution was to arrange for the transfer of these sheets, then scattered about Medina, into a single volume.' God informs us that in Muḥammad's day the Qur'ān was written on 'pure sheets from which he recites'.¹¹ Q 98.2 may or may not refer to Muḥammad. In either event, the remark is exegetical rather than historical.

Only an appreciation that entirely independent needs, pulling in opposite directions and directing to differing conclusions, are operative here, will enable us to realise that several distinct Qur'ān's are envisaged in these apparently contradictory discussions.

Kitāb allāh is the source of the Islamic Law. The Qur'ān, Scripture and credentials of the polity of Islam, is ideally identical with that revealed to the Prophet and

transmitted to our times without addition, without subtraction, a whole complete and true record of the divine revelations.¹² But the Qur'ān, the mutawātir document on the basis of whose texts alone the prayer of the Muslim is valid, nevertheless differs from both kitāb allāh and the muṣḥaf prepared by any of Muḥammad's Companions save only Abū Bakr or 'Umar, or perhaps 'Uthmān.

The first to collect the Qur'ān between two covers was Abū Bakr. awwal man jama'a al Qur'ān baina lawḥain.¹³

'Alī said, 'God bless Abū Bakr! He was the first to collect the Qur'ān between two covers',¹⁴ and again, 'the greatest reward in respect of the maṣāḥif will fall to Abū Bakr for he was the first to collect the text between two covers'.¹⁵

Hišām b. 'Urwa reports his father as saying, 'Abū Bakr collected the Qur'ān after the death of the Prophet'.¹⁶

'Umar was the first to collect the Qur'ān into a single volume [muṣḥaf]... 'Umar desired to collect the Qur'ān. He addressed the people, 'Whoever among you received any part of the Qur'ān directly from the very mouth of the Prophet let him bring it here to us'.¹⁷

In one version of the report on 'Alī's vow, we read, 'until I collected the Qur'ān between two covers'.

The commentators assure us that this version is erroneous. Only a single transmitter credits 'Alī with a collection ab initio. The report is isolate.¹⁸ Omitting the words, 'between two covers' or 'into a single volume', and supposing the transmission to be accurate, the meaning of jama'a al Qur'ān would be 'memorised the Qur'ān'.¹⁹

Similarly, where used of 'Umar, the root j m 'a signifies aṣāra bi jam'ihi, 'advised its collection'.²⁰

Schwally too readily swallowed the equation of j m 'a with 'to get by heart'; but he dismissed the equation of j m 'a with aṣāra bi jam'ihi as arbitrary.²¹

Elsewhere we are assured that Zaid first wrote out the Qur'ān for Abū Bakr on scraps of leather and on palm-branches. On the death of Abū Bakr, 'Umar appointed Zaid to transcribe his materials into the ṣaḥīfa which remained in 'Umar's possession.²² Zaid says that they had been accustomed to organising the Qur'ān from these scraps in the presence of the Prophet.²³

'Umar decided to collect the Qur'ān. He addressed the people, 'Let whoever received direct from the mouth of the Prophet any part of the Qur'ān now bring it here to us.' They had written what they had heard on sheets, tablets and palm-branches. 'Umar would not accept anything from anyone until two witnesses bore testimony. He was assassinated while still engaged on his collection. His successor, 'Uthmān addressed the people, 'Let whoever has anything of the Book of God bring it here to us.' 'Uthmān would accept nothing from anyone until two witnesses bore testimony. Khuzaima b. Thābit said, 'I see that you have omitted two verses. You have not written them.' They asked what they were and he said, 'I had direct from the Prophet: "There has come to you...". 'Uthmān said, 'And I bear witness that these verses come from God.' He asked Khuzaima where they should enter them. He replied, 'Make them the close of the latest Qur'ānic revelation.' Thus was Barā'a sealed with these words.²⁴

The report recalls not only the above Zaid ḥadīth. It is

also connected with the following:

They collected the Qur'ān into a muṣḥaf in the reign of Abū Bakr, some men writing to the dictation of Ubayy. When they reached Q 9.127 some supposed that that was the last part of the Qur'ān to have been revealed. But Ubayy pointed out that the Prophet had taught him two verses more and, since they were the last of the Qur'ān to be revealed, the Book should close on the note on which it had begun.²⁵

The concern with the isnād of the Qur'ān and its tawātur is patent. No part of the Qur'ān is khabar wāḥid, based on the word of a single guarantor. Nothing was accepted into the muṣḥaf until two witnesses bore testimony. Nothing was included unless it had been heard direct from the very mouth of the Prophet.

The concern with the dating of the collection is equally evident. In what concerns the isnād, the name of Ubayy has not yet finally been replaced by that of Zaid. Ubayy had served Muḥammad as amanuensis before Zaid's selection. Zaid is the later of two witnesses.²⁶ In a further ḥadīth, Ubayy's name had not yet been replaced by that of Ḥaḥṣa, 'They collected the Qur'ān from the codex prepared by Ubayy' (Maṣāḥif, p. 30).

Reference to the last verse of the Qur'ān to be revealed, and thus to be recorded, is in Suyūṭī's view a gratuitous allusion to matters other than collecting. There is nowhere any suggestion that the scraps of the revelations had been arranged chronologically. The date of revelation was ignored in arranging the Qur'ān texts. Dates are relevant only to al nāsikh wa al mansūkh.

The ḥadīth further represents an incomplete reaching

after fulfilment of a rule laid down in Q 2.282 for the correct action to be taken in recording a debt, 'Let the scribe write and let the borrower dictate.' Ubayy dictated and the others wrote. The ḥadīth however marks incomplete verification of the verses contributed by Ubayy, since he is their sole witness. 'Umar and 'Uthmān had demanded two witnesses for acceptance into the muṣḥaf.

In the 'Uthmān ḥadīth, 'Uthmān himself volunteered corroboration of the testimony of Khuzaima b. Thābit. Earlier we noted Zaid b. Thābit's endorsement of the testimony of Abū Khuzaima on the very same verse. A further ḥadīth features one al Ḥārith b. Khuzaima who brought this very verse to 'Umar.²⁷

Q 2.282 carries the additional admonition, 'demand the testimony of two of your men'.

Abū Bakr ordered 'Umar and Zaid to sit in the gate of the mosque and to include in the muṣḥaf only what was vouched for by the testimony of two men.²⁸

'Uthmān asked whose was the purest speech and whose the greatest acquaintance with the Qur'ān.²⁹ A variant might mean whose is the greatest acquaintance with the Book, alternatively, with the art of writing.³⁰ On their reply, he commanded, 'Let Sa'īd dictate and let Zaid write.'

This proper solicitude of the Muslims to find, consistently throughout every phase of the first moves to record the Qur'ān texts, two witnesses to authenticate verses to be included in the muṣḥaf, a motif undeniably derived from Q 2.282, led to a remarkable status being conferred upon the individual from whom Zaid, in the reign of Abū Bakr, had

recovered the verse from Q 9 which he had failed to find with anyone else. Unhappily, however, the elegance of this rationalisation is marred by uncertainty as to the man's identity.

'Khuzaima was known as dū al šahādain. The Prophet had declared his testimony equal to that of two men.'³¹

The verse was volunteered by Abū Khuzaima. 'The Prophet had declared his evidence the equal of that of two men.'³²

In default of this item of information, Q 2.282's two witnesses might refer to abstract testimonies. Zaid's words, 'I did not find it with anyone else', were interpreted to mean that he had not found the verse in writing with anyone else.³³ That indicates that Zaid had not been satisfied with mere remembrance to the exclusion of written evidence, nor had he been satisfied with mere written records until that which was found in writing was endorsed by the memories of other witnesses.³⁴ The memories and the written records together thus afford two classes of testimony: receipt of the revelations direct from the Prophet - samā'; recording - kitāba (i.e. recording during the Prophet's lifetime).

Two principal tendencies are detectable throughout the confusions of the ḥadīths:

1. The muṣḥaf is incomplete. Its collection was not undertaken until some time after the death of the Prophet.

Zuhrī reports, 'We have heard that many Qur'ān passages were revealed but that those who had memorised them fell in the Yemāma fighting. Those passages had not been written down and, following the deaths of those who knew them, were no longer

known; nor had Abū Bakr, nor 'Umar nor 'Uthmān as yet collected the texts of the Qur'ān.³⁵ Those lost passages were not to be found with anyone after the deaths of those who had memorised them. This, I understand, was one of the considerations which impelled them to pursue the Qur'ān during the reign of Abū Bakr, committing it to sheets for fear that there should perish in further theatres of war men who bore much of the Qur'ān which they would take to the grave with them on their fall, and which, with their passing, would not be found with any other.³⁶

The motif of the Qur'ān's incompleteness collides head-on with the Qur'ān's tawātur.

2. The Qur'ān texts in the hands of the Muslims represent the universal Qur'ān Tradition of the text as preserved by the countless number of Muḥammad's Companions living on at and around Medina after the Prophet's death.

The device of the two witnesses, borrowed as we see from the Qur'ān source, was intended to rebut any suggestion arising from the oldest accounts of the collection of the Qur'ān texts that the muṣḥaf represented that class of dubious information from the Apostolic age dubbed in the jargon of the Ḥadīth specialists khābar al wāḥid, the isolate report.

It does not follow from Zaid's saying that he had failed to find the āya from sūrat al Tawba in the possession of anyone else, that at that time it was not mutawāṭira among those who had learnt their Qur'ān from the Companions, but had not heard it direct from the Prophet. What Zaid was seeking was the evidence of those who had had their Qur'ān texts direct from the Prophet. Besides, it is probable that when Zaid found it with Abū Khuzaima the other Companions recalled having heard it. Zaid himself certainly recalled that he had heard it...

al Da'ūdī commented that Abū Khuzaima was not the sole witness. Zaid knew the verse. It was thus attested by two men. Da'ūdī was under the misapprehension that the rule that the Qur'ān text cannot be established on the basis of the isolate report refers to reports from single individuals. That is not the case. By isolate is meant all reports which do not satisfy all the conditions of tawātur. The number of transmitters might be considerable and yet, should one of the conditions of tawātur be lacking, the report would be regarded as isolate. The correct interpretation of Zaid's remark that he had failed to find the āya with anyone else is that he had failed to find it in writing, not that he had failed to find those who bore it in their memories.³⁷

The reports that 'Umar would not accept anything into the muṣḥaf until two witnesses had borne testimony indicate that Zaid did not satisfy himself with merely finding something in writing. He further required in his extremely cautious approach that those who had received the Qur'ān direct from the Prophet should also give their testimony, although Zaid himself knew that the verse was an authentic part of the Qur'ān.³⁸

The technical desirability of furnishing the Qur'ān texts with the tawātur now demanded by the scholars is adequately reflected in the various techniques which have been worked into the texts or into the interpretation of the available collection ḥadīths.

A significant and troublesome breach of this rule of tawātur will shortly occupy our attention.

The extreme caution exercised by Zaid in his work of pursuing and collecting the Qur'ān texts was a sufficient guarantee that what the Muslims found in their copies of the

muṣḥaf consisted solely of texts that properly belonged there, and that nothing that did not belong there had found its way into the text.

There was no similar guarantee that all that did belong there had been included and that nothing that belonged to the Qur'ān had been excluded.

Zaid's test, it will be seen, was negative.

Nöldeke expressed the commonsense view that it may be doubted whether in the very earliest days, when he had next to no following, Muḥammad had already begun to have his revelations recorded. If he had not, then it is always possible that some of the earliest Qur'ān revelations have not survived.³⁹ The suggestion is inherently probable. It is not of course the view that the Muslims have formed.

We have already considered what for convenience I called the exegetes' concern for the distinction between Muḥammad's human and his prophetic memory. It is of the utmost import that we bear in mind constantly when reviewing the Muslim accounts of the history of the texts of the Qur'ān that Muḥammad, the Prophet, could never merely forget any of the Qur'ān, even if Muḥammad, the man, might occasionally fail to recall this or that verse in ordinary everyday life, as when, for example, he went into the mosque to pray. 'The Messenger of God heard a man recite by night and said, "May God have mercy on that man! He has just reminded me of verse so-and-so that I had forgotten from sūra such-and-such."⁴⁰

More than once already we have traced such reports to the disputes on the exegesis of verses containing

functions of the root n s y.

Bukhārī preserves a ḥadīth to the effect that some men waited upon ibn 'Abbās, cousin and supporter of 'Alī, and later upon Muḥammad b. al Ḥanafiya, son of 'Alī and himself a figurehead in the Šī'a's claims on behalf of the Holy Family. To the question whether Muḥammad had 'left anything' each of these notables in turn replied that Muḥammad had left no more than may be found between the 'two covers'. ibn Ḥajar comments, 'Muḥammad did not omit from the mushaf any part of the Qur'ān which ought to be publicly recited [at prayer].'⁴¹

That implies that there is Qur'ān material missing from the mushaf that need not be publicly recited. For ibn Ḥajar, the ḥadīth denies the existence outside the mushaf of verses which ought to have been included.

That implies that there are verses that ought not to be included in the mushaf. He finds this reading of the tafsīr of the ḥadīth confirmed by other reports from Companions mentioning Qur'ān materials revealed, but subsequently withdrawn in respect of their wording. That had not prejudiced the continuing legal validity of their rulings. The wording had simply been omitted from the mushaf. An instance of the kind is 'Umar's report on the omission of the stoning verse.

Other verses had been withdrawn in respect of both their wording and ruling. An example in the Tradition is Anas' ḥadīth on the Qur'ān's reference to the Bi'r Ma'ūna martyrs. Further cases include Ubayy's remark that Aḥzāb had originally been as long as Baqara; Ḥudāifa's remark, 'They don't recite a quarter of al Barā'a today.'

These are all sound ḥadīths and represent instances of naskh al ḥukm wa al tilāwa and naskh al tilāwa dūna al ḥukm. Both are types of Qur'ān omission from the mushaf.

Omissions fall into two classes: revelations withdrawn in respect of their wording and ruling - withdrawn from both document and source; and, secondly, revelations withdrawn in respect of their wording alone - withdrawn from the document alone.

The Qāḍī Abū Bakr al Bāqillānī states, 'The entire Qur'ān revealed by God and commanded by Him to be recorded in writing, except what He suppressed, wording and ruling together, or wording only, although He may also have suppressed the ruling, is this which is between the two covers. Not one jot is missing and not one tittle has been added.'⁴²

The Qāḍī has defined the mushaf, not the Qur'ān. Only Qur'ān verses whose wording has been unaffected by the two modes of withdrawal have been included in the mushaf. Excluded, therefore, were all passages whose wording and ruling had been nullified and all passages whose wording alone had been nullified. In the latter case, the ruling may well have continued valid as in the case of the stoning verse.

Insofar, therefore, as the formal contents of the Qur'ān are concerned, we cannot afford not to take into account the Islamic theories of nāsikh and mansūkh. As already indicated, the theories have influenced the Muslim accounts of the history and collection of the Qur'ān texts to the extent of consciously, deliberately and systematically excluding Muḥammad from all stages of the preparation and promulgation of the Qur'ān texts which we have before us

today. In short, there are no Muslim accounts of the collection of the Qur'ān. There are only accounts of the history of the collection of the muṣḥaf. These are the children of the history of the Muslim concept 'Qur'ān'.

The Prophet's removal from the history of the collection of our texts of the Qur'ān was rationalised into the virtual impossibility of his participation. On Zaid's remark that the Prophet had died before the Qur'ān had been brought together, Khaṭṭābī reflected,

It is likely that the reason the Prophet did not collect the Qur'ān into a single volume was his expectation that naskh would affect either some of its legal provisions, or some of the wording. But once the revelation of the Qur'ān ceased on the Prophet's death, God inspired his successors to the task of collecting the texts of the Qur'ān in fulfilment of the divine promise to preserve it.⁴³

Zarkaṣī saw the danger of Muḥammad's playing his part in the collection of the texts for

with naskh a regular event, had Muḥammad brought the Qur'ān into a single volume and then some part of the wording were withdrawn, the seeds of the corruption of Islam might well have been sown. God preserved the texts of the revelation in the memories of the Muslims until the time when naskh was possible had come to an end.⁴⁴

Naskh in both these statements visibly refers only to the withdrawal of wording.

Taking ḥadīths about Muḥammad's forgetting, or a verse being withdrawn at their face value, European scholars have all missed the point.

'Abdullāh b. Mas'ūd reported that the Prophet had

taught him to recite a particular Qur'ān verse which he learned by heart and copied out in his personal muṣḥaf. When night came, and 'Abdullāh rose to pray, he desired to recite that āya but could not recall a syllable. In the morning he consulted his muṣḥaf, only to find the page blank! He mentioned this to the Prophet who told him that that verse had been withdrawn that very night.

Nöldeke argued,

Eine vollständige Sammlung des ganzen Qorāns war schon seinem Verfasser selbst kaum möglich. Denn nicht nur hatte er auch nach der Überlieferung der Muslime und sogar dem Zeugnisse des Qorāns manche Stücke schon selbst vergessen, manche wurden auch absichtlich von ihm verändert.⁴⁵

The Qur'ān whose testimony is here invoked is Q 2.106 and Q 87.6-7!

The Muslim accounts we have just considered, and which Nöldeke has just oversimplified, are rather more subtle than he or Schwally realised.

The commentators spoke of the withdrawal of either the ruling or the wording of Qur'ān verses, and we have learnt that the latter phenomenon had in the theory of the uṣūlīs two aspects: withdrawal of both wording and ruling; withdrawal of the wording alone. In the latter case, the withdrawal of the wording was held to have had no effect upon the validity of the ruling. Naturally, it had no significance whatsoever for the contents of the muṣḥaf.

In the classical stage of the development of the new sub-science of naskh three phenomena were isolated.

1. Naskh al ḥukm wa al tilāwa, the suppression of both

the wording and the ruling of an alleged revealed Qur'ān statement.

2. Naskh al ḥukm dūna al tilāwa, the suppression of one Qur'ān ruling, replaced by another Qur'ān ruling or by a Sunna ruling; the suppression of a Sunna ruling, replaced by another Sunna ruling, or by a Qur'ān ruling.
3. Naskh al tilāwa dūna al ḥukm, the suppression of a Qur'ān wording without prejudice, however, to the continuing validity of its own ruling for legal purposes (i.e. for Fiqh-validation purposes in uṣūl al fiqh).

The commentators spoke above of both 1 and 2 and both are presented also in Nöldeke's statement. But neither Nöldeke nor any other European writer on the history of the collection of the Qur'ān texts has, although using the Muslim accounts, taken the measure of the pressure exerted upon the shaping of the reports on Zaid's activities by the third category of naskh.

Without a detailed analysis of the invention and development of this third mode of naskh, such as we have attempted to provide in this study, it is impossible to make sense of the entire body of Muslim utterances on the history of the collection(s) of the Qur'ān texts, or to expose the compromise character of the Muslim accounts of the several stages through which the Qur'ān texts were envisaged as having passed.

The three naskh formulae can themselves be shown to have evolved as compromise statements following a lengthy

period of anxiety caused by the apparent conflicts both within the texts of the Tradition and between the Fiqh and a Tradition seen as consisting of both Qur'ān and Sunna.

In the discussions on the Qur'ānic component of that Tradition, two of the formulae, which can have relevance only for the Qur'ān, presuppose omissions from the texts of the Qur'ān document. Omissions, in the nature of things, can be documented solely on the basis of ḥadīth reports.

The third formula, naskh al ḥukm dūna al tilāwa, refers impartially either to the Qur'ān or the Sunna source. Its wording indicates the embarrassment caused by the presence in our Qur'ān texts of verses thought by the uṣūlī to have become inoperative since the fuqahā' had ignored them. The Qur'ān document was not always a source.

The formula naskh al ḥukm wa al tilāwa represents the final formalisation of the exegetically derived notion that Muḥammad had forgotten/been caused to forget unspecified parts of the Qur'ān revelation.

Naskh al tilāwa dūna al ḥukm represents the claim of a Qur'ānic origin for certain Fiqh rulings nowhere mentioned in the transmitted texts of the Qur'ān document, the muṣṣḥaf, and even, as in the case of the stoning penalty, flying in the face of the ruling which is there mentioned. In brief, the formula represents an attempt at notional interpolation in an ideal text. Naskh al tilāwa dūna al ḥukm faced difficulties peculiar to itself. Had the wording really been suppressed, the ruling derived from the wording would have been left without the support of any existing documentary source. This mode of naskh has never been universally

acknowledged.⁴⁶ It was the creation of only some uṣūlīs who, in naming it, would appear to have hit upon the expedient of placing it, in terms of nomenclature, under the aegis of the analogy that could be drawn from the formula naskh al ḥukm wa al tilāwa, by exploitation of the middle term, that is, naskh al ḥukm dūna al tilāwa.

This last formula is the naskh of the uṣūlīs par excellence. The term naskh here means replacement or supersession. In the other formulae alone does the term naskh respect both Qur'ānic and Arabic usage in carrying its true meaning of suppression.

The origin of all the semantic difficulties was the anxiety to rationalise the visible interplay between the three factors of Fiqh, Sunna and Qur'ān.

Given this kind of theoretical treatment of the Qur'ān source, we shall have to conclude that the Muslims simply could not afford to be seen in possession of a Qur'ān that had come down to them in writing from the Prophet.

This explains why the classical ḥadīths had to place the collection of the Qur'ān texts into the time following the death of Muḥammad. The connection between the Qur'ān document and the Prophet to whom it had been revealed had at all costs to be broken.

This need is indicated by the emphatic repetition of the motif that the collectors among the Prophet's successors were conscious that they proposed to do something that the Prophet personally had never either undertaken, nor, indeed, apparently recommended.

Care is also taken to convey the gratuitous

information that only the dread of the loss of Qur'ān materials or the shocked recognition of actual loss had enabled them to quieten their scruples and to embark on what they unanimously acknowledged to be an innovation, for Abū Bakr's hesitation was that of one who preferred to follow the Sunna of the Prophet in all things avoiding innovation (bid'a). 'Umar had had to reassure him by pointing out that certain bida' may be not merely unavoidable, but even positively commendable.

7 The 'Uthmān collection

Here, once again, as we have now grown accustomed to expect, a multitude of factors are at play in the shaping of the ḥadīths.

In terms of ḥadīth materials, this might be called the major collection. The reports on the motives which impelled 'Uthmān to undertake his collection of the Qur'ān are again conflicting. Some envisage his contribution as merely the piety of completing a task already taken in hand, but interrupted on the untimely death of his great predecessor, 'Umar.

Other reports entirely alter the placing of the 'Uthmān initiative on behalf of the Book of God in the historical perspective of the development of the texts. They do not conceive it to have been concerned with the extent of the revelations surviving to his day. Rather, his aim was to select from amid a welter of rival Qur'ān texts, each claiming to be the uniquely authentic record of what had been revealed to Muḥammad, a single text to be officially promulgated as the textus receptus of the Muslims. No deviation from this text would henceforward be tolerated, or indeed possible, for it is also reported that 'Uthmān required the destruction of all other recorded Qur'ān texts.

It is apparent that these are not only alternative

statements on the motives guiding 'Uthmān's initiative. They are totally incompatible judgments on the history of the book. The basic contradiction between these two views has hitherto not been appreciated.

'Abū Bakr collected the scattered fragments of the Qur'ān on sheets. 'Uthmān collected the sheets into a single volume.¹ This is not quite the same as: 'Abū Bakr collected the Qur'ān into volumes on the deaths of those killed at Yemāma. 'Uthmān later derived from these volumes a single text.'

'Abū Bakr collected the Qur'ān between two covers' differs from 'Uthmān formed but a single text': 'Uthmān alladī jama'a al maṣāḥif 'alā muṣḥaf wāḥid.

'Uthmān united the Muslims on a single text'²: Jama'a 'Uthmān al nās 'alā ḥāḍa al muṣḥaf, is not what Abū Bakr did when he jama'a al Qur'ān.³

The collection of the Qur'ān ab initio (jam' al Qur'ān fī ṣaḥīfa, fī ṣuḥuf, fī muṣḥaf, baina lawḥain) is a distinctive activity and has, we have seen, been ascribed to numerous individuals among the Companion generation, including each of Muḥammad's four immediate successors as Head of State, Abū Bakr, 'Umar, 'Uthmān, 'Alī.

The provision of a textus receptus (jam' al maṣāḥif 'alā muṣḥaf wāḥid, jam' al nās 'alā muṣḥaf) in which the root j m ' abandons the meaning 'to collect' to take on the force of 'collating', 'reconciling', is a different activity and has been attributed to only one of Muḥammad's successors, 'Uthmān b. 'Affān (A.D. 644-56).

According to the jam' al Qur'ān tradition, the Qur'ān

fragments were not first collected into one place until some twelve years after the death of Muḥammad. That would represent a considerable delay when the difficulties of the enterprise would have been aggravated by the diaspora of Muḥammad's major lieutenants into the conquered territories, and by the deaths of many of the first-generation Muslims. The preservation of the texts of the Qur'ān had been assured and their authenticity guaranteed by appeal to the mechanical, formal Islamic requirement of two qualified witnesses to a written document.

The alternative jam' al maṣāḥif view requires our assent to the contrary proposition. Not only had the Qur'ān texts been organised, preserved and collected at a much earlier date, but this had been done on innumerable occasions and by innumerable persons. On the accession of the Prophet's third successor there existed such an unwieldy body of materials that it was not only possible but essential to establish a textus receptus ne varietur while many of those best qualified to bring this vital undertaking to a successful conclusion were still happily alive.

This second view, a mature sophistication of the first, was the product of considerations quite distinct from those which underlie the earlier version out of which it grew. Here, the doctrine of the tawātur, which guarantees the contents of a revealed Book transmitted with the endorsement of an entire generation, is uppermost.

The unspoken corollary of this representation of Qur'ānic affairs should be that the chances of authentic Qur'ān material failing to gain admittance to the officially

promulgated canon must have been immeasurably reduced. Like Zaid's test, this test is negative and must have been aimed at some target. The extent of the Qur'ān is no longer the issue. The reports envisage, rather, tolerable agreement on the contents, with such disagreements as are highlighted concentrated almost exclusively on the 'correct' reading of what appears to be conceived of as a commonly accepted and generally agreed textual base. This tradition is aimed at what are known as variant Qur'ān readings. It derives from a generation familiar with the ijmā' concept.

'Hudaifa b. al Yemān came to 'Uthmān direct from the Adarbajjān and Armenian frontier where, uniting the forces from Iraq with those from Syria, he had had an opportunity to observe regional differences over the Qur'ān. "Commander of the faithful," he advised, "take this umma in hand before they differ about the Book like Christians and Jews." 'Uthmān sent asking Ḥafṣa to lend him the sheets [inherited by her father, 'Umar, from Abū Bakr, and now in her possession] "so that we can copy them into other volumes and then return them." She sent her ṣuḥuf to 'Uthmān who summoned Zaid, Sa'id b. al 'Aṣ, 'Abdul Raḥmān b. al Ḥārith b. Hišām and 'Abdullāh b. al Zubair and commanded them to copy the sheets into several volumes. Addressing the group from Quraiṣ, he added, "Wherever you differ from Zaid, write the word in the dialect of Quraiṣ for it was revealed in that tongue."

When they had copied the sheets, 'Uthmān sent a copy to each of the main centres of the empire with the command that all other Qur'ān materials, whether in single sheet form, or in whole volumes, were to be burned.'

Zuhri adds, 'Khārija b. Zaid informed me that Zaid said, "I noticed that a verse of sūrat al Anzāb,

which I had been used to hear the Prophet recite, was missing. I found it in the keeping of Khuzaima b. Thābit and entered it in the appropriate place."⁴

Ṭabarī mentions only two commissioners, Zaid and Abān b.

Sa'īd b. al 'Āṣ,⁵ but according to the isnād critics, Abān had already died in the reign of 'Umar.

Ḥudāifa figures in a second ḥadīth series which reports textual differences, not only between Iraq and Syria, but also between rival groups of Iraqis.

We were sitting in the mosque and 'Abdullāh was reciting the Qur'ān when Ḥudāifa came in and said, 'The reading of ibn Umm 'Abd! [i.e. 'Abdullāh] The reading of Abū Mūsā! By God! if I am spared to reach the Commander of the Faithful, I will recommend that he impose a single Qur'ān reading!' 'Abdullāh became very angry and spoke sharply to Ḥudāifa who fell silent.⁶

'Yazīd b. Mu'āwiya was in the mosque in the time of al Walīd b. 'Uqba, sitting in a group among whom was Ḥudāifa. An official called out, 'Those who follow the reading of Abū Mūsā, go to the corner nearest the Kinda door. Those who follow 'Abdullāh's reading, go to the corner nearest 'Abdullāh's house.' Their reading of Q 2.196 did not agree. One group read, 'Perform the pilgrimage to God.' The others read it, 'Perform the pilgrimage to the Ka'ba.' Ḥudāifa became very angry, his eyes reddened and he rose, parting his qamīṣ at the waist, although in the mosque. This was during the reign of 'Uthmān. Ḥudāifa exclaimed, 'Will someone go to the Commander of the Faithful, or shall I go myself? This is what happened in the previous dispensations.' He came over and sat down, saying, 'God sent Muḥammad who, with those who went forward, fought those who went back until God gave victory to His religion. God

took Muḥammad and Islam made strides. To succeed him, God chose Abū Bakr who reigned as long as God chose. God then took him and Islam made rapid strides. God appointed 'Umar who sat in the midst of Islam. God then took him also. Islam spread rapidly. God next chose 'Uthmān. God's oath! Islam is on the point of such expansion that soon you will replace all other religions.'⁷

The conclusion which such reports invite us to draw is that there was genuine fear that Islam, like the religions before it, would be fragmented into warring sects as a result of the differences arising in the reading of the sacred texts. 'Uthmān's purpose and his achievement was to unite the Muslims on the basis of a single agreed Qur'ān reading.⁸

During the reign of 'Uthmān, teachers were teaching this or that reading to their students. When the students met and disagreed about the reading, they reported the differences to their teachers. They would defend their readings, condemning the others as heretical. News of this came to 'Uthmān's ears and he addressed the people, 'You who are here around me are disputing as to the Qur'ān, and pronouncing it differently. It follows that those who are distant in the various regional centres of Islam are even more widely divided. Companions of Muḥammad! act in unison; come together and write out an imām for the Muslims.'⁹

The reading disputes were apparently not restricted to the provinces. They appear to have prevailed also at Medina. We are unfortunately given no information on the nature of these differences, nor any explanation as to how they might have arisen.

The unification of the Muslims on the basis of a single text is envisaged as having been due to the corporate

efforts of the Companions resident at Medina.

The piety of the objective aimed at by 'Uthmān had commended itself to the Ṣūrā of Muḥammad's senior adherents.

This note of unanimity was further endorsed by appeal to the authority of 'Alī who is projected as averring that what 'Uthmān had done in respect of the mushaf, and especially in respect of the most sensitive issue of all, the alleged destruction of all Qur'ānic records other than the textus receptus achieved as the result of his initiative, he had done only after the fullest consultation with the Companions. Far from protesting at his highhandedness, they had applauded and blessed his decisiveness.

By God! he did not act on the mushaf except in the fullest consultation with us, for he said, 'What is your view in this matter of reading? I have heard that some even say, "My reading is superior to yours." That is tantamount to heresy.' We asked him, 'What are you thinking to do?' He replied, 'My view is that we should unite the Muslims on the basis of a single mushaf. That way, there will be no disagreement, no segmentation.' We replied, 'An excellent idea!' Someone then asked, 'Whose is the purest Arabic? and whose the greatest acquaintance with the recitation [alt. Qur'ān]?' They said that the purest Arabic was that of Sa'īd b. al 'Āṣ and that the one most acquainted with the recitation [Qur'ān] was Zaid b. Thābit.

'Uthmān said, 'Let the one write and the other dictate.' The two then set to work and in this way 'Uthmān united the Muslims on the basis of a single text.

'Alī concludes his report with the declaration, 'Had I been in power, I should have done just what 'Uthmān did.'¹⁰

The extreme Ṣī'a, the Rāfidīs, alleged that the impious rulers had expunged from the mushaf some 500 verses including those which most unambiguously marked out 'Alī as the appointed successor to the Prophet.

We have already seen the reply to this accusation ascribed to two of the great leaders of the Ṣī'a, ibn 'Abbās and ibn al Ḥanafiya. The ready endorsement of 'Uthmān's action by 'Alī is directed precisely at this sort of Ṣī'i complaint. The rebels against 'Uthmān, justifying their revolt, enumerated amongst their grievances their resentment at his 'having expunged the mushafs'.¹¹ Besides, it is reasonably argued on the other side, 'Alī succeeded 'Uthmān and if he had had any reservations about the Qur'ān text, he could easily have reinstated what he regarded as the authentic revelations.¹²

Compromise ḥadīths are known which conflate the two ideas of a collation of extant texts and their collection.

Muṣ'ab b. Sa'd reports, 'Uthmān addressed the people, "It is now thirteen years since your Prophet left you and you are not unanimous on the Qur'ān. You talk about the reading of Ubayy and the reading of 'Abdullāh. Some even say, 'By God! my reading is right and yours is wrong.' I now summon you all to bring here whatever part of the Book of God you possess." One would come with a parchment or a scrap of leather with a Qur'ān verse on it [fīhi al Qur'ān] until there was gathered great store of such. 'Uthmān adjured them one by one, "You heard the Prophet recite this?" They would answer that that was so. After this 'Uthmān asked, "Whose acquaintance with the Book is greatest?" They replied, "His who wrote it out for the Prophet." He asked, "Whose Arabic is best?" They said, "Sa'īd's."

'Uthmān said, "Let Sa'id dictate and Zaid write."...

Muṣ'ab adds, 'I heard some Companions of the Prophet say, "'Uthmān did well to undertake it."¹³

A second version places the event fifteen years after the Prophet's death and mentions the bringing of tablets, shoulder-blades and stripped palm-fronds all bearing writing (fīhi al kitāb) or parts of the Book. There is no allusion to any earlier collection and, as the celebrated ṣuḥuf of Ḥaḥṣa are quite unmentioned, no backward link is intended between 'Uthmān's and 'Umar's or Abū Bakr's collection. 'Uthmān's is envisaged as the earliest collection since the revelation of the Qur'ān to the Prophet.

The two witnesses motif is once more prominent. The ḥadīth is thus concerned chiefly with the isnād of the Qur'ān and its reference back to the Prophet. 'Uthmān concerned himself with certifying that the texts he had collected had been received direct from the Prophet. Simultaneously, he was concerned to put an end to the disunity created by variant readings and to provide the basis for a universal reading. The existence of the variant readings is rationalised by reference to the Companions, some of whom are identified. That is the isnād of the readings varying from 'Uthmān's. The elimination of variants was 'Uthmān's chief aim.

Ḥudaifa said to 'Uthmān, 'Whatever you would do if you heard someone talking of the reading of so-and-so, and the reading of another, as the non-Muslims do, then do it now.'¹⁴

Ḥudaifa said, 'The Kufans say, "the text of 'Abdullāh"; the Basrans say, "the text of Abū Mūsā".'

By God! if I reach the Commander of the faithful, I will recommend that he drown these readings.'¹⁵
'Abdullāh said, 'Do and God will drown you, but not in water!'¹⁶

'Abdullāh, Ḥudaifa and Abū Mūsā were on the roof of Abū Mūsā's house. 'Abdullāh said, 'I hear you say such-and-such.' Ḥudaifa said, 'Yes, I deplore folk talking about this one's reading and that one's reading. They are differing like non-Muslims.' Ḥudaifa continued, 'Abdullāh b. Qais, you were sent to the Basrans as governor and teacher. They have adopted your adab, your dialect and your text.'

To b. Mas'ūd he said, 'You were sent to the Kūfans as their teacher and they have adopted your adab, your dialect and your reading.'

'In that case,' retorted b. Mas'ūd, 'I have not misled them. There is no verse in the Book of God but that I know where and in what connection it was revealed. Did I know of anyone more learned than myself on the subject I should go to him.'¹⁷

This allusion to asbāb al nuzūl, the dates and circumstances of the individual revelations, indicates that we are dealing with more than the text. Where and in what connection a text was revealed bears directly upon the aḥkām of the Qur'ān. By adab is meant Fiḥ. The term 'dialect' refers to 'Abdullāh's speech habits (i.e. to his text). By reading is meant his exegesis, or the exegesis which has been attached to 'Abdullāh's name. 'Abdullāh's text, exegesis and Fiḥ represent those sciences as developed and cultivated at Kūfa. Abū Mūsā represents the sciences of the Basran centre.

Q 2.187 reads, 'seek what God permits you' - wabtaḥū mā kataba allāh lakum. By mā kataba, b. 'Abbās is reported to have understood lailat al qadr. Abū Hišām al Rifā'i said,

'kaḍā qara'ahā Mu'ād'. That cannot be a reference to Mu'ād's text, but only to his exegesis.¹⁸

Variant readings, although transmitted from Companions, claim to derive from the Prophet himself.

A man recited in the presence of 'Umar who corrected him. The man, incensed, claimed to have recited for the Prophet and he had not corrected him. They carried their dispute to Muḥammad. When the Prophet endorsed the man's claim that Muḥammad had personally instructed him, doubts sprang up in 'Umar's mind. Reading 'Umar's expression, the Prophet struck him on the chest, exclaiming, 'Out devil!' Muḥammad then explained, 'All the modes of reciting are correct so long as you don't turn a statement on mercy into one on wrath and vice-versa.'¹⁹

There may be different readings (texts). The wording of the Qur'ān is not its most relevant feature. The meaning matters above all. Differing readings were known to the Prophet and he lacked the pedantry to object.

Ubayy entered the mosque and, hearing a man recite, asked him who had instructed him. The man replied that he had been taught by the Prophet. Ubayy went in search of the Prophet. When the man recited, Muḥammad said, 'That is correct.' Ubayy protested, 'But you taught me to recite so-and-so.'

The Prophet said that Ubayy was right too. 'Right? right?' burst out Ubayy in perplexity. The Prophet struck him on the chest and prayed, 'Oh God! cause doubt to depart.' Ubayy broke into a sweat as his heart filled with terror. Muḥammad disclosed that two angels had come to him. One said, 'Recite the Qur'ān in one form.' The other advised Muḥammad to ask for more than this. That was repeated several times until finally the first angel said, 'Very well. Recite it in seven forms.' The

Prophet said, 'Each of the forms is grace-giving, protecting, so long as you don't terminate a punishment verse with an expression of mercy, or vice-versa - as you might for example say, Let's go; or, let's be off.'²⁰

The different readings have the Prophet's (and Heaven's) approval. Differences in utterance are not material. The meaning is paramount. The differing readings are all equally valid, having been revealed in parallel. The difference appears to consist simply in the use of this as opposed to that synonym. That ought to occasion neither wonder nor alarm, neither squabbling nor scandal. All readings are correct. All readings come down from the days of the Prophet. All readings carry the seal of his approbation.

But differences reported from the Companions on Qur'ān matters, which divided them already in the days of the Prophet, concerned more than merely verbal matters.

'Abdullāh reports, 'We differed about a sūra, as to whether it consisted of thirty-five or thirty-six verses, so we went to the Prophet who was engaged in conversation with 'Alī. When we told him we disagreed over the reading, his face reddened as he replied, "Those before you perished through their disagreements." He whispered something to 'Alī who said, "The Prophet commands you to recite as you were taught."²¹

Concern with the punctuation of the Qur'ān masks more than merely reading differences. Q 4.101 apparently indicates that travellers may abbreviate the ritual prayer if threatened with attack. That the restriction is absolute, in the sense that the prayer might be cut short only if the Muslims had

reason to fear attack, was a view attributed by some of the fuqahā' to 'Ā'īṣa. 'Alī is the authority for the contrary view that the ritual prayer may be shortened by travellers. Appealing to asbāb al nuzūl, 'Alī claimed that the first half of the verse had been revealed to the Prophet in reply to a question put to him on the subject. The answer, as revealed, read 'No blame is incurred if, when travelling, you shorten the prayer.' Only a year later, on the occasion of a fresh revelation, was the context extended to include the reference to fear of attack. The addition, however, bears only upon the second half of the verse.²²

The main burden of our hadīths was that reading differences are much less grave than disagreement. Tolerance must be exercised on all sides and the right to differ mutually recognised if disunity is to be avoided.

Zaid b. Arqam reports that a man went to the Prophet and said, 'Abdullāh b. Mas'ūd taught me to recite a particular sūra; Zaid b. Thābit taught me the same sūra, and so did Ubayy. The readings of all three are different. Whose reading ought I to adopt?' The Prophet remained silent. 'Alī, who was by his side, said, 'Every man ought to recite it as he was taught. Each of the modes is acceptable and equally valid.'²³

This reply would have been of little help to our man, but the general message is clear. The faithful should not find scandal in the circulation of the several Qur'ān recensions attributed to the Companions. Muḥammad himself had been aware of their existence and had not insisted on imposing a universal reading. He had urged understanding and mutual forbearance upon his followers, exhorting them by his example

to lay aside petty, narrow chauvinism and pedantry. All the Companion versions of the Qur'ān (to which we must now add Zaid's) are correct and equally valid.

'Umar said, 'I heard Hiṣām b. Ḥukaim reciting sūrat al Furgān and listened to his recital. On observing that he was reading many forms which the Prophet had not taught me, I all but rushed upon him as he prayed. But I waited patiently as he continued, and, collaring him when he had finished, I asked him, 'Who taught you to recite this sūra?' He claimed that the Prophet had taught him. I said, 'By God! you're lying!' I dragged him to the Prophet telling him that I had heard Hiṣām recite many forms he had not taught me. The Prophet said, 'Let him go. Recite, Hiṣām.' He recited the reading I had already heard from him. The Prophet said, 'That is how it was revealed.' He then said, 'Recite, 'Umar', and I recited what he had taught me. He said, 'That's right. That is how it was revealed. This Qur'ān was revealed in seven forms, so recite what is easiest.'²⁴

The scholars were to disapprove of the use by the Muslims of the post-Apostolic ages of isolate Qur'ān readings at prayer. That is not, however, the point of the report. The earliest rationalisation of reading variants was that, as all had been revealed, all were equally legitimate. Abū Huraira reports the Prophet as saying, 'The Qur'ān was revealed in seven forms and contention about the Qur'ān is disbelief.'²⁵

Both Abū Huraira, who became a Muslim only in the year A.H. 7, and Ubayy, who was Medinese, localise this dictum in Muslim eyes in the Prophet's late period.

That the Qur'ān was revealed in seven versions reinforces, or is reinforced by, the idea that it had been

revealed piecemeal. It would otherwise have been very difficult to keep the seven different forms apart in Muḥammad's mind.²⁶

This ḥadīth on the seven forms gave rise to an extensive comment literature, as the Muslims endeavoured to identify the different readings which were all equally correct and valid.

Many attempted to relate the different forms to the linguistic situation. It was therefore alleged that the Qur'ān had been revealed in each of the seven dialects of Muḍar, the great branch of the Arab nation from which the Prophet sprang.²⁷ These dialects were listed as: Hudail, Kināna, Qais, Dabba, Taim al Rabbāb, Asad b. Khuzaima and Quraiṣ.

ibn 'Abbās is credited with the distribution: five Hawāzin-type dialects, Quraiṣ and Khuzā'a.²⁸

'Abdullāh b. Mas'ūd had reportedly permitted a non-Arab to substitute another word for one he was incapable of pronouncing correctly, owing to the strange Arabic phoneme. 'Abdullāh explained that error would consist solely in reading a mercy verse as a punishment verse, or vice-versa, or in adding to the Book of God something that did not belong there.²⁹

In one version of Muḥammad's encounter with the revealing angel, the Prophet pleaded that he had been sent to a nation of illiterates and was granted the concession of multiple readings.³⁰ The concession, in Ṭaḥāwī's view, allowed for their inability to keep to the exact wording of a single reading, unaccustomed as they were to reading, writing

and accuracy in verbatim memorising. The concession was later withdrawn when, with their growing acquaintance with writing and with accuracy in reproduction, the necessity originally justifying it was removed.³¹

In Ṭabarī's view, the recitation of the Qur'ān in all of the seven forms had never been obligatory. It had merely been a concession in the early days. Once the Companions observed that the Muslims were splitting into bickering factions in the absence of a single text, they reached a consensus on the desirability of providing an agreed form. In the undertaking, the Companions were infallible, and they agreed that they should copy out that which they were satisfied had been endorsed on the occasion of the Prophet's final meeting with Gabriel and that all else besides be abandoned.³²

Whether it was 'Umar or 'Uthmān who had collected the Qur'ān, the suggestion that linguistic considerations were present to the mind of the Head of State provided a convenient means of harmonising the attribution of such a collection with reports on parallel variant readings. These had been ascribed to Companions and, as we have seen, each reading claimed to be marfū', to have been known to and approved by the Prophet. That was the function of the story about the seven forms. The ḥadīth was most easily understood to refer to the varying dialects.

When 'Umar determined to write out the imām, he ordered a group of the Companions to set to work and advised them that, if they disagreed linguistically, they should write it in the language of Muḍar, since it had been revealed to a man of Muḍar.³³

'Umar is said to have admonished 'Abdullāh for teaching the Qur'ān in the language of Hudail. It had been revealed in the language of Quraiṣ and ought to be taught in that language.³⁴

The hadīth, and the one above on the resolution of any differences among the Qur'ān commissioners, were designed to explain how a divine Book revealed to a man of Mecca came to be preserved in the recension prepared by a man of Medina.

But, as the Qur'ān text features usages thought to be other than those of the Quraiṣ dialect, al Bāqillānī was constrained to add that 'Uthmān's advice to the commissioners is to be interpreted in the sense that the bulk, not necessarily the whole, had been revealed in the dialect of Quraiṣ.³⁵

A further modification was imposed upon the scholars. 'Abdullāh, in the case of the non-Arab had permitted the substitution of one word for another. 'Abdullāh was a non-Meccan. The substitution would have been presumably a synonym in his dialect for a word in the Meccan dialect. Then there was the story of 'Umar's quarrel with Hiṣām. Not only were 'Umar and Hiṣām fellow tribesmen. Both were fellow tribesmen of the Prophet.³⁶ The reference to dialects was thus watered down to a reference to synonyms. The aim was to rationalise the claim that there had existed variant readings transmitted from several Companions of the Prophet.

Another question sprang naturally to minds receptive to the notion that variant readings, or even variant muṣhafs, had been transmitted from the several Companions. 'Uthmān is supposed to have imposed a single reading. By definition, that would have imposed a fixed sūra order. The question

provided a convenient basis for improving the plausibility of the claims on behalf of the variant readings. The Companions had taught variant readings in the various regions. The variant readings were taught from the variant muṣhafs prepared for their personal use. In addition to these variant readings, the variant muṣhafs had been arranged in a variant sūra order.

Some distinction ought to be made between Abū Bakr's collection and that of 'Uthmān. Since Abū Bakr had collected his muṣhaf on separate sheets (ṣuhuf) no particular sūra order need have been fixed on that occasion. This has enabled the Muslims to argue, in a manner not fully appreciated by European writers on this question, that there were, in fact, two distinct caliphal collections of the Qur'ān texts, and not merely two conflicting attributions of its first collection. These two collections, by Abū Bakr and by 'Uthmān, were not, in the eyes of later scholars, competitive attributions. They were complementary operations, the later completing what the earlier had made possible. The distinction at any rate enabled the Muslims to provide a motive for and an effect of 'Uthmān's action.

'Uthmān organised the sūras in the order we are now familiar with. In addition, he restricted the reading to a single dialect - that of Quraiṣ in which it had been revealed. Hitherto, there had been a concession permitting the reciting of the Qur'ān in dialects other than that of Mecca so that the burden of scruple imposed upon converts at the outset of the new revelation should be minimal. Those days were now recognised by 'Uthmān to be gone, not least since much danger was to be feared from the continuation of

that freedom and especially since some overliteralness in the local attachment to a particular reading might give the impression of, or even lead to, the fragmentation of the Islamic unity.³⁷

'Uthmān's collection occurred when differences had become frequent. They were reciting in all the rich multiplicity of their Arab dialects. He copied out the sheets into a single muṣḥaf, arranged the sūras and restricted the text to a single dialect - that of Quraiṣ on the plea that it had been revealed in the tongue of Mecca.³⁸

The variant readings had arisen from the Qur'ān's having originally been revealed in umpteen dialects. ibn 'Abbās stated, 'The Qur'ān was revealed in seven dialects [luḡāt]' - not ahruf!³⁹

There had originally been no restriction on how it might be recited. Some had employed the synonyms of their own dialect, or as dictated by their own speech habits; others had used synonyms of the same dialect. The most important thing had been to achieve the precise spirit of what had been revealed to Muḥammad.

Some dozen years after the death of the Prophet, 'Uthmān, sensing the dangers both present and future that inhered in such liberty, took steps to provide a single text for the entire empire by the simple expedient of restricting the reading henceforward to a single text drawn up in the Quraiṣ dialect, the most obvious choice since that had been the language of the Prophet.

Sending out copies of his work to the main centres in the provinces, 'Uthmān commanded that all other texts of the Qur'ān be expunged, shredded or consigned to the flames.

From that day forward, it would be quite inconceivable that variant Qur'ān readings could be reported from any quarter. The readings of the Prophet's Companions, all of which bore Muḥammad's seal of approval as 'correct renderings' of the divine Book, had served their purpose as the instruments of the initial transmission of the revelations to the Muslims of the outlying regions of the expanding Muslim empire. With increasing prosperity and growing educational opportunity, it would now be a matter of comparative ease to disseminate, as the unique Qur'ān text for use by the Muslims everywhere, the text which commended itself to the consensus of the Companions.

This text had been arrived at only after the most rigorous enquiries by the commission appointed for the purpose by the Head of State. We have seen something of the scholarly caution with which the commission had approached its sacred task, including in the completed draft only what it had no human reason to doubt had come down from the direct instruction of the Prophet via the most veracious witnesses. The text of the Book of God has thus been traceable, since 'Uthmān's day, back to the Prophet and from him to Gabriel, the angel of the revelation, by means of an absolutely reliable and unshakable isnād.

We have seen that to the questions, when and by whom was the Qur'ān first collected, a variety of answers had been proposed which it was the business of successive generations of Muslim scholars to resolve. This they attempted to do by assuming that there had been not one but several collections. But this attitude itself was merely an attempt

to harmonise the conflicting attributions. For some obviously held that the Qur'ān had first been collected by Abū Bakr.

Others thought that this had been the work of 'Umar, while yet others believed that it had been accomplished by 'Uthmān. These two views were reconcilable by joining them together on the supposition that 'Uthmān had seen through to completion the pious work embarked on by his predecessor. Nöldeke perceived that this leaves no means to carry the process back to Abū Bakr.⁴⁰

If, as was also done, 'Umar's role were reduced to that of merely advising the collection, he could have advised only Abū Bakr, which leaves no means of carrying the process forward to 'Uthmān.

A device was needed to knit the various phases together. This is the role played by the ṣuḥuf of Ḥafṣa, who, besides being the daughter of 'Umar, was also a widow of the Prophet. The solution was not always consistently applied, for we found versions of the report on 'Uthmān's Qur'ān initiative which portrayed that too as a collection ab initio. Modern European writers have greatly exaggerated the part played in the story by the ṣuḥuf of Ḥafṣa. They are not in the literature on the collection of the Qur'ān 'die sicherste Tatsache des ganzen Berichtes', as Schwally claimed.⁴¹ Bell argued: 'That Ḥafṣa had a copy of the Qur'ān on ṣuḥuf seems certain',⁴² and of that fact, he alleged, 'there is no doubt'.⁴³

Failing to delve beneath the surface of the Muslim reports, they would have the 'Uthmān text nothing more than a

mere copy of the codex of Ḥafṣa.⁴⁴ That is certainly erroneous.

The one constant and unvarying factor throughout all versions of the ḥadīths on the collection of the Qur'ān texts - whether that allegedly undertaken as early as the reign of Abū Bakr, within little more than a year of the Prophet's death, or that completed as late as a dozen years after the death of Muḥammad, in the reign of 'Uthmān, or even later still in the time of Marwān b. al Ḥakam - was the central part played, both as the amanuensis of the Prophet himself and as the rapporteur of the various caliphal initiatives on Qur'ān matters, by Zaid b. Thābit.

8 The Qur'ān collections: a review

European scholars have analysed the hadīths on the collection of the Qur'ān on the assumption that in the end only one could be accepted as true. In a sense this is erroneous. The Muslim reports are not in fact in disagreement; they are in perfect agreement, for common to all of them is the constant and unvarying allegation that, whoever may have been the first to collect the Qur'ān texts, it was certainly not the Prophet to whom they had been revealed. No scholar has hitherto suspected that perhaps all the hadīths are equally untrue.

The exclusion of the Prophet from the collection of the Qur'ān was a prime desideratum of the uṣūlīs wrestling with the serious problems generated by some of their own theoretical positions.

We must therefore never lose sight of the part played in shaping the Muslim versions of the history of the Qur'ān texts by uṣūl theories of naskh, and especially by the two theories which posit the absence from the muṣḥaf of verses which it was firmly believed had nevertheless been part of the Qur'ān.

In all discussions on the collection of the muṣḥaf, we are primarily concerned with two issues:

1. the isnād of the muṣḥaf (i.e. the actual reading),

2. the textual incompleteness of the muṣḥaf.

Abū Bakr's aim had been to collect the Qur'ān between two covers. 'Uthmān's was to collect those readings attested as coming from the Prophet and to reject all non-canonical readings. He aimed to unite the Muslims on the basis of a single text, containing no interpolations and no Qur'ān provisions whose wording had been withdrawn but which still appeared in the written text with verses whose inclusion in the final version of the text had been endorsed and thus preserved as required to be publicly recited [at prayer].¹

Sarakhsī, we recall, informed us that the preservation of the interpolations was the function of the Companion readings.²

The Qur'ān provisions whose wording had been withdrawn related to Fiqh rulings and were of the type: naskh al tilāwa dūna al ḥukm.

All Sunnī Muslim discussions on the history of the Qur'ān text presuppose the operations of naskh. When a generation of Muslims had first been driven by a noisy minority to take the Qur'ān source into more serious consideration, the texts of the muṣḥaf, the Qur'ān document, were found occasionally to be unrelated to the Fiqh that had already evolved.

Certain elements of that Law could not be fitted to the existing document, but no insuperable problem need arise if the Law could now be attributed to the Sunna source, documented by reference to the Hadīth. Certain counter-doctrines had also adopted Sunna form. Where the muṣḥaf contained a statement on the legal topic at variance with a statement of the Sunna, the solution was to be sought in the theory of abrogation. Only in its light could the fugahā'

be shown to have preferred the Sunna statement, as apparently on other topics they had preferred one Qur'ān statement to another, or one Sunna statement to another.

The madāhib no longer granted the widow the right to one year's accommodation and maintenance following the husband's death. 'Abdullāh b. al Zubair therefore asked 'Uthmān what had possessed him to include Q 2.240 in the mushaf, when he knew it to have been abrogated by Q 2.234. 'Because,' replied 'Uthmān, 'I know it to be part of the Qur'ān text.'³

Once the view that the Qur'ān, like the Sunna, had been from the first the root of the Fiqh became itself part of the uṣūl al fiqh axiom, scholars, assisted by the general lack of information on the history of the earliest period, persuaded themselves that the lacunae in their Qur'ān texts could be accounted for rationally only on the assumption that the Prophet had not collected and checked the revelations. For in no other way could they explain a verse which ought to be of the Qur'ān, but which is not in the mushaf. Theoretical positions adopted in uṣūl al fiqh worked against the free and easy assumption that the Sunna had abrogated the Qur'ān. Only the Qur'ān might abrogate the Qur'ān. This technical view was reinforced by an exegetical view derived from Q 87 which pointed to the incompleteness of the mushaf. The distinction now felt between Qur'ān and mushaf led first to the third mode of naskh, naskh al tilāwa dūna al ḥukm, and thence to the Qur'ān collection ḥadīths.

Several motives thus lay behind the drive to exclude the Prophet from the history of the collection of the mushaf,

but two motives outweighed all others:

1. the desire to facilitate reference to the Qur'ān source of matters agreed in the Fiqh but unmentioned in the Qur'ān document;
2. the need to justify regional attitudes on certain questions by referring them to locally recognised Qur'ān variants, when the opposition referred to the Qur'ān source and to the presently existing Qur'ān document, the mushaf (one of the myriad examples had concerned the ṭawāf between Ṣafā and Marwa).

The Muslims themselves acknowledged the pressure of the naskh theories upon the collection ḥadīths. We are familiar with the explicit second-level argument that the Prophet forbore to collect, edit and publish the texts of the revelation since, so long as he lived, abrogation remained a possible hazard. Any collection made before his death, when revelation ceased absolutely, must have led to confusion and uncertainty. Even the collection made soon after his death led to confusion and uncertainty when later compared with the Fiqh. But in 'Uthmān's reply to ibn al Zubair, we see that the attempt to use the mushaf to throw doubts on the naskh theories had been of no avail.

That the rationalisation of the placing of the collection of the Qur'ān into the period following the Prophet's death, on the plea that abrogation was a daily possibility while Muḥammad lived, is itself absurd, is clear from the consideration that the 'classic instances of abrogation' - the phrase is Ḥāzimī's⁴ - consist in the simultaneous presence in the mushaf of statements held to be

mutually exclusive, naskh al hukm dūna al tilāwa.

We have also pointed out, however, that the term naskh means more to the Muslim than merely abrogation. It carries the further connotation of omission. That etymology was forced upon certain uṣūlīs by the exegetes. The Qur'ān texts were, thus, already incomplete in the Prophet's lifetime. Alternatively, it had this meaning for other uṣūlīs for whom the Sunna had never abrogated the Qur'ān. This had the interesting consequence that, whereas their opposite number in another uṣūl school could with equanimity speak of the abrogation of this or that verse by this or that ḥadīth, these men had doomed themselves to posit the existence of an abrogating verse. Their scientific certainty could not be shaken by failure to locate that verse in the muṣḥaf. It must have been omitted when the muṣḥaf was collected. No verse still legally valid when the Prophet died would have been omitted if the Prophet had collected the Qur'ān. The omission, and hence the collection, had occurred only after his death.

ibn 'Abbās asked 'Uthmān what possessed him to place sūrat al Anfāl, one of the mathānī, with Barā'a, one of the mi'īn, join them with no bismillāh between them and place them among the seven lengthy sūras. 'Uthmān replied that often the Prophet received quite long revelations. He would call for one of the scribes and say, 'Put these verses in the sūra in which so-and-so occurs.' Anfāl was among the first of the Medina revelations and Barā'a among the last. Since its contents resembled those of Anfāl, 'Uthmān took it to belong with it, for the Prophet had died without explaining that it was part of it.⁵

Mālik had a shorter explanation for the absence of this

bismillāh. The beginning of Barā'a fell out and its bismillāh fell out with it.⁶

If Muḥammad is not to be permitted to have collected the Qur'ān, then, in order to guarantee that the muṣḥaf is nevertheless complete, authentic and involves neither deficiency nor unwarranted addition, its collection must be attributed to a senior Companion. With certain reservations, it would be immaterial which Companion was chosen. Some were obviously disposed to attribute the enterprise to a Head of State and Church. Hence the attributions to Abū Bakr, 'Umar, 'Uthmān and 'Alī. Other attributions include the Prophet's widows: 'Ā'isha, Ḥafṣa and Umm Salama.⁷ Among the Companions were named: Miqdād (or Mu'āḍ),⁸ Abū Mūsā, 'Abdullāh, 'Ubāda and Zaid b. Thābit.

The attribution to Ubayy has proved unhappy since he is elsewhere alleged to have entirely repudiated the theory of naskh, with interesting consequences.⁹

The Qur'ān text, in short, like any other sunna in the Ḥadīth canon, as a component of the Islamic Tradition has been equipped with an isnād.

A useful by-product of this procedure is that those who still cannot bring themselves to concede that in any circumstances a divinely guided Prophet could forget any of his revelations, but who yet held that the Qur'ān document, the muṣḥaf, is incomplete, by transferring its preservation to the Companions, could likewise transfer to them any omissions. That was the line taken by Tūsī among the exegetes.¹⁰ Besides āyat al naskh, Q 2.106 contains two terms: mā nansakh and aw nunaḥ. Those who read the second to mean 'cause to

forget' applied that to the Companions.

Once equipped with its isnād, the Qur'ān would become a sunna mutawāṭira to which would be attached the highest degree of probative force. It would thus be accorded in certain schools of uṣūl the same consideration and treatment extended to any other sunna of the same degree of 'spread'. It would have the capacity to abrogate any other ḥadīth or to be abrogated by another sunna mutawāṭira.

The Ḥudaifa ḥadīths had pointed to local and rival canons of the Qur'ān, reminiscent of the rest of the ḥadīth weaponry with which the scholars fought to support or to rebut this or that local legal opinion. Like the ḥadīths, their Qur'ān was authenticated by appeal to the authority of this or that Companion called upon to serve as the eponym of the local Fiqh.

The same Ḥudaifa ḥadīths induced the assumption that the Companion-muṣḥafs were pre-'Uthmānic. They were presumably given their quietus on the completion of Zaid's work on behalf of 'Uthmān. But ibn Mas'ūd, the eponym of the Qur'ān of the Kufans, is reported to have burst out, 'I recited from the very mouth of the Prophet some seventy sūras while Zaid still had his ringlets and was playing with his companions.'¹¹ In a second version, 'The Prophet taught me to recite seventy sūras which I had mastered before Zaid had even become a Muslim.'¹² Or, again, 'Am I to be debarred from copying the muṣḥafs and the job given to a man who was an infidel in his father's reins when I first became a Muslim?'¹³ 'Abdullāh is supposed to have enjoined his followers, 'Lay up your Qur'ān's! How can you order me to

recite the reading of Zaid, when I recited from the very mouth of the Prophet some seventy sūras?'

'Am I,' asks 'Abdullāh, 'to abandon what I acquired from the very lips of the Prophet?'¹⁴

I went to Abū Mūsā's house and saw there 'Abdullāh and Ḥudaifa. I sat with them. They had a muṣḥaf that 'Uthmān had sent ordering them to make their Qur'ān's conform with it. Abū Mūsā declared that anything in his muṣḥaf and lacking in 'Uthmān's was not to be omitted. Anything in 'Uthmān's and lacking in his own was to be added. Ḥudaifa asked, 'What is the point of all our work? Nobody in this region will give up the reading of this Ṣaikh, meaning 'Abdullāh, and nobody of Yemenī origin will give up the reading of Abū Mūsā.' Ḥudaifa it was who had advised 'Uthmān to unite the muṣḥafs on the basis of a single muṣḥaf.¹⁵

'Uthmān's initiative to provide a single universal reading would appear to have failed in the face of the determination of the regions to abide by the interpolations which they traced to the Companions.

We shall now expect to find references not only to alleged pre-'Uthmānic codices but also to occasional post-'Uthmānic readings at variance with the muṣḥaf.

It would therefore surely be hazardous to continue to doubt that what lies behind the attribution to this or that Companion of a codex is identical with what lies behind the attribution to the Companion of a reading at variance with 'the single text'. Attribution of a codex was intended to lend colour to attribution of a variant reading.

The attribution to a Companion of a codex was, in turn, identical with the attribution to the Companion of a

store of information on the Sunna documented in the hadīths circulated and 'supported' in his name. The Qur'ān itself is a sunna mutawāṭira and variant readings are variant hadīths. There is no more reason for a willing suspension of disbelief in respect of the reading of 'Abdullāh, of Abū Mūsā, of Ubayy, or of any other Companion than there is in relation to haddathanā 'Abdullāh, Abū Mūsā, Ubayy, or any other Companion.

If we accept the readings of the Companions because we accept that they had private codices, we ought in logic to accept also their hadīths. Both are transmitted in precisely the same way, and with the same isnāds. One set of traditions conveys their information for the Qur'ān, the other set their information for the Sunna. The two sets are identical in shape and format. If we are inclined to reject one set, we ought by the same logic to reject the other equally.

One would be immeasurably more impressed by that achievement which the hadīths on the collection of the mushaf seek to ascribe to 'Uthmān - namely, his having thereby at a stroke united the Muslims on the basis of a single reading - if in fact variations on textual matters were seen to have become impossible after his reign. That his initiative in this direction was a total failure is, however, admitted in further hadīths which show 'Uthmān either resignedly permitting, or himself using, readings at variance with those enshrined in the mushaf associated with his name.¹⁶

'Uthmān sent to 'Alī for information on the grievances of the rebels. Among these was resentment at his

having 'expunged the mushafs'. 'Uthmān replied, 'The Qur'ān came from God. I prohibited the variant readings since I feared dissension. But now, read it as you please.'¹⁷

It is said that when 'Uthmān received the completed mushaf, he noticed certain linguistic irregularities. 'Had he who dictated it been of Hudail and the scribe of Thaqīf,' he said, 'this would never have happened.'¹⁸

'Abdullāh b. Mas'ūd, we recall, was of Hudail. The report looks uncommonly like a pro-'Abdullāh, that is, a pro-Kūfa, propaganda vehicle.

'Abdullāh is supposed to have said, 'Hide your Qur'ān's! How can you order me to use the reading of Zaid when I recited from the very lips of the Prophet seventy-odd sūras?'

Not only is there no evidence that reading uniformity prevailed after 'Uthmān's day, there is, on the contrary, ample indication in the Fiqh works, and especially in the tafsīr works, that the exact opposite was increasingly the case. 'Uthmān was assassinated and laid in his grave and the heyday of ikhtilāf was yet to come.

What, then, if any, is that great achievement with which the memory of 'Uthmān is to be glorified? To understand the Muslim traditions it will be necessary to reconsider the background against which the initiative ascribed to 'Uthmān was thought to have occurred.

The Iraqis and the Syrians, the Kufans and the Basrans were all said to have indulged in mutual recrimination, exchanging accusations of error, even of heresy in respect of their readings of the Qur'ān. This runs exactly parallel

with their mutual indictment of their respective sunnas. Any mention of the dialect rationalisation of the reading differences is merely the acknowledgement that in 'Uthmān's day the linguistic sciences had not yet evolved - the varia lingua rather than the varia lectio. Besides, some ḥadīths had distinguished dialect from reading.

The dialect problem had apparently not been overcome by the very work ascribed to 'Uthmān, as we have just seen. Nor had the reading problem been settled by his supposed provision of a uniform consonantal matrix. Goldziher has signalled a disputed vocalic reading for the very Tawba verse which Zaid is said to have reinstated: There has now come to you a prophet from amongst your own number (anfusikum); from amongst the most precious among you (anfasikum). The variant has been ascribed, not merely to Companions, but even to the Prophet himself!¹⁹

Scholars could explain the creation of the Muslim linguistic sciences after the death of 'Uthmān as centring upon solicitude for the avoidance of incorrect theology occasioned by incorrect reading of the sacred texts.²⁰ The consonantal base of the text was envisaged as having been fixed, but not the vocalic values. Were this the case, liberty would be little affected. There would yet remain to the scholars such scope for variant readings that it is simply not possible to understand why 'Abdullāh was projected as so violently opposed to 'Uthmān's obvious good sense.

When, however, we consider the variant readings attributed to the ancient authorities, to whom appeal is constantly made by the rival groupings in the course of their

undignified squabbles over the details of the Qur'ān texts, our surprise increases. It is exceedingly difficult for us to comprehend what might have given rise to such widespread fuss. For no major differences of doctrine can be constructed on the basis of the parallel readings based on the 'Uthmānic consonantal outline, yet ascribed to mushāfs other than his. All the rival readings unquestionably represent one and the same text. They are substantially agreed in what they transmit, varying from one another only to the extent of the occasional preference for one of a number of possible inflections and the use or non-use of certain minor conjunctives. Here and there the variants depart from 'Uthmān to the extent of employing this or that synonym. None of these variants is of great import.

We have, however, seen that the variant codices are further differentiated from 'Uthmān by a limited number of attempted interpolations. A detailed study of the use made of appeal to the 'Abdullāh or Ubayy readings against 'Uthmān leads to the conclusion that the traditional accounts of the act and motive of 'Uthmān cannot possibly be correct. A single reminder will suffice to make the point:

The fast in expiation of breach of an oath need not be consecutive, even if 'Abdullāh did read: 'three [consecutive] days', since this addition is not mutawātir. It is therefore not part of the Qur'ān. Perhaps 'Abdullāh adduced this reading to clarify what he considered a justifiable exegesis. Perhaps he attracted to this verse, by analogy, the restriction that is found in the verse on the zihār.²¹ Abū Ḥanīfa, who conceded that this interpolation is not Qur'ānic, accepted 'Abdullāh's view on this topic,

but as a ḥadīth. But the practice ought to be based exclusively on what is explicitly attributed to the Prophet.²²

This can only mean that the scholars who adduced the variant readings ascribed to 'Abdullāh did so in exactly the spirit in which they adduced ḥadīths attributed to 'Abdullāh.

Sarakhsī argued that God had caused the other Companions to forget this reading, but permitted 'Abdullāh to transmit it so that the ruling might be preserved.

The post-Ṣāfi'ī practice of regarding the ḥadīths traced from the Prophet as having absolute priority over the ḥadīths from all others did not affect the variant Qur'ān readings. All our information on the Qur'ān derives solely from Companions, since no codex or muṣḥaf has been explicitly ascribed to Muḥammad.

A new way therefore had to be discovered of resolving the conflicts between reading-ḥadīths.

Bergsträsser discusses the Qur'ān variants:

Goldziher treated the variants in the readings of 'Abdullāh on the same footing as other versions of the readings, that is in general from the viewpoint of regarding them as departures from the 'authentic text'. Certainly, in the variants ascribed to him are instances enough in which the 'Uthmānic text has been wrongly altered, or in which a motive for the variation from the 'Uthmānic text is discernible, and hence the ibn Mas'ūd text is to this extent secondary. The most important although not the most frequent of such motives is certainly the sort which Goldziher placed in the foreground: the side-stepping of possible stumbling blocks; the provision of pertinent elucidations; the linguistic clarification of obscure texts; the avoidance of unusual or faulty

expressions and stylistic infelicities; together with a general disposition to smoothe and simplify the utterance. Yet the ibn Mas'ūd text need not always be treated as simply 'corrected' wherever it chances to read more smoothly than the 'Uthmānic text. Examination of synonyms which replace the individual words of the 'Uthmānic text, and Goldziher had already noted the frequency of synonyms in the non-'Uthmānic texts, indicates that often the word occurring in the ibn Mas'ūd text is the more familiar and the more suitable, but not always. This is explicable by supposing that in such cases either it is the 'Uthmānic that is secondary to the ibn Mas'ūd, or more properly that many Qur'ān verses were in circulation in variant oral versions differentiated one from another by the selection made from a number of synonyms and that the ibn Mas'ūd, or both texts directly and independently of each other drew upon this oral tradition. Such direct adoption from an oral store of Tradition is the more likely explanation in the majority of those cases where the ibn Mas'ūd text offers an unambiguous form or orthography as against the ambiguous 'Uthmānic reading. In such cases, the relation between the two is clearly not one in which the author of the ibn Mas'ūd variants had the 'Uthmānic text before him and, recognising the ambiguity of his 'Vorlage', prepared to select a positive reading. Rather, for him, the meaning of the verse was still alive and this is what he sought to express in the clearest possible manner. He differs from the author of the 'Uthmānic texts in that he makes even greater efforts to achieve a clear expression insofar as the deficiencies of the script will permit this. Finally, it is necessary to posit the existence of a parallel tradition independent of the 'Uthmānic text to account for those innumerable variants which are too trivial and insignificant to be regarded as deliberate alterations, or such as

those which bear the stamp of the original readings, or at the very least, as in the case of several greater variations occurring in the last sūras, the mark of total independence from the 'Uthmānic text.²³

This is a fair sample of European investigation by intuition. Several issues are raised: the reported synonyms; the deficiencies of the script and the effect that might have had on men who had memorised the Qur'ān; the greater differences in the last sūras with their 'stamp' and 'mark' of independence.

To attribute not merely variant readings but whole variant muṣḥafs to the Companions, and achieve a degree of credibility in doing so, it was necessary to attribute to them greater or lesser differences from the 'Uthmānic text. It was also necessary to ascribe to the Companion codices several features not mentioned here, such as a different ordering of the sūras, some attempted interpolations, and even the omission of one or more chapters of the Qur'ān.

In common with the Muslims, Bergsträsser in acknowledging the existence of such an entity as the 'Uthmānic text has no difficulty in identifying which text it is. Whether compiled by 'Uthmān or another is for the moment irrelevant, just as the question of whether the 'Abdullāh text had any historical connection with the generation of the Companions may also be set aside for the present. The important thing is the fact of their difference. The nature of their difference is the crucial point of our enquiry.

In common with the European scholars, Bergsträsser approached the problem by considering the Qur'ān as exclusively a literary monument. To the Muslims also, the

Qur'ān is of course a document, recognised by what may or may not traditionally be recited in the ritual prayer. However, to the Muslims, the Qur'ān is primarily a source. If we consider it in this light, we shall be led to conclusions different from those we have just noted.

That the motive behind the promulgation of the Qur'ān texts in the form in which we now have them was an attempt (as the Muslims see it) to narrow down the range of documents available for the derivation of the Law is, on first hearing, inherently plausible on the pattern of the narrowing down of the range of materials available in the extra-Qur'ānic Tradition. That, we saw, followed the work of Šāfi'ī in the definition of the Sunna as the Sunna of the Prophet which had resulted in improvements in methodology. This analogy between the history of the Qur'ān source and that of the Sunna source was the work of Muslim scholars.

Their view would be acceptable likewise on historical grounds were it the case, which it emphatically is not, that the promulgated Qur'ān text reflects the Fiqh as faithfully as does the Sunna. To extend the analogy, we ought now to possess, alongside the muṣḥafs of the Companions, the muṣḥaf transmitted from the Prophet. That would presumably, in the post-Šāfi'ī ages, gradually have dislodged the Companion texts as thoroughly as the Sunna of the Prophet dislodged the Companion-hadīths. As it is, we see that all our information on the Qur'ān derives wholly and exclusively from the Companions, since even the officially promulgated muṣḥaf, on the basis of which alone the prayers of the Muslims are valid, did not succeed in driving out the habit of referring

to Companion codices or variant readings, and since this textus receptus is still known as the muṣḥaf of 'Uthmān.

How little the admirable aim of narrowing down the source materials was in fact realised in the Qur'ān field, even where we view its use as merely documenting as opposed to deriving the Law, becomes clearer upon consideration of the use which could still be made, generations after 'Uthmān's death, of the Qur'ān in support of the local Fiqh, especially but not solely in view of the deficiencies of the script, which long continued to permit the schools that degree of freedom which the imposition of a single text was supposed to have limited.

Here is the very crux of the Qur'ān problem. The freedom of the schools had not been at all circumscribed. On the contrary, ikhtilāf, far from withering away on the provision of a single text, appears to be only beginning. The most likely explanation of this clear contradiction is precisely that, for the schools, the 'Uthmānic and the non-'Uthmānic Qur'ān traditions were regarded as parallel and equally sovereign. The one interacted upon the other, as they developed to play out their function as the Tradition-based documentation from the Qur'ān source, to which this or that maḏhab appealed for support on this or that topic of the local Fiqh.

We have seen examples of just such appeals to the 'Abdullāh or Ubayy readings. Those were not of course variant Qur'ān readings. They were attempted additions to the text. That is what the disputes were really about.

The use of non-'Uthmānic readings at prayer was

banned since they were not universally recognised. The validity of the prayer was conditional upon use of the mutawātir Qur'ān document. The appeals we mention were to the 'Abdullāh or Ubayy Qur'ān sources, for they concerned the Fiqh of the Qur'ān. This is the area in which we find appeals to the Companion muṣḥafs, as we noted above in Sarakhsī's appeal (p. 171).

In response to the fundamentalist challenge, based on the view that only the Qur'ān was adequate to serve as source, the Qur'ān entered the methodological debate. This was at that stage in the discussion when the appeal to the sunna of the Companions was on the point of being replaced by appeal to the Sunna of the Prophet. The Companion muṣḥafs failed to make a complete transition.

Although they now began to speak of and to adduce the texts of the Sunna of the Prophet, the legal scholars did not advance to the point of adducing in addition the muṣḥaf of the Prophet. Qur'ān variants, in other words, concern only Companions - variant readings vary from the text now attributed to 'Uthmān.

The difference between the Qur'ān source and the Sunna source is quite simply that behind the appeal to either lay the tacit assumption that the text derived from the Prophet. In the case of the Sunna alone, the claim had to become explicit and had to be set out explicitly in the isnād prefaced to each ḥadīth.

That the variant readings appealed to continued to be associated with individuals among the Companions suggests that they had always been recognised as varying from the

generally accepted Qur'ān texts.

The suggestion by Bergsträsser that the 'Uthmānic and the non-'Uthmānic Qur'ān traditions were independently and directly drawing upon an underlying store of oral tradition is complicated by the fact that, so far as they have been examined to date, all Qur'ān MSS exhibit throughout the 'Uthmānic text.

One might have expected, as so often happens in literary history, that some evidence of the existence of non-'Uthmānic, not to speak of pre-'Uthmānic codices would have survived in some remote corner of the Islamic world, especially since ibn Mas'ūd ordered his followers to lay up their Qur'ān's in hiding and withhold them from the government agents charged with their destruction.

A solution to these problems is to be sought in distinguishing those variants which are 'too trivial and insignificant to be regarded as deliberate alterations' from those whose motivation in the projection back to the revealed Book of the disputed details of the Fiqh is unmistakable. In other words, we too must learn to distinguish between the Qur'ān text and the Qur'ān source.

We argued that it was irrelevant to the revealed status of the Qur'ān document whether one read: aswabu, aqwamu or ahya'u (Q 73.6); saiha or zagya (Q 36.29).

On the other hand, it was of the highest significance for the history of the development of Islamic Law and to the attendant school polemic whether one read fa mā stamta'tum bihi minhunna (Q 4.24) with or without the attempted interpolation ilā ajalin musamman.²⁴ The sole purpose of the

attempt was to provide a Qur'ānic basis (asl) for the doctrine of temporary marriage, mut'a, whose rejection by other scholars was currently based upon evidence circulating in the Sunna.

As one element in the Tradition, the Qur'ān was here being used in the role of counter-sunna, less open to ready rejection because 'stronger' than a ḥadīth.

It was this role of the Qur'ān that gave rise to the extensive disputes on the reading in which variants are never either trivial or insignificant.

The subtlety of ascribing variant readings to Ubayy lies in the existence of a series of ḥadīths of an originally exegetical origin in which we are informed that Ubayy stoutly refused to abandon any part of the Qur'ān wording he had received direct from the Prophet. Ubayy, we are told, would have none of the doctrine of the withdrawal of any part of the Qur'ān text.²⁵ 'Umar, on the other hand, who is credited in the Ḥadīth with the prohibition of the very usage not merely adumbrated but specifically documented in the supposed Ubayy text, figures in the ḥadīths attempting to convince Ubayy from the Qur'ān itself (Q 2.106) of the reality of all the naskh phenomena.²⁶

This representation of Ubayy's insistence on the quranicity of the words for the sake of establishing the quranicity of the practice, is the reverse of the classical uṣūl's insistence on the quranicity of the ruling on account of the quranicity of the wording. This betrays the very *raison d'être* of Ubayy's 'reading'.

The mut'a doctrine had been embraced by an

insufficient number of Sunnī Muslims to acquire probative roots in all the recognised sources. In view of the contents of certain ḥadīths, temporary marriage was admitted by some to have once been permitted; it was however alleged to have been suppressed by statements in both Qur'ān and Sunna.

Other doctrines, more widely acquiesced in, had had no difficulty in acquiring satisfactory bases in both Qur'ān and Sunna. Nowhere explicitly mentioned in the 'Uthmānic text of the Qur'ān, mut'a rested solely on the evidence of the Sunna. When challenged, it advanced its documentation to the Qur'ān, appealing to the reported, and, for some, convenient refusal of Ubayy's to abandon once revealed matter.

Rejection techniques available to the uṣūlīs thus included, for both Qur'ān and Sunna, isnād critique (i.e. acceptance of both conflicting documents accompanied by the assertion that one chanced to be later than the other). In the case of the Qur'ān only, abrogation might have affected the wording alone, or both wording and ruling. This last was to be the ground for the rejection of mut'a, Ubayy's reading notwithstanding. Designed as a Qur'ān evidence, the Ubayy reading might have been expected to overcome the weaker ḥadīth evidence, but it was seen to be at odds with the universal text of Q 4.24.

A reading promoted by the proponents of a particular practice, urging a particular exegesis of Q 4.24, was ignored or rejected by those who did not care for the practice. The reading was attributed to a Companion.

The variations in the information provided by the

Companions for the Qur'ān thus correspond exactly to the variations in the information they provide for the Sunna for which, as for the Qur'ān, they are the common eponyms.

Yet there is a degree of difference between the Sunna-variations and the Qur'ān-variations, reflected in their respective developments. From the quarrels over the ḥadīths of 'Abdullāh and the ḥadīths of another, there had emerged the ḥadīths of the Prophet conveying the Sunna of the Prophet. That development provided one solution to the problem of the conflict of ḥadīths. The Sunna of the Prophet never again yielded after Ṣāfi'ī to ḥadīths from the Companions.

The same development had also provoked improvement in the isnāds which in turn raised the fresh problem of the evident conflict between ḥadīths now reported as coming from the Prophet. A ḥadīth from the Prophet reported by a later Companion, it was decided, indicated the abrogation of the conflicting ḥadīth from the Prophet transmitted by the earlier Companion. In this procedure, we witness the birth of the theories of naskh.

Individual variant readings reported from the senior Companions developed into the mushafs of those Companions, there being no better rationalisation of the reported variants. From the codex of 'Abdullāh, Ubayy, Abū Mūsā, 'Ā'īṣa, Umm Salama, Ḥafṣa and others, there did not, however, evolve the codex of the Prophet.

That there are inauthentic ḥadīths from the Companions, and hence from the Prophet, designed to document some particular element of local Fiqh, is not difficult to demonstrate. That there are inauthentic elements in the

Qur'ān information reported from the Companions is no more difficult to demonstrate. Indeed, more than one learned Muslim has been seen in the foregoing to be perfectly aware that the variants reported were in fact nothing more than exegetical comments, as opposed to actual 'readings'.

What is certain is that such variants never gained acceptance into the text. At best, they were obliged to remain the variant of the Companion sponsor.

Certain of these variants, in this case undisguised attempted interpolations, were reported collectively from several senior Companions. They too were forced to remain Qur'ān's outside the Qur'ān since again they failed to achieve admittance into the text between the two covers. It is because they adumbrated (documented) legal doctrines of more than merely local interest that they were attributed to a collective, and not simply described as the variant of some individual Companion and entrusted to his personal codex.

This adds for the Qur'ān an element additional to the suggestion that the 'Uthmānic and the non-'Uthmānic Qur'ān texts were drawing upon an underlying common Qur'ān tradition, whether oral or otherwise.

That suggestion in itself tends to direct one's thinking towards an ancient Qur'ān tradition, flowing upwards since the days of Muḥammad and ultimately breaking surface (as the ḥadīth had earlier done) at a point in time when some imperious necessity was being felt to call upon the Qur'ān to provide documentary evidence to buttress specific positions in the intense competition between the regional practices and legal viewpoints. When this occurred, it occurred in

separate phases.

In the case of the rivalry between the local legal views, certain developments occurring in the Sunna field failed to occur in the Qur'ān field. In the light of the uṣūl doctrine on the Sunna source, the Sunna documents proved extremely malleable in the hands of the schools. With the Qur'ān, on the contrary, any departure from the transmitted text universally acknowledged and traditionally employed at prayer is never referred to as 'Qur'ān' in that loose fashion in which the word Sunna is bandied about. Qur'ān variants have always been identified as the 'reading' of some individual Companion.

Even more striking is the case of those items of Qur'ān information which are referred neither to the 'Uthmānic nor to the individual Companion Qur'ān texts. These are the 'readings' of the Qur'ān intended to document legal views upheld over a large part of the Muslim world, and not merely advanced and defended by the scholars of a particular regional grouping. These were 'readings' held to date from the time of the Prophet, but from before the time of the collection of the Qur'ān texts (i.e. naskh al tilāwa dūna al ḥukm).

A Qur'ān text, in other words, associated with a Head of State and Church, 'Uthmān, is always set apart from the variant Qur'ān readings or even texts attributed to individual Companions, while itself always being likewise distinguished from another Qur'ān text associated with another Head of State and Church, the Prophet.

A Qur'ān text, the 'Uthmānic, distinguishable from the variant Companion texts, has always retained an objective

historical identity, and there is no sign in the literature of any ambiguity as to precisely what that text was. It is the text that looks in two opposite directions. It differs from the texts ascribed to the other Companions; and it differs from the text revealed to Muḥammad. Relative to the Companion texts, 'Uthmān is the text without interpolations. Relative to the revealed Qur'ān, 'Uthmān is incomplete. Its collection could not but be placed in the period after Muḥammad.

The Companion readings and the Companion-muṣḥafs played a role parallel to that played by the Companion-ḥadīths. They were therefore the creation of the regional rivalries.

The concept of the total original Qur'ān revelation is met with only in the documentation of legal attitudes shared by all or by the majority of the regions. Appeal to the Qur'ān in cases such as the stoning penalty had been forced upon the scholars by one of two compelling factors: either by the challenge thrown down by the fundamentalist groups who did not admit that the Sunna had a role to play as a source for the Law, or who insisted that the Qur'ān be seen to be the primary source; or by the belief of the scholars that stoning did in fact derive from the Qur'ān.

We attempted earlier to enquire into the origins of that belief and, if the analysis offered in our discussion of the Q 5 passages were thought to have merit, several conclusions follow. It is possible that the older generation of Muslim scholars stoutly maintaining that the Fiqh's stoning penalty had been derived from the Qur'ān were

justified in their claims if, that is, by assigning the stoning penalty to the Qur'ān they meant the Qur'ān in the general sense, that is, the muṣḥaf plus its exegesis.

It is not difficult to see how stoning could have come to be mentioned in the course of wide-ranging gossip about the meanings and implications of the Q 5 verses. One must bear in mind the essentially narrative (haggada) nature of tafsīr and asbāb al nuzūl and the tafsīr nature (halakha) of much of the sīra, or biography of the Prophet.

The entry of stoning in some such manner into the discussions could also very easily and early become obscured for the succeeding generation. One may perhaps be justified in pointing again to the unanimity of the schools on this question in the widely separated regions. This unanimity might tend to indicate the antiquity of the belief that stoning is indeed the Islamic penalty.

The irony of the suggestion increases when we recall the anguish felt by some uṣūlīs who had been taught never to concede that the Sunna had ever abrogated a Qur'ān ruling. It was their participation in this discussion that had reinforced the allegation that the stoning penalty had derived from the Qur'ān.

If stoning did commend itself to the ancient fugahā' in the manner suggested, by passing over from the exegesis into the Fiqh, the standpoint of those who argued that stoning had originated in the Sunna becomes even more ironic.

What passes for the Sunna of the Companions contains a considerable degree of material of undoubted exegetical origin. Viewed in this light, the tension between the Qur'ān

and the Sunna can be almost totally eliminated, and the necessity to formulate a special theory of abrogation to solve the problem shown to be illusory.

Once the demand for Islamic documentation had arisen in the atmosphere of incessant school rivalry, the function of the ḥadīth in documenting the Sunna was significant. It has been amply demonstrated that this had important effects for the flexibility of the individual ḥadīth document. Indeed, it was this very flexibility that provided Goldziher with his clue to the inauthenticity of much of the Ḥadīth in general.

We have seen that the Qur'ān, on the contrary, in taking its place alongside the Ḥadīth for the purposes of documentation, proved considerably more intractable material. The Qur'ān was flexible only within very exiguous limits. Local variation was possible solely within the range demonstrated by readings based on the consonantal framework of the universally agreed text.

The scholars were in consequence driven to seek the liberties they craved in varying the vocalic data (arjulakum/arjulikum), or the diacritical pointing (yathurna/yattahirna), or by questioning the punctuation of the individual verses, that is, the syntax of the individual utterances. Otherwise they could only resort to attempted interpolation.

All readings and variants required to be documented by reference to one or more of the Prophet's generation. Beyond this, linguistic considerations could be urged in favour of certain views the Muslims sought to establish, not on the basis of the inherited text, but in despite of the

text, in the ingenious ta'wīl to which on occasion they had recourse.

These determined, if obvious, efforts reflected the need they felt to circumvent a basically unyielding Book. Both the very unhelpfulness of the Qur'ān document when called upon to behave as the Qur'ān source, and the frequent embarrassment it caused the Muslim scholars speak very strongly for its authenticity as a document, in the sense that it does not have any of the appearance of having been concocted after the evolution of the legal doctrine with the aim of supplying its documentation. Indeed, the Qur'ān texts frequently contradict the Fiqh, 'und da ist es Sache der spitzfindigen Theologen und Harmonistiker sich zurecht zu finden'.²⁷

We encountered in the Ḥadīth materials treating of the earliest collection of the Qur'ān indications of the concern of the Companions for the extent of the Qur'ān heritage. Ḥadīths of that kind can be detached from another type of ḥadīths, which reflected awareness of the sense of scandal which must result if the community of the faithful were seen not to be united on the reading of their sacred Book.

The reading variants that were identified had been rationalised by attribution to the several Companions, an attribution sustainable solely on the premise that the Qur'ān had not been given definitive form by the Prophet to whom it had been revealed. The attribution did nothing to lessen the sense of scandal. Hence the further assertion was made that the Prophet had for reasons of policy

sanctioned recitation in the various Arab dialects.

This explanation broke down on the consideration that 'Umar and a fellow Meccan had disputed the reading. The further explanation was provided that the differing readings had involved synonyms drawn from one and the same dialect. The paramount factor was apparently the common meaning which all codices or readings shared.

None of these successive rationalisations suffices to elucidate the problem of the class of variants which consist in interpolations relative to the 'Uthmān text. None of them takes account either of yet another Muslim doctrine which, in its implications, is hostile to any suggestion that the Qur'ān at any stage in its history had ever been transmitted according to the sense alone.

The doctrine of the i'jāz of the Qur'ān (its miraculous nature) - a central element in dalā'il al nubuwwa, a central element in the 'proofs' of Muḥammad's claims and now advanced on its own behalf as a 'proof' of the claims of Islam - developed in the course of the external polemic and was directed at non-Muslims. It could not, however, be left out of account in the internal polemics among the Muslims.

The report that 'Umar had quarrelled with a fellow Meccan, inexplicable on the ground of dialect difference, and therefore explained on the grounds of choice of synonyms, sins in its turn against the i'jāz doctrine in the eyes of those who interpreted the term, erroneously, to mean the inimitability of the Qur'ān in strict literary terms. That which is verbally inimitable can scarcely have passed through a phase of multiple wordings when the individual Companions

had the Prophet's permission to substitute whichever word chanced to correspond with the meaning revealed by God. ibn al Jazarī exclaims, 'Whoever alleges that any of the Companions thought it legitimate to transmit the Qur'ān according to the sense alone is a liar!'²⁸

The scholars therefore had to supply a further rationalisation of 'Umar's reported quarrel with a fellow Meccan. The function of the report had been merely to make the point that the different readings had been countenanced by the Prophet, and were thus still legitimate. But we have seen the difficulties that ambush so many of the ḥadīth reports, leading to ever more subtle interpretations and harmonisations.

The origin of the reported difference was simply that 'Umar had memorised the sūra at an early date. Hišām had learned it in its later form. Hišām became a Muslim only at the time of the conquest of Mecca. 'Umar was unaware of the later additions to the sūra.²⁹

This explanation shows neatly the application of the theory of the isnād to the Qur'ān information reaching us from the Companions of the Prophet.

We now arrive at the core of the vast corpus of traditions on all aspects of the reading and of the collecting of the Qur'ān texts. The principal considerations were the isnād and the relating of all available reports, from whatever quarter, to the yardstick of the theories of abrogation. The later supersedes the earlier if they disagree.

9 The isnād of the Qur'ān

Statements which assert that the Qur'ān already existed in collected form in the days of the Prophet confront not the question: when precisely was the Qur'ān first collected in the form we now know as the mushaf? but the quite different question: is the mushaf a complete record of the divine revelations to Muḥammad?

The 'Uthmān collection tradition corresponds to another question: which Qur'ān tradition is the more authentic, the Ḥijāzī tradition represented in the universally acknowledged text; or the Kufan tradition claiming descent from ibn Mas'ūd; or the Basran stemming from Abū Mūsā; or the Syrian from Ubayy (or from Miqdād/? Mu'ād)?

The Abū Bakr - 'Umar tradition could very well be, as Schwally suggested, an attempt to project the credit and priority of merit to the first and most revered of Muḥammad's successors.¹

It could as well represent for the Medinese tradition the conscious effort to pre-date the rival non-Arabian traditions by projecting 'Uthmān's initiative further back into the pre-diaspora Islam of Medina, and thus nearer to the Prophet under the aegis of the isnād: Zaid b. Thābit - 'Umar - Abū Bakr.

Ṭayālīsī draws our attention to an interesting rule-of-thumb: 'He shall be imām [at prayer] whose knowledge of the Book of God is most extensive and whose acquaintance with it is most ancient. If two men be alike in this respect, he shall be imām whose adherence to Islam was the earlier.'²

This recalls the dispute as to which of Muḥammad's followers had been converted to Islam earliest and thus enjoyed the longest association with the Prophet. His acquaintance with the Prophet's views and conduct would presumably have been the most extensive. We might now relate this to the disputes about the first to collect the Qur'ān: Abū Bakr, or 'Umar, or 'Uthmān, or 'Alī.

In the legal sciences, where ḥadīth reports clash, a brilliant and elegantly simple technique was deployed to resolve the problem. This involved employment of isnād theory in terms of ta'akhkhur, the later abrogates the earlier if they differ.³

This resulted, however, in earliness of conversion being driven out in favour of lateness of conversion. The change occurred in the time of Ṣāfi'ī, much of whose work was directed at the systematisation of the appeals to abrogation. For traces of the older rule appear to have affected his reasoning on the question of the prayer in times of peril. Faced with conflict of ḥadīths, Ṣāfi'ī's preference for the report from Khawwāt b. Jubair is explicitly determined by his awareness that Khawwāt was older than ibn 'Umar and had associated longer with the Prophet.⁴

Indeed the very frequency with which Ṣāfi'ī must insist in his polemic with representatives of the other

schools that, in the event of a clash of ḥadīths, it is the later that invariably is to be adopted, suggests that that principle was in his day something novel.

In the light of this technical development, the traditions on 'Uthmān's collection of the Qur'ān would, since they clash with traditions reporting earlier collections, be seen to post-date the collections attributed both to Abū Bakr and to 'Umar, but also, much more importantly, they report events later than the formation of the codices of the other contemporaries of Muḥammad.

Confirmation that the Qur'ān collection ḥadīths were influenced by the theories of naskh is provided by a study of the isnād attributed to the muṣḥaf, that is, of the prominent role assigned at each stage in the history of its collection and promulgation to the figure of Zaid b. Thābit.

It might now be more profitable, therefore, to begin to think in terms of the Zaid b. Thābit codex of the Qur'ān being placed in conscious and polemic opposition to the codices of 'Abdullāh, Ubayy, Abū Mūsā and any other first generation Muslim.

The attachment of Zaid's name to the 'Uthmān muṣḥaf, to the 'Umar recension and to the Abū Bakr recension undoubtedly occurred later than the attribution of variant readings or variant recensions to the other adherents of the Prophet.

It is extremely interesting to note in addition that, apart from allegedly having collected the Qur'ān, neither 'Umar nor Abū Bakr was credited with a personal codex, that is, with a variant reading analogous to that attributed to the others. 'Uthmān is occasionally mentioned in connection

with variants, but to a very much lesser extent than 'Abdullāh or Ubayy.

When 'Abdullāh was made to assert that he had learned his Qur'ān from the Prophet before Zaid had reached puberty; or that he had become a Muslim before Zaid was even conceived, this had without doubt been intended, under the older rule governing isnāds, to pre-empt the primacy in codex matters in favour of 'Abdullāh's readings. That was also the aim of the following utterances placed in the mouth of the Prophet: 'Whoever wishes to recite the Qur'ān in the purest form, that in which it was revealed, let him recite the reading of ibn Umm 'Abd ['Abdullāh].'⁵ 'Whatsoever 'Abdullāh teaches you to recite, follow it.'⁶

That there was rivalry on the question of the isnād of the Qur'ān, and that the question was to be solved by reference to the principle of abrogation, is clear from a series of ḥadīths, the first of which endorses incidentally our suggestion of attributing a codex to Zaid b. Thābit.

A man complained to the Prophet, 'Abdullāh taught me to recite a sūra of the Qur'ān. Zaid taught me the same sūra and so too did Ubayy. The readings of all three differ. Whose reading ought I to adopt?' The Prophet remained silent. 'Alī who was at his side replied, 'Every man should recite as he was taught. Each of the readings is acceptable, valid.'⁷

Bukhārī quotes from Muḥammad's daughter, Fāṭima, a report to the effect that the Prophet one day informed her that Gabriel was in the habit of checking the revelations with him annually. On this occasion, Gabriel had just checked them twice, from which the Prophet surmised that his death was

imminent.⁸

Since the Qur'ān had been revealed in seven forms, had Gabriel checked all seven, or only one, and, if so, which one?⁹ Aḥmad, ibn abī Da'ūd and Ṭabarī are all credited with the view that the 'Uthmān text was based on the reading reviewed by Gabriel in his final meeting with Muḥammad. In an ibn Sīrīn version of the ḥadīth, it is reported that 'the Muslims are of the view that our present text is the latest of all the texts, having been reviewed on the occasion of the final check'.¹⁰

Mujāhid reports ibn 'Abbās as asking, 'Which of the two texts do you consider the later?' They replied that the Zaid text was the later, which ibn 'Abbās repudiated. 'The Prophet,' he argued, 'reviewed the Qur'ān annually with Gabriel and twice in the year he died. The reading of 'Abdullāh represents the later of the two final reviews.'¹¹ By Zaid's text is meant the 'Uthmān muṣḥaf.

Ibrāhīm reports that ibn 'Abbās heard some man refer to 'the former Qur'ān text'. He asked him what he meant. The man explained, 'Umar sent 'Abdullāh to Kūfa as instructor and the people there adopted his reading. 'Uthmān altered the text, and so they refer to 'Abdullāh's reading as "the former text".' ibn 'Abbās rejected this. 'Abdullāh's is the later, based on the final review.'

ibn 'Abbās also reports that 'Abdullāh attended the final review and learned what had been withdrawn and what had been abrogated.¹²

Zaid is also said to have attended the final review and to have learned what was withdrawn and what remained.¹³

al Baḡawī in Šarḥ al Sunna, concluded, 'The muṣḥaf which has been traditionally accepted represents the final review text. 'Uthmān ordered it to be copied into the muṣḥafs he despatched throughout the empire, simultaneously making away with all other Qur'ān materials with the aim of preventing differences. Whatever is at variance with the written text is now to be regarded in the same light as that which has been abrogated and withdrawn. It is no longer competent for any man to go beyond the text.'¹⁴

Ṭabarī taught that the Companions agreed to write out that which they were certain represented the text as checked on the occasion of the final review. They were unanimous that all other Qur'ān materials must be abandoned.¹⁵

The Qāḍī Abū Bakr holds 'that the entirety of the Qur'ān, as God revealed it, and as He commanded that it be recorded, such as He did not abrogate, nor withdraw in respect of the wording alone, is represented in the muṣḥaf of 'Uthmān.'¹⁶

In Bāqillānī's view, therefore, the 'Uthmān muṣḥaf, as collected by Zaid, equals the Qur'ān minus two classes of verses: naskh al ḥukm wa al tilāwa and naskh al tilāwa dūna al ḥukm.

ibn Zibyan reports that ibn 'Abbās asked him which of the two texts he recited. He replied the former reading, that of ibn Umm 'Abd (i.e. 'Abdullāh's). 'But,' said ibn 'Abbās, 'it is the later of the two.'¹⁷

'Abdullāh is himself reported as declaring, 'Did I know of anyone whom camels could reach who had later information on the final review than I have, I should go to him.'

The 'annual review' and especially the 'final review' is transparently a motif deliberately framed to overcome the

recognised difficulty that everyone knew that Zaid was much younger than 'Abdullāh and a much later adherent of the Prophet. Zaid thus represented a threat to the 'Abdullāh text of the Qur'ān.

Zaid's youth and late conversion had, under the aegis of naskh, become precisely Zaid's strength. His selection as the guarantor of what was now known as the 'Uthmān muṣḥaf, must have represented the conscious implication that Zaid's reading was younger than and therefore superseded all other older codices of the text.

One thrills to the elegance of the reasoning by which the Muslims extricate themselves from problems of their own creation, nothing lost, and nothing even risked. 'Sālim died at Yemāma; Mu'āḍ in 'Umar's reign; both Ubayy and 'Abdullāh in 'Uthmān's reign. Zaid died much later than them all and thus attained to leadership in respect of the Qur'ān reading.¹⁸

The attempts noted earlier to make 'Abdullāh's earliness of conversion pre-empt the primacy in codex matters in his favour, rebounded in the later isnād theory to the disadvantage of 'Abdullāh and in favour of Zaid. Considerably younger than 'Abdullāh, and surviving all the major Companions who had an interest in Qur'ān affairs, Zaid serves as the guarantor of the latest Qur'ān Tradition, and that recension to which his name was attached was seen to have abrogated all earlier recensions, codices and readings.

The 'Uthmān collection tradition thus stands opposed not to the Abū Bakr - 'Umar collection tradition, but to the variant reading, variant codex traditions. These could be

used to counter the Sunna in disputes where the Sunna was seen to be at variance with the 'Qur'ān'. They might also be seen in that stage of the development of the legal sciences in which the Qur'ān had come to be seen as a stronger source, superior to the Sunna, to be used to counter some view making appeal to the 'Qur'ān'.

Borrowing the techniques of the Sunna, the 'Qur'ān' now counter-attacked as the 'Uthmān muṣḥaf, co-opting Zaid precisely on account of his youth and the lateness of his conversion in combination with the lateness of the caliphate of 'Uthmān. The isnād Zaid - 'Uthmān is doubly late, representing Islam's last link with the city of the Prophet of God.

The masses of ḥadīth materials which surround the various differing versions of the collection of the Qur'ān texts, only some of which we have reviewed, are but the consequence of the central and really significant assertion which all the reports share in common.

The ḥadīths agree in holding that Muḥammad had not left an edited Qur'ān text to his followers.

The assertion is, of course, contradictory, since, given all the work that had gone into the principle that God would cause His Prophet to forget only what it suited God to have him forget, it not being part of the divine plan that it should form part of the muṣḥaf and on that account operate upon the post-Muhammadan legal praxis, God could still have permitted Muḥammad in the final stages of his life to promulgate a complete record of the divine revelations in their divinely intended final form. This could have reflected the final review text and would have reconciled

that Ḥadīth motif with the exegetically derived 'forgetting' motif.

The contradiction was, however, inescapable. The reports had been designed to account for two incompatible principles of faith. The agreed Fiqh opinions were derived from the Qur'ān and from the Prophet to whom the Qur'ān had been revealed. There was, however, a demonstrable break between the Islamic legal doctrines on the one hand and the historical Muḥammad and the contents of the Qur'ān on the other. Neither of the two articles of faith could be abandoned.

The final review text would have sufficed to explain the absence from our Qur'ān texts of once revealed matter in conformity with the divine author's intention that all such matter should not form part of the final promulgated text. The absent matter was a number of verses of type: naskh al ḥukm wa al tilāwa.

The final review text would, however, fail to explain, indeed it would render impossible, the omission from the officially promulgated muṣḥaf of Qur'ān matter which it was not part of the divine intention to omit. Yet such omission had, it is alleged, occurred. For certain elements of the Fiqh doctrine, for example, for all the legal schools, the stoning 'verse', and for some of the schools only, the five sucklings 'verse', both verified by reference to the 'Qur'ān' as having been revealed, are quite unmentioned in the muṣḥaf. These are verses of the type: naskh al tilāwa dūna al ḥukm. The justification of this class of Qur'ān omissions is quite impossible save on the hypothesis

that our Qur'ān texts are post-Muhammadan.

Where legal views of a type not referred to in the 'Qur'ān' are agreed in the Fiqh, one might have expected appeal to the Companion muṣḥafs. That should have served the lawyers' purpose, on the analogy of their regular appeal to the Companions for information on the Sunna. That that was not, however, the technique adopted, suggests that such appeal would not have served. That in turn suggests that appeal to the Companion muṣḥafs served a more specialised need.

On the question of omission from Qur'ān records, 'Abdullāh reported that the Prophet had taught him an āya or a sūra. He got it by heart and copied it into his muṣḥaf. When night came, 'Abdullāh attempted to recite the passage in his prayers, but could not recall a single syllable. In the morning he checked his muṣḥaf, only to find the page blank! He reported immediately to the Prophet who told him that that passage had been withdrawn overnight.

Nöldeke exploited this story to conclude that it provided evidence that Muḥammad had struck out Qur'ān passages with his own hand.¹⁹ The story is certainly no more than exegetically inspired pseudo-sīra adduced to reinforce one side of the disputed tafsīr of the Qur'ān references to naskh and nunsi (insā').²⁰

It is surely a curious circumstance that the personalities called upon in the Tradition to testify to historical occurrences of the phenomena of Qur'ān omissions, whether by the normal processes of human forgetting or by the super-normal intervention of the deity, coincide with those

personalities engaged in one or other of the various stages in the history of the formation of the Qur'ān texts.

It is the self-same personalities that reappear in the guise of the eponyms of the rival local legal opinions. Furthermore, the local statements of the Law were held to have been derived either from their respective sponsors' store of Sunna materials, or from their variant Qur'ān readings.

It is likewise a curious fact that none of the great first generation Readers is a representative of the Prophet's tribe of Quraiṣ, although there has been an effort to insist that the Qur'ān had been revealed in the dialect of Mecca. It is doubtless this consideration which lies behind the various suggestions of Qur'ān commissions appointed by 'Uthmān and comprising a majority of Quraṣī members. It undoubtedly also accounts for the appearance of the Quraṣī caliphs, Abū Bakr, 'Umar, 'Uthmān or 'Alī, in the various stages of the preparation of the Qur'ān texts. The task of the commissioners had been to control the text arrived at by the Medinese Zaid. But, as the caliphs are all of Quraiṣ, the commissioners are redundant. Besides, as we have seen, the dialect hypothesis survived even the 'Uthmān collection. When the completed muṣḥaf was delivered, 'Uthmān, observing certain irregular usages, said, 'Had it been dictated by a man from Hudail and recorded by a man from Thaqīf, this would not have happened.'²¹

'Umar is reported to have insisted, 'Let none dictate the texts of our muṣḥafs save men of Quraiṣ and Thaqīf.'²²

The reference to Hudail reminds us that 'Abdullāh was a Hudalī. 'Umar is said to have written to him, admonishing

him to instruct the people in Quraṣī, not in Hudalī readings, for the Qur'ān had been revealed in the dialect of Mecca.²³

This dialect theory had presumably arisen from and thriven upon the heterogeneous tribal affiliations of the prominent Readers. 'Abdullāh was of Hudail, Ubayy and Zaid were both Medinese and Abū Mūsā was Yemenī.

Zaid, however, alone of all these personalities, appears consistently in all phases of Qur'ān text development, from the Medina period of the revelation to the Prophet whom he served as scribe, through each of the reported Abū Bakr, 'Umar and 'Uthmān initiatives on behalf of the Book of God.

In the light provided by such a striking series of coincidences, a coherent pattern underlying all the traditions on Qur'ān codices and Qur'ān collections begins finally to emerge.

The variant muṣḥafs of the senior Companions represent the Qur'ānic pole of the symbolic part they play in the Sunna. Qur'ānic evidences are adduced in their names by the rival schools in their disputes. Their variant codices correspond exactly to their variant ḥadīths. Readings and codices, as well as ḥadīths were ascribed to them in the same way and to the same end. Both Qur'ān and Sunna ascriptions were the device to furnish the documents from the Tradition that would speak in favour of the local school view.

That the readings adduced in the course of disputes between the lawyers are not to be found in our texts of the Qur'ān is an objection most easily dealt with by assigning them to the personal muṣḥafs prepared for their own use and that of their followers by the several Companion school-

patrons.

That their personal muṣḥafs are not available for scientific scrutiny is best answered by alleging their destruction at the hands of 'Uthmān on the occasion of his 'uniting the Muslims on the basis of a single text'. 'Uthmān can be portrayed as prudent or highhanded, depending on the point of view.

The major difficulty in the way of our accepting this presentation of the matter is that for some reason this act of 'Uthmān's has never prevented those readings from being adduced in abundance in inter-school quarrels, for centuries after they were supposed to have been rooted out. Not that this objection has been overlooked. 'Abdullāh allegedly bade his pupils and followers to lay up their Qur'ān's in hiding and to withhold them from 'Uthmān's agents charged with their destruction. Unfortunately for the ḥadīth, this report can easily be shown to be derived from an indifferent exegesis of Q 3.161, a verse quite unrelated to the issue. Besides, 'Abdullāh's words are reported as addressed, not to his faithful followers, but to the government agents sent to confiscate 'Abdullāh's text of the Qur'ān.

The Companions furnished evidence for the Qur'ān as they furnished evidence for the Sunna. In the latter sphere, technical improvements in methodology were reflected in the evolution of Companion-ḥadīths into Prophet-ḥadīths, as the madāhib learned how to advance their evidence in step with the theoretical developments which had resulted in the emergence of the Sunna of the Prophet. The madāhib hoped thereby to preserve the local body of legal materials intact,

in the face of the threat posed by this novel insistence on appeal to the Prophet, rather than to the Companions. Their legal differences continued to be exposed by the still visible conflicts in a body of materials all of which was now attributed to the Prophet. But their temporary dismay was dealt with by considering the isnāds of this body of ḥadīths. Reports could be preserved if they could be shown to come down from the Prophet via Companions of later and later date of conversion. These later reports could be proclaimed to have abrogated reports coming down from the Prophet via Companions of earlier conversion or death-dates.

In the Qur'ān sphere, on the other hand, we noted a very striking difference. The information from the Companion generation similarly carries its isnād, yet here there had been no necessity to improve the isnāds to the same degree required in the Sunna. Attributions did not pass beyond the Companion generation to seek out the Prophet himself.

Developments in the isnād science in the field of Qur'ān studies lagged far behind parallel developments in the Sunna science. The reason for this comparative backwardness is not far to seek. Quite simply, the situation in the Qur'ān field was the reverse of that obtaining in the Sunna. As a document, the Qur'ān had existed and was universally known, having been universally employed for ritual purposes for ages before it became the Qur'ān source of the uṣūlīs.

Thus, three principal factors worked on the Muslim discussion of the Qur'ān:

1. The exegesis of certain verses indicating that as the Prophet had forgotten/been caused to forget, the Qur'ān was

not fully represented in the muṣḥaf.

2. Conflict between the Fiqh and the contents of the muṣḥaf. The uṣūlīs who rejected the principle of the abrogation of the Qur'ān by the Sunna argued that certain legal rulings of Islam had derived from the Qur'ān, even if no corresponding wording could be shown to be present in the muṣḥaf. For these scholars also the Qur'ān was not fully represented in the muṣḥaf.

Theological and exegetical arguments operated against any suggestion that the wording of, for example, the stoning verse had been merely lost or mislaid, or just forgotten by the Prophet or by his Companions. Besides, the stoning verse had always remained valid for legal purposes, since stoning had remained the Islamic penalty. The ruling had been in force during the Prophet's lifetime, remained in force until the Prophet's death, was in force during the reigns of his successors and remained in force until the age of the fuqahā', since when it has been handed down from generation to generation of the Muslims.

No Islamic legal provision could conceivably have been based on something that had been abrogated during the Prophet's lifetime, and there certainly can be no abrogation after the Prophet's death.

No Qur'ānic revelation continuing without interruption to apply to the Fiqh could conceivably have been omitted from the muṣḥaf, if the muṣḥaf had been prepared and promulgated by the Prophet. The Prophet for that reason could not conceivably have been responsible for the formation of the muṣḥaf.

Like the Muslims, the non-Muslim scholar must recognise and respect this difference introduced between the Qur'ān as text and the Qur'ān as source.

3. The third and final factor was the isnād of the Qur'ān text, the muṣḥaf.

Zaid's youth and the lateness of his conversion together imply the lateness of his information for both the Sunna and the Qur'ān, in each of which fields he is a prominent and distinguished personality.

As in the Sunna, so also in the Qur'ān field, Zaid is the hallmark of the last-period information from the Prophet. His muṣḥaf, that is, the muṣḥaf placed under the aegis of his name, is the nāsikh of all other known muṣḥafs and any readings they may contain.

Two quite disparate attitudes to reported Qur'ān variants were reflected in the Islamic literature. There is firstly an expression of reprobation and reprehension. This was instanced in the hadīths featuring Ḥudāifa and his quarrels with 'Abdullāh and Abū Mūsā, leading to the advice he offered to 'Uthmān.

Secondly, however, there is a preference for harmony achieved by rationalising and justifying the reported variants, representative of the later catholicity of the Muslim attitudes.

The Muslims never developed a technique for judging the truth of the contents of their hadīths. Except in the case of the most blatant forgeries, offensive to faith and to reason alike, the utmost their concentration upon the isnād of the hadīths enabled them to do was to pass judgment on the

likelihood of whether A had met B and could therefore have received information from him. No hadīth of sound isnād could be ignored, far less set aside, without even more compelling evidence to indicate a greater probability (r j h).

The analytical approach failing to evolve, subtle minds, in thrall to traditional Islamic knowledge, had to be content with ever more ingenious interpretation and harmonisation. Some examples of this we have already met, and others we shall shortly meet in detail.

The attitude to the hadīths on the history of the Qur'ān texts was expressed variously. The reported Qur'ān variants led to the postulation of an ancient indifference to the details of the reading of the texts, providing only that the meaning remained unaffected. A matured explanation of the reported variants was to assume an ancient indifference to the dialect employed to convey the meaning. That view derived from and rationalised the first explanation.

Thirdly, since the dialect hypothesis broke down under scrutiny, there next emerged the 'seven acceptable readings' theory which postulated that the number of acceptable readings represented the number of parallel revelations made to the Prophet. Among some forty varying interpretations of that hadīth canvassed, one view was that the reference is to the seven Qur'ān codices compiled by Abū Bakr, 'Umar, 'Uthmān, 'Alī, 'Abdullāh, Ubayy and ibn 'Abbās.²⁴ The suggestion is irregular, since we have already noted that we nowhere else meet with the attribution to several of these personalities of a private Qur'ān codex. The hadīth is noteworthy insofar as it makes 'Uthmān one among other mushāfs.

Ḥudāifa and 'Uthmān were projected as alarmed at the reading disputes which threatened the Muslims of Iraq and Syria (and of Medina) with the sort of squabbles and divisions which had afflicted Jews and Christians, and in which each of these communities had squandered the social and political advantages which flow from the possession of a divine revelation. The solution urged by the party lurking behind this attitude was that the Muslims be seen to be united on the basis of a single mushāf before the unity of Islam was similarly shattered.

Others took a much less alarmist view. Abū Huraira's authority was borrowed for the report that the Prophet himself had stated that the Qur'ān had been revealed in seven versions and that only contention over the Qur'ān was unbelief.²⁵ This view would license school ikhṭilāf while prohibiting only public contention. Such dangers as might be apprehended for Islam lay not in the fact of local differences, but in making these differences the occasion of quarrels and exaggerated mutual accusations of error, or of attributing to one's opponents the possession and use of incorrect texts. This is the plea of minorities against majorities. The Muslims must respect one another's right to differ even on such sensitive matters as Qur'ān text. The primary consideration in the recitation of the Qur'ān was that it should always faithfully reflect the meaning of the revealed texts. Provided there was no distortion of the divine intention the vocabulary used to clothe God's meaning was quite immaterial. 'All the readings are correct and equally valid, so long as you do not terminate a mercy verse

with a reference to punishment or vice versa.²⁶

This view was intended to be confirmed by a conciliatory remark reported from Zuhri, 'I have heard that these are the seven forms, and that they express but one meaning with no disagreement as to what is permitted and what forbidden.'²⁷ The remark refers only to consonantal/vocalic variations from 'Uthmān and quite ignores the most significant feature of reported variants, namely, the attempt to document differing local approaches to certain legal questions. In all cases of that kind, what was in view was the use of the Qur'ān source to which the Qur'ān document was being made to conform.

The synonyms/dialects and other rationalisations are in this area of Qur'ān use totally irrelevant.

'Alqama al Nakha'i reports 'Abdullāh's departure from Kūfa.

He took leave, saying, 'Do not contend about the Qur'ān. It contains no contradictory statements, nor such as cancel each other out. Nor does it materially alter statements, even frequently repeated statements. The Ṣarī'a, with its penalties and obligations, is a single consistent system.'²⁸

The readings disputes concerned the use of the Qur'ān source. The use that the scholars then making appeal to the 'Abdullāh reading had made of the 'Abdullāh Qur'ān source had attracted criticism for making it appear that the Qur'ān contained contradictions.

'We used,' continues 'Abdullāh, 'to refer our disputes to the Prophet and he would order us to recite in his presence and inform us that each was in the right. Did I know of any man more learned than

myself in respect of what God has revealed, I would seek him out and add his store of knowledge to mine. I learned the recitation of seventy sūras of the Qur'ān from the very mouth of the Prophet and I was aware that the Qur'ān was reviewed annually, every Ramaḍān, and twice in the year he died. When he had completed the review, I would recite to him and he would inform me that I was right.

'Let therefore whoever recites after my reading not abandon it nor lose taste for it. Whoever recites according to any of these other forms, let him not abandon his reading either. But whoever denies a single verse of the Qur'ān denies the entire Book.'²⁹

It is a somewhat confused ḥadīth which conflates the 'seven forms' remark attributed to the Prophet with the varying results achieved in the interpretation of another, the 'seven abwāb', ḥadīth.³⁰ The report insists in a defensive tone upon the correctness of the legal doctrine documented from the Qur'ān on the basis of the 'Abdullāh codex, which it simultaneously strives to vindicate by reference to the Prophet's late-period endorsement. The ḥadīth alludes to disagreements on legal conclusions, but denies that these can be urged to argue inconsistency in the Qur'ān itself.

Disagreements are the perfectly natural outcome of the appeal by the different lawyer groups to different Qur'ān recensions.

Although the claim is obviously enough made that the codex of 'Abdullāh carried the Prophet's repeated and, more important, his late-period approval, the report somewhat inconsistently shrinks back from insisting that the disagreements should be limited by the imposition of textual

uniformity.

No serious harm need be anticipated from the multiplicity of Qur'ān codices, providing only that all recensions are treated as equally valid. Division in the ranks of the Muslims would result only from a narrow-minded insistence that there can be only one authentic Qur'ān tradition which its proponents would seek to enforce upon the whole community. Public contention about the reading of a single verse is unbelief.

This is how one group of Muslims sought to defend and vindicate their right to employ Qur'ān variants.

In view of the reported complacency of the Prophet, 'Abdullāh can be projected as undoubtedly correct.

Equally, 'Uthmān, if the squabbles over the readings bid to destroy the very unity of Islam, had acted from motives of the highest expediency in insisting upon a single uniform text, to achieve which he set his mind upon the destruction of every other documentary record of the revelations.

The Prophet had not irrevocably commanded the preservation of the variant readings. He had merely countenanced them as a gracious concession. Were it otherwise, and were the 'seven readings' understood to have represented an obligatory injunction laid by the Prophet upon his community, knowledge of each and every one of them would have come to be regarded by the Muslims as an integral and indispensable element in the transmission of the entire corpus of the divine revelations, to be passed on undiminished to the successor generations. That this had not occurred,

however, was for Ṭabarī the clearest evidence that the 'seven ahruf' had been alternative texts. 'Uthmān could therefore, in no sense, be accused of having derelicted from his duty either to the Qur'ān or to the community.³¹

The Muslims abandoned recitation after six of the forms which their just leader insisted they abandon, until they lost all knowledge of them and all trace of them became quite obliterated. There is today no possibility of reciting them on account of their having quite vanished, and on account of the agreement among the Muslims to reject their recitation without, however, any reflection upon their individual correctness or that of any fraction of any one of them. No recitation today is possible for the Muslims other than on the basis of that one consonantal text which their solicitous leader selected for them.

The connection through Ḥudāifa to the variant pre-'Uthmān Qur'ān traditions, associated in the Ḥadīth with the names of 'Abdullāh, Ubayy, Miqdād/?Mu'ād, Abū Mūsā, 'A'īša, Ḥafṣa, Umm Salama and others, is not, in Ṭabarī's way of seeing things, so much broken as suddenly duplicated. What has been abandoned, what has vanished and become quite obliterated so that its recitation is no longer in fact possible, can be quite ignored for all but antiquarian purposes.

It was now inevitable that, where they continued to be alleged, variant readings, even variant codices, were seen by the scholars to be mere variants of the 'Uthmān text. Goldziher was right after all.

The alleged pre-'Uthmānic Companion muṣḥafs had no historical, merely a theoretical identity, partly explicable by the necessity to provide a rational explanation for

'Uthmān's having had to act at all.

Abū Bakr or 'Umar had already collected the texts, but neither had taken steps to disseminate the text universally. Thus were the Companion readings/muṣḥafs explained. The reports settled upon 'Uthmān as the caliph who had despatched a unique text throughout the empire. Two collections having been reported, two motivations had to be assumed, with all the implications that strictly logical thinking would cause to follow.

The error of the Nöldeke-Schwally conclusions lay in their looking for only a single collection. As between Abū Bakr and 'Umar and 'Uthmān, their preference fell on the 'Uthmān ḥadīth series and the Abū Bakr/'Umar series had to be explained away.

Admittedly, we too have seen that there existed a single ḥadīth strain which attributed to 'Uthmān the merit of having been the first to complete a collection of the Qur'ān ab initio. That view had not, however, prevailed among the Muslims. Harmony and rationalisation was their way with conflicting ḥadīths. The Muslims looked therefore for at least two collections in the period following the death of the Prophet, and to each they allotted a separate motivation.

The two occurred, successively, under Abū Bakr-'Umar and then under 'Uthmān. The aim of the first was the earliest collection of the scattered fragments of the individual revelations into one central place. The aim of 'Uthmān was the collection of the Muslims, that is, uniting the Muslims of every region throughout the empire on the basis of a single text. To do this he merely needed to

arrange for the despatch of copies of the assembled Abū Bakr-'Umar text to the provinces. Typical of this view of the matter are the following:

The reading of Abū Bakr, 'Umar, Uthmān, Zaid, of the Muhājirs and the Anṣār was one and the same. All used a common reading that had been employed by the Prophet before them. This text Muḥammad had read over twice with Gabriel in his final year, on the occasion of the last check-reading of the Qur'ān texts. Zaid attended the final review and taught the reading endorsed on that occasion to the Muslims until he died. That is why Abū Bakr commissioned Zaid to assemble the corpus of the revelations and why 'Uthmān engaged him to copy out the muṣḥafs that were despatched to the regions.³²

Zaid b. Thābit attended the final review and in the course of it what had been removed from the Qur'ān and what remained was explained to the Prophet. Zaid wrote out this final review text for the Prophet and read it over to him to check it once again. Zaid thereafter taught this text to the Muslims. That is why Abū Bakr and 'Umar relied upon Zaid in the assembly of the Qur'ān texts and why 'Uthmān appointed him to produce the copies.³³

These ḥadīths go even further than Ṭabarī, in that they fail to take any account of the existence at any time of variant readings/muṣḥafs attributed to 'Uthmān's contemporaries. In fact, they are more concerned with explaining Zaid's prominent role in the history of the Qur'ān texts than with 'Uthmān's motive for his collection. From what we have seen in the foregoing analysis of the collection ḥadīths, 'Uthmān had to have rival Companion codices to suppress in order to make the effort to unite the Muslims on the basis of a unique text.

But even the most naïve hadīths, which fail to assign to 'Uthmān a specific technical motive, nevertheless report his as the second collection.

Indeed, the Muslims believe that the Qur'ān had been collected on three separate occasions. The first had occurred in the lifetime and indeed in the presence of the Prophet. 'We organised the Qur'ān,' reports Zaid, 'in the presence of the Prophet.'³⁴

Certain commentators suggested that this report is to be interpreted in the sense that by organisation is meant the internal arrangement of each of the sūras.

The question of the internal organisation of the muṣḥaf also gave rise to much speculation. What here concerned them was when and by whom the present arrangement of the contents had been determined. As two collections had been reported, two issues are involved. The order of the verses within the sūras was considered so intimately connected with the processes of the actual revelation, that it was concluded that this aspect of the organisation of the text must have been the work of the Prophet.

'Uthmān reports that when lengthy sūras were being revealed the Prophet would summon one of the scribes and say, 'Place these verses in the sūra in which such-and-such a topic is mentioned.' When a single verse was revealed in isolation the Prophet would say, 'Put it in the sūra where so-and-so is mentioned.'³⁵

Generally, therefore, the Muslims were agreed that the sūras were distinguished one from another and that the ordering of their verses had been fixed by the Prophet,

although even here adventurous claims are occasionally met with. On the discovery of the two closing verses of Q 9, 'Umar is said to have remarked, 'Had they been three verses, I would have made them a separate sūra',³⁶ a report which disturbed some scholars.

The statement in the Mabānī, that 'in the muṣḥafs attributed to 'Alī and 'Abdullāh there is discoverable no difference whatsoever relative to our muṣḥaf, apart from the order of the sūras and verses',³⁷ is apologetic in tone. The reference to the order of the verses goes too far, but that to the order of the sūras is a characteristic acknowledgment of the feeling among the scholars that if, as opposed to speaking of Companion readings, one is ready to accept that there had once existed whole Companion muṣḥafs, then presumably one of their hallmarks would have been a different ordering of the sūras.

The order of the verses in each sūra was generally conceded to have been the work of the Prophet. Only the order of the sūras therefore presented any possibility of idiosyncrasy by the individual Companion.³⁸

In fact, several views have been expressed on this question. Bāqillānī reflects that 'it is possible that it was the Prophet who ordained the present arrangement. It is equally possible that we may owe the present order to the decision of the Companions.' As between the two possibilities, the Qāḍī finally decided that the order of the muṣḥaf has come down from the Prophet.³⁹ This was suggested by the reports on Muḥammad's having checked the Qur'ān with Gabriel. Presumably they had reviewed the texts in their

present order. That was also the view of ibn al Anbārī. However, the review was said to have occurred annually. ibn Hajar was inclined to think it more probable that they had checked them in the chronological order of their revelation. That need apply only to the yearly reviews however. In the muṣḥaf, the sūra order bears no relation to the chronological order of the revelation of the verses and chapters. This observation may perhaps have been one of the factors encouraging the appearance of ḥadīths on the final review.

'Alī is said to have arranged his muṣḥaf in the chronological order of the revelation and to have included his notes on the nāsikh and the mansūkh.⁴⁰ The importance of this work would have been immense, but all Muḥammad b. Sīrīn's efforts to locate this work in Medina came to nothing. In any case, the story merely underlines the rule that the theories of naskh set no store whatever by the present arrangement.

Scholars who long assented to the view that the text we have in our hands today and the detailed arrangement of its contents were the work of Zaid and 'Uthmān, naturally asserted that the arrangement of the contents in the variant muṣḥafs ascribed to some of the Companions had been different.

The Qādī 'Iyyād reports that in the night prayer the Prophet recited Q 4 before Q 3 and that that was the order of the two chapters in the muṣḥaf of Ubayy. This led the Qādī to conclude that the sūra order had not been fixed by the Prophet, but had been left to the discretion of the Companions.⁴¹

Baḳillānī, noting that the order of the sūras is not

insisted upon for the purposes of prayer, private study or public instruction, supposed that this explained the different ordering reported to have occurred in the Companion codices.

We find, therefore, in various studies on the subject, varying versions of the order of the sūras occurring in the Companion codices. The difficulty arises here that arises elsewhere in Muslim literature, namely, that the reports are seldom in agreement. 'I have seen,' reports the author of the Fihrist, 'a number of codices alleged by those who had copied them to be the muṣḥaf of 'Abdullāh. No two of them, however, agreed with each other.'⁴²

The most recent scholar to attend to the reports on the Companion codices was Professor Jeffery who, with admirable perseverance, collected an impressive body of material for a projected history of the text of the Qur'ān. The most striking feature of this work is the regularity with which the reader encounters expressions of Jeffery's scepticism concerning this or that aspect of the reports he is considering. For example, he thought it 'unfortunate that not sufficient has survived to enable us to get a real picture of the text of any one of the pre-'Uthmānic codices'.⁴³

He recognises that,

The older variants, even though they were known to be represented in some of the older codices, for the most part survived only in the works of two classes of savants: firstly, certain exegetes interested in the theological implications of such variants; and secondly, the philologists who quoted them as grammatical or lexical examples.⁴⁴

Jeffery admits that

the question arises, of course, as to the authenticity of the readings ascribed to these old codices. In some cases, it must be confessed, there is a suspicion of readings later invented by the grammarians and the theologians being fathered on these early authorities, in order to gain the prestige of their name. This suspicion is perhaps strongest in the case of distinctly Šī'a readings that are attributed to ibn Mas'ūd and to the wives of the Prophet. It is felt also in regard to the readings attributed to ibn 'Abbās, who as Übermensch des Tafsīr, tended to get his authority quoted for any and every matter connected with Qur'ānic studies. On the whole, however, one may feel confident that the majority of readings quoted from any reader really go back to early authority.⁴⁵

It is not clear from anything that Jeffery, Schwally or Bergsträsser has said in any of their specialist works on the Qur'ān why anyone should feel this degree of confidence.

'The traditions as to the sūra-order in 'Abdullāh and other of the old codices come, argues Jeffery, 'from persons who were familiar with the 'Uthmānic sūra-order, but knew that the material was differently disposed in the others.'⁴⁶

First 'feel' and now 'knew'! Alas for his use of this 'knew'. Surely what is meant is just 'alleged'.

'It is evident that we cannot place any reliance on the Ubayy sūra-order which, as in the case of the lists for ibn Mas'ūd's codex, must be regarded as later formations, not based on the original codex.'⁴⁷ It is remarkable to Jeffery how often Ubayy's 'variants agree with ibn Mas'ūd's against the 'Uthmānic codex'.⁴⁸

On ibn 'Abbās' codex, Jeffery remarks,

From the exalted position which ibn 'Abbās holds in Muslim exegesis, where he figures as 'tarjumān al Qur'ān', 'al baḥr' and 'ḥeḇer al umma', one would have expected his codex to be as famous in Qur'ānic literature as that of 'Abdullāh. The rarity of its mention in his case serves as an argument for its genuineness, for, had it been an invention, we should have found it running as wildly through the Commentaries as his supposed school of exegesis.

His fame in exegesis, however, belongs to a later stage in his career, when he was interested in utilising Jewish and Christian material for the elucidation of the Qur'ān, but, as his exegesis is obviously based on the text of the official 'Uthmānic edition, we must place his collection of the material for his codex in the days of his youth.⁴⁹

It is very much to be regretted that Jeffery did not place all these observations side by side and thus co-ordinate his individual acts of scepticism.

One is appalled at the results for European scholars of their too ready acceptance of all that they read in the Muslim reports on this or that aspect of the discussions on the Qur'ān. Remembering that all such reports are, after all, merely ḥadīths which must therefore be treated no differently from the other ḥadīths we daily have to deal with, we can confidently conclude that it was only because the Muslims had alleged that 'Abdullāh and Ubayy had prepared personal codices which differed from the 'Uthmānic text, that it next became necessary for them to report the different sūra-order in those different codices. To do this they had, of course, to depart more or less from the order of the mushaf they had in their hands, the mushaf they had attributed to 'Uthmān. There was no need to depart too radically,

merely enough to implant the idea of differentness. It cannot be any wonder that no two lists agree. To do that, they would have had to be describing something that really existed.

THE TAWĀTUR OF THE MUSHAF

If the Companions had possessed mushafs privately prepared for their personal use which differed from the universally acknowledged text, now attributed to a Companion, 'Uthmān, in respect of the sūra order, was there any other respect in which they might have varied from 'Uthmān? A reasonable suggestion would be that perhaps they had differed also in length, both from 'Uthmān and from each other.

Some were longer and some were shorter. Despite the statement attributed to 'Abdullāh that he who denies a single verse of the Qur'ān denies the entire revelation, 'Abdullāh is depicted in the literature as having denied three whole chapters of the Qur'ān!

The codex ascribed to 'Abdullāh is said to lack three of the sūras present in our (the 'Uthmānic) text. The codices ascribed to ibn 'Abbās, Ubayy and Abū Mūsā are said to contain two sūras which the 'Uthmānic text lacks.⁵⁰

The Mu'tazilī scholar al Nazzām is reported to have impugned 'Abdullāh's memory on the ground that he had denied two sūras (sic) which are part of the Book of God.⁵¹ This is a reference, says ibn Qutaiba, to Q 113 and Q 114, and for his attitude 'Abdullāh had justification. Men may opine and opine wrongly. This is possible for prophets and for ordinary mortals more possible still. What induced

'Abdullāh to refrain from recording the two sūras in his mushaf was that he observed that the Prophet used the chapters as charms to invoke the divine protection upon his grandsons, al Ḥasan and al Ḥusain.

A similar cause led Ubayy, on the contrary, to copy into his mushaf the two gunūt prayers which he noted the Prophet reciting at the ritual service. 'Abdullāh, taking two chapters to be prayers, thought them to be no part of the Qur'ān, while Ubayy, taking two prayers to be sūras, thought that they were part of the Qur'ān.

Of the two reports, it was that concerning 'Abdullāh's supposed omission of Q 113 and Q 114, but more especially his refusal to record the first sūra, the Fātiḥa (to which, curiously, there is no reference in ibn Qutaiba's comment) which provoked the more serious discussion among the scholars.

The trouble with the reports is that they clash with a fundamental doctrine - the tawātur of the Qur'ān. The universally acknowledged mushaf of 'Uthmān had been the unanimous bequest of the entire generation of the Prophet's contemporaries. In this connection, one might refer to the observations of Fakhr al Dīn al Rāzī,

The reports transmitted in certain ancient books to the effect that ibn Mas'ūd denied that the Fātiḥa and the two charm sūras are part of the Qur'ān are troublesome. If we accept that a mutawātir tradition had been achieved in the days of the Companions, then the three chapters are part of the Qur'ān and 'Abdullāh's denial amounts to disbelief [kufr]. If, on the other hand, we hold that tawātur had not been achieved in the days of the Companions, it follows that the Qur'ān is not mutawātir. What

springs most readily to mind is that the reports from 'Abdullāh are quite unfounded. This cuts the knot of that dilemma. The Qāḍī Abū Bakr said, 'It is not soundly reported from 'Abdullāh that these three chapters are not part of the Qur'ān. Such a statement has not been reported from him. What he did was merely to erase these chapters and omit them from his text since he did not approve of their being written. This does not imply that he denied that they were part of the Qur'ān. The Sunna in his view was that they should record only what the Prophet had commanded to be recorded and 'Abdullāh did not have information that the Prophet had himself recorded these sūras or commanded that they be recorded.'

al Nawawī says in his commentary on the Muhaddab, 'The Muslims are unanimously of the opinion that the three sūras are part of the Qur'ān and that anyone who denies one of them is an unbeliever. What has been reported about 'Abdullāh is groundless and thoroughly unsound.'

ibn Ḥazm said in the Muḥallā, 'The thing is a lie fathered upon 'Abdullāh. Only the reading from 'Abdullāh as transmitted from 'Āṣim from Zirr from ibn Mas'ūd is authentic and in that reading, the three sūras are present.'⁵²

But ibn Ḥajar in the Fath accepts the reports about 'Abdullāh as sound. He states that both Aḥmad and ibn Ḥibbān report that 'Abdullāh would not write these chapters in his muṣḥaf. Aḥmad's son, in the supplement to the Musnad, al Ṭabarānī and ibn Mardawaih all report from al A'māš from Abū Ishāq from 'Abdul Raḥmān b. Yazīd al Nakha'ī that he said, 'Abdullāh used to erase the two charm sūras from his records saying, "They are not part of the Book of God." Similar reports are related by al Bazzār and al Ṭabarānī with the addition that, as he erased them, 'Abdullāh said, 'The Prophet merely commanded that they be used as charm prayers.' 'Abdullāh

never recited them in his ritual prayers.

al Bazzār adds, 'None of the Companions concurred with this view of 'Abdullāh's. Further, it is ascertained that the Prophet recited them at his ritual prayers.' ibn Ḥajar concludes that the allegation that the whole thing is a lie fathered on 'Abdullāh must be dismissed. Attacks upon ḥadīths of unexceptionable isnād are quite unacceptable in the absence of further evidence. Since the isnāds of these reports about 'Abdullāh are sound, they must be accepted without further ado. A means ought to be sought whereby they might be interpreted. The Qāḍī and others took the reports to show 'Abdullāh's reluctance to write these sūras into the muṣḥaf. Here is an interpretation which commends itself, excepting that the sound report states that 'Abdullāh said, 'The charm prayers are not part of the Book of God.' Now, if one construes the words, 'Book of God' as a reference to the muṣḥaf, this complements the interpretation.

Some who have reviewed the drift of the reports felt this harmonisation to be somewhat far-fetched. ibn al Ṣabbāḡ added that 'Abdullāh was not quite certain as to the status of the three chapters at the time when he first made his remarks. The consensus of the Companions as to the contents of the muṣḥaf was first reached after that time. The three sūras were first declared mutawātira during 'Abdullāh's lifetime. It was simply that they had not at first been mutawātira in his private opinion.

ibn Qutaiba, resuming his comment on 'Abdullāh's view of the matter, refrained from expressing any opinion as to whether 'Abdullāh or the Companions were right or wrong. As for the reports that he had omitted the Fātiḥa from his muṣḥaf on the grounds that that chapter was not part of the Qur'ān God forbid!

'Abdullāh took the view that the Qur'ān was to be recorded and to be assembled between the two covers to preclude any doubt and to obviate any forgetting, any addition or any loss. 'Abdullāh could see that all these things were quite inconceivable in respect of the Fātiha, on account of its brevity and given the fact that every Muslim is required to memorise it for the purposes of prayer.⁵³

10 General conclusions

It must now have become abundantly clear how little assistance is to be hoped for from the Muslim accounts of the history of the collection of the Qur'ān texts.

The reports are a mass of confusions, contradictions and inconsistencies. By their nature, they represent the product of a lengthy process of evolution, accretion and 'improvement'. They were framed in response to a wide variety of progressing needs.

Nöldeke-Schwally isolated reports of several incompatible contentions: that the Qur'ān had first been collected by Abū Bakr; that it had first been collected by 'Umar; that the collection had been begun by Abū Bakr and completed by 'Umar; that it had been begun by 'Umar and completed by 'Uthmān; that it had been solely the work of 'Uthmān.

They failed to detect the distinction between jam' al Qur'ān and jam' al maṣāḥif. They thus took all these reports to be competitive attributions through the maze of which they hoped to find safe passage in clinging fast to the detail of the ṣuḥuf of Ḥafṣa.¹

Schwally, and since his day all his imitators, decided that this was the one sure fact in a morass of contradictions. The security derived from the frequency of

the mention of these ṣuḥuf has led to an unfortunate tendency to exaggerate their significance to the Muslims.

Schwally may well have been correct in his surmise that the unpopularity of the figure of 'Uthmān had induced the Muslims to reduce his stock by attributing the first collection of the sacred texts to his more revered predecessors, Abū Bakr and 'Umar, who had been erected by Muslim sentiment into models of semi-legendary piety and energy respectively.²

Nor was he wrong in detecting in the ṣuḥuf of Ḥaḥṣa a motif for linking the 'Uthmānic with the 'Umar collection. His error consisted simply in the oversimplification of the nature of that link, and hence the exaggeration of the role played in the Muslim reports by Ḥaḥṣa's ṣuḥuf. This he did, not merely by regarding the work ascribed to 'Uthmān as limited to simply copying out the ṣuḥuf of Ḥaḥṣa, but, in addition, by treating the pre-'Uthmānic codices attributed to the several Companions as no more than merely copies similarly derived from those ṣuḥuf.³

Relying solely upon one single series of ḥadīths, to be subjected to an exclusively literary analysis in the light of his personal intuition, Schwally achieved a conclusion which effectively is no more than an endorsement of certain fourth-century Muslim attitudes. This resulted from his procedure of treating the Qur'ān as a literary monument. The Qur'ān, we have seen more than once, is and was much more to the Muslims than simply a document. Much more significant in its history has been the role it was called on to play as the primary source for the derivation of the Law.

It follows that the reports on its collection must logically be submitted to a test of precisely the same canons that were applied by the Muslims to their second source, the Sunna. We cannot, therefore, avoid applying to all statements on the Qur'ān the test of the use to which the Qur'ān has traditionally been put in the Islamic sciences, and especially, since it has been treated as a primary source, the use to which it has been put in the Islamic source theory.

In this light, it soon becomes apparent that, far from being identical with the so-called 'Uthmānic text, the ṣuḥuf of Ḥaḥṣa, like the ṣuḥuf of 'Ā'īṣa or the ṣuḥuf of a third widow of the Prophet, Umm Salama, played a role analogous to that conferred upon the muṣḥaf of 'Abdullāh, of Abū Mūsā, of Ubayy, of Miqdād (or Mu'ād). Like all of these, Ḥaḥṣa's codex had occasional exegetic value in the scholars' attempts to decide issues left 'unclear' in the 'Uthmān text. Use has also been made of the ṣuḥuf of Ḥaḥṣa in the interest of attempted interpolation relative to the universally acknowledged Qur'ān text of the ('Uthmān) muṣḥaf.

In the Qur'ān sphere, as in the Sunna sphere, appeal was still allegedly possible to information provided in the names of prominent contemporaries of the Prophet.

Again in the Qur'ān sphere, as in the Sunna sphere, attempts had early been set in train to regularise the position created by the apparent conflict of sources. This was done by the application to the Qur'ān of the principles of abrogation which had been applied to the Sunna and which, by definition, involved consideration of isnāds. For the purposes of 'settling' exegetical disputes, certain circles,

it would appear, were not above attributing unambiguous Qur'ān readings to senior Companions. The opposing position could always be restored by appeal to the authentic Qur'ān texts and attributing them to equally eminent Companions of later date of conversion. That was the mechanism by which Zaid b. Thābit achieved his central role in all versions of the ḥadīths on the various aspects of the recording and the collecting of the Qur'ān revelations.

In this connection, it should be noted that Zaid's name is more prominent and more consistently used than that of Ḥafṣa. It also perhaps should be noted that Zaid and Ḥafṣa shared roughly the same late death-date. The fact of their both having survived the major Companions mentioned in connection with Qur'ān matters doubtless accounts for the frequency with which both names occur. They both occur, as has been seen, as links connecting the alleged 'Uthmān collection with the alleged Abū Bakr-'Umar collection.

In order to provide this 'Uthmān collection with a rationale, the Muslims argued that it had become necessary to avoid the dangers of sectionalism and faction tearing asunder the unity of Islam, as the different regions and localities proclaimed their allegiance to this or that Companion codex.

But if, as has now been argued, appeal to the Companion codices is a common exegetical and especially an uṣūlī device, aimed at countering, elucidating, or even evading the 'Uthmān text, the so-called Companion codices could only have been posterior, not prior, to the 'Uthmān text. That would rob the 'Uthmān codex of its entire *raison d'être* and indicates that, as a matter of historical fact, it

need never have occurred.

The Abū Bakr-'Umar collection likewise had its distinct motive, succinctly differentiated in the literature from 'Uthmān's: Abū Bakr was the first to collect the Qur'ān texts into a single volume on the occasion of the deaths of the remembrancers at Yemāma; 'Uthmān was the first to collate the muṣḥafs and to produce a textus receptus ne varietur. Abū Bakr collected the texts; 'Uthmān collated the texts.

The Muslim sources are thus quite clear that Abū Bakr and 'Umar were responsible for the first collection of the Qur'ān texts following the death of the Prophet. Discordant voices were nonetheless heard, 'Abū Bakr died and the Qur'ān had not been collected; 'Umar was killed and the Qur'ān had not been collected.'

The existence of such reports makes it clear that the Muslims were confused. The earliest stage of the traditions on the collection of the Qur'ān did consist in incompatible attributions of the first collection: to Abū Bakr, to 'Umar, to 'Uthmān.

Only when the belief that the unpopular 'Uthmān had been responsible for the first collection became general might it have been felt desirable to lessen his merits by transferring the piety attaching to this sacred undertaking to his predecessors, the representatives of the ideal caliphate. When this happened, it was consequentially necessary to introduce linking motifs, perhaps even to distinguish the objectives underlying what was coming to be seen as a two-fold collection.

Yet, if, perhaps owing to prevailing anti-Umayyad feeling, 'Uthmān's credit were deliberately minimised in this fashion, why, one may ask, had a caliph so closely identified with the unpopular dynasty ever been given the merit of any association with the collection of the Qur'ān? Schwally thought it was because the first to have collected the Qur'ān had been 'Uthmān and that it was impossible ever to suppress the fact.

My suggestion is that that attribution had resulted from even more interesting technical considerations. To guarantee an ancient and a mutawātir transmission, the collection of the Qur'ān must necessarily be attached to the name of one of Muḥammad's immediate successors. We have seen the varying results of the attempts to identify that successor in the attribution of a Qur'ān collection to each of Muḥammad's four immediate successors - the khulafā' al rāšidūn.

This led to the attempts to harmonise these conflicting attributions: Abū Bakr had initiated the sacred undertaking, 'Umar acquiring the merit of having completed it; 'Umar is credited with initiating the undertaking, 'Uthmān is grudgingly allowed the lesser merit of completing the work of his pious and energetic predecessor.

The circumstances in which the task was first taken up were such in which loss of Qur'ān materials is very easily conceivable, yet the task is presented as having been executed with such supererogatory care that the promulgated text was projected as having been beyond doubt complete.

The two motifs concretise the forces pulling in

opposite directions in the minds of the Muslims on the question of the completeness/incompleteness of the Qur'ān, according as they were engaging in external or in internal polemic. Further, the question arises internally from the implications of the exegesis of certain verses apparently referring to the Prophet's forgetting/being caused to forget certain unspecified parts of the revelation.

When framing the reports on the collection of the Qur'ān, there was the further need to take into account the still circulating hadīths relating the loss, withdrawal, or forgetting of this or that 'verse' said to have been revealed to the Prophet but not now figuring in the mushaf. The hadīths had been the weapons with which the ancient exegetical dispute about precisely those 'forgetting' verses had been won.

The traditions on the collection of the Qur'ān are not, in fact, as Nöldeke-Schwally supposed, contradictory. They form a perfect harmony, for the most striking feature of all the Muslim discussions on the collection of the Qur'ān texts is the deliberate exclusion of the figure of the Prophet. This exclusion was both stressed and repeated in the principal hadīth on the supposed Abū Bakr collection. Indeed, the one common motif shared by every single Muslim account of the collection of the Qur'ān, uniting all the hadīths, whatever the details of their other conflicts, is precisely this allegation that, whoever it may have been who for the first time in the history of Islam had brought together the Qur'ān texts, it was certainly not the Prophet.

The exclusion of the Prophet from the task of

collecting and promulgating the revelations has even been rationalised into the very impossibility of his doing so, on the ground that as long as he remained alive, a safe and certain recension of the valid revelations was unthinkable. With naskh (withdrawal) a daily possibility, the extent to which the Qur'ān would continue to have valid applicability for the Law could confidently be recognised only with the Prophet dead and silent.

Having considered the Muslim theories of naskh, we have learned that two such theories referred exclusively to the Qur'ān texts and necessarily implied omissions from the Qur'ān: 1. the suppression of both the wording and the ruling, and 2. the suppression of the wording, but not of the ruling. The muṣḥaf is thus not co-extensive either with the fullness of the revelation made to Muḥammad or with the Qur'ān as this bears upon the Islamic Fiqh.

In view of the implications for their view of the history of the Qur'ān texts of this second theory of naskh especially, the Muslims simply could not afford to be found or to find themselves in possession of a Qur'ān document that had been edited, checked and promulgated by its Prophet-recipient. That was because they argued that certain elements of Islamic Law, derived from revealed and still-surviving Qur'ān revelations, were nowhere referred to in the muṣḥaf.

This motive induced the Muslims to exclude their Prophet from the history of the collection of their Qur'ān texts. It was a compelling motive. It was their only motive.

Nöldeke-Schwally, although fully informed on the three-fold modality of naskh and arguing that amidst the confusion of details in the Muslim accounts of the collection of the Qur'ān - those that are in agreement as much as those that are in clear conflict - we must throughout be on our guard against tendentious colouring of reports, given the central significance of the Qur'ān to the religious system now developing on the basis of the Book's claims and contents, nevertheless concentrated their considerable intellectual powers on the various aspects of the reports in total isolation one from another. The Qur'ān source and the Qur'ān document was a distinction they failed to exploit.

They therefore recognised in the discussion of the Qur'ān only two of the alleged three modes of naskh. The significance of the third mode, the suppression of the wording alone, to the framing of the reports on the collection they quite overlooked, despite their realisation that in all our analyses of the Muslim reports, the sole unreservedly certain point of departure must be the present condition of the Qur'ān texts.⁴ Their analysis, in short, was exclusively literary.

Far too much weight has been given in European studies to alleged omissions from the Qur'ān texts owing to the tendency of European scholars to accept with uncritical naivety the Muslim allegation that such omissions are already rationalised in the Qur'ān, and thus presumably by the Prophet.⁵

We must learn this simple wisdom: one must either accept all ḥadīth impartially with uncritical trust, or one

must regard each and every ḥadīth as at least potentially guilty of a greater or lesser degree of inherent bias, whether or not this is immediately visible to Western eyes.

We cannot in our arrogance continue to presume that guided by mere literary intuition we can safely pick our way, selecting or rejecting ḥadīths on the excuse that where no motive for any particular statement is discernible by us, none was therefore intended.⁶ Schwally, for example, could detect no motive for the selection of Zaid as the redactor of the 'Uthmān muṣḥaf.

The need for circumspection applies with particular force to the Muslim exegetical tradition, more especially to statements bearing upon any aspect of our present concern, the condition of the Qur'ān texts at the moment of Muḥammad's death. Nöldeke held the view that a complete recension of all the revealed texts even in the lifetime of the Prophet was already scarcely possible.⁷ In the earliest days of his mission when the number of his following was insignificant, Muhammad might not have troubled to write down his revelations.⁸ As the numbers of his adherents increased, the revelations would continue to be preserved solely in the memories of the faithful. Amid his manifold state responsibilities Muhammad could not always himself remember the precise wording in which he had given out certain revelations. This is how different Companions received their slightly differing versions, although all were received direct from the Prophet himself. Certain verses Muḥammad forgot outright, others he summarily altered.⁹ With his own hand he had cancelled yet other verses.¹⁰

How far the reader will concur with these views will depend on how far he agrees with Nöldeke's model of Muḥammad as the author of the Qur'ān. Nöldeke also relied upon Ḥadīth and tafsīr. But the traditions in question here are devices all too transparently designed, in apparently innocent references to incidents in the Prophet's life, to document a Muslim contention that to the 'replacement' definition of the term naskh, adopted from Q 2.106 by the uṣūlīs to lend the appearance of Qur'ānic support to their theories that certain verses or certain sunnas had superseded other verses, must now be added a second meaning, 'omission', derived from Q 22.52.

To this end, the scholars made subsidiary references to Q 87.6-7 and to other verses. Nöldeke's references to the Qur'ān are to the self-same verses, Q 2.106 and Q 87.6-7. Hence his reasoning is circular.

What is ironic in these Muslim procedures is that the term naskh in both its occurrences in the Qur'ān, but especially in the verse from which they derived their technical term naskh, Q 2.106, where it is coupled with the term nunsi, 'we cause to forget or abandon' (taraka) can mean only 'suppression'. The irony is even clearer in the awkwardness of the three naskh formulae:

1. naskh al ḥukm wa al tilāwa, the suppression of both wording and ruling;
2. naskh al ḥukm dūna al tilāwa, the suppression of the ruling but not of the wording;
3. naskh al tilāwa dūna al ḥukm, the suppression of the wording but not of the ruling.

These formulae were forced upon the scholars by their own realisation that the term naskh, the technical term adopted into the science devoted to the study of the supersession of Qur'ānic or Sunna provisions, in fact actually meant suppression.

Naskh nevertheless proved the more popular term since the only possible Qur'ānic alternative, tabdīl (Q 16.101) raised even more awkward theological problems.¹¹

The apodosis of Q 2.106, 'We shall bring one better than it or one like it', in association with Q 16.101, 'When We substitute one āya for another', provided an apparently impregnable basis in the divine revelation, the Word of God, for medieval Islam's assertion that its doctrines on abrogation could claim Qur'ānic and Prophetic sanction.

The connection between the lawyers' theories and the Qur'ān rests, however, solely upon the assertion that in both these contexts the term āya refers to a verse of the Qur'ān. Reflection upon both sūras may, however, suggest that this is by no means certain.

Q 2.106 occurs immediately before a series of sweeping changes, rather modifications, introduced by Muhammad in both the ritual and the legal spheres. The verse thus precedes a change in the qibla (verses 115, 177, 124-151); in the pilgrimage rites (verse 158); in the dietary laws (verses 168-74); in the law relating to the talio (verses 178-9); in bequests (verses 180-2); in the fast (verses 183-7); and again in the pilgrimage (verses 191-203).

Similarly, Q 16.101 is followed by allusions to

modifications in the dietary laws (verses 114-19), and in the Sabbath laws (verse 124).

What seems more likely, in view of the contexts in which each of these key verses occurs, is that, in each instance, the notoriously difficult term āya refers to an individual ritual or legal regulation established and hallowed in one religious tradition, the Jewish, and now modified in a later tradition, the Islamic.

Q 2.106 would now read, 'Whatsoever legal or ritual regulation We suppress or cause you to forget [or abandon] We shall bring in its stead another superior to the first, or at least its equal.'

Whatever may be thought of this suggestion, at least its possibility must work against the kind of dogmatic certainty with which the Muslims insist on this verse as the Qur'ānic legitimation of their theories, and that with which Nöldeke and others confidently pronounced on the incompleteness of our Qur'ān texts.

The proof that would establish rationally that the Qur'ān in actual historical fact is incomplete must be sought elsewhere than in a science which teaches the incompleteness of the Qur'ān texts that have reached us,¹² and which pretends that 'supersession' is the same as 'suppression'.

Moreover, although Nöldeke-Schwally were aware of the three modes of naskh, they argued that when we consider the present contents of the Qur'ān, we find that we have to deal with only two modes: either with cases where, on a given topic, both abrogated and abrogating texts are present,

or only the one or the other.¹³

They further recognised that there are two classes of abrogated verses: those whose wording remains in our texts, only their rulings having been set aside; and those verses whose wording does not appear in our texts, having been omitted at the instance of the Prophet himself.

This also is oversimplification, for, as already pointed out, verses once revealed, but 'omitted' from our texts fall likewise into two classes: verses whose rulings have lapsed on account of the suppression of their wording; and verses whose rulings have not lapsed, despite the suppression of their wording.

The principal representative of the last class of verses is the so-called stoning 'verse'. The conclusions of Schwally on its reliability mark a considerably more matured and reasoned judgment than that expressed originally by Nöldeke.¹⁴

What above all is regrettable is that these two scholars, who rendered outstanding services to our study of all aspects of the Qur'ānic sciences, never once brought this second type of supposed Qur'ān omission into close comparison with the central overall contention inspiring all versions of the Muslim accounts of the history of the collection of the Qur'ān texts, namely that the collector had been anybody but Muḥammad.

If we now reject both classes of alleged Qur'ān omissions, we become capable of stepping over the one barrier that the Muslims themselves had erected which alone prevented them from conceiving of a Qur'ān text collected, edited and

promulgated by their Prophet.

The motives underlying the 'Uthmān collection of the Qur'ān have been shown to derive from the schools' attempts to smuggle into the Qur'ān texts unwarranted interpolations designed to support local opinion on certain debated topics and calculated to swing the argument in their favour. Without this motive (i.e. without Companion codices to suppress) 'Uthmān's collection collapses. With it, Abū Bakr-'Umar's collection collapses. The implications are momentous.

The single vigorous Qur'ān text that throughout the ages has successfully withstood the assaults of both the exegetes and the usūlīs, stoutly retaining its textual identity in the face of countless attempts to insinuate interpolations through exploitation of the alleged codex of this or that Companion, is none other than the unique text of the revelations whose existence all their tricks betoken, the text which has come down to us in the form in which it was organised and approved by the Prophet.

So far as they have been examined to date, all Qur'ān MSS exhibit throughout the 'Uthmānic text'.¹⁵ But, if the 'Uthmānic collection collapses, as never having occurred, this means that only one text of the Qur'ān has ever existed. This is the universally acknowledged text on the basis of which alone the prayer of the Muslim can be valid. A single text has thus already always united the Muslims.

We have isolated and neutralised the only motive for excluding Muḥammad from the editing and promulgating of the Qur'ān texts. In those processes, Muḥammad at last must now be once more re-instated. What we have today in our

hands is the muṣḥaf of Muḥammad.

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CHAPTER FIVE: THE MUṢḤAF: AN INCOMPLETE RECORD OF THE QUR’ĀN

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- 3 Abu al Ḥasan Saif al Dīn ‘Alī b. abī ‘Alī b. Muḥammad al Āmidī, K. al Iḥkām fī uṣūl al Ahkām, 4 vols. (Cairo, 1332), vol. 2, p. 185.
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- 5 Abu al Faraj ‘Abdul Raḥmān b. ‘Alī b. Muḥammad, ibn al Jawzī, K. nawāsikh al Qur’ān, MS Topkapisarai, Aḥmad III, no. 192, f. 67.
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CHAPTER SIX: THE FIRST COLLECTION

- 1 Itqān, pt 2, p. 25.
- 2 Fath, vol. 9, p. 9.
- 3 Ibid.
- 4 GdQ2, vol. 2, p. 22.
- 5 Maṣāḥif, p. 10.
- 6 Fath, vol. 9, p. 12.
- 7 Ibid. p. 9.
- 8 Itqān, pt 1, p. 58.
- 9 Bāji, f. 14.
- 10 Maṣāḥif, p. 10.
- 11 Fath, vol. 9, p. 10.
- 12 Mabānī, p. 39.
- 13 Maṣāḥif, p. 6.
- 14 Ibid.
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- 17 Ibid. p. 10.
- 18 Fath, vol. 9, p. 9.
- 19 Maṣāḥif, p. 10.
- 20 Fath, vol. 9, p. 10; Maṣāḥif, p. 10.
- 21 GdQ2, vol. 2, p. 15, n. 2.
- 22 Fath, vol. 9, p. 12.
- 23 Itqān, pt 1, p. 57.
- 24 Maṣāḥif, p. 10.
- 25 Ibid. p. 9.
- 26 Fath, vol. 9, p. 18.
- 27 Maṣāḥif, p. 30.
- 28 Fath, vol. 9, p. 11.

- 29 Maṣāḥif, p. 22.
- 30 Ibid. pp. 23-4.
- 31 Ibid. p. 29.
- 32 Zarkašī, vol. 1, p. 234.
- 33 Fath, vol. 9, p. 12.
- 34 Ibid. p. 11.
- 35 The published text ought here to be amended: for fa lammā jama'a Abū Bakr, I propose to read: wa lammā yajma' Abū Bakr, to follow: lam yuktab.
- 36 Maṣāḥif, p. 23.
- 37 Fath, vol. 9, p. 12.
- 38 Ibid. p. 11.
- 39 GdQ2, vol. 1, p. 45.
- 40 Bukhārī, K. Faḍā'il al Qur'ān, bāb nisyān al Qur'ān.
- 41 Fath, vol. 9, p. 53.
- 42 Itqān, pt 1, p. 61.
- 43 Fath, vol. 9, p. 9. The reference is to Q 15.9.
- 44 Zarkašī, vol. 1, p. 235.
- 45 GdQ2, vol. 1, pp. 47-8.
- 46 Zaid, vol. 1, pp. 284-5.

CHAPTER SEVEN: THE 'UTHMĀN COLLECTION

- 1 Fath, vol. 9, p. 18.
- 2 Abū 'Amr 'Uthmān b. Sa'id al Dānī, K. al Muqni', ed. O. Pretzl (Istanbul, 1932), p. 9.
- 3 Ibid. p. 7.
- 4 Maṣāḥif, pp. 18-19.
- 5 Ṭabarī, Tafsīr. vol. 1, p. 60.
- 6 Maṣāḥif, p. 13.

- 7 Ibid. p. 11.
- 8 Fath, vol. 9, p. 15.
- 9 Maṣāḥif, p. 21.
- 10 Ibid. p. 22.
- 11 Ibid. p. 36.
- 12 Mabānī, p. 78.
- 13 Maṣāḥif, pp. 23-4.
- 14 Muqni', p. 7.
- 15 var. maṣāḥif.
- 16 Maṣāḥif, p. 13.
- 17 Ibid. p. 14.
- 18 Ṭabarī, Tafsīr, vol. 3, p. 507.
- 19 Ibid. vol. 1, p. 25.
- 20 Ibid. p. 32.
- 21 Ibid. pp. 23-4.
- 22 Itqān, pt 1, pp. 90-1.
- 23 Ṭabarī, Tafsīr, vol. 1, p. 24.
- 24 Ibid. The final sentence derives from Q 73.20. Use of Q 73.20 is common in Fiqh quarrels over the night prayer. Its use there, as here, is artificial.
- 25 Ṭabarī, Tafsīr, vol. 1, p. 22.
- 26 Fath, vol. 9, p. 16.
- 27 Itqān, pt 1, p. 47; Maṣāḥif, p. 11.
- 28 Ṭabarī, Tafsīr, vol. 1, p. 66.
- 29 Ya'qūb b. Ibrāhīm al Kūfī, Abū Yūsuf, K. al āthār (Haiderabad, 1355), p. 44; Itqān, pt 1, p. 47.
- 30 Ṭabarī, Tafsīr, vol. 1, p. 35.
- 31 Itqān, pt 1, p. 47.
- 32 Ibid. p. 50.
- 33 Maṣāḥif, p. 11.

- 34 Fath, vol. 9, p. 7.
- 35 Ibid.
- 36 Ibid. p. 22.
- 37 Itqān, pt 1, p. 60.
- 38 Ibid. Cf. Fath, vol. 9, p. 18.
- 39 Itqān, pt 1, p. 47.
- 40 GdQ2, vol. 2, p. 22.
- 41 Ibid. p. 21.
- 42 R. Bell, Introduction to the Qur'ān (Edinburgh, 1953), p. 40.
- 43 Ibid. p. 44.
- 44 GdQ2, vol. 2, p. 56. Bell, Introduction, p. 44.

CHAPTER EIGHT: THE QUR'ĀN COLLECTIONS: A REVIEW

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- 2 Uṣūl, vol. 2, p. 81.
- 3 Itqān, pt 1, p. 60.
- 4 I'tibār, p. 4.
- 5 Itqān, pt 1, p. 60.
- 6 Ibid. p. 65.
- 7 A. Jeffery, Materials for the History of the Text of the Qur'ān, (Leiden, 1937).
- 8 Ibid. p. 17. Cf. Abū Muḥammad 'Abdullāh b. 'Abdul Raḥmān al Dārimī, K. al Sunan (Cairo, 1966/1386), p. 55.
- 9 Bukhārī, K. al Tafsīr, ad Q 2.106.
- 10 Abū Ja'far Muḥammad b. al Ḥasan al Ṭūsī, al Tibyān, 10 vols. (Najaf, 1957), vol. 1, p. 397. Cf. Zarkašī, vol. 2, p. 40.
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- 12 Maṣāḥif, p. 17.
- 13 Ibid.
- 14 Ibid. p. 15.
- 15 Ibid. p. 35.
- 16 Ibid. p. 39.
- 17 Ibid. p. 36.
- 18 Ibid. p. 33.
- 19 I. Goldziher, Die Richtungen der Islamischen Koranauslegung (Leiden, 1952), p. 35.
- 20 Muḥammad b. Ishāq b. abī Ya'qūb, ibn al Nadīm, al Fihrist (Cairo, 1929/1348), al maqālat al thāniya.
- 21 Q 58.4.
- 22 Mustasfā, vol. 2, p. 102. Cf. Sarakhsī, Uṣūl, vol. 2, p. 81.
- 23 GdQ3, pp. 77 ff.
- 24 Maṣāḥif, p. 53.
- 25 Bukhārī, K. al Tafsīr, ad Q 2.106 and commentaries.
- 26 Umm, vol. 7, p. 219 and previous reference.
- 27 Goldziher, Muhammedanische Studien, vol. 2, p. 12.
- 28 Itqān, pt 1, p. 77.
- 29 Fath, vol. 9, p. 21.

CHAPTER NINE: THE ISNĀD OF THE QUR'ĀN

- 1 GdQ2, vol. 2, pp. 22-3.
- 2 Ṭayālisī, no. 618.
- 3 Umm, vol. 1, pp. 108-10.
- 4 Risālah, p. 37.
- 5 Ṭayālisī, p. 44.
- 6 Ibid. p. 59.
- 7 Ṭabarī, Tafsīr, vol. 1, p. 24.

- 8 Bukhārī, K. Faḍā'il al Qur'ān, bāb kāna Jibrīl ya'riḍ al Qur'ān...
- 9 Fath, vol. 9, pp. 35-6.
- 10 Cf. Itqān, pt 1, p. 50.
- 11 Fath, vol. 9, pp. 35-6.
- 12 Abū 'Abdullāh Muḥammad b. Aḥmad al Anṣārī al Qurtubī al Jāmi' li aḥkām al Qur'ān, 30 vols. (Cairo, 1952/1372), vol. 1, p. 57.
- 13 Itqān, pt 1, p. 50.
- 14 Fath, vol. 9, p. 25.
- 15 Itqān, pt 1, p. 50.
- 16 Ibid. p. 61.
- 17 Fath, vol. 9, p. 36.
- 18 Itqān, pt 1, p. 70.
- 19 GdQ1, p. 43; GdQ2, vol. 1, p. 47, vol. 2, p. 44.
- 20 Q 2.106; Q 87.6-7.
- 21 Maṣāḥif, p. 33.
- 22 Fath, vol. 9, p. 15.
- 23 Ibid. p. 7.
- 24 Itqān, pt 1, p. 49.
- 25 Ṭabarī, Tafsīr, vol. 1, p. 22.
- 26 Itqān, pt 1, pp. 46-7.
- 27 Ṭabarī, Tafsīr, vol. 1, p. 29.
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- 29 Ibid.
- 30 Itqān, pt 1, pp. 45-9.
- 31 Ṭabarī, Tafsīr, vol. 1, pp. 64-5.
- 32 Zarkaṣī, vol. 1, p. 237.
- 33 Itqān, pt 1, p. 50.
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- 35 Itqān, pt 1, p. 60.
- 36 Ibid. p. 61.
- 37 Mabānī, p. 33.
- 38 Itqān, pt 1, p. 64.
- 39 Ibid. p. 61; cf. Fath, vol. 9, p. 34.
- 40 Itqān, pt 1, p. 58.
- 41 Fath, vol. 9, p. 32.
- 42 Fihrist, bāb tartīb al Qur'ān fī muṣḥaf 'Abdullāh.
- 43 Materials, p. x.
- 44 Ibid. p. 2.
- 45 Ibid. p. 15.
- 46 Ibid. p. 23.
- 47 Ibid. p. 115.
- 48 Ibid. p. 116.
- 49 Ibid. p. 193.
- 50 Itqān, pt 1, p. 65.
- 51 ibn Qutaiba, Ta'wīl, p. 31.
- 52 Cf. Jeffery, Materials, p. 21.
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CHAPTER TEN: GENERAL CONCLUSIONS

- 1 GdQ2, vol. 2, p. 21.
- 2 Ibid. p. 22.
- 3 Ibid. p. 46.
- 4 Ibid. p. 5.
- 5 Ibid. p. 3.
- 6 Ibid. p. 23.
- 7 GdQ1, p. 36; GdQ2, vol. 1, p. 47.
- 8 GdQ1, p. 34; GdQ2, vol. 1, p. 45.

- 9 GdQ1, p. 36; GdQ2, vol. 1, p. 47.
- 10 GdQ1, p. 43; GdQ2, vol. 1, p. 54.
- 11 Uṣūl, vol. 2, p. 54.
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- 13 GdQ1, p. 42; GdQ2, vol. 1, p. 54.
- 14 GdQ2, vol. 1, p. 251; vol. 2, p. 45. GdQ1, p. 186; p. 194.
- 15 GdQ3, p. 97.

General Index

abrogation (see also forgetting; al nāsikh wa al mansūkh;
naskh; n s y; replacement; substitution;
 supersession; suppression; tabdīl; withdrawal), 27,
 47-51, 57, 161-3
 of Qur'ān by Qur'ān, 49, 52, 58, 61, 93, 162
 of Qur'ān by Sunna, 50-9, 71, 89, 92, 105-7, 134, 162, 166
 of Sunna by Qur'ān, 50, 55, 58, 61, 134, 166
 of Sunna by Sunna, 43, 49, 58, 91, 134, 180, 203
 theories of, 18, 50, 59, 180, 186-9, 193, 227, 236
 Abū Bakr, 75-7, 98-102, 118-27, 137-46, 155-61, 165, 190-2, 196,
 200-1, 206, 212, 225-30, 239
 reading of, 122, 192, 213
 Abū Mūsā al Aš'arī, 83-5, 147, 165-7, 190, 201-5
 reading of, 142, 146, 167-8, 181, 192, 211, 220, 227
 adultery,
 penalties for, 69-76
 'aḥruf', the seven, 148-56, 193-4, 206-11
 'Ā'isa, 12, 16, 30-2, 37, 84-7, 94-100, 106, 150, 165;
 reading of, 37, 181, 211, 227
 'Alī, 37, 75, 120-2, 130, 139, 144-5, 149-50, 165-8, 191-3, 200, 206,
 215-16
 aqra' (Q 87.6-7), 82-3, 107, 124, 133, 148, 151, 166, 193, 199
 asbāb al nuzūl, 15, 68-70, 147, 150, 185

'asīf ('hired hand'), 75, 90-2, 102

Baṣra, 147, 194

Bell, R., 158

Bergsträsser, G., 172, 174, 178, 218

Companions (see also conflict; muṣḥaf; Qur'ān variants),
 illiteracy of, 39, 153

conflict

of Companion information, 34; for Qur'ān, 34, 41-4, 81, 168,
 180-4, 189, 193, 200-2, 227; for Sunna, 34, 41-4, 168, 180-4,
 199-202, 227

of evidence, 17, 31-2, 60

of exegesis, 32, 62, 65-7, 103-4, 199, 227, 231

of ḥadīths, 43, 95, 126, 135, 160, 166, 170-2, 180, 191, 212, 217,
 225

inter-madhab, 36, 42-4, 56, 60, 182-6, 201-2, 209, 239

of sources, 14, 50, 60, 81, 227; Fiqh-Fiqh, 17, 37, 41, 60, 150;

Fiqh-Qur'ān, 17, 31-2, 61, 72, 75, 81, 135-6, 163, 204; Fiqh-

Sunna, 17, 135-6; Qur'ān-Qur'ān, 18-21, 42, 97

Qur'ān-Sunna, 16, 25, 27, 32, 52, 82, 117, 161, 197; Sunna-

Sunna, 16

conversion, date of, 43-4, 166, 180, 189-97, 203-5, 228

dialects, 37, 141, 147, 152-6, 170, 188, 200-1, 206-8

exegesis, 22, 48, 63, 105, 147, 219, 239

of Prophet, 33

- Fiqh, 3, 32-3, 73, 85-6, 136, 147, 161
 defence of, 22, 30, 41, 61
 documentation of, 6, 10, 26-7, 33, 44, 46, 52, 60, 92, 105, 109,
 134-5, 161, 176-86, 201, 208
 local, 44, 176, 183, 200
 as source, 12-13, 23
 sources of, 14, 28, 67, 70, 91, 94, 106, 117, 121, 162, 175, 184, 198
 threat to, 26, 29, 53
 flogging penalty, 59, 71-5, 80, 90-6, 108
 forgetting, 82, 99
 Companions', 110, 132, 199, 204; divinely caused, 35, 50, 84,
 97-100, 166, 172, 199
 Muḥammad's, 47-9, 62-6, 107, 110, 129-35, 165, 198, 203-4, 231-4;
 divinely caused, 48, 66, 129, 135, 197, 203, 231-7
 fornication, 72, 78
 penalty for, 75-6
fuqahā', 16, 32, 86, 105, 109, 135, 150, 161, 185, 204
 Gabriel, 102-3, 153-7, 193-4, 213-15
 general ('āmm), 22, 52, 81, 90
 Goldziher, I., 5, 43, 170-3, 186, 211
ḥadīth,
 classification of, 15
 counting of, 14
 dating of, 16
 definition of, 5-6
 isolate, 15, 35, 38-9, 85, 99-100, 103-4, 107-8, 122-4, 127-8
 may not abrogate Qur'ān, 107

- maṣhūr, 15, 37, 107
 specialists, 23, 95, 127
 Companion-ḥadīth, 24, 43-4, 53, 168, 175, 180, 202; Prophet-
ḥadīth, 22, 24, 42-3, 52, 172, 180, 202; Qur'ān-ḥadīth, 33,
 35, 41-2; sunna-ḥadīth, 32, 41-2
Ḥadīth literature, 5, 30, 54, 58, 165, 179, 186, 211
Ḥafṣa, 37, 88, 124, 141, 158, 165, 228; reading of, 37, 181, 211
ṣuḥuf of Ḥafṣa, 119, 146, 158, 225-7
Ḥudaifa, 141-2, 146-7, 166-7, 205-6, 211
 ibn 'Abbās, 31, 37, 75, 83, 130, 145-7, 152, 156, 164, 194-5, 206, 218
 -19; reading of, 220
 ibn Mas'ūd, 31, 132, 142, 147-54, 165-70, 178, 180, 190, 193, 196,
 199-210, 219-20; reading of, 31-9, 142, 145-7, 150,
 168-76, 181, 192-5, 208-11, 215-22, 227
 ibn Šihāb al Zuhri, 12, 79, 120, 126, 141, 208
i'jāz al Qur'ān, 51, 56, 104, 107, 188
ijmā', 23, 40, 61, 72, 84-6, 105, 108-9, 141, 144, 153-7, 185, 195, 211,
 223
 cannot abrogate, 108
ikhtilāf (see also conflict)
al Fiqh, 36
 Iraq-Syria, 141-2, 169, 206
 Kūfa-Baṣra, 142, 146-7, 169
al qirā'a, 36, 41, 141-6, 149-56, 166, 169-70, 176, 195, 207-8,
 210, 228
 interpolation, 32-3, 36-7, 44, 135, 161, 167, 170, 174, 178, 182-8, 227,
 238
isnād, 15, 39, 42-4, 53-4, 64, 100, 110, 120, 124, 142, 146, 157, 160,

jam' (see also Qur'ān, collection of)

al maṣāḥif, 139-140, 225-9

al nās, 139

al Qur'ān, 122, 139, 225-9

Jeffery, A., 217-18

Karā'ites, 71

Khawārij, 93

kitāb allāh (the Book of God), 3, 21, 48, 51, 54, 68, 70-1, 75-9,

99-103, 111, 120-3, 138, 145-7, 152, 157, 191, 201, 220, 222

Kūfa, 147, 169, 194, 208

Kufans, 166

Law, Islamic (see also Fiqh), 3-6, 121, 232

regional origins of, 6-9

sources of, 40; relative primacy of, 9

Mālik b. Anas, 31, 70, 75, 78-9, 81, 88, 94-5, 104, 164

mansūkh, 57, 65-6, 84-5, 88-9, 93, 216, 237

mithl, 52-4, 58, 102-3, 237

Mu'ād b. Jabal, 148, 165, 190, 196, 211, 227

Muḥammad (see also Prophet), 3, 22, 41, 55, 69, 98, 106, 118, 121,

129-30, 140, 142, 148, 150

muṣḥaf (pl. maṣāḥif), 30, 35, 40-1, 48, 50, 64, 66, 70, 77, 79-85, 89,

111, 121-2, 125, 135, 139, 144, 163, 185, 192, 223

completeness of, 119-21, 130-1, 165, 190, 230; denial of, 67,

82, 86, 93, 97, 104, 106, 110-12, 117-21, 126-7, 129-31, 145,

160-5, 184, 204, 232, 237

Companion-muṣḥaf, 32-3, 37-44, 102, 117, 122-3, 133, 140, 151,

167, 174-7, 181-4, 192, 196, 199, 201, 206, 210-20, 226, 228;

destruction of, 138, 141, 144, 156, 178, 195, 202, 210, 213,

239

Prophet-muṣḥaf, 172, 175, 177, 181, 183, 213, 240

textus receptus of, 138-40, 143-6, 150, 153-6, 161, 167-8, 170,

175, 202, 207, 210, 212, 229

mut'a, 36-7, 179-80

Mu'tazila, 93-5, 220

nansa' (see also postpone), 63

nāsikh, 57-61, 88-9, 93, 205, 216, 237

al nāsikh wa al mansūkh (see also abrogation), 17, 46, 124, 131

science of, 18; lack of unanimity in, 18

naskh (= to copy), 141, 153, 156, 159, 166, 195, 213, 226

naskh, 18, 24, 27, 46, 49-52, 62, 64-5, 84-6, 93-4, 97-100, 104, 108,

132-6, 160-4, 192, 196, 216, 232-7

al ḥukm wa al tilāwa, 50, 60, 62, 89, 131-6, 180, 195, 198, 235,

238; rejection of, 165, 179

al ḥukm dūna al tilāwa, 49, 60, 63, 73, 96, 134-6, 164, 235-8

al tilāwa dūna al ḥukm, 89, 93-4, 96, 100, 106, 110, 131, 134-5,

161-2, 180, 183, 195, 198, 235

Nöldeke, Th., 80, 117-9, 129, 133-4, 158, 199, 212, 225, 231-8

n s y (see also forgetting), 48-50, 130

nansa, 63

nunsi, 63, 235

postpone (see also nansa') a verse, 63, 73

- prayer,
 shortening of, 55,149
 use of Qur'ān at, 39-40,42,57,84-6,96,102,122,130,151,161,
 175,183,203,211,217,221-4,239
- Prophet,
 amanuenses of, 4,118,120,124,145,159,164,201,214
 illiteracy of, 4
 reading of, 43
- qibla, 7,24,55,59,236
- Qur'ān document, 40,44,47,66,82,84-5,111,135-6,161,163,175,
 178,187,203,205,208,226,232-3
- additions to, 77-9,92,101,108,122,152,176,189,224
 alteration of, 30,52,54,98,132,234
 collection of, 5; history of, 6,18,42,47,86,109,117,
 132-6,139-40,159-65,189,192,197,200-1,206,214,225,
 231,238; commissions, commissioners, 154, 157,200;
 first to collect, 110,112,119-26,146,153-7,160,187,
 190-1,212,225-30; ideological basis of, 7,110,131,
 134,160-3
- divine authorship of, 20,51
- direct knowledge of (samā'), 82,104,120-8,141,145-6,157,
 166-9,179,193,209,234
- punctuation of, 149,186
- review of (see also Gabriel)
 annual, 193,195,209,215; final, 153,194-8,209,213,
 216
 science of, 9,203,238
 text of, 85,148,165; improvement of, 32,41;

- omissions from, 47-9,63,82-8,91,96,98,102,104,109-10,
 130,132,135,137,164-5,174,198-9,224,230-8;
- preservation of, in memory, 4,65,78,97,107,119-21,
 126-8,132,165,172-4; in writing, 4,80-1,97,101-7,
 119-21,123-8,136,140,145-6; recording of, 4,121,126,
 129,131,222,224; role of, 39; transmission of, 4,
 36,42,106,136,140,155-7,188-9,210-12; variants of,
 32,141,146-9,153-7,163,167-9,172,177,186,195-6,205-10,
 213,217; Companion-variant, 32-3,41,112,146-57,161,
 166-75,180-3,187,192,211-12,215,228,234; abrogated,
 38; is ḥadīth, 35-8,168-70; is tafsīr, 32-9,171,
 181; Prophet-variant, 43,170
- of Q 2.106, 63
- of Q 2.158, 31-2
- of Q 2.196, 142
- of Q 4.24, 35-6
- of Q 5.89, 34-5
- of Q 36.29, 34-6
- of Q 73.6, 34-6
- Successor-variant, 64
- Qur'ān source, 4,14,40,44,46,66,84,111,127,135-6,161,163,175,
 178,187,203,205,208,226,232-3
- ahl al (Qur'ān party), 24-30,41,44,54,61,92
- dating of revelation of, 16,61,91,123,164
- is Sunna, 166
- evidence from, 43-4,50,176,180-2
- role of, 6,179
- status of relative to Sunna, 16,24
- qurrā', 118-20,127

replacement

of Qur'ān ruling, 49-51, 59-62, 92, 97, 124, 136, 235

of Qur'ān verse, 63-6, 73, 107

ṣaḥīfa (pl. ṣuḥuf), 86, 100, 119-21, 123, 127, 139, 155

sciences, Islamic, 46, 67, 109, 227

legal, 8, 191, 197

linguistic, 170

Schacht, J., 5-6, 25, 43

Ṣafi'ī, 18, 21-30, 31, 38, 52-6, 58-63, 73, 86-94, 105-6

Ṣāfi'ites, 50, 92

Ṣaikh, Ṣaikh, 78-81, 86, 100, 106-8

Ṣarī'a (see also Law, Islamic), 3, 9, 85, 99, 208

Ṣī'a, 130, 145, 218

Schwally, Fr., 117, 123, 133, 158, 190, 212, 218, 225-6, 230-8

stoning penalty, 70-80, 86, 89-96, 101-5, 109-10, 135, 184-5, 204

rejection of, 75-9, 91-3, 101, 106

revelation of, 74, 93, 99; in Qur'ān, 79-80, 93, 105, 121, 185;

in Sunna, 74, 93, 101, 105-10, 185

stoning 'verse', 70, 77-82, 84, 86, 89, 91-8, 102, 105, 108, 110-11,

120-1, 198, 204, 238

substitution, 51, 62, 92, 152-4, 236

sucklings

five revealed, 87, 94-8, 105, 111, 198

ten revealed, 87, 95

Sunna source, 14, 135, 161, 175, 183, 227

defence of, 54, 61

definition of, 5, 175

elucidates Qur'ān, 21, 29-30, 52, 56-8, 90-2, 107

opposition to, 19, 28-9, 41-3, 54, 184

possibility of error in, 20

Prophet established, 12, 30, 58, 71

status of relative to Qur'ān, 6, 9, 16-17, 24-5

support of, 20, 27

transmission of, 20, 107, 206

Sunna of the Prophet, 3, 177

adherence to imposed in Qur'ān, 22, 27, 30, 35, 41, 56, 76

of human authorship, 51

reference to, 6, 31, 202

revelation of, 54-6, 59, 102-3

role of, 20, 23, 53, 105, 185

as tafsīr, 13, 21

threat to, 53, 92

Sunnī, 161, 180

supersession, 50, 60, 62, 136, 236-7

ḥadīth supersedes ḥadīth, 16, 60, 172

Qur'ān supersedes Qur'ān, 16, 51-2, 57-8, 73, 85, 235

Qur'ān supersedes Sunna, 18

Qur'ān does not supersede Sunna, 18, 24, 29

Sunna supersedes Qur'ān, 57, 62, 91, 106, 110, 235

Sunna supersedes Sunna, 18, 28, 58

Sunna does not supersede Qur'ān, 18, 28, 52-8, 61, 91-2, 106-7,

164, 185, 204

suppression

of ruling only, 60, 134, 235-7

of a sunna, 180

of a verse, 51, 60-6, 131-6, 199, 232-7

of wording only, 62, 131, 134-5, 232-3, 235, 238

- of wording and ruling, 46,60,131-4,232,235
- sūra-order, 154-6,174,214-20
- synonyms, 36-7,149,154,170,173-4,188,208
- tabdīl (see also replacement; substitution), 236
- tafsīr (see also exegesis), 9,38,56,84,89,169,185,235
- tawātur, mutawātir, 15,35,38,41,100,107-9,128,140,166,170,
220-1
- of Qur'ān, 40-2,85-6,107,112,122-7,168,177,180-6,190,195,
203,223,227,230,239
- ta'wīl (see also exegesis), 9,187
- testimony, 23,101,123-8
- thayyib, thayyiba, 81
- Torah, 68-9,94
- Law of, 69
- Tradition, Islamic (see also Hadīth), 3,14,16,43,67,70,74,110,
120,130,135,165,173,179,199,201,237
- Tradition, Jewish, 237
- 'Ubāda b. al Ṣāmit, 74-5,81-2,90-3,106,165
- Ubayy b. Ka'b, 35,39,65,80-4,98,124-5,130,148-51,176,179-81,
196,201,206
- reading of, 35,124,145,150,168,170,180,192-3,211,216-21,
227
- 'Umar b. al Khaṭṭāb, 75-83,96-104,108,118-22,125-30,137-9,
141-8,151-8,165,179,188-96,200-1,206,212,215,225-30,
239
- reading of, 122,213
- uṣūl al fiqh, 4,28,44,71

- local origins of, 9-12
- role of, 6-10; vis-à-vis Islamic Tradition, 6
- source theory, 62,70,109,162,227
- uṣūlīs, 46,49,51,60,136,160,164,239
- 'Uthmān b. 'Affān, 123-7,138-46,153-4,158-66,169-70,191,195-7,
200-2,205-7,210-12,214-16,225-6,230,239
- the 'Uthmān text, 83-4,122,138-9,141-5,155-8,167-8,170-8,
180-4,188,192-7,211-13,218-21,227-8,234,239
- vowels, vocalic, 37,40,170,208
- waḥy, 56-7,83
- waḥy matlū, 54; waḥy ḡair matlū, 54
- withdrawal (see also forgetting; naskh; suppression),
- of a concession, 153
- of a sūra, 83-5,199
- of a verse, 49,66,81,84,95,130-3,194-5,231; of the
ruling, 85,133; of the wording, 35,77,84-9,97,104,
106-9,130-3,161,179,195
- witnesses (see also testimony), 68,126,157
- four male, 72; two male, 23,120,123-8,140,146
- Zaid b. Thābit, 80-1,118-20,123-8,132-4,141-4,150,159,165-6,
170,190-2,194-7,205,214-16,228,234
- reading of, 120,150,154,167,169,192-6,200-1,213

Index of Qur'ānic references

<u>al Fātiḥa</u> 221-4	Q 4.25 90
<u>al Baqara</u> 80,130	Q 4.101 149
Q 2.106 29,48-53,56-9,62,64-6, 93,98,103-4,133,165,179, 235-7,251,257	Q 5 184-5
Q 2.142-3 17	Q 5.6 37,186
Q 2.158 12,16,30-1,41	Q 5.38 38,80
Q 2.180 55	Q 5.42-9 69
Q 2.184 34	Q 5.89 34-6
Q 2.187 147	Q 7.12 31
Q 2.196 142	<u>al Anfāl</u> 164
Q 2.222 36	<u>al Barā'a</u> 83-5,123-6, 130,164-5
Q 2.233 87	<u>al Tawba</u> 119,127,170
Q 2.234 61,162	Q 9.127 123-4,215
Q 2.238 37	Q 10.15 52-7
Q 2.240 55,61,162	<u>Yūsuf</u> 83
Q 2.282 125-6	Q 15.9 99,132,253
Q 3 216	Q 16.101 51,56,236
Q 3.161 202	Q 17.86 47,51,64,66,98
Q 4 91-3,107,216	Q 18.24 64
Q 4.15-16 72-6,86,106-7	Q 22.52 62,235
Q 4.23 89	Q 24.2 59,71-2,75,80,85, 90,108
Q 4.24 35-6,178,180	<u>al Furqān</u> 151

al Aḥzāb 80,83-4,130,141

Q 36.29 34,36

Q 53.4 55,57

Q 58.4 35,256

Q 59.7 26,56,245

Q 73.6 34,36,178

Q 73.20 151,254

Q 87.6-7 48,51,64-6,82

98,106,110,111

162,235,257

Q 98.2 121

al Takāthur 84

Q 113-14 220-1