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EDITORIAL

Sarah Waseem – London, UK

In a recent poll conducted in the UK of Muslims, most said that there should be a single leader for their religion in Britain to act as their voice and help them to integrate. Muslims suggested a British Mufti who would represent them alongside other religious leaders such as the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Catholic Archbishop of Westminster and the Chief Rabbi, to ease tensions between Muslims and other groups. However the poll also indicated that while 57% of Sunnis and 53% of other Muslim groups are in favour of such a leader, the proportion falls to just 30% among Britain's Shi'ite Muslims. There are about 1.8m Muslims in Britain and more than 80% are believed to be Sunni, which is also the dominant denomination world-wide.

The results of the poll are unsurprising. For a long while Muslims in the UK have

remained divided along religious and political lines. Today at an international level, Muslims present a sad sight to the world as they fight, brother against brother. Because of this lack of unity, they are easy prey for their opponents.

Of course, Muslims need unity. As Hadhrat Khalifat Masih IV^(ru) said in a Question and Answer session (*Ahmadiyya Gazette*, Canada. Khilafat Number, May 2001):

When you go to the mosque for Namaz [prayer] five times a day, there must be an Imam. Standing behind an Imam is a demonstration of unity among people.if the Imam falters, the entire congregation must follow his mistake even if they know that a mistake has been committed. ... If Imam is mandatory in a small mosque, then how can the whole of

Muslims Ummah survive without an Imam. Therefore, it is incumbent that Muslims should unite on the hand of One Imam. There should be one Imam of the Muslims of the whole world. But without Khilafat, it is just impossible. Khilafat is the successor after the prophet in the form of a person who is representing the deceased prophet and Khalifa is the vicegerent and his subordinate. He is the central authority. This is the basic principle of Khilafat.

However there is a problem as Hadhrat Khalifat Masih IV^(ru) pointed out.

'The issue is that once Khilafat is terminated, then it is not within the power of the people to introduce it again themselves.... Khilafat starts after the passing away of the prophet and if unfortunately once it is destroyed, it is impossible that it restarts without a prophet.'

majority of the Muslim community.

'According to a large number of Muslims the chain of Khilafat ended with the Khilafat of Hadhrat Ali. After him, there was no Khilafat-e-Rashida (rightly guided). It was monarchy in the name of Khilafat and majority of Muslims agree that Khilafat-e-Rashida ended after Hadhrat Ali. So how can you start this Khilafat once again?

Muslims believe that no prophet, of whatever category, can come now. This means that the single avenue to open the way of Khilafat has been barred. This is the big issue, which the Muslim Ummah is facing today.'

So while Muslims may yearn for a global leader to represent them, they first need to reflect on the meaning and significance of such a leadership.

And herein lies the tragedy of the

Non-Ahmadi Muslims also

believe in the coming of a prophet. But according to them this person will be Jesus Christ^(as) who will descend with his old form and body. But fourteen hundred years have passed, and there is no trace of the second coming of that Jesus. And as they wait, the Muslim world falls deeper into chaos and despair. The fact is that no one will ever

descend from skies; Khilafat was destroyed but it has returned in the Ahmadiyya Muslim community. Now the non-Ahmadi Muslim world needs to reflect on the teachings of the Holy Qur'an and the Hadith carefully if they are to enjoy its benefits.

Verse references to the Holy Qur'an item count '*Bismillah...*' (In the Name of Allah...) as the first verse of each Chapter. In some non-standard texts, this is not counted and should the reader refer to such texts, the verse quoted in *The Review of Religions* will be found at one verse earlier than the number quoted.

In this journal, for the ease of non-Muslim readers, '(saw)' or 'saw' after the words, 'Holy Prophet', or the name 'Muhammad', are used. They stand for '*Sallallahu 'alaihi wa sallam*' meaning 'Peace and blessings of Allah be upon him'. Likewise, the letters '(as)' or 'as' after the name of all other prophets is an abbreviation meaning 'Peace be upon him' derived from '*Alaihis salatu wassalam*' which are words that a Muslim utters out of respect whenever he or she comes across that name. The abbreviation 'ra' or (ra) stands for '*Radhiallahu Ta'ala anhu*' and is used for Companions of a Prophet, meaning Allah be pleased with him or her (when followed by the relevant Arabic pronoun). Finally, 'ru' or (ru) for '*Rahemahullahu Ta'ala*' means the Mercy of Allah the Exalted be upon him.

In keeping with current universal practice, local transliterations of names of places are preferred to their anglicised versions, e.g. Makkah instead of Mecca, etc.

ESSENCE OF ISLAM:

Part 21 – Arabic, the Mother of Tongues

This series sets out, in the words of the Promised Messiah^(as), Hadhrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, a summary of his exposition of four outstanding topics: ISLAM; ALLAH, THE EXALTED; THE HOLY PROPHET^(sa) and THE HOLY QUR'AN. The original compilation, in Urdu, from which these extracts have been translated into English, was collated with great care and diligence by Syed Daud Ahmad Sahib, Allah have mercy on him and reward him graciously for his great labour of love. Amin. The English rendering is by the late Sir Muhammad Zafrullah Khan, may Allah be pleased with him, and is quoted from *The Essence of Islam*, Volume 1. All references throughout, unless otherwise specifically mentioned, are from the Holy Qur'an.

It is not true to say that language is the invention of man. Research has established that the inventor and the creator of human languages is God Almighty, Who created man out of His perfect power and bestowed upon him a tongue that he may be able to speak. Had language been the invention of man, it would not have been necessary to teach a baby to talk. It would have invented its own speech, as it grew mature. But it is patent that if a child is not taught speech, it will not be able to speak. Whether it is nurtured in a Greek forest or in the British Isles or at

the equator, he has to be instructed in the art of speaking, and in the absence of such instruction he would not be able to speak.

The notion that languages undergo changes under human influence is an illusion. These changes do not result from conscious human effort, nor can we determine any rule or principle whereby the human mind brings about changes in languages at certain times. Deep reflection would reveal that linguistic changes also take place under the direction of the *Causa*

Causans like all other heavenly and earthly changes.

It cannot be established that at any particular time the whole of mankind collectively, or its different sections separately, had invented the different tongues that are spoken in the world. It may be asked why should it not be supposed that, as God Almighty constantly brings about changes in languages, in the beginning languages might have been originated in the same way without the need of revelation? The answer is that in the beginning God had created everything simply through His power. Reflection on heaven, earth, sun, moon and on human nature itself would disclose that the beginning and origin of everything was through the pure operation of Divine power, in which no physical means were involved. Whatever God created was a manifestation of His supreme power, which is beyond the concept of man The circumstances of today cannot serve as a precedent for the beginning and origin of creation.



The founder of the Ahmadiyya Muslim community was Hadhrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad^(as).

The founder of the Ahmadiyya Muslim community was Hadhrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad^(as). In 1891, he claimed, on the basis of Divine revelation, that he was the Promised Messiah and Mahdi whose advent had been foretold by Muhammad, the Holy Prophet of Islam (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) and by the scriptures of other faiths.

The founder's claim constitutes the basis of the beliefs of the Ahmadiyya Muslim community.

For instance, today no child is born without the agency of parents, but if in the beginning the same condition had been essential, man could not have come into being. Moreover, there is a world of difference between

changes that naturally occur from time to time in languages and the birth of speech itself in the original void. The two concepts are entirely different.

(Barahin-e-Ahmadiyya, Ruhani Khaza'in, Vol.1, pp.358-404)

Are Languages the Invention of Man?

Some ignorant Aryas, holding Sanskrit as the language of Parameshwar, consider all other languages, which comprise of hundreds of Divine wonders and curiosities, as the invention of man; as if while Parameshwar revealed one language, men invented scores of languages better than that one. We would inquire from the Aryas that if it is true that Sanskrit was issued from the mouth of Parameshwar, and all other languages are the inventions of men and have no relationship with Parameshwar, what are the particular characteristics of Sanskrit which are not to be found in other languages; for the speech of Parameshwar must have superiority over the inventions of men. He is called God because He is Matchless and

Supreme in His Being, attributes and works. If we are to suppose that Sanskrit is the language of Parameshwar, which was revealed to the ancestors of the Hindus, and that other languages were invented by the ancestors of other people who were cleverer and wiser than the ancestors of the Hindus, then could we also suppose that those other people were somewhat superior to Parameshwar of the Hindus in that they, through their perfect power, invented hundreds of languages and Parameshwar could invent no more than one? Those whose very natures are permeated with polytheism consider Parameshwar to be an equal entity with themselves in many respects, perhaps because they esteem themselves as uncreated and, therefore, partners in the Godhead. The objection as to why God did not content Himself with the creation of just one language, results from lack of reflection. If a wise person were to observe the diversity of modes and temperaments of people of different countries, he would be convinced that one

language would not have suited all of them. The people of some countries can easily pronounce certain letters and words, but for the people of some other countries the pronouncing of those letters and words would be a great hardship. How was it then possible that the All-Wise One, loving only one language, should have ignored the principle of:

وَضَعُ الشَّيْءِ فِي مَوْضِعِهِ

Putting a thing in its proper place

and should have abandoned that which would have been appropriate for the diversity of temperaments. Would it have been proper that He should have confined people of different temperaments in the narrow cage of one language? Moreover, the creation of a diversity of languages would have been proof of the multiple power of God Almighty. The praise of God offered by His humble creatures in a variety of languages is in itself a most attractive spectacle. (*Barahin-e-Ahmadiyya, Ruhani Khaza'in, Vol.1, pp.447-456*)

Announcement for the Book *Minan-ur-Rahman*

This book is a wonderful production to which we have been directed by some of the verses of the Holy Qur'an which are replete with wisdom. Among its other bounties the Holy Qur'an includes one whereby the true philosophy of the diversity of languages has been set forth, and we have been apprised of the deep wisdom underlying the source of all languages. We also learn therefrom how greatly those people are mistaken who do not admit that all languages have developed under Divine direction. In this book it has been established as the result of research that the Holy Qur'an is the only revealed book which has come down in the language which is the mother of tongues, which has been revealed by God, and is the source and fountain-head of all other languages. It is patent that the whole beauty and superiority of a Divine book consists in its being in a language that has proceeded from the mouth of God Almighty and possesses higher qualities than

other languages, and is perfect in its pattern. When we find such qualities in a language that are superhuman and beyond human skill, and of which all other languages are bereft, and we discover in it such properties as cannot be invented by any human intellect and proceed only from God's true and eternal knowledge, we are compelled to confess that such a language has proceeded from God Almighty. Our perfect and deep research has revealed that Arabic is that language. Many people have spent their lives in such research and have made great efforts to discover which language is the mother of tongues, but as their efforts were not rightly directed, nor were they bestowed the relevant capacity by God Almighty, they could not achieve success. An additional reason was that they were prejudiced against Arabic and did not pay due attention to it. Thus, they failed to discover the truth. Now we have been guided by the Holy Word of God Almighty, the Holy Qur'an, to the truth that the mother of tongues, to which the

Parsees, the Hebrews and the Aryas have laid separate claims, is Arabic, and that all other claimants are in error ...

Why Arabic is Superior to Other Languages?

In contrast with Arabic words, the words of other languages appear lame, maimed, blind, deaf and leprous, and entirely bereft of a natural pattern. The vocabulary of those languages is not rich in roots, which is a necessary characteristic of a perfect language

If any Arya or other challenger of ours is not convinced by our research, we wish to inform him by means of this announcement that we have set out in this book, in detail, the reasons in support of the superiority, perfection and excellence of Arabic which fall under the following headings:

- (1) The perfect pattern of the roots of Arabic words.
- (2) Arabic possesses an extraordinarily high degree of intellectual connotations.

- (3) The system of elementary words in Arabic is most complete and perfect.
- (4) In Arabic idiom, a few words convey extensive meanings.
- (5) Arabic has the full capacity for the exposition of all human feelings and thoughts.

Now everyone is at liberty after the publication of our book to try, if possible, to prove these qualities in Sanskrit or any other language.

(Dia-ul-Haq, Ruhani Khaza'in, vol. 9, pp. 250,320-321)

Characteristics of the Holy Qur'an

The Holy Qur'an is such a brilliant ruby and a glorious sun that the rays of its truth and the flashes that indicate its Divine origin are being manifested not only in one aspect, but in thousands of them. The more the opponents of Islam strive to put out this Divine light, the stronger becomes its manifestation, and the more it attracts the hearts of those who possess insight, with its beauty and loveliness. Even in

this dark age, when the Christian missionaries and the Aryas have spared no effort to denigrate it and to bring it into contempt, and have on account of their sightlessness attacked this light in every form that could be employed by the bigoted and the ignorant, this eternal light has furnished every type of proof of its being from God.

One of its grand characteristics is that it sets forth its claims with respect to its guidance and its excellent qualities and itself furnishes the proof of those claims. This grand characteristic is not possessed by any other book. Out of the reasons and proofs that it has set forth in support of its Divine origin and its high-grade superiority, one great proof is that for detailed exposition of which we have compiled this book. It is a product of the holy spring of the mother of tongues, whose water shines like the stars, slakes the thirst of those who are thirsty for comprehension, and washes out the dirt of doubt and suspicion. No previous book has set forth this

proof in support of its truth. If the Vedas or any other book has set forth such proof, then the followers of such a book should present the claim for such proof in the words of that book. The purport of this proof is that a comparative examination of different languages discloses that all languages are related to each other.

Further and deeper study establishes that the mother of all these related languages is Arabic, from which all these languages have emerged. A complete and comprehensive research then discloses that its extraordinary qualities compel the acknowledgement that Arabic is not only the mother of tongues but is a revealed language which the first man was taught by the special design of God Almighty, and that it was not invented by any man. This leads to the conclusion that Arabic alone is suited for the complete and perfect Divine revelation, inasmuch as it is necessary that the Divine Book that has been revealed for the guidance of the whole of

mankind should be expressed in a revealed language which should be the mother of tongues so that it should have a natural relationship with every language and the speakers of every language, and that being revealed it should possess the blessings with which everything that proceeds from the blessed hands of God Almighty is invested. But as the other languages were also not deliberately framed by men and have all emerged under Divine direction from this holy language, and have been corrupted but are all the progeny of this language, it was not inappropriate that for particular people guidance should have been revealed in those languages. Yet it was necessary that the highest and most perfect Book should be revealed in Arabic because Arabic is the mother of tongues and is the true revealed language, having issued from the mouth of God Almighty.

As this proof is presented only by the Holy Qur'an and it alone claims to be from God, and no other Arabic book makes this

ONE OF THE CHARACTERISTICS OF ARABIC IS THAT ALL THE MISCELLANEOUS QUALITIES OF OTHER LANGUAGES ARE COMPRISED IN ARABIC THUS AS CAREFUL STUDY AND DEEP RESEARCH REVEAL THAT ARABIC IS COMPREHENSIVE OF ALL THE MISCELLANEOUS QUALITIES OF OTHER LANGUAGES, IT HAS TO BE ACKNOWLEDGED THAT ALL OTHER LANGUAGES ARE BRANCHES OF ARABIC.

claim, we are compelled to acknowledge the Qur'an as manifestly proceeding from God and its being a Guardian over other books.

Therefore, I have compiled this book so that with God's help I may establish the mutual relationship of all languages, and may thereafter set forth the proofs of Arabic being the mother of tongues and the true revealed language; and then, on the basis of the speciality that it alone is the perfect, pure and revealed language, should expound the certain and conclusive proof that out of all revealed books the Holy Qur'an alone is the highest, most exalted, most complete, most perfect and *Khatam-ul-Kutub*, and that it alone is the Mother of Books as Arabic is the mother of tongues. In this research project

we would have to pass through three stages:

First stage: Proof that all languages are interrelated.

Second stage: Proof that Arabic is the mother of tongues.

Third stage: Proof that on account of its extraordinary qualities Arabic is a revealed language

The interrelation of languages has been established so clearly in this book that no further research in this respect can be imagined....

The second issue is that out of interrelated languages, Arabic alone is the mother of tongues, the proof of which has been set out in detail, and we have established that one of the special

qualities of Arabic is that it possesses a natural pattern and displays the beauty of Divine manufacture in the same way as the other works of God Almighty. We have also established that all other languages present a distorted picture of the Arabic language. To the degree to which this blessed language has been preserved in those languages in its true form, to that degree they shine like a ruby and attract the hearts with their charming beauty. But to the degree to which a language has been corrupted, to that degree its beauty and attractions have been reduced. It is obvious that a thing that proceeds from the hand of God continues to display extraordinary characteristics so long as it retains its original form, and man is not able to produce its match. But as soon as it falls away from its original condition, its shape and beauty are debased....

The Arabic language operates like the wise person of refined taste who can express his meaning in diverse ways. For

instance, a clever and intelligent person can sometimes accomplish with the movement of a brow, nose or hand that which normally requires expression in words; that is to say, he can convey his meaning through delicate nuances. This is a method also employed by Arabic. Sometimes by the use of ‘Al-’ the **definite article** it conveys a meaning that would need several words in other languages. Similarly **vowel points** often serve a purpose which would require long phrases in other languages. Some brief words have surprisingly rich connotations; for instance, ‘*aradtu* means ‘I have visited Makkah and Madinah and their environs’, and *tahfaltu* means ‘I am accustomed to eating bread made of *Cheenay* (a kind of cereal half way between millet and barley [Publisher]) and have decided not to eat any other kind’

One of the characteristics of Arabic is that all the miscellaneous qualities of other languages are comprised in

THE JEWS AND THE CHRISTIANS ARE COMPELLED TO ACKNOWLEDGE THAT ARABIC IS THE MOTHER OF TONGUES AS THE TORAH CLEARLY AFFIRMS THAT THERE WAS ONLY ONE LANGUAGE IN THE BEGINNING.

Arabic Thus as careful study and deep research reveal that Arabic is comprehensive of all the miscellaneous qualities of other languages, it has to be acknowledged that all other languages are branches of Arabic.

Some people raise the objection that if one language is acknowledged as the root of all languages, it becomes difficult to accept that within three or four thousand years languages, which had emerged from one root, became so diverse. This objection is an instance of a fallacy upon a fallacy. In the first place, it is not definitely established that the world is only four or five thousand years old and that heaven and earth had no existence before. On the contrary, there are clear indications that the earth has

been peopled since a very long time. Besides, distance in time or place is not the only cause of diversity in language. A powerful cause of this diversity is that every region of the earth affects the throats, tones and pronunciation of its inhabitants in a particular way in consequence of its latitudinal situation, or its juxtaposition *vis-a-vis* other planets, or on account of some other unknown causes, and these factors produce a particular form of speech. That is why the peoples of certain countries are not able to pronounce Z or R properly. As complexions, spans of life, manners, morals and constitutions differ from country to country, likewise speech also differs, for the same causes affect speech also; and the degree of difference is determined by the degree of the causes. This difference is not arbitrary but is determined by physical laws. Thus a change, which occurs in the shape, or manners, or morals, or thinking of people under the influence of earthly or heavenly causes, also affects their speech. If a foreign word or phrase finds its

way into their language, they change it about. This is clear proof that speech is affected by earthly and heavenly causes. The Jews and the Christians are compelled to acknowledge that Arabic is the mother of tongues as the Torah clearly affirms that there was only one language in the beginning.

Some people raise the objection that the relationship of some languages with Arabic, for instance that of Hebrew, is much closer than that of other languages like Sanskrit or European languages. The answer is that despite this difference it has been ascertained that the elementary words and phrases of these languages have been derived from Arabic and have been further developed through natural changes.

Special Characteristics of Arabic

There are five special characteristics of Arabic, which prove conclusively that Arabic is a revealed language, which we shall expound in detail in their proper

places. These are:

First Characteristic:

Arabic has a perfect pattern of roots, which is suited to human needs. Other languages lack this pattern.

Second Characteristic:

The names of God, and of heavenly bodies, vegetables, animals, solids, and human limbs in Arabic comprise great wisdom. Other languages cannot compete with Arabic in this respect.

Third Characteristic:

The Arabic system of elementary words is perfect, and comprises all nouns and verbs of the same roots, and illustrates their mutual relationship by arranging them in a wise pattern. This characteristic is not found in other languages in the same perfect degree.

Fourth Characteristic:

In Arabic idiom a few words comprise extensive meanings. Arabic conveys extensive connotations through the use of the definite article and vowel points

AS WE HAVE UNDERTAKEN TO PROVE AND ILLUSTRATE ALL THESE SPECIAL CHARACTERISTICS OF ARABIC, IT IS NECESSARY THAT WE SHOULD DO SO IN ARABIC, THEREBY FURNISHING ILLUSTRATIONS OF ALL OF THEM IN THAT LANGUAGE, SO THAT WE MIGHT REQUIRE ANYONE, WHO MAY CLAIM ANOTHER LANGUAGE TO BE REVEALED AND THE MOTHER OF TONGUES, TO ILLUSTRATE THESE CHARACTERISTICS IN THE SAME WAY.

and sequence, for which purpose other languages have to employ several phrases and sentences.

Fifth Characteristic:

Arabic possesses such roots and idioms as furnish a perfect means for the expression of the most subtle of human thoughts and reflections.

As we have undertaken to prove and illustrate all these special characteristics of Arabic, it is necessary that we should do so in Arabic, thereby furnishing illustrations of all of them in that language, so that we might require anyone, who may claim another language to be revealed and the mother of tongues, to illustrate these characteristics in the same way If we should be proved false in our claim that Arabic possesses those five

characteristics to a special degree, and any scholar of Sanskrit or any other language should succeed in proving that their language partakes of these characteristics to the same or even to a greater degree than Arabic, then we make a firm and definite promise that we shall immediately pay him five thousand rupees.

What we demand from the advocates of other languages is that they should prove that their respective languages possess the qualities that we have established in the case of Arabic. For instance, it is indispensable that a language, which is described as revealed and the mother of tongues should comprise a full stock of roots, for the purpose of transmuting human thinking into words in such a manner that when

a person should desire to make a detailed exposition of a subject, for instance, of the Unity of God, or polytheism, or the obligations due to God, or the rights of man, or religious doctrines and the reasoning supporting them, or love and human intercourse, or rancour and hatred, or the praise and glory of God and His holy names, or the refutation of false religions, or stories and biographies, or commandments and penalties, or the hereafter, or commerce and agriculture and employment, or astrology or astronomy, or physics, medicine, or logic, etc., the roots of the language should be capable of helping him in such a way that there should be available a root against every idea that may arise in his mind.

This is necessary so that it may be established that the Perfect Being Who created man and his ideas also created from the very beginning roots for the expression of those ideas. Our sense of justice would compel us to acknowledge that if this characteristic is found in a

language – that it comprises in itself a beautiful pattern of roots corresponding to the natural structure of human ideas, and is capable of illustrating in words every subtle distinction between acts, and its roots are adequate to fill all the needs of ideas – then that language is, without a doubt, a revealed language, inasmuch as it can only be the act of God Almighty that, having invested man with the capacity of expressing a complex diversity of ideas, he should have been supplied with a stock of verbal roots corresponding to his ideas, so that the word and the work of God Almighty should correspond to each other at the same level. However, to possess the quality of utilising roots in particular formations in the expression of ideas is not the speciality of any particular language. Many languages suffer from the defect that they are compelled to employ compounds in place of elementary words, which shows that those compounds were formed at the time of need by those who used those languages for the con-

veyance of their ideas. Therefore, the language that is secure against such deficiencies, possesses the capacity of filling its needs with its roots and elementary words, and is capable of matching its words to the works of God Almighty – that is to say, to the upsurge of ideas at their proper level would doubtless deserve to be called a revealed language in accord with Divine nature, on account of its extraordinarily high level and its possession of a speciality which is not shared by other languages.

Honesty would require the affirmation that the language that is characterised by the high rank that it had issued from the mouth of God Almighty, possesses extraordinary qualities, and is the mother of tongues, is the only language which truly deserved that the highest and the most perfect revelation should be clothed in it. Other revelations are only branches of this revelation as other languages are branches of this language.

Therefore, we shall at a later stage expound that the Holy

Qur'an alone comprises the true, complete and perfect revelation that was to be sent to the world. We shall also develop the thesis that, by acknowledging Arabic as a revealed language and the mother of tongues, not only must we acknowledge that the Holy Qur'an is the Word of God, but we have also to acknowledge that it is the Qur'an alone which is the complete, perfect and true revelation which should be designated *Khatam-ul-Kutub*. We will now proceed with the Arabic part of this book to demonstrate the system of roots and other qualities.

لَا حَوْلَ وَلَا قُوَّةَ إِلَّا بِاللَّهِ الْعَلِيِّ الْعَظِيمِ

There is no strength or power except through Allah, the Exalted, the Almighty.

[Minan-ur-Rahman, Ruhani Khaza'in, vol. 9, pp.128-142]

ESTABLISHING Societal Peace

An address by Hadhrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad, Khalifatul Masih V, Head of the worldwide Ahmadiyya Muslim community delivered at the Roehampton University London in the Chapman Hall, Southlands College on 16 April 2007

After welcoming remarks and an introduction to the University of Roehampton by the Vice Chancellor, a recitation from the Holy Qur'an of Ch.4:V.135-136 by Mr Hafiz Fazle Rabbi and the English translation by Mr Salim Malik, and a further introduction by the Pro Vice Chancellor and after shahada, ta'wud and bismillah, Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih V said:

The Pro Vice Chancellor Roehampton University, Dr Peter Briggs, the Vice Chancellor Southlands College, Professor Mr Paul O'Prey, all the distinguished guests

Peace and blessings of Allah be upon you

I have been given 40-45 minutes on this topic, so I will try to finish this subject in brief.

A key issue of the world today is Peace. The erosion of peace is on

the tip of everyone's tongue. Some attribute this to economic causes, others to social issues whether on an individual, national or international level, yet others point to political causes, whilst others attribute it to religious differences and as a consequence to the very concept of a God.

Time does not permit me to go into its various subdivisions and other causes but if we examine this fairly, the primary cause is man's extreme selfishness and

his neglect of the purpose of his creation.

Be that as it may, I shall say a few words on the basis of the teachings of Islam and the Holy Qur'an. In turn, this perspective of true Islam is based on the direct guidance received from God Almighty by the Holy Founder of the Ahmadiyya Muslim community, which he conveyed to us and by means of which we have been shown the ways of establishing peace in the world.

This is important because some people who call themselves Muslims do not have a proper understanding of Islam and are responsible for presenting such an image of Islam that it is not even remotely connected to the true and fundamental teachings and the example set by the Founder of Islam, the Holy Prophet Muhammad^(saw). In pursuit of their personal and selfish vested interests, some so-called Muslim scholars or leaders have created this backward concept to grow amongst a group of ill-informed Muslims. Such people neither

serve Islam nor mankind.

As I have just said that all the causes that disturb peace, be they major or minor, and whether they are manifest or hidden and working underground, are attributable to man's growing selfishness and his forgetfulness of why he is here in this world. If one forgets the purpose of one's creation, one becomes selfish. In turn, this selfishness and conceit at different levels leads to usurping the rights of others. In other words, this is a satanic cycle and man is finding it increasingly difficult to find a way out. Despite the fact that there is a desire to come out of it, there is no easy means out.

Now we shall see, what is the Islamic teaching about the purpose of man's creation and how man can achieve this? God Almighty says in the Holy Qur'an:

And I have not created the Jinn and the men but that they may worship Me.

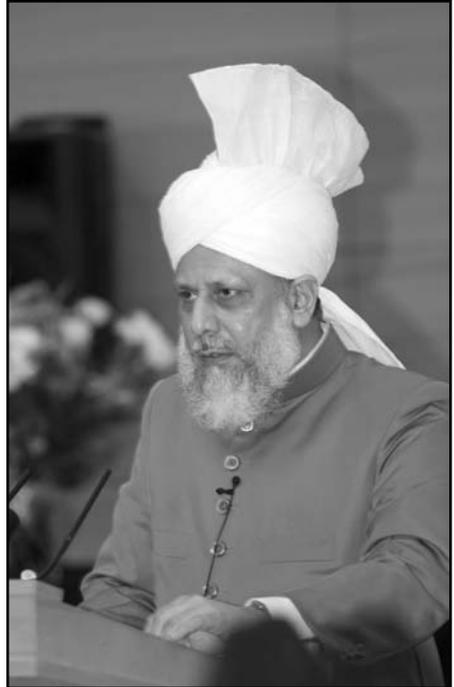
[Ch.51:V.57]

Therefore, it is the basic reality that if man recognises God, peace will be established in the world. It should always be remembered that the lack of peace, whether at domestic or international level, is caused by the unrest of the heart and the unrest of the heart can be removed by the purpose taught to us in the Holy Qur'an.

This commandment, or call it a teaching or formula, is for all kinds of people. Great powerful people who hold personal power have been addressed just as different superpowers and the very wealthy people as is obvious from the Arabic word *Jinn*.

And the word 'Ins' or 'Men' means the ordinary people of a country and poor people and nations who have been asked to reflect upon their purpose of creation. When you understand this issue, your priorities will change.

When priorities will alter, your life will naturally change



according to the nature in which man has been created and whose example we can see in an innocent child. The child is unattached to the world and all that is in it. Irrespective of whether it speaks to a dictator or a fakir or a poor man, it says whatever it sees because it knows not the ways of the world. But as it grows older and in its learning age begins to be reprimanded or punished on its deeds, it responds as best befits the situation but that response is removed from that nature of innocence and

truth. As a result, it gradually drifts away from the purpose for which man was created.

I should perhaps explain here as to what is meant by worship. According to an Ahmadi Muslim, worship is to discharge the rights owed to the Creator, to bow before the Lord and to discharge all the rights of His creation which include all kinds of personal, social, economic and moral rights.

To return to the subject, although a majority of this world acknowledges that there is a Creator of all that exists in the universe, it is in doubt about faith or considers some faiths, or if I can be more specific, considers Islam neither to be a true religion nor from God. One reason is the unawareness of the true teachings of Islam. Secondly, the evil deeds committed by some people make them even more dubious.

As I said earlier, there is, unfortunately, a group amongst the Muslims which commits foul

deeds in the name of Islam but this group is not even remotely connected to Islam. Because of their deeds, those who do not believe in religion and deny the existence of God, make religion the primary target for the lack of peace and go so far as to attribute this to the concept of God even though there are many other reasons for this disorder in the world as stated earlier.

Then, as an Ahmadi Muslim, I believe that God sent His Messengers to their respective people with moral and spiritual guidance so as to teach man tolerance, respect and how to live at peace with other people. The Messengers fulfilled their assigned missions. Finally, God sent Muhammad^(saw) with the declared message that:

And We have sent you not but as a mercy for all peoples.

[Ch.21: V.108]

Therefore, it is inconceivable that the Prophet^(saw) who was sent as a mercy for all people by the Lord of the heaven and the earth



to share His bounties could bring a teaching of cruelty and spread disorder nor is it possible that a God Who sent such a Prophet could be a God Who should cause His creation to suffer cruelty and transgression.

The Prophet^(saw) was a mercy for his friends and foes. It was his kindness and compassion that converted the backward and uncivilised Arabs – who neither had regard for relations nor any social responsibility – into a civilised people with high moral values. In fact I believe that God Almighty revealed such a

teaching that was to foster love and affection and mercy not only amongst the generations that followed him but generations that were yet to come till the end of time providing that they comply with its true spirit and do not confine themselves to the teachings but adopt it in practice. The history of Islam is full of such noble examples.

For instance, the most deprived and worthy of kindness individuals in Arabia were the slaves that every rich person of that time possessed. Before the advent of Islam, the slaves were

treated in a most cruel way. After a hard day's labour, they were not even fed properly.

In order to restore the rights to a deprived class and create a peaceful society, Islam advocated the kind treatment of slaves by saying that if you employ them for hard work, help them. Then, in relation to the emancipation of slaves, the Holy Qur'an teaches:

And what should make you know what the Aqabah (or ascent) is? It is the freeing of a slave.

[Ch.90:V.13-14]

This action of yours against a deprived class whom you have subjugated and whose rights are being violated is disliked by God in respect of His creation. This is why in the do's and don't's mentioned in the Holy Qur'an and in some cases punishments or expiation has been prescribed, one of the good deeds is that if you have a slave, he should be set free.

As for the Holy Prophet^(saw), he himself set free all the slaves he possessed long before his claim of prophethood. These slaves became indebted to him. One of them was Zaid. When his father and his other relatives came to take him back, he refused to go with them even though he was free and said: 'I cannot leave the person who loves me so much and is so careful about discharging the rights of the poor people.'

The Holy Prophet^(saw) advised the Muslims that if you wish to enter paradise, free the slaves. There are two benefits of this teaching. One is a means of entering paradise in the hereafter. The other is that by granting freedom in this world to a deprived class you will be able to grant them the same status of a freeman. This will remove the unrest within because it is quite possible that if this unrest continues to grow in them then a time will come when the slaves will fight for their freedom and the societal peace will disappear. If a society is peaceful, it can be an example of

paradise on earth but the lack of peace can become a hell.

Just look at today's society. When superpowers compel other nations to agree to their terms and conditions and effectively hold them in bondage, a time comes when there is a reaction against this bondage. Past history bears testimony to this and the same is happening today.

A society in which there is peace will look beautiful but where there is fire and bloodshed, the same society will seem like hell. Today, the ways of enslaving and bondage have changed but the underlying concepts of exploitation are the same in that conditions are imposed on weak nations and the developing countries in respect of debt provided as aid for their development projects so that they are permanently held under the yoke of slavery. We are witnessing the consequence of this unwise logic being suffered by the whole world.

Therefore, the developed coun-

tries should help the developing world to gain economic independence. They should assist them so that they are able to utilise their own resources to enable them to stand on their own feet and thus strengthen their economy.

When each country looks at another country and each nation looks at another nation as an equal, the thought will never come to mind that we have to monopolise the market. They will never think that they have to only help the poor nations so that they do not perish or when they are about to die, they announce some economic aid and inject a temporary boost of assistance and publicise by saying that look here how much aid has been given to the poor nations. Till this way of thinking changes, unrest and lack of peace will continue to be the hallmark of the world.

It is true that these are the mistakes committed by the people and their leaders and that their weaknesses, apathy, worth-

lessness and selfishness are playing a key role. However, if there is a desire for true peace, then wealthier nations can relate their aid to the GDP and pace of economic growth of the developing countries. This is the only way to emancipate the world from economic slavery and to solve the problem of restlessness that arises from economic causes.

I should mention here the teachings of Islam regarding how to end economic unrest and how to create an economically peaceful society. The Qur'an says:

Those who devour interest do not rise except as rises one whom Satan has smitten with insanity. That is because they say: 'Trade also is like interest,' whereas Allah has made trade lawful and made interest unlawful. So he to whom an admonition comes from his Lord and he desists, then will that which he received in the past be his; and his affair is with Allah.

And those who revert to it, they are the inmates of the Fire; therein shall they abide. Allah will abolish interest and will cause charity to increase and Allah loves not anyone who is a confirmed disbeliever and an arch-sinner.
[Ch.2:V.276-277]

O ye who believe! Fear Allah and relinquish what remains of interest, if you are believers.

But if you do it not, then beware of war from Allah and His Messenger; and if you repent, then you shall have your original sums; thus you shall not wrong, nor shall you be wronged. And if any debtor be in straitened circumstances, then grant him respite till a time of ease. And that you remit it as charity shall be better for you, if only you knew.

[Ch.2:V.279-281]

I have cast this Islamic teaching here as following the reference to economic bondage. If we assess the world today, it is only interest

that has enslaved the people and nations; keep aside the man of a poor nation, even a common man in the developed world is enslaved to interest although apparently the person is the possessor of property, yet he rarely becomes the true owner of the property till the time of his death. His earning power, the increase in the rate of inflation and the repayment of interest do not enable the poor man to leave the world free of debt. The same is the situation with the poor countries. They are immersed in debt and this economic slavery perpetuates through generations. I cannot go into further details on this issue but if you look into it yourself, you will no doubt agree with me.

Therefore, as I have quoted the teachings of the Holy Qur'an, Islam instructs that you should not enslave people through interest because when you are cruel to a needy person, your greed for interest will make your thinking evil and cruel. You will not be counting the true and base capital but will give greater

preference to interest and as a result you will continue to squeeze further an already crushed class.

So, if you are a true Muslim, then lend sympathetically and without interest because God Almighty will bless your capital. This act will also foster love and affection for others and a peace-loving society will begin to emerge. Otherwise, remember this well that by disobeying God, you are declaring war against God. Due to interest, the ability to repay will diminish, unrest will increase and a time will come when you will fight against each other. So it is better for you that you stick to your basic capital and with reference to capital, the teaching is that grant him respite till a time of ease and that if you remit it as charity, it shall be better for you.

I should clarify here that Islam requires the borrower to honour his debt and pledge even if he has to suffer hardship in order to repay the debt. In other words, this is not a one-way street but

both the lender and the borrower have been bound that in order to maintain social peace they have to work hard together. So, this is one of the Islamic teachings of God about honouring the economic rights so as to create economic and social peace in the world.

What was the example of the Holy Prophet^(saw), with regard to the repayment of debt. He always repaid more than he had borrowed, that is to say, by repaying more as a reward for the help that was given at the time of need rather than as a pre-determined amount agreed at the outset. That is why such an act leads one to love and affection and will guarantee peace and in this regard this was his practice with both the Muslims and the non-Muslims.

The last words that came from his blessed tongue were to draw attention to two very important issues. He said: ‘O Ye Muslims! Do not forget my teachings about prayers and slaves.’ In other words, while you remember your

duty to God that it will lead you to do good works, at the same time, remember the rights of the weakest in the society. Be very kind to your slaves and your task is to try to free them, and never try to enslave those who are free due to their helplessness, whether that enslavement is physical, social or economic.

Then, there is another aspect of maintaining peace. Allah the Almighty commands:

Those who spend in prosperity and adversity and those who suppress anger and pardon men; and Allah loves those who do good.

(Ch.3:V.135)

Get into the habit of suppressing anger and forgiving others as this acts as a guarantee for peace in society. It is not easy to suppress anger and forgive people.

That is why Allah the Almighty has said that if you wish to develop your association with Me and if you want to gain My pleasure, then you will have to do

good to others without expecting anything in return. Doing good means forgiving the guilty despite their wrong-doing.

Where, in the beginning, Allah says to spend, this means spend in the way of Allah, for religious needs as well as for fulfilling the rights of the people. If you spend on the needy without their having to ask you, you will guarantee peace.

Then we have been commanded to sustain peace because, whereas we can suppress our anger and forgive temporarily, and can also spend for the good of others, and treat them with kindness now and then, it is very difficult to continue to do this good work in a steadfast manner. That is why, Allah the Almighty says in the Holy Qur'an:

And those who persevere in seeking the favour of their Lord, and observe Prayer, and spend out of that with which We have provided them, secretly and openly, and repel evil with good. It is these who shall have the best

reward of the final Abode.
(Ch.13:V.23)

It is clear from these verses that one requires, not only patience to do good and repel evil, but also steadfastness. And to achieve this, there is also a commandment to not only spend the money, but also to share all that knowledge and utilise all the faculties that are required to spread goodness and stop all evil tendencies, using all the resources that have been put at the discretion of the well-to-do. There is an injunction for both individuals and nations that the establishment of peace requires patience and consistency.

It is not enough to stop evil but it is also essential to do good works. If evil alone is suppressed, there will be a reaction. There are many who incite evil-doers to believe that they have been wronged. But, if after stopping the evil, all means are used for the improvement of the society, they will realise that the people who advocated doing good works are really their

friends and sympathisers who pointed the evil in the society and helped them to move forward towards goodness. Such action helps to eliminate evil permanently from society. However, this reformation will neither be permanent nor will it help to establish peace, if all the action is only to achieve vested personal interests.

The Holy Qur'an teaches us that in order to maintain peace, it is essential to establish justice in society. Besides justice, if good is done in society in accordance with the need, it will help to create an environment of love and affection.

I have deliberately used the words 'in accordance with the need', because you will come across a person who is a habitual criminal, and despite all efforts to reform him, he does not change his ways; it will be counter-productive to do good to him. In fact, in such cases, justice demands that he be punished so that the society can be saved from his harm. Because the real

purpose is to create an environment of peace and at the same protect the rights of everyone, it is this protection that provides peace to the society. The commandment in the Holy Qur'an is:

Verily, Allah enjoins justice and the doing of good to others; and giving like kindred; and forbids indecency and mani-fest evil and transgression. He admonishes you that you may take heed. (Ch.16:V.91)

This verse talks about three good and three evil deeds. The three good deeds are (1) showing justice; (2) the doing of good to others; and, (3) giving like kindred. The three evils mentioned are (1) exhibiting indecency; (2) manifesting evil; and (3) transgressing. Going into the details of these good and evil deeds, you will realise that the good deeds are the basics of establishing peace in a society and the evil deeds are the basics that lead to the destruction of social peace.

Therefore, if we want to create peace in our society then we must shun all evils, promote good deeds and fulfil the rights of others selflessly. We must get rid of the poison of superiority complex. We must eliminate the distinction between superpower and the poor developing countries. We must get rid of all the national and racial prejudices. In this regard, we will have to set very high targets, free of all prejudices so that humanity can advance in doing good to each other.

Why is this? It is because the feelings of superiority and inferiority have become extreme.

We may not agree on this, but the divides between East and West and North and South are more prominent. In fact, even today, the question of black and white is still alive and predominant in some countries.

Does this situation provide any guarantee for peace of mind? I do not think so!

Islam advises its believers:

O ye people! Fear your Lord Who created you from a single being and created therefrom its mate, and from the two spread many men and women; and fear Allah in Whose name you appeal to one another, and fear Him particularly respecting ties of kinship. Verily Allah watches over you.
(Ch.4:V.2)

And again Allah reminds us:

O mankind, We created you from male and female; and We made you tribes and sub-tribes that you may recognise one another. Verily, the most honourable among you, in the sight of Allah, is he who is the most righteous among you. Surely, Allah is All-Knowing, All-Aware.
(Ch.49:V.14)

This is the teaching of the Qur'an. It leads us to the point from where the educated man wants us to move away and that

is that God exists and by acting on His teachings and just trying to gain His pleasure, it will help man to understand fellowmen.

What does Islam teach on eliminating prejudices and thoughts of causing harm to others and to what extent does Islam emphasise on dealing with each other honestly?

The Holy Qur'an says in this respect:

O ye who believe! Be steadfast in the cause of Allah, bearing witness in equity; and let not a people's enmity incite you to act otherwise than with justice. Be always just, that is nearer to righteousness. And fear Allah. Surely, Allah is aware of what you do.
(Ch.5:V.9)

This is the ultimate state of establishing peace with justice that if you have to bear testimony, you must always remain just. In another place, it enjoins that even if you have to

testify against yourself or your near ones, then you must testify fulfilling the requirements of justice. At the same time, it has also said that even the enmity of a nation should not make you deviate from justice.

We can see this commandment being put into practice in the early period of Islamic history. For example, when a dispute between a Muslim and a Jew was brought before Hadhrat Umar, the Second Successor of the Holy Prophet of Islam^(saw), he found the Jew to be right and decided in his favour.

The Holy Qur'an says:

... And let not the enmity of a people that they hindered you from the Sacred Mosque, incite you to transgress. And help one another in righteousness and piety; but help not one another in sin and transgression. And fear Allah; surely Allah is severe in punishment. (Ch.5:V.3)

See, this is the beautiful teaching! The people of Makkah

committed extreme cruelties against the Holy Prophet of Islam^(saw), and his followers. They were made to lie on burning coal because they had accepted Islam. Muslim women were pierced with lances in their private parts and some were tied to two camels which were then made to run in opposite directions thus tearing the women asunder in two parts. The Holy Prophet^(saw) was exiled with his followers and ostracised in a valley outside Makkah for two and a half years and they suffered from shortage of food and other essentials. After all the sufferings, the Muslims decided to migrate to Madinah. Even then they were attacked. Muslims were stopped from going to Makkah to perform the Pilgrimage. Despite all these inhuman acts, Muslims were enjoined not to react in similar fashion; and although they were victims of many cruelties, when they entered victorious into Makkah they were taught to forget the past. They were taught that you are victorious now, therefore, forget old enmities and fear Allah because Allah wants to spread peace in the world and He

is the Creator Who should be worshipped.

Muslims were told not to indulge in any excesses but to use piety and goodness to establish peace and to enhance co-operation. If you understand the psychology of the Arabs of that time and how they used to carry enmities from one generation to another, you will realise that it was not possible for the Muslims to act as they did without bringing about a revolution in the psyche of the Arabs with the help of the teachings that the Prophet of Islam brought.

I have explained briefly various aspects of the peaceful teachings of Islam. The question here arises that this is all very well but who is going to apply these teachings in the world and among the Muslims?

The Ahmadiyya Muslim community is of the view and believes that God Almighty has always sent His messengers and reformers in this world to bring people nearer to God and return to

the people the rights of human beings. In this age also, according to the prophecies of the Prophet of Islam^(saw) and past prophets, peace and blessings be upon them all, God Almighty has sent Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of Qadian^(as) whom we believe to be the Messiah and the Mahdi, to this world, to fulfil His mission. The voice that was raised more than a hundred years ago in a small town in the Punjab in India, has reached 185 countries of the world and his followers are in millions. This could not have happened without the Divine assistance.

Along with its efforts to bring man nearer its Creator, the Ahmadiyya community is serving mankind by fulfilling the medical, educational and other financial requirements of the needy. In poor countries of Africa and elsewhere, the community is helping with hospitals and schools and is trying to provide water and electricity in those regions free of any cost to the poor.

Irrespective of race, religion or nationality, the Community has

been and is trying to provide assistance to the victims of natural disasters like earthquakes, tsunamis, floods etc without any ulterior motives. It is difficult to go into its details. It is worth noting that these expenses that the community incurs are not obtained from businesses, factories or oil revenues. It is collected from every member of the community who reduces his own expenses to contribute towards these services for gaining the sheer love and nearness of Allah.

All this is being done to bring humanity nearer to its Creator and thus fulfil the mission of the Founder of the Ahmadiyya movement.

I would like to end my address with a quotation of the Founder of Ahmadiyya Community. He says:

‘The mission for which Allah has appointed me is to renew the relationship between Allah and His creatures; and remove the malice that has developed between mankind

and its Creator; and thus re-establish the relationship of love and sincerity between man and God; to eliminate wars between religion and lay the foundation for reconciliation; and bring out the truth and verities that had disappeared from the world; and manifest by example the spirituality that had been buried in darkness;....but this will not happen by my power alone. It will only come about by the power of that Almighty Who is the Lord of Heaven and Earth.'

Finally, I would like to thank all of you who have given your time to listen to me. I am grateful to the Vice Chancellor for providing me this opportunity and to the Principal of Southland College for organising everything. May Allah the Almighty bless them and reward you abundantly. Thank you

'... In a University which takes pride in the fact that we have a centre for human rights, social justice and citizenship – because that reflects very much what this University stands for and is founded upon – then the insight which you have shared with us about the teachings of the Holy Qur'an, of Islam and the work of the Ahmadiyya Muslim community which have a bearing on all those issues and brought together in the notion of creating a world which is peaceful and which will give peace to so many millions of people who crave peace but who do not find it are inspirational and insightful. We are grateful...'

This was followed by applause and a vote of thanks in which the Vice Chancellor said:

A brief survey of some scientific facts in the book:

Revelation, Rationality, Knowledge and Truth

In the year 2002, certain scientific objections were raised about the book *Revelation Rationality Knowledge and Truth* written by Hadhrat Mirza Tahir Ahmad, Khalifatul Masih IV. Because of Huzur's illness, the matter could not be investigated. Recently when this matter was brought to the attention of his Successor, the present head of the worldwide Ahmadiyya Muslim Jama'at, Hadhrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad, Khalifatul Masih V, he instructed me for investigation. According to his instructions, I sent the list of objections to Mr. Masoud A Malik (USA) for careful scrutiny and research. As a result, members of the Association of Ahmadi Muslim Scientists (AAMS) USA were assigned the task of conducting this research and offer their collective responses in the light of published scientific literature. The team consisted of Dr Amtul Mujeeb Chaudhry (USA), Professor Hafiz Saleh Mohammad Alladin (guest member from India) and Dr Arshad M Khan (USA). In this report, the team summarises the objections and provides a point by point response to each. We are presenting this research here for the benefit of our readers.

Munir-ud-Din Shams (Additional Vakil-ul-Tasneef)

1. Background

There are various theories in science discussed in the book *Revelation Rationality Knowledge and Truth* about which different opinions and thoughts exist. We mention some of them

in this article.

The Holy Qur'an is the Word of God and Nature represents the Work of God. In science, we try to understand the working of Nature. The commentaries of the



Holy Qur'an reflect our efforts for comprehending the Holy Qur'an. Both in religion and in science it should be our aim to attain the truth¹. There cannot be any contradiction between the Holy Qur'an and science, if we understand them both correctly². The treasures of the Holy Qur'an as well as Nature are inexhaustible³.

The book *Revelation Rationality Knowledge and Truth* (RRKT) contains an excellent commentary of several verses of the Holy Qur'an that deal with

nature. It highlights the testimony of nature to the existence of an All-Mighty and All-Wise God⁴. The book is based on an in-depth study of the Holy Qur'an by the saintly scholar Hadhrat Mirza Tahir Ahmad^(ru) who had a comprehensive knowledge of various branches of science. We strongly feel that the book serves as an excellent model of scholarly work regarding the interaction between religion and science, and is written by a profound lover of the Holy Qur'an.

In the words of the author:

*‘The Divine scriptures are not textbooks of science, hence any reference therein to scientific subjects could not be merely incidental. The main purpose is to establish the unity of source; to prove that the material world and the spiritual world are both the work of the same Creator.’*⁵

The author has drawn attention to the truths of the Holy Qur’an verified by science as well as to those truths that still await exploration.^{6,7}

2. Research

This article presents the findings to some pertinent objections and refutations made on a few of the scientific arguments given in the book, RRKT. The references for this research have been drawn from diversified sources. These sources include scholarly publications, research journals, scientific magazines, internet and non-technical web links. The objective is to cater for a wide

readership and make the sources as accessible as possible.

2.1 Objection related to the chapter ‘Entropy and the Finite Universe’

In the chapter ‘Entropy and the Finite Universe’, the author explains the term ‘Entropy’ using the second law of Thermodynamics⁸. The author draws the conclusion that the universe would end when ‘Entropy’ reaches its peak as a result of which the universe will experience ‘Heat Death’. This conclusion has been supported by several scientists^{9, 10, 11, 12, 13}.

The observer, on the other hand, uses the concept of reversible process¹⁴ and the Hawking Principle¹⁵ to contradict the author’s point of view. The observer’s conclusion is supported by another school of thought¹⁶ which does not agree with the theory of Heat Death of the universe.

Another research that takes into consideration the Hawking Principle (interestingly enough

the same principle as cited by the observer) points to ‘Cosmological Heat Death’¹⁷ of the universe. Other ideas about the fate of the universe include concepts like ‘Big Crunch’¹⁸, ‘Big Freeze’¹⁹ and ‘Big Rip’^{20, 22}.

The fate of the universe has been and still is a subject of rival scientific theories and serious scientific investigations^{20, 21, 22}. Despite this controversy, the laws of Thermodynamics (as used by the author) continue to be part of the latest academic curricula²³.

Hence the author’s conclusion about the fate of the universe is a scientifically valid conclusion.

2.2 Objection related to the Chapter ‘The Qur’an and Cosmology’

The observer has raised an objection regarding the statement of the author about the movement of universe in space. The argument is that the wording ‘*movement of the universe in space*’ (as used in RRKT) implies that universe and space

are distinct entities. Therefore the wording contradicts the definition of a single unique universe.

This controversy is not new. In fact it has been and still is a critical subject of speculation^{24, 25, 26, 27, 28} in the field of cosmology.

Hence, the author’s choice of words is scientifically valid and correct.

2.3 Objection related to the chapter ‘The Essential Role of Clay and Photosynthesis in Evolution’

The observer refers to page 384 of the book, RRKT, where the author states: ‘*To those pondering over the origin of life, it is classic chicken and egg problem – which came first the protein or the DNA.*’ The observer points out that this problem has been resolved by the Crick’s postulate.

The author has referred to a classic paradox about whether DNA or protein was the first to

appear in early pre-biotic Earth. Despite the formalisation of the ‘Central Dogma’ of molecular biology by Crick in 1958²⁹ (which states that information passes unidirectionally from nucleic acid to protein, that is from RNA to protein), it is now understood that there are multiple ways of interpreting the Central Dogma^{29, 30}. In addition, there are many exceptions to this formalisation^{30, 31, 32, 33}. These exceptions could lead to multiple interpretations about the origin of life and the roles of DNA, RNA and protein in this process. Currently there is no scientific consensus on this issue, due to some controversial aspects.

Hence the author’s statement in the book is scientifically valid and correct.

2.4 Objection related to the chapter ‘Chirality or Sidedness in Nature’

In this chapter, the author reports on one school of thought which states that ‘chirality’ or sidedness in molecules is related to their spin^{34, 35, 36, 37}.

The observer reports on another school of thought which suggests that chirality is related to the arrangement and position of atoms in a molecule^{38, 39, 40}.

Scientists have also discovered an aspect which states that chirality can be switched in molecules by the addition or removal of electrons⁴¹.

Hence, the refutation made by the observer regarding the author’s statement is not valid.

3. Conclusion

Detailed research was carried out to investigate the objections made on some of the scientific evidence presented in the book, RRKT.

In three instances (‘entropy and heat death’, ‘universe and space’, ‘chirality’), the objections only reflect a different school of thought as compared to the idea presented by the book, RRKT. References have been provided in this article to prove the existence and wide support of the author’s idea in the scientific

realm. Hence the author's statements are perfectly valid scientific statements.

In one instance ('chicken and egg paradox') the objection was found to be incorrect. References have been provided for this result.

Scientific research is a dynamic activity which continues to expand upon earlier findings, proving or refuting them or pointing out their limitations. The Holy Qur'an, on the other hand, is a universal truth independent of any argument or scientific developments. Hence, when scientific reasoning enters a conflict due to ongoing research, it should not confuse the reader about the conclusions of the author that are guided and based upon the Qur'anic prophecies. We strongly believe that the book, *Revelation Rationality Knowledge and Truth*, serves as an excellent model of a scholarly work that diligently examines the interactions between religion and science.

References and Notes

1. *Revelation Rationality Knowledge and Truth (RRKT)*, 1998. p.256, para 2.
2. *Ibid.*, p. 286, para 3; p. 300, para 3; p. 344, para 4.
3. The Holy Qur'an, Ch.15:V.22
4. *RRKT*, p.386, para 3; p.569, para 1
5. *Ibid.*, p. 285, para 4
6. *Ibid.*, p. 303, para 2; p. 331, para 4; p. 333, para 2; p. 334, para3; and p. 488, para 3
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The Purity of the Text of the

HOLY QUR'AN PART 5

From the Review of Religions, 1907

Arrangement of the Verses and Chapters of the Qur'an

It has already been shown that the Holy Qur'an was both written and committed to memory in the life-time of the Holy Prophet^(saw). But we also know that the Qur'an was revealed piecemeal during a long period extending over twenty-three years. Some of the chapters were revealed complete but the revelation of many others was fragmentary and extended over long periods. It also happened often that while one chapter was still unfinished, a new chapter was revealed, and sometimes verses belonging to more than two unfinished chapters were revealed at one and the same time. Now the arrangement of chapters and verses in the copies of the Holy Qur'an at present in the hands of the Muslims does not follow the order of revelation. The impor-

tant question before us, therefore, now is whether the Holy Prophet^(saw) himself arranged the verses and chapters in an order different from that of their revelation, and, if so, whether the present arrangement of the verses and chapters is the same as that which prevailed in the life-time of the Holy Prophet^(saw). In other words, was the Holy Qur'an left by the Holy Prophet^(saw) in the same condition as regards the arrangement of its verses and chapters as that in which we now find it, or is its present condition different from that in which the Holy Prophet^(saw) left it?

Both intrinsic and extrinsic evidence conclusively show that the present arrangement of the chapters and verses of the Holy Qur'an was effected by the Holy Prophet^(saw) under the guidance of Divine revelation. But as the

intrinsic evidence on this point requires a separate treatment, I shall not attempt to give it here. The different verses in different chapters and the chapters themselves are so well arranged that no better arrangement is conceivable. It is only ignorance of the Holy Qur'an and Arabic idiom which has made some critics remark that there is no connection between certain verses or that there are some chasms. A deep reflection over the Holy Book reveals a close connection between verses which are considered by hasty writers to be disconnected. But we leave this point for a separate discussion and would refer here only to the extrinsic evidence which proves that the present arrangement of the verses and chapters of the Holy Qur'an is not the work of Abu Bakr or Zaid, but that of the Holy Prophet^(saw) himself who did it under the guidance of Divine revelation. Such evidence is not only met with abundantly in the traditions of the Holy Prophet^(saw), but it is also contained in the Holy Qur'an. Thus in Ch.75:Vs.8-19 we read:

Surely upon us rests its collection and its recital. so when We recite it, then follow thou its recital.

These verses clearly show that the collection of the Qur'an, that is its gathering into one whole with an arrangement of its various parts, was brought about by the guidance of Divine revelation. Arrangement and collection were according to these verses as much the work of Divine revelation as the reading of a verse to the Holy Prophet^(saw), *i.e.*, its revelation. The Qur'an itself, therefore, asserts, not only that it is the Word of God, but that its collection and arrangement were also brought about by Divine revelation. It should be borne in mind that the word *Jam'a* in the above verse (Ch.75:V.18) implies both collection and arrangement, since no collection could be brought about without an arrangement. Now the verse shows that this arrangement was different from the order of the revelation of the verses. It describes arrangement and collection as a process

different from the revelation of a verse to the Holy Prophet^(saw), thus showing that from the first it was meant that the verses and the chapters of the Holy Qur'an should be arranged in an order different from that of their revelation. If the order in collection were to be the same as the order of the reading of the different verses to the Holy Prophet^(saw), *i.e.*, the order of their revelation, collection and reading would not have been described in the verse quoted above as two different things. The reader may also consult Lane's Lexicon which gives 'arranging' as a significance of the word *Jam'a*.

It is in authentic traditions, however, that we meet with the clearest proof that the Holy Prophet^(saw) left at his death the complete Qur'an with the same arrangement of the verses and the chapters that we have now in every Arabic Qur'an. We will consider the arrangement of verses and that of chapters separately and in each enquiry we shall have to discuss the following points:

1. Was any arrangement followed by the Prophet^(saw) himself and by his companions in his life-time?
2. Was that arrangement different from the order in which the verses or the chapters were revealed?
3. Is the present arrangement different from that followed by or in the life-time of the Holy Prophet^(saw)?

That such a large book treating so many and such varied subjects should have been committed to memory and regularly recited in and outside prayers and taught by one man to another without there being any settled arrangement of its parts is a most preposterous proposition, but there is hardly a Christian critic of Islam who has not advanced it. The grounds for this assertion are the same in every case. Not the least regard is paid to historical evidence, and the supposition that no arrangement is discoverable in the verses and chapters at present is the only basis on which the proposition is based. Even Muir who sat down to write his *Life of Mahomet* on a

strong historical basis has in this respect followed the earlier Christian critics and shut his eyes to the whole historical evidence. The following short paragraph from Muir's introduction is not only illustrative of the assertions of Christian critics in general, but it also shows how the author himself has evaded the historical evidence. He says:

‘We are not, however, to assume that the entire Qur’an was at this period repeated in any fixed order. The present compilation, indeed, is held by the Moslems to follow the arrangement prescribed by Mahomet; *and early tradition might appear to imply some known sequence*¹ But this cannot be admitted; for had any fixed order been observed or sanctioned by the Prophet, it would unquestionably have been preserved in the subsequent collection. Now the Coran as handed down to our time, follows in the disposition of its several parts no intelligible arrangement whatever, either of subject or

time; and it is inconceivable that Mahomet should have enjoined its recital invariably in this order. We must even doubt whether the number of *Suras*, or chapters, was determined by Mahomet as we now have them. The internal sequence at any rate of the contents of the several *Suras* cannot, in most cases, have been that intended by the Prophet.’

Some of the footnotes given under this paragraph show the struggle in the writer's mind between historical facts and religious prejudice. Thus while denying the existence of any fixed order in the Qur'an in the life-time of the Holy Prophet^(saw), Muir had to admit that ‘we read of certain companions, who could repeat the whole Coran in *a given time*, which might be held to imply some usual connection of the parts.’ In another footnote it is admitted that there were four or five persons who could repeat ‘with scrupulous accuracy’ the whole of the Qur'an, and ‘several others who could very nearly

repeat the whole before Mahomet's death.' Again while denying that even the number of *Suras* was determined by the Holy Prophet^(saw), for fear of being contradicted he cautiously adds the following footnote:

'But there is reason to believe that the chief *Suras*, including all passages in most common use, were fixed and known by name or other distinctive mark. Some are spoken of, in early and well authenticated traditions, as having been so referred to by Mahomet himself. Thus he recalled his fugitive followers at the discomfiture of Honein, by shouting to them as "the men of the *Sura Bacr*" (i.e., *Sura Ch.2*).

Several persons are stated by tradition to have learnt by heart a *certain number* of *Suras* in Mahomet's life-time. Thus Abdulla bin Masud learned seventy *Suras* from the Prophet's own mouth – and Mahomet on his death-bed repeated seventy *Suras*, 'among which were the seven long ones.' These traditions signify a recognised

division of at least some part of the revelation into *Suras*, if not a usual order in repeating the *Suras* themselves.

'The liturgical use of the *Suras* by Mahomet must, no doubt, have in some measure fixed their form, and probably also their sequence.'

In connection with the same subject, it is said in another footnote that 'the traditions just cited as to the number of *Suras* which some of the companions could repeat, and which Mahomet himself repeated on his death-bed, also imply the existence of such *Suras* in a complete and finished form.'

In this manner, almost every remark made in the paragraph quoted above is contradicted in the footnotes on the basis of historical facts met with in authentic traditions. And though the statements in the footnotes are made reservedly, yet the contradictions are too clear to escape unnoticed by any careful reader, and the struggle in the

writer's mind can be easily discovered. In the text it is asserted that there was no fixed order or arrangement in the verses and chapters of the Holy Qur'an, and historical evidence is produced in the footnote showing that there was a connection. The text makes the allegation that even the *Suras* were not distinctly marked out by the Holy Prophet(saw) and their number was not determined by him. Yet the footnote brings forward historical testimony to the effect that there was a recognised division and that form of the chapters was, no doubt, fixed. The reservations contained in such expressions as 'some part' and 'some measure' were only natural considering the allegations in the text. It can be easily seen that if 'seventy Suras including the seven long ones' existed 'in a complete and finished form' as the footnote admits, and there is no evidence showing that the remaining forty-four short *Suras* which were, no doubt, generally recited in prayers did not exist in the same form, the presumption will be that all the *Suras* existed 'in a

complete and finished form.' This conclusion becomes clearer still when it is borne in mind that the same writer has also admitted that there were several companions who could repeat, not only seventy Suras, but the whole Qur'an and that too 'with scrupulous accuracy.'

As regards the stale assertion that the Qur'an follows no arrangement in the disposition of its several parts, it arises only out of an ignorance of the Holy Book. There exist commentaries in the Arabic language which show the connection of the verses and the chapters to each other, but the subject is not suited for a short article in a monthly. I would, however, give one example of the real connection between verses which a superficial reader would think to be totally unconnected. From the 156th verse the second chapter runs thus: *'With somewhat of fear and hunger and loss of wealth and of lives and of fruits, will We surely prove you: but bear good tidings to the patient, [157] who, when a calamity falls upon them, say:*

'Verily we are God's and verily to Him do we return. [158] On such the Lord sends down His blessings and mercy, and these — they are the rightly guided. [158] Verily, Safa and Marwa are among the Signs of God: whoever, therefore, makes a pilgrimage to the House or performs Umrah to go round about them both. And whoever does good in obedience to God, then verily God is Grateful and Knowing.' Apparently the 158th verse abruptly introduces a subject foreign to the purport of the context. A little reflection, however, makes it clear that this verse has a deep connection with the preceding verses.

Safa and Marwa are the two hills which were the scene of Hajar's suffering when she ran hither and thither in search of water for her infant child. Now the previous verses state that when Almighty God tries His servants by sending down any suffering upon them and they are patient and faithful and trust in God, they are rewarded with great blessings and

mercy from the Lord. The verse which speaks of Safa and Marwa is really only an illustration of the principle laid down in these verses. It mentions two hills which were the scene of the sufferings of a faithful servant of God who, because of the faithfulness and patience shown under the heaviest sufferings, was rewarded with the greatest of blessings from heaven, so much so that these very hills became the Signs or sanctuaries of God. Going round these hills was a commemoration of the events which befell Hajar and the patience and faithfulness which she showed in that trial which had been sent upon her by God. Her reward was great, for the descendants of Ishmael were made a great nation and it was from among them that the Holy Prophet Muhammad^(saw), was raised. These facts reveal the existence of a deep connection between verses which to a superficial reader of the Qur'an would appear as having not the least connection with each other.

The allegation that there is no connection between the verses as at present arranged is, therefore, the result only of the ignorance of the deep significance of the Qur'anic words and expressions. As it is only upon this one supposition that the whole historical evidence concerning the arrangement of the Holy Qur'an is rejected, we may after having shown the error of this supposition proceed to consider the evidence itself.

The assertion that no arrangement was followed in the case of single verses revealed at different times is so absurd on its very face that it hardly requires a refutation. How was it possible for any body to commit the Holy Qur'an to memory if there was no settled order in which the verses were read? What order did the different copies follow? Or was it that each copy of the Holy Qur'an current at the time followed a different order? Could every man who knew any portion of the Holy Qur'an, and every one of the companions knew some portion,

have followed a different arrangement? Does any tradition support these absurd assertions? What order did the reciters of the Holy Qur'an follow? Or did each reciter follow a different order? What again was the order of the verses followed by those who led the public prayers? It is inconceivable that a book which was so widely committed to memory and which was so frequently recited by thousands of men existed in such an orderless state.

If there were no other evidence to show that the verses in the different chapters of the Holy Qur'an followed some arrangement, the mere fact that the Holy Book was committed to memory by the companions would be sufficient to establish that conclusion. There are many chapters containing more than a hundred verses each, and unless these were arranged in a settled order, no one could be said to have committed to memory the whole of any chapter. Take the different permutations of only a hundred

...WE LEARN FROM AUTHENTIC TRADITIONS THAT WHEN ANY PERSON, WHILE RECITING A PORTION OF THE HOLY QUR'AN FROM MEMORY, MADE A MISTAKE OR LEFT OUT A VERSE, SOMEONE OF THOSE WHO LISTENED TO HIM CORRECTED THE MISTAKE OR POINTED OUT THE PARTICULARS VERSE. NOW THIS COULD NOT BE DONE UNLESS THE SAME ARRANGEMENT OF VERSES WAS FOLLOWED BY ALL.

verses, and no two out of a hundred thousand men could have agreed upon one arrangement. In such a case there would have been not one Qur'an which the companions could learn from each other, but everybody would have his own Qur'an, and no one could be certain of the correctness of what his friend recited. Moreover, we learn from authentic traditions that when any person, while reciting a portion of the Holy Qur'an from memory, made a mistake or left out a verse, someone of those who listened to him corrected the mistake or pointed out the particular verse. Now this could not be done unless the same arrangement of verses was followed by all. In fact, it was simply impossible to commit thousands of verses to memory unless there was some

arrangement which they followed.

Considerations such as the above clearly show that some arrangement of verses was necessarily followed. Was it the order of revelation? There is clear historical evidence that the Holy Prophet^(saw) arranged the verses not according to their chronological order of receipt but according to matter. There were no doubt many chapters that were revealed complete, but there were others, particularly the longer ones, that were revealed by portions. Chronologically verses of one chapter were followed by those of another, and hence in the arrangement of verses in chapters the chronological order could not be observed. The practice of the

Holy Prophet^(saw) in such cases is clearly stated in authentic traditions. As Othman tells us in a tradition already quoted: ‘it was customary with the Messenger^(saw) of God, when portions of different chapters were revealed to him, that when any verse was revealed he called one of the amanuenses [persons who write what another dictates] and said to him “write these verses in the chapter where such and such verses occur.”’ From this it appears that the place and chapter for every verse were pointed out by the Holy Prophet^(saw) himself. With such clear and conclusive testimony before him, no sensible person would deny that the work of the arrangement of the verses in every chapter was done by the Holy Prophet^(saw) himself and as the Holy Qur’an tells us it was done under the guidance of Divine revelation, and that that arrangement did not follow the chronological order of the revelation of verses.

If the arrangement of verses was different from the order of their

revelation, the next question that arises is, was that arrangement different from the one upon which the whole Muslim world is now agreed? We must answer this question in the negative. The arrangement of the verses in the Qur’an we have in our hands is not in accordance with the order of revelation, and hence if there is no trace in the history of the Qur’an of any change having been brought about in the arrangement of its verses at any time, the conclusion that the present arrangement is exactly the same as that followed by the Holy Prophet^(saw) will be absolutely certain and final. Now it is admitted on all hands, and the truth of the fact has not been questioned by the hostilest critic of Islam, that there has not been the slightest change in any word or letter of the Qur’an or in the arrangement of its verses or chapters since the time of Othman, the third of the Muslim Caliphs. Our copies of the Qur’an are admittedly exact copies, true and authentic in every way, of the collection made by Othman, and

hence to prove that the arrangement of verses and chapters at present is the same as that followed by the Holy Prophet^(saw), we have only to show that the collection made by Othman followed the original arrangement. It can be easily seen that at the time of his making the collection, Othman had no motive for changing the fixed arrangement which up to that time was followed by the companions of the Holy Prophet^(saw). That an arrangement different from the order of revelation was followed by the Holy Prophet^(saw) and that the same arrangement was followed by the companions in the learning and teaching of the Holy Qur'an has already been shown.

Such an arrangement was changed by Othman is for him to show who makes the assertion. When Othman began to make his collection, or more correctly when he began to make copies of the Qur'an from Abu-Bakr's^(ra) collection, thousands of the companions of the Holy

Prophet^(saw) were still living, and no change in the arrangement of verses could have remained unnoticed. Moreover, the task of making the required copies was not in the charge of Othman personally, but in that of several of the most well-known companions reputed for their knowledge of the Qur'an, and none of these can be shown to have had any motive for altering the arrangement of verses existing at the time. Nor is there the slightest trace in the historical record of the time that the arrangement was altered.

No charge has ever been preferred against Othman by any sect of Islam or any individual that he had changed the arrangement of the verses in the chapters of the Holy Qur'an. In fact the only charge against him is that he disallowed certain readings. The nature of this charge we will describe later on when we have occasion to write about the various readings. But there is absolutely no mention whatever in any tradition

authentic or unauthentic of any alteration in the arrangement of verses.

Besides the negative proof cited above which conclusively shows that at no time in the history of the Qur'an was the arrangement of its verses altered in the slightest degree, there is positive evidence leading to the same conclusion. This evidence may be gathered from incidental remarks made in certain authentic traditions. Under the heading 'The excellence of the chapter entitled Al-Baqra', Bukhari relates the following tradition: 'The Holy Prophet^(saw) said: "Whoever reads the last two verses of the chapter entitled *Baqara* on any night, they are sufficient for him."' This tradition which reports the exact words of the Holy Prophet^(saw) shows two things. Firstly, that the Holy Prophet^(saw) himself followed an arrangement which he made known to his companions and they all followed the same arrangement, for if such had not been the case, he could

not have referred to two verses as the last two verses of a certain chapter. The tradition shows clearly that every verse had a known and fixed place in a chapter and no reciter of the Qur'an could change its place.

In the second place, this tradition shows that the verses with which the chapter entitled the Baqarah or 'Cow' now ends were also the concluding verses of that chapter in the time of the Holy Prophet^(saw), and therefore the arrangement in the copies of the Qur'an at present is the same that was followed by the Holy Prophet^(saw).

In support of this we may cite another tradition which is accepted as authentic by the authorities on tradition. In this tradition these two verses, *i.e.*, the concluding verses of the chapter entitled the 'Cow' are identified with the 285th and 286th verses of that chapter as enumerated in Rodwell's translation or 286 and 287 according to our *Review of Religions* referencing. (See for

this tradition the *Fath-ul-Bari*.) According to another authentic tradition the Holy Prophet^(saw) told his followers to recite the ‘first ten verses’ of the chapter entitled the ‘Cave’ at the appearance of the anti-Christ. Had there been no arrangement of verses, the ‘first ten verses’ would have been a meaningless phrase because it would not have indicated any particular ten verses. This tradition occurs in the Sahih Muslim. The first ten verses as in our copies of the Qur’an are plainly the verses meant, as in these verses the doctrine of the sonship of Jesus, a doctrine indented with the teaching of the anti-Christ by the Holy Qur’an, is refuted in forcible words. This tradition also shows that the arrangement of verses in the time of the Holy Prophet^(saw) was the same as it is now. Other traditions to the same effect may, if necessary, be quoted.

In no tradition any arrangement of verses other than the one which exists in the current copies of the Holy Qur’an is hinted at. Had the Holy Prophet^(saw) left the

Qur’an in an unarranged form, different arrangements of verses would no doubt have been followed by different companions and in the great mass of traditions there would have been references to some of these arrangements. But the absence of any such reference shows conclusively that there was only one arrangement of verses which was followed by all the companions and that arrangement was the same as we have now in our copies of the Qur’an, because there is no reference at all to any change having been introduced at any time. There is only one tradition which speaks of Ali having made a collection of the Qur’an in the order of its revelation, but if true this only supports the conclusion we have already arrived at as to the present arrangement being the one in existence at the time of the Holy Prophet^(saw). The fact, if true, is mentioned only on account of the peculiarity of the arrangement, its distinction from the recognised and accepted arrangement. Had there been a third arrangement besides these two, we should also have had a

reference to it. The order of revelation as we have seen was not followed by the Holy Prophet(saw), for his arrangement was according to matter and not chronological. Ali might have thought of preserving the order of revelation for historical purposes. In the time of Othman, when copies of the Qur'an were made for distribution, Ali was one of the companions who superintended the copying and there is no doubt that if he had not looked upon the present arrangement as the right arrangement, he would have either objected to it or refused to take any part in it. But along with the whole body of the companions, Ali followed an arrangement different from the order of the revelation though he might have preserved the chronological order also. Had he considered the latter arrangement to be the actual arrangement, he would no doubt have given currency to it during his caliphate. But neither in the time of the first three caliphs nor in his own reign did he ever, privately or publicly, make a statement that the arrangement of verses and

chapters in the current copies of the Holy Qur'an was not followed by the Holy Prophet(saw) and that it ought to be superseded by chronological arrangement. These considerations clearly show that the arrangement of verses in the copies made by Othman was recognised by all the companions without a single exception to be the arrangement followed by the Holy Prophet(saw). Had it not been so there would have been many differences among them as to arrangement. But as a matter of fact even Ibn-i-Masud who otherwise expressed his dissatisfaction with the action of Othman in having disallowed certain readings favoured by the former never took any objection to the arrangement of the verses in the copies made by the orders of the latter, nor did he himself ever propose a different arrangement.

The above considerations prove conclusively that the division of the Holy Qur'an into chapters and the arrangement of verses in each chapter were both performed under the directions of the

Holy Prophet^(saw). When a new verse was revealed, a place was assigned to it by the Holy Prophet^(saw), and no companion could assign it a place at his own choice.

The greater part of the chapter entitled *Al-Baqarah*, for instance, was revealed during the early days of the Holy Prophet^(saw) at Madinah, but some verses belonging to it were revealed only a few days before his death. Such were the verses relating to the prohibition of usury, as trustworthy traditions show. The place assigned to these verses is immediately after the verses which speak of alms. The reason for this arrangement is that both injunctions, *viz.*, the injunction relating to the giving of alms and the injunction relating to the prohibition of usury, were meant for the benefit of the poor and these were two steps in the same direction, that is, the amelioration of the poor. The state of the society whose reform the Holy Qur'an had in view was such that the two injunctions could not be given together. It was necessary

that the people to whom the injunction relating to the prohibition of usury was to be given should be first prepared to accept that teaching. Hence the two injunctions were revealed at different periods, but the subjects of which they treated were so closely related to each other that in an arrangement of verses they had to be placed side-by-side.

But the division into chapters was marked by the Holy Prophet^(saw) himself and we find the names of most of the chapters expressly mentioned in authentic traditions. In fact the division of the Holy Qur'an into chapters and the arrangement of verses in these chapters by the Holy Prophet^(saw) are such clear facts that no difference at all can be pointed out to have ever existed on these points among the companions or the later Muslims. No one can be shown to have ever asserted that a certain verse in a certain chapter in the collection in our hands belonged to a different chapter or that a verse occupying a certain position occupied a different position at any time. In many

traditions references to verses are contained in numbers, and this shows clearly that the arrangement of verses was complete in the lifetime of the Holy Prophet(saw).

To add another example to those already given, there is a tradition which narrates that Ibn-i-Masud recited forty verses of the chapter entitled *Al-Anfal* in a certain prayer. This is narrated in the *Sahih Bukhari*. Another traditionist, Abdul Razzaq, has mentioned the same tradition through a different chain of narrators with this difference that instead of mentioning the reciting of forty verses of the chapter, the narrator only says that he recited up to the verse which ends with such and such words. (*Fath-ul-Bari, Vol II, page 212*). Now if we compute forty verses from the beginning as mentioned by the first narrator, we find them ending with the words mentioned by the second narrator. From this it is clear that the present arrangement of verses was well-known in the lifetime of the Holy Prophet(saw). According to another

tradition narrated by Bukhari, the Holy Prophet(saw), when he awoke for his *tahajjud* prayers, used to recite 'the last ten verses of the chapter entitled *Al-i-Imran*', and in imitation of him the Muslims still recite the same ten verses. This fact also proves that the same arrangement of verses was followed during the life-time of the Holy Prophet(saw) that is followed now and that the division of the Holy Qur'an into chapters was distinctly marked at the time.

The next question that we have to consider is the arrangement of chapters. In the discussion of this question it may be stated at the very outset that any arrangement in the recital of chapters in or outside prayers was regarded as unnecessary except when the whole of the Qur'an was to be recited. As we have seen in traditions already quoted there were men among the companions who knew the whole of the Qur'an by heart and to keep it fresh in memory they used to recite the whole within a stated time. Indeed Bukhari has a

chapter with the heading ‘In how much time should the recital of the Qur’an be finished.’ Under this heading traditions are narrated according to which the Holy Prophet(saw) forbade one of his companions to finish the recital of the Qur’an in less than three days, and forbade another to finish it in less than seven days. These traditions show the practice of the companions of the Holy Prophet(saw). Those among them who knew the whole of the Qur’an by heart used to repeat it constantly and finished the recitation of the whole ordinarily in seven days. Indeed it would not have been possible to retain such a large book in memory except by its constant recital and repetition. The Holy Prophet(saw) himself had told them that they should constantly resort to a recital of the Holy Qur’an and that otherwise it could not be retained in memory. Hence they constantly resorted to its recital. Now to finish the Qur’an within a stated time and to recur to it again and again it was necessary that some arrangement of chapters should have been

observed. But it may be asked, does tradition support this conclusion? Ahmad and Abu Daud and others have narrated the following tradition which shows that the arrangement of chapters was also effected by the Holy Prophet(saw):

Aus says: ‘I was in the *Saqeef* embassy at the time of their conversion to Islam The Holy Prophet said to us, “My portion of the Holy Qur’an has come to me unexpectedly, so I intend not to go out until I finish it.’ Thereupon we questioned the companions of the Holy Prophet(saw), as to how they divided the Qur’an into portions. They said: ‘We observe the following division into portions, three chapters and five chapters and seven chapters and nine chapters and eleven chapters and thirteen chapters and all the remaining chapters beginning with *Qaf* which are termed the *Mufassal*.’

There is good reason to believe

the authenticity of this tradition. It divides the Holy Qur'an into seven portions, each portion to be recited in one day, and the recital of the whole Qur'an is thus finished in seven days. From other trustworthy traditions we learn that the Holy Prophet^(saw) had enjoined some of his companions not to finish the Holy Qur'an in less than seven days, and the two traditions reported through entirely different channels corroborating as they do the testimony of each other testify to each other's truth and authenticity. Moreover they are both accepted by eminent traditionists as authentic traditions. Hence we have no reason to doubt the truth of either.

Now the tradition quoted above shows clearly an arrangement of chapters, for the division into portions mentioned in this tradition is observed to this day by the whole Muslim world. The seven portions are called the seven *manzils* or stages, and they include the same number of chapters as is mentioned in the

tradition. The seventh portion begins with the chapter entitled *Qaf* as stated in the tradition, and the total number of chapters contained in the first six portions is forty-eight as even in the copies of the Qur'an in our hands. It should be borne in mind that in our copies the *Qaf* is the fiftieth chapter, the difference arising from the fact that in the tradition quoted above the *Fatiha* or the Opening chapter is not included. This tradition affords the clearest and most conclusive testimony that the arrangement of the chapters of the Holy Qur'an was brought about by the Holy Prophet^(saw) himself like the arrangement of its verses, and their present arrangement does not differ in the least from the original arrangement.

Khilafat Centenary Article

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The *Review of Religions* is running a competition for articles on Khilafat to be published during 2008.

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