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## What is the Qur'an: A Contemporary Contribution to The History of the Qur'an

*Kur'ân Nedir: Kur'ân Tarihine Çağdaş Bir Katkı*

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### Abstract

This study is an attempt to find out the contributions of Ömer Rıza Doğrul (1893-1952) to the history of the Qur'an through his work *What is the Qur'an*. Although the author has many works, *God's Commandment: Translation and Commentary of the Holy Qur'an* has not been studied independently. On this occasion, with this work, which is small in volume and large in content, the author has been brought to the attention of contemporary researchers. In Orientalist studies, the debate on the preservation of the Qur'an/the authenticity of the text has been discussed under the headings such as the writing and preservation of the Qur'an at the time of the Prophet, the gathering of the Qur'an in the times of Hazrat Abu Bakr (d. 13/634) and Hazrat Uthman (d. 35/656), the appointment and reproduction of the Imam's Mushaf, the Companion Mushafs, the Seven Letters and the Qiraats. All these subjects constitute the literature we call "History of the Qur'an" today and examine the textualisation process of the Qur'an. Since the first three chapters of Ömer Rıza Doğrul's *What is the Qur'an* are completely devoted to these issues, it deserves to be called a contemporary "History of the Qur'an" work. It is understood that the work was also written as a response to the orientalists. It is seen that today, as in the past, the claims and scepticism of the orientalists about the Qur'an persistently continue.

**Keywords:** History, Qur'an, tafsir, orientalist, Ömer Rıza Doğrul.

### Öz

Bu çalışmada Ömer Rıza Doğrul'un (1893-1952) *Kur'ân Nedir* adlı eseri üzerinden Kur'ân tarihine katkılarını ulaşılmaya çalışılmıştır. Müellifin pek çok eseri olmasına rağmen, *Tanrı Buyruğu: Kur'ân-ı Kerim'in Tercüme ve Tefsiri* hariç diğer eserleri üzerinde müstakil çalışmalar yapılmamıştır. Bu vesile ile hacmi küçük muhtevası büyük olan bu eseri ile yazar çağdaş araştırmacıların dikkatine sunulmuştur. Oryantalist çalışmalarda Kur'ân'ın korunmuşluğu/metnin sıhhati tartışması; Kur'ân'ın Hz. Peygamber zamanında yazılması ve muhafaza edilmesi, Hz. Ebû Bekr (öl.13/634) ve Hz. Osman (öl.35/656) zamanlarında cem edilmesi ve İmam Mushaf'ının tayin ve çoğaltılması, sahabe Mushafarı, Yedi Harf ve Kiraatler gibi başlıkları altında tartışılmıştır. Bu başlıklarda yer alan konuların tamamı bugün "Kur'ân Tarihi" dediğimiz literatürü oluşturmakta olup Kur'ân'ın metinleşme sürecini incelemektedir. Ömer Rıza Doğrul'un *Kur'ân Nedir?* Adlı eserinin ilk üç bölümü tamamen bu konulara ayrıldığı için çağdaş bir "Kur'ân Tarihi" eseri olarak isimlendirmeyi hak edecek niteliktedir. Eserin aynı zamanda oryantalistlere bir cevap olarak yazıldığı anlaşılmaktadır. Dün olduğu

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gibi bugün de müsteşriklerin Kur'an hakkında ileri sürdükleri iddialarını ve kuşklarını ısrarla devam ettirdikleri görülmektedir.

**Anahtar kelimeler:** Tarih, Kur'an, tefsir, müsteşrik, Ömer Rıza Doğrul.

### **Introduction**

The Holy Qur'an is the last divine book consisting of the revelations that started in 610 A.D. in the cave of Hira near Mecca on the night of Qadr (al-Qadir, 97/1; al-Dukhan, 44/3) in the month of Ramadan (al-Baqara, 2/185) when Gabriel, the angel of revelation, transmitted the first five verses of Sura Alaq to the Prophet Muhammad and continued until the death of the Messenger of Allah in 632, and was revealed by the Lord of the worlds in Arabic to the heart of the Prophet (al-Shuara, 26/192-195). This definition is a historically orientated definition without harming the divine nature of the Qur'an. When we look at the ways of defining the Qur'an in history, two basic approaches are encountered. The first of these is the way of defining the Qur'an based on revelation, and the second is the definitions that exclude revelation. The first of these definitions is the definitions adopted by Muslims, which, although there are differences, basically do not contain contradictions. The second is the definition adopted by non-Muslims who, although they accept the existence of the Qur'an, do not accept that it originated from revelation, and regard it as the word of Muhammad (Uzun, 2018, s. 100-140). The principled and scientific attitude here is to act on the differences of religions, not on their sameness, and to give the members of each religion the opportunity to define their own book. It should be taken into consideration that religions have existed in history not by melting into each other but by preserving their differences. For example, according to Christian belief, Jesus Christ did not write the Gospel, but only preached it and asked the apostles to preach it. According to Christians, the Gospel in the New Testament does not refer to a written text, but to the message and gospel proclaimed by the Messiah and the apostles (Harman, 2000, s. 22/271). In the Holy Qur'an, on the other hand, in all the verses where the word Bible is mentioned, it refers to the divine revelation delivered by Jesus Christ and the book in the hands of the Christians living during the Prophet's time (al-A'raf, 7/157). In the Holy Qur'an, it is reported that the Gospel was revealed and revealed by Allah, (Al-i 'Imran, 3/3, 65) that it was revealed to Jesus (Al-Ma'ida, 5/46; al-Hadid, 57/27) after Abraham, (Al-i 'Imran, 3/65) and that Allah taught Jesus the Gospel along with the Torah. (Al-i 'Imran, 3/48; al-Ma'ida, 5/110). Jesus also states that Allah gave him a book (Maryam, 19/30; Harman, 2000, s. 22/275). Based on the view of Christianity, which is the first of these two approaches to the Bible, it is never right to accuse the Prophet Muhammad and Allah of falsehood because the Qur'an uses the word "book" for the Bible. The same applies to the different understandings of revelation of the two religions. According to Christians, Jesus is the embodiment of the divine word. He did not receive a book from God, but the words and deeds of Jesus, who is the manifest form of revelation, were later written into books and the Gospels were formed. The authors of the Gospels wrote the message of Jesus with the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, but in their own style. (Harman, 2000, s. 22/272). This perception of revelation does not coincide with the understanding of revelation of Islam and Muslims. Applying this understanding to the textual history of the Qur'an means defining and devaluing Islam and the Qur'an according to a mould produced from Christianity.

As every written text has, the Qur'an also has a history since it has met man in history. The tension arising from the divine characteristic of the Qur'an and its existence in history has always continued. However, referring to the existence of the Qur'an in history should not mean to suggest that it only reflects the historical ideas that took place in Mecca, Medina and the surrounding regions in the past. Similarly, to present the

modern view that the source of the words in the Qur'an is the unconscious of the Prophet Muhammad is incompatible with the divine nature of Islamic revelation. (Kılıç, 2010, s. 13). Because the Qur'an, without the intervention of foreign elements, (al-Haqqa, 69/40-42; al-Takwir, 81/25) unchanged and pure from the main inscription (al-Waqi'a, 56/77-80; al-Buruj, 85/21-22) to the Arabic-speaking messenger (al-Nahl, 16/103; Fussilat, 41/44) in Arabic, (Joseph, 12/2; al-Ra'd, 13/37; al-Taha, 20/113; al-Shuara, 16/195; al-Shura, 42/7; al-Ahqaf, 46/12) has been included in history as a divine word given by Allah (Fussilat, 41/2, 42; al-Kahf, 18/1; al-Shura, 42/17; al-Haqqa, 69/43; Al-i 'Imran, 3/7; al-Nisa, 4/174; al-Sajda, 32/2) and not by anyone else. (al-Nisa, 4/82) The Qur'an is not a word invented by Muhammad (al-Sajda, 32/3) or dictated to him by another human being (Yunus 10/38; al-Furqan 25/4). It was obligatory upon Muhammad to read the Qur'an, to preach it and to obey its commands; (Qasas, 28/85) He was not authorised to change the revelation according to his own will. (Yunus, 10/15; al-Haqqa, 69/44-46) The Qur'an insists that it is not the word of a poet (al-Haqqa, 69/41) or a oracle (al-Haqqa 69/42) or a devil, (al-Shuara, 26/210; al-Takwir, 81/25) that it was given by Allah (al-Naml, 27/6; Yasin, 36/5; al-Zumar, 39/1; Fussilat, 41/2; al-Jasiya, 45/2; al-Ahqaf, 46/2; al-Waqi'a, 56/80; al-Insan, 76/23) and that it is the word of Allah, (al-Baqara, 2/75; al-Tawba, 9/6; al-Fath, 48/15) and therefore the source of revelation is Allah.

The main subject of this study is Ömer Rıza Doğrul's *What is the Qur'an*, which has been overlooked among the studies in the field of "History of the Qur'an". The fact that the existing edition of this work in Ottoman Turkish and Latin letters was not renewed in the following processes did not make the work recognised at the desired level. The aim of this study is to include this work of Doğrul in the studies of the history of the Qur'an. The book *What is the Qur'an* contains the history of the Qur'an in terms of its content. At the same time, it is also an answer to the doubts about the history of the textualisation of the Qur'an in terms of its historical context. The book *What is the Qur'an* also devotes a large space to the history of translation of the Qur'an. In the work, the principles of the Qur'an's theology and ethics, translations of the Qur'an in Eastern and Western languages, and the views of famous European and American writers and thinkers on the importance of the Qur'an are mentioned. When the foreword and the content of the work are examined, it is understood that the work is a study that responds to the orientalist's claims against the preservation of the Qur'an. While giving information about the history of the Qur'an, it is also intended to answer the doubts about the history of the textualisation of the Qur'an. The first three chapters of the mentioned work constitute the subject of our study. Although the author has dozens of works, (Uzun, 2003, s. 214-220; Akpınar, 2002, s. 17-36) *God's Commandment: Translation and Commentary of the Holy Qur'an* (Akpınar, 2007, s. 457-473) has not been studied independently. Since studies on the biography and works of the author have been done already in other studies, they are not repeated in this article. Our study is based on the Latin alphabet edition of the work published by the Presidency of Religious Affairs Publications, Ankara 1967, and the editions of Asar-i 'İlmiyya Library Publications, Amadi Printing House, Istanbul, Hijrî 1345, 1927. Footnotes are given according to the Latin alphabet edition.

The first chapter of the work is *What is the Qur'an*, which was also chosen as the title of the book. In this section, attention is drawn to the language and style of the Qur'an, and the original aspects of Islam by mentioning the principles of belief, worship, morality and practice in the Qur'an are covered under the main title "What is the Qur'an."

In the second part of the work, issues such as the collection of the Qur'an, its arrangement, its edition, the memorisation of the Qur'an in the Golden Age ('Asr al-Sa'ada), the collection of the Qur'an in the time of Hazrat Abu Bakr (d. 13/634) and

Hazrat Uthman (d. 35/656), the Qur'an's Qiraat variances, the objections against the purity of the Qur'an (being clean in material and spiritual sense and being free from doubts) are included. With these explanations, it is claimed that the Qur'an was written and preserved in a way that leaves no room for any doubt and answers to the doubts on this subject were provided.

In the third chapter, under the main title of "The History of the Qur'an"; the hafiz, the editing of the Qur'an, the collection of the Qur'an in one volume, the publication of the Qur'an during the reign of Hazrat 'Umar (d. 23/644), the first published volume of the Qur'an, other copies of the Qur'an, the points and diacritical punctuation of the Qur'an, the Umayyads and the Qur'an, the Qur'an in Africa, the Qur'an in Europe, the Qur'an in Asia, the Qur'an in other parts of the World.

It can be said that Ömer Riza, as an intellectual who witnessed with this work both the interest of Westerners in the history of the textualisation of the Qur'an and the periods when they began to turn towards the exegesis of the Qur'anic text itself with its language and style rather than the authenticity of the Qur'anic text, knows such debates well. Because Ömer Riza was born in 1893 and died in 1952, he witnessed both the first and second world wars. Therefore, he participated in the ways of thinking formed by the new shapes of the world in a Muslim way with his pen.

### 1. An Overview of Qur'anic History Studies

In the modern period, the works that deal with the history of the Qur'an are the works that cover the entire textualisation process of revelation, including the revelation, reading, memorisation, writing, forming a Mushaf, distribution, adding the points to and diacritical punctuation of the Qur'an. Although "Kitab al-Masahif" type works have been written about the history of the Qur'an in Islamic sciences, the information in this field has not been mentioned as a separate field, but in works written in fields such as tafsir, hadith, fada'il al-Qur'an and ulum al-Qur'an. The oldest surviving written works that provide us with information about the history of the Qur'an belong to the authors who lived in the second half of the 2nd century and the first half of the 3rd century. (Öztürk & Ünsal, 2018, s. 13-17). The classical works that provide information about the textualisation process of the Qur'an and the history of the Qur'an and the Mushaf can be listed as follows: Biography and history books such as Abū Muhammad Abdullah Ibn Wahb's (d. 197/813) *al-Jāmi'*, Abū Ubayd Qāsim b. Sallām's (d. 224/838) *Fadā'il al-Qur'ān*, the introduction of Abū Ja'far al-Tabarī's (d. 310/923) *Jāmi al-Bayān*, Abū Bakr Ibn Abī Dāwūd's (d. 316/929) *Kitāb al-Masāhif*, Abū Bakr al-Bāqillānī's *al-Intisār li Naqil al-Qur'ān*, Abū 'Abdillāh Ibn Sa'd's (d. 230/845) *Kitāb al-Taqabātī al-Kabīr*, Abū Zayd Ibn Shabba's (d. 262/876) *Tārīkh al-Medīnat al-Munawwara*, Abū al-Hasan al-Balāzurī's *Ansāb al-Ashrāf* (d. 279/893), Abū al-Abbās al-Ya'qūbī's (d. 292/905) *Tārīkh al-Ya'qūbī*, Abū al-Hasan al-Samhūdī's (d. 911/1506) *Wafā al-Wafā*, and cultural encyclopaedias such as Ibn al-Nadīm's *al-Fihrist* (d. 385/995[?]) and Ibn Abdirabbih's *al-Iqd al-Farīd* (d. 328/940) are works that contain important information on the history of the Qur'an. Since almost all the information on the history of the Qur'an is based on narration, the hadith literature is among the most important sources in this field. Ibn Abī Shaybah's (d. 235/849) *al-Musannaḥ*, Ahmad b. Hanbal's (d. 241/855) *al-Musnad*, al-Bukhārī's (d. 256/870) *al-Jāmi al-Sahih*'s "Bad' al-Wahy" and "Fadāil al-Qur'an" sections. "Fezail al-Qur'an" section of al-Tirmidhī's (d. 279/892) *al-Jāmi' al-Sahih*, "Fadail al-Qur'an" section of al-Nasā'ī's (d. 303/915) *al-Sunan*, the "Tafsir" chapter of al-Bukhārī, Muslim (d. 261/875) and al-Tirmidhī's *Sahihs*, and the "Tafsir" chapter of al-*Mustadrak* by al-Hākīm al-Nisābūrī (d. 405/1014) also provide rich information on the history of the Qur'an. Abū Abdillāh Ibn al-Durays (d. 294/907) and Abū al-Fidā Ibn Kathīr's (d. 774/1373) *Fadā'il al-Qur'ān* and Ibn



Hajar al-'Askalānī's (d. 852/1149) *Fath al-Bārī* are also important works on the history of the Qur'an. In addition, Makkī b. Abī Tālib's (d. 437/1045) *al-Ibāna an Ma'ani al-Qirāât*, Abū 'Amr al-Dānī's (d. 444/1053) *al-Muqni' fi Ma'rifat Marsûm Masahif Ahl al-Amsâr, al-Muhkam fi Naqt al-Masahif* and *al-Bayân fi 'Add Ây al-Qur'ân*, and Abū al-Hasan al-Sahāwī's (d. 643/1245) *Jamāl al-Kurrā'* and *Kamāl al-Ikrā'*, Abū Shāma al-Maqdisī's (d. 665/1267) *al-Murshid al-Wajīz*, Ibn al-Zubayr al-Sakafī's (d. 708/1308) *al-Burhān fi Tartib Suwar al-Qur'ân*, *al-Burhān fi Ulūm al-Qur'ân* by Bedriddīn al-Zarqāshī (d. 794/1392), and *al-Itkān fi Ulūm al-Qur'ân* by Jalāluddīn al-Suyūti (d. 911/1505).

The emergence of the history of the Qur'an as an independent field of study came in the nineteenth century through Western researchers. Western studies on the history of the Qur'an began with the *Geschichte des Qurans* published in 1860 by Theodore Nöldeke (d. 1836/1930), one of the German Orientalists. (Akgün, 2020, s. 1).

Orientalists, who have been researching in the field of Islamic sciences for centuries, have produced many works on the source of the Qur'an and have put forward many different hypotheses about the source of the Qur'an. In these hypotheses, they base the source of the Qur'an mainly on the written and oral sources of Jews and Christians. Some orientalist even extend this framework and include the written and oral knowledge of the religions of the Far East, as well as the discourses of the Hanifs living in the time of the Prophet (pbuh), the pagan Arab culture, Hellenism, Gnosticism, Manichaeism, Hermetism, Neo-Platonism among the sources of the Qur'an. (Yaşar, 2017, s. 29-96). Most of the Orientalists have always claimed that the Qur'an was not written down in a sound and reliable way and have been sceptical about the process of textualisation of the Qur'an. Among Western scholars, Theodore Nöldeke, Ignaz Goldziher (d. 1850/1921) and Arthur Jeffery (d. 1893/1959) are among the contemporary Orientalists interested in the history of the Qur'an. Nöldeke's *Geschichte des Qurans* and Goldziher's *Die Richtungen der Islamischen Koranauslegung* are important works in the field. (Gökkir, 2020, s. 9; Yaşar, 2017, s. 52-53, 56-57, 76-77).

Orientalism was both conceptualised and institutionalised as a scientific discipline in Europe at the beginning of the 19th century, especially in parallel with the beginning and development of colonialism. Considering that Orientalists published around 60,000 works between the early 19th century and the mid-20th century, it should be said that Orientalism experienced its heyday in the 19th and 20th centuries. The most important studies in the field of Qur'anic studies were carried out in this period and the following studies were constantly built on them. (Yaşar, 2017, s. 17).

As for the formation of the "History of the Qur'an" literature, it can be said that the interest in this field in the West coincides with the 19th century and later. If we look at this period in terms of the history of Western thought and science, it is a period in which the West experienced some developments and radical changes in historiography and understanding of history. From the point of view of political history and especially the political relationship between the Islamic world and the Western world, this period coincides with the period when the Western colonisation began to dominate the Islamic world and the East in general. In the post-colonialism phase, which corresponds to the period after 1950 and which we can call the period when the colonies began to dissolve, it can be stated that the Qur'anic history literature, which discusses the authenticity of the Qur'anic text, has lost interest in orientalist studies. It can be supposed that academic interest has started to turn towards the language and style of the Qur'anic text rather than the authenticity of the text. (Robinson, 2018). However, it is seen that doubts and historical debates about the authenticity and preservation of the Qur'anic text have not been abandoned (Gökkir, 2012, s. 11).

As of the second half of the 20th century, it is known that Qur'anic history studies were revived with a "revisionist"<sup>1</sup> (Akgün, 2020, s. 2-3) approach with John Wansbrough's (1928-2002) *Qur'anic Studies and Secterian Milieu* and that the connections between Jewish and Christian theology and saints and the Qur'an were the most important topics in these works (Gokkir, 2012, s. 12).

Many studies on the "History of the Qur'an" have been carried out in the Islamic world in the modern period. Among these works are Abu Abdullah Zinjani's (1891-1941) *Tarikh al-Qur'ân*, Musa Jarullah Bigiev's (1875-1949) *Tarikh al-Qur'ân wa al-Masahif*, Ahmet Cevdet Pasha's (1822-1895) *Hulasat al-Bayan fi Ta'lif al-Qur'ân*, İsmail Fenni Ertugrul's (1855-1946) *The Book to Remove Doubts*. The following works are also mentioned among the contemporary works: Muhammad Abu Layla, *al-Qur'ân al-Karim min al-Manzûr al-Istishrakî Dirasa Naqdiyya Tahliliyya*; Sasi Salim Hajj, *Naqd al-Hitabi al-Istishrakî al-Zahira al-Istishrakîyya wa Atharuhâ fi al-Dirasat al-Islamiyya*; Ibrahim Awad, *al-Mustashrikûn wa al-Qur'ân: Dirasa li Tarjamat Nafar min al-Mustashrikin al-Fransiyyin li al-Qur'ân wa Arahum Fîh*, Muhammad Abu Zahra (1898-1974), *al-Mu'jizat al-Kubra: al-Qur'ân*, Muhammad Mustafa al-A'zami (1930-2017) *The History of the Qur'anic Text: From Revelation to Compilation: A Comparative Study with the Old and New Testaments* (Gokkir, 2012, s. 9).

The following works can be added to the works mentioned above: İzmirli İsmail Hakki's (1869-1946) *History of the Qur'ân*, Mehmet Şerafettin Yaltkaya's (1880-1947) *History of the Qur'ân al-Karim*, Muhammed Hamidullah's (1908-2002) *History of the Qur'ân*, Muhammad Abdullah Dirâz's (1894-1958) *Initiation au Koran*, Osman Keskioglu's (1907-1989) *Knowledge of the Qur'ân al-Karim from Its Revelation to the Present*, Abdu's-Sabûr Şahin's *Tarikh al-Qur'ân*, M. Kemal Atik's *Comparative History of the Qur'an*, Mustafa Öztürk and Hâdiye Ünsal's *History of the Qur'an*, Muhsin Demirci's *History of the Qur'an*, Mehmet Emin Maşalı's *Text Structure, Mushaf History and Spelling of the Qur'an*.

It can be held that independent studies under the name of "History of the Qur'an" are new in the Islamic world. In our tradition, much information about the history of the Qur'an is given in the works of 'ulum al-Qur'an. In the modern period, with the influence of the West, it has become obligatory to write independent works. For example, the works of İzmirli İsmail Hakki and Şerafettin Yaltkaya are largely high-level texts that were published in booklet form under the title of "History of the Qur'an" by summarising the topics related to the history of the Qur'an in the encyclopedic works of scholars such as al-Zarqashi and al-Suyuti. Apart from the work of Muhammad Mustafa al-A'zami, the work of Abdullah Zinjânî outside Turkey should be counted among the works that do not exceed the framework of knowledge of ulûm al-Qur'ân, except for the emergence of writing in the Hijaz peninsula and the translation of the Qur'ân. While Muhammad Hamidullah's work is a bibliography of the Turkish translations of the Holy Qur'an, it can be said that a more critical and innovative language is used in the works of Muhammad Abdullah Dirâz, Mustafa Öztürk and Hâdiye Ünsal. Osman Keskioglu's work is a comprehensive study with a didactic dimension on the methodology of tafsir and the history of the Qur'an. M. Kemal Atik's work is a valuable work that can be called a comparative history of Mushafs including modern approaches. Mehmet Emin Maşalı's

<sup>1</sup> Since the 1970s, some Western scholars have been labelled "revisionists" for their new theories on the formation of the Qur'an and Islam. John Wansbrough, Patricia Crone, Michael Cook, and Günter Lüling are the most prominent of these researchers. Revisionist scholars were sceptical about the origin, writing and finalisation of Islamic narrations and considered the method of historical criticism developed by Orientalists of the 19th and 20th centuries inadequate. Revisionists, on the other hand, had a common opinion about the relationship between the Qur'an and the Prophet. According to them, it is unrealistic to say that there is a connection between the Qur'an and the Prophet Muhammad.

work is a multi-faceted work that deals with and criticises the textualization processes of the Qur'an, including writing, and the history of the Mushafs.

## 2. Sources of the Work

Although Ömer Rıza Doğrul did not use footnotes in this work, which he presented as a drafting experience on a very deep and profound subject, he has stated in the introduction which sources he used in the writing of his work. While writing the first chapter of *What is the Qur'an*, the author states that he benefited from some of the works written about I'jāz al-Qur'an and other works summarising these works. He emphasises that he did not ignore the work written by Mustafa Sâdık Râfiî (1881-1937), one of the Egyptian writers, on "I'jāz al-Qur'an". Ömer Rıza mentions the works such as by al-Jāhiz's (d. 255/869) *Nazm al-Qur'an*, Abū 'Īsā al-Rummānī's (d. 384/994) *al-Nuqāt fī i'jāz al-Qur'an*, Qādī Abū Bakr Bāqillanī's (d. 403/1013) *I'jāz al-Qur'an*, Abū Suleiman Muhammad b. Ibrāhīm al-Khattābī's (d. 388/998) *Bayān al-I'jāz al-Qur'an*, as well as works on this subject by scholars such as Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī (d. 606/1210), Ibn Abū al-Isba' (d. 654/1256), and Ibn al-Zamlakānī (d. 727/1327) (Doğrul, 1967, s. 6, 11). The author states that he has summarised the Qur'an's main topics of belief, worship, morality and guidance by making use of the appendix entitled "Islam is the Religion of Humanity" of the work he translated under the name of *Our Prophet Peace Be Upon Him*<sup>2</sup> (and other works of his own and other different works and tafsirs. However, it is not clear which of these other works and commentaries are (Doğrul, 1967, s. 6).

It is stated that Mawlānā Muhammad Ali's English translation of the Qur'an was used in the writing of the second chapter, which deals with the collection and organisation of the Qur'an, its revelation, its recitation and memorisation in the Prophet's era, and its preservation in this form (Doğrul, 1967, s. 6). The main sources of Islam such as *Sahih* of al-Bukhari and *Sahih* of al-Muslim have been consulted in order to indicate the hadiths used as evidence by non-Muslims and to respond to their accusations against the Qur'an. English sources such as Encyclopedia Britannica have also been utilised (Doğrul, 1967, s. 6).

It is indicated that the following chapters of the work are based on the English translation of the Urdu treatise written by Muhammad Abdullah Minhas, one of the contemporary scholars of India, under the name of *Payam-i Amin* (Doğrul, 1967, s. 6,7).

## 3. Non-Muslims Mentioned in the Work

He did not give much space to the thoughts of non-Muslims about the Qur'an and Islam, probably because he found them distasteful. He preferred to respond with his work without entering any polemic with them. To enlighten the historical background of the work, it would be appropriate to briefly mention the thoughts of the orientalist mentioned in the work.

### 3.1 Alphonse Mingana (1878-1937)

Alphonse Mingana claims that the Qur'an has not reached us as it was revealed and that the text has been tampered with in some way. According to him, although a significant part of the Qur'an is based on Aramaic and Syriac languages, Islamic scholars failed to realise this dimension of the work, and therefore, from the beginning, they have both miswritten and misinterpreted the Qur'an. According to Mingana, while languages

<sup>2</sup> The work titled *Our Prophet Peace Be Upon Him* is the translation of the work titled *Sirat-i Saniyyah* by the Indian writer Muhammad Ali into Turkish by Ömer Rıza Doğrul with some notes.

such as Hebrew and Abyssinian have an influence on the Qur'anic language, the influence of Syriac is much greater. Mingana claims that Muhammad used Syriac concepts, which were used in his surroundings at the time and were known to the Arabs, for religious terms for which he could not find equivalents in his own language. In this way He achieved a linguistic revolution (Neuwirth, 2020, s. 338). According to him, Syriac is both more literary and more developed in terms of religious language (Yasar, 2017, s. 63-64). For example, the name Isaac in the Qur'an is not taken from Hebrew but from Syriac. In addition, Mingana believes that all the religious terms in the Qur'an are taken from Syriac. Some of them are the words such as priest, furqan, religion, taghut, apocalypse, sacrifice and messiah (Akgün, 2020, s. 62; al-Zarqashī (thk. Atā), 1988, s. 357-362).

Doğrul did not mention the above ideas of Mingana. He only states in the preface of his work that the writing allegedly discovered by Mingana and published under the title "leaves from old copies of the Qur'an" or "pages from three old Qur'ans" constitutes evidence in favour of the Qur'an, not against it. (Doğrul, 1967, s. 4). Because, according to Doğrul, the examples given in this article do not point to different Qur'anic manuscripts before Hazrat Uthman but to spelling/typing mistakes (Doğrul, 1967, s. 58). With these statements, Doğrul referred to Mingana's 1915 article on the pre-Hazrat Uthman Qur'anic pages (Çalışkan, 2020, s. 174-182).

### 3.2. George Sale (1697-1736)

According to George Sale, Muhammad, although he deserved to be condemned for imposing a false religion on the people, was a man of good morals and a fine intellect. He led the Arabs out of idolatry and made them believe in a single God, was kind to everyone, rich and poor, and opposed injustice, lying, murderers, slanderers, prodigals, and greed. For this reason, He is a person to be admired (Yaşar, 2017, s. 34). Sale, like many non-Muslim scholars, claims that Muhammad himself edited the Qur'an. He created many of the terms related to the internal organisation of the Qur'an in analogy with the People of the Book, imitated the prophetic sentence patterns of the Old Testament, and even borrowed some styles from the Magi. To him, Muhammad's chief guides were the Jews. Therefore, he imitated Judaism in many matters (Yaşar, 2017, s. 34; Birışık, 2009, s. 36/24-25).

Ömer Rıza states that many non-Muslim writers claim that the Qur'an is composed of unorganised and jumbled verses and that they imitate each other in spreading this claim. For example, he says that Sale, the English orientalist who prepared the first complete English translation of the Qur'an, put forward this claim in his introduction to the English translation of the Qur'an (Doğrul, 1967, s. 39). The author has given answers to these claims about the collection and organisation of the Qur'an.

### 3.3. Edward Henry Palmer (1840-1882)

According to Palmer, who makes derogatory remarks about the personality of Muhammad, some of the matters in the Qur'an were given to Muhammad by his Christian companions through Syriac translations of the sacred texts. Muhammad used ancient religious legends, widely known among the Arabs, in his religion. In his doctrine he placed the monotheism propagated by the People of the Book in a central position. According to him, some conceptions seem to have been borrowed from Magianism. Muhammad preached nothing but the truths of Judaism and Christianity. Nevertheless, he introduced a third religion (Yaşar, 2017, s. 36-39).



Doğrul, while discussing the collection and organisation of the Qur'an, cites Palmer's claim that it was not organised at the time of the Prophet, and that some verses were repeated because they were deemed appropriate in terms of prose and versification (Doğrul, 1967, s. 39).

### 3.4. Sir William Muir (1819-1905)

Muir claims that some Qur'anic verses and sources of exegesis confirm Christian revelation. He also says that the Qur'an is the most difficult of the holy books to understand and that some parts of it were written by the Prophet Muhammad. Muir, who believed that Christianity was a purer religion than Islam, used offensive language about the Messenger of Allah. In *The Life of Mahomet*, he claimed that Muhammad's prophethood was fabricated and that the revelation he said had come down to him in fact came from his subconscious. It is understood that Muir's main purpose in turning to Arab and Islamic studies was to support the policy of the British colonial administration and the missionary activities in which he actively participated, and in the meantime, especially to prove that the Qur'an and its sources of exegesis confirm the Christian revelation, and to wear down Islam and its prophet with destructive criticisms far from scientific objectivity (Woodhead, 2020, s. 31/94).

## 4. Subjects Dealt with in the First Three Chapters of the Work Titled *What is the Qur'an*

The Holy Qur'an has always been a source for Muslims in terms of religion, morality, belief, behaviour and social life. Muslim scholars have mostly treated the Qur'an as the basis of their legal and theological doctrinal systems. However, the approaches of most of the non-Muslim contemporary Western scholars to the Qur'an have been limited to its historical aspects. In the author's first answers to the question "What is the Qur'an", it is understood that the Qur'an is a book that encompasses the whole of the life both in this world and in the hereafter.

### 4.1. What is the Qur'an

"What is the Qur'an" is the main title of the first chapter and is also the title of the book. The subjects listed under this title are the equivalent of the Qur'anic imagination in Ömer Rıza Doğrul's mind. This chapter consists of the following titles: The Qur'an, the language of the Qur'an, the style and verse of the Qur'an, the main beliefs of the Qur'an, the concept of divinity in Islam, tawhid, revelation, afterlife, belief in angels, practical principles; prayer, fasting, pilgrimage, zakat, man's duties towards man, Islamic brotherhood, obedience to elders and leaders, Qur'anic morality and salvation.

When we look at the titles that Doğrul opened to the question "What is the Qur'an?", we can see that the Qur'an is not only a written historical source for research, but also a set of beliefs, orders and practices that encompass the whole of life, including the other world.

According to Doğrul, the Qur'an is the holy book of Islam. Its addressee is not a tribe or a nation but the whole humanity. The essence of the religion preached by all prophets is the same. However, according to the changing needs of humanity, not the principles, but the details change, so the last form of Islam is the form communicated by our Prophet and expressed in the Qur'an (Doğrul, 1967, s. 9).

To Doğrul, the Qur'an is distinguished from other books in terms of its history. It is also a miracle because of its impact on humanity and the truths it communicates (Doğrul, 1967, s. 11). The basis of this i'jâz is the style of the Qur'an. The verse of the

Qur'an, its composition, the way its letters are arranged in words, words in sentences, sentences in suras, is unlike any other work written by Arabic eloquents. Doğrul draws attention to the reflection of this perfect harmony arising from the verse of the Qur'an on the music in its recitation and says that if one of its letters is changed, the harmony in the recitation will be disrupted (Doğrul, 1967, s. 13). He emphasises that a word forming a sentence expresses three sounds. These are the voice of the soul, the voice of the mind and the voice of consciousness. Omar Reza says that the voice of consciousness is the voice of consciousness, which Arabic literati do not have, and that the Qur'an has given Arabic the voice of consciousness. The more this voice is heard in a certain word, the more the spirit of eloquence is manifested in it (Doğrul, 1967, s. 13).

According to Doğrul, the Holy Qur'an requires its believers to believe in all the heavenly books. Because all religions are based on "divine revelation". The Qur'an has corrected the errors in the heavenly books and communicated the truths that had not been communicated before. Furthermore, it was sent to fulfil all the spiritual and moral needs of humanity. The Qur'an is the divine work that expresses the perfection of religion. The important feature that distinguishes the Qur'an from other religious books is that it has been preserved in all its purity (Doğrul, 1967, s. 14-15).

According to Doğrul, tawhid is one of the foremost principles of Islam. In the concept of divinity inculcated by Islam, Allah is not a God who confines his generosity and favour to one nation and is the God of only one nation. The Holy Qur'an, without naming names, criticises the Jewish understanding of divinity by saying "Allah is the Lord of the worlds" and the Christian understanding of God by saying "divinity does not accept fragmentation and division" and explains the Islamic understanding of divinity by bringing evidence from the Qur'anic verses (Doğrul, 1967, s. 16-18).

When considered together with the other topics covered in this chapter, Doğrul argues and defends the Qur'an not only as a text but also with its belief, worship, morality and social dimensions.

## **4.2. Topics Covered in the Second Section**

### **4.2.1. How The Qur'an Was Gathered and Organised?**

Doğrul states that many non-Muslim writers have imitated each other in supporting the claim that the Qur'an is composed of unorganised and jumbled verses. For example, Sale asserts this claim in his introduction to the English translation of the Qur'an, Palmer says that the Qur'an was not organised at the time of the Prophet and that some verses were repeated only because they were deemed appropriate in terms of prose and versification (Doğrul, 1967, s. 39). Although Doğrul was aware of the problems, one of his biggest shortcomings was that he did not cite sources when referring to the authors.

Doğrul argues that Sale and Palmer's claims are not true. Because the Qur'an was written down completely during the life of the Messenger of Allah and by his order. The Qur'an was completely memorised while the Messenger of Allah was alive. Every sura of the Qur'an was organised in the life of the Messenger of Allah. The collection of the Qur'an at the time of Hazrat Abu Bakr is nothing but a compilation of various writings into one volume. The divergence of the qiraats did not cause any significant disagreement in the meaning of the Qur'anic text (Doğrul, 1967, s. 39). The following chapters are an explanation of these issues.

#### 4.2.2. The Tadwin of the Qur'an

According to Doğrul, the Holy Qur'an is a reliable book that leaves no room for doubt. The reason for this is that the incoming revelations were written in the presence of the Messenger of Allah. There is evidence in the Qur'an that prove this. One of them is that the Qur'an is called a book (al-Baqara, 2/1) and a suhuf (al-Bayyina, 98/2). This means "leaves" that are written and constitute an artefact.

When new verses were revealed to the Messenger of Allah, he would call one of the scribes who wrote the revelation and order him to write the verse in one of the existing suras and in the place He deemed appropriate (al-Arnaüt & Murshid, 2001, s. 1/57). Doğrul believes that this information from Hazrat Uthman (d. 35/656) constitutes evidence that the Qur'anic revelations were written in the presence of the Messenger of Allah (Doğrul, 1967, s. 40). Another report from Barā b. 'Azib (d. 71/690) is as follows: When verse 95 of Sura al-Nisa was revealed, the Messenger of Allah said, "Call Zayd to come and get me a plate or a scapula and a divot." When Zayd b. Thabit (d. 60/680) came, he ordered him to write the verse *لَا يَسْتَوِي الْقَاعِدُونَ مِنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ*. Zayd b. Thabit himself confirms this information. "I used to work as a scribe for the Messenger of Allah and once he ordered me to write the verse *لَا يَسْتَوِي الْقَاعِدُونَ مِنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ*" (al-Bukhārī, 2002, "Kitāb al-Jihād wa al-Siyar", 30 (No. 2831); Bukhārī, "Kitāb al-Tafsīr", 18 (No. 3593); Bukhārī, "Fadā'il al-Qur'an", 4 (No. 4990). 'Abdullah ibn 'Umar (d. 73/693) said, "We were forbidden to carry a copy of the Qur'an in our hands when we travelled to enemy lands for fear that it might fall into their hands." (al-Qazwīnī, 2014, 45 (No. 2889), 3/141). Again, the Prophet said, "Do not write anything from me except the Qur'an." (Abdulbāqī, ts. "Kitāb al-Zuhd", 72 (No. 3004). These and similar narrations indicate that the revelations were written down in the time of the Prophet (Doğrul, 1967, s. 40-42; Çalışkan, 2017, s. 64; Deliser, 2020, s. 114-122).

#### 4.2.3. The Qur'an Was Memorised in Asr al-Sa'ada

Doğrul affirms that the Arabs were very confident in their memory and could memorise all long odes and tribal genealogies. For this reason, when the Holy Qur'an was revealed, the Arabs were able to memorise it immediately. All Muslim contemporaries of the Prophet believed that the Qur'an was the Word of Allah and considered it a religious duty to memorise it. Muslims who believed in the Qur'an felt a deep pleasure and a high consolation from memorising the Qur'an. In fact, the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) also attached great importance to the recitation and instruction of the Qur'an and assigned the duties of guidance and imamate only to those who memorised the Qur'an. The number of those who memorised the whole Qur'an at the time of the Messenger of Allah can be expressed in hundreds. Because only seventy of them were treacherously martyred in the "Bi'r Mauna" incident. The fact that there were about 70 hafiz Companions among those who were martyred in the Battle of Yamamah, which took place in the first days of the caliphate of Hazrat Abu Bakr, shows how many hafiz Companions there were among the living Companions. It is reported that among those who memorised the whole Qur'an in the life of the Messenger of Allah, there were male Companions such as Hazrat Abu Bakr, Hazrat 'Umar, Hazrat Uthman, Hazrat 'Ali, and female Companions such as Hazrat 'Aisha (d. 58/678) Hazrat Hafsa (d. 45/665). (Doğrul, 1967, s. 42-43).

Even if the number and names of those who memorised all the revelations are different in the sources, (Dağ, 2006) this deep-rooted tradition, which was formed in and around the Prophet himself as a necessity of the Prophet's policy of Qur'anic education and teaching, has continued vividly under the name of "memorization / hifz" until today.

#### 4.2.4. The Order of Suras and Verses

Doğrul suggest that the Qur'an was both written and memorised at the time of the Messenger of Allah. The verses of the Holy Qur'an are organised in the most perfect way as such that a more perfect organisation is unthinkable. According to the author, to say that there is no connection and relationship between the verses of the Qur'an is to not know Arabic and not understand the Qur'an. The scholars and specialised scholars had no difficulty in discovering the relations between the verses (Doğrul, 1967, s. 43).

Doğrul puts forward the following evidence from verses and hadiths to prove that the Qur'an was organised by the Messenger of Allah: "Do not move your tongue until Jibril has finished the revelation in order to grasp and memorise it quickly. It is for us to collect it and make you read it. So, when We recite it, follow its recitation." (al-Qiyamah, 75/16-18). According to Doğrul, these verses show that the work of collecting and organising the Qur'an is a requirement of divine revelation. Since the Qur'an was a book memorised during the life of the Messenger of Allah and was recited in prayers and everywhere, it is not possible for it to have been memorised in an unorganised way. The verses of the Qur'an are organised according to their subjects, not according to their dates of occurrence. There is no doubt that the present form of the Qur'an is the form organised by the Messenger of Allah. "Whoever recites the last two verses of Sura al-Baqara at night, it is enough for him." (Bukhari, "Fada'il al-Qur'an", 10 (No. 5008). This hadith narrated by al-Bukhari shows that Sura al-Baqara was composed during the lifetime of the Messenger of Allah (Doğrul, 1967, s. 43-44).

It is true that the Qur'an ended shortly before the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) passed away. But this has nothing to do with the organisation of verses and suras. Because every part of the Qur'an that was revealed was organised by the Messenger of Allah in the way He himself determined. If the revealed verses constitute a small sura, it was placed in the place determined by the Messenger of Allah (Doğrul, 1967, s. 44). It seems that Doğrul is of the opinion that both verses and suras were edited by the Prophet Muhammad directly.

#### 4.2.5. The Compilation of the Qur'an in the Times of Abu Bakr and Uthman

The author started this subject with the following question: If the Qur'an was written, collected, memorised and organised at the time of the Messenger of Allah, what is the purpose of the gathering of the Qur'an during the reign of Hazrat Abu Bakr and Hazrat Uthman?

The author answers the question by linking it with the historical events of the period and the consequences of these events. As it is known, during the last years of Prophet Muhammad and the caliphate of Hazrat Abu Bakr, apostasy increased in Arabia. During this period, the Battle of Yamama was fought with one of the false prophets, Musaylima al-Kazzab (d. 12/633). Many hafizs were martyred in this war. Hazrat 'Umar, who was worried about this decrease in the number of hafizs, encouraged Hazrat Abu Bakr to compile the Qur'an into a volume. Hazrat 'Umar convinced Hazrat Abu Bakr and this work was entrusted to Zayd (Doğrul, 1967, s. 44-45).

Doğrul, the copy of the Qur'an that was edited during the time of the Hazrat Abu Bakr is the same Qur'an that was recited by the Messenger of Allah. The sole aim of those who did this work was to compile the Qur'an into a volume. This work was done six months after the Messenger of Allah's death. All those who listened to the Qur'an from the Messenger of Allah were alive when this collection was made, and there were many among the Companions who had memorised the Qur'an completely. Moreover, the



Companions had written copies of the Qur'an in their hands. Because the Qur'an was written completely in the life of the Messenger of Allah. Therefore, there is no evidence that the Qur'an is missing or excessive at the present time (Doğrul, 1967, s. 45).

This copy, which was written during the reign of Hazrat Abu Bakr, remained with him until his death, and after his death, it was passed to Hazrat 'Umar, who handed it to his daughter, Hazrat Hafsa, who was also the wife of the Prophet Muhammad. Hazrat Uthman created official copies of the Qur'an to resolve the disputes that occurred in the Qur'anic recitation and distributed them everywhere. The copies of the Qur'an that Hazrat 'Uthman had copied are the same copies that were collected during the time of Hazrat Abu Bakr. Zayd, who transcribed the Qur'an in the time of Hazrat Abû Bakr, did the same work in the time of Hazrat 'Uthman. After these copies were written, the copy taken from Hazrat Hafsa was returned to her. Upon the publication of these copies, the copies published by some people and causing Qiraat disputes in the newly conquered countries were eliminated. The copies of the Qur'an we have today are the same copies published by Hazrat Uthman (Doğrul, 1967, s. 45-46).

#### 4.2.6. Qur'an's Qiraat Variances

Doğrul, without giving scientific and historical information on the subject, started his words by directly stating that the qiraat disputes caused some objections. According to him, the first of these objections is the claim that Hazrat 'Uthman caused the destruction of a part of the Qur'an by eliminating the qiraats permitted by the Messenger of Allah, and the second is the diversity of the qiraats and the inability to determine which qiraat is correct because of these differences (Doğrul, 1967, s. 46).

In response to both objections, Doğrul claims that these oppositions stem from a lack of understanding of the word "qiraat". The Prophet declared that the Qur'an was revealed in seven letters (Bukhari, "Fada'il al-Qur'an", 5 (No. 4991). According to Doğrul, what is meant by the word "letter" in the hadith is the dialect, expression and declaration style of the Arabs. All the hadiths narrated indicate that Muslims in the Golden Age recited the Qur'an according to various dialects, but dialect differences did not cause any change in the original Qur'anic text. The recitation of the Qur'an according to various dialects is a natural result of the spread of Islam among various tribes. Since it was impossible to eliminate the tribal dialects that differed from the Quraysh dialect, each tribe read the text of the Qur'an, but pronounced the words according to their own dialects. Preventing this means precluding the spread of Islam and the recitation of the Qur'an. Then it becomes clear what the purpose of the Qur'an being revealed in seven dialects is. Since the differences between these seven dialects is not of much importance, the Qur'an could be recited in these dialects. Because these seven dialects are the purest dialects of Arabic (Doğrul, 1967, s. 46-47). Doğrul rejects the second objection as a baseless claim with the following statements: "First of all, there is no copy of the Qur'an on earth that is even remotely contrary to the copy we have. Then, if you have two Muslims from two distant parts of the world read the Qur'an, you will see that they read the same thing. Therefore, nothing has ever happened among Muslims due to the difference of recitation that would damage the purity, cleanliness and reliability of the Qur'an." (Doğrul, 1967, s. 47).

It should also be noted that the different reading styles resulting from the "seven letters" licence are a matter of the nature of language, and that this diversity does not affect the meaning of the Qur'an much. Some of these changes include interchangeable words such as "and" or "also". There is a remarkable similarity in the actual wording of the Qur'an. This is a proof of the reliability of the 'Uthman copies (Griffel, 2022, s. 70). The

fact that Muslims kept the qiraat narrations separate from the text of the Qur'an and developed them as a "Science of Qiraat" shows their self-confidence in the authenticity of the Qur'an.

It is understood that Doğrul approaches the Qur'an and qiraat as two different phenomena. Doğrul associated the issue of qiraat with the issue of seven letters (Çetin, 2005). Therefore, he implies that the qiraats are a result of the permit given by the Messenger of Allah to read differently. Doğrul did not give detailed information on the issue of qiraat and the seven letters as in other subjects. He left the knowledge of the field to the reader's mind and tried to produce direct answers to questions and problems.

#### 4.2.7. Objections Against the Purity of the Qur'an

Some non-Muslims have always kept on the agenda the debates about whether the Qur'an has been textualised in a pure and clean way and have claimed that the Qur'an is not complete and that Hazrat 'Uthman left some suras incomplete. Under this heading, Doğrul criticised the narrations in Islamic sources that justified the orientalist's scepticism about the textualisation process of the Qur'an. Doğrul especially states that Zayd b. Thabit did not compile the Holy Qur'an alone but was assisted by many Companions in this matter.

According to Doğrul, Hazrat 'Uthman destroyed the other copies of the Holy Qur'an which he had received from Hafsa and had Zayd copy it from this copy. One of the copies that was destroyed was the copy of Ubayy b. Ka'b (d. 33/654). However, there is no evidence to prove that Ubayy's copy contains anything more than the existing copies of the Qur'an. Al-Suyuti (d. 911/1505) also claims in his work *Itqan* that only the Qunut prayer is written at the end of the copy said to belong to Ubayy b. Ka'b. Both Qunut and similar prayers are mentioned in the hadiths. They have nothing to do with the Qur'an. Although al-Suyuti mentions such a thing in his work *Itqan*, there is a consensus that al-Suyuti cannot be trusted in hadith expertise. Muhaddiths such as al-Bukhari refute al-Suyuti on this issue (Doğrul, 1967, s. 47-48).

Doğrul drew attention to two points to prove the purity of the Qur'an. The first is that nothing has been added to the original text of the Qur'an, and the second is that nothing has been removed from the original text. There is no narration in Islamic sources that denies that the Qur'an is composed of divine revelations. Regarding the second point only, according to a rumour, Ibn Mas'ud (d. 32/652-53) did not record the last two suras of the Qur'an in his own copy, thinking that they were prayers. Since all the Companions objected to this action of Ibn Mas'ud, his injustice was realised (Doğrul, 1967, s. 48).

Doğrul has examined three narrations in Muslim's *al-Sahih* which imply that some verses were removed from the Qur'an and criticised these narrations, saying that they do not reflect the truth.

The first of these is the narration of Abu al-Aswad al-Duali (d. 69/688): According to this narration, Abu Musa al-Ash'ari (d. 42/662-63) summoned the hafiz of Basra and three hundred hafizs who had memorised the Qur'an came. Abu Musa al-Ashari said to them: "You are the best hafizs of the Qur'an in Basra. Read the Qur'an. Do not neglect reading the Qur'an. Your hearts will harden as the hearts of those before you hardened. Then he continued his words as follows: We were reciting a sura that resembled Sura al-Tawba in length and intensity. I have forgotten it, but this is what I remember: If the son of Adam had two valleys full of wealth, he would want a third valley. Only the earth can satiate man's greed. Then there was another period which we likened to the suras of (Sabbaha). I have forgotten that too. Only this much is in my memory: "O you who

believe, why do you say what you cannot do, and why do you bear the burden of a testimony that will be asked of you on the Day of Resurrection?" (Muslim, "Kitab al-Zakat", 119 (No. 1050)).

According to the second narration attributed to Hazrat 'Umar in Muslim's *al-Sahih*, Hazrat 'Umar said from his pulpit one Friday: "Allah sent Muhammad with the truth and revealed the Book to him. One of the things He revealed to him is the verse of stoning (rajm). We have read this verse, comprehended it and kept it in our minds. The Messenger of Allah performed stoning. After him, we also did it. Don't let anyone say in later times that there is no stoning in the Book of Allah. If they say that, people will fall into misguidance by neglecting an obligation revealed by Allah. The punishment of a man and woman who are married and commit adultery is right according to the Book of Allah..." (Muslim, "Kitāb al-Khudūd", 15 (No: 1691); Demirci, 2000, s. 101-119).

According to the third narration in Muslim's *al-Sahih* from Hazrat 'A'isha, she states that there is a verse in the Qur'an that states that intimacy is established with ten sucklings, then it was abrogated with the known five sucklings, and when the Messenger of Allah passed away, these verses were being recited in the Qur'an (Muslim, "Kitāb al-Radā'", 6 (No: 24); Özdemir, 2019, s. 14-32).

Doğrul criticised these three narrations in terms of both script and text and rejected them as lies and fabrications. Doğrul's criticism of these three narrations is a product of knowledge, reason and intelligence. It is also an example in terms of hadith criticism (Doğrul, 1967, s. 47-58).

On the other hand, in al-Suyūti's *Itqan*, the narrations of Hazrat 'Aisha that Sura al-Ahzab has 200 verses, that there is a basmala at the beginning of Sura al-Tawba, that Ibn Mas'ūd's copy of the Qur'an contains 112 suras, that he did not include Suras al-Falaq and al-Nās in his own mushaf, that Ubayy b. Ka'b's (d. 33/654) copy contains 116 suras, and that he wrote the prayers known as qunut prayers in his mushaf as suras were not taken seriously by the author because al-Suyūti was lax and unreliable in these matters (Doğrul, 1967, s. 53). In fact, the origin of such narrations can be traced back to the fourth century (Ibn Nedim, 1997, s. 43-45). However, it cannot be said that there is an agreement on the issue.

The author has responded to the allegations regarding the authenticity of the Qur'an in Mingana's article published under the title "three ancient Qur'anic pages". According to Dr Mingana, these old pages predate the time of 'Uthman. But who wrote them? When were they written? There is no answer to these questions (Doğrul, 1967, s. 58). The words written differently that Mingana put forward from the copy he claims to have found to prove that the existing Mushafs are wrong are the following:

ضَلَّ instead of ضَلَّ ,

أَعْرَضَ instead of أَعْرَضَ ,

قُرْآن instead of قُرْآن ,

يَنْتَلُوا instead of يَنْتَلُوا ,

أَدَانَا instead of أَدَانَا

According to Doğrul, these are all spelling mistakes. It does not indicate the existence of a different Mushaf (Doğrul, 1967, s. 58). According to Altıkulaç, one of the contemporary scholars, there is a difference in approach between orientalist scholars and Muslim scholars about the Mushaf folios. Accordingly, an erroneous spelling or a later

correction seen on the Mushaf folios was seen as evidence of change by some orientalist, while Muslim scholars considered such mistakes as scribal errors (Akgün, 2020, s. 75).

Doğrul states that William Muir, one of the non-Muslim writers, claimed that Hazrat 'Uthman concealed some verses of Hazrat Ali (d. 40/661). According to Doğrul, this claim is also baseless. Because most Shiites do not accept such a claim. The majority of the Shia agree that the Qur'an is complete and preserved in its original form (Doğrul, 1967, s. 59).

### **4.3. Topics Covered in the Third Chapter**

The author has included the following topics in this section: The Historical Initiation of the Qur'an, The Hafiz, The Edification of the Qur'an, The Compilation of the Qur'an in One Volume, The Compilation of the Qur'an in the Age of Hazrat 'Umar, The First Volume of the Qur'an, Other Copies of the Qur'an, The Points and the Diacritical Punctuations of the Qur'an, The Umayyads and the Qur'an, The Qur'an in Africa, Europe, Asia and Other Parts of the World.

Some of the information and topics in the second chapter were repeated in this chapter as well. We preferred to summarise this chapter under the title of The Historical Propagation of the Qur'an in accordance with the historical chronology followed by the author, without including the previously mentioned topics. Already the titles of the chapters talk about the historical spread of the Qur'an.

#### **4.3.1. Historical Diffusion of the Qur'an**

The Holy Qur'an brought with it factors that made writing and writing secretariat compulsory and expanded the field of its use. The Prophet also ordered the determination and preservation of information in writing and appointed scribes for the transcription of revelation, covenants, letters to be sent to the rulers and various correspondences. In the period of Khulafa al-Rashidin, each caliph had a special scribe, as well as separate scribes for various duties (Küçükaşçı, 2022, s. 25/53).

The verses of the Qur'an announced by the Messenger of Allah were both memorised and written down by the Companions. Doğrul confirms that these two practices of the Messenger of Allah continued with the tradition of memorisation and scribing. These two methods adopted in the dissemination of the Qur'an continued uninterruptedly in the Islamic tradition (Doğrul, 1967, s. 60).

Hazrat Abu Bakr eliminated all dangers to the Qur'an by printing and recording the Qur'an in a single volume. The activities for the publication of the Qur'an continued during the reign of 'Umar. Doğrul conveys the following information on this subject: Khalif 'Umar also attached great importance to the publication of the Qur'an. Hazrat 'Umar himself went to the bazaars and fairs, read the Qur'an to the people, and then found solutions to their problems, if any. In addition, he appointed well paid teachers and professors to teach and publish the Qur'an for he also made it compulsory for Bedouins to learn the Qur'an. The Khalif tested the Arab tribes of Abu Sufyan (d. 31/651-52) from the Qur'an and punished those who did not know a single verse from it. Hazrat 'Umar sent teachers to the neighbouring regions to teach the Qur'an and Islam to the new converts to Islam. Three of the Companions were sent to teach the Qur'an to the Muslims of Syria. In addition to teaching the Qur'an, they were busy giving religious lessons to the people in Homs, Damascus and Palestine. In the army of Sa'd b. Abi Waqqâs (d. 55/675), the conqueror of Iran, it is stated that the number of hafizs was 300 (Doğrul, 1967, s. 62).



Doğrul summarised ‘Umar’s efforts for the publication, instruction and preservation of the Qur’an with the following quote by Shah Waliullah Dehlawī (d. 1176/1762): “Today, every individual among Muslims who reads the Qur’an owes a great debt of gratitude and thanks to Hazrat ‘Umar.” (Doğrul, 1967, s. 62-63).

According to Doğrul, the Qur’an was spread everywhere before it was published in one volume. The danger of any distortion and alteration due to the scattered state of the Qur’an was eliminated by bringing the verses together and organising them. The first volume of the Holy Qur’an, which was edited in this way, first remained under the patronage of Hazrat Abu Bakr and then passed on to ‘Umar, who entrusted this volume to his daughter Hafsa, the wife of the Messenger of Allah. Hafsa preserved the Holy Qur’an with the deepest affection and the greatest care. During the reign of Hazrat ‘Uthman, this volume was taken and in the twenty-fifth year of Hijra, five copies, according to another narration seven copies, were printed and sent to different Islamic countries. ‘Uthman based the reproduction of the Qur’an on the Quraysh dialect spoken by the Prophet Muhammad. He neglected other qiraat variants in order to prevent possible conflicts and falsification. Therefore, only one qiraat became popular in non-Arabic-speaking countries (Doğrul, 1967, s. 63).

One of the copies of the Qur’an written during the time of Hazrat ‘Uthman was kept in Medina by his order. The other copies were sent to Mecca, Syria, Yemen, Bahrain, Basra and Kufa (Doğrul, 1967, s. 64). While the Mushafs sent to Yemen and Bahrain were not mentioned, there were long discussions about the fate of the other five copies.

**Medina Mushaf:** Mawlānā Shiblī Nu’mānī (d.1857-1914) stated in the journal “Tahzib al-Akhlaq” that the Medina Mushaf was seen in Medina in 735 AH (Doğrul, 1967, s. 65). Musa Jarullah Bigiev (d.1875-1949) also said that he saw the Medina Mushaf after escaping from Bolshevik Russia in 1930 (Keskiöğlü, 2014, s. 134).

**Mecca Mushaf:** Mawlānā Shiblī also records that the Meccan Mushaf was seen there in 735 AH (Doğrul, 1967, s. 65).

**Kufa Mushaf:** The copy sent to Kufa by ‘Uthman arrived in Tarsus at an unknown date and was transferred to the castle of Homs. Imam Nablusi (d. 1143/1731) described this copy during his travels in 1689 (Keskiöğlü, 2014, s. 134-135).

**Basra Mushaf:** According to the statement of Mawlānā Shiblī, the copy in Basra was taken to Cordoba in Spain at an unknown date. In the six hundred and forty-fifth year of Hijrah, first Mu’tazid Billah (892-902) and then Abu al-Hasan took this copy when they conquered Tilimsan. Upon the death of Abu al-Hasan, this copy was taken to Portugal. There it was bought by a merchant and brought to Morocco, where it was kept in the state treasury for a long time (Doğrul, 1967, s. 65). Doğrul approaches this narration of Shiblī with caution. According to him, this is the copy that ‘Uthman recited when he was martyred. The Umayyads kept this copy for a while, and when they travelled to Spain, they took it with them. After the end of Islamic rule in Spain, this copy was brought to Morocco. According to Ibn Battuta (d.779/1377), this copy was seen in the eighth century of Hijra with blood stains on it (Doğrul, 1967, s. 65). According to the information given by Doğrul, the same copy was transferred from Bukhara to Moscow in 1904. Although it was later returned to Bukhara, it was sent back to Moscow in 1923 after the Bolsheviks conquered Turkestan. Attempts have been made to return this copy to Bukhara and these attempts have yielded results. It is said that this copy was placed in the tomb of Sheikh Obaidullah Akhrar (d. 895/1490) during the Timurid period (1370-1405) and the Bolsheviks took it from there (Doğrul, 1967, s. 66; Keskiöğlü, 2014, s. 137-138).

According to this approach of Doğrul, the copy that Mawlana Shibli says is the Mushaf of Basra is not the Mushaf of Basra but the Mushaf of Uthman. This Mushaf was somehow transferred to Russia. As a result of long evaluations, Osman Keskiöğlü came to the conclusion that this Mushaf, which is claimed to be found in Russia, is not the 'Uthman Mushaf (Keskiöğlü, 2014, s.137-138).

**Damascus/Syria Mushaf:** According to Mawlānā Shibli's article in the journal "Tahzib al-Akhlaq", Abu al-Qasim al-Sabtī (d. 730/1329) saw the copy of the Qur'an sent by Hazrat 'Uthman in the mausoleum of the Damascus Mosque in 657 AH. 'Abd al-Malik also says that he saw this copy in the 725th year of the Hijrah. Ibn al-Jazari (d. 833/1429) says that he saw the Damascus Mushaf as well as one of the "Masahif al-Amsar" in Egypt (Keskiöğlü, 2014, s. 135).

At the end of this chapter, the author provides historical information about the Umayyads' services in spreading the Qur'an and how the Qur'an reached Africa, Europe, Asia and other parts of the world (Doğrul, 1967, s. 67-74).

### Conclusion

The Holy Qur'an has always been a source for Muslims in terms of religion, ethics and faith, including listening and memorising. In this sense, it is a conscious choice that Ömer Riza Doğrul devotes the first part of his work to these issues. This is because Muslim scholars have treated the Qur'an not only as a literary text but also as the basis of their own systems of legal and theological doctrine. However, the approach of non-Muslim contemporary Western scholars to the Qur'an has been limited to its historical aspect. The Qur'an has been used by them as an authentic source for the teachings of Muhammad and the details of his prophetic career, as a document for the early period of Islam, and even as a source for the pre-Islamic religious and social structure of the Arabs. They were sceptical of its existence in the form of the Mushaf and of this process as well. Since the orientalists viewed the Islamic revelation as the word of Muhammad in its simplest form, they were not very interested in the transhistorical references that are part of the definitions of the Qur'an. There is a desire among Orientalists to see the Qur'an as a historical material and to make it the subject of their research. However, the Quran is designed as a regular recitation text and does not contain information about when its various passages 'appeared'. Therefore, to use it as a source of historical knowledge, it is necessary to make it a historical source. In this sense, two main factors can be mentioned that led Western orientalists to 'scientific' Qur'anic research. These factors are nevertheless not independent of missionary aims. The first of these is to determine what Islam has borrowed from Christianity and Judaism. The assumption is that Islam is not an original religion and the Qur'an is not an original text. Therefore, it is desired that the Qur'an be reduced to Jewish and Christian traditions and texts and perceived according to a mould produced from them. The second factor is the desire to produce alternative versions of the Qur'an to the "authentic copy" of the existing Qur'anic text, which Muslims have been writing and reciting within the framework of a pluralistic tradition since the first centuries, and which they began to publish during the printing period (Özsoy, 2017, s. 336).

In fact, the creation of history and chronology should be written according to the data of the science of history, not through the divine text, and this writing should be done by historians. While it is necessary and meaningful to approach the Qur'an with the data of history and to use the knowledge of history to explain it, it is inconsistent to make a work of history out of the Qur'an. Since the historical references in the Qur'an are presented from a divine perspective and the place, time and persons are mostly not

specified, they do not carry the value of a historical document. While it may be meaningful to make use of “siyar” in understanding the Qur’an, it may not be meaningful to produce a “siyar” from the Qur’an. For example, it is almost impossible to extract the biography of the Prophet from the Qur’an. Because it is the language of God and its equivalent in terminology is Kalam Allah / the Word of God. The effort to extract a chronological history from the Qur’an is incompatible with the nature of divine revelation. It is obvious that even when all verses and suras are arranged according to the order of occurrence, a meaningful composition cannot be reached. Because the language of the Qur’an is not the language used by the historians. The Qur’an was not written by the Prophet Muhammad as a history book based on historical documents. Unlike the language of history, the Qur’anic language does not specify place, time and space. Moreover, the language of the Qur’an is as imaginative as possible. The language of history, on the other hand, must be plain and prose.

Except for a few references in his work, Ömer Rıza did not directly address the orientalists and did not certainly engage in polemics with them. However, it is understood from every passage that he is fully informed about the thoughts of the orientalists. While presenting information about all the stages of the Qur’an from its revelation until it became a Mushaf, he also gave answers to orientalist doubts. In fact, the entire work is a response to the orientalists. Doğrul, as a Muslim, presented an example of Qur’anic history studies by staying within the framework of faith, practice and belief of Islam. On the other hand, he seeks to produce alternative information based on sources and to interpret tradition. For this reason, he did not hesitate to reject some narrations in the *Sahih* of al-Muslim that cast a shadow on the authenticity of the Qur’an. He favours looking at the history of the Qur’an not through contradictory narrations but through a rational unity derived from tradition.

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