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Jacob

Biblical patriarch, son of Isaac (q.v.), mentioned sixteen times by name in the Qurʾān and probably referred to by the name Isrāʾīl another two times (see ISRAEL). The form of the name in Arabic, Yaʿqūb, may have come directly from the Hebrew or may have been filtered through Syriac (Jeffery, *For. vocab.,* 291; see FOREIGN VOCABULARY); the name was apparently used in pre-Islamic times in Arabia (Horovitz, Jewish proper names, 152; id., *KU,* 152-3; see PRE-ISLAMIC ARABIA AND THE QURʾĀN). Most frequently, Jacob is mentioned simply within the list of patriarchs along with Abraham (q.v.) and Isaac, following Jewish tradition (Q 6:84; 11:71; 12:38; 19:49; 21:72; 29:27; 38:45), with Ishmael (q.v.) added on occasion (Q 2:136, 140; 3:84; 4:163; and perhaps 2:132). The narrative of the life of Jacob in the Qurʾān is primarily limited to his role in the Joseph (q.v.) story in which he orders his sons not to all go through a single gate into the city (Q 12:67; see Shapiro, *Haggadischen Elemente,* i, 55-6) and in which he becomes blind due to his sorrow (over Joseph, cf. Q 12:84). His sight, however, is restored when his face (q.v.) is touched by the shirt of Joseph (Q 12:93, 96; see VISION AND BLINDNESS; CLOTHING). Jacob's last words (*Gen* 49) are also echoed in Q 2:133, "… when he said to his sons, 'What will you serve after me?' They said, 'We will serve your God and the God of your fathers Abraham, Ishmael and Isaac, one God; to him we surrender'" (see POLYTHEISM AND ATHEISM; MONOTHEISM).

The observation that the Qurʾān appears to consider Jacob a brother of Isaac rather than his son (although on other occasions, it is clear that this type of confusion has not taken place, e.g. Q 2:132, "Abraham charged his sons with this and Jacob likewise") has become a motif in polemical literature. Based on passages "We gave him Isaac and Jacob" (Q 6:84; 19:49; 21:72; 29:27) and "We gave her the glad tidings of Isaac and, after Isaac, Jacob" (Q 11:71), the charge has been laid that there was a misunderstanding of the relationship between Jacob and Isaac. It is clear, however, that later Muslims were not the least bit confused on the issue, all recognizing that the relationship between the two as related in the Bible was accurate (Geiger, *Judaism and Islam,* 108-9; Speyer, *Erzählungen,* 170-1).

The biblical renaming of Jacob as Israel (thus providing the personal dimension of the idea of the "Children of Israel" [q.v.] as well as the territorial and tribal; see *Gen*

32:28) is likely reflected in the use of "Israel" in Q 3:93, "All food was lawful to the Children of Israel save what Israel forbade for himself (see FORBIDDEN; LAWFUL AND UNLAWFUL)" — which probably refers to the account of Genesis 32:33 — and in Q 19:58, "of those we bore with Noah (q.v.), and of the seed of Abraham and Israel." No further elaboration of this name change and its significance in genealogical terms can be noted in the Qurʾān.

When the story of Jacob is retold in the "stories of the prophets" literature *(qiṣaṣ al-anbiyāʾ),* the account of Jacob and Esau receives a good deal of attention even though it is unmentioned in the Qurʾān itself (e.g. Ṭabarī, *Taʾrīkh,* i, 354-60). The etymology of the name of Jacob is retold in these accounts as an etiological narrative that works as well in Arabic as it does in Hebrew: Jacob held on to Esau's heel (*ʿaqb* in Arabic) when the twins were being born, although the etymology of Esau as derived from "refusing," *ʿaṣā,* does not produce a fully meaningful narrative within the picture of their birth (cf. *Gen* 25:25-6; Ginzberg, *Legends,* i, 315; v, 274).

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Jahannam

see HELL AND HELLFIRE

Jāhiliyya

see AGE OF IGNORANCE

Jail

see PRISONERS

Jālūt

see GOLIATH

Jealousy

see ENVY

Jerusalem

The holy city sacred to Judaism, Christianity and Islam, Jerusalem (Īliyāʾ, *bayt al-maqdis,* Ūrīshalayim, al-Quds) is not mentioned by name in the Qurʾān. As Islam is, however, deeply rooted in Judaism and Christianity (see JEWS AND JUDAISM; CHRISTIANS AND CHRISTIANITY), many stories with a biblical background are undoubtedly situated in Jerusalem and some of these stories have been included in the holy book of the Muslims (see NARRATIVES). Further, one must bear in mind that the designation *bayt al-maqdis* (lit. "house of the holy," from Heb. *Bēt ha-miqdāsh,* the Temple), has three meanings: first, the Jewish Temple and its successor, the Temple Mount *(al-ḥaram al-sharīf)* with the Dome of the Rock and the Aqṣā Mosque (q.v.); second, the city of Jerusalem; third, the holy land *(al-arḍ al-muqaddasa)* as a whole.

Based on relevant passages in the Qurʾān, Muslim tradition created an image of Jerusalem that combined Jewish and Christian elements with specifically Islamic ones. The main sources to be consulted in presenting this image are the vast corpus of Qurʾān commentaries (*tafsīr,* see EXEGESIS OF THE QURʾĀN: CLASSICAL AND MEDIEVAL; EXEGESIS OF THE QURʾĀN: EARLY MODERN AND CONTEMPORARY) and the *faḍāʾil al-Quds* ("Virtues of Jerusalem") literature. By its very nature, the literary genre of *faḍāʾil al-Quds* is an expression of local pride, which explains why the authors active in

this field found more material in the Qurʾān in favor of Jerusalem than did the qurʾānic commentators *(mufassirūn)*. Likewise, they claimed exclusiveness for Jerusalem in passages for which the *mufassirūn* offered a variety of interpretations.

There are a number of instances in which there is general agreement — in both commentary *(tafsīr)* and *faḍāʾil*-literature — that certain qurʾānic passages allude to Jerusalem, rather than other places. This applies, for instance, to the identification of "the farthest mosque" *(al-masjid al-aqṣā)* in Q 17:1 with al-Ḥaram al-Sharīf in Jerusalem, which is said to have been the destination of Muḥammad's "night journey" *(isrāʾ)* and the scene of his ascension (q.v.; *miʿrāj*). It is the site of the Jewish Temple, which was destroyed by the Romans in the year 70 C.E. and reconstructed by the Muslims during the caliphate of ʿUmar b. al-Khaṭṭāb (r. 13-23/634-44). There is, however, disagreement as to whether Muḥammad prayed in the sanctuary or not. Had he done so, it would have been incumbent on Muslims also to visit Jerusalem when on the pilgrimage (q.v.; *ḥajj*) to Mecca (q.v.). Therefore, some theologians denied the idea of Muḥammad's praying in the sanctuary. According to others, however, confirmation of the belief in one God *(tawḥīd)* was revealed in Jerusalem when Muḥammad prayed with the prophets, his predecessors in office, in the sanctuary (see PROPHETS AND PROPHETHOOD). General agreement likewise exists regarding the interpretation of Q 2:142-50, where the change of the direction of prayer (*qibla,* q.v.) is discussed. It has been accepted that the direction of prayer was Jerusalem before it was changed to the Kaʿba (q.v.) in Mecca.

The setting of many biblical stories incorporated in the Qurʾān is Jerusalem or the holy land, although the name is not explicitly mentioned. Jewish and Christian traditions — both apocryphal and canonical — such as those about the location of the last judgment (q.v.) in Jerusalem, have been adopted by Muslims. Q 50:41, "And listen for the day when the caller will call out from a place quite near *(min makānin qarībin),*" is said to refer to Jerusalem, the "place quite near" being the holy rock *(al-ṣakhra)* in the al-Ḥaram al-Sharīf. The angel Isrāfīl, standing on the holy rock, will call the dead to rise from their graves (see DEATH AND THE DEAD; RESURRECTION). It is a place appropriate for the purpose because it is next to heaven (see HEAVEN AND SKY). There is, on the other hand, an interpretation offered by al-Zamakhsharī (d. 538/1144; *Kashshāf,* ad loc.) according to which "a place quite near" means the feet of the dead or the roots of their hair.

Many other identifications of places are not as unequivocal as those just mentioned. There are numerous cases in which, in accordance with the generally accepted exegetical tendency to amass traditional interpretations, one or more sites in addition to Jerusalem have been proposed; in other words, these places compete with Jerusalem. Sometimes such competing sites are situated in the holy land, including Syria (q.v.) and Jordan. A rivalry on a higher level, however, is that between Jerusalem and the holy cities of Mecca and Medina (q.v.) or between the holy land and the rest of the world (see COSMOLOGY). The latter is present in the interpretation of Q 7:137, "And we made a people, considered weak, inheritors of land *(arḍ)* in both east and west — land whereupon we sent down our blessings (see BLESSING; OPPRESSED ON EARTH, THE)." The blessed land is Syria or, according to another interpretation, the whole world, because God conferred the kingdom of the world upon

David (q.v.) and Solomon (q.v.). Q 21:105, "Before this we wrote in the Psalms (q.v.; *al-zabūr*) after the message *(al-dhikr):* My servants, the righteous, shall inherit the earth," is, according to Speyer (*Erzählungen,* 285), the only word-for-word citation of the Bible (*Ps* 37:19; *Matt* 5:5; see SCRIPTURE AND THE QUR'ĀN). Although it undoubtedly refers to the holy land, other interpretations have been offered: It means paradise (q.v.), which is to be granted to the believers (see BELIEF AND UNBELIEF), but also this world, the universal kingdom of Islam (q.v.). The inheritance will come at the end of times, when Jesus (q.v.) descends from heaven to fight the unbelievers, subjecting the whole world to Islamic rule. The decisive battle will be fought in Jerusalem (see APOCALYPSE).

More often, Jerusalem competes with Mecca, as both are cities, and the holy land with the Ḥijāz. Q 17:60, "We granted the vision which we showed you," has been explained in two ways: It is the vision Muḥammad had after his return from the night journey *(isrā')*. When the Quraysh (q.v.) called him a liar (see LIE; OPPOSITION TO MUḤAMMAD; INSANITY), the Prophet had a vision of *bayt al-maqdis,* which enabled him to answer questions that the Meccans were asking in order to examine the veracity of his story. Another interpretation is that Muḥammad had a vision of the forthcoming conquest of Mecca at al-Ḥudaybiya (q.v.), when the Quraysh prevented him from entering Mecca to offer sacrifices at the Kaʿba (see EXPEDITIONS AND BATTLES). Q 2:114, "And who is more unjust (see JUSTICE AND INJUSTICE) than he who forbids that in places for the worship of God, God's name should be celebrated, whose zeal is to ruin them?" possibly refers to the destruction of the Temple either by Nebuchadnezzar or Titus. It has been interpreted, however, as referring to Mecca and the Kaʿba, when the heathens, before Muḥammad's emigration (q.v.; *hijra*), prevented him from worshiping at the Kaʿba. Another interpretation says that this happened at al-Ḥudaybiya. The olive tree *(zaytūn)* mentioned in Q 95:1, by which an oath (see OATHS) is sworn, has been explained both as meaning what it is, a valuable plant, and as denoting the hill on which *bayt al-maqdis* stands.

The rivalry between Jerusalem and Mecca is also apparent in the question about whether it was Isaac (q.v.) or Ishmael (q.v.) whom Abraham (q.v.) was ordered to slaughter as a sacrifice (q.v.). The story is recounted in Q 37:99-111, but the narrative leaves open the identity of the potential victim. If it was Isaac, Jerusalem would be the place of the sacrifice; otherwise, it would be Mecca or nearby Minā. Conversely, the account of the building of the Kaʿba in Q 2:125 is in favor of Ishmael, for he assisted his father, which proves his presence in Mecca.

Another example of Jerusalem's rivalry with Mecca may be found with the interpretation of the parable of the divine light (q.v.) in Q 24:35-6. It could be an allusion to candles lit in churches and monasteries (Paret, *Kommentar,* 360; see CHURCH; MONASTICISM AND MONKS), but another interpretation exists: the houses *(buyūt)* mentioned in Q 24:36, in which the light is lit, are four structures, all erected by prophets. These four are: the Kaʿba, built by Abraham and Ishmael, *bayt al-maqdis* built by David and Solomon, *masjid al-Madīna,* and *masjid qubā',* both built by Muḥammad; each can be deemed to be a "mosque (q.v.) founded on piety" (Q 9:108). Here, Jerusalem is put on a par with the holy places in the Ḥijāz. Al-Rāzī (d. 606/1210; *Tafsīr,* xxiv, 3, ad Q 24:36), however, cites another interpretation in the name of al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī, who identifies the houses, without explaining the plural, with *bayt al-maqdis* because it is illuminated by ten thousand candles.

Jerusalem competes not only with Mecca,

but also with the other world: *al-sāhira* mentioned in Q 79:14 is said to be the surface of the earth to which the dead will ascend on the day of resurrection. Some commentators define it geographically as the plain to the north of Jerusalem on which humankind will gather during the day of judgment. According to others, it is a plain destined for the gathering of the unbelievers, causing such fright as to prevent people from slumbering. Another exegetical tradition explains *al-sāhira* as the new earth *(al-arḍ al-jadīda),* which will replace this earth when the world comes to an end; and, finally, according to yet another understanding, it is hell (*jahannam,* see HELL AND HELLFIRE).

Also understood to have both eschatological and this-worldly connotations is the wall mentioned in Q 57:13: "A wall will be put up between them, with a gate therein, within it will be mercy (q.v.), and without it, all alongside, will be punishment (see REWARD AND PUNISHMENT)." The wall is understood to be the eastern wall of the al-Ḥaram al-Sharīf, above Wādī Jahannam (the Kedron Valley), the gate is Bāb al-Raḥma, the Gate of Mercy, one of the two entrances of the Golden Gate. According to some commentators, though, it is the partition between paradise and hell, a kind of purgatory, the gate where the elect will enter paradise (see BARZAKH; BARRIER). On the day of resurrection those raised from the dead will rush to a goal-post *(nuṣub),* mentioned in Q 70:43. This is understood by some to be the holy rock in Jerusalem, but by others to be a signpost *(ʿalam)* to which the believers — or an idol to which the polytheists (see IDOLS AND IMAGES; POLYTHEISM AND ATHEISM) — will rush on the day of judgment.

Rivalry exists on the local level between Jerusalem and other towns of Palestine and Syria. The town *(al-qarya)* mentioned in Q 2:58, whose gate the Israelites were ordered to enter with humility, is identified in the exegetical literature as Jerusalem or Jericho. When Jericho is mentioned, the remark is added that it is located not far from Jerusalem. But according to some commentators, it is the gate of Cairo or Egypt *(Miṣr).* Another example: "The one who passed by a town, all in ruins to its roofs" (Q 2:259) was either ʿUzayr (identified with Ezra, q.v.) or Jeremiah (who bewailed the destruction of Jerusalem) or the legendary al-Khiḍr (see KHAḌIR/KHIḌR). There are three proposals about the name of the town: first, Sābūr on the Tigris, situated between Wāsiṭ and al-Madāʾin; second, Jerusalem; and third, the town of "those who abandoned their homes, though they were thousands, for fear of death," mentioned in Q 2:243. There are various explanations of the holy land *(al-arḍ al-muqaddasa)* mentioned in Q 5:21: It is said to be Jericho, Jordan (al-Urdunn), and Palestine, or Ṭūr (Mt. Sinai; see SINAI) and its surroundings. According to others it is al-Shām (Syria or Damascus), or simply Jericho. Equally various are the locations given for the *rabwa* (lit. great or high place) in Q 23:50, where Mary (q.v.), the mother of Jesus, found shelter with her son: the Ghūṭa (plain) of Damascus, Jerusalem, Ramla, or Egypt, the latter apparently a reminiscence of the flight of Joseph, Mary and Jesus to Egypt (q.v.) as told in the Gospels (q.v.).

The Shīʿī viewpoint (see SHĪʿISM AND THE QURʾĀN) is especially evident in the various interpretations, found in both Sunnī and Shīʿī authors, of Muḥammad's vision mentioned in Q 17:60. Al-Māwardī (d. 450/1058; *Nukat,* iii, 253) and al-Ṭabarsī (d. 548/1154; *Majmaʿ,* xv, 66-7), following al-Ṭabarī (d. 310/923; *Tafsīr,* xv, 110-3), give three interpretations of this vision: the first explains it as Muḥammad's vision during the *isrāʾ;* the second, as a vision while Muḥammad was sleeping (according to Ibn ʿAbbās, Muḥammad sees himself entering Mecca; see DREAMS AND SLEEP;

FORETELLING; VISIONS); and the third, also as a vision while sleeping (according to Sahl b. Saʿd, the vision is of people like donkeys climbing on the pulpits *[manābir]*). While al-Ṭabarī expresses a preference for the first explanation, al-Māwardī gives no such opinion. Shīʿī exegetes, such as al-Ṭabarsī and al-Ṭabāṭabāʾī (d. 1982; *Mukhtaṣar al-Mīzān*), stress that this passage has nothing to do with Jerusalem, nor with Mecca, but maintain that it refers to future events, the misdeeds of the Umayyads who deprived the ʿAlids of their legitimate claim to the caliphate (see CALIPH; POLITICS AND THE QURʾĀN): Muḥammad saw them climbing on his pulpit, behaving like apes.

Modern commentators such as Rashīd Riḍā *(Manār),* al-Mawdūdī *(Tafhīm),* al-Zuḥaylī *(Tafsīr)* and Tuʿaylib *(Fatḥ),* present the traditional interpretations on many of the verses already discussed. After making their own positions clear, however, they provide events and places in the context of the life of Muḥammad and the history of early Islam in Arabia rather than locating these in Jerusalem. To mention but a few examples: Those who, according to Q 2:114, prevented the pious from visiting the sanctuaries, and even tried to ruin them, were not Nebuchadnezzar or Titus, but the heathens in Mecca before the emigration *(hijra)*. Rashīd Riḍā derives the protection of synagogues and churches as practiced in Islam from Q 2:114 (see RELIGIOUS PLURALISM AND THE QURʾĀN). That Muḥammad prayed inside the sanctuary of *bayt al-maqdis* during his night journey is not contested in principle in modern *tafsīr;* it is no longer considered an issue of heated debate. The land promised to the pious in Q 21:105 is paradise, the wall with the gate in Q 57:13 will be put up in the other world, and *al-sāhira* in Q 79:14 belongs to the world to come or remains geographically undefined. Generally modern *tafsīr* prefers theological interpretation and the discussion of problems pertaining to the religious law *(sharīʿa)* to a consideration of problems in the history of the holy places and their basis in biblical lore (see LAW AND THE QURʾĀN; HISTORY AND THE QURʾĀN; THEOLOGY AND THE QURʾĀN).

Finally, the close relation between Jerusalem and the Qurʾān found expression in the enumeration of merits earned by those who recite certain sūras (see RECITATION OF THE QURʾĀN): The person who recites Q 29 "The Spider" (Sūrat al-ʿAnkabūt) will receive for each verse the same recompense as those who conquered Jerusalem, and those who recite Q 5 "The Table Spread" (Sūrat al-Māʾida; see TABLE) and Q 30 "The Romans" (Sūrat al-Rūm; see BYZANTINES) will be compensated for each verse as those who visit Jerusalem (Firūzābādī, *Baṣāʾir,* i, 364, 369). See also SACRED PRECINCTS.

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Jest

see LAUGHTER; MOCKERY

Jesus

The first-century Jewish teacher and wonder worker believed by Christians to be the Son of God, he is named in the Qurʾān as one of the prophets before Muḥammad who came with a scripture (see BOOK; CHRISTIANS AND CHRISTIANITY; PROPHETS AND PROPHETHOOD). The qurʾānic form of Jesus' name is ʿĪsā. It is attested twenty-five times, often in the form ʿĪsā b. Maryam, Jesus son of Mary. The Qurʾān asserts that he was a prophet and gives him the unique title "the Messiah" (see ANOINTING). It affirms his virginal conception (see MARY; HOLY SPIRIT); cites miracles which he performed by divine permission (see MIRACLE); and states that God raised him into his presence. It probably also alludes to his future return. It denies, however, that he was divine (as noted, one of his qurʾānic identifications is as the "son of Mary"; see below for further discussion of this title) and attaches no significance to the cross. As traditionally interpreted by Muslims, it also denies that he was crucified (see CRUCIFIXION).

Inventory of the qurʾānic Jesus material

The relevant passages are listed here in chronological order in accordance with Nöldeke's classification (see CHRONOLOGY AND THE QURʾĀN). For the sake of comparison, the order implied by the headings of the standard Egyptian edition of the Qurʾān is also given (see Robinson, *Discovering,* 72-96). For example N 58/E 44 indicates that according to Nöldeke the sūra in question was the fifty-eighth revealed but that it was the forty-fourth according to the standard Egyptian edition: Q 19:16-40, 88-95 (N 58/E 44); Q 43:57-65, 81-2 (N 61/E 109); Q 23:50 (N 64/E 74); Q 21:91-93 (N 65/E 73); Q 42:13-14 (N 83/E 86); Q 6:83-90 (N 89/E 55); Q 2:87, 135-141, 252-253 (N 91/E 87); Q 3:42-64, 81-85 (N 97/E 89); Q 33:7-8 (N 103/E 90); Q 4:156-159, 163-165, 171-172 (N 100/E 92); Q 57:26-27 (N 99/E 94); Q 66:10-12 (N 109/E 107); Q 61:6, 14 (N 98/E 109); Q 5:17-18, 46-47, 72-78, 109-118 (N 114/E 112); Q 9:30-31 (N 113/E 113).

There is widespread agreement that the first six passages cited above (i.e. those down to and including Q 6:83-90) were revealed in Mecca and the others in Medina. The chronological order, however, is only approximate and some of the earlier sūras have almost certainly been revised. The dating of the passages in Q 19 is particularly problematic. There is a tradition that the Muslims who emigrated to

Abyssinia (q.v.) recited part of this sūra to the Negus (Ibn Isḥāq-Guillaume, 150-3) which would make it quite early (see EMIGRATION). In any case, the reference in Q 19:17 to an angel (q.v.), 'our spirit,' appearing in visible form strongly suggests that the sūra is Meccan. Moreover, Q 43:57 implies that the Prophet's audience had already heard an extensive revelation about "the son of Mary" and Q 23:50 probably alludes to a specific element in this particular version of his story (cf. Q 19:22-6). Q 19:34-40, however, which has a different rhyme from the rest of the sūra (see FORM AND STRUCTURE OF THE QUR'ĀN), was almost certainly added later and the references to "the book" (Q 19:12, 16, 30, etc.) are probably late Meccan or early Medinan.

The name ʿĪsā, its origin and significance

The name "Jesus" (ʿĪsā) occurs twenty-five times: nine times by itself (Q 2:136; 3:52, 55, 59, 84; 4:163; 6:85; 42:13; 43:63) and sixteen times in conjunction with one or more other names or titles (Q 2:87, 253; 3:45; 4:157, 171; 5:46, 78, 110, 112, 114, 116; 19:34; 33:7; 57:27; 61:6, 14). It was probably absent from the original version of Q 19:16-40 and it is not found in sūras 23 or 61, but it is attested in the other twelve sūras listed above.

The qur'ānic spelling of Jesus' name is strikingly different from any currently used by Christians. The English form "Jesus" is derived from the Latin *Iesus* which in turn is based on the Greek *Iēsous.* It is generally held, however, that because Jesus was a Palestinian Jew, his original name must have been Hebrew and that the Greek *Iēsous* represents the Hebrew *Yēshūaʿ* which is an abbreviated form of *Yᵉhōshūaʿ* (or *Yᵉhōshuaʿ*). The original meaning of *Yᵉhōshūaʿ* was "Yahweh helps" but it was popularly understood to mean, "Yahweh saves." When the New Testament was translated from Greek into Syriac, *Iēsous* was rendered *Yēshūʿ,* although Syriac-speaking Nestorian Christians called him *Ishuʿ.* After the rise of Islam, the gospels (q.v.) were eventually translated from Syriac into Arabic and *Yeshūʿ* was rendered *Yasūʿ,* which is what Arab Christians call Jesus to this day.

The grounds for thinking that Jesus' original name was *Yeshuaʿ* are: 1) The Hebrew scriptures mention several people called *Yᵉhōshūaʿ, Yᵉhōshuaʿ* or *Yēshūaʿ,* including Moses' successor Joshua son of Nūn whose name is spelled in all three ways. In the Septuagint, these names are almost invariably rendered as *Iēsous* (Brown et al., *Hebrew and English lexicon,* 221). 2) By the first century, only the short form *Yēshūaʿ* was in use. 3) The New Testament refers to Moses' successor, Joshua, in Acts 7:45 and Hebrews 4:8, and in both instances it gives his name in Greek as *Iēsous.* 4) According to Matthew 1:21, an angel told Joseph in a dream that Mary would have a son, and added "Thou shalt call his name Jesus for it is he who shall save his people from their sins." As there is no play-on-words in the Greek, Matthew's readers were presumably familiar with the original Hebrew name and its etymology.

Western scholars, because of their conviction that Jesus' authentic Hebrew name is *Yēshūaʿ,* have been puzzled by the Qur'ān's reference to him as ʿĪsā. They have offered a number of explanations for this apparent anomaly. One suggestion is that *y-sh-ʿ,* the Hebrew consonants of *Yēshūaʿ,* have been reversed for some cryptic reason to give *ʿ-s-y,* the Arabic consonants of ʿĪsā. Those who favor this view note that in ancient Mesopotamia certain divine names were written in one way and pronounced in another; for example EN-ZU was read ZU-EN (Michaud, *Jésus,* 15). Scarcely more plausible is the suggestion that the Jews called Jesus "Esau" (Hebrew *ʿEsaw*) out of hatred and that

Muḥammad learned this name from them not realizing that it was an insult (see JEWS AND JUDAISM; POLEMIC AND POLEMICAL LANGUAGE). Admittedly, in Arabic Esau is usually written *ʿĪsū* and this might have been changed into *ʿĪsā* in order to assimilate it to other qurʾānic names ending in *-ā*. There is no evidence, however, that the Jews have ever called Jesus Esau. Moreover, the Qurʾān criticizes them for insulting Jesus' mother (Q 4:156), and Muḥammad's many Christian acquaintances would surely have corrected him if he had unwittingly adopted a Jewish insult against Jesus himself. A third suggestion is that Jesus' name has been altered deliberately to assimilate it to Mūsā (Moses, q.v.), with whom he is sometimes paired. There may be other examples of this phenomenon in the Qurʾān, for instance, Saul (q.v.) and Goliath (q.v.) are called Ṭālūt and Jālūt, Aaron (q.v.) and Korah (q.v.) are called Hārūn and Qārūn. A fourth suggestion is that, already before the rise of Islam, Christians in Arabia may have coined the name ʿĪsā from one of the Syriac forms *Yeshūʿ* or *Ishūʿ*. Arabic often employs an initial *ʿayn* in words borrowed from Aramaic or Syriac and the dropping of the final Hebrew *ʿayin* is evidenced in the form *Yisho* of the "köktürkish" Manichaean fragments from Turfan (Jefferey, *For. vocab*., 220; see FOREIGN VOCABULARY). Although there is no irrefutable evidence that the name ʿĪsā was in use in pre-Islamic times (see PRE-ISLAMIC ARABIA AND THE QURʾĀN), there was a monastery in Syria which may have been known as the *ʿĪsāniyya* as early as 571 C.E. (Mingana, Syriac influence, 84; see SYRIAC AND THE QURʾĀN; MONASTICISM AND MONKS).

While many Muslim scholars entertain the possibility that the qurʾānic form of Jesus' name reflects the usage of certain Christians in Muḥammad's milieu, others maintain that ʿĪsā was, in fact, the original form of Jesus' name. Sarwat Anis al-Assiouty (*Jésus,* 110-19) champions this view. Among the arguments which he adduces, the following merit consideration:

1) If Jesus' original name had been *Yēshūaʿ,* the final *ʿayin* would have been retained in Aramaic sources which mention him. In the Talmud, however, he is called *Yēshū*.

2) In Matthew 1:21, the angel states that it is Jesus himself, not Yahweh, who will save his people. Thus, far from supporting the derivation of *Iesous* from *Yeshuaʿ,* this biblical verse militates against it.

3) Josephus used the Greek name *Iēsous* to denote three people mentioned in the Bible whose Hebrew names were not *Yēshūaʿ, Yᵉhōshūaʿ* or *Yᵉhōshuaʿ*. They were Saul's son *Yishwī* (Anglicized as "Ishvi" in the RSV of I Samuel 14:49), the Levite *Abīshūaʿ* (mentioned in I Chronicles 6:4, etc.) and *Yishwah* the son of Asher (Anglicized as "Ishva" in the RSV of Genesis 46:17).

4) Around the middle of the second century, Justin Martyr penned his famous *Dialogue with Trypho the Jew*. Justin, a Christian who wrote in Greek and knew no Hebrew, argued at length that the Old Testament story of Joshua should be interpreted typologically as referring to Jesus. Under his influence, most Christians subsequently assumed that Jesus' Hebrew name must have been the same as Joshua's.

5) Jesus' name should be derived ultimately from the Hebrew verb *ʿāsā,* "to do," which also means "to bring about" in the sense of effecting a deliverance. This etymology would make better sense of Matthew 1:21 than the assumption that his Hebrew name was *Yēshūaʿ*. Moreover, in the first centuries of the Christian era, Nabatean pilgrims inscribed the name *ʿs* on rocks in the region of Sinai, and the name is also found in inscriptions in southern Arabia and the region between Syria

(q.v.) and Jordan (see ARCHAEOLOGY AND THE QUR'ĀN).

None of al-Assiouty's arguments is decisive and some of them are unsound. The Talmudic *Yēshū* may be a deliberate deformation of Jesus' name to ensure that his memory would be blotted out. Matthew 1:21 should be read in conjunction with Matthew 1:23, where Jesus is identified as Emmanuel, "God with us"; from the evangelist's viewpoint, therefore, it would have been entirely appropriate for his name to mean "Yahweh saves." Although Josephus furnishes important evidence for the wide variety of Hebrew names represented in Greek by *Iēsous,* it is noteworthy that none of these names begins with an *ʿayin*. Justin Martyr elaborated the Joshua/Jesus typology but he did not invent it; it was already implicit in Hebrews 4:8. It is true that the Hebrew verb *ʿāsā,* "to do," can mean "to bring about" in the sense of effecting a deliverance. In biblical passages where it has this latter meaning, however, the subject is invariably Yahweh (Brown et al., *Hebrew and English lexicon,* 795). Moreover, as the verb is not Aramaic and is not certainly found in south Semitic languages (ibid., 793) it is not relevant to the interpretation of the pre-Islamic inscriptions which the author mentions.

According to al-Rāghib al-Iṣfahānī (fl. fifth/eleventh cent.), some authorities took ʿĪsā to be an Arabic name and derived it from *ʿays,* "a stallion's urine" (Jefferey, *For. vocab.,* 219). As urine was used to bleach clothes, this bizarre suggestion probably arose among interpreters who were familiar with the tradition that Jesus' disciples were fullers. The *Lisān al-ʿArab* mentions two other Arabic derivations: from *ʿayas,* "a reddish whiteness," or from *ʿaws,* the verbal noun of *ʿawasa,* "to roam about." The former should perhaps be explained in the light of the ḥadīth (SEE ḤADĪTH AND THE QUR'ĀN) in which the Prophet describes Jesus as "ruddy *(aḥmar)* as if he had just come from the bath." The latter is probably linked with attempts to derive Jesus' title *al-Masīḥ* from *masaḥa,* "to pace" or "to survey." Ṭabāṭabā'ī (d. 1982) favors a tradition which derives *ʿĪsa* from *yaʿīsh,* "he lives," because the name of Zechariah's (q.v.) son, Yaḥyā (John; see JOHN THE BAPTIST), likewise has this meaning, and because in Q 3 the two births are announced in similar fashion. Nevertheless, several classical philologists thought that ʿĪsā was a Hebrew or Syriac name that had been Arabicized and this view was endorsed by a number of classical commentators (for a recent analysis in which a misreading of the unpointed Arabic is suggested, see Bellamy, Textual criticism, 6; see ARABIC LANGUAGE; ARABIC SCRIPT; COLLECTION OF THE QUR'ĀN).

By way of conclusion, it is worth summarizing the salient features of the debate about the origins of the qur'ānic form of Jesus' name. It is not certain that Jesus' original name was *Yēshūaʿ*. The view that it was, and that it connoted that he was the Savior, cannot be traced back to earlier than around 80 C.E., the time when Hebrews and Matthew were written. In any case, ʿĪsā, the qur'ānic form of his name, has no such connotations. The attempts to derive that form from an Arabic root are, however, far-fetched and show, if anything, that it had no obvious associations for the native speaker of Arabic. It is just possible that ʿĪsā was actually Jesus' original name, although it seems more likely that it is an Arabicized form of the name current among Syriac-speaking Christians as was recognized by a number of classical authorities. This Arabicized form may be pre-Islamic but there is no compelling evidence that it is. Nor are there grounds for thinking that its purpose is polemical.

References to Jesus as "the son of Mary" and "the Messiah"

The expression "the son of Mary" is attested twenty-three times. By itself, it occurs in only two Meccan verses: Q 43:57 and Q 23:50. In the other instances, which are all Medinan, it is invariably preceded by "Jesus," "the Messiah" or "the Messiah Jesus."

An Arabic name *(ism)* is often followed by a familial attribution *(nasab),* "the son of X." Moreover, the *nasab* may also be employed in isolation. Thus as regards its position, form and employment, "the son of Mary" resembles a *nasab*. In a *nasab,* however, X is normally the name of the person's father. Very occasionally, one encounters a *nasab* in which X denotes the person's mother; for example, "the son of the Byzantine woman," "the son of the blue-eyed woman," or "the son of the daughter of al-Aʿazz" (Schimmel, *Islamic names,* 9). Note, however, that in these examples X is not the mother's name but a *nasab* indicating her place of origin, a nickname drawing attention to one of her distinguishing features or her own *nasab*. This last type of *nasab* is employed when the maternal family is more distinguished than the paternal line: for instance the Aʿazz in the above-mentioned example was a vizier.

Because there is no exact parallel to the expression "the son of Mary," its origin and significance are disputed. It is attested only once in the New Testament, in Mark 6:3, where Jesus' townsfolk say, "Is not this the carpenter the son of Mary?" Some interpreters think this biblical passage merely implies that Mary was a widow whereas others detect an insult: a hint that Jesus was perhaps illegitimate. Neither explanation suits the qurʾānic context because Joseph is not mentioned in the Qurʾān, and among the Arabs an illegitimate child was called Ibn Abīhi, "son of his father." Nor need it be supposed that the Qurʾān imitated the usage of the Ethiopic church (*pace* Bishop, The son of Mary) for it is unlikely that Ethiopian Christians called Jesus "the son of Mary" (Parrinder, *Jesus,* 25-6) and although the Qurʾān contains a number of Ethiopic loan words they occur mostly in Medinan sūras. In the opinion of the present writer, during the Meccan period the expression was used merely for ease of reference. Bearing in mind that in the earliest reference to Jesus (Q 19:16-33) the principal character was Mary, with Jesus figuring as her unnamed child, the brief allusions to Jesus as Mary's son in the subsequent revelations concerning Jesus (those in Q 43 and 23) are entirely understandable. In the Medinan period, however, many of the revelations about Jesus were concerned with countering Christian claims about him. Hence, the expression "the son of Mary" took on polemical overtones; it was an implicit reminder that Jesus is not the son of God as the Christians allege (also, some suggest implausibly a reflection of Trinitarian doctrines with Mary as the mother of God; see TRINITY). The classical commentators do not distinguish between the Meccan and Medinan usage. They interpret the expression as a counter-thrust to Christian claims but also regard it as an honorific title because of the high status that the Qurʾān ascribes to Mary (see WOMEN AND THE QURʾĀN; GENDER).

The term "the Messiah" (al-Masīḥ) is attested eleven times and is found only in Medinan revelations. It occurs by itself three times; followed by "the son of Mary" five times; and followed by "Jesus the son of Mary" three times. There can be little doubt that it is derived ultimately from the Hebrew *Māshīaḥ,* which means "anointed" or "Messiah." In ancient Israel, kings and priests were consecrated by anointing their

heads with oil. After the Babylonian exile, there arose in some circles expectations of a future ideal Davidic ruler, God's anointed par excellence, an eschatological figure who would usher in an age of peace. Whereas the Jews maintain that this Messiah is yet to come, Christians claim that Jesus had this God-given role and that he was wrongly killed but will return in glory. In the Greek New Testament, *Messias,* the Hellenized transliteration of the Hebrew word, occurs only twice (John 1:41; 4:25). The New Testament writers showed a marked preference for the literal Greek translation *Christos,* "Christ." According to one tradition, Jesus was instituted as the Messiah when God anointed *(echrisen)* him with the Holy Spirit at his baptism (Acts 10:38; cf. Luke 1:15-22; 4:17-21). He is, however, frequently referred to as *Iēsous Christos,* "Jesus Christ," or *Christos Iēsous,* "Christ Jesus," almost as if *Christos* were an additional name rather than a title.

Arabic lexicographers regarded al-Masīḥ as a *laqab,* or nickname, and attempted to give it an Arabic etymology. Al-Fīrūzabādī (d. 817/1415) claimed to have heard no less than fifty-six explanations of this sort (Lane, 2714). Only those most frequently encountered in the classical commentaries will be mentioned here. It was widely held that it was derived from the verb *masaḥa,* which occurs five times in the Qurʾān: four times in instructions on performing ablutions by "wiping" various parts of the body with water (Q 5:6) or clean earth (Q 4:43; 5:6; see CLEANLINESS AND ABLUTION; RITUAL PURITY) and once in a reference to Solomon's (q.v.) "stroking" his horses (Q 38:33). Most of those who took this line thought that *masīḥ* was an adjective with the force of a passive participle and meant "touched" or "anointed." They variously suggested that Jesus was given this nickname because he was touched by Gabriel's (q.v.) wing at birth to protect him from Satan (see DEVIL); because he was anointed with oil, as were all the prophets; or because he was anointed with God's blessing (q.v.; cf. Q 19:31). Others held that *masīḥ* was an adjective with the force of an active participle. They claimed that he was given the nickname because he laid hands on the sick and healed them (see ILLNESS AND HEALTH); or because he washed men from their faults and sins (see SIN, MAJOR AND MINOR). This last explanation was generally frowned on because the Qurʾān insists on individual responsibility and denies that a person can count on anyone but God to save him (Q 2:286; 6:70; see FORGIVENESS; INTERCESSION; FREEDOM AND PREDESTINATION; SALVATION). Finally, there were those who maintained that although *masīḥ* had the force of an active participle it was derived not from *masaḥa* but from *sāḥa,* a verb meaning to travel about in the cause of religion (Q 9:2; see JOURNEY) and hence to be devout (Q 9:112; 66:5; see also FASTING). They alleged that Jesus received this nickname because of his itinerant lifestyle (see further Arnaldez, *Jésus fils de Marie,* 84-7).

The explanation why the lexicographers exercised such ingenuity in trying to account for the qurʾānic term, and why they put forward such diverse explanations, is that a *laqab* may be bestowed for a whole range of reasons. There are *laqab*s that are honorific titles but there are others that merely indicate a person's trade or physical characteristics so as to help identify him. Despite the *prima facie* plausibility of the etymologies mentioned above, however, it should be noted that those which seem to indicate qualities that Jesus shared with other prophets do not do justice to the fact that he alone is called al-Masīḥ in the Qurʾān. It seems likely that the first hearers of the revelations would have been aware that al-Masīḥ was a dignified title which the Christians held was uniquely applica-

ble to Jesus. Nevertheless, the qurʾānic title does not have precisely the same connotations as "Messiah" or "Christ" in the New Testament. Several of the New Testament writers stressed that Jesus was the Davidic Messiah, and two of them furnished genealogies tracing his "descent" from David through Joseph, despite the fact that they apparently believed in the virginal conception (Matthew 1:1-16, Luke 3:23-8). In the Qurʾān, on the other hand, the link between Jesus and David (q.v.) is tenuous (Q 5:78); Mary's betrothal to Joseph is not mentioned; and what is stressed is Jesus' descent from Adam (see ADAM AND EVE) via Noah (q.v.), Abraham (q.v.), ʿImrān (q.v.) and Mary (Q 3:33-45).

Jesus' conception and infancy and the description of him as "word" and "spirit"

In Q 19 God recounts that, while Mary was in seclusion, he sent his spirit to her in the form of a man who announced that, despite being a virgin, she would conceive a boy-child by divine decree (Q 19:16-21); that she conceived and withdrew to a remote place where her labor pains drove her in despair to the trunk of a palm tree (Q 19:22-3; see DATE PALM); that after she had given birth, her baby told her to refresh herself from the ripe dates and a stream which God had miraculously provided (Q 19:24-6); and that when she returned to her people he spoke up in her defense (Q 19:27-33). Q 3 includes a similar account of the annunciation (Q 3:42-7), although here God's agent is described as "the angels." Q 3 and 5 both allude to Jesus' speaking in the cradle (Q 3:46; 5:110).

In the biblical version of the annunciation, God's agent is named as Gabriel rather than the spirit (q.v.; Luke 1:26). Some Christians, however, may have regarded them as identical on the basis of Tatian's gospel harmony, the *Diatesseron,* in which Luke's account of the annunciation is followed immediately by Matthew's report of how Mary was found to be with child by the Holy Spirit. The miracle of the palm tree and the stream is mentioned in the Latin *Gospel of pseudo-Matthew;* and, according to the *Arabic infancy gospel* Jesus spoke while still a child in the cradle. Although these two apocryphal writings post-date the rise of Islam, Christians in Muḥammad's audience were probably familiar with the episodes to which they refer. The Qurʾān's reference to Mary's labor pains, on the other hand, may have been intended to counter the Christian belief in Jesus' divinity and Mary's perpetual virginity.

Most commentators identify the spirit who was sent to Mary as Gabriel, on the grounds that both designations appear to be used interchangeably elsewhere for the revelatory angel (Q 2:97; 16:102; 26:193; see REVELATION AND INSPIRATION). Gerock (*Versuch,* 36-46) claims that the Qurʾān regards Gabriel as Jesus' father. This interpretation can be ruled out because the Qurʾān defends Mary against the charge of unchastity (Q 4:156; see CHASTITY), although some of the classical commentators suggest that the effect of Gabriel's sudden appearance in human form was to arouse Mary's desire, as in an erotic dream, and thereby facilitate the descent of the maternal fluid into her womb (Robinson, *Christ,* 161, 187).

In Q 23:50, God states that he set the son of Mary and his mother as a sign (see SIGNS) and that he sheltered them on a hilltop "where there was both a cool place and a spring" *(dhāti qarārin wa-maʿīnin).* The suggestion made by some Christian authors that this is an allusion to the assumption of Mary which allegedly took place on a hill in Ephesus, is wide of the mark. The verse seems rather to refer back to the circumstances surrounding Jesus' birth, which were mentioned in Q 19 where Mary was

instructed to drink from a stream that appeared miraculously (Q 19:24-6; see SPRINGS AND FOUNTAINS). There is even a verbal echo of the infant Jesus' words to her, "refresh yourself," literally "cool your eye" (*qarrī ʿaynan*, Q 19:26). Other verses in Q 23 deny that God has taken a son (Q 23:91) and warn against appealing to another deity beside him (Q 23:117). It is clear therefore that neither Jesus nor Mary is to be regarded as a divine being. Together, however, they constitute a "sign:" probably a reference to the virginal conception, which, like the miraculous creation (q.v.) of the first man, points to God's power to raise the dead (compare Q 23:12-6; see DEATH AND THE DEAD; BIOLOGY AS THE CREATION AND STAGES OF LIFE).

Q 21:91-3 alludes to Mary and her son without naming them. Here, too, they are said to constitute a sign. The only new element is God's statement that she "guarded her chastity (*farjahā*, literally, her opening) so we breathed into her *(fīhā)* of our spirit" (Q 21:91). An almost identical statement occurs in Q 66:12, the only difference being that there God says that he breathed "into it" *(fīhi)*, "it" presumably being Mary's *farj*. In both instances, the probable reference is to God's creating life in her womb without her having sexual intercourse. Similar language is used elsewhere to describe how he gave life to the first man (Q 15:29; 32:9; 38:72). Some of the classical commentators, however, assumed that "our spirit" in Q 21:91 and 66:12 denoted Gabriel, as in Q 19:17. They therefore reasoned that Mary literally "guarded her opening" from Gabriel on the specific occasion of the annunciation and debated whether the reference was to her vulva (the usual meaning of *farj*) or to an aperture in her clothing. They cited reports alleging that she conceived after he blew up her skirt, down the neck of her chemise, into her sleeve or into her mouth (Robinson, Fakhr al-Dīn, 15).

There are two Medinan verses which clearly state that Jesus is God's word (see WORD OF GOD), namely Q 3:45 and Q 4:171. Moreover, it is sometimes held that Q 3:39 and 19:34 (a Medinan passage in Q 19) also imply this. As the context of these verses is Jesus' conception, birth and infancy, it is appropriate to discuss them at this point. Christian apologists often argue that they echo the teaching of John's Gospel, which states that God's divine Word *(logos)*, which was with him in the beginning and through whom he created all things, became flesh in Jesus Christ (John 1:1-18). We shall see, however, that although the Qurʾān calls Jesus "a word from God" it does not endorse the orthodox Christian view that he was the incarnation of a pre-existent divine hypostasis.

Q 3:39 recalls that the angels announced to Zechariah the good news (q.v.) of the forthcoming birth of John, who would "confirm the truth of a word from God." Arabic does not distinguish between upper and lower case letters, but as *kalima* lacks the definite article it should probably be rendered "word" rather than "Word." The classical commentators generally assumed that the "word" in question was Jesus. They cited a number of traditions in support of this, including one from Ibn ʿAbbās, which relates how John bowed down in reverence before Jesus when they were both babes in their mothers' wombs. Although some of the early philologists argued that in this context *kalima* denotes a "book" or "scripture," the traditional interpretation is preferable in view of Q 3:45, which recalls how the angels told Mary: "God announces to you good news of a word from him; his name will be the Messiah Jesus son of Mary…." Here *kalima* clearly refers to Jesus and, as the annuncia-

tion to Mary is the structural homologue of the earlier annunciation to Zechariah, it seems likely that *kalima* refers to Jesus there as well. Nevertheless, it should be noted that, whereas *kalima* is a feminine noun, the pronominal suffix attached to "name" is masculine. Thus the name "the Messiah Jesus son of Mary" is attributed to the male person indicated by the word, rather than to the word itself. Elsewhere in the Qurʾān *kalima* usually denotes a divine decree, and this seems also to be the case here. The classical commentators argued convincingly that Jesus is called a "word" primarily because, as was also the case with Adam, God brought him into existence merely by uttering the command "Be!" as is stated a few verses later in Q 3:59 (see COSMOLOGY).

Q 4:171 is more overtly polemical. The People of the Book (q.v.) are ordered not to exaggerate in their religion and to speak nothing except the truth about God. The Messiah Jesus son of Mary was only God's envoy (see MESSENGER) and "his word which he cast unto Mary" and a spirit from him. Here, Jesus and the "word" are even more closely associated because the verb "cast" is followed by the redundant feminine object pronoun. Nevertheless, as there is no suggestion that Jesus was God's sole envoy and, as "spirit" is indefinite, "his word" should probably be construed as "a word of his," without any implication of uniqueness. In any case, the polemical context and the insistence that Jesus is *only* an envoy, word and spirit, should caution Christian apologists from interpreting *kalima* in the light of orthodox Christian *logos* theology.

Q 19:34 contains the word *qawl*, which can mean either "word" or "statement." Two of the seven readers (see READINGS OF THE QURʾĀN), ʿĀṣim in Kūfa and Ibn ʿĀmir in Damascus, vocalized the crucial expression as *qawla l-ḥaqqi*, giving *qawl* an accusative ending. This is the reading found in Flügel's text and in the standard Egyptian edition of the Qurʾān, which are the basis of most English translations. If it is accepted, the expression introduces an exclamation and the verse should be rendered: "That is Jesus son of Mary — statement of the truth concerning which they are in doubt!" In which case, "statement of the truth" simply refers to the previous story and has no bearing on the qurʾānic teaching about Jesus as a word from God. The other five readers, however, favored *qawlu l-ḥaqqi*, with *qawl* in the nominative. This reading, which may well be the more original, can be construed in two ways: either as the predicate of a sentence whose subject has been omitted, namely "[It is] a statement of the truth" or as a nominal phrase in apposition to Jesus, namely "Word of Truth." In view of the fact that this verse is part of a highly polemical Medinan addition to the sūra and that the next verse denies that God has taken a son, the former interpretation seems the more probable.

The understanding of Jesus as God's word in the minimalist sense that he was brought into existence by God's command is in line with the teaching of the Nestorian Christians (O'Shaugnessy, *Word*, 24) as is the Qurʾān's stress on the similarity of the virginal conception and the creation of Adam (Robinson, *Christ*, 156-7). The statement that he was both a word and a "spirit" *(rūḥ)* from God (Q 4:171) is more difficult to interpret in view of the range of meanings ascribed to spirit in the Qurʾān. It may, however, reflect a thought-world akin to that of Psalm 33:6, where God's creative word and breath (Hebrew *rūach*) are treated as synonyms because an utterance is invariably accompanied by outbreathing.

His status and mission

The Qurʾān emphatically denies that Jesus was God, a subsidiary deity or the son of God (e.g. Q 5:17, 72, 116; 9:30; see POLYTHEISM AND ATHEISM). He was merely a "servant" (q.v.) of God (Q 4:172; 19:30; 43:59) and was required to pray and to pay alms (*zakāt,* Q 19:31; see ALMSGIVING; PRAYER). He and his mother needed to eat food (Q 5:75; see FOOD AND DRINK) and God could destroy them both if he wished (Q 5:17). He was nonetheless a "mercy (q.v.) from God" (Q 19:21), a "prophet" (*nabī,* Q 19:30) and an "envoy" (*rasūl,* Q 3:49, 53; 4:171; 5:75, 61:6), "eminent" in this world and the hereafter (see ESCHATOLOGY) and "one of those brought near" (Q 3:45).

Although Jesus was a sign for humanity as a whole (Q 19:21), his specific mission was to the Children of Israel (q.v.; e.g. Q 3:49; 43:59). God taught him the Torah (q.v.) and the Gospel (Q 3:48; 5:110) and supported him with the Holy Spirit (Q 2:87, 253; 5:110) — possibly an allusion to his baptism (q.v.) but most commentators assume that the reference is to Gabriel. Jesus attested the truth of what was in the Torah (Q 3:50; 5:46; 61:6); made lawful some of the things that were forbidden to the Children of Israel in his day (Q 3:50; see LAWFUL AND UNLAWFUL; FORBIDDEN); clarified some of the things that they disagreed about (Q 43:63); and urged them to worship God alone (e.g. Q 5:117). Like David before him, he cursed those of his people who disbelieved (Q 5:78).

He is credited with a number of miracles including creating birds from clay; healing a blind person and a leper; raising the dead; and telling the Children of Israel what they ate and what they stored in their houses (Q 3:49; 5:110). The miracle of the birds is mentioned in the apocryphal *Infancy Gospel of Thomas,* and the healings and resuscitations correspond to those narrated in the canonical gospels. From the qurʾānic perspective, however, none of these miracles implies that he possessed divine status or supernatural power; they were simply God-given signs of the authenticity of his mission, "clear proofs" which the unbelievers nevertheless dismissed as sorcery (Q 5:110; 61:6; see PROOF; BELIEF AND UNBELIEF).

A further miracle attributed to Jesus is that, at the request of his disciples, he asked God to send down "a table (q.v.) spread with food" (Q 5:112-5). The Arabic word translated by this phrase is *māʾida*. The lexicographers derived it from the verb *māda,* "to feed," but it is probably an Ethiopic loanword for it resembles the term used by Abyssinian Christians to denote the eucharistic table. Moreover, as Jesus speaks of the table as a "festival" for his disciples, there can be little doubt that the episode describes the institution of the Eucharist at the Last Supper; but, in accordance with traditional Christian typology, it appears to have conflated the Last Supper with the gospel feeding miracles and the Hebrew Bible story of how God sent down manna to the Israelites in the wilderness. Although the Qurʾān seems at this point to acknowledge the legitimacy of a specifically Christian ritual that originated with Jesus, the next verse makes clear that Jesus did not instruct people to worship him and his mother (Q 5:116). Moreover, the ritual is not linked with Jesus' atoning death. On the contrary, as God punishes whom he wills and forgives whom he wills, there can be no question of the participants enjoying a special status or gaining immunity from punishment (Q 5:18, 115; see REWARD AND PUNISHMENT).

The Qurʾān recognizes that God granted special favors to some of the envoys who preceded Muḥammad, in the case of Jesus by supporting him with the Holy Spirit and enabling him to perform miracles

(Q 2:253). Moreover, it singles out Noah, Abraham, Moses and Jesus as prophets with whom God established a strong covenant (q.v.; Q 33:7; compare 42:13). It urges the Muslims, however, to believe in all of God's envoys and not make a distinction between them (Q 2:136, 285; 3:84; 4:152) because they all taught essentially the same religion. Thus Jesus' name also figures in more extensive lists of messengers (Q 4:163; 6:84-6).

From the qurʾānic perspective, like the other envoys, Jesus was a precursor of Muḥammad. This is underscored in three ways. First, Jesus and Muḥammad are depicted as having had similar experiences. For instance, both were sent as a "mercy," both needed to eat food, both had "helpers" (*anṣār,* see APOSTLE; EMIGRANTS AND HELPERS) and both were suspected of sorcery (Robinson, *Christ,* 36-8; see INSANITY; SOOTHSAYERS; MAGIC). Second, God informs Muḥammad that he has inspired him in the same way as he inspired his predecessors including Jesus (Q 4:163; 42:13). Third, Jesus is said to have foretold the coming of an envoy called Aḥmad (Q 61:6), the heavenly name of Muḥammad.

The plot to kill him, his exaltation and future descent

According to Islamic tradition, when the Jews sought to kill Jesus, God outwitted them by projecting his likeness onto someone else whom they mistakenly crucified. Meanwhile, he caused Jesus to ascend to the second or third heaven (see HEAVEN AND SKY), where he is still alive. Jesus will return to kill the Antichrist (q.v.), and after a forty-year reign of peace he will eventually die and be buried in Medina (see APOCALYPSE). On the day of resurrection (q.v.), he will be a witness against the unbelieving People of the Book. It is questionable whether the qurʾānic data provides sufficiently solid foundations to bear the weight of this construction.

In Q 19 the child Jesus speaks of the day of his birth, the day he will die, and the day he will be raised alive (Q 19:33). From the similar statement about John (Q 19:15), and from subsequent verses that deal with eschatology (Q 19:37-9, 66), it has been inferred that Jesus will be raised alive at the general resurrection. There is not the slightest hint, however, that his death also lies in the future. On the contrary, given only this sūra, the assumption would be that it already lay in the past like John's.

Q 43 includes the cryptic assertion that "he" or "it" (the pronominal suffix *-hu* could mean either) is "knowledge for the hour" (Q 43:61). The classical commentators mention three traditional interpretations: (i) Jesus' future descent is a portent which will signal that the hour is approaching, (ii) the Qurʾān imparts knowledge concerning the resurrection and judgment (see LAST JUDGMENT), and (iii) Jesus' raising of the dead by divine permission brings knowledge that God has the power to raise the dead (Robinson, *Christ,* 90-3). Instead of *ʿilm,* "knowledge," Ibn ʿAbbās (d. ca. 67/686), Qatāda (d. ca. 117/735), and al-Ḍaḥḥāk (d. 115/723) allegedly read *ʿalam,* "sign, distinguishing mark," which would strengthen the case for the first interpretation, whereas Ubayy (see COMPANIONS OF THE PROPHET) allegedly read *dhikr,* "reminder," which would seem to lend weight to the second (see EXEGESIS OF THE QURʾĀN: CLASSICAL AND MEDIEVAL). As Jesus is the subject of verse 59 and verse 63, it is probably he, rather than the Qurʾān, who is the subject of verse 61. Additionally, in view of the predominant concern with eschatology in verses 65-78, it seems likely that verse 61 alludes to Jesus' future descent rather than to his miraculous raising of the dead. Nevertheless, there is nothing to indicate that his future

descent requires him to have been spared death on the cross.

Q 3 contains two consecutive verses which have a bearing on this topic. First there is a reference to Jesus' unbelieving opponents, "And they plotted and God plotted, and God is the best of plotters" (Q 3:54). This is followed by a statement about what God said to him, "When God said, 'Jesus, I am going to receive you and raise you to myself…' " (Q 3:55). Muslim commentators usually assume that both verses refer to the same incident, namely the Jews' plot against Jesus' life and God's counter-plot to rescue him by having them crucify a look-alike substitute. Although there may be a close link between the two verses, the staccato nature of much qurʾānic narrative should be a caution against supposing that this is necessarily the case. Therefore each verse will be considered in turn.

The verb *makara,* "to plot, plan or scheme," and its derivatives, occur in thirteen sūras spanning Nöldeke's second and third Meccan periods, and in Q 8 and 3 which are Medinan. When human beings are the subject of this verb, they are usually unbelievers who plot against specific envoys of God including Noah (Q 71:22), Ṣāliḥ (q.v.; Q 27:50), Moses (Q 40:45), and Muḥammad (Q 8:30; 13:42), or against God's signs (Q 10:21) thereby hindering others from believing (Q 34:33). When God is the subject of the verb, the reference is invariably to his counter-plot, but the emphasis may be on his rescue of the envoy (Q 8:30; see PROTECTION), the immediate punishment of the unbelievers (Q 7:99, 27:50 f.; see CHASTISEMENT AND PUNISHMENT; PUNISHMENT STORIES), the recording of their misdeeds (Q 10:21; see RECORD OF HUMAN ACTIONS) or their eventual punishment in the hereafter (Q 13:42). Hence, in Q 3:54 the unbelievers' plot could have been an attempt on Jesus' life — either the final plot to kill him or one which took place earlier in his ministry (see Q 5:110, compare Luke 4:30 and John 8:59) — or an attempt to subvert his message. God's counter-plot could have entailed his rescue of Jesus, but it might equally well have been his punishment of the Jews by destroying Jerusalem (q.v.), or his preservation of Jesus' monotheistic teaching. It is true that Noah, Ṣāliḥ and Moses were all rescued by God and that the Qurʾān warns against thinking that he would fail his envoys (Q 14:47), which seems to strengthen the case for thinking that Q 3:54 implies that Jesus was delivered from death. On the other hand, the same sūra explicitly mentions the possibility of Muḥammad dying or being killed (Q 3:144) and states that the Muslims who were killed at Uḥud (see EXPEDITIONS AND BATTLES; FIGHTING; JIHĀD) are not dead but "alive with their lord" (Q 3:169). Thus Jesus' death, ostensibly at the hands of his enemies, cannot be ruled out on the basis of Q 3:54.

The interpretation of Q 3:55 hinges on the meaning of the present participle of the verb *tawaffā* (Robinson, *Christ,* 117-26), which was rendered above as "going to receive." The finite verb is attested twenty-two times and the imperative three times. When God is the subject it can mean to receive souls in their sleep (q.v.; Q 6:60; 39:42) but it more frequently means "cause to die." As this latter meaning is attested in Q 3:193 and as the Qurʾān uses the verb in other sūras when speaking about Muḥammad's death (Q 10:46; 13:40; 40:77), there is a *prima facie* case for construing God's words to Jesus to mean that he was going to cause him to die and raise him into his presence. Most of the classical commentators, however, took them to mean that he would cause Jesus to sleep and to ascend in that condition or that he would snatch him

alive from the earth. The minority, who conceded that the participle does mean "cause to die," nevertheless denied that Jesus was crucified. Some of them argued that the order of the verbs is inverted for stylistic reasons and that, although God has already caused Jesus to ascend, his death still lies in the future. Others held that God caused him to die a normal death, while his substitute was being crucified, and that he then caused him to ascend.

In Q 4, the Jews are criticized for boasting that they killed Jesus (Q 4:157-9). The interpretation of this passage poses a number of problems (Robinson, *Christ,* 78-89, 106-11, 127-41). First, there is the statement, "They did not kill him or crucify him." Traditionally, Muslim interpreters have held that this is a categorical denial of Jesus' death by crucifixion. It may simply mean, however, that although the Jews thought that they had killed Jesus, Muslims should not think of him as dead because, from the qurʾānic perspective, he is alive with God like the martyrs of Uḥud (Q 3:169, see above; see MARTYR).

The second problem centers on the clause *wa-lākin shubbiha lahum* (Q 4:157). Most of the classical commentators understood it to mean "but he [i.e. the person whom they killed] was made to resemble [Jesus] for them." In support of this they cited traditional accounts of how God projected Jesus' likeness (Arabic *shibh*) onto someone else. These accounts, however, are unreliable for they differ over the identity of the person in question, some saying that he was a loyal disciple of Jesus who volunteered to die in his place, others that he was Judas Iscariot or one of the men sent to arrest Jesus. The non-standard interpretation that regards the verb as impersonal and construes the clause as "but it was made to seem like that to them" avoids the need to identify any person onto whom Jesus' identity was projected.

A third problem is posed by the words "God raised him to himself" (Q 4:158). The verb is *rafaʿa* (compare the use of the participle *rāfiʿ* in the similar context in Q 3:55). The classical commentators invariably took it to mean that God caused Jesus to ascend bodily into the second or third heaven where Muḥammad allegedly saw him on the night of the *miʿrāj* (see ASCENSION). It is arguable, however, that it is simply a graphic way of saying that God honored him, for elsewhere the same verb is used to denote God's raising envoys in rank (e.g. Q 2:253), his exalting Muḥammad's reputation (Q 94:4) and the ascent of good works into his presence (Q 35:10; see GOOD DEEDS).

The final problem is the ambiguity of the words "his death" in Q 4:159. The classical commentators mentioned two principal interpretations: either it refers to the death of each individual Jew and Christian, because immediately before their death they will recognize the truth about Jesus, or it refers to Jesus' death, because he is still alive and all the People of the Book will believe in him when he descends to kill the Antichrist. A good case can be made for the former interpretation on syntactical grounds, for the whole sentence constitutes an oath used as a threat (see LANGUAGE AND STYLE OF THE QURʾĀN). Moreover, the reading "their death," which is attributed to Ubayy, supports this interpretation. Owing to the influence of the ḥadīths about Jesus' future descent, however, the view that the verse referred to Jesus' death gained widespread support.

The assertion that Jesus will be a witness against the People of the Book (Q 4:159) is unproblematic and accords with the qurʾānic teaching that God will raise a witness against every community (Q 16:89).

In Q 5:117, Jesus says to God, "I was a witness over them while I dwelt among them, and when you received me you were the watcher over them." The word rendered 'you received' is the first person plural perfect of *tawaffā,* a verb whose meaning was discussed earlier in connection with Q 3:55. It most probably refers here to Jesus' death or rapture before his exaltation, which already lies in the past. As the statement occurs, however, in a conversation that will take place on the last day, it is just conceivable that it refers to Jesus' future death after his descent to kill the Antichrist.

From the above analysis, it should be obvious that the qurʾānic teaching about Jesus' death is not entirely clear-cut. Three things, however, may be said with certainty. First, the Qurʾān attaches no salvific importance to his death. Second, it does not mention his resurrection on the third day and has no need of it as proof of God's power to raise the dead. Third, although the Jews thought that they had killed Jesus, from God's viewpoint they did not kill or crucify him. Beyond this is the realm of speculation. The classical commentators generally began with the questionable premise that Q 4:157-9 contains an unambiguous denial of Jesus' death by crucifixion. They found confirmation of this in the existence of traditional reports about a look-alike substitute and ḥadīths about Jesus' future descent. Then they interpreted the other qurʾānic references to Jesus' death in the light of their understanding of this one passage. If, however, the other passages are examined without presupposition and Q 4:157-9 is then interpreted in the light of them, it can be read as a denial of the ultimate reality of Jesus' death rather than a categorical denial that he died. The traditional reports about the crucifixion of a look-alike substitute probably originated in circles in contact with Gnostic Christians. They may also owe something to early Shīʿī speculation about the fate of the Imāms (see IMĀM; SHĪʿISM AND THE QURʾĀN).

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Jewels and Gems

see METALS AND MINERALS

Jews and Judaism

Terminology

The Arabic term denoting "Jews" is *yahūd,* which occurs seven times in the Qurʾān. The form *hūd* also denotes the same and appears in this sense three times. The singular, *yahūdī,* occurs once. From *yahūd/hūd* was derived the secondary verb *hāda,* which means "to be a Jew/Jewish." "Those who were Jews" *(hādū)* is mentioned ten times. This verb appears once with the complementary *ilā* (Q 7:156), in which case it denotes "to return to." It is put into the mouth of Moses (q.v.), who says to God: "We have returned *(hudnā)* to you." Obviously, this is a play on *yahūd,* on behalf of whom Moses is speaking here (see Paret, *Kommentar,* ad Q 7:156). Outside the Qurʾān the transitive *hawwada* is used in the sense of "he made him a Jew." The form *yahūdiyya,* which denotes "Judaism," or "the Jewish religion," is also non-qurʾānic (cf. Lane, s.v. *h-w-d*). In addition to *yahūd* and its derivatives, the Qurʾān addresses the Jews as "Children of Israel" (q.v.), which alludes to their ancestral origin. Sometimes the Christians (see CHRISTIANS AND CHRISTIANITY), too, are included in this designation. The Jews are called by this appellation to imply that the fate of the old Children of Israel is continued through their descendants. Apart from the ethnic designations, the Qurʾān addresses the Jews as "People of the Book" (q.v.). This is a religious evaluation of them, and refers to the fact that they had prophets sent to them with revealed scriptures (see BOOK; PROPHETS AND PROPHETHOOD). The Jews are not the only community with a revealed book. Q 6:156 mentions two par-

ties to whom the book was revealed before the Muslims, and they stand for the Jews and the Christians respectively.

Jews as believers

The image of the qurʾānic Jews is far from uniform (which, as an aside, is true concerning almost any other qurʾānic theme), and the attitude towards them is ambivalent. On the one hand, they are recognized as true believers, while on the other, they are rejected as infidels (see BELIEF AND UNBELIEF; FAITH). As for their image as believers, the passage stating this in the most explicit way is Q 2:62: "Those who have believed and those who have been Jews, and the Christians and the Sabians (q.v.; Ṣābiʾūn), whoever believes in God and in the last day (see LAST JUDGMENT) and does good (see GOOD DEEDS), their reward (see REWARD AND PUNISHMENT) awaits them with their lord (q.v.), and no fear (q.v.) shall be on them, neither shall they sorrow." A divine reward is promised here to the Jews as well as to the other monotheistic communities, provided they remain monotheists believing in God and the last judgment. The same statement is repeated almost verbatim in Q 5:69, but in Q 22:17 a significant change is noticeable. The monotheistic communities are not alone, the Persians (*majūs,* lit. Magians) and the Arab polytheists (*mushrikūn,* see POLYTHEISM AND ATHEISM; IDOLATRY AND IDOLATERS) being mentioned, too. Concerning all of them it is stated that "God will decide between them on the day of resurrection (q.v.)…" No automatic reward is mentioned here, which renders the message to the non-Muslim monotheists more reserved in comparison with the former passages.

Other passages, however, recognize Jews as believers only on the condition that they believe in the concrete Islamic message as represented in the Qurʾān. Jews who did accept the Islamic message are mentioned in several qurʾānic passages, in which, however, they are always an exceptional minority among a majority of sinful Jews. Q 4:162, for instance, refers to "those (of the Jews) who are "firmly rooted in knowledge (see KNOWLEDGE AND LEARNING)," and identifies them as those who believe in the Qurʾān as well as in the scriptures revealed to previous prophets. They are mentioned in contrast to the evil-doing Jews who take usury (q.v.), whom the Qurʾān denounces in the previous verse (see EVIL DEEDS). The same applies to Q 4:46, in which a minority of believers is mentioned among a majority of Jews refusing to obey the qurʾānic Prophet.

Passages employing the appellation "People of the Book" reveal similar nuances. In some verses, the People of the Book are recognized as believers on the mere basis of their monotheism. Most explicit is Q 3:64: "Say: O People of the Book, come to a word (which is) fair between us and you, (to wit) that we serve no one but God, that we associate nothing with him, and that none of us take others as lords beside God." As observed by W.M. Watt (*Muhammad at Medina,* 201), this passage offers the People of the Book a common framework of faith on the basis of monotheism and nothing else. The People of the Book are referred to in Q 16:43 as the people of the "reminder" (*dhikr,* another term for a revealed scripture) and, in this case, they are treated as authoritative experts on prophetic matters. The skeptic listeners of the qurʾānic Prophet are invited to consult them and learn that God indeed may send a mortal messenger (q.v.) as he did in the past. Even the qurʾānic Prophet himself is requested in Q 10:94 to consult "those who have read the book" before him, if he is in doubt concerning his own prophetic revelation. As potential partners in a common

system of monotheistic faith, the dietary laws of the People of the Book were proclaimed acceptable (see FOOD AND DRINK; LAWFUL AND UNLAWFUL; FORBIDDEN), and in one qurʾānic passage (Q 5:5), the Muslims were given permission to eat their food as well as to marry women from among them (see MARRIAGE AND DIVORCE). The Islamic fasting (q.v.) days were also introduced with reference to the fast of the previous communities (Q 2:183). Their places of worship (q.v.), too, are treated favorably in Q 22:40, which seems to refer to synagogues and churches, as well as to mosques (see CHURCH; MOSQUE; SACRED PRECINCTS). The verse states that God has protected them from being pulled down.

But other qurʾānic passages using the label "People of the Book" distinguish between the believers and non-believers among them, the believers being those accepting the qurʾānic message. For example, in Q 3:199 it is stated that "Among the People of the Book are some who believe in God and in what has been sent down to you (i.e. to the qurʾānic Prophet), and in what has been sent down to them, humbling themselves to God…" These believers are again an exceptional minority. This is indicated in Q 3:110, which says that some of the People of the Book are believers, "but most of them are ungodly" (*al-fāsiqūn,* see HYPOCRITES AND HYPOCRISY). The believers among the People of the Book are described in Q 5:66 as a "just nation" *(umma muqtaṣida)* among a majority of evil-doers.

Other passages provide vivid descriptions of the piety (q.v.) of the believers among the People of the Book and of their admiration for the qurʾānic revelation. In Q 3:113-4 they are described as an "upright community, reciting the signs of God (i.e. the Qurʾān; see RECITATION OF THE QURʾĀN) at the drawing on of night, prostrating themselves (see BOWING AND PROSTRATION), believing in God and the last day… and strive with one another in hastening to good deeds." In Q 17:107-9 we read: "Those who were given the knowledge before it (i.e. before the Qurʾān), when it (i.e. the Qurʾān) is recited to them, fall down upon their faces prostrating… and they fall down upon their faces weeping, and it increases them in humility" (see VIRTUES AND VICES). Elsewhere it is asserted that these believers will be rewarded twice over, thanks to their belief in their own revealed scriptures as well as in the Qurʾān (Q 28:52-4).

Jews as sinners

But the Qurʾān is engaged mainly in dealing with the sinners among the Jews and the attack on them is shaped according to models that one encounters in the New Testament. In the latter, the Jews are already accused of having persecuted and murdered their own prophets (Matthew 5:12, 23:30-1; Luke 11:47). The prophets whom they killed are said to have foretold the coming of Jesus (Acts 7:52) and the Jews are said to have persecuted Jesus himself, plotting to kill him (John 7:1; 18:12; Acts 9:29). They are also described as stirring up the gentiles against Jesus' apostles (see APOSTLE) and as conspiring to kill them, too (Acts 13:50; 14:2; 20:3; 26:2). The Jews are further accused of not keeping the Torah (q.v.), which had been given to them (Acts 7:53). The conviction of the Jews that they were God's chosen people is also refuted and it is stressed that God is not only of the Jews but also of the gentiles (Romans 3:29). On the other hand, a group of Jews who believed in the message of the apostles is also mentioned (Acts 14:1).

All these elements recur in the qurʾānic attack on the Jews. To begin with, the Jewish arrogance (q.v.) stemming from the conviction that the people of Israel (q.v.)

were God's chosen nation, is reproved in various ways. In Q 2:111, the Jews, as well as the Christians, are challenged to prove their claim that only they will enter paradise (q.v.). In Q 5:18 the qurʾānic Prophet is requested to refute the idea that the Jews and the Christians were no less than "the sons of God and his beloved ones." The qurʾānic Prophet is requested to tell them that if this were so, God would not have punished them as he did. The arrogant Jews seem also to be referred to in Q 4:49, which speaks about people who consider themselves pure, while only God decides whom to purify. Elsewhere (Q 62:6) it is maintained that if the Jews are really God's favorites, to the exclusion of other people, then they had better die soon. This is a sarcastic response to their unfounded conviction that paradise is in store for them (see also Q 2:94). The same arrogance is attributed to them in verses dubbing them "People of the Book." In these verses they are said to have believed that they would only spend a few days in hell (Q 2:79-80; 3:23-4; see HELL AND HELLFIRE). The Qurʾān replies that they have no monopoly on God's mercy (q.v.) and that God extends it to whom he wills (Q 57:29).

The Jews have lost their right to be considered a chosen people mainly because of their insubordination (see DISOBEDIENCE) and disbelief. The Qurʾān imputes to them the blame of persecuting and killing their own prophets (Q 3:181, 183), a sin that is usually mentioned with allusion to the Children of Israel (Q 2:61, 87, 91; 4:155; 5:70). The Christians, too, share some of the blame because they have rejected the prophets sent to the Jews. This is implied in Q 2:113 where the Jews and the Christians reject each other's religion as a false one. This they do in spite of the fact that they read "the book" which testifies to the relevance of all prophets sent by God. Likewise, in Q 4:151, the Qurʾān condemns unbelievers *(kāfirūn)* who have only believed in some prophets while rejecting others. It seems that the rift between Jews and Christians is also referred to in Q 23:53 (cf. Q 15:90-1), which condemns those who divide their religion into sects (*zubur,* see RELIGIOUS PLURALISM AND THE QURʾĀN; PARTIES AND FACTIONS). Apart from persecuting the prophets, the Jews are blamed for failing to keep the laws of their own Torah. In Q 62:5, those who have been given the Torah but do not act upon its stipulations are likened to an ass carrying books. The Torah, it is said elsewhere, contains guidance and light (q.v.) by which the prophets and the rabbis judged the Jews, but those who do not judge by what God has revealed are unbelievers (Q 5:44; see JUDGMENT; SCHOLAR). Elsewhere they are said to have believed only in parts of the book and to have disbelieved in its other parts (Q 2:85). The Christians, too, are suspected of ignoring their own law as is implied in Q 5:68, in which the People of the Book are warned against failing to observe the Torah and the Gospel (q.v.; *Injīl*). In fact, a party of the People of the Book is accused of deliberate rejection of the scriptures given to them by their prophets. They have cast them behind their backs, yet they expect to be praised for their assumed devotion to the Torah (Q 2:101; 3:187-8). But the Jews, or rather the People of the Book, were also offered a chance to be forgiven, on condition that they started observing the Torah and the Gospel and all of God's revealed scriptures. If they had, God would have blessed them with an abundance of food (Q 5:65-6).

The Qurʾān is also aware of the wrath of God, which resulted in various hardships that the Jews suffered in the course of their history (see TRIAL; PUNISHMENT STORIES). Their rigid dietary laws, for example, which the Qurʾān adopts in a passage

mentioned above, are interpreted elsewhere in the Qurʾān as a punishment from God inflicted on the Jews for oppressing the poor and for taking usury (Q 4:160-1; cf. 6:146; 16:118). The Qurʾān further claims that these restrictions were not yet prescribed in the Torah, in which all kinds of food were still permitted except for that which Israel (see JACOB) prohibited (Q 3:93). Apart from the dietary restrictions, the state of internal friction and discord, which divided the Jews into sects, was also seen as a sign of God's vengeance (Q 5:64; see CORRUPTION; ANGER). The key term conveying the idea of God's anger with the Jews is *ghaḍab,* "wrath." It occurs in a passage (Q 2:90) dealing with the Children of Israel, in which it is stated that they "were laden with wrath upon wrath" for their disbelief. In another verse (Q 5:60), which is addressed to the People of the Book, allusion is made to those whom God has cursed and with whom he has been angry *(ghaḍiba)* and turned into apes and pigs. Transformation into apes recurs elsewhere in the Qurʾān as a punishment inflicted on the Children of Israel for violating the Sabbath (q.v.; Q 2:65; cf. 7:166; see CHATISEMENT AND PUNISHMENT).

The Jewish anti-Islamic sins

In the qurʾānic purview, the sins committed by the Jews with respect to their own scriptures continued into Islamic times, bearing grave anti-Islamic implications. These come out in passages imputing to the Jews the distortion *(taḥrīf)* of the original text of their own sacred scriptures (Q 4:46; 5:13, 41-3; cf. Q 2:75; see SCRIPTURE AND THE QURʾĀN). This seems to be treated indirectly also in Q 2:79, which denounces those "who write the book with their own hands and then they say, 'This is of God,' in order to sell it at a small price…" (see SELLING AND BUYING). It is probably implied here that the Jews sold the believers forged copies of their scriptures (see FORGERY). In one verse (Q 3:78), the act of perversion is oral, performed by people who "twist" the book with their tongues, making the false claim that this is the true form of the book. In this context, the Jews are also accused of playing with (Hebrew?) words that bear a mischievous sense (Q 4:46; cf. Q 2:104). All this is designed to mislead and offend the Muslims and their Prophet. The distortion of the Torah goes hand in hand with the Jewish sin of rejecting those rulings of the qurʾānic Prophet that corresponded to their own laws. After having made him a judge, they refuse to follow his verdict, and the Qurʾān blames them for preferring the legal advice of others (Q 5:41-3; see LAW AND THE QURʾĀN). The Jews are also said to have plotted to conceal from the Muslim believers what God revealed to them, so as not to give the believers arguments which they might use against them (Q 2:76; cf. Q 4:37; 2:42; see DEBATE AND DISPUTATION). The sin of concealment is imputed mainly to the People of the Book (Q 2:146; 3:71). They are said to have made their scriptures into separate writings *(qarāṭīs),* much of which they concealed (Q 6:91). The message of the qurʾānic Prophet reintroduces those parts of the previous scriptures that the People of the Book attempted to conceal (Q 5:15). The Qurʾān promises the sinners guilty of concealment a severe curse (q.v.) from God (Q 2:159), which is the fire (q.v.) of hell (Q 2:174). When accusing the Jews of concealing the Torah, the Qurʾān apparently refers to those parts in their scriptures that foretold the emergence of Muḥammad (q.v.). This is supported by qurʾānic verses asserting that the description of the Islamic Prophet was recorded in the Torah and the Gospel as the "gentile" (*ummī,* see ILLITERACY) Prophet (Q 7:157) and that Jesus (q.v.) knew him as Aḥmad (Q 61:6).

The Jews, or rather the People of the Book, are also accused of rejecting the authenticity of the Qurʾān as the true Word of God (q.v.). On one occasion, they demand that the Prophet produce a book from heaven (Q 4:153; see HEAVENLY BOOK) and they seem to have in mind the written Torah of Moses. Their demand seems to be designed to annoy the Prophet who only receives sporadic oral revelations (see REVELATION AND INSPIRATION; ORALITY; ORALITY AND WRITING IN ARABIA). It implies that the People of the Book do not believe him to be a true prophet. In some other passages, their conduct is the result of sheer envy (q.v.). They are jealous of the believers who have been blessed with God's bounty as this emanates from the Qurʾān that has been given to them (see BLESSING; GRACE). Their rejection of the Islamic scripture out of jealousy has turned them into unbelievers *(kāfirūn)* in the eyes of the Qurʾān (Q 2:89-90, 105). Their frustration is described most vividly in Q 3:119, according to which, whenever the People of the Book meet the believers, they pretend to believe in the Qurʾān, but when they are alone they bite their nails in rage at the believers. Moreover, the jealous People of the Book are said to have tried to make the believers revert to unbelief (Q 2:109; see also Q 3:69, 99-100; 4:54; 5:59). They conspire to achieve this by pretending to believe in the Qurʾān in the morning and by disbelieving in it in the evening (Q 3:72), i.e. they attempt to convey the impression that they only stopped believing in the Qurʾān after having examined it carefully, and not out of spite. The rejection of the Qurʾān by the Jews seems also to be treated in Q 2:97-8. Here, the "enemies of Gabriel" (q.v.) are attacked and tagged as unbelievers *(kāfirūn)*. Implicit here is the idea that the Jews rejected the Qurʾān because it was brought to Muḥammad by the angel Gabriel, whom the Jews considered their enemy. The Qurʾān asserts that Gabriel brought down the Qurʾān by God's will and that whoever is an enemy to any of God's angels (see ANGEL) will be punished by God as an unbeliever. The main polemical argument used in response to the Jewish rejection of the Qurʾān revolves around the idea that this scripture confirms the message of the previous scriptures. This means that the People of the Book must believe in it as well as in their own scriptures. They cannot believe only in some of God's holy books and reject the others (e.g. Q 2:89-91).

The Jews are not just unbelievers but also idolaters. In Q 9:30-1 they are accused of believing that Ezra (q.v.; ʿUzayr) was the son of God, just as the Christians held that the Messiah was the son of God. The Qurʾān reacts to both tenets by asserting that one must associate nothing with God. This implies that the Jews and the Christians are associators *(mushrikūn)*, i.e. they associate idols with God in a polytheistic form of worship. Moreover, in Q 4:51, "those who have been given part of the book," who are probably the Jews, are said to have believed in the Jibt and the Ṭāghūt (cf. Q 5:60), which may imply a kind of idol worship (see IDOLS AND IMAGES).

The gravest aspect of the Jewish anti-Islamic sin is the hostility towards the Muslim believers. In this respect, the Qurʾān differentiates between them and the Christians. This comes out in Q 5:82, which states that the Jews as well as the associators *(alladhīna ashrakū)* are the strongest in enmity against the believers, while the Christians, particularly priests and monks, are the closest in love to the believers (see MONASTICISM AND MONKS). But in Q 3:186, the enemies of the Muslims are identified by the more comprehensive label "People of the Book" and here again they are coupled with the *mushrikūn*. Together they cause the believers to "hear much annoy-

ing talk" *(la-tasmaʿunna)*. Another aspect of the hostility attributed to the People of the Book is revealed in Q 3:75 in which some of them claim that they have no moral obligations with respect to the "gentiles" *(ummiyyīn),* and therefore do not pay their financial debts (see DEBT) back to them. (See also POLEMIC AND POLEMICAL LANGUAGE.)

The dissociation from the Jews

Another aspect of the image of the Jews as enemies of the believers is revealed in passages in which a tendency to dissociate from them, as well as from the Christians, is noticed. To begin with, in Q 5:51, the believers are warned against taking the Jews and the Christians for friends *(awliyāʾ,* see CLIENTS AND CLIENTAGE; FRIENDS AND FRIENDSHIP). It is stressed that the Jews and the Christians are each other's friends, and whoever associates with them becomes one of them. In Q 5:57, a similar injunction is given concerning the People of the Book. It is added that they, as well as the unbelievers *(kuffār),* have taken the religion of the believers for a mockery (q.v.) and a joke, and this is why the believers should not be friendly with them. The People of the Book are dealt with also in Q 42:15, where the qurʾānic Prophet is warned against following their evil inclinations *(ahwāʾ,* see GOOD AND EVIL). Instead of following them, he is directed elsewhere to adhere to the law *(sharīʿa)* that God has given him (Q 45:18). The law is based on what God has revealed to him, i.e. the Qurʾān, and since it confirms the scriptures revealed previously to the Jews and the Christians, the qurʾānic Prophet is requested to judge between the People of the Book according to it. But in so doing he must beware of their evil inclinations and be cautious of them, lest they seduce him from part of what God has revealed to him (Q 5:49).

Other passages draw a sharper distinction between the alternative recommended law and what is defined as the "evil inclination" of the People of the Book. Some of these passages deal with the issue of the direction of prayer (*qibla,* q.v.). In Q 2:145 it is stated that the People of the Book and the Muslims reject each other's *qibla,* and the qurʾānic Prophet is warned not to follow the evil inclinations of the former. Another verse, Q 2:142, indicates that the conflict over the *qibla* started when the Muslims abandoned their original *qibla,* i.e. the one to which the People of the Book were accustomed, and adopted another one, which caused the "foolish people" to wonder what made the believers change their former *qibla*. The final *qibla* sanctioned by the Qurʾān is the one directed towards the sacred mosque (in Mecca). Thus, the alternative *qibla* is Mecca (q.v.), which most probably was designed to replace the Jewish *qibla* of Jerusalem (q.v.), although the latter is never mentioned explicitly in the Qurʾān.

A more dogmatic definition of the recommended substitute for the "evil inclinations" of the Jews and the Christians is provided in Q 2:120. Here, the Jews and the Christians wish for the qurʾānic Prophet to embrace their respective religions, but God tells him to proclaim instead his adherence to the "right course" or "guidance" *(hudā)* of God. The same is repeated in Q 2:135 but the recommended substitute is defined here more concretely as the religion *(milla)* of Abraham (q.v.). The latter is said to have been a *ḥanīf* (q.v.), i.e. a non-Jewish and a non-Christian monotheist. The particularistic insistence on Abraham's non-Jewish and non-Christian identity comes out in explicit statements as, for example, in Q 2:140, where Abraham as well as Ishmael (q.v.), Isaac (q.v.), Jacob and the Tribes (i.e. Jacob's sons) are said to have been neither Jews nor Christians (Q 2:140).

Elsewhere, the non-Jewish/non-Christian identity is linked to Abraham through the assertion that the Torah and the Gospel were only revealed after him (Q 3:65). This statement is addressed to the People of the Book, most likely with the intention of refuting their own aspirations concerning Abraham, whose religious heritage they were probably claiming to have preserved. In other words, the image of Abraham has been appropriated from the Jews and the Christians and was turned into the prototype of the non-Jewish and non-Christian model of Islam. This is also the context of Q 3:67-8, which asserts that the people nearest to Abraham are the Muslim believers.

The punishment of the Jews

The response to the Jewish rejection of the Islamic message as described in the Qurʾān consists not only in various dogmatic maneuvers but also in military pressure (see JIHĀD; FIGHTING). The latter course is hinted at in Q 29:46, in which the qurʾānic Prophet is advised to dispute with the People of the Book in a fair manner, "except those of them who act unjustly." This implies that the evildoers among the People of the Book deserve harsh measures, perhaps even war (q.v.). Other passages give up the hope of ever convincing the Jews and elaborate on the punishment that they deserve for their unbelief. According to some verses, the punishment awaits the Jews in the indefinite future. This is implied, for example, in Q 3:20, which says that if the People of the Book turn their backs on the qurʾānic Prophet, he can do nothing but deliver his message, a verse which is taken to mean that it is God's business to deal with such people in his own time. This idea is even clearer in Q 2:109, in which the believers are urged to pardon and forgive (see FORGIVENESS) the People of the Book until God brings his command (concerning them).

But the Jewish-Muslim relationship as described in yet other verses is explicitly warlike. In one passage (Q 5:64), the military option seems to have been taken up by the Jews themselves. It is stated here that whenever they light the fire of war, God puts it out. In Q 2:85, which is addressed to the Children of Israel, allusion is made to certain hostile acts they carry out against some unidentified groups. Yet in other passages, the Jews are the party that comes under the Islamic military pressure and their military weaknesses are exposed. In Q 59:14, for example, it is observed that the People of the Book never fight the believers in one solid formation but only in sporadic groups, hiding behind the walls of their fortresses. They are divided among themselves and fight each other strongly. The People of the Book have suffered actual defeat, which is mentioned in Q 59:1-4. Here, they are described as being driven out of their houses, although they thought that their fortresses would defend them against God. In Q 59:11-12, the expulsion of the unbelieving People of the Book is mentioned yet again, this time with reference to the hypocrites *(munāfiqūn),* who have not kept their promise to help the People of the Book. A similar pattern of military defeat recurs in Q 33:26-7, which says that God has brought down the People of the Book from their fortresses and cast fear into their hearts (see HEART). The believers have slain some of them and taken others captive (see CAPTIVES). God bequeathed upon the believers their lands and possessions (see BOOTY; EXPEDITIONS AND BATTLES).

Apart from the military defeat of the People of the Book, the Qurʾān also refers very briefly to their social status under Islamic domination (see SOCIAL RELA-

TIONS; SOCIAL INTERACTIONS; COMMUNITY AND SOCIETY IN THE QUR'ĀN). They must be killed unless they pay tribute (the *jizya*, see TAXATION; POLL TAX) but even then, they remain socially inferior to the believers (Q 9:29).

The qur'ānic Jews and the life of Muḥammad

The concrete relationship between the qur'ānic Jews and the life of Muḥammad is provided in the realm of the biography of Muḥammad (the *sīra*, see SĪRA AND THE QUR'ĀN). One of the earliest biographies of Muḥammad is that of Ibn Isḥāq (d. 150/768), of which the best-known version is that of Ibn Hishām (d. 218/833). Ibn Isḥāq's compilation served as a model to later historiographers who quoted large portions of his accounts. His compilation contains numerous allusions to qur'ānic verses about the Jews. Most of them appear in the chapters about Muḥammad's stay in Medina (q.v.) and are associated with the history of the Jewish tribes of that city, namely, Qaynuqāʿ (q.v.), Naḍīr (q.v.) and Qurayẓa (q.v.). These tribes based their military power on fortresses built of stone, within which they lived, and thanks to which they retained predominance over their Arab neighbors. The arrival of the Jews in Medina is described in the sources as a prolonged process containing waves of refugees from Syria (q.v.) following the Babylonian and the Roman conquests of that area. Some traditions provide the Jews with a priestly pedigree originating in Moses' brother, Aaron (q.v.), but other traditions trace their origins to certain ancient Arab clans who are said to have converted to Judaism (see TRIBES AND CLANS).

Ibn Isḥāq incorporates Q 2:85 within a description of some pre-Islamic alliances formed between the Jewish tribes and the Arab inhabitants of Medina, the Aws and the Khazraj. The qur'ānic verse is addressed to the Children of Israel, accusing them of slaying their people and of turning a party from among them out of their homes, unlawfully going against their own. Ibn Isḥāq has associated this verse with the military clashes that broke out between the various Jewish/Arab alliances in pre-Islamic Medina (Ibn Isḥāq, *Sīra*, ii, 188-9). The first Jewish tribe defeated by Muḥammad was Qaynuqāʿ. Ibn Isḥāq adduces Q 3:12, which addresses "those who disbelieve," in reference to the fate of this tribe: they are told that they shall be vanquished and driven to hell together. Although this verse does not mention the Jews in particular, Ibn Isḥāq has nevertheless applied it to them, to illustrate God's wrath with the arrogant Jews of Qaynuqāʿ (Ibn Isḥāq, *Sīra*, ii, 201). Q 5:51, which does mention the Jews and warns the believers against taking them as friends, appears in Ibn Isḥāq (*Sīra*, iii, 52-3) within an account about a Muslim who dissolved his alliance with the Qaynuqāʿ out of fidelity to Muḥammad. The story implies that the Qur'ān encourages believers to sever their former pacts with the Jews. The tribe of Naḍīr was next to be attacked by the Muslim warriors and Ibn Isḥāq associates large portions of Q 59 (Sūrat al-Ḥashr, "The Gathering") with them. He asserts that most of this sūra was revealed in connection with the defeat of this Jewish tribe (*Sīra*, iii, 202-4; see OCCASIONS OF REVELATION). Another qur'ānic passage, Q 5:11, was connected with Naḍīr's plot to assassinate Muḥammad when he came to their premises in order to discuss a problem of blood money (q.v.; Ibn Isḥāq, *Sīra*, ii, 211-12). The verse itself bears no direct relation to the Jews, merely stating that God stopped some people from "stretching forth their hands" against the believers. By applying the verse to the Jews, Ibn Isḥāq betrays yet again his desire to illustrate

God's dismay with the Jewish anti-Islamic hostility by recourse to as many qurʾānic verses as possible. For the massacre of the tribe of Qurayẓa (q.v.), Ibn Isḥāq alludes to Q 33:26, which mentions the People of the Book whom God drove down from their fortresses. The Qurʾān says that they backed the unbelievers and that the believers killed some of them and took another part captive. The Qurʾān goes on to say that God made the believers heirs to the land and dwellings of the defeated People of the Book as well as to "a land that you have not yet trodden" (Q 33:27). The latter is taken by Ibn Isḥāq to be a forecast of the Islamic conquest of the Jewish settlement in Khaybar (Ibn Isḥāq, *Sīra,* iii, 261-2). In other exegetical compilations (*tafsīr,* see EXEGESIS OF THE QURʾĀN: CLASSICAL AND MEDIEVAL), additional verses have been connected to the affair of Qurayẓa. Most noteworthy is Q 8:55-8, in which instructions are given for treating "those with whom you make an agreement, then they break their agreement every time" (see BREAKING TRUSTS AND CONTRACTS; CONTRACTS AND ALLIANCES).

Apart from the military clash between Muḥammad and the Jews of Medina, Ibn Isḥāq (*Sīra,* ii, 160-221) dedicates a lengthy chapter to the polemical discourse between the two parties, and here, too, numerous qurʾānic allusions are provided. In his introduction to this chapter, Ibn Isḥāq observes that the Jewish rabbis showed hostility to Muḥammad because God chose his apostle from the Arabs (q.v.). The rabbis were joined by hypocrites *(munāfiqūn)* from the Aws and the Khazraj who clung to the polytheism of their fathers. The Jewish rabbis used to annoy the Prophet with questions and introduced confusion so as to confound the truth (q.v.) with falsity (see LIE). The Qurʾān was revealed with reference to these questions of theirs. Further on, Ibn Isḥāq provides specific accounts with names of hostile Jews, about whom the various qurʾānic passages were allegedly revealed. These accounts impute to them the stereotyped qurʾānic sins of arrogance, jealousy, mockery, distortion of scriptures, etc. (see SIN, MAJOR AND MINOR).

In connection with the sin of concealing parts of scripture, as imputed to the Jews in Q 2:76, Ibn Isḥāq's traditions (see ḤADĪTH AND THE QURʾĀN) assert that the Jews concealed God's command to believe in Muḥammad's prophethood (*Sīra,* ii, 185; see PROPHETS AND PROPHETHOOD). As for the qurʾānic allegation that the Jews did not judge "by what God revealed," i.e. that they falsified the laws of the revealed Torah (Q 5:41-3), Ibn Isḥāq has recorded a tradition dealing with the issue of the penalty of death by stoning (q.v.; *rajm*), which adulterers must incur (see ADULTERY AND FORNICATION; BOUNDARIES AND PRECEPTS). The Jews reportedly rejected this law while Muḥammad endorsed it. They also concealed the fact that this law was written in their own Torah. They did so out of jealousy so as not to admit that Muḥammad was a genuine prophet, well guided in the divine laws (Ibn Isḥāq, *Sīra,* ii, 213-14). The sin of ignoring the evidence of their own Torah is imputed to the Jews also in Ibn Isḥāq's report about the religion of Abraham. The report alludes to Q 3:23, which mentions the invitation to the book of God given to those who have received a portion of the scripture *(a-lam tara ilā lladhīna ūtū naṣīban mina l-kitāb yudʿawna ilā kitābi llāh),* that it might judge between them. The verse goes on to say that a party of them turned down the offer. Tradition relates that the verse was revealed following a debate that took place in a Jewish school *(bayt al-midrās)* between a number of Jews and Muḥammad. Muḥammad announced that his religion was that of Abraham but the Jews claimed that Abraham

was Jewish. When, however, Muḥammad asked them to let the Torah judge between them, they refused (Ibn Isḥāq, *Sīra,* ii, 201). The Jewish conviction that they were genuine holders of Abraham's religious legacy comes out also in a tradition about the changing of the *qibla* from Jerusalem to Mecca, which alludes to Q 2:142. The tradition identifies the "fools" of this verse (see IGNORANCE) with a delegation of Jews who came to Muḥammad claiming that following the true religion of Abraham means reverting to the *qibla* of Jerusalem (Ibn Isḥāq, *Sīra,* ii, 198-9). Another tradition makes it even clearer that both parties, Muslims and Jews, claimed to be holding the true religion of Abraham and accused each other of distorting it. The tradition says that in this context, Q 5:68 was revealed. It tells the People of the Book that they follow no good until they keep the Torah and the gospel (Ibn Isḥāq, *Sīra,* ii, 217). Thus it is clear that in Ibn Isḥāq's presentation, the idea of the religion of Abraham is not regarded as a newly introduced concept but merely as an old Jewish idea that acquired a new non-Jewish Islamic interpretation. This interpretation was considered closer to the genuine message of the Torah than the Jewish one.

Among the passages quoted in Ibn Isḥāq's reports about the Jewish-Islamic polemics, some make no direct reference to Jews. For example, Q 3:7 mentions "those in whose hearts there is perversity *(zaygh),*" equating them with those who follow those parts of the Qurʾān that are ambiguous (q.v.; *mutashābihāt*). They do so in order to mislead, and impose (their own) interpretation upon, the Muslims. Ibn Isḥāq identifies the perverts with some Jews of Medina and says that they used to examine the mysterious letters that open some of the qurʾānic chapters, trying to figure out what their numerical value meant (see MYSTERIOUS LETTERS; NUMEROLOGY). When they failed, they expressed their doubts concerning Muḥammad's prophethood (Ibn Isḥāq, *Sīra,* ii, 194-5). Another similar case is that of Q 2:6-7, in which anonymous unbelievers *(alladhīna kafarū)* are condemned. It is said about them that "God has set a seal upon their hearts and upon their hearing and there is a covering over their eyes (q.v.), and there is a great punishment for them" (see HEARING AND DEAFNESS; SEEING AND HEARING; VISION AND BLINDNESS). Ibn Isḥāq (*Sīra,* ii, 178) identifies these doomed unbelievers as the Jewish rabbis. He says that these rabbis are also referred to in Q 2:14, which speaks about devils (*shayāṭīn,* see DEVIL), with whom some unbelievers conspire against the Muslims. While the "devils" are the Jews, the unbelievers, according to Ibn Isḥāq (*Sīra,* ii, 179), are the hypocrites *(munāfiqūn)*. Q 2:170 refers to some stubborn people who refuse to become Muslims and insist on following the faith of their fathers. Here, too, according to Ibn Isḥāq (*Sīra,* ii, 200-1), the Qurʾān alludes to certain Jews whose names he specifies. Q 7:187 mentions some anonymous people inquiring when the "hour" shall come (see APOCALYPSE) and, again, Ibn Isḥāq (*Sīra,* ii, 218) says that they were the Jews and provides a list of their names. Even Q 112, which declares the undefined unity of God, without reference to any unbelievers, was revealed, according to Ibn Isḥāq (*Sīra,* ii, 220-1), in response to irritating questions posed to Muḥammad by certain Jews.

In various exegetical sources, other verses have been associated with the Jewish-Islamic conflict. For example, Q 58:8 condemns people who "hold secret counsels for sin" and greet the qurʾānic Prophet in a depraved manner. This was interpreted as referring to the Jews who reportedly greeted Muḥammad by saying *al-sām ʿalayka* ("destruction be upon you"), instead of *al-salām ʿalayka* ("peace be upon you").

On the other hand, Ibn Isḥāq is also aware of some Medinan Jews who converted to Islam and his report about them alludes to Q 3:113, which mentions an "upright" party among the People of the Book. He provides a list of their names — the best known of which being that of ʿAbdallāh b. Salām — and describes the dismay of the rabbis at their conversion to Islam (Ibn Isḥāq, *Sīra,* ii, 206). Ibn Salām's name recurs in later exegetical compilations *(tafsīr)* in association with other verses mentioning believers among the Jews or the People of the Book (Q 4:46, 162; 5:66; 10:94; 28:52-4). Ibn Salām is occasionally contrasted with Kaʿb b. al-Ashraf, a Jewish archenemy of the Prophet (of the tribe of Naḍīr), who was assassinated at the behest of Muḥammad. Ibn al-Ashraf's name, too, was read into the Qurʾān and it occurs, for example, in the commentaries on Q 3:75. That verse speaks of two types of people belonging to the People of the Book: those who pay back their debts to the believers in full and those who do not. Ibn Salām is mentioned as one of the former and Ibn al-Ashraf as one of the latter. Ibn al-Ashraf also figures in the exegesis of Q 3:186, in which the believers are said to have been hearing "much annoying talk" from the People of the Book. The commentators say that the verse refers to Ibn al-Ashraf who used to compose satirical anti-Islamic poetry (see POETRY AND POETS). His name is also included in the exegesis of Q 3:78, which speaks about those who "twist" the book, i.e. the Qurʾān, with their tongues. Q 4:51-2 mentions people whom God has cursed because they told the unbelievers that the latter's faith was better than the Islamic one. The exegetes say that the passage refers to Ibn al-Ashraf, who supported the Quraysh and their idols and reviled Muḥammad's religion (q.v.). The Prophet's doomed "enemy" *(shāniʾ)* of Q 108:3 is also identified with him (see ENEMIES; OPPOSITION TO MUḤAMMAD).

It may be noted in passing that some of the qurʾānic verses that refer to believers among the People of the Book did not remain confined to the Jewish sphere and appear also in a specific Christian context. For example, Q 28:54, which states that the believers among the People of the Book shall be granted their reward twice, was interpreted as referring to Ibn Salām as well as to Salmān al-Fārisī. The latter changed his faith from Christianity to Islam and became a celebrated Companion of the Prophet (see COMPANIONS OF THE PROPHET). The verse is also said to refer to believers among the Christians of Abyssinia (q.v.) who joined Muḥammad's warriors in Medina (Suyūṭī, *Durr,* v, 131-3; see EMIGRANTS AND HELPERS). This verse also inspired a ḥadīth that is attributed to the Prophet, which says that whoever embraces Islam from among the "people of the two books," will be rewarded twice and whoever embraces Islam from among the associators *(mushrikūn),* will be rewarded once (Ibn Ḥanbal, *Musnad,* v, 259). The same verse was eventually worked into the Prophet's letter to the Byzantine emperor (see BYZANTINES). The letter promises him a double reward in return for his conversion to Islam. The same letter contains also the verbatim wording of Q 3:64, which extends an invitation to the People of the Book to join the Muslims in a common monotheistic faith (e.g. Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ,* iv, 57 [56:102]).

Qurʾānic Jews and the Islamic community

The sinful Jews of the Qurʾān were eventually turned into a model of evil of which the entire Islamic community must beware. This emerges from the exegesis of qurʾānic passages that denounce people who became divided by inner conflicts and dissension (e.g. Q 3:105; 6:159). The verses instruct the qurʾānic Prophet to dissociate

from them and the commentators have identified them with the Jews, as well as the Christians. It was thus implied that the Islamic community should be cautious not to follow the Jewish and Christian precedent of discord. Such warning was intended mainly against heretical groups, like the Khārijīs (q.v.) and the Qadarīs who were accused of introducing Jewish models of schism into Islamic society, although the introduction of Jewish ideas is most commonly associated with the Shīʿīs, especially ʿAbdallāh b. Sabaʾ and al-Mukhtār (d. 67/687; see SHĪʿISM AND THE QURʾĀN). Verses dealing with the fate of unbelievers in hell (e.g. Q 18:103-6) were likewise interpreted as referring to the Jews with the same anti-heretical aim in mind (for details see Rubin, *Between Bible and Qurʾān,* 160-3, 208-12). In addition to those verses about the wrath *(ghaḍab)* of God in which the Jews are mentioned explicitly, various qurʾānic allusions to anonymous groups who have come under God's wrath were also interpreted as referring to the Jews (e.g. Q 1:7; 60:13). The punishment of transformation into apes and pigs, which the qurʾānic People of the Book incurred as a result of God's wrath, reappears in traditions about Jews of Islamic times. In some of these traditions, the Prophet himself is involved and he is said to have addressed them as "brothers of apes and pigs." Some traditions have applied the same punishment to certain heretical Islamic groups such as the Qadarīs (Rubin, *Between Bible and Qurʾān,* 213-32; see HERESY).

Numerous qurʾānic passages associated with the Jews emerge also in the discussions of their status as *ahl al-dhimma,* "people under protection" (i.e. of the Islamic community, the *umma,* see PROTECTION). Especially noteworthy is the qurʾānic passage that contains the term *dhimma* (Q 9:7-15). It deals with associators *(mushrikūn),* concerning whom the Qurʾān says that their protection remains valid as long as they remain loyal to the believers (see LOYALTY). If they break their oaths (see OATHS AND PROMISES) and revile the Islamic religion, then the believers must fight them. Muslim scholars applied this passage to the obligation of loyalty with which the Jewish and Christian *dhimmī*s must treat their Muslim protectors (Ibn Qayyim, *Dhimma,* iii, 1379 f.). Q 9:28 is also noteworthy. It proclaims that the *mushrikūn* are impure (*najas,* see PURITY AND IMPURITY) and therefore they should not approach the "sacred mosque." Muslim scholars took this statement as the scriptural basis for the injunction (usually attributed to the Prophet himself) to prevent Jews and Christians from entering the Arabian peninsula (Ibn Qayyim, *Dhimma,* i, 370-408).

Qurʾānic Jews and modern scholarship

Modern scholars have usually taken the qurʾānic treatment of the Jews as a point of departure for their historical analysis of Muḥammad's relations with the Jews of Medina. In so doing, they have followed the traditional Islamic approach, which sees in the Qurʾān an authentic collection of Muḥammad's prophecies. The scholars have adopted a historiographical narrative (see HISTORY AND THE QURʾĀN) about a so-called "break" between Muḥammad and the Jews of Medina, usually dated to shortly before the battle of Badr (q.v.) in March 624 C.E. The scholars defined Muḥammad's policy until the break as dedicated to attempts at gaining the support of the Jews. An extra-qurʾānic document known as the Constitution of Medina (recorded in Ibn Isḥāq, *Sīra,* ii, 147-50), which is relatively favorable to the Jews, was dated to this stage. The reason for the "break" with the Jews, according to the scholars, was the Jewish reluctance to

respond to Muḥammad's appeal. Consequently, the Prophet changed his attitude towards them and embarked on a military offensive against them. This narrative runs parallel to the supposed evolution of the idea of holy war (*jihād,* q.v.). The scholars have built into this narrative of escalating conflict the various qurʾānic verses about the Jews. Broadly speaking, verses relatively tolerant of the Jews were marked by the scholars as early Medinan (see CHRONOLOGY AND THE QURʾĀN), assuming that they were revealed before the break. The break is reflected in qurʾānic passages about the military clash with the People of the Book, as well as in the verses about the new *qibla* and the non-Jewish/non-Christian identity of Abraham. In view of doubts raised more recently by some scholars, however, who suggested that the Qurʾān gained its final shape much later than in the days of Muḥammad and perhaps not even in Arabia (cf. Wansbrough, *QS;* see POST-ENLIGHTENMENT ACADEMIC STUDY OF THE QURʾĀN), the historicity of the supposed relations between Muḥammad and the Jews is no longer self-evident. One cannot rule out the possibility that at least some components of the narrative of the "break" with the Jews stem from post-conquest conditions that were projected back into Muḥammad's time.

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Jibrīl see GABRIEL

Jibt

A word of uncertain etymology, the noun *jibt* occurs only once in the Qurʾān, but is also used in poetry and prophetic traditions from the early Islamic centuries (see POETRY AND POETS; ḤADĪTH AND THE

QUR'ĀN). Generally, *jibt* has three possible meanings: it is used to describe any false object of belief or worship (see IDOLS AND IMAGES), an individual who exceeds all bounds of propriety (see MODERATION) or a state of oppression (q.v.) and injustice (*Lisān al-ʿArab,* ii, 164; *Tāj al-ʿarūs,* iii, 32; see JUSTICE AND INJUSTICE). It is mentioned in Q 4:51 in the context of condemning those People of the Book (q.v.) who gave credence to the unbelievers (see BELIEF AND UNBELIEF) and attempted to incite them against Muslims.

Some early authorities asserted that the word passed into Arabic from the language of the Ḥabasha (i.e. Ethiopic: that of the former inhabitants of today's Sudan and Ethiopia; see ABYSSINIA; FOREIGN VOCABULARY; cf. Jeffery, *For. vocab.,* 99-100; Suyūṭī, *Muhadhdhab,* 204), where, reportedly, it meant "sorcery" or "a demon" (see MAGIC; DEVIL). Other authorities maintained that the word was derived from the Arabic term *jibsun,* meaning "a person of ill repute and character" (Māwardī, *Nukat,* i, 494-5; ʿAbd al-Raḥīm, *Tafsīr,* i, 284). In the Qur'ān and in numerous theological works, *jibt* is most often correlated with the word *ṭāghūt (al-jibt wa-l-ṭāghūt),* an expression that means divination (q.v.), sorcery or idol worship (see IDOLATRY AND IDOLATERS). Some commentators on the Qur'ān (see EXEGESIS OF THE QUR'ĀN: CLASSICAL AND MEDIEVAL) claimed that *jibt* and *ṭāghūt* were the names of two idols worshipped by the Quraysh (q.v.) in Mecca (q.v.; Qurṭubī, *Jāmiʿ,* v, 248-9; Qāsimī, *Tafsīr,* iii, 172). Others claimed that *jibt* referred to a specific person named Ḥuyayy b. Akhṭab while *ṭāghūt* referred to Kaʿb b. al-Ashraf, two Jewish leaders who, after the battle of Uḥud (see EXPEDITIONS AND BATTLES), went to Mecca in order to conspire with the Quraysh to destroy the Muslims in Medina (q.v.; Ṭabarī, *Tafsīr,* viii, esp. 461-5, 469-70 [ad Q 4:51]; Ibn Kathīr, *Tafsīr,* ad loc.; see JEWS AND JUDAISM; OPPOSITION TO MUḤAMMAD). Still other authorities maintained that *jibt* means sorcery or divination while *ṭāghūt* means a sorcerer or diviner (Zamakhsharī, *Kashshāf,* i, 274; Ibn ʿĀdil, *Lubāb,* vi, 420-2). The influential premodern jurist and theologian, Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī (d. 606/1210; *Tafsīr,* v, 103-4), asserted that the expression has come to describe any condition of extreme evil (see GOOD AND EVIL) and corruption (q.v.).

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Jihād

Struggle, or striving, but often understood both within the Muslim tradition and beyond it as warfare against infidels (see FIGHTING; WAR; BELIEF AND UNBELIEF). The term *jihād* derives from the root *j-h-d,* denoting effort, exhaustion, exertion, strain. Derivatives of this root occur in forty-one qur'ānic verses. Five of these contain the phrase *jahd aymānihim,* meaning "[to swear] the strongest oath," which is irrelevant to the present discussion (see OATHS), and not all the remaining verses refer to warfare.

Since the concept of jihād is related to warfare, discussions of the subject often contain explicit or implicit value-judgments and apologetics. In fact, the subjects of jihād and warfare in Islam are always treated as one. There are, however, two reasons to discuss them separately. First, jihād is a concept much broader than warfare. Secondly, the doctrine of warfare can be derived from the Qurʾān without resorting to the term jihād at all. Therefore, in this article the derivatives of the root *j-h-d* in the Qurʾān will be discussed first, followed by a survey of the doctrine of warfare as expressed in the Qurʾān.

The root j-h-d *and its derivatives in the Qurʾān*

The root *j-h-d* does not have bellicose connotations in pre-Islamic usage (see PRE-ISLAMIC ARABIA AND THE QURʾĀN). Judging by linguistic criteria alone (see LANGUAGE AND STYLE OF THE QURʾĀN), without having recourse to qurʾānic exegesis (see EXEGESIS OF THE QURʾĀN: CLASSICAL AND MEDIEVAL), only ten out of the thirty-six relevant qurʾānic references can be unequivocally interpreted as signifying warfare. The rest are unspecified, some of them clearly denoting efforts or struggles other than fighting. The following guidelines help determine whether or not the term *j-h-d* in a given verse refers to warfare:

(a) when the term is juxtaposed with a military idiom, such as "shirkers" (*mukhallafūn, qāʿidūn,* Q 4:95; 9:81, 86) or "go on raids" (*infirū,* Q 9:41; see EXPEDITIONS AND BATTLES). Verses in which *j-h-d* is connected to "asking leave/finding excuses" *(istiʾdhān)* also seem to be dealing with warfare (Q 9:44; cf. 9:86, which combines both "ask leave" and "shirkers");

(b) when the content of the verse discloses its military significance (Q 5:54, where there is a linkage between harshness towards unbelievers, fearlessness and *j-h-d;* Q 60:1, where "enemies" [q.v.] and departing for jihād are mentioned);

(c) when the context of the verse indicates a military significance. Textual context is difficult to use because of the methods of assembling the text to which the history of the collection of the Qurʾān (q.v.) attests. As indicated in this history, verses that were revealed on different occasions (see OCCASIONS OF REVELATION; CHRONOLOGY AND THE QURʾĀN) were placed in sequence. Sometimes, fully contradictory verses were placed together, apparently because they deal with the same topic (e.g. Q 2:190-3; 8:72-5). Occasionally, however, the continuity between sequential verses is clear and the textual context may be used to clarify the warlike intention of a verse (Q 9:41, the context being 9:38-41; Q 9:44, the context being 9:44-6; these two verses also fall under category (a) above; Q 9:88, the context being 9:87-92);

(d) when *j-h-d* in the third form is followed by a direct object. It denotes, literally, two parties, each trying to exhaust the other, hence the notion of combat (Q 9:73 = 66:9; but cf. Q 25:52, *wa-jāhidhum bihi jihādan kabīran,* where the Prophet is instructed to combat by peaceful means, namely, by the Qurʾān; see DEBATE AND DISPUTATION).

In sum, there are only ten places in the Qurʾān where *j-h-d* definitely denotes warfare. To these may be added four verses that establish the status of "those who believed, emigrated (see EMIGRATION) and exerted themselves" (*inna lladhīna āmanū wa-hājarū wa-jāhadū,* Q 8:72, 74; 9:20; cf. 8:75). Since warfare is strongly advocated in the Qurʾān, it stands to reason that references to the high status of the "strugglers" *(mujāhidūn)* are, in fact, references to warriors. It is clear, however, that in these verses the reference is to the Emigrants

(*muhājirūn,* see EMIGRANTS AND HELPERS). It may be pointed out that sometimes *j-h-d* occurs as the counterpart of *hijra,* "emigration," presumably the Muslims' emigration to Medina (q.v.; Q 2:218; 8:72-5; 9:20; 16:110, cf. 9:24). Strangely, there is no qurʾānic reference to the military contribution or warlike attributes of the Helpers (*anṣār,* i.e. those Medinans who helped the émigrés; such references do, however, abound in the historical and ḥadīth literature; see ḤADĪTH AND THE QURʾĀN).

There is one case where *j-h-d* is applied to an impious struggle, namely, the struggle of disbelieving parents (q.v.) to prevent their offspring (see CHILDREN; FAMILY) from adhering to the true religion (q.v.; Q 29:8).

But in many verses it is not possible to determine the kind of effort indicated by *j-h-d*. There are many commentators who leave the terms unspecified in these instances, whereas others interpret also these ambiguous cases as warfare against infidels (see commentaries to Q 2:218; 3:142; 5:35; 9:16, 19, 20, 24; 16:110; 29:6, 69; 47:31; 61:11). Still others understand the doubtful cases in one or more of the following ways: (a) combat against one's own desires and weaknesses (see SIN, MAJOR AND MINOR), (b) perseverance in observing the religious law (see LAW AND THE QURʾĀN), (c) seeking religious knowledge (*ṭalab al-ʿilm,* see KNOWLEDGE AND LEARNING), (d) observance of the sunna (q.v.), (e) obedience (q.v.) to God and summoning people to worship him, and so on (see e.g. Khāzin, *Lubāb,* v, 200; Ibn Abī Ḥātim, *Tafsīr,* ix, 3084). All these meanings, however, are never explicit in the Qurʾān. Also, the phrases denoting the "greater" jihād (i.e. one's personal struggle to be a better Muslim) that are common in later literature, namely, "struggle of the self" *(jihād al-nafs)* or "struggle with the devil" (*jihād al-shayṭān,* see DEVIL), do not occur in the Qurʾān (see THEOLOGY AND THE QURʾĀN; ETHICS AND THE QURʾĀN; GOOD AND EVIL).

The qurʾānic concept of jihād was not originally connected with antagonism between the believers and other people. The semantic field of the root *j-h-d* as well as its use in the Qurʾān suggest another provenance. It may be an expression of the ancient and ubiquitous notion that the believers must prove to the deity their worthiness for divine reward (see REWARD AND PUNISHMENT; MARTYRS). This proof is achieved by enduring various kinds of hardships and self-mortification. Fasting and pilgrimage belong to this category as do celibacy and poverty. Conversely, hardships that befall the believers are understood as divine tests designed to provide the believers with opportunities to prove themselves worthy (see TRIAL). These ancient religious ideas found expression in the Qurʾān. God announces many times that he subjects the believers to tests and he reprimands those who are not able, or not willing, to endure (e.g. Q 2:155-6, 214; 3:142; 4:48; 47:4; see TRUST AND PATIENCE; JOY AND MISERY; PUNISHMENT STORIES). In Islam, in addition to giving the believers the opportunity to prove themselves, the tests also help establish the distinction between the true believers on the one hand, and the pretenders and the unbelievers on the other (see HYPOCRITES AND HYPOCRISY). The tests also help determine the relative status of the members of the community (see COMMUNITY AND SOCIETY IN THE QURʾĀN). One of the means of testing is jihād. In this capacity jihād may mean participation in warfare, but also any other effort made in connection with adherence to the true religion (see Q 3:142; 9:16; 47:31; cf. Q 9:24, 44, 88. Only Q 9:44 and 9:88 certainly refer to warfare, judging by the context. See also Q 4:76-7, 95-6; 9:90-4; 29:10-1; 47:20; 49:14-5; 57:10, 25.).

Sometimes not jihād but death (see DEATH AND THE DEAD) or battle *(qitāl)* "in the way of God" are explicitly mentioned as a test (Q 3:166-7; 47:4; cf. 3:154-5; 4:66; 33:11, 23-4).

Very little of the peaceful sense of *j-h-d* remained in Muslim culture and the understanding of jihād as war became predominant. Nevertheless, there are verses in the Qurʾān that attest to other significations. The best example is Q 22:78. By linguistic and contextual criteria, the phrase "exert yourself in the way of God as is his right" *(wa-jāhidū fī llāhi ḥaqqa jihādihi)* clearly does not refer to warfare, but to other forms of effort made by way of obedience to God. The verse is part of the doctrine of the "religion of Abraham" *(millat Ibrāhīm),* which regards the patriarch as the first, original Muslim (see Q 2:125-36; see ABRAHAM; ḤANĪF). Q 22:78 instructs Muslims to perform the religious duties originally prescribed to Abraham. While asking the believers to exert themselves and to do their utmost to this end *(jāhidū),* the verse points out that the requirement should not be deemed too much to ask, since God "has laid no hardship on you in your religion." The theme of war is not touched upon at all in this verse. In the same vein, Q 49:15 deals with definitions of belief and the phrase "those who strive" *(alladhīna… jāhadū)* apparently refers not to warriors but to those who perform all the divine ordinances (cf. Bayḍāwī, *Anwār,* ii, 277). Yet many commentators (including al-Ṭabarī, d. 310/923) insist that in these two cases the term refers to participation in warfare.

The warlike meaning of jihād thus predominates, to the extent that *q-t-l,* "kill," was sometimes glossed by *j-h-d* (e.g. Bayḍāwī, *Anwār,* i, 105, ad Q 2:190). This predominance is perhaps to be explained by the fact that in this sense of "war," jihād was given a legal definition, legal categories and regulations, aspects which were discussed at length by the jurists (who often, however, used the term *siyar* instead of jihād). Also the parallelism between the qurʾānic phrases jihād "in the way of God" *(fī sabīli llāh)* and *qitāl* "in the way of God" may have contributed to the equation of *j-h-d* with terms of warfare. In fact the phrase "in the way of God" itself came to mean "warfare against infidels," although it is not necessarily so in the Qurʾān (see e.g. "emigration in the way of God" in Q 4:100; 16:41; 22:58; 24:23).

The doctrine of warfare in the Qurʾān

Islam is a system of beliefs, ritual and law (see FAITH; RITUAL AND THE QURʾĀN) and its legal system covers all spheres of life, including warfare. Many rulings and attitudes relating to warfare are scattered throughout the Qurʾān, mainly in the Medinan sūras. Yet, derivatives of the root *j-h-d* are absent from the majority of these verses. Forms of the root *q-t-l* are used forty-four times in relation to warfare (although derivatives of this root are also used in other contexts). In addition, there are many verses relating to this subject in which neither *j-h-d* nor *q-t-l* occur.

The qurʾānic rulings and attitudes regarding warfare are often ambiguous and contradictory so that there is no one coherent doctrine of warfare in the Qurʾān, especially when the text is read without reference to its exegetical tradition. These contradictions and ambiguities resulted from historical developments and were later amplified by differences of opinion among exegetes. The Prophet led a dynamic career, having been at war for years with various enemies and under changing circumstances. Such variations and developments are doubtlessly reflected in qurʾānic verses and account for some of the contradictions. The course of these developments, however, is not clear, for

the same reasons that obstruct a decisive reconstruction of the Prophet's biography (see SĪRA AND THE QURʾĀN; MUḤAMMAD). In addition, differences of opinion eventually arose due to the various possibilities of interpretations. The language of the Qurʾān is often obscure and, even when not so, many terms, phrases and sentences have more than one possible meaning or implication. For example, the sentence "we have our endeavors *(aʿmāl),* you have yours" (Q 2:139; 42:15; cf. 10:41; 109:6) may be interpreted in several ways: (a) it enjoins tolerance towards other religions (see RELIGIOUS PLURALISM AND THE QURʾĀN), (b) it merely states a fact, (c) it constitutes a threat, or (d) it employs "endeavors" but means "reward for the endeavors," in which case it is also merely a statement of a fact, not an implied imperative. The first of these interpretations contradicts the qurʾānic order to initiate war against the infidels (Q 2:191, 193, 244; 8:39; 9:5, 29, 36 etc.; see e.g. Ibn al-Jawzī, *Nawāsikh,* 175-6, 440; Ṭabarī, *Tafsīr,* xi, 118-9). Another example is Q 2:190 (cf. 2:194). It contains the seemingly clear phrase "fight in the way of God those who fight you and do not trespass" (see BOUNDARIES AND PRECEPTS). This may be taken either as prescribing defensive war or as an instruction to refrain from harming non-combatants (see e.g. Jaṣṣāṣ, *Aḥkām,* i, 257). The former contradicts the above-mentioned qurʾānic order to initiate war. These are only two of a multitude of examples.

Commentators developed special techniques to deal with qurʾānic contradictions, chief among them abrogation (q.v.; *naskh*) and specification (*ʿāmm wa-khāṣṣ,* literally "general versus specific"). Abrogation seeks to replace the rulings of certain verses by others, on the grounds that the latter were revealed to the Prophet later than the former. Specification is designed to restrict or ban certain injunctions and prohibitions. This is done by establishing that the verse in question only applies to a definite group or to a specific event in the past. In contrast to abrogation, specification often occurs without the use of the technical terms *ʿāmm* and *khāṣṣ*.

A rarely applied, but very significant device, is the assignation of differing qurʾānic rules to different situations. Whereas the techniques of abrogation and specification aim at distilling one absolutely binding rule out of a number of possibilities, the technique of assignation leaves open a number of options and allows the authorities the power to decide which of the mutually-exclusive qurʾānic rules applies in a given situation. There are other exegetical devices used in order to resolve contradictions, such as denying linguistically possible implications (e.g. for Q 2:62), "supplementing" verses (*taqdīr,* e.g. for Q 10:41) and assigning appropriate contents to qurʾānic words (e.g. equating the term *silm/salm,* "peace," with Islam, for Q 2:208 and 8:61, see Ṭabarī, *Tafsīr,* ii, 322-5; x, 34).

The verses relating to warfare may be classified under the following headings: (a) the order to fight, (b) exhortations (q.v.), (c) the purpose of warfare, (d) conscription, (e) permission to retreat, (f) the treatment of prisoners (q.v.; see also HOSTAGES; CAPTIVES), and (g) booty (q.v.). There are also miscellaneous practical and tactical instructions. The first topic is covered by a large number of verses, whereas the rest are confined to a few verses each.

The order to fight involves the issue of attitudes towards the other. Muslim scholars considered more than one hundred verses as relevant to this topic. Even an address to the Prophet such as "you are merely a warner" (q.v.; Q 11:12) was sometimes understood as an implicit instruction to leave the infidels alone. Thus the verses expressing attitudes towards the infidels include explicit or implicit instructions to

the Prophet, or to the Muslims, which may be defined as follows: (a) to be patient and to stay aloof from the infidels (Q 2:139; 3:20, 111; 4:80-1; 5:99, 105; 6:66, 69, 70, 104; 7:180, 199; 10:99, 108-9; 11:121-2; 13:40; 15:3, 94-5; 16:82; 17:54; 19:84; 20:130; 22:68; 23:54; 24:54; 25:43; 27:92; 29:50; 30:60; 31:23; 32:30; 33:48; 34:25; 35:23; 37:174; 38:70; 39:15; 40:55, 77; 42:6, 48; 43:83; 44:59; 46:35; 50:45; 51:54; 52:31, 45, 48; 53:29; 54:6; 68:44, 48; 70:5, 42; 73:10-1; 74:11; 76:24; 88:22), (b) to forgive them or treat them kindly (Q 2:109; 5:13; 15:85; 43:89; 45:14; 60:8-9; 64:14; see FORGIVENESS; MERCY), (c) to tolerate them (Q 2:62, 256; 5:69, but cf. 3:19; 5:82; see TOLERANCE AND COMPULSION), (d) to preach or argue with them peaceably (Q 3:64; 4:63; 16:64, 125; 29:46; 41:34; see INVITATION), and (e) to fight them under certain restrictions (Q 2:190, 191-4, 217; 4:91; 9:36, 123; 16:126; 22:39-40). There are also qurʾānic references to treaties with infidels and to peace (Q 2:208; 4:90; 8:61; cf. Q 3:28; 47:35; see CONTRACTS AND ALLIANCES). All these are in conflict with the clear orders to fight, expressed in Q 9:5 and 9:29 (cf. Q 2:244). Q 9:5 instructs the Muslims to fight the idolaters *(mushrikūn)* until they are converted to Islam and is known as "the sword verse" (*āyat al-sayf,* see POLYTHEISM AND ATHEISM). Q 9:29 orders Muslims to fight the People of the Book (q.v.) until they consent to pay tribute (*jizya,* see POLL TAX), thereby recognizing the superiority of Islam. It is known as "the *jizya* verse" (*āyat al-jizya,* occasionally also as "the sword verse"). The Qurʾān does not lay down rules for cases of Muslim defeat, although there is a long passage discussing such an occurrence (Q 3:139-75, see also 4:104; see VICTORY).

A broad consensus among medieval exegetes and jurists exists on the issue of waging war. The simplest and earliest solution of the problem of contradictions in the Qurʾān was to consider Q 9:5 and 9:29 as abrogating all the other statements. Scholars seem sometimes to have deliberately expanded the list of the abrogated verses, including in it material that is irrelevant to the issue of waging war (e.g. Q 2:83, see Ibn al-Bārzī, *Nāsikh,* 23; Ibn al-Jawzī, *Muṣaffā,* 14; id., *Nawāsikh,* 156-8; Bayḍāwī, *Anwār,* i, 70; Ṭabarī, *Tafsīr,* i, 311; other examples: Q 3:111; 4:63; 16:126; 23:96; 25:63; 28:55; 38:88; 39:3). The number of verses abrogated by Q 9:5 and 9:29 is sometimes said to exceed 120 (Ibn al-Bārzī, *Nāsikh,* 22-3 and passim; also Powers, Exegetical genre, 138). Several verses are considered as both abrogating and abrogated, in turn, by others. The Muslim tradition, followed by modern scholars (see POST-ENLIGHTENMENT ACADEMIC STUDY OF THE QURʾĀN), associated various verses with developments in the career of the Prophet. It is related that, in the beginning, God instructed the Prophet to avoid the infidels and to forgive them. The Prophet was actually forbidden to wage war while in Mecca (q.v.). After the emigration to Medina *(hijra)* the Muslims were first permitted to fight in retaliation for the injustice (see JUSTICE AND INJUSTICE) done them by the Meccans (Q 22:39-40). Then came the order to fight the infidels generally, yet certain restrictions were prescribed. Eventually all restrictions were removed and all treaties with infidels were repudiated by Q 9:1-14, and the ultimate divine orders were expressed in Q 9:5 and 9:29. (There are many versions of this scheme, see ʿAbdallāh b. Wahb, *Jāmiʿ,* fol. 15b; Abū ʿUbayd, *Nāsikh,* 190-7; Bayḍāwī, *Anwār,* i, 634; Khāzin, *Lubāb,* i, 168; Shāfiʿī, *Tafsīr,* 166-73; Jaṣṣāṣ, *Aḥkām,* i, 256-63; cf. Ibn al-Jawzī, *Nawāsikh,* 230.) This evolutionary explanation relies on the technique of abrogation to account for the contradic-

tory statements in the Qurʾān. Although details are disputed, this explanation is not a post-qurʾānic development constructed retrospectively (see Firestone, *Jihād,* esp. chaps. 3-4). In addition to its obvious rationality, this evolution is attested in the Qurʾān itself (Q 4:77). Many exegetes, however, avoided the technique of abrogation for theological and methodological reasons, but achieved the same result by other means (e.g. Ibn al-Jawzī, *Nawāsikh*). Thus, in spite of differences of opinions regarding the interpretation of the verses and the relations between them, the broad consensus on the main issue remained: whether by abrogation, specification or other techniques, the order to fight unconditionally (Q 9:5 and 9:29) prevailed. Some commentators, however, argued that the verses allowing peace (Q 4:90; 8:61) were neither abrogated nor specified, but remained in force. By the assignation technique, peace is allowed when it is in the best interest of the Muslims (e.g. in times of Muslim weakness, see e.g. Jaṣṣāṣ, *Aḥkām,* ii, 220; iii, 69-70). In fact this was the position adopted by the four major schools of law (see Peters, *Jihād,* 32-7).

Exhortations to battle occur many times in the Qurʾān and the Prophet is told to urge his followers to fight (Q 4:84; 8:65). In addition to the verses that contain various instructions, there are those that promise reward to warriors and reprimand shirkers, threatening them with God's wrath (Q 2:154; 3:195; 4:74, 104; 9:38-9, 88-9, 111; 22:58-9; 33:23-4; 61:10-3; see also Q 3:139-75, which encourages the Muslims after a defeat). The verses that establish the distinction between true believers and hypocrites (see above) may also serve the same end.

In a few verses, the cause or purpose of Muslim warfare is mentioned as self-defense, and retaliation for aggression, for the expulsion from Mecca and for the violation of treaties (Q 2:217; 4:84, 91; 5:33; 9:12-3; 22:39-40; 60:9, cf. 4:89). In one case, defense of weak brethren is adduced (Q 4:75; see BROTHER AND BROTHERHOOD). On the basis of the "sword verse" (Q 9:5) and the "*jizya* verse" (Q 9:29) it is clear that the purpose of fighting the idolaters is to convert them to Islam, whereas the purpose of fighting the People of the Book is to dominate them. Many commentators interpret Q 2:193 and 8:39 ("fight them until there is no *fitna*") as an instruction to convert all the polytheists to Islam by force if need be (e.g. Khāzin, *Lubāb,* ii, 183; Jaṣṣāṣ, *Aḥkām,* i, 260). It appears, however, that *fitna* (see DISSENSION; PARTIES AND FACTIONS) originally did not mean polytheism, but referred to attempts by infidels to entice Muslims away from Islam. Such attempts are mentioned in many qurʾānic verses (e.g. Q 3:149; 14:30; 17:73-4; for Q 2:193 see e.g. Ṭabarī, *Tafsīr,* ii, 254; see APOSTASY). Thus the purpose of war in Q 2:193 and 8:39 would be not conversion of infidels, but the preservation of the Muslim community. Conversion as the purpose of Muslim warfare is also implied by some interpretations of Q 2:192 and 48:16. In later literature the formulation of the purpose of war is "that God's word reign supreme" *(li-takūna kalimatu llāhi hiya l-ʿulyā),* but in the Qurʾān this phrase is not associated with warfare (Q 9:40; cf. 9:33 = 61:9; 48:28).

The verses relevant to conscription are Q 2:216; 4:71; 9:39-41, 90-3, 120, 122; cf. Q 48:17. The verses implying that only a part of the community is required to participate in warfare prevail over those that stipulate or imply general conscription (see ʿAbdallāh b. Wahb, *Jāmiʿ,* fol. 16a-b; Ibn al-Jawzī, *Nawāsikh,* 438; Bayḍāwī, *Anwār,* i, 405; Shāfiʿī, *Tafsīr,* 140-1, 145, 148; Zuhrī, *Nāsikh,* 28-9; see also Paret, *Kommentar,*

215-6; id., Sure 9, 122). In post-qurʾānic legal idiom it is stated that warfare *(jihād)* is a collective duty *(farḍ ʿalā l-kifāya)*.

Permission to retreat occurs three times. In Q 8:15-6 retreat is forbidden unless it is intended to be temporary and is done for tactical reasons. These verses are considered by some scholars to have been abrogated by Q 8:65, which permits retreat only if the enemies outnumber the Muslims by more than ten times. This rule was, in turn, replaced by Q 8:66, which reduces the proportion to two to one (Bayḍāwī, *Anwār,* i, 361; Ṭabarī, *Tafsīr,* ix, 200-3; Ibn al-Jawzī, *Nawāsikh,* 415-8; Abū ʿUbayd, *Nāsikh,* 192-3). This issue is sometimes discussed in relation to Q 2:195 as well.

The taking of prisoners is forbidden in Q 8:67 (see also Q 8:70-1). This verse is considered as abrogated by Q 47:4, which allows the Muslims to take prisoners, to free them for no compensation at all or to do so in exchange for ransom (Qurṭubī, *Aḥkām,* iv, 2884-7; vii, 6047-9; Jaṣṣāṣ, *Aḥkām,* iii, 71-4; Abū ʿUbayd, *Nāsikh,* 209-16; Ṭabarī, *Tafsīr,* x, 42-4). Nowhere in the Qurʾān is there a reference to the permissibility (or otherwise) of executing prisoners. There is, however, disagreement among commentators regarding the apparent contradiction between Q 47:4 and the categorical order to kill the idolaters in Q 9:5 (Ibn al-Jawzī, *Nawāsikh,* 425-7; Ṭabarī, *Tafsīr,* x, 80-1; xxvi, 40-3; Qurṭubī, *Aḥkām,* vii, 6047-8; Jaṣṣāṣ, *Aḥkām,* iii, 390-2). Booty is discussed in Q 4:94; 8:1, 41, 68-9; 59:6-8 and other practical matters relating to war occur in Q 2:239; 4:101-3; 8:56-8, 60; 61:4.

In the legal literature qurʾānic verses are sometimes cited which appear to be irrelevant to the discussions. Thus Q 48:24-5 were adduced in the discussion of non-discriminating weapons (ballista, *manjanīq,* e.g. Ibn Abī Zayd, *Kitāb al-Jihād,* 70-1). Q 59:5 was used in the discussion of the permissibility to destroy the enemy's property (e.g. Ṭabarī, *Tafsīr,* xxviii, 32). Q 6:137 was adduced as proof that no enemy-children should be killed (e.g. Shāfiʿī, *Tafsīr,* 121).

Finally, the origins of the notion of the sacredness of Islamic warfare should be mentioned. Although jihād and warfare are disparate concepts, only partly overlapping, both are endowed with sanctity. The sanctity of jihād was discussed above. The sacredness of warfare derives, first, from the causative link between warfare on the one hand, and divine command and divine decree on the other. Another source is the association of warfare with divine reward and punishment. The roles of warring as a divine test and as a pledge that the believers give to God (Q 33:15, 23) add another dimension to the sacredness of warfare. Finally, God's direct intervention in the military exploits of his community sanctifies these exploits (Q 3:13, 123-7; 8:7-12, 17-19, 26; 9:14, 25-6, 40; 33:9-10, 25-7; 48:20-4; see BADR).

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Jinn

A category of created beings believed to possess powers for evil and good. Although their existence is never doubted, the jinn (Eng. "genie") are presented in the Qurʾān as figures whose effective role has been considerably curtailed in comparison to that accorded to them by various forms of pre-Islamic religion.

Unlike their rivals, the *rabb* and the *rabba,* the "lords" and "ladies," supernatural protectors and "allies" *(awliyāʾ)* of the tribes (see TRIBES AND CLANS) that God, in the fullness of his lordship, succeeds in making disappear (Q 53:23, "They are but names which you have named"), the jinn survive at the heart of the new religion. The Qurʾān limits itself to denying them the greater part of their powers — those, at any rate, that they could have claimed from the lord of the Qurʾān. In particular, they are shorn of their primordial function relative to humankind, that of uncovering the secrets (q.v.) of destiny *(ghayb),* thereby possessing knowledge of the future and of the world of the invisible (see HIDDEN AND THE HIDDEN; DESTINY; FATE). In the account of the death of Solomon (q.v.; Q 34:14), the jinn, having failed to grasp that the king is dead, continue to serve him in humility and abasement — thus demonstrating their ignorance of the *ghayb*. But the very fact that the Qurʾān dispossesses them, allows, at the same time, for recognition of their former role as mediators between the invisible world and humankind. The Qurʾān finds itself in the surprising position of having to come to terms with the jinn, i.e. subjecting them to its God, so powerful is the image they conjure up in popular imagination and local beliefs. In doing this, the text of the Qurʾān permits us to confirm part of what has been suggested concerning the way in which the desert Arabs (see ARABS; BEDOUIN; PRE-ISLAMIC ARABIA AND THE QURʾĀN) of the sixth century C.E. viewed their relationship to the jinn.

Regarded as having lost their faculty of familiarity with the invisible, the jinn were also seen as having lost their "power" or "faculty of action" (*sulṭān,* e.g. Q 55:33). *Sulṭān* is the exclusive preserve of the God of the Qurʾān, who dispenses it to whomsoever he wishes (Q 14:11; 59:6; etc.; see POWER AND IMPOTENCE). He never delegates complete mastery to anyone, however, since omnipotence remains one of

his exclusive properties (see GOD AND HIS ATTRIBUTES). One should consider this assertion about the reduction of the jinn's powers in the light of the qurʾānic denial of the powers attributed to magic (q.v.; *siḥr*). The qurʾānic allusions to magic seem to demand the presence of an initiator (himself human and dependent on a supernatural being) who "teaches" *(yuʿallimu)* it, that is — in this context — gives "guidelines" (*aʿlām;* cf. Q 2:102; 20:71). The people of Mecca called Muḥammad the "lying sorcerer" (*sāḥir kadhdhāb,* Q 38:4); he is denounced as "bewitched" (*masḥūr,* Q 17:47); he is said to be "possessed by jinn" (*majnūn,* Q 15:6; see INSANITY; LIE). In another passage it is the "satans, devils" (*shayāṭīn,* the equivalent of the jinn in the Qurʾān — see below) who "teach magic to men" (*yuʿallimūna l-nāsa l-siḥar,* Q 2:102). Nonetheless, a pervasive sentiment that the jinn still need to be appeased can be seen in the persistent ritual sacrifices to the jinn, which have been more or less openly admitted until very recently among the desert shepherds. This demonstrates that the powers denied the jinn are nevertheless understood to remain vital despite the passage of centuries (e.g. the sacrifice of the tent reported by Jaussen, *Coutumes,* 339; Wellhausen, *Reste,* 151 also quotes the slightly earlier observations made by Doughty in *Travels,* ii, 629).

Ethnographic research indicates that, despite the qurʾānic statements to the contrary, people continue to believe in the quietly disconcerting presence of these beings, who haunt the spaces to which people do not belong but through which they are nevertheless constrained to pass whenever going from place to place. Their vague hordes appear to be contained, rather than reduced to impotence, in those territories which belong to them and where humans are at constant risk of encountering them. An acknowledgment of divine omnipotence coexists in uneasy tension, within the minds of many Muslims, with the fear that the jinn remain as dangerous and as unpredictable to access as ever.

The jinn most often figure in the Qurʾān in the form of a collectivity. The other name applied to them is *shayāṭīn,* "satans, devils" (associated with the Eng. "demons"), a name whose semantic evolution from classical Greek is worthy of particular attention (see FOREIGN VOCABULARY). The equivalence between the terms jinn and *shayṭān,* already familiar in pre-Islamic Arabia, is confirmed in the Qurʾān with reference to the supernatural beings who are said to be in Solomon's service. They are indicated — indiscriminately — by both these terms: in Q 27:17, 39 and 34:12, 14 it is the jinn who serve Solomon; but in Q 21:82 and 38:37 they are called *shayāṭīn*. Parallel to the use of their designation in the plural, the "satans" come to acquire the status of a proper name, "the Satan" *(al-shayṭān),* a rebel against God (Q 17:27; 19:44) and an enemy *(ʿaduww)* of people (e.g. Q 17:53, and numerous other places in the Qurʾān; see DEVIL).

As regards Iblīs, the qurʾānic *diabolos* (lit. the Gk. term means "he who divides [by calumny]"; this is the Septuagint's translation of the Heb. *sāṭān* [derived from *Job* 1, "the adversary" or "the accuser" — in fact, he who proposes to put the just person to "the test"]), his qurʾānic attestations are far less significant than either the singular or the plural occurrences of *shayṭān*. Iblīs is of immediate interest in the context of the jinn, however, because he is identified as one of them in Q 18:50. Iblīs enters the qurʾānic discourse in the context of a particular narrative, that of his refusal to prostrate himself before Adam (see BOWING AND PROSTRATION; ADAM AND EVE). A.J. Wensinck (Iblīs) sees an origin of this account in the *Life of Adam and Eve* (Kautsch, *Apokryphen,* § 15; also in Riessler, *Altjüdisches Schrifttum*). It should be noted, though, that the more ancient "Vie Grecque d'Adam et

Ève," presented in Dupont-Sommer and Philonenko *(La Bible),* does not contain the passage in question; in the Latin version, however, the "devil" *(der Teufel)* does reject any obligation to prostrate himself before Adam and refuses to obey the command of the archangel Michael (q.v.). The incident is placed after the account of the fall of man from the garden of Eden. In the account contained in the Qurʾān, the order to prostrate comes directly from God without the archangel's (see ANGEL) intervention. Iblīs incurs divine wrath (see ANGER) upon his refusal and sees, at his own request, his punishment "deferred" *(inẓār* or *taʾkhīr)*. He is appointed the "great tempter" (*mughawwī* or *mughwī,* see TRIAL) of humankind until the resurrection (q.v.). In several passages in the Qurʾān this sequence is placed before the account of the fall *(hubūṭ)* of Adam, which is told only subsequently (see FALL OF MAN; GARDEN). This is a reversal of the order of the pseudo-epigraphical texts noted above, in which the fall precedes the devil's confrontation with God. Finally, it should be noted that the qurʾānic tempter of Adam in the garden of paradise (q.v.) is always called *shayṭān* and never Iblīs.

Does the juxtaposition of the two texts (that of the refusal on the part of Iblīs and that of the fall of Adam) imply a continuity of the account or its re-working in the canonical text? The question should at least be asked. In several cases, passages dealing with Iblīs are followed by the account of the fall (Q 2:34; 7:11; 15:31, 32; 17:61; 20:116; 26:95; 34:20; 38:74, 75). It is only in the single verse of Q 18:50 that Iblīs is designated expressly as a jinn. In the other passages he is depicted as a rebellious angel without, however, any explicit mention of his angelic nature; in fact, the text essentially states the following: the angels *(malāʾika)* prostrated themselves except Iblīs *(illā Iblīs)* who refused. In Q 38:76, Iblīs, of whom it has just been said (Q 38:73-4) that he alone among the angels refused, justifies his disobedience (q.v.) saying that he was created from *nār* (the usual translation, but not necessarily appropriate here, is "fire"), and therefore he should not have to prostrate himself before a creature "of clay" (q.v.; *ṭīn*). Does this mean that it justifies his status as a jinn? According to local traditions, the *nār* from which the jinn are created (see below) most certainly does not correspond to "fire" (q.v.), while in the ancient tradition of the Near East — and, *a fortiori,* in the Bible — angelic nature is clearly "igneous" (cf. the Seraphim, etc.; if this meaning prevails, then Iblīs could well be identified as an "angel," in the Near Eastern sense of the term).

The Qurʾān says nothing about the material from which the angels are created. The Islamic tradition regards them as being made from *nūr,* the "cold light of the night," that of the moon (q.v.), which is also the light of guidance and of knowledge (see KNOWLEDGE AND LEARNING), precisely the opposite of *nār,* which is diurnal and solar. As opposed to the jinn, who are incontestably figures from local beliefs, angels (*malak,* pl. *malāʾika,* lit. "envoys," from the root *l-ʾ-k*) are not a local construct: they are attested in Ethiopic and Hebrew, as well as in inscriptions from northeastern Arabia. Although there may have been particular, local understandings of "angels," the qurʾānic discourse on the subject is highly polemical. Perhaps, therefore, the qurʾānic "angels" should not be taken as referring to a local religion, as has sometimes been said in connection with a cult of the "daughters of Allāh" — alleged to be the angels (see below).

Despite the single occurrence in which Iblīs, the "devil" of the Qurʾān, is designated a jinn — could this be an interpolation? — he would seem, thanks to his specific narrative insertion (i.e. his refusal to prostrate to Adam; his corrupting mission is also biblical), to have origins clearly

distinct from those of the local jinn/*shayṭān*. It is only at a later date, in the post-qurʾānic Islamic tradition, that he is finally completely assimilated into *al-shayṭān,* the "Satan" of the Qurʾān as the prototype of all beings hostile to humankind. The two diabolical representations live on in Islamic tradition, enacting a complex destiny often in combination, or encounter, with other negative figures such as various sorts of dragons derived from the ancient Near Eastern traditions. The adventures ascribed to them subsequently have little to do with their itinerary as stated in the Qurʾān.

Even if the jinn of the Qurʾān are shown as deprived of part of their powers because they no longer manage to uncover the secrets of heaven, they can nonetheless raise themselves up to heaven's gates (cf. Q 15:18; 37:10; 72:8-9; see HEAVEN AND SKY). The account of the heavenly ascension of the jinn is obviously not commanded by God — unlike the routes taken by the angels, which, just like those taken by men, must be marked with signposts (e.g. Q 15:14; see also the term *sabab,* pl. *asbāb,* used to designate the obligatory routes for both men and angels at Q 18:84-5, 89, 92; 40:36-7; it should be noted that, for the angels, the *ʿurūj* is specifically a movement of "descending and re-ascending" at Q 15:14; 32:5; 34:2; 57:4; 70:4). But Islamic tradition has continued to recognize the jinn's ability to move in all spaces without needing to follow a trail. This mobility probably corresponds to an ancient local belief that has remained deeply embedded, namely that of the notion — vital in the society of sixth and seventh century Arabia — of movement from place to place and the concept of a route.

Can it therefore be said that the representation of the jinn contained in the Qurʾān is essentially defensive and, in some ways, in continuity with the past? The Qurʾān confirms the division of the earth into two territories — that of humankind and that of the jinn. The formula contained in the Qurʾān, *al-ins wa-l-jinn,* "the humans and the jinn" (also, *al-jinn wa-l-ins*), is clearly dominant in the statements the Qurʾān makes concerning the jinn for there are twenty examples of this conjunction of jinn and humanity (using the collective noun *jinn:* Q 6:112, 128, 130; 7:38, 179; 17:88; 27:17; 41:25, 29; 46:18; 51:56; 55:33; 72:5, 6; using the singular *jānn* employed as a collective noun: Q 55:39, 56, 74; using the plural form *al-jinna wa-l-nās,* "jinn and people [or tribes]": Q 11:119; 32:13; 114:6). The God of the Qurʾān is presented as master of the two spaces. But the ancient representation of the co-existence of this fundamentally bipartite division of the earth (q.v.) remains intact.

With regard to *shayāṭīn al-insi wa-l-jinni* at Q 6:112, "satanic men and jinn," it could be asked to what the "satanization" here evoked corresponds. Since the verse probably belongs to the Medinan period (see CHRONOLOGY AND THE QURʾĀN) it can doubtless be compared to the various passages denouncing an "alliance" *(walāʾ)* between humans and the "demons" *(shayāṭīn),* a designation that should be regarded as another name for the jinn: the infidels adopt these "demons" as allies (Q 7:27, 30; cf. 17:27), but the alliance will in no case benefit them (Q 2:16; see CONTRACTS AND ALLIANCES; CLIENTS AND CLIENTAGE). There is also a series of occurrences where the alliance is with "the Satan," the term being used as a proper name. He is as much a betrayer of the cause of humankind as are the "demons," and will lead people to their damnation (see REWARD AND PUNISHMENT): Q 25:29 reflects this theme, that of *khadhūl,* the "abandonment"

of humanity by its pseudo-ally, the Satan (see ENEMIES). The same theme is to be found in Q 25:18 with the earlier deities designated periphrastically as "that which is adored apart from God" (see POLYTHEISM AND ATHEISM). These passages correspond to the evolution of the demonology proper to the Qurʾān, which ends up individualizing the satanic figure in a symbolic role that seems to condense together all the negative aspects of the "demons," variously named. Like an unavoidable figure of the anti-god he seems to remain capable of trapping humans (e.g. Q 27:24 or 58:19).

The theme of demonization and the accusation of pacts with the jinn apply specifically to the Medinan enemies of Muḥammad (see MEDINA; OPPOSITION TO MUḤAMMAD), the "impious" (*kāfirūn,* the ancient "ingrates" of tribal Arabia, "those who fail to recognize a benefit received"; see BELIEF AND UNBELIEF; GRATITUDE AND INGRATITUDE; BLESSING), the "hypocrites" (*munāfiqūn,* formerly used of "cowards," and, as noted by Watt, also the term used to designate Muḥammad's political enemies in Medina; see HYPOCRITES AND HYPOCRISY), or however they are named. It is a technique of qurʾānic polemical discourse (see POLEMIC AND POLEMICAL LANGUAGE) typical of the Medinan era, corresponding to conflict situations in which the religious argument often comes to the aid of the political (see POLITICS AND THE QURʾĀN; LANGUAGE AND STYLE OF THE QURʾĀN). This is in contrast to the Meccan period, in which Muḥammad is accused by his own of being "possessed by the jinn." The antithetical relationship between the jinn as negative allies and God as the only positive ally (*walī,* e.g. Q 4:45) lends itself to conjecture about a "cult" alleged to be devoted to the jinn. In particular, some qurʾānic passages that discuss the jinn utilize terminology similar to that concerning the "service" rendered to God: i.e. *ʿibādat al-jinn* (there is also a passage on the "service" devoted to Satan, Q 36:60). But, just like people, the jinn must adore God alone (Q 51:56). Just like humans they are subjected to the last judgment (q.v.; Q 37:158). Like the "people of the tribes" *(nās),* a number of them are destined for hell (q.v.; Q 11:119; for further references to the infernal destiny of the jinn, see Q 6:128; 7:38, 179; 32:13; 55:39).

In the Qurʾān, the theme of the nations that were destroyed because of their rebellion is also applied to the jinn (see PUNISHMENT STORIES). One passage (Q 6:130) attributes to the jinn, after the fashion of humans, "envoys from among you *(min-kum)*… who warned you" (see MESSENGER; WARNER), but this passage seems to have its origins in a form of rhetorical symmetry and nothing more is known about it (see FORM AND STRUCTURE OF THE QURʾĀN; RHETORIC OF THE QURʾĀN). The disappearance of the "nations" *(umam)* of the jinn is also associated — without providing any further detail — with that of the human "nations" that have disappeared (Q 41:25; 46:18; cf. Q 7:38, where disappearance is associated with "hell" *(nār)*; see GENERATIONS). This is probably an extrapolation of the Qurʾān's discourse, bringing the punishment of the impious, of the deniers and of those who fail to recognize the "signs" (q.v.; *āyāt*) of God to its logical conclusion. The jinn of the Qurʾān again lose ground with reference to their previous status. They are reduced to sharing the eschatological destiny of humankind (see ESCHATOLOGY).

In this type of passage it is impossible to distinguish that which has its origins in beliefs and practices evident in seventh-century Arabia from that which belongs to the Qurʾān's polemical discourse and the

controversy pursued with enemies in an attempt to confuse them by the force of words (cf. Q 2:14, where the hypocrites are with their "demons"; in Q 6:121, it is these demons who push "their minions", i.e. Muḥammad's adversaries, to "controversy" or "disputation," *mujādala,* see DEBATE AND DISPUTATION).

It is also no easy task to uncover the reality of the belief that is being fought over in the tangled Meccan passages about a "cult of angels" *(ʿibādat al-malāʾika)* — which seems to become confused with a cult of the jinn (Q 34:41; cf. also the "invocation," *ʿawdh,* addressed to the jinn in Q 72:6) — and about the representation of angels as "daughters" *(banāt)* of God (Q 6:100; 16:57; 37:149, 153; 43:16; 52:39). In Q 37:150-2 it is a question of a belief in the fact that the lord is said to have procreated angels of the female gender (q.v.), while in verse 158 of the same sūra, a form of "kinship" *(nasab)* is alleged between God and the jinn. In Q 6:100, the jinn are said to be "associates" *(shurakāʾ)* of God while the "daughters of God" are once again evoked. It appears that in this polemic, pseudo-angelized figures are being reduced to jinn, the pseudo-angelized figures who, in the final analysis, would seem to be the tribes' local protecting goddesses who are to disappear slowly but surely under a variety of disguises (see the remarks made by Wellhausen [*Reste,* 24] regarding the term "daughter of God," which he compares to the representation of the *Beney Elohim*). In all likelihood it is also a way of reducing them to a minor, subordinate role by declaring that, just like humans, they are "created beings." And yet their nature is stated to be different from that of humankind. The Qurʾān says that they are made from *nār*. The usual translation, "fire," probably makes no sense in the context. The image conjured up is that of a representation of wreaths of smoke and mirages of "the burning air of the solar day" and not that of flames. This metaphorical transposition could also be recognized in the numerous qurʾānic uses of the concept of *nār* (regarding the nature of the jinn, see Q 15:27, "created from the fire of *al-samūm*"; and Q 55:15, *min mārijin min nārin,* a difficult formulation which would make the jinn "unformed beings created from the reverberated heat" and not, as in some translations — such as that of Kazimirski — beings created from a "pure fire without smoke"; see, for an attempt at a more precise explanation of the two passages, Chabbi, *Seigneur,* 190 f.).

But this difference in nature that the Qurʾān is constrained to admit, can only permit the jinn to retain powers that enable them to outclass humans. Thus, although the jinn are no longer able to hear what heaven says about destiny, they are nonetheless still represented as being perfectly capable of rising up to heaven without divine assistance. The divine guard at the gates of heaven requires all of its powers, launching against them "fiery traces" *(shihāb),* to throw them back to earth and prevent them from collecting the secrets of the future (Q 37:10; 72:8-9). A further valiant deed could have been credited to a jinn of Solomon's court who is said to be *ʿifrīt* (q.v.), "very skillful and crafty." He suggested to his master that, in an instant, he could bring him the throne of the queen of Sheba (see BILQĪS); but the jinn does not have the time to demonstrate his powers (which are manifestly seen as effective) since his place is taken by a more suitable member of the king's retinue — one who "knew the scripture" — who accomplished the mission "in the twinkling of an eye" (Q 27:39-40).

In fact, therefore, the approach taken by the Qurʾān to the jinn seems to be para-

doxical. A final quotation will demonstrate another way in which the Qurʾān treats them: their persistent power can be perceived as a constant theme when the Qurʾān itself appeals to their testimony (see WITNESSING AND TESTIFYING) in order to convince men who refuse to believe. These are the "believing jinn," called to aid in attesting to the pre-eminence of a *qurʾān* (a verbal noun designating "the message faithfully transmitted" and not yet Qurʾān as a proper noun) that they have heard by chance and that they call "marvelous" (*ʿajab,* Q 72:1; see MARVELS; MIRACLE). If the jinn themselves are convinced, how could humans not be convinced? The reasoning must have been seen as incontestable.

A non-Arabic origin of the word *jinn* is not immediately traceable, even though it is cognate to the root *j-n-n,* present in most of the ancient Semitic languages, albeit as a designation of a garden or a cultivated place with trees (the Hebrew *gan;* this latter meaning is retained in Arabic, wherein the triliteral root *j-n-n* is used to designate a "cover" of vegetation). On the other hand, the Ethiopic *gānen* has the meaning of "demon, evil spirit." Sometimes this Ethiopic term is said to be of Syriac origin (Leslau, *Dictionary,* 198), from the root *g-n-n,* "recover, reside in, descend upon" (this is used of the Holy Ghost, see Payne Smith, *Dictionary,* 73; see HOLY SPIRIT). But Syriac (see SYRIAC AND THE QURʾĀN) does not appear to provide the negative meaning "possessed," a meaning well-attested in Arabic and Ethiopic. It is probable, therefore, that this latter meaning of *jinn* is a development specific to Arabic, which passed into Ethiopic. At any rate, the term *jinn,* with its derivatives *jānn, jinna, jinnī* (in the masculine, the feminine and the collective, respectively), is fully attested in the Arabic of the era of the Qurʾān. The representation and perception of the permanent encounter with, and the otherness of, these metamorphic beings lend support to their imaginary existence in the minds of people. The Qurʾān strives to turn to its God's advantage the fear inspired by the jinn and to annihilate the powers attributed to them by the pastoral and nomadic societies of western Arabia. Nevertheless, these strange creatures have continued to exist in a particularly intense manner in a wide variety of disguises in the collective imaginings of Islamic societies. They encountered and merged with other supernatural beings already long resident in the territories conquered by Islam. Some of these retained their original names such as, for instance, the *div* in Iran. Others would lose their identity, at least in appearance, and be assimilated with the figures, most surely negative, that can be definitively identified as jinn.

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Jizya see POLL TAX; TAXATION

Job

One of the prophetic figures preceding Muḥammad common to the Jewish, Christian and Islamic traditions (see PROPHETS AND PROPHETHOOD). Job (Ayyūb) is mentioned in only four pericopes: Q 6:83-7 and 4:163 set him in the company of the prophets while Q 38:41-2 and Q 21:83-4 allude to his distinctive vocation and charisma.

In Q 6:83-90, together with Abraham (q.v.), Isaac (q.v.), Jacob (q.v.), Noah (q.v.), David (q.v.), Solomon (q.v.), Joseph (q.v.), Moses (q.v.) and Aaron (q.v.), Zechariah (q.v.), John (see JOHN THE BAPTIST), Jesus (q.v.), Elias (see ELIJAH), Ishmael (q.v.), Elisha (q.v.), Jonah (q.v.) and Lot (q.v.), he is included among those God has guided, chosen and preferred to ordinary humankind (see ELECTION), to whom he has given scripture (see BOOK; SCRIPTURE AND THE QUR'ĀN), authority (q.v.), prophethood and whose example is to be followed. In Q 4:163, Job is named among those to whom a revelation (see REVELATION AND INSPIRATION) has been given so that humans will not be able to claim ignorance (q.v.) of God's will. The names given include those mentioned in the pericope cited above — omitting Joseph, Zechariah, John, Elias, Elisha and Lot, but adding "the tribes" (*al-asbāṭ,* see CHILDREN OF ISRAEL; TRIBES AND CLANS), and two general categories subsuming all the other prophets, those mentioned to Muḥammad, and those not mentioned to him.

As for Job's special character, Q 38:41-2 presents Job calling to his lord, "Satan (see DEVIL) has indeed touched me with hardship and pain (see TRIAL)." God responds to his cry, "Scuff [the earth] with your foot. Here is [water] a place to cleanse yourself, [it is] cooling, it is drink." Job obeys. A spring appears in which he bathes and from which he drinks. His kin and "the like of them with them" are restored to him as an act of divine mercy (q.v.). God then (Q 38:44) commands him to strike "her" (the ellipsed pronoun in *fa-ḍrib bihi* has no explicit referent) with a sprig of leaves in order to keep an oath he has made (see OATHS). The pericope ends with a formula of praise — "How excellent a servant! Constantly was he turned [to God]" *(ni'ma l-'abdu innahu awwāb)* — which, in Q 38:30, celebrates the virtues of Solomon, the only other prophet to be honored with this formula. Q 21:83-4 likewise tells of Job's call to his lord, God's hearing of him, removal of the hurt upon him, restoration of what he had lost, and his praise of God as "most merciful of the merciful."

Both of the pericopes that indicate Job's special character are allusive, but the exegetical tradition (see EXEGESIS OF THE QUR'ĀN: CLASSICAL AND MEDIEVAL), as summarized by al-Ṭabarī (d. 310/923; *Tafsīr,* ad loc.), supplies an inter-text in the light of which they may be understood. Job cried out because God had allowed Satan to put him to the test by destroying his livestock, slaying his kin, and afflicting him with a painful disease (see ILLNESS AND HEALTH). Because he remained faithful while put to the test, God heard his cry, healed him with a miraculous spring, and restored to him two-fold both his kin, and the property taken from him. The person to be struck with a sprig in Q 38:44 refers to his wife. She alone, during his illness, had not deserted him. But she was tempted by Satan, to whom she had urged Job to sacri-

fice a kid in order to be healed. Job swore an oath (see OATHS) that if cured, he would punish her with a hundred lashes. Because of her faithfulness, God alleviated this punishment, telling Job to strike her once with a sprig of one hundred leaves.

In the light of this inter-text, the status and role of Job in the divine economy of prophetic guidance is clear. These two pericopes present Job's distinctive charisma, that of patience in enduring undeserved suffering without challenging God to explain his wisdom (q.v.) in putting him to the test (see TRUST AND PATIENCE). The story of Job in the Qurʾān then is understood primarily as a reward narrative (see BLESSING), with an emphasis different from that of the story of Job in the Bible.

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John the Baptist

The New Testament herald of Jesus (q.v.) who also figures in the Qurʾān (see SCRIPTURE AND THE QURʾĀN). John the Baptist, son of Zechariah (q.v.), called in Arabic Yaḥyā b. Zakariyyā, is mentioned by name five times in the Qurʾān. In Q 3:39, John is described as noble, chaste and a prophet who will "witness the truth (q.v.) of a word from God," that is, Jesus (see PROPHETS AND PROPHETHOOD; WORD OF GOD; WITNESSING AND TESTIFYING). Q 6:85 speaks of John along with Zechariah, Jesus and Elias (see ELIJAH) as being of the "righteous." Q 19:7 announces the forthcoming birth of John to Zechariah (see GOOD NEWS) with the remark that this name was being used for the first time (or that this was the first prophet by that name; cf. *Luke* 1:59-63). Q 19:12 conveys the command to John to be a prophet with a book (q.v.; usually taken by Muslim exegetes [see EXEGESIS OF THE QURʾĀN: CLASSICAL AND MEDIEVAL] to mean that John confirms the Torah [q.v.], not that he brought a new scripture). Q 21:90 explains that John's birth was a response to Zechariah's prayer, and the curing of his wife's barrenness. The spelling of the name Yaḥyā for Yoḥanan is known from pre-Islamic times and is probably derived from Christian Arabic usage (see CHRISTIANS AND CHRISTIANITY). Muslim exegetes frequently trace the name to a root sense of "to quicken" or "to make alive" and connect this to the barrenness of John's mother and to his people's absence of faith, themes that are present in the Qurʾān.

Although the qurʾānic details of the story of John are few, extended discussions concerning him have arisen throughout Muslim history. For example, the idea that John was "chaste" *(ḥaṣūr)* provoked a good deal of debate (see ABSTINENCE; ASCETICISM).

In their discussions of Q 3:39, some exegetes understood this word to be intended in its sexual sense of being incapable of coitus ("he had a penis no bigger than this piece of straw," Ṭabarī, *Tafsīr,* vi, 377, a prophetic ḥadīth on the authority of Saʿīd b. al-Musayyab) or of abstaining from it. Other exegetes rejected that view, for it would suggest some sort of imperfection on the part of the prophet, and argued that the word means only that John was free from impure actions and thoughts, and that it does not preclude John's having been married (see MARRIAGE AND DIVORCE) and fathering children (q.v.).

The Muslim rendering of the birth, life and death of John have, in general, been elaborated on the basis of the Christian accounts. John, it is said, was born six months prior to Jesus. He became a prophet, traveled to Palestine, met and baptized Jesus in the Jordan river and departed with twelve disciples to teach the people (see APOSTLE; BAPTISM). At the instigation of Salome, Herod had John put to death prior to Jesus' death and ascension. Many of the accounts, however, have become confused and place John's life in the era of Nebuchadnezzar. This is especially evident in stories related to John's death (which is not mentioned in the Qurʾān). The Israelite king Josiah, it is said, killed John, the son of Zechariah, and Nebuchadnezzar attacked Jerusalem (q.v.) as a result. In these accounts, the king's action is motivated by his desire to marry his own niece, an action of which John disapproved. The conspiracy of the girl's mother then led to the death of John (cf. the story of Salome, *Matt* 14:1-11; *Mark* 6:16-29). Nebuchadnezzar invaded in order to solve problems that arose as a result of John's death (or God simply inspired him to do so). The source of this chronological confusion is likely found in the name Zechariah (a name which had already occasioned confusion within the biblical tradition) with a conflation taking place of the author of the biblical book of Zechariah, the Zechariah of Isaiah 8, the prophet Zechariah of 2 Chronicles 24:22 (who was killed by King Joash), and Zakariyyā, the father of John. Al-Ṭabarī (d. 310/923), in recounting these traditions, indicates that he is well aware that many regard these stories as false and based on a historical error, there being 461 years between the lives of Nebuchadnezzar and John the Baptist.

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Jonah

One of the prophets mentioned in both the Bible and the Qurʾān (see PROPHETS AND PROPHETHOOD). Jonah (Yūnus b. Mittai, Heb. Jōnā ben Amittai) is named

five times in the Qurʾān: Q 4:163 lists him together with Abraham (q.v.), Jesus (q.v.) and other prophets who have received revelations (see REVELATION AND INSPIRATION); as rightly-guided he is cited together with Zechariah (q.v.), Jesus and other prophets in Q 6:85-86; his people *(qawm Yūnus)* were, according to Q 10:98, the only ones who escaped divine punishment because they had repented (see PUNISHMENT STORIES; REPENTANCE AND PENANCE).

As told in the Qurʾān, the story of Jonah resembles in many details the account narrated in the biblical book of Jonah. Jonah, also called Dhū l-Nūn ("the man of the whale"), rebelled against God's mission, ran away in wrath, was swallowed by the fish, praised God, confessed his sin in the belly of the fish, and was thrown ashore (Q 21:87-8). This and the rest of the story is told in Q 37:139-48: When he was saved, he found shade under a tree, and was sent "to a hundred thousand or more." In Q 68:48-50, Muḥammad is admonished to wait with patience (see TRUST AND PATIENCE) for the command of the lord, and not to behave like "the man of the fish" *(ṣāḥib al-ḥūt),* who went away without God's permission.

Muslim tradition as expressed in qurʾānic commentary (*tafsīr,* see EXEGESIS OF THE QURʾĀN: CLASSICAL AND MEDIEVAL) and the "tales of the prophets" *(qiṣaṣ al-anbiyāʾ)* embellished the short account given in the Qurʾān with many details, continuing Jewish and Christian teachings (see SCRIPTURE AND THE QURʾĀN; MYTHS AND LEGENDS IN THE QURʾĀN). There are two different versions of the story, one following in broad lines the biblical account, while the other has a somewhat different sequence of events. The first relates that Jonah delivered his message in Nineveh and went away in wrath when people did not follow him and divine punishment did not arrive promptly. He went on board a ship, was swallowed by the fish, cast ashore, and returned to Nineveh. Upon his arrival, he found that in his absence the inhabitants had repented and punishment had been suspended. So he settled there. According to other accounts, he took to wandering about as an ascetic, accompanied by the king of Nineveh who had renounced the throne, ceding it to a shepherd who had assisted Jonah on his way back to the city.

A full account of Jonah's biography has been provided by al-Kisāʾī (*Qiṣaṣ,* 296-301; Eng. trans. in id., *Tales,* 321-6). Jonah was born when his mother Ṣadaqa was far beyond the age of childbearing. In his early life he practiced asceticism (q.v.); then he married Anak, the daughter of Zakariyyā b. Yūḥannā, a rich merchant of Ramla. When he was called to prophethood he went to Nineveh, accompanied by his wife and two sons. He lost them as he crossed the Tigris. Jonah was rebuked while preaching in Nineveh and he left the city because of imminent punishment, watched the city from a nearby hill, went on board a ship, was swallowed by the fish and cast ashore, and was reunited with his family on his way back to Nineveh. Finding the inhabitants in a state of happiness he spent the rest of his life there.

The story of Jonah posed theological problems for Muslims, as it had for Jews and Christians. Jews took offence at the sending of an Israelite prophet to the pagans, whereas Christians saw in him the model of evangelization to the heathens. This is mirrored in Muslim tradition in a story with an obviously Jewish or Judeo-Christian background (see JEWS AND JUDAISM; CHRISTIANS AND CHRISTIANITY): King Hezekiah, on the advice of Isaiah (q.v.), ordered Jonah to bring back the tribes in exile who had been abducted by the king of Nineveh. Angry at the king,

Jonah went away, was swallowed by the fish, repented of his disobedience (q.v.), was cast ashore and then went to Nineveh to accomplish his mission. The inhabitants first rebuked him, but finally they let the Israelites go.

Another problem was Jonah's anger. He was angry because God had postponed punishment for Nineveh (*Jon* 4:1). This is likewise told in Q 21:87: "When he departed in wrath *(idh dhahaba mughāḍiban)*." Yet, this is rather vague, leaving open the reason for Jonah's emotional reaction (cf. e.g. Schwarzbaum, *Biblical and extra-biblical legends,* 112). As Muslims did not consider it acceptable for a prophet to show such an attitude toward God's orders (see OBEDIENCE), they offered alternative explanations: He was enraged at King Hezekiah who had ordered him to go to Nineveh on the advice of a prophet but, evidently, without any divine instruction. Another solution was to declare the obstinacy of the people of Nineveh as the cause of Jonah's wrath (see INSOLENCE AND OBSTINACY). A third explanation was his being angry at the urgency of his mission: The angel Gabriel (q.v.), who brought the orders, did not allow him any time for preparation, not even to put on his sandals. Jonah therefore went away in anger, seeking refuge on board a ship. His refusal to transmit the message was a grave offence, indeed. Another offence was his departure — without God's permission — from Nineveh because the punishment of its inhabitants was not forthcoming. In Q 68:48, Muḥammad is cautioned against making such an emigration (q.v.; *hijra*) without waiting for divine permission. Jonah repented in the belly of the fish, confessing that he was a sinner: "I was indeed wrong (*innī kuntu mina l-ẓālimīn,* Q 21:87)."

Another question with theological implications is the doubt (see UNCERTAINTY) Jonah had about God's omnipotence (see POWER AND IMPOTENCE; FREEDOM AND PREDESTINATION). Q 21:87, *fa-zanna an lan naqdira ʿalayhi,* may be translated "He imagined that we had no power over him." Two answers were found to avoid the accusation of unbelief (see BELIEF AND UNBELIEF): One was that Jonah did not expect imprisonment in the narrow belly of the fish, *qadara* meaning "to measure the size," not only "to have power." Another solution was to provide the phrase with a question mark. On the other hand, being swallowed by a fish was not the proper punishment of one who questioned God's omnipotence. God, however, granted Jonah a loan *(salaf)* because he had displayed piety (q.v.) and devotion before he was disobedient. God, therefore, was not ready to leave him to the devil (q.v.), and instead punished him by locking him up in the belly of the fish for some time. "Had it not been that he glorified God" *(fa-law lā annahu kāna min al-musabbiḥīn)* before he refused to obey God's orders "he would certainly have remained inside the fish till the day of resurrection" (q.v.; Q 37:143 f.). His imprisonment in the belly of the fish was not a punishment *(ʿuqūba),* but a correction (*taʾdīb,* see CHASTISEMENT AND PUNISHMENT; REWARD AND PUNISHMENT).

Because Jonah was impatient, he does not belong to the prophets of "inflexible purpose" (*ūlū l-ʿazm,* Q 46:35) praised for their patience. He was saved because he prayed when he was in distress (see PRAYER). Therefore, he is a model for the pious Muslim in case of need. He is likewise a model for the penitent. His mother conceived him, according to al-Kisāʾī (*Qiṣaṣ,* 296; *Tales,* 321), on the eve, i.e. the day before ʿĀshūrā, the Jewish Day of Atonement. This means that Jonah was destined for atonement. In Jewish life, the eve of the Day of Atonement had taken on the character of a festival (see FASTING; FESTIVALS AND COMMEMORATIVE DAYS). It was a Friday, as al-Kisāʾī adds, and it was on that day that the punishment of Nineveh was

cancelled (cf. Rāzī, *Tafsīr,* ad Q 10:98). It can parenthetically be remarked that the book of Jonah is read in synagogues during the Day of Atonement afternoon service.

The church fathers explained Jonah's sojourn of three days in the belly of the fish and his salvation as a prefiguration of the death and resurrection of Jesus. The length of his sojourn in the fish is, however, not mentioned in the Qurʾān. Muslim tradition narrates three days, though other figures have also been proposed, ranging from one day to one month or forty days.

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Joseph

The son of Jacob (q.v.; Yaʿqūb), whose story is told in Sūrat Yūsuf ("Joseph"), the twelfth sūra of the Qurʾān. This sūra is devoted to the story of Joseph (Yūsuf) and, as such, it is the Qurʾān's longest sustained narrative of one character's life. The sūra's

111 verses *(āyāt)* relate events in Joseph's life ranging from his youthful conversations with his father Jacob and his brothers (see BENJAMIN; BROTHER AND BROTHERHOOD), conversations that lead to Joseph's exile and imprisonment, to the resolution of the family's conflicts through divine guidance and inspiration (see REVELATION AND INSPIRATION). Q 12:3 announces that "the best of stories" *(aḥsan al-qaṣaṣ),* is to be related (see NARRATIVES). Qurʾān commentaries differ as to whether this is a direct reference to the story at hand or a more general statement on the nature of qurʾānic narrative. Those commentators who see Joseph's as the best of all stories give a multiplicity of reasons for its superiority (see MYTHS AND LEGENDS IN THE QURʾĀN). "It is the most beautiful because of the lessons concealed in it, on account of Joseph's generosity, and its wealth of matter — in which prophets (see PROPHETS AND PROPHETHOOD), angels (see ANGEL), devils (see DEVIL), jinn (q.v.), men, animals, birds (see COSMOLOGY; ANIMAL LIFE), rulers (see KINGS AND RULERS; COMMUNITY AND SOCIETY IN THE QURʾĀN), and subjects play a part" (Thaʿlabī, *Qiṣaṣ,* ad loc.).

Throughout the sūra, there are interjections that exhort the believers to see the hand of God in human affairs and to recognize the power of true prophecy (Q 12:7, 56-7). Joseph can thus be seen as exemplifying the basic paradigm of the Qurʾān: he is a prophet *(nabī)* who is derided and exiled, but is eventually vindicated and rises to prominence. As such, he serves as a model for the life of Muḥammad and many of the qurʾānic commentaries (*tafāsīr;* see EXEGESIS OF THE QURʾĀN: CLASSICAL AND MEDIEVAL) see this as a central theme and function of the sūra (see also OPPOSITION TO MUḤAMMAD). This interpretation is strengthened by the "occasions of revelation" (q.v.; *asbāb al-nuzūl*) tradition, which places the circumstance of Sūrat Yūsuf's

revelation at the point where Muḥammad is challenged by skeptics who doubt his knowledge of the narratives of the Children of Israel (q.v.; *banū Isrā'īl,* Bayḍāwī, *Anwār*). The sūra is one response to this challenge, and is thus greatly detailed and includes information not known from earlier tellings of the stories of Jacob's family.

In his commentary on the opening of the sūra, "These are the signs of the manifest book" (Q 12:1), al-Bayḍāwī offers an alternative reading to the simple meaning of the text. He explains it thus: "This is the sūra which makes plain to the Jews that which they asked… it is recorded that their learned men said to the chiefs of the polytheists, 'Ask Muḥammad why Jacob's family moved from Syria (q.v.) to Egypt (q.v.), and about the story of Joseph,' whereupon this sūra was revealed." On one occasion Muḥammad is asked for even greater detail, whereupon he reveals the names of the stars (see PLANETS AND STARS) that Joseph saw in his dream (cf. Zamakhsharī, *Kashshāf;* see JEWS AND JUDAISM).

Dreams (see DREAMS AND SLEEP) are central to this narrative. Joseph's dream of ascension to power, an ambition so bitterly resented by his brothers, is featured in Q 12:4-7. The king of Egypt's (see PHARAOH) dreams trouble him, they are "a jumble of dreams" *(aḍghāthu aḥlāmin),* and only Joseph can offer the true interpretation (Q 12:43-9). Here one can see the compression of narrative at work in the sūra. While in the Joseph narratives of the Hebrew Bible, both dream episodes — those of Joseph and those of the Pharaoh — have two dreams each, the Qur'ān tells of only one dream for each figure. The essence of their messages is conveyed through the manner in which these dreams are written and their expressed interpretations (see SCRIPTURE AND THE QUR'ĀN).

The two dream episodes are separated by that section of the narrative that has received the most exegetical and literary attention (both in Islamic and Western culture): the episode in which his master's wife attempts to seduce Joseph (Q 12:23-31). The reasons for Joseph's rejection of the unnamed older woman are not directly stated. Rather, it is related that he was led away from temptation when he saw the "proof of his lord" (*burhān rabbihi,* Q 12:24), variously interpreted as an image of the master of the house or as an image of his father Jacob. Other interpretations understand the interruption as a "call" of divine origin telling Joseph not to sin or as the actual appearance on the wall of qur'ānic verses warning against sin (see SIN, MAJOR AND MINOR; ADULTERY AND FORNICATION; SEX AND SEXUALITY).

Joseph's adventure with his master's wife and his subsequent encounter with "the women of the city" lead him to prison, a prison from which he is freed after he interprets the king's dream. The Qur'ān here emphasizes Joseph's innocence and sets the stage for the second half of the narrative to unfold. This latter half of Sūrat Yūsuf is focused on the dramatic encounters between Joseph and his family. Shuttling between their father Jacob and their brother Joseph, the brothers (who remain unnamed), seek a resolution of the family conflict. Before the brothers and their father enter Egypt together (Q 12:100) the conflict is resolved. Joseph assures his brothers that they will not be blamed and Jacob is told that his children are forgiven. As the narrative closes, the sūra exhorts the reader/listener to see the actions of God at work in this story, actions which are made manifest only through God's messengers (see MESSENGER).

Joseph's name appears in two sūras other than Sūrat Yūsuf. In a list of earlier prophetic figures, Joseph's name appears

between those of Job (Ayyūb) and Moses (Mūsā; Q 6:84). On this same theme of Joseph as one of the earlier messengers — and thus a predecessor of, and model for, Muḥammad — see Q 40:34, where it is stated that "Joseph brought you the clear signs (q.v.) before, yet you continued in doubt (q.v.) concerning what he brought you until, when he perished, you said 'God will never send forth a messenger after him'."

Neither Joseph's death nor burial is mentioned in the Qurʾān, but they do figure in Islamic legends. Al-Ṭabarī (d. 310/923) relates a tradition that Joseph lived to the age of 120. He also cites the biblical tradition that tells of Joseph's death at an earlier age, "In the Torah (q.v.) it is said that he lived one hundred and ten years, and that Ephraim and Manasseh were born to him." The use of Joseph's coffin to ensure Egypt's fertility also appears in Islamic folklore. In his commentary on Sūrat Yūsuf, al-Bayḍāwī (d. ca. 685/1286) says, "… the Egyptians disputed about Joseph's burial place until they were on the verge of fighting, so they decided to place him in a marble sarcophagus and bury him in the Nile in such a way that the water would pass over him and thereafter reach all of Egypt. Then the Egyptians would all be on an equal footing in regard to him." From Egypt, Joseph's bones are carried to Syria (al-Shām). There are contending Islamic traditions as to Joseph's final burial place. One tradition places it in the Ḥaram al-Khalīl in Hebron (cf. Yāqūt, *Buldān,* ii, 498-9). Another situates it in the village of Balata (Yāqūt, *Buldān,* i, 710; al-Harawī, *Guide,* 61), near Nablus. As this brief overview demonstrates, the commentarial and folkloric traditions concerning Sūrat Yūsuf are particularly rich. While earlier Western scholarship focused on comparisons between this sūra and the Hebrew Bible's Joseph narratives, the more recent scholarship focuses on the literary qualities of the sūra and on the relevance of this narrative to the life of Muḥammad.

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Journey

Voyage, usually of some length, from one place to another. Terms to be translated as "journey, trip, travel," occur throughout the Qurʾān. Perhaps the most obvious, and most frequent, are derivatives of *s-f-r, s-y-r,* and *ḍ-r-b (fī).* Of this set, eight (Q 2:184, 185, 283; 4:43; 5:6 *[s-f-r];* 4:101; 5:106; 73:20 *[ḍ-r-b]*) concern legal prescriptions brought into play by the act of travel (see LAW AND THE QURʾĀN). For example, Q 2:184-5, "[fast; see FASTING] for a given number of

days, but if any among you is ill (see ILLNESS AND HEALTH) or on a journey *(ʿalā safarin),* [fast] on an equal number of other days." (Commentary on this passage appears limited; see Ayoub, *Qurʾān,* 193-5.) Q 2:283 addresses pledges of trust (see OATHS; CONTRACTS AND ALLIANCES); Q 5:106 finding sound witnesses (in executing bequests; see INHERITANCE; WITNESSING AND TESTIFYING); and Q 4:43 and 5:6 allowing travelers alternate forms of ritual cleansing (see CLEANLINESS AND ABLUTION) prior to prayer (q.v.). Q 4:101, "when you travel through the world *(wa-idhā ḍarabtum fī l-arḍ),* you occur no sin (see SIN, MAJOR AND MINOR) if you shorten the prayer," speaks to risks for the traveler in hostile territory. The last of the set, Q 73:20, recognizes the traveler's need to curtail reading of the Qurʾān (see RECITATION OF THE QURʾĀN; RITUAL AND THE QURʾĀN) when circumstances require it.

A second category reflects, more generally, movement in the name of God or, more properly, "upon the path of God" (*fī sabīli llāhi,* cf. Q 2:190, 218, 262, 273; 5:54; 22:9; 24:22; see PATH OR WAY). Q 9:41, on the arduous nature of service to God, is an example; so, too, is Q 4:94, in which the believer is told to display vigilance and humility when venturing into the world. Q 9:111 refers to those who "wander" in such manner; the term *sāʾiḥ,* here used in the plural, is understood by Arabic lexicographers to refer to ascetics (see ASCETICISM), specifically those devoted to fasting (see *Lisān al-ʿArab*). A final category appears to denote simply instances of movement from place to place: i.e. Q 3:156 *(ḍ-r-b),* which refers to the travel of unbelievers (see BELIEF AND UNBELIEF). Nearly all of the derivatives of *s-y-r* fall into this category, such as Q 12:109, "do they not travel through the world?" Two references to Moses (q.v.), Q 18:62 and Q 28:29, speak of his travel; and Q 34:18 *(al-sayr)* and Q 34:19 *(asfārinā),* in reference to the people of Sabaʾ (see SHEBA), treat distances or stages of journey.

A further term, *riḥla,* in Q 106:2, proved unsettling to the exegetes. It is one of four uses of derivatives of *r-ḥ-l;* the remaining three, Q 12:62, 70, 75, treat the saddlebags *(raḥl,* pl. *riḥāl)* of Joseph's (q.v.) brothers (see BROTHER AND BROTHERHOOD). The term *riḥla* occurs in Q 106 (Sūrat Quraysh — known also as Sūrat Īlāf) ostensibly in reference to the pair of journeys taken by the Quraysh (q.v.) at set points of the year, one in the cold, the second in the hot season (see SEASONS). Al-Ṭabarī (d. 310/923; *Tafsīr,* ad loc) indicates that many of the early commentators (see EXEGESIS OF THE QURʾĀN: CLASSICAL AND MEDIEVAL) understood that the Quraysh, for reasons of commerce ("they were merchants"; see SELLING AND BUYING; CARAVAN), underwent a winter *riḥla* to Yemen (q.v.; usually, the view is, because of the favorable weather) and a summer *riḥla* to Syria (q.v.). While his apparent preference lies with this reading, al-Ṭabarī cites an alternate view, that both journeys were confined to the Ḥijāz (see GEOGRAPHY; PRE-ISLAMIC ARABIA AND THE QURʾĀN). Later commentators would occasionally relate these journeys to the performance of the lesser and greater pilgrimages (*ʿumra* and *ḥajj,* respectively; see PILGRIMAGE). In sum, and particularly in later commentaries, the exegetes are uncertain as to the meaning of the term other than as a reference to journeys of some kind undertaken by the Quraysh. Further questions surrounding *riḥla* are treated by, among others, P. Crone (*Meccan trade,* 204-14) and F.E. Peters (*Muhammad,* 88-92). The first such problem concerns the relationship of Sūrat Quraysh to Sūrat al-Fīl ("The Elephant"; Q 106 and Q 105 respectively). Some early exegetes treat the two as a single sūra; al-Ṭabarī (*Tafsīr,* xxx, 197-8),

however, weighs in against this view (see I. Shahīd, Two sūras, for a modern counterview). Closely related problems arise in reference to *īlāf,* about which the commentaries are in frequent disagreement — both with regard to the reading (see READINGS OF THE QUR'ĀN; ORTHOGRAPHY; ARABIC SCRIPT) and the interpretation. If the frequently expressed view is correct, that it refers to arrangements permitted by God and executed by the Quraysh in order to create the proper conditions for safe passage, or, simply, the order created by God that allowed the Quraysh to survive, even thrive (see BLESSING; GRACE; MERCY), one is still left with the question regarding the nature of these journeys.

Riḥla takes on, beginning with the early Islamic tradition, the notion of travel as an act of piety (q.v.) and scholarship (see KNOWLEDGE AND LEARNING). In a well-known ḥadīth (see ḤADĪTH AND THE QUR'ĀN), the Prophet urges believers to seek "knowledge, wisdom" *('ilm)* even as far as China, if need be. Drawing, if indirectly, on this impulse, and joining it frequently to participation in the pilgrimage *(ḥajj),* Muslim authors crafted a genre of travel literature (see TRIPS AND VOYAGES). Premier examples of the genre are the works of Ibn Jubayr (d. 614/1217) and Ibn Baṭṭūṭa (d. 770/1377). I.R. Netton (Riḥla) provides a useful initial bibliography.

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Joy and Misery

The state of happiness and that of wretchedness, respectively. References to joy and misery are frequent in the Qur'ān, are expressed either directly or by implication, and pertain both to this world and the next (see ESCHATOLOGY). Pleasures of this world are neither condemned nor forbidden (q.v.; see also ASCETICISM; ABSTINENCE; WEALTH; POVERTY AND THE POOR; LAWFUL AND UNLAWFUL), but believers are to be mindful about the source of these pleasures (see GRATITUDE AND INGRATITUDE). Current wretchedness is not a sure sign of divine favor or disfavor (see BLESSING; GRACE; CURSE; REWARD AND PUNISHMENT; TRIAL): the true believer, however, is to assist those who are less fortunate (see ETHICS AND THE QUR'ĀN; COMMUNITY AND SOCIETY IN THE QUR'ĀN). While the joys and miseries of the present life are not absent from the qur'ānic discourse, it is the states of joy and misery experienced in the next life upon which the Qur'ān places its strongest emphasis (see REWARD AND PUNISHMENT).

Among the most recurrent themes is the relative worthlessness of the joys of this world in comparison with those of the hereafter, as in Q 57:20, "The present life is but the joy of delusion." The word rendered here as "joy" is *matāʿ,* which also occurs in the following passages: "Surely, this present life is but a passing enjoyment *(matāʿ)* and the hereafter is the abode [in which] to settle" (Q 40:39); "And those things you have been given are only a provision *(matāʿ)* of this life and its adornment, and whatever is with God is better and more lasting" (Q 28:60; also 13:26 and 42:36); and "The enjoyment *(matāʿ)* of this world is but little, and the hereafter is better for the one who is pious" (Q 4:77; cf. 9:38). Equally significant is the contrast between the pleasures, delights, and enjoy-

ments of this world and the punishment to be visited upon those who do not submit to God (see REWARD AND PUNISHMENT; HELL AND HELLFIRE; FIRE). The forgers of lies against God are promised "a little enjoyment *(matāʿ),* and for them is a painful chastisement" (Q 16:117; see CHASTISEMENT AND PUNISHMENT) or "A brief enjoyment. Then their abode is hell" (Q 3:197). Of like import are passages that emphasize accountability to God at the end of life. People who become rebellious after God has rescued them from the terrors of the sea are told, "O people, your rebellion (q.v.) is against yourselves — only a *matāʿ* of this world's life. Then to us is your return" (Q 10:23).

For the most part, words from the root *m-t-ʿ* have reference to material things rather than to the spiritual joys of the hereafter: they designate things that are useful, of benefit, that bring satisfaction, that meet needs or that inspire delight and pleasure. Such is the meaning of those verses that speak of a provision *(matāʿ)* for this world, as in Q 3:14: "Fair seeming to people is made the love of desires, of women, of sons (see CHILDREN), of hoarded treasures of gold (q.v.) and silver and branded horses and cattle and tilth (see ANIMAL LIFE; AGRICULTURE AND VEGETATION). This is the provision *(matāʿ)* of the life of this world." More basically, *matāʿ* indicates the necessities of life, those things which are required to sustain existence and which afford pleasure. There is mention of a " 'goodly provision' for you for a certain time" (Q 11:3), also of an "abode and provision for you for a time" (Q 7:24) and of "an enjoyment *(matāʿ)* for you and your cattle" (Q 79:33; 80:32). Firewood is both a reminder of God as provider of all things and a boon *(matāʿ)* to wayfarers in the desert (q.v.; Q 56:73) and the produce of the sea is characterized as a "provision for you and for the travelers" (Q 5:96; see HUNTING AND FISHING). Muslims are also warned of the desire of the unbelievers (see BELIEF AND UNBELIEF) that they be heedless of their weapons and their possessions (Q 4:102; see INSTRUMENTS; FIGHTING; EXPEDITIONS AND BATTLES). The material meaning is clear in such passages as that in which Muslims are commanded: "When you ask them [the Prophet's wives; see WIVES OF THE PROPHET] for something *(matāʿ)* ask them from behind a veil" (q.v.; Q 33:53).

The concept of *matāʿ* as material goods or possessions also appears in the story of Joseph (q.v.). Joseph's brothers fabricate an explanation for the disappearance of their young sibling by telling their father that they had left Joseph behind to mind their baggage *(matāʿ)* while they ran races and that he had been eaten by a wolf (Q 12:17). Later, when Joseph's brothers return to their father from their trip to buy corn in Egypt and open their things *(amtāʿ),* they find that their money has been returned to them (Q 12:65). In the same story, again, Joseph asserts (in reference to the king's missing drinking cup; see CUPS AND VESSELS) that he will hold responsible only him in whose possession the goods *(matāʿ)* are found (Q 12:79).

The essentially material nature of *matāʿ* is underlined also by the commands to make honorable provision for divorced women (Q 2:241; see MARRIAGE AND DIVORCE). The affluent man should do so according to his means and the person in more straitened circumstances according to his, in agreement with established custom (Q 2:236). Those who die should also leave a bequest to surviving wives that will offer provision for a period of one year without their being turned out (Q 2:240; see INHERITANCE).

Another set of meanings relating to joy is expressed in forms of the root *f-r-ḥ* which means "to be happy, delighted, cheerful,"

etc. The noun *farḥa,* signifying "joy," does not appear as such in the Qurʾān, but there are frequent occurrences of other words from this root that point to the experience of joy. One such is the verb "to rejoice." Uses of this verb may be divided into those which indicate positive causes for rejoicing and those which refer to negative causes. One affirmative reason to rejoice is the mercy (q.v.) of God: "and when we cause men to taste mercy they rejoice in it" (Q 30:36; 42:48); also "Say: let them rejoice in the grace and mercy of God. It is better than what they hoard" (Q 10:58). A major source of joy is the revelation (see REVELATION AND INSPIRATION): "Rejoice in what was sent down to you" (Q 13:36) and "on that day the faithful will rejoice in God's help" (Q 30:4, 5). God, indeed, controls all things for both good and ill "so that you do not grieve for what has escaped you nor rejoice in what he has given you" (Q 57:23; see FREEDOM AND PREDESTINATION). God both amplifies and diminishes the provision for men, and "they rejoice in this present life" (Q 13:26). Addressing those who refused to participate with the Muslims in battle, the Qurʾān says that those lost are not killed or dead, but are alive and have sustenance "rejoicing in the grace God has bestowed on them" (Q 3:170). Even mundane physical events are reason to rejoice as sailors do when they encounter a fair wind (Q 10:22; see AIR AND WIND).

Rejoicing can occur, however, for reasons that are not in themselves good. When this happens, the joy expressed is often equivalent to boasting (see BOAST), pride (q.v.), haughtiness, arrogance (q.v.) or ingratitude (see GRATITUDE AND INGRATITUDE). For instance, at the time of the emigration (q.v.; *hijra*) to Medina (q.v.), "those who were left behind rejoiced in tarrying" (Q 9:81). The present sent by the Queen of Sheba (see BILQĪS) to King Solomon (q.v.) earned him a rebuke, as he exulted in the gift instead of recognizing that what God had given was better (Q 27:36). Pride and arrogance were also involved in the case of Qārūn, biblical Korah (q.v.), the wealthy Jew whose people warned him: "Do not boast *(lā tafrah),* God does not love boasters *(fariḥīn)*" (Q 28:76). The fate of previous peoples shows their haughtiness and its consequences; when messengers came to them with clear arguments "they exulted in the knowledge they already had" (Q 40:83; see PROOF; KNOWLEDGE AND LEARNING) and what they had formerly mocked came to pass (see MOCKERY). When the unbelievers rejected what had been said to them but, nonetheless, experienced much good, "they rejoiced in what had been given them" (Q 6:44), but God seized them suddenly. When the fortunes of a man change for the good after his having suffered, he may become ungrateful: "Certainly, he is exultant, boastful" (Q 11:10). As for the unbelievers, "If something good happens to you, it grieves them, and if something bad happens to you, they take joy in it" (Q 3:120; see GOOD AND EVIL). In a nearly identical verse the unbelievers also take credit for the hardship that may afflict the believers, "and they turn away rejoicing" (Q 9:50). Pride in what they have is likewise characteristic of the various groups into which the Muslim community is divided, "each party rejoicing in what it has" (Q 23:53; 30:32; see PARTIES AND FACTIONS). Finally, it is made clear that rejoicing or exulting in the wrong things has serious consequences: "And do not think that those who exult in what they have done… are free from punishment" (Q 3:188). They will, indeed, endure the torments of hell because they "exulted in the land unjustly" (Q 40:75).

Quite similar in usage and meaning are some words from the root *b-sh-r,* meaning "to be joyous or to rejoice in good tidings." The Prophet is described in the Qurʾān as

a *bashīr* or bearer of good news (q.v.). Q 3:169 and 170 show that *faraḥ* and *b-sh-r* are synonymous terms in their meaning of rejoicing. Those who were killed in battle are joyous *(fariḥīn)* in what God has given them of his grace and rejoice *(yastabshirūna)* for those who have not yet joined them that they have neither fear (q.v.) nor grief. They rejoice *(yastabshirūna)* in God's favor and his grace (Q 3:171). Physical events are also a source of joy as, for example, when the rain falls (Q 30:48; see WATER; NATURE AS SIGNS). Of more spiritual import is revelation, which, as it comes, strengthens the faith (q.v.) of the believers, "and they are joyful" *(yastabshirūna,* Q 9:124). There is none more faithful to a promise than God (see OATHS; CONTRACTS AND ALLIANCES; BREAKING TRUSTS AND CONTRACTS); the believers are commanded "rejoice, therefore, in the bargain you have made" (Q 9:111). In the story of Lot (q.v.) there is an example of rejoicing in evil (Q 15:67) when the townspeople come to him demanding the messengers whom Lot has accepted as his guests. On the last and terrible day of judgment (see LAST JUDGMENT) there will be some faces that are bright, "laughing, joyous" (Q 80:39), while others will be covered with dust in gloom and darkness (q.v.). The unbelievers seek intercession (q.v.) with other than God though it is useless for them to do so. "When God alone is mentioned, the hearts (see HEART) of those who believe not in the hereafter shrink *(ashmaʾazzat),* and when those besides him are mentioned, lo! they are joyful" (Q 39:45).

Joy is also indicated by the word *naʿīm* from the root, *n-ʿ-m,* which means "to be happy, to be glad, to delight, to take pleasure in something, or to enjoy something." *Naʿīm* may be translated as "bliss," for it points to a particularly intense sense of joy, in fact, to the very pinnacle of delight and pleasurable feeling that humans may experience. In all seventeen of its occurrences in the Qurʾān, *naʿīm* is associated either with paradise (q.v.) or with the fate of the righteous on the day of judgment, as in Q 102:8: "On that day you will certainly be questioned about true bliss." There shall be judgment for the evildoers (see EVIL DEEDS) and rewards for the righteous of whom "you know in their faces the radiance of bliss" (Q 83:24); "Surely, the righteous are in bliss" (Q 82:13; 83:22). The concept figures most often in descriptions of paradise which refer to gardens of bliss or gardens of delight (e.g. Q 10:9; 22:56; see GARDEN) where the righteous may dwell eternally (see ETERNITY). "And when you look there, you see bliss and a great kingdom" (Q 76:20). There are closely related words from the same root that also point to things which give joy. *Niʿma,* meaning "blessing (q.v.), favor, or grace (q.v.)" and used in connection with God's beneficence to man, is found fifty times in the Qurʾān. There are also eighteen occurrences of verbs from the same root, all conveying the idea of blessing.

Another set of words that refers to joy comes from the root *s-r-r,* "to make happy, to gladden," yielding also the nouns happiness and gladness. For example, when Moses (q.v.) commanded his people to sacrifice a cow, he replied to their request for a description of it, saying that it was "a golden cow, bright in color, gladdening the beholders" (Q 2:69; see CALF OF GOLD). More significant is the use of the passive participle *(masrūran)* in connection with the judgment day. One who is given his book behind his back, although "he used to live among his people joyfully" will taste perdition and enter into burning fire (Q 84:10-3). In contrast, he who is judged righteous "will return to his people joyfully" (Q 84:9). God "will ward off the evil of that day from them and give them radiance and

gladness" (Q 76:11). Again the theme of judgment day is the context for the use of another term signifying joy, namely *fākih* (of the root *f-k-h*). The word is evidenced twice in predictions of the coming judgment, "The inhabitants of paradise today are busy in their rejoicing" (Q 36:55) and "The dutiful will surely be in gardens and in bliss, rejoicing because of what their lord has given them" (Q 52:17, 18). In Q 11:105 another term for happiness, *saʿīd*, is used in an eschatological context (cf. also Q 11:108): the state of contentment of those assigned a heavenly reward is explicitly contrasted with the misery of those who are consigned to the fire of hell (Q 11:106).

The Qurʾān speaks with great frequency of the reward, recompense or wage prepared for those who believe and are righteous (see JUSTICE AND INJUSTICE). The references are far too numerous to be detailed here, but they may be explored by reference to terms from such roots as *ʿ-dh-b*, *ʿ-q-b*, *th-w-b*, *j-z-y*, and *kh-r-j*. Reward and punishment are, indeed, among the very central themes of the qurʾānic message. As one of its consequences reward surely brings joy to those who receive it, since that reward is nothing less than an eternity in paradise, the ultimate joy to which the qurʾānic revelation urges humankind to aspire.

As with the understanding of joy, the concept of misery also has a double aspect, one related to worldly life and the other to the hereafter. In mundane terms, misery is a consequence of poverty and deprivation (see POVERTY AND THE POOR; DESPAIR; OPPRESSED ON EARTH, THE). The pursuit of righteousness requires choosing the uphill road, one element of which is to feed "the poor man *(miskīn)* lying in the dust" (Q 90:16). In addition to the eschatological sense that is found in Q 11:105-6 (mentioned above), derivatives of *sh-q-y* carry the sense of unprosperous (Q 20:2, 123; 19:48 and others), of adversity (Q 23:106), and of wretchedness (Q 87:11). The Qurʾān exhibits a humanitarian concern for the deprived, especially in the chapters generally held to belong to the first parts of the revelation. Among the actions that define a pious Muslim is the giving of wealth (q.v.) to "the near of kin (see KINSHIP), and the orphans (q.v.) and the needy and the wayfarer" (Q 2:177; see HOSPITALITY AND COURTESY; JOURNEY). In short, it takes notice of the misery of poverty and distress. Endurance in times of distress and affliction are another mark of the pious believer. In accord with its broad insistence upon God's sovereignty the Qurʾān underlines that it is he who delivered Noah (q.v.) and his people from their great distress and, indeed, is the deliverer from every distress (Q 6:64; 21:76; 37:76, 115). There is also mention of God's seizing people with misery and hardship (Q 2:214; 6:42; 7:94; see TRIAL; PUNISHMENT STORIES). All of these references have to do with poverty and the pain that accompanies it.

Undoubtedly, however, the greatest misery is otherworldly, that of hell, the place for which all are destined who do not heed the message of God. Some of the most graphic passages of the Qurʾān are devoted to descriptions of the miseries to be endured in hell. Its inhabitants will be roasted (Q 38:56), and will be made to suffer a blazing fire in which they must dwell forever. They will be paraded about Jahannam (hell) hobbling on their knees (Q 19:68). As for the unbeliever, "Hell is before him, and he is given oozing pus to drink (see FOOD AND DRINK); he drinks it little by little and is not able to swallow it; and death comes to him from every side; yet he does not die" (Q 14:16-7). "And whenever they try to escape from it, from anguish, they are turned back" (Q 22:22). The torments of hell are a recompense, wage or reward for

the evil of the evildoers and for the denials of those who disbelieved. By their deeds they have earned a mighty chastisement, a painful punishment. The promise of eternal misery to come is one of the most persistent and compelling of all qurʾānic themes.

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Judgment

Opinion or decision; pronouncement of such. Judgment is an integral part of the whole qurʾānic ethos and is intrinsically linked to creation (q.v.) itself, which is not just a random act but teleological and divinely ordained (see COSMOLOGY; FATE; FREEDOM AND PREDESTINATION). God, who is the sole source of creation and sustenance (q.v.; see also BLESSING; FOOD AND DRINK), is also the lord (q.v.) of the day of judgment (see LAST JUDGMENT). Consequently, the concept of God's final "judgment," which eventually became one of the tenets of faith (q.v.; *aqāʾid,* see also CREEDS), is found throughout the Qurʾān, with subsequent expansion and refinement by the exegetical tradition (see EXEGESIS OF THE QURʾĀN: CLASSICAL AND MEDIEVAL). But judgment is not the prerogative of God alone. The Qurʾān, which acknowledges that in the course of their daily lives, humans, too, pass judgment, sets forth general (and, in certain cases, specific) guidelines by which humans should judge (see ARBITRATION).

The Qurʾān contains no unique term for judgment, human or divine. Rather, a range of vocabulary is employed to convey the concept: *ḥukm, qaḍāʾ, dīn, ḥisāb, raʾy, rashad/rushd* and others. Among these, *ḥukm* — a verbal noun of the verb *ḥakama (*from the triliteral root *ḥ-k-m)* meaning "to judge, give verdict or provide decision" — and its cognates occurs most comprehensively. One derivative, *ḥakam (*pl. *ḥukkām),* was historically associated with pre-Islamic judges or, rather, arbitrators (see PRE-ISLAMIC ARABIA AND THE QURʾĀN), a meaning apparent in the Qurʾān in the prescription of appointing an arbitrator *(ḥakam)* from each family in case of domestic disputes between husband and wife (Q 4:35; see FAMILY; MARRIAGE AND DIVORCE; LAW AND THE QURʾĀN). Wisdom (q.v.; *ḥikma*) and authority (q.v.; *ḥukm*) are also derived from the root letters *ḥ-k-m*. The correlation between judgment and wisdom is demonstrated in the description of God as both "the judge" *(al-ḥākim* and *al-ḥakam)* and "the wise" (*al-ḥakīm;* cf. Gimaret, *Noms divins,* 74, 347-9; see GOD AND HIS ATTRIBUTES). God is also described in the Qurʾān as "the best of judges" (*khayr al-ḥākimīn,* Q 7:87; 10:109; 12:80; cf. Gimaret, *Noms divins,* 74, 347-9) and "the most just of judges" (*aḥkam al-ḥākimīn,* Q 11:45 and 95:8; see JUSTICE AND INJUSTICE).

The term *ḥukm* occurs in the early Meccan verses (see CHRONOLOGY AND THE QURʾĀN) where human judgment of the pagans is contrasted to the divine judgment (Q 5:50; see POLYTHEISM AND ATHEISM; IDOLATRY AND IDOLATERS). *Ḥukm* is also mentioned in the Qurʾān with regard to Muḥammad's prophetic authority to judge individuals (see PROPHETS AND

PROPHETHOOD). Moses (q.v.), David (q.v.), Jesus (q.v.) and others are mentioned in this context, together with the Torah (q.v.; Q 5:44) and the Gospel (q.v.; Q 5:47). In this respect, though, special emphasis is placed upon Muḥammad, and the Qurʾān is called the "Arabic code/judgment" (*ḥukm ʿarabī,* Q 13:37). Muḥammad was, in fact, invited to Medina (q.v.) because of his personal authority as a judge or arbiter in tribal disputes (see EMIGRATION; POLITICS AND THE QURʾĀN; TRIBES AND CLANS).

Derivatives of another triliteral root, *q-ḍ-y,* are also employed for judgment or decision in the Qurʾān; the verb *(qāḍa)* occurs frequently, referring primarily to an act of God, indicating his absolute power (cf. Q 6:58; 39:75; see Dāmaghānī, *Wujūh,* ii, 138; cf. Abū l-Baqāʾ, *al-Kulliyyāt,* 705a; see POWER AND IMPOTENCE). The judicial decision *(qāḍaʾ)* is generally considered as part of judgment *(ḥukm),* since whenever someone gives a verdict or a decree, judgment is invariably passed (cf. *Tāj al-ʿarūs,* s.v.). But in the Qurʾān, the verb *ḥakama* and its cognates usually relate to the Prophet's judicial activities (e.g. Q 4:105), while the verb *qaḍā,* from which the word for "judge" *(qāḍī)* is derived, mainly refers (with the exception of Q 10:71 and 20:72) not to the judgment of a judge, but to a sovereign ordinance of either God or the Prophet. Both verbs occur simultaneously in Q 4:65: "But no, by your lord, they can have no real faith until they make you a judge *(yuḥakkimūka)* in all disputes between them and thereafter find no resistance within their souls of what you decide *(qaḍayta),* but accept them with total conviction." The first verb *(yuḥakkimūka)* refers to the arbitrating aspect of the Prophet's activity, while the second *(qaḍayta)* emphasizes the authoritative character of his decision, raising it to a level of belief (*īmān,* see BELIEF AND UNBELIEF). While al-Zamakhsharī (d. 538/1144; *Kashshāf,* ad loc.) and al-Bayḍāwī (d. prob. 716/1316-7; *Tafsīr,* ad loc.) only stress the emphatic *lām* in the verse, al-Ṭabarī (d. 310/923; *Tafsīr,* ad loc.) includes a reference to peoples' sincerity of belief as dependent upon whether God or the Prophet were appointed as judges in their affairs and their not feeling any uneasiness about the ensuing decisions. Al-Qummī (d. 328/939; *Tafsīr,* ad loc.), on the other hand, designates *yuḥakkimūka* as referring to ʿAlī (see ʿALĪ B. ABĪ ṬĀLIB) and the second verb *(qaḍayta)* to the Prophet's decision regarding ʿAlī's imāmate (*walāya;* see CLIENTS AND CLIENTAGE; FRIENDS AND FRIENDSHIP).

Muḥammad had been sent by God to teach humans how to act, what to do and what to avoid in order to be judged favorably in the reckoning on the day of judgment (see GOOD DEEDS; EVIL DEEDS; LAWFUL AND UNLAWFUL). In Islam, therefore, law is an all-embracing body of religious commandments (q.v.) and prohibitions (see FORBIDDEN; PROHIBITED DEGREES); it consists not only of a legal system, but also of rules governing worship (q.v.) and ritual (see RITUAL AND THE QURʾĀN). There is a recurrent insistence on the merits of forgiveness (q.v.) in the Qurʾān, with words such as *ʿafā, ṣafaḥa, ghafara* in Q 2:109; 3:134; 23:96; 42:37, 40, 43; 64:14, etc. (see also MERCY). Although a life (q.v.) for a life and an eye (q.v.) for an eye is ordained in the Qurʾān (see RETALIATION; BLOOD MONEY), there is a qualification pertaining to the action of those who voluntarily overlook the injustice done to them, a response which is regarded as atonement (q.v.) for their own actions.

Ethics (see ETHICS AND THE QURʾĀN) is an integral part of law, and the Qurʾān includes many ethical injunctions such as to judge with justice (Q 4:58; 5:42; 6:152), not to offer bribes (Q 2:188), to give true evidence (Q 4:135; 5:8; see LIE; WITNESSING AND TESTIFYING) and to give full weight

and measure (Q 17:35; 55:7-9; 83:1-3; see WEIGHTS AND MEASURES). Transactions and contracts are to be committed to writing and fulfilled, especially in relation to returning a trust or deposit *(amāna)* to its owner (e.g. Q 2:283; see BREAKING TRUSTS AND CONTRACTS; CONTRACTS AND ALLIANCES; SELLING AND BUYING). Judging others wrongly is abhorred in the Qurʾān as is judging others on the basis of suspicions (q.v.; *ẓann*). A different aspect of judgment is portrayed in Q 49:11-12, where believers are asked not to laugh (see LAUGHTER), label, defame or be sarcastic to others (see MOCKERY) as, in God's view, it is possible that those whom they judge are actually better than themselves. Explicit warning is given not to enquire curiously into the affairs of others as well as not to blame, set up one against the other, talk about each other or backbite (see GOSSIP), the last-mentioned of which is equated with eating the flesh of one's dead brother (see BROTHER AND BROTHERHOOD).

Dīn is another expression for judgment in the Qurʾān, although its etymology lends itself to two additional meanings: custom (see SUNNA) and religion (q.v.). Whatever their differences in origin and meaning, these meanings are conceptually related. Thus, *dayn,* which means debt (q.v.) due at a fixed time, semantically connects to *dīn* as custom or usage, which, in its turn, gives the idea of God-given direction (see ASTRAY; PATH OR WAY). Judging involves guiding someone in the right direction, often through rebuke and retribution. Arabic philologists often derive *dīn* from *dāna lahu* meaning to submit to the obligations imposed by God (for *dīn* in the sense of obedience [q.v.], see Jeffery, *For. vocab.,* 131-3; Izutsu, *God,* 219-29). "The judge" *(al-dayyān)* is one of God's names, which people also applied to ʿAlī b. Abī Ṭālib as the sage of the community (cf. *Lisān al-ʿArab,* s.v.; for *al-dayyān* as an attribute of God, cf. also Gimaret, *Noms divins,* 350-1).

Al-Bāqillānī (d. 403/1013; *Kitāb al-Tamhīd,* 345) distinguishes several possible meanings of *dīn,* including judgment in the sense of retribution, in the sense of decision *(ḥukm),* as well as of doctrine *(madhhab)* and the religion of truth (q.v.; *dīn al-ḥaqq*). The sense of judgment and retribution occurs frequently in the early sūras of the Meccan period: four times independently, and twelve as part of the expression "the day of judgment" *(yawm al-dīn)*. This is synonymous with "the day of reckoning" (*yawm al-ḥisāb,* Q 40:27; 14:41; cf. 37:20, 26, 53), "the day of resurrection" *(yawm al-qiyāma),* the "return" *(maʿād)* and "the hour" (*al-sāʿa,* see ESCHATOLOGY; APOCALYPSE). Many other names are given in the Qurʾān; as many as 1,700 verses refer to the resurrection (q.v.; cf. *Rasāʾil Ikhwān al-Ṣafāʾ,* iii, 286-7, which cites numerous names for the final day, such as *yawm al-faṣl, yawm al-tanādī, yawm al-āzifa*).

Eschatological judgment in the Qurʾān is inevitable (Q 3:9) and God is swift in dealing with the account *(ḥisāb)*. In Q 75:26-8 there is reference to an initial judgment occurring immediately after death, while other passages in Q 56 (Sūrat al-Wāqiʿa, "The Event"), speak of the inevitable event, alluding to the hour of judgment *(al-sāʿa),* when each soul will be evaluated according to what it has earned (see GOOD AND EVIL; RECORD OF HUMAN ACTIONS). At the final resurrection the whole present order gives way to a new one as portrayed in Q 14:48 (see DEATH AND THE DEAD). The rendering of accounts — required from all people — is to be given to God alone (Q 13:40; 26:113). God is "prompt in demanding an account" (Q 2:202, 3:19 and 199) of each person's actions, which will have been inscribed on a "roll." The day of judgment is described as the day when the

world will be rolled up like a scroll and nothing on the scales of God's judgment will be overlooked: an atom's weight of good will be manifest and so will an atom's weight of evil. If the good deeds outweigh the bad, people will receive their accounts in their right hands and receive their reward, while those whose deeds are unfavorable will receive them in their left hands and be punished (see REWARD AND PUNISHMENT).

"The Heights" (Q 7, Sūrat al-Aʿrāf) mentions those on the heights who hear and address the people of paradise (q.v.; Q 7:46-7; see PEOPLE OF THE HEIGHTS). It is only the sanctified, who, having perfected themselves, will enter paradise. Those who are not perfect will enter an intermediary state as they undergo final purification. "The Event" (Q 56, Sūrat al-Wāqiʿa) seeks to judge three types of souls: the companions of the left, the companions of the right and those that are foremost *(al-sābiqūn),* to be equated with those who are brought close to God's throne (*al-muqarrabūn,* see THRONE OF GOD). Clearly, there seems to be a fundamental difference of degree, between which some Shīʿa and the Ṣūfīs did not hesitate to distinguish (see ṢŪFISM AND THE QURʾĀN): those who achieve salvation (q.v.) and those who attain beatitude. In their view, salvation is the reward for the exoteric religion, while the aim of the esoteric path is the beatific vision (see FACE OF GOD; SEEING AND HEARING; VISION AND BLINDNESS; VISIONS).

Judgment invariably involves an evaluation of right or wrong, true or false and good or bad (see PAIRS AND PAIRING). Philosophically, it involves the rational faculty as observed by the authors of the *Rasʾāil Ikhwān al-Ṣafāʾ,* who regard "judgment on things as a product of the intellect (q.v.)." In the Qurʾān, this meaning is apparent in the word *raʾy,* used in numerous verses (e.g. Q 6:40) in which God asks people about their thoughts at the time when the wrath (see ANGER) of God will befall them and when the hour of judgment is near. *Raʾy* can be used in a variety of ways: seeing physically with one's eyes, considering or perceiving things with one's heart (q.v.) and even sensing things through one's beliefs (cf. *Lisān al-ʿArab,* s.v.; see KNOWLEDGE AND LEARNING). It can also connote a belief about something or someone and for wrong belief, God's judgment falls upon people as punishment (cf. *Tāj al-ʿarūs,* s.v.; see CHASTISEMENT AND PUNISHMENT). In the debates of the fourth/tenth century among the various legal schools, the *ahl al-raʾy* were those who were accused by the *ahl al-ḥadīth* of practicing analogical deduction *(qiyās)* by giving judgments according to their opinions, as they could not find an appropriate prophetic tradition to support their arguments (see ḤADĪTH AND THE QURʾĀN; TRADITIONAL DISCIPLINES OF QURʾĀNIC STUDY).

Another qurʾānic lexeme used in connection with judgment is *rashad/rushd.* In Q 4:6, God speaks of giving orphans (q.v.) their wealth when they attain "sound judgment" (*rushd,* see MATURITY). People differ with regard to the meaning of *rushd:* among the interpretations of the passage that he discusses, al-Ṭabarī (*Tafsīr,* iv, 252) relates that some consider it to be soundness of intellect and righteousness in religion. Al-Zamakhsharī (*Kashshāf,* i, 501) also mentions several traditions: Abū Ḥanīfa (d. 150/767) explained that *rushd* was informed guidance on all aspects of good actions, while Ibn ʿAbbās (d. 68/686-8) maintained that it was righteousness in using intellect and preserving wealth (q.v.), whereas Mālik b. Anas (d. 179/796) and al-Shāfiʿī (d. 204/820) held that it was righteousness in religion.

The notion of judgment raises the issue

of intercessory disputation on behalf of the soul (q.v.; Q 4:109), which invariably involves matters of repentance (*tawba,* see REPENTANCE AND PENANCE), intercession (q.v.; *shafāʿa*) and compassion *(raḥma).* Not all Sunnī schools accept the possibility of prophetic intercession *(shafāʿa),* and those who do argue about whether it applies only to Muḥammad or to all prophets. The Shīʿa, on the other hand, accept this doctrine without question and also extend it to the Imāms (see IMĀM; SHĪʿISM AND THE QURʾĀN). Although Q 4:64 elucidates the concept of intercession *(shafāʿa),* mentioning the Prophet's role, other verses, such as Q 16:111, speak of the "day that every soul shall come debating on its own behalf."

In conclusion, it may be said that although the final, eschatological judgment dominates the qurʾānic discourse, the concept is not absent from discussions of the present world, in which humans are called to judge fairly, and by what is best.

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Jūdī

Mount (Jabal) Jūdī, also written Djūdī (modern Turkish, Cudi), the name of a mountain mass and its highest point in SE Turkey, near the borders of Iraq (q.v.) and Syria (q.v.). Mount Jūdī is attested once in the Qurʾān, at Q 11:44, as al-Jūdī, the site where Noah's (q.v.) ark (q.v.) rested on dry land after the flood (see MYTHS AND LEGENDS IN THE QURʾĀN; SCRIPTURE AND THE QURʾĀN; GEOGRAPHY). There has been considerable disagreement about the actual site to which this story refers. Largely due to western Christian misinterpretation of the Hebrew *"hārê Arārāṭ,"* literally "*mountains* of Ararat" (*Gen* 8:4), as *Mount* Ararat (q.v.), the passage has been interpreted as referring to a single mountain since about the tenth century. Thus, the tallest mountain near the present-day border of Turkey with Armenia, once known as Masik, came to be named Mount Ararat and is generally identified today as the site of the ark's landing. In the Hebrew scriptures the name Ararat was actually the Hebrew rendition of Urarṭu, the name of the ancient kingdom that covered the territory of eastern Turkey, and included both mountains, today's Ararat and Jabal Jūdī. This extensive mountainous area has been known variously as Qardū in Aramaic and Syriac texts; Gordyene by Greek, Roman, and later Christian writers; and Kordukh in Armenian. The Jewish-Aramaic *Targum Onkelos,* possibly based on an earlier Babylonian tradition, translates the Hebrew of Genesis 8:4 as "ṭurē Qardū" ("mountains of Qardū") and later rabbinic sources have generally described Qardū as the mountains where the ark rested (cf. Ṭabarī, *History,* 366 n. 1137). The variant forms of this name led some scholars to connect Qardū wrongly with Kurd and Kurdistan, despite the difference between K and Q.

According to Yāqūt (*Muʿjam,* ii, 144-5),

Jūdī in the Qurʾān seems to have denoted a mountain in Arabia, a designation possibly based on earlier Arabian traditions (see PRE-ISLAMIC ARABIA AND THE QURʾĀN). The transfer of the designated locale from Arabia to upper Mesopotamia and the territory of Urarṭu must have taken place early during the Arab invasion of that region. Today, the areas around both Mount Ararat and Jabal Jūdī are filled with memorials and legends referring to the flood and the life of Noah (q.v.) and his family after they left the ark. This holds true about a particular structure, once a monastery, on the supposed site of Noah's worship of God after the flood. According to Le Strange, from the village of Jazīrat Ibn ʿUmar, Jūdī was visible to the east, with the "Mosque of Noah" on its summit and Qaryat Thamānīn ("the village of eighty") at the mountain's foot (*Lands,* 94). The village's name refers to one of several traditions about how many humans survived the flood in the ark, which vary between seven survivors (Noah, his three sons and their spouses) and eighty, including seventy-three descendants of Seth, son of Adam. This village is supposedly where Noah himself settled after the flood and although all the survivors except for Noah and his immediate descendants perished, all of today's humanity is descended from those seven or eight. Because of the qurʾānic reference to al-Jūdī and to its early identification with Noah, the mountain and its surrounding area became a pilgrimage site for Muslims, Jews and eastern Christians.

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Jug

see CUPS AND VESSELS

Jugular Vein

see ARTERY AND VEIN

Justice and Injustice

Equitable action according to God's will; action that transgresses God's bounds. One of the key dichotomies in the Qurʾān, it separates divine from human action, moral from immoral behavior (see ETHICS AND THE QURʾĀN). The Qurʾān uses several different words and metaphors to convey this moral balance. *ʿAdl* and *qisṭ* can be used to speak of justice as equitable action but justice can also be defined as correct or truthful action, in which case *ṣidq* or *ḥaqq* may be used. Metaphors (see METAPHOR) such as the balance (*mīzān,* see WEIGHTS AND MEASURES; INSTRUMENTS), inheritance (q.v.) shares *(naṣīb)* and even brotherhood (see BROTHER AND BROTHERHOOD) can describe the underlying principles of justice. The usual word for injustice in the Qurʾān is *zulm,* which has the sense of stepping beyond the boundaries of right action (see BOUNDARIES AND PRECEPTS), specifically, a *ẓālim* is one who does wrong to others or to himself. But human injustice can also be expressed in the larger sense of sinning, opposing God, or ascribing partners to God, for which there are many terms, such as *faḥshāʾ* and *baghy* (see SIN, MAJOR AND MINOR; POLYTHEISM AND ATHEISM; DISOBEDIENCE).

In post-qurʾānic Arabic, *ʿadl* became the technical term for justice and the Muʿtazilī theologians were known as *ahlu l-ʿadl*

wa-l-tawḥīd, "the people of justice and unity," for their defense of the doctrine of God's essential justice (see MUʿTAZILĪS; THEOLOGY AND THE QURʾĀN). The Qurʾān also uses the term *ʿadl* but relatively rarely (only fourteen times in the sense of justice or equity) and in a much broader fashion. While God's words are described as *ʿadl* in Q 6:115, more common is the use of *ʿadl* or its verbal derivatives to mean equal treatment of wives or disputants (Q 4:3, 58, 129; 5:8; 42:15; 49:9; see WOMEN AND THE QURʾĀN; FAMILY; DEBATE AND DISPUTATION; SOCIAL INTERACTIONS). The qurʾānic range is demonstrated by the use of three synonyms for *ʿadl: qisṭ,* "equity," in the case of just witnesses (Q 5:8; cf. 4:135), *ṣidq,* "truthfulness," in Q 6:115 and *iḥsān,* "good deeds" (q.v.), in Q 16:90. Nowhere in the Qurʾān is God called *al-ʿadl,* although this is often listed as one of his most beautiful names (see GOD AND HIS ATTRIBUTES).

As for the many other qurʾānic terms that may denote justice, most continue the metaphor of symmetry and balance such as the *mīzān (*pl. *mawāzīn),* the "scales of justice," in which good deeds are weighed on the last day (Q 7:8-9; 23:102-3; 101:6-7; see LAST JUDGMENT). But scholars have argued that the idea of justice must be extended to include other metaphors; for instance, Khadduri (*Islamic conception,* 7) sees an abstract principle of equal rights in the declaration that the believers are brothers (Q 49:10). Further, Rahbar (*God of justice,* 231-2) points out that *ḥaqq,* "truth or reality," may also be translated as "justice." So, Q 16:3 *(khalaqa l-samāwāti wa-l-arḍa bi-l-ḥaqq)* should be interpreted as "He created the heavens and the earth with justice." Two of these metaphors are connected in Q 7:8, which reads, "The weighing on that day is just *(wa-l-waznu yawmaʾidhin al-ḥaqq).*" But here Arberry and Rahbar both translate *ḥaqq* as "true" even though al-Bayḍāwī *(Anwār)* and the Jalālayn gloss it as *ʿadl;* al-Qurṭubī *(Jāmiʿ)* regards the whole phrase as a metaphor for justice. The fact that the Arabic could support both readings indicates that the technical differentiation of *ʿadl* and *ḥaqq* is a post-qurʾānic development. Wagner (*La justice,* 13-4) has argued that the absence of a technical term for justice in the Qurʾān allows for a conception of justice which transcends human language.

A similar semantic range is found for injustice. *Jawr,* the technical word for injustice in classical theology, is not found in the Qurʾān; rather, several words are used to convey the sense of injustice. For example, Q 16:90 lists three terms as having a meaning opposite to *ʿadl:* "Surely God bids to justice *(ʿadl),* good deeds and giving to relatives; and he forbids indecency *(al-faḥshāʾ),* disobedience *(al-munkar)* and insolence *(al-baghy).*" Of these words, the first two are mentioned in dozens of other places in the Qurʾān. The last, while less common, is also listed as an antonym to *ʿadl* in Q 49:9. Another word indicative of injustice is *ṭāghūt* (in fourteen places this word, as well as other derivatives of *ṭ-gh-y,* are connected with unbelief, *kufr;* see e.g. Q 2:257; 5:64; see BELIEF AND UNBELIEF; INSOLENCE AND OBSTINACY; IDOLS AND IMAGES); *haḍm* is also placed in apposition to *ẓulm* in Q 20:112.

Ẓulm is most usually a general word for sin or transgression and so is found as a synonym for *zūr,* "falsehood" (see LIE), in Q 25:4 and for *mujrim,* "sinner," in Q 7:40-1 (see also Q 11:116). The transgressor *(ẓālim,* pl. *ẓālimūn)* is referred to over one hundred times. For example, in Q 2:35 Adam and Eve (q.v.) are warned that they will be among the *ẓālimūn* if they transgress God's command not to touch the tree; theft (q.v.; Q 5:38-9; 12:75) and lying (e.g. Q 6:21) also make one a *ẓālim* (Izutsu, *Concepts,* 164-72). But while *ʿadl* is never used in explicit reference to God, *ẓulm* is; in fact, Q 20:112 dem-

onstrates a technical usage of *zulm* to refer to God's actions, which are explicitly not unjust (also Q 3:108; 6:131; 11:117). Furthermore, the emphatic form *zallām* is only used as a negative description of God; it is found in five exhortations that declare that God is not unjust (e.g. Q 3:182). The common qurʾānic phrase "those who wronged themselves" (*anfusahum yazlimūn* in Q 2:57 and nine other places; *zalamū anfusahum* in Q 3:117 and five other places; see also *zālimun li-nafsihi* in Q 18:35; 35:32; 37:113) almost always refers to ancient peoples who were punished, or will be damned to hell, because they did not recognize God's prophets (see GENERATIONS; PROPHETS AND PROPHETHOOD; PUNISHMENT STORIES; HELL AND HELLFIRE). *Ẓalama nafsahu* in Q 2:231 and 65:1, however, refers to those who do not follow proper divorce proceedings (see MARRIAGE AND DIVORCE). In terms of God, therefore, injustice may be seen as the diametrical opposite of justice but in terms of human behavior, injustice is not a lack of justice as much as it is an active resistance of God's guidance. Q 65:1 specifies: "the one who transgresses the bounds of God has wronged himself" *(wa-man yataʿadda ḥudūda llāhi fa-qad ẓalama nafsahu)*.

Interestingly, the very words for just actions also share Arabic roots with metaphors for injustice. So Q 6:150 defines the unbelievers as those who make something else equivalent to their lord (*wa-hum bi-rabbihim yaʿdilūn,* see also Q 6:1, 70). *ʿAdala ʿan* means "to deviate from the right course," and so Lane (v, 1972) understands Q 27:60 as "they are a people who deviate" *(qawmun yaʿdilūn)*. Attempts to reconcile these divergent usages in the Qurʾān are attributed to very early sources (see, for instance, the explanation of ʿAbd al-Mālik b. Marwān [d. 86/705] in *Lisān al-ʿArab,* xi, 431-2; partial trans. in Khadduri, *Islamic conception,* 7-8). The *qāsiṭūn* also deviate from the right course in Q 72:14-5, where they are placed in opposition to the *muslimūn*.

Moving from semantics to the broad teachings of the Qurʾān, one can isolate three fields of moral action in terms of justice and injustice: human-human relations; human-divine relations; and God's own activity. As for the first category, specific areas addressed by the Qurʾān include both public and private affairs, such as fair measures in the market (Q 6:152; see MARKETS), fair testimony (Q 4:135; 5:8, 95, 106; 65:2; see WITNESSING AND TESTIFYING; CONTRACTS AND ALLIANCES), just recording of debts (Q 2:282; see DEBT), impartial judgments (Q 4:58; see JUDGMENT) and just treatment of co-wives (Q 4:3, 129; see CONCUBINES) and orphans (q.v.; Q 4:3, 10; 6:152). There are also general injunctions to act and speak in a just manner (Q 5:8; 6:152; 16:90; 49:9). These injunctions are cited extensively in books of Islamic law and works on ethics (see LAW AND THE QURʾĀN). The existence of these exhortations is itself qurʾānic recognition that human beings are unjust to one another, particularly when they are in positions of power (see POWER AND IMPOTENCE; OPPRESSION). Q 4:10 specifically refers to those who consume the assets of orphans unjustly *(zulman)* and Q 4:129 simply states: "You will not be able to be equitable *(taʿdilū)* among [your] wives."

God's justice in relationship to his creatures has already been mentioned in metaphors of the scales of justice and the many qurʾānic references to his judgment on the last day. But God also created the heavens (see HEAVEN AND SKY) and the earth (q.v.) with justice (Q 6:73 and eleven other places; see CREATION; COSMOLOGY), and his words of revelation continue that work of justice (Q 6:115; see REVELATION AND INSPIRATION; WORD OF GOD). In fact, God is intimately involved in all human actions

"for God in the qurʾānic conception interferes in the minutest details of human affairs" (Izutsu, *Concepts,* 166; see FREEDOM AND PREDESTINATION). Acts among humans, therefore, are not merely in terms of human justice but rather they are to occur within God's bounds *(ḥudūdu llāh).* Further, when speaking of divorce in Q 2:231 and 65:1, the Qurʾān uses language otherwise reserved for judgment day ("he wronged himself," *zalama nafsahu*) to describe those who would transgress God's rules.

The third category, God's own characterization as just, is dealt with primarily in terms of his right to judge humankind. The defense of this right is expressed in an account of history repeated throughout the Qurʾān. Not only did God create the heavens and the earth, he asked the souls (see SOUL) of all humankind to testify: "Am I not your lord?" (Q 7:172), thereby establishing his right to judge them, should they begin worshipping idols (SEE IDOLS AND IMAGES). According to the Qurʾān, human beings forgot that covenant (q.v.) and went astray (q.v.), despite the many prophets and warners (see WARNER) sent to remind them. In going astray, of course, they wronged themselves (*zalamū anfusahum,* see above). And as for the many peoples whom God destroyed for their wickedness, he would never have done so unjustly (*bi-zulm,* Q 6:131 and 11:117). As mentioned above, God's scales for weighing good deeds are just and he will not begrudge anyone *(lā yazlimu)* the weight of an ant (Q 4:40). The Qurʾān specifically complains about those who prefer the judgment *(ḥukm)* of the Age of Ignorance (q.v.) to the judgment of God (Q 5:50). The qurʾānic exhortation that believers render justice and be just in their actions, therefore, is part of their acceptance of this cosmology of justice.

Although, as noted above, the Qurʾān does not call God *al-ʿadl,* this epithet is found in lists of God's most beautiful names. In his treatise on these names, al-Ghazālī (d. 505/1111) finds an elegant connection among the various qurʾānic images of justice and God's creative act. In allusion to Q 82:6-7 which reads: "your generous lord who created you and shaped you and wrought you in symmetry (*ʿadalaka,* see BIOLOGY AS THE CREATION AND STAGES OF LIFE)," he writes: "By creating these [bodily] members he is generous, and by placing them in their particular placement he is just.… He suspended the hands and arms from the shoulders, and had he suspended them from the head or the loins or the knees, the imbalance resulting from that would be evident.… What you should know, in short, is that nothing has been created except in the placement intended for it" (Ghazālī, *Names,* 93-4). By focusing on God's intended placement as evidence of his justice, al-Ghazālī both displays his orthodox theology (God's actions define justice, not the reverse) and also the lexical opposition of justice to injustice *(zulm),* literally "that which is out of place."

Al-Ghazālī's attempt to reconcile qurʾānic conceptions of justice and injustice is the product of centuries of theological speculation. Already in the years immediately following Muḥammad's death, Muslims witnessed vast examples of human injustice during the civil wars *(fitan)* that tore apart the early Muslim community. Questions naturally arose as to God's role in acts of human injustice. The Khārijīs (q.v.) argued that the grave sinner *(fāsiq)* was no longer a Muslim and must be combated with the sword in this world, while others said that God alone would punish the grave sinner at judgment day. These debates continued to ask whether human and divine acts are separate from one another. Muʿtazilīs began to argue that God was essentially just and therefore bound to do the better, while human

beings could commit injustices by acting against God's will. Others understood God's action and human action to be intimately connected, with nothing occurring outside of God's will. As a result, qurʾānic interpreters derived two distinctive notions of justice from the Qurʾān: Muʿtazilīs like al-Zamakhsharī (d. 538/1144) found that "God's justice implies 'human free will'" and their opponents, like al-Bayḍāwī (d. 716/1316-7), maintained "that God's justice lies in his dealing as possessor and Lord, and in making decisions according to his will" (Ibrahim, Concept, 14). Al-Bayḍāwī's position thus closely mirrors that of the Ashʿarīs, who held that God's actions were by definition just.

Islamic law also offers interpretations of qurʾānic justice but does so largely by maintaining a separation between divine and human justice. The classical legal handbooks were organized into two major categories, beginning with duties owed to God *(ʿibādāt),* followed by duties owed to other human beings *(muʿāmalāt)*. Such a categorization may have developed from a pseudo-Aristotelian conception of justice (Heffening, Aufbau, 107). Books of legal theory dealt primarily with questions of procedure and interpretation and only rarely with the relationship between divine and human justice. The qurʾānic conception of divine justice as invading all aspects of human interaction played, however, a key role in defining court procedure. At least in theory, the Islamic judge was only to render justice on the basis of the apparent evidence, and was not responsible for the actual truth of a case, since ultimately the plaintiffs were responsible to God (Heffening, Aufbau, 107). This also explains the wide use of oaths (q.v.) in the Islamic court to ascertain the truth of a matter (following the qurʾānic precedent in Q 24:4-9; see BREAKING TRUSTS AND CONTRACTS; CHASTITY). Yet unlike court function in Judaism, court punishments in Islam are not in lieu of eternal punishment. Rather, God reserves the right to exact further justice on the last day (see Q 5:37; 24:19). The legal principles of *istiḥsān* and *maṣlaḥa* have been used by medieval and modern reformers to argue that general qurʾānic injunctions to promote justice may override specific qurʾānic laws. The principle of *istiḥsān* is sometimes based on Q 39:55, "follow the best *(aḥsana)* of that which has been sent down to you" (see also Q 39:18). Likewise, the virtue of equity (*inṣāf,* a word not found in the Qurʾān) in Islamic ethical treatises may be seen as a continuation of principles of equity and justice in the Qurʾān.

The movement from the injustice of the Age of Ignorance *(jāhiliyya)* to the justice of the Muslim community, described in the Qurʾān, has become one of the central teachings of the Islamic religion. This movement is not merely a historical event, played out in the revelation of the Qurʾān to the Prophet but it is also the practical theology of the Qāḍī's court, the motivating force of proselytizers (see INVITATION) and the explanation of God's continued action in this world. This movement will be complete on the last day, when each soul will be rewarded for what it has earned, and there will be no injustice (Q 40:17).

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K

Kaʿba

A cube shaped building situated inside the Great Mosque *(al-masjid al-ḥarām)* at Mecca. Although the term *kaʿba* is attested only twice in the Qurʾān (Q 5:95, 97), there are other qurʾānic expressions that have traditionally been understood as designations for this structure (i.e. certain instances of *al-bayt* [lit. "the house," see HOUSE, DOMESTIC AND DIVINE]; as well as of *masjid* [see MOSQUE]). In Islamic tradition, it is often referred to as "the house (or sanctuary) of God" *(bayt Allāh),* and for the vast majority of Muslims it is the most sacred spot on earth. The name Kaʿba is generally explained as indicating its "cubic" or "quadrangular" *(murabbaʿ)* form.

Description

Its ground plan is an irregular oblong, the size of which has been variously stated: a reliable approximation is 40 feet (12 meters) long, 33 feet (10 m.) wide and 50 feet (15 m.) high. Its four corners are aligned approximately north (the "Iraqi" corner), east, south (the "Yemeni" corner) and west. Built into its eastern corner is a large black stone, known as *al-ḥajar al-aswad* or *al-rukn,* which is the object of special veneration when worshippers make the ritual sevenfold circumambulation *(ṭawāf)* around the outside of the Kaʿba (see WORSHIP).

The building has one door, situated towards the eastern end of the northeastern wall and raised about six feet (2 m.) above ground level. It is accessible from steps that are wheeled into place but worship takes place around and outside the Kaʿba. Entry inside, although highly prized, is not a required act, and access to the interior is limited. Adjacent to the northwestern wall is a semi-circular area known as *al-ḥijr,* demarcated by a low wall (sometimes referred to as *al-ḥaṭīm*) that does not quite touch the wall of the Kaʿba. The building is normally enclosed in an ornately decorated covering cloth known as the *kiswa,* which is renewed annually.

The Kaʿba in Islamic practice

The Kaʿba is the focus of the *ḥajj* (major pilgrimage) and the *ʿumra* (minor pilgrimage), in that each begins and ends with the ceremony of circumambulation (see PILGRIMAGE). The *ḥajj,* however, involves the performance of rituals at a distance from the Kaʿba, outside Mecca itself, and the law places a greater importance on some of those rituals — such as the "standing" *(wuqūf)* at ʿArafa (see ʿARAFĀT) and the

slaughtering of animals at Minā — than it does upon the circumambulation of the Kaʿba. To miss the *wuqūf* is usually counted as invalidating the *ḥajj,* while the day of slaughtering (10th of Dhū l-Ḥijja; see CALENDAR) is often identified with "the great day of the *ḥajj*" (Q 9:3; see SLAUGHTER). Wellhausen proposed that Muḥammad linked pre-Islamic *ḥajj* ceremonies that had nothing to do with Mecca (q.v.) and the Kaʿba, with those of the *ʿumra,* which were performed in Mecca around the Kaʿba, in order to give the Islamic *ḥajj* a greater association with Mecca.

Muslims must face towards the Kaʿba when performing the obligatory prayers (*ṣalāt,* see PRAYER) and certain other rituals such as the slaughter of animals for consumption or as religious offerings (see CONSECRATION OF ANIMALS; SACRIFICE). The dead are buried facing towards it (see DEATH AND THE DEAD). In other words, the Kaʿba marks the *qibla* (q.v.), the sacred direction that distinguishes Islam from other monotheistic religions. It figures large in traditions about pre-Islamic Arabia (the *jāhiliyya,* see AGE OF IGNORANCE) and the life of the Prophet (see SĪRA AND THE QURʾĀN), and ʿAlī (see ʿALĪ B. ABĪ ṬĀLIB) is sometimes reported to have been born inside it. It features only to a limited extent in Muslim eschatology (q.v.), which centers much more on Jerusalem (q.v.).

The Kaʿba and the Qurʾān

The expression *al-kaʿba* occurs only twice in the Qurʾān (Q 5:95, 97) and commentators naturally identify each as references to the Kaʿba at Mecca. In addition there are many other passages which are understood as alluding to it, using the term *al-bayt* (house or sanctuary), sometimes qualified by an adjective such as "sacred" *(ḥarām),* "ancient" *(ʿatīq)* or "visited" (? *maʿmūr,* Q 52:4).

Q 5:95 occurs in regulations which prohibit the *muḥrim* (a person who has entered the sacral state of *iḥrām* that is obligatory for anyone making *ḥajj* or *ʿumra*) from killing game (see RITUAL PURITY; HUNTING AND FISHING). It lays down that, if a *muḥrim* does intentionally kill a wild animal, he must provide as compensation *(jazāʾ),* from among the animals of the pasture *(al-naʿam),* an equivalent to the animal killed, "as an offering to reach the Kaʿba" *(hadyan bāligha l-kaʿbati)*. Q 5:97 tells us that God has made the Kaʿba, the sacred house *(al-kaʿba al-bayt al-ḥarām),* a support (? *qiyām;* commentators debate the precise meaning) for the people, together with the sacred month (see MONTHS), the (animal) offerings *(al-hady)* and the garlands (*al-qalāʾid;* which are placed on the necks of the offerings).

Some of the passages in which "the house" *(al-bayt)* is understood to mean the Kaʿba associate it with Abraham (q.v.) and, slightly less consistently, Ishmael (q.v.). Q 2:125 alludes to God's making "the house" a place of meeting (? *mathāba*) and sanctuary *(amn),* and commanding that Abraham's "standing place" *(maqām Ibrāhīm)* should be a place of prayer. It goes on to refer to God's ordering Abraham and Ishmael, "Purify my house for those who circumambulate, make retreat, bow and prostrate [there]" (*an ṭahhirā baytiya li-ṭāʾifīna wa-l-ʿākifīna wa-l-rukkaʿi l-sujūdi,* see BOWING AND PROSTRATION). That list of those for whom it is to be purified is repeated with a slight variant in Q 22:26 which recalls that God "prepared"(? *bawwaʾa*) for Abraham the place of the house and commanded him to purify "my house for those who circumambulate, stand, bow and prostrate [there]." Q 2:127 alludes to Abraham and Ishmael "raising the foundations" of the house *(wa-idh yarfaʿu Ibrāhīmu l-qawāʿida mina l-bayti wa-Ismāʿīlu)*. These verses are understood as referring to the building or rebuilding of the Kaʿba by

Abraham and Ishmael at God's command (see further below) and Q 3:96, which says that the first house established for humankind was that at Bakka *(inna awwala baytin wuḍiʿa lil-nāsi la-lladhī bi-Bakkata),* is also frequently interpreted as a reference to the origins of the Kaʿba.

Other qurʾānic references to the house associate it with *ḥajj, ʿumra* and animal offerings. Q 3:97 (following the immediately preceding mention of the "first house" at Bakka) states that in it are clear signs — the standing place of Abraham, that those who enter it have security, and that those of humankind who are able have the duty to God of the *ḥajj* of the house *(ḥajju l-bayti)*. Q 2:158 assures those who make the *ḥajj* of the house, or *ʿumra,* that there is no harm if they circumambulate al-Ṣafā and al-Marwa (see ṢAFĀ AND MARWA), which are among the signs (q.v.) of God *(inna l-Ṣafā wa-l-Marwata min shaʿāʾiri llāhi)*. Al-Ṣafā and al-Marwa are the names given to two small hills outside the "sacred mosque" *(al-masjid al-ḥarām)* in Mecca. Circumambulation of them, or rather passage between them (usually called *saʿy*), is part of the ritual required both for the *ḥajj* and the *ʿumra,* and the commentators explain in various ways why it might have been thought that making *ṭawāf* of them involved "harm."

Q 5:2 includes among a number of things which must not be profaned "those going to the sacred house, seeking merit and pleasure from their lord" *(yabtaghūna faḍlan min rabbihim wa-riḍwānan)*. Q 22:29, following a brief setting out of the duty of *ḥajj* in connection with the slaughter and consumption of animals, says that after the food has been eaten those taking part should end their (ritual) dishevelment, fulfil their vows and make circumambulation of the ancient house *(bi-l-bayti l-ʿaṭīqi)*. Q 22:33 indicates that the animals which are to be offered may be used until a certain time, after which they are to be brought to the ancient house (for slaughter).

Q 8:35 makes it clear that those who "disbelieve" also worship at the house, although their prayer *(ṣalāt)* is merely whistling and handclapping (*mukāʾan wa-taṣdiyatan,* see BELIEF AND UNBELIEF; MOCKERY). Q 106:3 urges that Quraysh (q.v.) should worship "the lord of this house" in gratitude for what he has done for them. In Q 52:4 there is an oath, "by the visited (?) house!" (*wa-l-bayti l-maʿmūri,* see OATHS). Sometimes this is understood not as referring to the Kaʿba itself but to its prototype in the highest heaven (see HEAVEN AND SKY), constantly circumambulated by angels (see ANGEL) beneath the throne of God (q.v.).

The frequent qurʾānic expression *al-masjid al-ḥarām* (Q 2:144, 149, 150, 191, 196, 217; 5:2; 8:34; 9:7, 19, 28; 17:1; 22:25; 48:25, 27) also sometimes seems to have the general sense of "sanctuary," just like *bayt,* and in commentary is occasionally equated with the Kaʿba. The most obvious example concerns the so-called *qibla* verses (Q 2:144, 149, 150) in which God orders the believers to turn their faces towards *al-masjid al-ḥarām*. These verses are understood as the revelation that specifies the *qibla* for Muslims. Some commentators argue that the precise direction of the *qibla* is the Kaʿba, or even a particular point of the Kaʿba, and this leads them to read *al-masjid al-ḥarām* here as equivalent to the Kaʿba.

Historically, the mosque containing the Kaʿba in Mecca, known as *al-masjid al-ḥarām,* is reported to have been built only after the death of the Prophet. The traditional scholars assert, however, that in pre-Islamic times the area around the Kaʿba was known as *al-masjid al-ḥarām* even though there was no building so-called. In this way they avoid the apparent anachronism involved in accepting that all of the Qurʾān had been revealed before the death

of the Prophet and that its references to *al-masjid al-ḥarām* apply to the same entity that bears that name in Islam, while yet agreeing that the mosque in Mecca post-dates the death of the Prophet.

The Kaʿba in Muslim tradition

Commentary on the above verses is concerned to relate them on the one hand to a large number of traditional stories concerned with the origins of the Meccan Kaʿba and the activity of Abraham in connection with it; and on the other with legal discussions of the *ḥajj,* the *ʿumra* and the rites associated with them (see LAW AND THE QURʾĀN). Thus, the discussions in works of commentary draw on, and are themselves reflected in, many other genres of Islamic literature — stories of the prophets (see PROPHETS AND PROPHETHOOD), law books, local histories of Mecca, traditional biographical material on Muḥammad, and others.

As for its origins and pre-Islamic history, several reports say that the Kaʿba existed before the creation of the world as a sort of froth on the primordial waters from which God made the world. It was the place of worship for Adam (see ADAM AND EVE) after his expulsion from paradise (q.v.; see also FALL OF MAN; GARDEN), compensating him for his loss and allowing him to imitate on earth the circumambulation of the angels around the divine throne in heaven. *Bakka* in Q 3:96 is interpreted as a name of Mecca, various explanations of it being adduced. This "first house" was destroyed in the flood God had sent to punish the people of Noah (q.v.), although its "foundations" (*qawāʿid,* Q 2:127) remained.

Subsequently, in the time of Abraham, God commanded him to go to Mecca to rebuild it. Ishmael was already in Mecca, having previously been taken and left there together with his mother Hagar by Abraham. The father and son then fulfilled God's command. The black stone was revealed to them by an angel and placed in the wall where it is today. It was, say some reports, originally white but it become black because of the sins of the people of the Age of Ignorance *(jāhiliyya)* or, alternatively, as a consequence of the many fires which afflicted the Kaʿba. When the walls became too high for Abraham to reach, he stood on a stone which is often identified as the *maqām Ibrāhīm* ("standing place of Abraham") referred to in Q 2:125. After the building was finished that stone was placed outside the Kaʿba and, although it was subsequently moved around, it is still there near the Kaʿba today. Having completed the work, Abraham then summoned all of humankind, including the generations still unborn, to come to fulfil there the rituals which he himself had been shown by the angel Gabriel (q.v.). Some see the *maqām Ibrāhīm* as a stone on which Abraham stood to deliver this summons.

Prominent in these and other reports about the Kaʿba is the idea of the navel of the earth. The Kaʿba or *bayt* is described as the central point from which the earth was spread out. It is the point of the earth that is directly beneath the divine throne in the highest heaven, and each of the seven heavens has its analogue. Similarly, it stands above the center of the seven spheres beneath the earth. If any one of these *bayt*s were to fall, they would all fall one upon another down to the lowest earth *(ilā tukhūm al-arḍ al-suflā)*. In reports of this type the distinction between the *bayt* and the town of Mecca is often blurred so that Mecca, which is situated in fact in a valley, is sometimes referred to as a hill or mountain *(jabal Makka),* in accordance with the concept of the navel as a protrusion above the surrounding area. (For further material on this concept, see the article of Wensinck given in the bibliography.)

Having been instituted by Abraham as a

center of monotheism, the Kaʿba was then, over time, corrupted and it came to be the center of the polytheism (see POLYTHEISM AND ATHEISM) and idolatry (*shirk,* see IDOLATRY AND IDOLATERS), which dominated central Arabia in the centuries before the sending of the prophet Muḥammad (see PRE-ISLAMIC ARABIA AND THE QURʾĀN). Some remnants of Abrahamic monotheism survived but idols (see IDOLS AND IMAGES) were installed and worshipped in and around the Kaʿba. Muḥammad's preaching and activities eventually achieved the defeat of Arab paganism and the restoration of the Kaʿba as the sanctuary of the one, true God. It is against this background that the references to the futile *ṣalāt* of the unbelievers at the *bayt* (Q 8:35) and the call for Quraysh to worship "the lord of this house" (Q 106:3) are understood.

Issues involving the law discussed in connection with the qurʾānic verses cited above include whether *ʿumra* has the same obligatory status as *ḥajj* (Q 2:158; 3:97), the nature of the compensation to be offered by the *muḥrim* who has intentionally killed a wild animal (Q 5:95), the precise point of the *qibla* (Q 2:144) and the status of the *ṭawāf* or *saʿy* between al-Ṣafā and al-Marwa (Q 2:158).

A non-traditional perspective

The unanimous traditional view is that the qurʾānic passages discussed above all originated with reference to the Kaʿba at Mecca and that the Meccan Kaʿba before Islam had the same central importance that it afterwards received in Islam. Qurʾānic commentary reflects those two presuppositions (see EXEGESIS OF THE QURʾĀN: CLASSICAL AND MEDIEVAL). The qurʾānic text itself seems neither to substantiate nor disprove them. It may be noted, however, that the expression *al-masjid al-ḥarām* as the name of the place of worship in contention between the believers and unbelievers is much more common and more prominent in the Qurʾān than is *al-kaʿba,* and the traditional identification of *al-masjid al-ḥarām* as a pre-Islamic name for the area around the Meccan Kaʿba may be an attempt at harmonization. It is notable, too, that the sanctuary *(bayt)* associated in the text with Abraham is not explicitly identified there as *al-kaʿba,* apart from the reference in Q 5:97 to *al-kaʿba al-bayt al-ḥarām,* which could incorporate a gloss. The identification of the *bayt* with the Meccan Kaʿba is mainly a product of the literary tradition rather than of the Qurʾān itself. Muslim tradition itself suggests that there were other *kaʿba*s besides the Meccan one and some evidence from outside Muslim tradition suggests a link between the word *kaʿba* and a stele or bethel connected with the worship of Dusares in Nabataean Petra (Ryckmans, Dhu 'l-Sharā; see GEOGRAPHY). There are some grounds, therefore, for hesitation in face of the traditional understandings of the qurʾānic passages. How far one is prepared to question them will largely depend on one's views about the origins of the qurʾānic text and of the Muslim sanctuary at Mecca.

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Kāhin

see SOOTHSAYERS

Kalām

see WORD OF GOD; THEOLOGY AND THE QURʾĀN; SPEECH

Keys

see INSTRUMENTS; HIDDEN AND THE HIDDEN

Khadīja

Khadīja bint al-Khuwaylid of the clan of Asad of the tribe of Quraysh (q.v.) was the Prophet's first wife, mother of all his children except one, and the first to believe in his mission. Inasmuch as she died three years before the emigration (q.v.; *hijra*) to Medina, and the revelations specifically addressed to the members of the Prophet's household (see FAMILY OF THE PROPHET; PEOPLE OF THE HOUSE; REVELATION AND INSPIRATION; OCCASIONS OF REVELATION) were vouchsafed in Medina (q.v.), Khadīja's name appears rarely in the exegetical literature (see EXEGESIS OF THE QURʾĀN: CLASSICAL AND MEDIEVAL). Her role in the genres of biographies of Muḥammad (*sīra,* see SĪRA AND THE QURʾĀN) and "stories of the prophets" (*qiṣaṣ al-anbiyāʾ,* see PROPHETS AND PROPHETHOOD) works, as well as in popular piety, however, has been immense.

Khadīja was an aristocratic, wealthy Meccan merchant woman who in two previous marriages had given birth to two sons and a daughter. As a widow, she obtained Muḥammad's services as steward of her merchandise in a Syrian trading venture, during which a young boy of her household named Maysara is said to have witnessed several miracles that foretold Muḥammad's rise to prophethood. The venture was a commercial success and, impressed by Muḥammad's good character and trustworthiness, Khadīja offered him marriage. Traditional sources indicate that the marriage proposal was extended by Muḥammad and his uncle Ḥamza b. ʿAbd al-Muṭṭalib (q.v.) to Khadīja's father Khuwaylid b. Asad (Ibn Isḥāq-Guillaume, 82-3) or it was her uncle ʿAmr b. Asad who married her to the Prophet (Ibn Saʿd, i, 132-3). Most traditions place Muḥammad's age at that time at twenty-five and Khadīja's at forty. She bore her husband at least five children: four daughters (Zaynab, Umm Kulthūm, Fāṭima, Ruqayya) and one or possibly two sons (al-Qāsim, ʿAbdallāh; who, however, may be the same, while al-Ṭāhir and al-Ṭayyib are generally taken to be epithets of ʿAbdallāh; Ibn Isḥāq-Guillaume, 82-3). Khadīja's material, emotional, and spiritual support were crucial to the success of Muḥammad's mission. The exegetical literature on the Qurʾān generally links Q 93:8, "did he not find you needy and enrich you" with their marriage (see POVERTY AND THE POOR). Khadīja reported Muḥammad's first miraculous experiences and especially his call to prophethood to her Christian cousin Waraqa b. Nawfal who likened the event to Moses' (q.v.) receiving of the law (Ibn Isḥāq-Guillaume, 83, 107; see TORAH; COMMANDMENTS; there is also speculation

that this Waraqa may have furnished Muḥammad with details of Christian belief; cf. Sprenger, *Leben,* i, 124-34; see INFORMANTS; CHRISTIANS AND CHRISTIANITY). According to many traditions (see ḤADĪTH AND THE QUR'ĀN), she was the first to believe in God, his apostle (see MESSENGER), and the truth of the message, meaning that she was the Prophet's first follower and, after Muḥammad himself, the second Muslim. According to others his cousin ʿAlī b. Abī Ṭālib (q.v.) was the second Muslim and Khadīja the third (see FAITH; BELIEF AND UNBELIEF; COMPANIONS OF THE PROPHET). During her lifetime, she remained the Prophet's only wife (see WIVES OF THE PROPHET; MARRIAGE AND DIVORCE) and his mainstay in the battles against his Meccan enemies (Ibn Isḥāq-Guillaume, 111-14; see OPPOSITION TO MUḤAMMAD).

Khadīja's rank among God's chosen women, indeed her cosmological importance, is established in the exegetical literature on Q 66:11-2 and 3:42 (see WOMEN AND THE QUR'ĀN). In the context of Q 66:11-2, she is placed in association with Pharaoh's (q.v.) wife (Āsya) and Mary (q.v.) the daughter of ʿImrān (q.v.; the mother of Jesus, q.v.), both examples to those who believe, because of her great service to the Prophet's mission. Regarding Q 3:42, the angels' words to Mary that God had chosen her above the women of the worlds, Khadīja's name appears prominently in the exegetical debate on Mary's ranking both among the qur'ānic women figures and also in relation to three selected elite women of the Prophet's household, i.e. Khadīja herself, Muḥammad's later wife ʿĀ'isha (see ʿĀ'ISHA BINT ABĪ BAKR), and his and Khadīja's daughter Fāṭima (q.v.). Here, the larger number of traditions recorded in exegetical *(tafsīr)* and *qiṣaṣ al-anbiyā'* literature establish on the authority of the Prophet that Mary and Fāṭima, Khadīja and Āsya are the best women of the world and the ruling females in heaven (see HEAVEN AND SKY). While the traditions on ʿĀ'isha's inclusion in this group are fewer in number, many hagiographic accounts affirm that Mary and Āsya, Khadīja and ʿĀ'isha will all be Muḥammad's consorts in paradise (q.v.), where Khadīja's heavenly mansion is located between the houses of Mary and Āsya (Ṭabarī, *Tafsīr,* vi, 393-400; Rāzī, *Tafsīr,* viii, 45-6; Bayḍāwī, *Anwār,* i, 155; Ibn Kathīr, *Qiṣaṣ,* ii, 375-83.)

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Khaḍir/Khiḍr

Islamic tradition identifies as al-Khaḍir (or Khiḍr), an otherwise unnamed "servant (q.v.) of God" who appears in Sūrat al-Kahf ("The Cave"; Q 18:60-82), in connection with Moses' (q.v.) quest for the "confluence of the two seas" (see BARRIER; NATURE AS SIGNS). Interpretations run a wide gamut. Al-Zamakhsharī (d. 538/1144; *Kashshāf,* ii, 703) asserts that Khiḍr lived from the time of Dhū l-Qarnayn (see ALEXANDER) to that of Moses; Sayyid Quṭb (d. 1966; *Ẓilāl,* iv, 2276-82) sets that tradition aside, calling him only "the

righteous servant." Moses and an unnamed companion (traditionally, Joshua son of Nūn) set out carrying a fish for food; mysteriously coming to life, the fish escapes into the sea. According to a ḥadīth cited by many exegetes (e.g. Ibn al-Jawzī, *Zād,* v, 119; see ḤADĪTH AND THE QURʾĀN) to explain the context of the journey, Moses rises to address the Children of Israel (q.v.) and someone asks him who is the most learned among them. When Moses answers that he himself is, God reveals that one yet more learned awaits Moses at the confluence of the two seas. Al-Ṭabarī (d. 310/923; *Tafsīr,* viii, 251) adds that Khiḍr is also the most beloved and most firmly decisive.

The qurʾānic account, enhanced with certain exegetical details, continues as follows: God then tells Moses that he will meet this most learned servant at the place where his fish escapes. But Joshua fails to tell Moses that he has lost the fish so the two must retrace their steps to the spot where Khiḍr awaits. Moses asks Khiḍr to teach him what he knows, but Khiḍr warns that Moses will not have the patience to bear with him. Moses insists he will be a good student, agreeing not to question Khiḍr's actions. The travelers embark on a ship, which Khiḍr proceeds to scuttle (see SHIPS). Moses inquires how he could do such a thing, and Khiḍr warns the Prophet. Later as they walk along the shore, Khiḍr spots some boys playing and kills one of them summarily. Moses again confronts Khiḍr. Further along they come to a town whose inhabitants refuse to feed the hungry travelers. Nevertheless, Khiḍr repairs a portion of a wall on the point of collapsing. Again Moses takes exception, and that is the last straw: Khiḍr decides to explain his actions, but from then on Moses is on his own. Khiḍr had scuttled the boat to prevent a wicked king from commandeering it for evil purposes; he had killed the boy lest the child grieve his good parents by a wayward life; and he had rebuilt the wall so that the treasure that lay beneath would be safe until the two orphaned sons of the wall's owner could reach their majority and thus claim their inheritance (see ORPHANS; GUARDIANSHIP; INHERITANCE).

Exegetes discuss such questions as the origin of the guide's name, the identity of the seas, the nature of Khiḍr's learning, and his spiritual status. He got the name Khiḍr, "green," because, according to a ḥadīth cited by several exegetes (e.g. Qurṭubī, *Jāmiʿ,* xi, 12; Ibn Kathīr, *Tafsīr,* iii, 105), whenever he prayed, everything around him waxed verdant. Exegetes generally agree that Khiḍr's divinely infused knowledge was esoteric, whereas that of Moses was more exoteric (e.g. Abū Ḥayyān, *Baḥr,* vi, 139; see KNOWLEDGE AND LEARNING). Al-Ṭabarī (*Tafsīr,* viii, 251) among others suggests the two seas were the Persian in the east and the Greek in the west (see GEOGRAPHY). But of equal importance is the metaphorical view that Moses and Khiḍr were themselves the two "seas" since they both possessed oceans of knowledge, albeit of different kinds (Abū Ḥayyān, *Baḥr,* vi, 136; Zamakhsharī, *Kashshāf,* ii, 703; see METAPHOR). Many interpreters call Khiḍr a prophet, arguing that only prophetic revelation *(waḥy)* could account for his bizarre actions and that a ranking prophet like Moses would surely follow only a figure of greater stature (see PROPHETS AND PROPHETHOOD; REVELATION AND INSPIRATION). Various exegetes gloss "mercy" (q.v.; Q 18:65) as *waḥy* or *nubūwwa* (Zamakhsharī, *Kashshāf,* ii, 705; Nasafī, *Tafsīr,* iii, 34). Ibn al-ʿArabī (d. 543/1148; *Aḥkām,* iii, 241) notes that the conditions Khiḍr imposed on Moses are understandable in that all Muslims must accept certain conditions in following the prophets. Muḥyī al-Dīn b. al-ʿArabī (d. 638/1240;

Fuṣūṣ, 202-5) parallels Khiḍr's actions with events in Moses' life: the scuttling of the ship with the infant Moses' rescue from the Nile, Khiḍr's murder of the boy with Moses' killing the Copt, and Khiḍr's not asking recompense for rebuilding the crumbling wall with Moses' drawing water at Midian (q.v.) without remuneration.

Khiḍr also appears in the various major versions of the "stories of the prophets" *(qiṣaṣ al-anbiyāʾ)* genre. These accounts have a sort of "midrashic" quality, spinning a narrative to fill in the gaps in the scriptural text (Kisāʾī), sometimes speculating on such details as the precise location of events and identities of individuals in the stories (Thaʿlabī). An extra-qurʾānic aspect of the Khiḍr legend is the story of his search for the water (q.v.) of life (q.v.), so that Khiḍr comes to share the immortality of Jesus (q.v.), Idrīs (q.v.) and Ilyās (see ELIJAH). Khiḍr's arrival at the spring (see SPRINGS AND FOUNTAINS) is naturally associated with his power to affect the spiritual "greening" of humankind. Ibn Kathīr (d. 774/1373; *Qiṣaṣ,* 342) intertwines Khiḍr's story with that of Ilyās and calls the two "brothers" (see BROTHER AND BROTHERHOOD).

The early exegete Muqātil b. Sulaymān (d. 150/767) explains Khiḍr's link with Ilyās etymologically. As the one person with greater knowledge than Moses, Khiḍr's learning was "expansive, all inclusive," from *wasaʿa,* "to be wide," which Muqātil claims is from the same root (see ARABIC LANGUAGE) as the name Ilyās. Muqātil has Moses find Khiḍr dressed in wool, whereupon Khiḍr recognizes Moses as prophet of Israel (q.v.). According to Muqātil, Khiḍr's knowledge exceeds that of Moses because God has given diverse gifts to various prophets — not, as others have said, because Khiḍr was a saint and therefore superior to a prophet in esoteric knowledge (Muqātil, *Tafsīr,* ii, 592-9). An editor later attached a ḥadīth to Muqātil's commentary, according to which Khiḍr is a *walī* (saint) whose knowledge comes through virtue (see ṢŪFISM AND THE QURʾĀN). Moses asks Khiḍr how he came to be gifted with immortality (see DEATH AND THE DEAD; ETERNITY), endowed with the ability to read hearts (see HEART) and see with God's eye (see ANTHROPOMORPHISM). Khiḍr responds that it is because he has obeyed God perfectly and neither fears nor hopes in any but God (Nwyia, *Exégèse,* 88-90; see FEAR; OBEDIENCE; HOPE). Al-Sarrāj (d. 378/988; *Lumaʿ,* 422-4) corrects the mistaken notion that *wilāya* (sainthood) is superior to *risāla* (being a messenger of God), a misinterpretation of Q 18:64 f. Moses' illumination far outstrips any that Khiḍr could have sustained.

Khiḍr's ongoing spiritual function becomes an important issue for certain Ṣūfī orders in particular, who regarded Khiḍr as an initiating *shaykh.* Muḥyī al-Dīn b. al-ʿArabī says he first met Khiḍr in Seville and received the Ṣūfī patched frock *(khirqa)* from him and calls him the fourth pillar along with Jesus, Idrīs, and Ilyās in the celestial hierarchy of initiation (Addas, *Red sulphur,* 62-5, 116-7, 144-5). Muḥammad b. ʿAbdallāh b. al-ʿArabī (d. 543/1148) observes that "anyone who wants to know without doubt that power and aid belong only to God must sail the sea," taking the ship Khiḍr scuttled as a symbol of spiritual poverty (*Aḥkām,* iii, 242; see POVERTY AND THE POOR). Jalāl al-Dīn al-Rūmī (d. 672/1273; *Dīwān,* poems 2521:10, 408:1-2) takes the metaphor further, identifying the ship as the body of the Ṣūfī that must be broken and purified by Khiḍr's love. Finally, Abū Ḥayyān (d. 745/1344; *Baḥr,* vi, 139) suggests the purpose of the whole story is guidance and incentive to travel on the search for knowledge (see JOURNEY), and instruction on the etiquette of the quest.

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Khalīl

see ABRAHAM; FRIENDS AND FRIENDSHIP

Khārijīs

The strongest opposition party in early Islam, their name (Ar. *khārijī,* pl. *khawārij*) is derived from the Arabic triliteral root *kh-r-j,* which has as its basic meaning "to go out," "to take the field against someone" and "to rise in revolt" (Ṭabarī, *Taʾrīkh,* ii, 32; trans. Morony, 37; see FIGHTING; JIHĀD). In the case in point, it means "to secede from the community." Although forms of *kh-r-j* appear numerous times in the Qurʾān with varied meanings, the group in question took its name from the usage in Q 9:46, where the root *kh-r-j,* denoting "to go out to combat," is opposed to the verb *qaʿada,* which denotes people who held back from the war (q.v.; see EXPEDITIONS AND BATTLES). The earliest Khārijīs were those who withdrew from ʿAlī b. Abī Ṭālib's (q.v.) army when he agreed to the arbitration (q.v.) at the battle of Ṣiffīn in 37/657 (see POLITICS AND THE QURʾĀN). Another name given to these first Khārijīs is al-Shurāt (lit. "the vendors") — meaning those who have sold their soul for the cause of God. This appears to have been the name they themselves used, and it has also been extended to their descendants (cf. Levi Della Vida, Khāridjites; Higgins, *Qurʾānic exchange*).

Early traditions state that a breeding-ground for the Khārijīs could be found among the Qurʾān readers (see RECITERS OF THE QURʾĀN), who displayed extreme piety (q.v.) and asceticism (q.v.). The earliest Khārijīs, just like the Arabs (q.v.) of Kūfa and Baṣra, were all bedouins (see BEDOUIN), who had migrated to the garrison cities (see CITY). In this respect there is little distinguishing information to provide other than that they were much less concerned with the system of genealogy based on kinship (q.v.). As a consequence of this stance, their doctrines had enormous appeal for minority groups within the newly emerging Islamic community (see HERESY; THEOLOGY AND THE QURʾĀN).

The earliest of ʿAlī's opponents were called Ḥarūrīs, from Ḥarūrāʾ, the place in which some twelve thousand men had gathered, those who, in protest against the arbitration, had seceded as ʿAlī entered Kūfa in Rabīʿ I 37/Aug.-Sept. 658, after the conclusion of the arbitration agreement. Also among them were many who had initially accepted the arbitration but now acknowledged their mistake and no longer recognized ʿAlī as their leader. Their oath of allegiance was to God on the basis of "ordering what is good and prohibiting what is reprehensible" (on this concept, see M. Cook, *Commanding right;* see also GOOD AND EVIL; LAWFUL AND UNLAW-

FUL; ETHICS AND THE QURʾĀN; VIRTUES AND VICES, COMMANDING AND FORBIDDING). The Ḥarūrīs were initially secessionists, not rebels. They wished to secede from the community to protect their principles. They were also called Muḥakkima from their motto "No judgment (q.v.) but God's" *(lā ḥukma illā li-llāh)*. They accused those who supported the arbitration of having acted contemptibly toward God by appointing human arbitrators. People who shouted *"lā ḥukma illā li-llāh"* at the battle of Ṣiffīn most likely meant that ʿUthmān (q.v.) had broken God's law as revealed in the Qurʾān (see LAW AND THE QURʾĀN) and was therefore worthy of death, and not that the question between ʿAlī and Muʿāwiya should be left to the "arbitrament of war" (Watt, Kharijite thought, 217-8). They also held that Muʿāwiya was a rebel and that according to Q 49:9, rebels are outlaws who should be fought until they repent (see REBELLION; REPENTANCE AND PENANCE). Arbitration was thus a mistake because no one had the right to substitute a human decision for God's clear pronouncement (Barradī, *Jawāhir,* 120).

The rupture among ʿAlī's followers proved serious since it brought a wider dogmatic schism to the fore. The Khārijīs objected to the concept of personal alliance to the imām (q.v.). In their view, allegiance should be bound not to a particular person (see COMMUNITY AND SOCIETY IN THE QURʾĀN), but to the Qurʾān and the sunna (q.v.) of the Prophet, Abū Bakr (q.v.) and ʿUmar (q.v.). They denied that the right to the imāmate should be based on close kinship with Muḥammad (see SHĪʿISM AND THE QURʾĀN), for that was irrelevant in their eyes. These differences found military expression when the Khārijīs from Kūfa and Baṣra assembled in Nahrawān. After calling for a resumption of the war with Muʿāwiya, who had been acknowledged by some as caliph (q.v.) before the end of Dhū l-Qaʿda 37/April-May 658 (Hinds, Muʿawiya, 265), ʿAlī invited them to join him and to fight their common enemy. Faced with their refusal, ʿAlī decided to deal with it before carrying out his campaign to Syria (q.v.). The Khārijīs fought desperately but they were outnumbered by ʿAlī's followers and the battle turned into a one-sided massacre. The battle of Nahrawān (9 Ṣafar 38/17 July 658) set the seal on the division between Shīʿa (q.v.) and Khārijīs, and made the Khārijīs' split with the community irreparable.

Khārijī revolts

During the Umayyad period, several Khārijī revolts broke out in various Muslim lands, causing the caliphate to suffer material damage as well as a blow to its pride. Large sections of territory were removed from its administration. The Azāriqa, one of the main branches of the Khārijīs, threatened Baṣra, while other Khārijī groups who emerged from the region of Mawṣil (i.e. the high Tigris country between Mārdīn and Niṣībīn) endangered Kūfa (cf. Levi Della Vida, Khāridjites, 1075-6). The chief persecutors of the Khārijīs were the governors of Iraq, Ziyād b. Abīhi (d. 53/673) and his son ʿUbayd Allāh, who became governor there in the year 55/674. They proceeded against the Khārijīs with harsh measures and killed and imprisoned many of them. As the Umayyad caliphate began to collapse, the Khārijīs turned into a revolutionary movement. The small numbers of troops, which had previously characterized the Khārijī armies, swelled to powerful masses. During this late Umayyad period, the revolts of the Ibāḍīs, a moderate branch of the Khārijīs (who spread to the Maghrib, the Ḥaḍramawt and ʿUmān) constituted a greater menace to the caliphate than did the Azāriqī uprisings (cf. Lewicki, al-Ibāḍiyya, 650). After occupying the Ḥaḍramawt and Ṣanʿāʾ, the capital of southern Arabia, in 129/746-47, the Ibāḍi

army, under the command of Abū Ḥamza, took Mecca (q.v.) and Medina (q.v.). Abū Ḥamza was a skilled soldier, but also a scholar and a preacher who gave sermons from the Prophet's pulpit (see MOSQUE) that have been preserved in the Arabic chronicles (Darjīnī, *Ṭabaqāt*, ii, 266-72). The Ibāḍīs were defeated and, for the most part, massacred in the middle of Jumādā I 130/January 748. The Umayyad army reconquered Medina and then Mecca but were forced to conclude a peace treaty with the Ibāḍīs of the Ḥaḍramawt.

The Khārijī revolts continued after the ascension of the ʿAbbāsids. The Ibāḍīs and the Ṣufrites, another moderate branch of Khārijism, succeeded in establishing their rule in the Maghrib. Again in ʿUmān, the Ibāḍīs had some success in a revolt about 132/750. Towards the second half of the second/eighth century they rose up again and recommenced their activities in the region creating an imāmate, which continued to exist almost without interruption for over 1200 years. There were revolts in other regions that were successful for some years and then died down. In various districts around Mawṣil, in northern Iraq, sixteen revolts have been recorded in the years between the middle of the second/eighth and the middle of the fourth/tenth century; Sijistān and southern Khurāsān also witnessed Khārijī revolts.

Khārijī sects

The weakness of the Khārijī movement lay in its incapacity to preserve both religious and political unity. A number of schisms *(iftirāq)* resulting from dogmatic disputes as well as from political crises culminated in the formation of several theological and political subdivisions *(firqa)*. Some of the Khārijīs adopted political quietism and moderation, while others took to activism and extremism. The extremists followed Nāfiʿ b. al-Azraq or Ḥanẓala b. Bayhas. The Azāriqa (who met a violent end in Ṭabarīstan in 78-9/698-9) upheld the *istiʿrāḍ* (the indiscriminate killing of the non-Khārijī Muslims, including their children), submitted new recruits to a severe inquisition, disregarded the practice of the dissimulation (q.v.; *taqiyya*) of one's real belief, considered unbelief a grave sin and insisted on the eternal punishment for the grave sinner (see BELIEF AND UNBELIEF; SIN, MAJOR AND MINOR; ETERNITY). The Bayhasiyya were as fierce as the Azāriqa in that they approved of the killing of non-Khārijī Muslims and the taking of their goods (see BOOTY). The followers of Najda b. ʿĀmir represented a milder tendency. The Najadāt permitted dissimulation *(taqiyya)* and quietism, as they did not expect everyone to join with them in the fight against the unbelievers. Another branch of the Khārijīs were the ʿAjārida, who stem from ʿAbd al-Karīm b. ʿAjarrad. They insisted on the supremacy of divine law and on the upright conduct of individuals.

The most moderate branch of the Khārijīs — and today the only survivors — were the Ibāḍīs. They appeared in Baṣra in 65/684-5, when ʿAbdallāh b. Ibāḍ broke away from the Khārijī extremists over which attitude was to be adopted towards other Muslims and joined a group of quietists who had gathered around Abū Bilāl Mirdās b. Udayya al-Tamīmī. During the first half of the second/eighth century, Ibāḍism began to undergo a profound change: from being part of the Khārijī sect, it became an autonomous movement with a defined membership, doctrine and organized missionary activities. At present, Ibāḍīs form the main part of the population in the oases of Mzāb in Algeria, of Zawāra and Jebel Naffūsa in Tripolitania, on the island of Jerba in Tunisia and in

ʿUmān, while small groups are also found on the island of Zanzibar. Another moderate branch of the Khārijīs were the Ṣufriyya, whose teachings spread among the remote Berber tribes of the western Maghrib.

Khārijī doctrine

The Khārijīs made important contributions to Islamic thought, and to the formation of Islamic culture. A considerable amount of historical and theological material has been preserved by the Ibāḍīs (for a discussion of Ibāḍī exegesis of the Qurʾān, see Gilliot, Le commentaire coranique de Hūd b. Muḥakkam), but apart from this Ibāḍī material, the only source for the Khārijī thought is the Sunnī historical and heresiographical tradition. The religion of the Khārijīs had as its aim paradise (q.v.). They did not think of victory (q.v.) on earth (q.v.). They wished to save their souls (see SOUL) by fighting the impious with a total lack of consideration for themselves and others (see SALVATION). The core of the theological teaching of the Khārijīs was the conception of a righteous God who demands righteousness from his subjects (see JUSTICE AND INJUSTICE). Indeed, the earliest Khārijite propositions attempted to place the believer in a direct relationship to God. Khārijism attached great importance to religious principles that stressed the responsibility of the individual, such as the obligation of "promoting good and preventing evil" and the conception of the relationship between works and faith (q.v.). Anyone who committed a capital sin, failed to obey the divine law (see OBEDIENCE) or introduced innovations (see INNOVATION) was an infidel and was to be combated as long as he remained dissident. Moreover, if there were no repentance, the transgressor would be condemned to eternal punishment in hell (see REWARD AND PUNISHMENT; HELL AND HELLFIRE). This doctrine was used to support the Khārijī view that the killers of ʿUthmān could be justified in their act, and, for the Azāriqa, it became the theological basis for their action.

The obvious corollary of the doctrine of human responsibility was the doctrine of divine decree (*qadar,* see FREEDOM AND PREDESTINATION). Al-Ashʿarī (d. 324/935-6; *Maqālāt,* 93, 96, 104, 116) mentions some Khārijī groups that agreed with the Muʿtazila (see MUʿTAZILĪS) in affirming human free will, but the general attitude of the Khārijīs supported the doctrine of predestination. The debate on *qadar* emerged in the Ibāḍī community during the imāmate of Abū ʿUbayda (first half of the second/eighth century), who was conscious of the danger to the community of carrying rational argument and disputation too far (see DEBATE AND DISPUTATION). He fiercely opposed ʿAbdallāh b. Yazīd al-Fazārī for his rigidly rational reasoning and expelled Ḥamza al-Kūfī (cf. van Ess, *TG,* ii, 203-4) and ʿAṭiyya (cf. van Ess, *TG,* iv, 204), suspected to be followers of Ghaylān al-Dimashqī (cf. van Ess, *TG,* i, 73-5). According to Abū ʿUbayda, God is all-powerful and all-knowing (see GOD AND HIS ATTRIBUTES); he knows people's acts but he does not determine them. Thus the individual is responsible for his or her actions and will be judged for them (Darjīnī, *Ṭabaqāt,* ii, 233; Shammākhī, *Siyar,* 84-5; see LAST JUDGMENT; RECORD OF HUMAN ACTIONS). The Khārijī theological doctrine shared a number of features with Muʿtazilī theology as a result of a parallel development, since the center of Ibāḍism was still Baṣra at the time when the founders of Muʿtazilism were active there (Moreno, *Note,* 312-3). Khārijīs and Muʿtazilīs used the same arguments, often borrowed from each other, to substantiate

their doctrines. In general, the dogma of the Khārijīs resembled certain main points made by the Muʿtazilīs, as in the case of the doctrine of anti-anthropomorphism (see ANTHROPOMORPHISM) and the theory of the createdness of the Qurʾān (q.v.). This latter doctrine was well established among the early Ibāḍīs in the Maghrib, as shown by a treatise in which the Rustamid imām Abū al-Yaqẓān (r. 241-81/855-94) quotes early Ibāḍī scholars (Cremonesi, *Un antico documento,* 148 f.) on the matter. In ʿUmān, the doctrine was first introduced only at the beginning of the third/ninth century, though it was opposed until the sixth/twelfth century.

The question of the imāmate was central for the Khārijī movement, together with the related question of membership in the community, which depended on the acceptance of its specific doctrines. It was on this latter question that the movement split into various sects over minor differences. The Khārijīs were not anarchists: they upheld the necessity of an imām, but rejected imāms such as ʿUthmān, ʿAlī and Muʿāwiya, insisting upon the personal qualities of the imām and his duty to enjoin good and forbid evil. They held that the limitation of the imāmate to the Quraysh (q.v.) was not valid: the most meritorious Muslim should be elected whatever his ethnic origins might be. In other words, for the Khārijīs, personal merits overruled considerations of descent. In their view, leadership stems from personal excellence, and the confidence that the community placed in its imām constitutes his authority (q.v.). When an imām commits major sins, his followers should not immediately dissociate themselves from him *(al-barāʾa ʿanhu),* but call him to formal repentance (cf. Rubinacci, Barāʾa, 1027-8). If he repents, and does not continue in his errors, then he retains his imāmate; if he does not, then it is the duty of his followers to dissociate themselves from him and, if necessary, fight him. The Khārijīs supported the principle that any Muslim could be elevated to the supreme dignity of the imāmate, even if he were "an Abyssinian slave whose nose has been cut off" (Shahrastānī, *Milal,* 87; see ABYSSINIA; SLAVES AND SLAVERY). The Ibāḍī sources state that the imām must be male, an adult in full possession of his faculties and so on (see MATURITY; KINGS AND RULERS), but they do not regard a slave as eligible for the caliphate (Wilkinson, Ibadi Imāma, 538). The formulation of "even an Abyssinian slave" causes misunderstanding. It actually means that the Khārijīs held any qualified Muslim, even one of slavish origin, eligible to the imāmate — provided that he was of irreproachable character. Originally this "black slave" tradition was not a Khārijī statement nor was it concerned with the qualification of the imāmate. It expressed Sunnī quietism, which maintained that rulers must be obeyed however illegitimate they may be (Crone, 'Even an Ethiopian slave,' 60-1).

It should be added that the Ibāḍīs were also eminent jurists (see TRADITIONAL DISCIPLINES OF QURʾĀNIC STUDY). The Ibāḍī school is one of the oldest surviving schools of law. Its foundation was attributed to Jābir b. Zayd (d. ca. 100/718-9). The first jurists of the movement were trained at his "circle" *(ḥalqa):* Abū Nūḥ Ṣāliḥ al-Dahhān, Ḥayyān al-Aʿraj, Ḍumām b. al-Sāʾib, Jaʿfar b. al-Sammāk, and Abū ʿUbayda al-Tamīmī propagated the doctrine learnt from Jābir in secret meetings *(majālis),* at which the members of the sect discussed questions of law and dogma. The first Ibāḍīs lived in places where Islamic law began to develop, namely in Baṣra and Kūfa, but also in the Ḥijāz, in close contact with the learned experts of the time with whom they

exchanged opinions and teachings. Al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī (d. 110/728) and Ibn ʿAbbās (d. 68/686-8) were teachers as well as personal friends of Jābir, and the first Ibāḍīs recognized the authority of the Sunnī traditionists (see ḤADĪTH AND THE QURʾĀN) who were among Jābir's pupils: Qatāda b. Diʿāma, ʿAmr b. Harim, ʿAmr b. Dīnār, Tamīm b. Ḥuwayṣ, and ʿUmāra b. Ḥayyān.

Some scholars have argued that the Ibāḍīs derived their law from the orthodox schools, introducing only such superficial modifications as were required by their own political and dogmatic tenets (Schacht, *Origins,* 260 f.). Recent studies on the Ibāḍī *madhhab* show, however, that from the beginning the Ibāḍīs took a line detached from Sunnī schools and thus contributed to the general development of Islamic jurisprudence (Ennami, *Studies in Ibāḍism,* chap. iv; Wilkinson, The early development, 125-44; Francesca, The formation; id., *Teoria e practica,* esp. chaps. 1-3).

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Khaybar

see EXPEDITIONS AND BATTLES

Kifl, Dhū al-

see DHŪ L-KIFL; EZEKIEL; ELIJAH

Kindness

see MERCY

King, Kingdom

see KINGS AND RULERS

Kings and Rulers

Royal male sovereigns and other political leaders. The Arabic term *malik*, "king," appears thirteen times in the Qurʾān (its plural form *mulūk* appears twice), and is derived from the root *m-l-k*, which connotes possession (q.v.), having power or dominion over someone or something (see POWER AND IMPOTENCE), or capacity, the ability to obtain something.

Other qurʾānic terms relevant to this subject include *mulk*, "dominion, power or kingdom," and *malakūt*, "dominion or kingdom." The former, which is attested many times in the Qurʾān, may be associated either with God or with human beings, while the latter, which appears only four times, is used exclusively in divine contexts, as in Q 6:75 when God shows Abraham (q.v.) "the kingdom of the heavens and the earth" (*malakūta l-samāwāti wa-l-arḍ*, see HEAVEN AND SKY; EARTH) or Q 36:83: "Glory be to him in whose hand is dominion *(malakūt)* over all things." The term *khalīfa* (derived from the root *kh-l-f*, which connotes succession or deputyship; see CALIPH), is attested twice in the Qurʾān, and in its application to David (q.v.) in Q 38:26, this term, too, strongly suggests rulership (Lewis, *Political language*, 44; see also Paret, Signification coranique; al-Qāḍī, The term "khalīfa"). The term *imām* (q.v.; pl. *aʾimma*), a title which, like *khalīfa*, was greatly preferred by many Muslim political thinkers to *malik* in the early centuries of the Islamic period, also appears in the Qurʾān, where it connotes leadership, and has sometimes been interpreted in a political sense (see POLITICS AND THE QURʾĀN; also, although attested in the Qurʾān, the term *sulṭān* never appears

there in the sense of governmental power, a sense that was to become prevalent in later centuries).

Although the words *malik* and *mulk* are used in the Qurʾān in both human and divine contexts, the scripture and its traditional interpreters (see EXEGESIS OF THE QURʾĀN: CLASSICAL AND MEDIEVAL) distinguish between true, eternal sovereignty (q.v.), that of God, and the temporal power that God grants briefly to whom he wishes (see ETERNITY). Commentators on the verse Q 3:26, where God is addressed as "the possessor of sovereignty, [you] who give sovereignty to whom you wish, and take sovereignty away from whom you wish, and exalt whom you wish and humble whom you wish" *(mālika l-mulki tuʾtī l-mulka man tashāʾu wa-tanziʿu l-mulka mimman tashāʾu wa-tuʿizzu man tashāʾu wa-tudhillu man tashāʾ),* draw a specific contrast between divine and human sovereignty. For al-Ṭabarī (d. 310/923), the verse emphasizes God's total control over the disposition of temporal power. "All that is in your hands and at your behest; no one in your creation (q.v.) can do anything about it," al-Ṭabarī writes (*Tafsīr,* vi, 301). As an illustration of God's ability to elevate and depose kings in ways that human beings would never consider possible, al-Ṭabarī (followed by several later commentators) cites the ḥadīth according to which Muḥammad purportedly promised his people that they would eventually gain sovereignty over the Persian and Byzantine empires (Ṭabarī, *Tafsīr,* vi, 299-301; see also Rāzī, *Tafsīr,* viii, 4; see BYZANTINES; ḤADĪTH AND THE QURʾĀN).

Q 3:26 is significant in Muʿtazilī theology, since some Muʿtazilīs (q.v.), as a consequence of their emphasis on divine justice (see JUSTICE AND INJUSTICE), rejected the idea that God could bestow kingship on an unbeliever (see BELIEF AND UNBELIEF; for a discussion of this issue, see Ṭūsī, *Tibyān,* ii, 430-1; Zamakhsharī, *Kashshāf,* i, 350; and further Māwardī, *Nukat,* i, 381-2). While al-Ṭabarī gives precedence to interpretations of Q 3:26 that understand the verse as referring to temporal power, he and later commentators also record alternative opinions, including the view according to which *mulk* should be understood here in the sense of prophethood (Ṭabarī, *Tafsīr,* vi, 300; Ṭūsī, *Tibyān,* ii, 429; see PROPHETS AND PROPHETHOOD). In his treatment of this view, Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī (d. 606/1210) explains: "Prophethood is the highest rank of sovereignty, because the scholars (see SCHOLAR; KNOWLEDGE AND LEARNING) have a great deal of command over the interior aspects of people, and tyrants (see OPPRESSION) have command over the external aspects of people, whereas the commands of prophets are effective on the interior and exterior aspects" (Rāzī, *Tafsīr,* viii, 5; see also AUTHORITY and OBEDIENCE for discussion of another verse with theological overtones that had ramifications on later Islamic political history, namely Q 4:59, in which the believers are instructed to obey God, the messenger [q.v.] and "those of you who are in authority *[ūlī l-amr minkum]*").

In reference to God, the term *malik* is invested with sacrality: in Q 20:114, God is called "the true king" *(al-maliku l-ḥaqq;* see also Q 25:26, *al-mulku yawmaʾidhin al-ḥaqq)* and he is twice described as "the holy king" (*al-maliku l-quddūs;* the latter term is generally interpreted as meaning "pure, devoid of any impurity or deficiency"; see Bayḍāwī, *Anwār,* ii, 326, ad Q 59:23 and Ṭūsī, *Tibyān,* x, 3-4, ad Q 62:1). In Q 114:2, God is "the king of humankind" *(maliki l-nās).* In contrast to its use as a divine appellation, the term *malik,* when applied to earthly monarchs, often carries negative connotations in the Qurʾān. For example, in Q 27:34, the Queen of Sheba (q.v.)

remarks, "When kings enter a town, they ruin it and make the grandest of its people wretched." God may grant sovereignty to those whom he favors, such as David, Solomon (q.v.) and Joseph (q.v.; it is noteworthy, however, that the Qurʾān does not attach the title of "king" to any of these figures); and Saul (q.v.; of whom the term "king" is used). In order to fulfil the divine purpose, God may also confer kingship on negative characters, such as Pharaoh (q.v.; who is described as "the king" in Q 12:43, 50, 54, 72, 76), and the unnamed "king who confiscates every good ship (see SHIPS)" mentioned in Q 18:79 (on his possible identity, see Bayḍāwī, *Anwār,* i, 570-1; see also KHAḌIR/KHIḌR). As a woman, the Queen of Sheba — known to Islamic tradition as Bilqīs (q.v.) — of whom the term "queen" is not used in the Qurʾān but who is described as "a woman who rules over them" (*imraʾatan tamlikuhum,* Q 27:23), stands in a category of her own: for all her splendor, she is as an unbeliever and a woman subservient to Solomon (see WOMEN AND THE QURʾĀN).

God's sovereignty, unlike that of earthly kings, is absolute. He is repeatedly described as possessing "sovereignty over the heavens and the earth" *(lillāhi mulku l-samāwāti wa-l-arḍi).* In many instances, the phrase is interpreted as a reference to God's creative power: at Q 24:42, al-Bayḍāwī (d. 685/1286 or 692/1293) glosses the qurʾānic text with the explication "for he is the creator of them both, and of the essences, accidents and actions within them" (*Anwār,* ii, 26; see COSMOLOGY; THEOLOGY AND THE QURʾĀN). Sometimes the description of God as possessing sovereignty over the heavens and the earth is meant to correct the errors of other religious groups, who may have failed to recognize that "God is powerful without qualification" (*qādir ʿalā l-iṭlāq;* Bayḍāwī, *Anwār,* i, 252, ad Q 5:17; see PARTIES AND FACTIONS). God's possession of sovereignty may also be presented as a challenge to the unbelievers and their gods (see IDOLS AND IMAGES; IDOLATRY AND IDOLATERS). Q 38:10 asks: "Or do they possess sovereignty over the heavens and the earth and what lies between them?" Q 4:53-4, a passage interpreted as a reference to the Jews (see JEWS AND JUDAISM), asks: "Or do they possess a portion of the sovereignty? If they did, they would not give the people so much as the speck on a date stone. Or are they jealous of the people for what God has given them of his bounty (see BLESSING; GRACE)? For we gave the family of Abraham the book (q.v.) and wisdom (q.v.), and we gave them great sovereignty." (See the interpretations of these verses in Ṭūsī, *Tibyān,* iii, 228; al-Bayḍāwī, *Anwār,* i, 213-4.)

The qurʾānic notion of God's sovereignty is also linked to the assertion of his uniqueness (see GOD AND HIS ATTRIBUTES). Twice the Qurʾān states, "He has no partner in sovereignty" (*lam yakun lahu sharīkun fī l-mulk,* Q 17:111; 25:2; in the former verse, *mulk* is interpreted by Bayḍāwī, *Anwār,* i, 554, simply as "divinity"). On the day of judgment (see LAST JUDGMENT), sovereignty will be God's (Q 22:56). Sovereignty is also among the phenomena that will be seen by those in paradise (q.v.): "And when you see, you shall see felicity and great sovereignty" (*wa-idha raʾayta thamma raʾayta naʿīman wa-mulkan kabīran,* Q 76:20; cf. the ḥadīth recounted in Bayḍāwī, *Anwār,* ii, 376).

On the earthly plane, kingship is depicted as a great but treacherous bounty that human beings, even those who receive divine favor, are naturally inclined to covet. For instance, Satan (see DEVIL) tempts Adam (see ADAM AND EVE; FALL OF MAN) with the prospect of imperishable sovereignty: "O Adam! Shall I show you to the tree of immortality (see ETERNITY) and sovereignty that never declines?" (Q 20:120, *yā Ādamu hal adulluka ʿalā shajarati l-khuldi wa-mulkin lā*

yablā). Joseph addresses God with gratitude (see GRATITUDE AND INGRATITUDE) for the sovereignty he has received from him (Q 12:101; see Quṭb, *Ẓilāl,* iv, 2029-30) and Solomon prays for kingship (Q 38:35). Those whom God leads astray (q.v.; see also FREEDOM AND PREDESTINATION) seem almost intoxicated by the power of kingship. In Q 2:258, for example, Nimrod (q.v.) argues with Abraham about the latter's God on the grounds that Nimrod himself received kingship. (For the reason given above in connection with Q 3:26, Muʿtazilī commentators also paid close attention to Q 2:258; see Zamakhsharī, *Kashshāf,* i, 304-5, where two explanations are given: that God gave Nimrod the wealth [q.v.], servants and followers that allowed him to become victorious [see VICTORY], but did not make him victorious directly; or, that God made Nimrod a king as a test for his servants [see SLAVES AND SLAVERY].) Similarly, Pharaoh boasts of his claim to the kingship (kingdom) of Egypt (q.v.; Q 43:51). In his commentary on this passage, Sayyid Quṭb (d. 1966) contrasts Pharaoh's kingdom of Egypt with the divine sovereignty over the heavens and the earth, and notes how the masses, whose eyes are dazzled by the accoutrements of Pharaoh's sovereignty, fail to perceive, in their hearts (see HEART), the insignificance of these royal trappings (*Ẓilāl,* v, 3193; for a Ṣūfī interpretation of the qurʾānic Pharaoh, see Böwering, *Mystical,* 190-2; see ṢŪFISM AND THE QURʾĀN).

However powerful kings may appear to be on earth, the Qurʾān makes clear that their authority in no way detracts from the overwhelming totality of God's power. The Qurʾān strongly implies the contingency and the brevity of human, worldly kingship (e.g. Q 40:29, "O my people! Today the kingdom is yours, who are triumphant in the earth; but who will come to our aid in the face of God's strength when it reaches us?"). Worldly power is invariably presented as part of God's creation, utterly contingent on him and at his disposal. This subordination of earthly rulership to divine power is often emphasized in the exegetical literature. For example, the Persian Shīʿī commentator Abū l-Futūḥ Rāzī (d. 525/1131 or later; see SHIʿĪSM AND THE QURʾĀN), in his discussion of Q 67:1, "Praise be to the one by whose hand is sovereignty, and he is powerful over all things" *(tabāraka lladhī bi-yadihi l-mulku wa-huwa ʿalā kulli shayʾin qadīrun),* interprets the phrase *bi-yadihi l-mulk* as follows: "Kingship *(pādshāhī)*… is by his command *(amr)* and power *(qudrat),* with 'hand' (q.v.) connoting strength and power, implying the sense of the administration and execution of affairs; the meaning is that sovereignty is his creation and at his disposal, such that he can bring it into existence and nonexistence, increase it or decrease it, or modify it in various ways according to his wishes" (Abū l-Futūḥ Rāzī, *Rawḥ,* xi, 208; a similar view is given by Ṭūsī, *Tibyān,* x, 57, who describes God as *mālik al-mulūk,* "the possessor of kings"; see also Rāzī, *Tafsīr,* viii, 4, ad Q 3:26).

The Children of Israel (q.v.) are said to have received special divine attention, for they were at times favored with both prophethood and kingship. Moses proclaims: "O my people! Remember God's favor to you, how he made prophets among you and made you kings, and gave you that which he did not give to any [other] of his creatures" (*yā qawmi ʾdhkurū niʿmata llāhi ʿalaykum idh jaʿala fīkum anbiyāʾa wa-jaʿalakum mulūkan wa-ātākum mā lam yuʾti aḥadan min al-ʿālamīn,* Q 5:20; for the exegetical treatment of this verse, see below). David and Solomon both combine their service as prophets with the possession of *mulk*. Of David, Q 38:20 states, "We made his kingdom strong and gave him the wisdom and clear speech" *(wa shadadnā*

mulkahu wa-ātaynāhu l-ḥikmata wa-faṣla l-khiṭāb); similarly Q 2:251, "God gave him [David] the kingdom and the wisdom *(al-mulka wa-l-ḥikma)* and instructed him as to his will." Q 38:26 describes David also as a deputy or successor on earth *(yā Dāʾūdu innā jaʿalnāka khalīfatan fī l-arḍ),* a phrase for which al-Bayḍāwī (*Anwār,* ii, 186) records two interpretations: that it refers to kingship *(mulk)* on earth, or that it portrays David as a successor to earlier prophets. A reference to Solomon's kingdom appears in Q 2:102 and an extensive treatment of Solomon's career is given in Q 27. In Q 38:35 he prays to God for forgiveness (q.v.), and also for sovereignty (for the role of Solomon as "the proof of God for kings" in Ṣūfī tradition, see Böwering, *Mystical,* 64). While neither David nor Solomon is designated a king in the Qurʾān, their examples, and especially the proof-text Q 38:26, are routinely cited in discussions of the excellence of kingship and its divine origins in later Islamic mirror literature.

A somewhat more ambiguous case is that of Saul, known in the Qurʾān as Ṭālūt. The Israelites are told by their prophet (who is nameless in the qurʾānic account) that, in response to their request, God has sent them Saul as their king; yet the people reject Saul. Q 2:247: "Their prophet said to them: 'God has sent you Ṭālūt as a king *(malik).*' They said: 'How is it that he should have sovereignty over us, when we are more worthy of kingship than he is? For he has not been given an abundance of wealth.' He said: 'God has chosen him over you, and has increased him largely in wisdom and stature. God gives his sovereignty to whom he wishes.'" The commentators account for the Israelites' rejection of Saul by noting that he was poor, a shepherd, water carrier or tanner, and that he came from Benjamin's (q.v.) stock, among whom neither prophethood nor kingship had appeared (Ṭabarī, *Tafsīr,* v, 306 f.; Rāzī, *Tafsīr,* vi, 184-5; Bayḍāwī, *Anwār,* i, 127-8). The prophet (on whose identity see Bayḍāwī, *Anwār,* i, 127) went on to tell them that the ark (q.v.; *tābūt*) would come to them as a sign of Saul's kingdom (Q 2:248).

The exegetical literature reflects an apparent intent in some circles to minimize any possibly positive qurʾānic emphasis on temporal kingship and this is most readily apparent in connection with the qurʾānic passages that treat the singular combination of prophethood and kingship enjoyed on occasion by the Israelites. In Q 5:20 (cited above), for example, Moses reminds his people of God's favor to them, in that he made prophets among them and made them kings. Al-Ṭabarī, followed by al-Ṭūsī (d. 460/1067) and others, records a number of interpretations, several of which suggest that the text indicates not that the Israelites were kings, but that they were masters — of themselves, their womenfolk (see GENDER), their possessions, and so on (Ṭabarī, *Tafsīr,* x, 160-3; Ṭūsī, *Tibyān,* iii, 481; Bayḍāwī, *Anwār,* i, 253: "God delivered them out of slavery in Egypt and made them masters *[mālikūn]* of their persons and their affairs, and so God called them 'kings'"). Similarly, in his commentary on Q 27:15, "And we gave knowledge to David and Solomon, and they said: 'Praise be to God, who has favored us over many of his believing servants!'" *(alladhī faḍḍalanā ʿalā kathīrin min ʿibādihi l-muʾminīn),* al-Bayḍāwī (d. prob. 716/1316-7; *Anwār,* ii, 64-5) explicitly subordinates kingship to knowledge when he writes: "In this is a proof of the excellence of knowledge and the nobility of those who possess it, in that they [David and Solomon] gave thanks for knowledge and made it the basis of excellence, and they did not consider the kingship that they had also been given, though [that kingship] had not been given to anyone else." When, in the following verse (Q 27:16), the Qurʾān

states that Solomon inherited from David, al-Bayḍāwī (*Anwār,* ii, 65) describes his inheritance as "prophethood, or knowledge, or kingship" (see also Māwardī, *Nukat,* iv, 198).

The term *imām (*pl. *aʾimma)* suggests a person (or, in other contexts, a book, or a pattern) to be followed and in some instances in the Qurʾān the word may include the idea of political leadership. Perhaps most strikingly, God appoints Abraham as an *imām (*Q 2:124: *qāla innī jāʿiluka lil-nāsi imāman)*. For al-Ṭabarī (*Tafsīr,* iii, 18) this means that God intended that Abraham should be followed. Al-Māwardī (d. 450/1058) follows al-Ṭabarī's interpretation and notes its particular relevance to prayer (q.v.; *Nukat,* i, 185; for a fuller treatment of the verse's meaning from a Shīʿī perspective, see Ṭūsī, *Tibyān,* i, 446, where the exegete records views according to which God by this verse made the imāmate incumbent on Abraham; on the Shīʿī view that Abraham combined the functions of prophethood and the imāmate, see Momen, *Introduction,* 147, and for Shīʿī readings of the Qurʾān on the subject of the historical imāms, see Momen, *Introduction,* 151-3).

In two cases, the term *aʾimma* is followed by the phrase "who guide by our command" *(aʾimmatan yahdūna bi-amrinā)* — Q 21:73: "And we made them leaders who guide by our command, and we inspired them to do good deeds (q.v.), maintain prayer and almsgiving (q.v.), and they were worshippers (see WORSHIP) of us" and Q 32:24: "And we made among them [the Children of Israel] leaders who guide by our command" — which some commentators took to mean moral leaders, "leaders in goodness," while others understood it as a reference to prophets (Māwardī, *Nukat,* iv, 366). In Q 28:5, the Qurʾān states that God wished to make the oppressed (*alladhīna stuḍʿifū fī l-arḍ,* see OPPRESSED ON EARTH; JOY AND MISERY) into leaders (*aʾimma,* Māwardī, *Nukat,* iv, 234; Bayḍāwī, *Anwār,* ii, 77). In Q 9:12, the term *imām,* in the sense of a human leader, appears in a negative context: the reference there to "the leaders of unbelief" *(aʾimmata l-kufr)* is interpreted variously as referring to the leaders of the polytheists (see POLYTHEISM AND ATHEISM), the leaders of Quraysh (q.v.) or those who intended to oust the Prophet (Māwardī, *Nukat,* ii, 345; Ṭūsī, *Tibyān,* v, 214; see OPPOSITION TO MUḤAMMAD).

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Kinship

Relationship by blood or marriage. Although there is no single term that corresponds precisely to the English term "kinship," the Qurʾān contains a variety of what might be identified as "kinship terms": *qurbā* (near relative); *arḥām* (close kin, maternal kin); *ʿashīra* (clan, tribe; see TRIBES AND CLANS); *zawj* (husband); *zawja* (wife); *imraʾa* (wife, woman); *ṣāḥiba* (wife, companion, friend; the masc. sing., *ṣāḥib,* is also attested in the Qurʾān, but does not

have the familial connotation of the feminine form); *akh* (brother, friend; see BROTHER AND BROTHERHOOD; FRIENDS AND FRIENDSHIP); *ḥamīm* (solicitous relative, close friend); *ṣihr* (affine, relation through marriage); *nasab* (lineage, kindred, attribution) and many others.

In "the legal verses" *(āyāt al-aḥkām),* those that contain stipulations on a variety of matters, the Qurʾān also employs terms to set forth rules for marriage, divorce (see MARRIAGE AND DIVORCE) and inheritance *(mīrāth, turāth),* which are foundational to the *sharīʿa* (see LAW AND THE QURʾĀN). (In the case of marriage and divorce, the qurʾānic text contains primarily verbal forms: "to marry," *zawwaja, aḥṣana, nakaḥa,* etc., "to divorce," *ṭallaqa, zāhara, ṭalaqa;* the nominal forms that are prominent in the discourse of the *sharīʿa,* such as *nikāḥ, ṭalāq,* etc., are not as prevalent in the Qurʾān; but cf. for *nikāḥ* Q 2:235, 237; 24:33; for *ṭalāq* Q 2:227, 229; and, as the name of a sūra, Q 65, "Sūrat al-Ṭalāq.") As with all interpretations, the English glosses given here depend on particular judgments regarding "comparable" work done by words in two discourses.

The terms selected at random and cited above are among those used in the Qurʾān to urge or discourage certain kinds of behavior. Some are also used to specify particular rights and duties. But neither in the matter of moral exhortation and prohibition (see ETHICS AND THE QURʾĀN; SOCIAL INTERACTIONS; PROHIBITED DEGREES), nor in that of defining succession to property rights, are the people concerned necessarily connected by "biological links." For example, those who look after the affairs of orphans (q.v.) are urged to regard them as "brothers" (Q 2:220); qurʾānic inheritance rules affect people related by affinity *(muṣāhara);* and various kinship terms can convey the sense of "friendship," "solicitude," etc., which raises the question of how so-called primary meanings are to be determined.

There is an explicit assumption held by scholars since the nineteenth century that the people of the Ḥijāz (see GEOGRAPHY), among whom the Qurʾān was revealed, lived in a society that was essentially organized in "kinship" terms (see PRE-ISLAMIC ARABIA AND THE QURʾĀN). This assumption has serious implications for assessing the political, legal and moral reforms initiated by the Qurʾān (see POLITICS AND THE QURʾĀN; COMMUNITY AND SOCIETY IN THE QURʾĀN). One of the first to talk about pre-Islamic and early Islamic "tribal" society in detail was Smith (*Kinship and marriage,* 1885), a major figure in the history of both orientalist and anthropological thought. The idea of "kinship" as the organizing principle of "early" societies had been a continuous part of evolutionary social thinking since before his time. It has been increasingly problematized, however, in contemporary anthropology (see Needham, *Rethinking kinship*). Most recently, Schneider *(Critique)* has demonstrated the questionable character of assumptions about "kinship organization." Although they frequently draw on anthropology when discussing the society whose members first listened to the Qurʾān (see ORALITY; REVELATION AND INSPIRATION), orientalists do not appear to have taken these important developments in anthropological theory into account.

The nineteenth-century belief that the seventh-century Ḥijāz was a "kinship-based society" allowed orientalists to interpret and explain references to "kinship" in the Qurʾān as a continuation of or break from pre-Islamic (*jāhilī,* see AGE OF IGNORANCE) principles and values. Thus Smith maintains that kinship among pre-Islamic Arabs signified the blood shared by all the members of a tribe, the common substance that defined each individual's

responsibility for — among other things — exacting vengeance in the name of the tribe (see RETALIATION; BLOOD MONEY). Many others have echoed this view — even a century after Smith, including Bashīr *(Tawāzun al-naqāʾid),* Donner *(Early Islamic conquests)* and Crone (Tribes and states).

Smith argues that since all amicable social relations were conceived in terms of "common blood," the extensions of such relations had to be sealed by blood-rites. "The commingling of blood by which two men became brothers or two kins (sic) allies, and the fiction of adoption [see CHILDREN] by which a new tribesman was feigned to be the veritable son of a member of the tribe, are both evidences of the highest value that the Arabs were incapable of conceiving any absolute social obligation or social unity which was not based on kinship; for a legal fiction is always adopted to reconcile an act with a principle too firmly established to be simply ignored" (Smith, *Kinship and marriage,* 51). Smith does not notice the double meaning he gives to "kinship" here — the one being a "biological" link and the other a "cultural representation" of the latter — just as he fails to notice that the existence of rites of friendship and adoption in the Age of Ignorance *(jāhiliyya)* indicates that an absolute obligation could be extended to those who did not share "common blood" (see CLIENTS AND CLIENTAGE). The point is that what he calls "a legal fiction" is not a statement that refers to imagined kinship but what Austin *(How to do)* called a "performative act."

The notion of kinship, as expressed in a variety of terms (*qarāba, nasab, ʿashīra, qawm, ḥayy,* etc.), is not simply an instance of "culture hitching a ride on nature" (Crone, Tribes and states, 355), i.e. of rights and duties attributed to biological facts. As a notion, kinship articulates distinctive ideas of social relations, morality and cosmology (q.v.), through which certain cultural facts can be constructed. Marriages as well as adoption create jural relations with mutual rights and obligations between persons who do not share "common blood." These relationships are not confused with "blood relationships." Marriage, for example, is a voluntary contract that is best seen as articulating one aspect of the total set of gender relations (see Rivière, Marriage; see GENDER) — and that is precisely how it is envisaged in the Qurʾān, often in explicit contrast to the Age of Ignorance. The relationship between blood brothers in the Age of Ignorance was apparently free of the rights and obligations that were legally ascribed to kinship roles. (The Qurʾān, of course, rejects legal adoption — see Q 33:4, 37 — as it rejects rites involving human blood.) This means that "blood brotherhood" (like friendship) in the Age of Ignorance was based on what Levi-Strauss calls metaphor (similitude) as against metonymy (consubstantiation). When the Qurʾān repudiates the attribution of *nasab* between God and jinn (q.v.) it is both "similitude" and "consubstantiation" that are being denied (Q 37:158-9; see METAPHOR; SIMILES; GOD AND HIS ATTRIBUTES; FAITH; POLYTHEISM AND ATHEISM).

Crone agrees with conventional historians (including Watt, *Muhammad at Mecca; Muhammad at Medina,* whom she attacks) that Mecca was "a tribal" society — a society based on "kinship." "In social terms," she observes, "the protection [q.v.] that Muhammad is said to have enjoyed from his own kin, first as an orphan and next as a prophet, would indicate the tribal system to have been intact" (Crone, *Meccan trade,* 233). Her argument, however, is not logically necessary. Yet Crone's insistence that "the tribal system" was "intact" does raise interesting questions about the relationship of her "model" to her "data," because it is

not entirely clear how someone who denies the credibility of all traditional Islamic sources relating to Meccan society at the time of the Prophet is able to make such an assertion. The answer would appear to lie in her resort to the writings of nineteenth-century European travelers and twentieth-century ethnographers (cf. Crone, *Meccan trade,* 236) — a style of historical inference adopted by other orientalists (e.g. Donner, *Early Islamic conquests*), even when they have not, as the radical skeptics have, dismissed all early Islamic sources (see Donner, *Narratives,* for a sober survey). Contemporary ethnographic studies of tribes — pastoral as well as agricultural — are useful for thinking about early historical periods, not because one can extrapolate from present social arrangements, which are extremely diverse, to distant historical ones, but because they can sensitize one to problems that need to be addressed when speculating about Islamic history (see HISTORY AND THE QUR'ĀN). The idea that contemporary "tribes" are living fossils of ancient ways of social life belongs to a theory of social evolution that anthropologists have long ago demolished and abandoned.

The resort to the modern ethnography of tribes for purposes of historical reconstruction also plays a crucial part in Powers' *(Studies)* revisionist account of the origins of the Islamic law of inheritance. When Smith reconstructed pre-Islamic Arabian society he represented the Islamic rules of inheritance as a modification of pre-Islamic *(jāhilī)* ones. Smith's thesis eventually became the established orientalist view. It is this view that Powers has challenged on the basis of a re-reading of the inheritance verses (especially Q 4:12, 176), to which arguments about the syntax of a qur'ānic sentence and the meaning of the word *kalāla* are central (*kalāla* has been understood to mean "someone who has no parents or children, and therefore no direct heirs"; Powers translates it as "daughter-in-law"; see INHERITANCE; GRAMMAR AND THE QUR'ĀN). Powers' thesis is that the received Islamic system of inheritance *('ilm al-farā'iḍ)* is quite different not only from the pre-Islamic one but also from the proto-Islamic system of the Qur'ān that gave a far greater scope to the principle of testamentary bequests than the *sharī'a* allows. In evolutionary terms, the shift from the pre-Islamic system to the proto-Islamic one represents a double progress, (a) from the constraints of kinship to the freedom of contract (see CONTRACTS AND ALLIANCES; BREAKING TRUSTS AND CONTRACTS) and (b) from the principle of inheritance by seniority (brother to brother) to the principle of generational inheritance (father to son). Powers sums this up as "a transition from nomadism to sedentary life and from tribalism to individualism" (*Studies,* 210). The *'ilm al-farā'iḍ* is therefore seen as a backward move, a clumsy compromise in the interests of power.

According to Powers, the proto-Islamic system was distorted for political reasons by the Prophet's immediate successors who imposed the orthodox reading on the relevant verses (see READINGS OF THE QUR'ĀN; COLLECTION OF THE QUR'ĀN). The idea that the Prophet's most trusted Companions (see COMPANIONS OF THE PROPHET) and oldest converts would engage in a conspiracy against him concerning the proper meaning of a divine verse which inaugurated a new legal dispensation, one that was presumably in force during the Prophet's lifetime, seems, according to Powers' critics, far-fetched. (For this and other critical points relating to Arabic syntax and the etymology of *kalāla,* see Ziadeh, Review of Powers; see also ARABIC

LANGUAGE; LANGUAGE AND STYLE OF THE QUR'ĀN.) Some Muslim modernists (e.g. Arkoun, *Min al-ijtihād*), however, have received Powers' re-interpretation of the "kinship" *kalāla* with enthusiasm because it supports their desire to challenge what they see as the ideological manipulation of the qur'ānic text by jurists and theologians determined to impose traditional authority (q.v.) on all believers and to prevent the use of critical reason by the individual (see ISLAM; CONTEMPORARY CRITICAL PRACTICES AND THE QUR'ĀN).

So what does "kinship" mean in the Qur'ān? Certainly not "common blood," a Western idiom, because the Arabic for "blood" *(damm)* is never used in the Qur'ān to denote that which relatives share in common (see BLOOD AND BLOOD CLOT; BIOLOGY AS THE CREATION AND STAGES OF LIFE). From a Muslim exegetical perspective, signification must be sought in the connection between believer and text. For pious Muslims qur'ānic meanings are not mechanically determined by grammatical and lexical criteria or by some objective context (see OCCASIONS OF REVELATION). Far from being a simple injunction, piety (q.v.) and fear (q.v.) of God *(birr wa-taqwā)* on the part of attentive Muslims is understood to be a presupposition for arriving at the meanings of the Qur'ān, because the divine recitation evokes and confirms what is already in the heart (q.v.) of the faithful man or woman (see BELIEF AND UNBELIEF; RECITATION OF THE QUR'ĀN).

A number of themes emerge through the qur'ānic use of "kinship" terms. To begin with, any similitude and common substance between God and humans is strongly rejected (e.g. Q 5:18, and most famously in Sūrat al-Ikhlāṣ, "Sincere Devotion," Q 112; see ANTHROPOMORPHISM). God cannot be likened or compared to anything — particularly as everything is of his creation (q.v.). The Qur'ān does, however, recognize friendship between God and humans, but friendship in this case transcends the absence of similitude: for it was God who chose to make Abraham (q.v.) his friend *(khalīl)* because the latter had given his entire being to him (Q 4:125; see ḤANĪF). The faithful, on the other hand, are bound by their common faith and the union of their hearts, which makes them brothers to one another (Q 3:103; 49:10). God has endowed human beings in this world with bonds of descent and affinity *(nasaban wa-ṣihran)* — that is to say, with enduring relations that are inherited as well as voluntarily undertaken (Q 25:54). Thus one owes obedience (q.v.) to one's parents (q.v.) — and especially to one's mother (Q 31:14): parents are to be welcomed and honored, just as the prophet Joseph (q.v.) welcomed his mother and his father (Q 12:99-100). Indeed obedience to parents is a virtue (see VIRTUES AND VICES, COMMANDING AND FORBIDDING) even if they happen to be non-Muslims (Q 40:8), so long as this does not involve disobedience (q.v.) to God (Q 58:22). (See, for example, the widely used textbook on the prescribed relations between parents and children in Islam, Ṣāliḥ, *ʿAlāqāt al-ābāʾ*, 15-41.) But on the day of judgment (see LAST JUDGMENT) one stands alone before God surveying one's completed life (Q 23:101). All inherited and created bonds of life are there dissolved. One flees from all one's kin — including one's parents, brothers, spouse *(ṣāḥiba),* and children (Q 80:33-7). On that day any sense of kinship as common substance is proven meaningless. Only similitude links us together. Hence one must temper worldly attachments of every kind.

As understood by the faithful Muslim, the qur'ānic language of kinship articulates ways of behaving in this world in full

consciousness of God, rather than representing the traces of a secular society in the process of evolving from tribalism to individualism. See also FAMILY.

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Kitāb

see BOOK; PEOPLE OF THE BOOK; SCRIPTURE AND THE QURʾĀN

Knife

see INSTRUMENTS

Knowledge and Learning

Cognitive understanding and its acquisition. Concepts of knowledge and learning appear frequently in nearly all types of Islamic discourse. They are commonly subsumed under a variety of Arabic words such as *ʿilm, maʿrifa, fiqh, ḥikma* and *shuʿūr,* and the verbs and verbal derivatives of each, many of which find representation in the Qurʾān itself, at least in form if not in meaning.

The problem of defining knowledge and explaining its relationship to faith (q.v.) on the one hand, and to action and works on the other (see GOOD DEEDS; EVIL DEEDS; ETHICS AND THE QURʾĀN), became, for example, the subject of intense debate and eventual elaboration involving precision and technical complexity. One example is the great concern of the experts about establishing that human knowledge is contingent and temporally produced whereas that of God is not, although he somehow, despite the paradox, comprehends and is the author of what humans think (see INTELLECT; FREEDOM AND PREDESTINATION). For both philosophy *(falsafa)* and theology *(kalām)* a precise understanding of the nature of knowledge *(ʿilm)* is, in fact, for this and many other reasons an essential first premise to all subsequent reasoning (see PHILOSOPHY AND THE QURʾĀN; THEOLOGY AND THE QURʾĀN). A major category of Islamic literature took up the theme of the enumeration of the sciences *(iḥṣāʾ al-ʿulūm),* that is, of laying out schematically all knowledge and explaining its value, ranks, and the relationship of one kind to the others. Religious scholars in Islam are "those who know" *(ʿulamāʾ,* sing. *ʿālim).* The search for knowledge *(ṭalab al-ʿilm)* is a duty for all Muslims, but especially for those who aspire to attain the status of a learned authority (q.v.). Seeking knowledge implies both finding and studying with a teacher and traveling to distant lands (even to China). Ṣūfī mystics (see ṢŪFISM AND THE QURʾĀN) sought to separate the process of knowing through intuitive perception *(dhawq)* and presence from discursive learning and rational or intellec-

tual reasoning — an effort that has led to an impressively sophisticated body of writings, both by the Ṣūfīs and by those who would deny their approach. Even earlier Muslims debated, as yet another example, the extent to which knowledge is confined to, or conveyed exclusively within, a natural language and its grammar (see GRAMMAR AND THE QUR'ĀN; ARABIC LANGUAGE; LANGUAGE, CONCEPT OF). For example, is what can be known in Arabic — the language of the Islamic revelation — different from Greek science and philosophy in part because of its linguistic home? Or does there exist a universal logic of thought that transcends (and is therefore superior to) particular expressions in use in a given culture? The ḥadīth (see ḤADĪTH AND THE QUR'ĀN), as yet one more category, already include numerous admonitions about the value of knowledge, its reward and the duty to seek it, to gather and preserve it, to journey abroad in search of it. In it teachers are accorded high honor; Muḥammad was a teacher; the angel Gabriel (q.v.) also (see TEACHING).

All these examples merely hint at the enormous importance of knowledge and learning in the Islamic world over time and place from the earliest period of post-qur'ānic Islam to the present (see TEACHING AND PREACHING THE QUR'ĀN). Every facet of Islamic thought was and continues to be affected by it. But it is doubtful that these concepts of knowledge or of learning and the characteristic value placed on them in Islam generally, come from the Qur'ān itself or find an echo there. It is, of course, always possible, and often done, to interpret the sacred text to draw on its amazing flexibility and thus yield almost any meaning from its words (see EXEGESIS OF THE QUR'ĀN: CLASSICAL AND MEDIEVAL; EXEGESIS OF THE QUR'ĀN: EARLY MODERN AND CONTEMPORARY). Nevertheless, given the original context for the Qur'ān, claiming as it does to represent the very words of God and not those of humans except secondarily, the perspective from which it speaks is not that of the community of Muslims. It does not reflect their later need to acquire or preserve knowledge.

In the world of the Qur'ān God alone knows (see GOD AND HIS ATTRIBUTES); truth (q.v.) is his. In it either humans do not know, even though they may think they know, or God causes a select few of them to possess a limited degree of knowledge and truth (see IGNORANCE; IMPECCABILITY). They know what he lets them know. This starkly different view of knowledge is perhaps best approached by observing a common theme in later Islamic thought of how to know God and, almost as important, how to express and verbally explain knowing God. One aspect of the problem is that God is infinite and no finite creature can know an infinite (see ANTHROPOMORPHISM). Knowing a thing implies comprehending the thing as it really and truly is. But that is impossible in relation to the infinite, unlimited, inexhaustible God. God cannot be known by humans; they will merely come to "acknowledge" him or "be aware" of him. Some authors make a distinction here between "knowing" (the verb *ʿalima*) and "recognizing" (the verb *ʿarafa*).

But, even so, is there any correspondence at all between the knowledge that God has and what knowledge the human possesses, acquires, or comes to know? Obviously, God himself does not learn, but does he teach? An important theme in Islamic writings concerns the relative worth of study and effort versus the spontaneous acquisition of inspired enlightenment (see REVELATION AND INSPIRATION; PROPHETS AND PROPHETHOOD). Should the seeker of knowledge — here the exact meaning of

knowledge can vary — read books and take instruction, or avoid both and prepare for the infusion of knowledge by grace through pious practice and exercise (see PIETY)?

In the Qurʾān the fact that God is all-knowing *(ʿalīm),* knows what humans do not, and knows the unseen *(ʿālim al-ghayb, ʿallām al-ghayb)* is stressed constantly (see HIDDEN AND THE HIDDEN). The term all-knowing *(ʿalīm)* appears literally again and again, often in combination with all-wise (*ḥakīm,* see WISDOM; JUDGMENT) but also with all-hearing (*samīʿ,* see HEARING AND DEAFNESS; SEEING AND HEARING). One phrase states clearly that "over and above every person who has knowledge is the all-knowing" (Q 12:76). In fact, every qurʾānic instance (thirteen in all) of the term "knower" (*ʿālim* [sing.]), which is the same word as that used later for the learned scholar, is followed by "unseen" *(ghayb)* and therefore refers unambiguously to God. It is true that there are references (five) to "those with knowledge" in the plural *(ʿālimūn, ʿulamāʾ)* and several expressions for humans "who know, understand, are aware" *(ūlū l-albāb,* for example, or *al-rāsikhūn fī l-ʿilm)*. Nevertheless, God's preponderance and omniscience is overwhelming, so much so as to bring into question what it means to assert that humans, even the prophets, know.

A further issue is how they come to know whatever it is that they know. Strictly within the Qurʾān, the terms for knowing and knowledge (*ʿilm, maʿrifa, fiqh, shuʿūr* and the various forms they take) seem to suggest not a degree or quantity, but an absolute, in which the known object is simply the truth — what truly is — in its ultimate reality and not some fact of ordinary perception. Common human knowledge in its mundane form lacks value in comparison. Thus, to have knowledge or to come to have knowledge implies becoming aware of the true nature of the universe as God's creation (q.v.) and of his role in it. In most cases, qurʾānic references to those who know or do not know indicate only whether or not the person or persons understands this truth and do not indicate an acquired or accumulated degree of learning. Those who have knowledge *(al-ʿulamāʾ)* are simply those who truly fear (q.v.) God (Q 35:28). Q 3:66 (among others) refers to those who argue about a matter about which they have no knowledge; only God knows what they think they know.

The opposites of knowledge are ignorance *(jahl),* which is not having guidance (*hudā,* as in Q 6:35; see ASTRAY; ERROR), supposition or conjecture (Q 53:28) and the following of personal whims in the absence of knowledge (as in Q 6:119 and 30:29), all of which denote a failure, often willful, to perceive and acknowledge the truth. Even the expressions for those who possess understanding *(ūlū l-albāb),* who are firmly grounded in knowledge *(al-rāsikhūn fī l-ʿilm)* or who come to know that which they formerly knew not *(mā lam yaʿlam, mā lam takun taʿlam),* indicate, not learning in the normal sense of that word, but having such knowledge, that is, of being wise in matters of religion (q.v.) and the affairs of God.

Given that knowledge does not depend on study and learning, it is fair to ask if the Qurʾān contains a concept of instruction as in either the teaching by God of humans or humans of other humans, leading some to become more learned than others. There are in fact several verses that, in accordance with the Qurʾān's fertile elasticity, can be construed in this manner. Most use the second — that is, transitive — form of the verb "to know" *(ʿalima),* thus to "teach" *(ʿallama)*. Important examples include "he taught Adam the names of all things" (Q 2:31; see ADAM AND EVE); "we have no knowledge except that which you taught us" (Q 2:32); "the most merciful

taught the Qurʾān; he created man and taught him the explanation *(al-bayān)*" (Q 55:1-4); "Lord… you have taught me [Joseph] the interpretation of events" (Q 12:101; see JOSEPH; DREAMS AND SLEEP; FORETELLING; DIVINATION; PORTENTS); and "we have been taught the language of the birds" (27:16; see ANIMAL LIFE). It is easy to see how these cases can be, as they have been, understood as proof that God acts as the teacher of humankind, at least of the prophets. In a closely parallel example, however, God instead "brings" or "bestows" *(ātā)* knowledge: "we have brought to David (q.v.) and Solomon (q.v.) knowledge" (Q 27:15); the sense is rather of God's *causing* the recipient to know something, not by instruction but by instantaneous revelation. "God revealed *(anzala)* to you the book (q.v.), and wisdom and caused you to know that which you previously knew not" (Q 4:113). This latter sense fits better the tone of the Qurʾān and of the power of God as expressed in it generally (see POWER AND IMPOTENCE). The slow accumulation of items of knowledge applies solely to humans learning from other humans. It involves a temporal and sequential process quite different from that of God. Accordingly, therefore, the first of these verses reads: "he caused Adam to have knowledge of the names of all things" and thus it does not imply a process of learning or that, despite his knowledge, Adam was "learned."

The cryptic words of Q 96:4-5, "he it is who taught by the pen; taught humankind *(al-insān)* what it knew not" suggest, however, the opposite since they indicate, if taken literally, a form of instruction that by its very nature must be sequentially ordered. The commentators note, however, that the verse may rather be read such that God taught the *use of* the pen, that is, writing itself. Nevertheless, the more common interpretation is that he taught *by means of* the pen and therefore quite possibly these verses point to some type of book learning (see BOOK; WRITING AND WRITING MATERIALS). A few isolated verses also mention learning or instruction in a situation involving humans imparting (or purportedly imparting) knowledge from one to the other. Two of these (Q 44:14 and 16:103), however, cite false imputations that Muḥammad had been taught what he knew by another man (a foreigner; see INFORMANTS; STRANGERS AND FOREIGNERS). One more verse (Q 2:102) speaks of a kind of sorcery or magic (q.v.) taught by devils (see DEVIL) for evil purposes, such as a spell to separate a man and his wife (see MARRIAGE AND DIVORCE; JINN).

Yet another verse (Q 9:122) contains a verb form that usually denotes quite clearly "to study" *(tafaqqaha)* and is there joined with the word "religion" *(li-yatafaqqahū fī l-dīn)*, in a phrase that would translate "that they may study (or become learned in) religion." The verse as a whole cautions the Muslims not to go to war (q.v.) altogether but to leave behind a contingent when the rest go out. But according to a widely accepted interpretation (credited by the commentary tradition to Ibn ʿAbbās [d. 68/686-8]), it applies specifically to a time when the Prophet was then actively receiving revelations and other instructions from God and, if none of the Muslims were to stay with him at home, none would come to know those aspects of the religion imparted to him in that interval. Subsequently, they could neither transmit it accurately to those not present nor insure its later preservation. And yet another view is that it is the party that goes out to war (not those who remain behind) that gains a deeper understanding and appreciation of religion — witnessing in this case how, by God's support, a few Muslims can defeat a much larger force of unbelievers (see EXPEDITIONS AND BATTLES) — and brings

that truth back with them to share with the others (see FIGHTING; JIHĀD). Both interpretations are related, for example, by Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī (d. 606/1210; *Tafsīr,* xvi, 225-7), among others. Thus, despite the use of this quite suggestive verb, given the context of the passage as a whole, the "study of religion" which is what some authorities would later have it imply, is not necessarily what was involved in this particular situation.

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Korah

A figure living at the time of Moses (q.v.) who is mentioned both in the Bible and the Qurʾān. He is described in Q 28:76-82 and briefly mentioned in two other verses. Korah (Ar. Qārūn) is introduced as one of the people of Moses, yet one who treated them unjustly (Q 28:76-82; see JUSTICE AND INJUSTICE; OPPRESSION). God accorded him such enormous treasures that "its very keys *(mafātiḥahu)* were too heavy a burden for a company of men" (Q 28:76) to carry. When people urged him to use his wealth (q.v.) for God's purposes and, with the world to come in mind (see ESCHATOLOGY), he would answer that the only reason he possessed his wealth was because of his knowledge (see KNOWLEDGE AND LEARNING). Finally, when Korah "went forth unto his people in his adornment" (Q 28:79) and his people argued about his fortune, God decreed his death, making the earth swallow him and his house (see PUNISHMENT STORIES; CHASTISEMENT AND PUNISHMENT). Two other verses mention the name of Korah. In the first of these (Q 29:39) he, along with Pharaoh (q.v.) and Hāmān (q.v.), arrogantly (see ARROGANCE) opposes the signs (q.v.) brought by Moses, while in the other he, along with Pharaoh and Hāmān, accuses Moses of being a lying sorcerer (Q 40:24; see SOOTHSAYERS; MAGIC; LIE; INSANITY).

As well as containing some elements that are similar to the biblical story of Korah (cf. *Num* 16; see SCRIPTURE AND THE QURʾĀN; MYTHS AND LEGENDS IN THE QURʾĀN), the Qurʾān mainly stresses the fact, which had already been highlighted in rabbinical literature, of his great wealth. A saying of Muḥammad, which reflects qurʾānic content, mentions his name along with those of Hāmān and Pharaoh as examples of people destined to go to hell (q.v.; Ibn Ḥanbal, *Musnad,* ii, 169). Exegetical traditions usually recount that Korah was Moses' cousin or, according to Muḥammad b. Isḥāq (d. 150/767), his uncle (Ṭabarī, *Tafsīr,* xx, 105; see EXEGESIS OF THE QURʾĀN: CLASSICAL AND MEDIEVAL). He was so handsome or his voice, while reciting the Torah (q.v.), was so beautiful that he was named the Enlightened *(al-munawwar)*. His appearance among his people is described with a wealth of detail, from his luxurious dress to the magnificence of his escort, consisting of three hundred maids, four thousand riding beasts with purple saddles or with seventy thousand or more soldiers. The keys of his treasures were the leather keys of his storehouses; they were no larger than a finger and so heavy that only forty men or forty camels or sixty mules could carry them.

Korah, envious of the prophethood of Moses and of the sacerdotal privileges of Aaron (q.v.; Abū l-Layth al-Samarqandī, *Tafsīr,* ii, 525; see PROPHETS AND PROPHETHOOD), planned to get rid of Moses when the duty of the alms tax was revealed (see ALMSGIVING). He paid a woman to accuse Moses of adultery (see ADULTERY AND FORNICATION) but the woman, when examined by Moses, retracted her accusation and unmasked Korah's plan. Moses ordered the earth to seize Korah and, in spite of his pleas, he and his house were completely swallowed up (Muqātil, *Tafsīr,* iii, 357). Other traditions state that every day Korah sinks deeper into the earth by the height of a man and that he will continue sinking at this rate until the day of resurrection (q.v.). It is also said, however, that while sinking in the earth, one day Korah heard Jonah's (q.v.) voice in the belly of the whale and that he felt sorry when he learned of Moses' and Aaron's death; as a reward for this, God relieved him of the punishment (Majlisī, *Biḥār,* xiii, 253; see REWARD AND PUNISHMENT). Some other reports tell of Korah's knowledge of alchemy and they are usually linked to the qurʾānic statement about his knowledge. Some traditions specify that he was able to change lead and copper into silver and gold (q.v.) or that Korah learned the art of alchemy from his wife, who was Moses' sister (Kisāʾī, *Qiṣaṣ,* 229; see MEDICINE AND THE QURʾĀN; METALS AND MINERALS).

The origin of the Arabic form of the name of Korah *(Qārūn)* is unknown but seems to parallel the form of other names such as Aaron (*Hārūn,* Horovitz, *KU,* 131).

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L

Labor see MANUAL LABOR; BIRTH

Lactation

Production of milk for nursing a child; the act of nursing a child. Q 2:233, 4:23 and 65:6, all dating (according to Bell) from the Medinan period (see CHRONOLOGY AND THE QUR'ĀN), lay the foundations of an Islamic "ethics of breastfeeding" (the Arabic terms for which utilize derivatives of the triliteral root *r-ḍ-ʿ*). In the Medinan sūra Q 22:2, nurses *(kull murḍiʿa)* and nurslings *(mā arḍaʿat)* are mentioned in an eschatological context (see ESCHATOLOGY); the qur'ānic story of Moses' (q.v.) infancy (the Medinan Q 28:7, 12) includes references to nursing and wet nurses *(marāḍiʿ);* and, finally, weaning *(fiṣāl)* is described as part of the stages of life (the Medinan Q 46:15; cf. the Meccan Q 31:14; see BIOLOGY AS THE CREATION AND STAGES OF LIFE).

That breastfeeding is a maternal instinct is implied in Q 22:2 and, even more strongly, in Q 28:7-12. In Q 22:2, nursing mothers, who due to grief and anxiety neglect their own nurslings, are listed among the signs of the dramatic displacement that will shake the universe on the day of judgment (see LAST JUDGMENT; APOCALYPSE). Moreover, in Q 28:7-12, the love and care of Moses' mother for her nursling find emphatic expression. Q 28:12 shows that the Arabs (q.v.) of the early seventh century were aware that infants sometimes reject the milk (q.v.) of women other than their own mothers (see CHILDREN; PRE-ISLAMIC ARABIA AND THE QUR'ĀN).

Q 2:233 calls upon the nurslings' fathers to "provide reputably for their [e.g. their repudiated, lactating wives] food and clothing" during "two full years" (cf. Q 31:14: *wa-fiṣāluhu fī ʿāmayni*) unless both father and mother "by mutual agreement and consultation desire [weaning] (earlier)" (see PARENTS; FAMILY). This could be read as an effort to protect repudiated (see MARRIAGE AND DIVORCE) women who were nursing — and their nurslings — in a society which was becoming sedentary (see GEOGRAPHY; CITY) and experiencing increasing individualism as well as a transition from a matrilineal to a patrilineal family structure (Bianquis, Family, 614; Watt, *Muhammad,* 272-89; see PATRIARCHY; GENDER; WOMEN AND THE QUR'ĀN). Wetnursing (q.v.), in this context of the separation of the parents, is sanctioned by the

same verse. Q 65:6 explicitly refers, moreover, to the repudiated (divorced) wife who is being paid to nurse her own infant.

Q 4:23 mentions milk mothers and milk sisters among those with whom a man may not have sexual relations (see PROHIBITED DEGREES; SEX AND SEXUALITY). It thus adds a unique element to a long Semitic tradition of prohibitions of marriage by extending the range of incest beyond its definition in Judaism and Christianity (Héritier, *Deux soeurs,* 87-91; see also FOSTERAGE; SCRIPTURE AND THE QURʾĀN; JEWS AND JUDAISM; CHRISTIANS AND CHRISTIANITY). According to Watt, the principle that milk-relationship is on the same level as blood-relationship may be seen as a concession to matrilineal groups which, practicing forms of polyandry, avoided undue endogamy by making certain degrees of milk-relationship a barrier to marriage (Watt, *Muhammad,* 281; cf. Schacht/Burton and Chelhod, Raḍāʿ, 362; see also KINSHIP; BLOOD AND BLOOD CLOT).

Islamic rules concerning lactation, as formulated in works of qurʾānic exegesis, ḥadīth and *fiqh,* are based on the normative verses among the above-mentioned. These were interpreted against a background of circumstances and needs that sometimes differed from those of the early Muslim community (see COMMUNITY AND SOCIETY IN THE QURʾĀN). One example would be the growing importance of hired wet-nursing among urban higher social groups of the Muslim world in the high Middle Ages. Thus, Ibn al-ʿArabī (d. 543/1148; *Aḥkām,* 202-6) refers to no less than fifteen legal questions, the answers to which are based on Q 2:233. Such questions include, for instance, whether breastfeeding is a mother's right or duty and, assuming it is her duty, whether or not noble women are exempted from fulfilling it. Ibn al-ʿArabī further concludes that a mother's right to the custody of her child (*ḥaḍāna,* not mentioned in the Qurʾān) is based on Q 2:233 since the functions of — and therefore the right to — lactation *(raḍāʿ)* and *ḥaḍāna* cannot be separated (cf. Ilkiyā al-Harrāsī, *Aḥkām,* i/ii, 187).

Ḥadīth and qurʾānic commentaries, postulating a connection between the mother's milk and her husband's semen, explain Q 4:23 (explicitly referring to milk mother and milk sisters only) as intended to duplicate for milk relationships the list of those blood relatives with whom a Muslim man is forbidden to contract marriage (Giladi, *Infants,* 24-7).

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Ladder see ASCENSION

Lamp

Manufactured light-giving object. The most common reference to a lamp (Ar. *miṣbāḥ* and *sirāj*) in the Qurʾān is a metaphoric use (see METAPHOR) of the word *sirāj* to designate the sun (q.v.): "And we built over you seven firmaments (see HEAVEN AND SKY) and made a splendid light *(sirājan wahhājan)*" (Q 78:12-3; cf. Dāmaghānī,

Wujūh, i, 442); "And he made the moon (q.v.) a light among them and he made the sun a lamp *(al-shamsa sirājan)*" (Q 71:16); and "Blessed is he who made constellations (see PLANETS AND STARS) in the sky and made in it a lamp *(sirājan)* and a light-giving moon" (Q 25:61). On one occasion (Q 33:46), however, the prophet Muḥammad is referred to as a light-giving lamp (*sirājan munīran,* see NAMES OF THE PROPHET).

The most celebrated reference to a lamp *(miṣbāḥ)* is in Q 24:35, commonly know as the "Light Verse" (*āyat al-nūr;* cf. Dāmaghānī, *Wujūh,* ii, 231; see LIGHT; MATERIAL CULTURE AND THE QUR'ĀN).

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Land see GEOGRAPHY; CREATION

Language, Concept of

The uniquely human faculty of (primarily) verbal expression. In the Qur'ān, the concept of language is expressed by the word *lisān* (lit. tongue). The other common term for language, *lugha,* which is well-attested in classical and modern standard Arabic (see ARABIC LANGUAGE), does not appear in the Qur'ān; one encounters only the related words *laghw* and *lāghiya,* which express exclusively the connotation of "vain utterance."

There are twenty-five occurrences of the word *lisān* in the Qur'ān, fifteen in the singular and ten in the plural (*alsina;* the other plural, *alsun,* is not attested in the Qur'ān; cf. ʿAbd al-Bāqī). In all of its occurrences in the plural, *lisān* actually refers to the tongue as the organ of speech, a meaning found in six of its occurrences in the singular. While *lisān* designates the tongue as the organ of speech, speech (q.v.) itself and the act of speaking are designated by the verb *qāla* and its derivatives as, for example, in Q 20:27-8: "Unloose the knot upon my tongue that they might understand my words" *(wa-uḥlul ʿuqdatan min lisānī yafqahū qawlī)*. The common metonymy — one encounters it in more than one language — of the tongue, the organ of speech, being used to mean the language articulated by means of that organ, appears in the nine remaining occurrences of *lisān* in the singular.

As to other important developments, the most interesting is surely Q 14:4: "And we have sent no messenger (q.v.) save with the tongue of his people that he might make all clear to them" *(wa-mā arsalnā min rasūlin illā bi-lisāni qawmihi li-yubayyina lahum)*. The first part of this sentence is a restrictive clause offered as the premise to an argument whose conclusion constitutes a well known theological thesis: namely, that the Arabic of the Qur'ān is itself the very language of Muḥammad, that is to say, a hypothetical "dialect of Quraysh (q.v.)," hypothetical in the sense that it is not documented in an independent manner (see DIALECTS).

The second part of Q 14:4 is based on a common conception of language as an articulation of thought *(tabyīn)*. Thus, efficacy in preaching (see also Q 19:97 and 44:58, *yassarnāhu bi-lisānika,* "now we have made it easy by your tongue"; see PROPHETS AND PROPHETHOOD; WARNER; GOOD NEWS) is linked to a language viewed either as a commonly-spoken vernacular or as a hypothetically-constructed linguistic vehicle. According to the theological thesis mentioned above, the qur'ānic language is indeed the vernacular of Quraysh. But for

many Arabists, the Arabic of the Qurʾān is very close, if not identical, to the pre-Islamic poetic *koiné,* itself a hypothetical construct (see POETS AND POETRY; LANGUAGE AND STYLE OF THE QURʾĀN; FORM AND STRUCTURE OF THE QURʾĀN). Some other linguists turn towards a third hypothesis: the late homogenization of both language forms (for a general overview, see Jones, Language). The use of the second verbal form, *bayyana,* with an explicit object in Q 14:4 (see Ṭabarī, *Tafsīr,* xvi, 616, for an example of classical commentary on this passage) suggests that *mubīn,* as an active participle of the fourth verbal form, *abāna* (see GRAMMAR AND THE QURʾĀN), may be similarly understood. See, for example, Q 26:195, where *lisān ʿarabī mubīn,* "a clear Arabic tongue," can be understood as "an Arabic tongue that makes [all things] clear" (Ṭabarī, *Tafsīr,* xix, 112, for this signification). But the opposition found in Q 16:103 between a *lisān* qualified simply as *aʿjamī* and a *lisān* with the double qualification of *ʿarabī* and *mubīn* makes one understand the former qualifier as the antonym of the two latter ones. In other words, its possible translation as "barbarous" conveys the dual sense of non-Arabic *(ʿajamī)* and unclear *(aʿjam)*. For the exegetes' debates on the meaning of *aʿjamī,* see Wansbrough (*QS,* 98-9), who includes this notion of *ʿarabī* and *mubīn* as functional equivalents.

In the juxtaposition of terms found in Q 16:103, one notes a furtive slip from an objective state, the communicative function of any language, to a subjective state, the clarity bestowed only on Arabic. It is this shift of signification that supported the theological logo-centrism of the medieval period (for example, see Shāfiʿī, *Risāla,* 34-55; also Gilliot, *Elt,* chapters 3 and 4) and provided justification for the linguistic nationalism of the modern era *(qawmiyya* < *qawm)* and what the American linguist Ferguson has described as "myths about Arabic." See also ILLITERACY; INIMITABILITY; FOREIGN VOCABULARY; ARABS; ARABIC SCRIPT.

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Language and Style of the Qurʾān

The semantic field of "language" includes several triliteral Arabic roots: *l-s-n* (Dāmaghānī, *Wujūh,* ii, 200-1; see H. Jenssen, Arabic language, 132; see also LANGUAGE, CONCEPT OF), *k-l-m* (Yaḥyā b. Sallām, *Taṣārīf,* 303-5; Dāmaghānī, *Wujūh,* ii, 186-7), *q-w-l*, *l-ḥ-n* (Khan, *Die exegetischen Teile,* 276, on Q 47: 30: "the burden of their talk," *laḥn al-qawl;* Fück, *ʿArabīya,* 133; Fr. trans. 202; Ullmann, *Wa-ḫairu,* 21-2). It should be noted that *lugha* in the sense of manner of speaking (Fr. *parler,* Ger. *Redeweise*) is totally absent from the Qurʾān — although the root *l-gh-w* is attested, but with the meanings of "vain conversation" (Q 23:3), "to talk idly" (Q 41:26), "idle talk" (Q 19:62; see GOSSIP), or to be "unintentional" in an oath (Q 2:225; 5:89; Dāmaghānī, *Wujūh,* ii, 198; Ibn al-Jawzī, *Nuzha,* 531-2; see OATHS).

The Qurʾān asserts of itself: "this is plain/clear Arabic tongue/speech/

language *(lisānun ʿarabiyyun mubīnun)*" (Q 16:103), or that it is "in plain/clear Arabic tongue/speech/language" (Q 26:195). In any case, this was the meaning of these verses according to the exegetes (see EXEGESIS OF THE QURĀN: CLASSICAL AND MEDIEVAL), and most translations have followed their lead, which, as will be discussed below, is problematic. It should be noted that, in Arabic — as in English — the concept of "language" is multivalent, including both an oral and a written manifestation. As will be discussed below, the interplay between these two aspects of language in the formation of the qurʾānic corpus is only imperfectly understood, a situation that leads to contested explanations for certain features of the qurʾānic language (for more on this subject, see ORALITY).

Various general positions on the language and style of the Qurʾān

There are many opposing points of view on the language and style of the Qurʾān, as will appear through a selection of quotations taken from both Muslim and non-Muslim scholars (for reactions of Muslims through the ages, see below). The Muslim translator of the Qurʾān, M. Pickthall (d. 1935), a British convert to Islam, described the Qurʾān as an "inimitable symphony, the very sounds of which move men to tears and ecstasy" (Pickthall, vii). An earlier (non-Muslim) English translator of the Qurʾān, G. Sale (d. 1736) thought that: "The style of the Korân is generally beautiful and fluent, especially where it imitates the prophetic manner and scripture phrases. It is concise and often obscure, adorned with bold figures after the eastern taste, enlivened with florid and sententious expressions, and in many places, especially when the majesty and attributes of God are described (see GOD AND HIS ATTRIBUTES), sublime and magnificent" (*Preliminary discourse,* 66). For the Austrian J. von Hammer-Purgstall (d. 1856): "The Koran is not only the law book of Islam (see LAW AND THE QURʾĀN), but also a masterpiece of Arabic poetic art (see POETRY AND POETS). Only the high magic of the language could give to the speech of Abdallah's son the stamp of the speech (q.v.) of God" (Die letzten vierzig Suren, 25). For F.J. Steingass (d. 1903), the Qurʾān is: "[…] A work, then, which calls forth so powerful and seemingly incompatible emotions even in the distant reader — distant as to time, and still more so as to mental development — a work which not only conquers the repugnance with which he may begin its perusal, but changes this adverse feeling into astonishment and admiration" (Hughes/Steingass, Qurʾān, 526-7). Another translator of the Qurʾān, J. Berque (d. 1995), has tried to find a "diplomatic" solution in the face of the peculiar language and style of the Qurʾān, speaking of its "interlacing structure," "symphonic effects" and "inordinating junctions" (*jonctions démesurantes,* Berque, *Langages,* 200-7; cf. id., *Coran,* 740: "a triangular speech"; id., *Relire,* 33-4), showing with these unusual qualifications the difficulty he had in expressing a consistently positive judgment, such as, "It is not necessary to be a Muslim to be sensitive to the remarkable beauty of this text, to its fullness and universal value" (id., *Relire,* 129).

On the other hand, R. Bell (d. 1952) remarked that, for a long time, occidental scholars called attention to "the grammatical unevennesses and interruption of sense which occur in the Qurʾān" (Bell, *Commentary,* i, xx). Indeed the qurʾānic scholar and Semitist Th. Nöldeke (d. 1930) had already qualified the qurʾānic language as: "drawling, dull and prosaic" (Nöldeke, *Geschichte,* 107, on the sūras of the third Meccan period; cf. id., *De origine,* 55; id., *GQ,* i, 143, n. 2, written by Schwally: "Muḥammad

was at the very most a middle-size stylist"). For this German scholar, "while many parts of the Koran undoubtedly have considerable rhetorical power, even over an unbelieving reader, the book, aesthetically considered, is by no means a first-rate performance" (Nöldeke, Koran, 34). In Strassburg, he also wrote that "the sound linguistic sense of the Arabs (q.v.) almost entirely preserved them from imitating the oddnesses and weaknesses of the qurʾānic language" (Nöldeke, Sprache, 22; Fr. trans. *Remarques,* 34). J. Barth (d. 1914) was struck by "the disruptions of the relations" in the sūras (*Störungen der Zusammenhänge;* Studien, 113). The Iraqi English Semitist A. Mingana (d. 1937) thought that the style of the Qurʾān "suffers from the disabilities that always characterize a first attempt in a new literary language which is under the influence of an older and more fixed literature" (Syriac influence, 78; this older literature being for him Syriac; see SYRIAC AND THE QURʾĀN). For the specialist in Arabic literature and Ṣūfism (see ṢŪFISM AND THE QURʾĀN), R.A. Nicholson (d. 1945), "The preposterous arrangment of the Koran […] is mainly responsible for the opinion held by European readers that it is obscure, tiresome, uninteresting; a farrago of long-winded narratives (q.v.) and prosaic exhortations (q.v.), quite unworthy to be named in the same breath with the Prophetical Books of the Old Testament" (*Literary history,* 161; see FORM AND STRUCTURE OF THE QURʾĀN; SCRIPTURE AND THE QURʾĀN).

Other intellectuals waver between reactions of disgust and attraction in reading the Qurʾān. In this category may be placed J.W. Goethe (d. 1832): "The Koran repeats itself from sura to sura […] with all sort of amplifications, unbridled tautologies and repetitions which constitute the body of this sacred book, which, each time we turn to it, is repugnant, but it soon attracts, astounds, and in the end enforces reverence […]. The style of the Koran, in accordance with its contents and aim is stern, grand, terrible, here and there truly sublime" (Goethe, *Noten,* 33-5).

In fact, there are two conceptions of the Qurʾān. The first is theological and is proper to the world of Islam. It is a matter of beliefs, and because beliefs in the Islamic areas are obligatory, of dogmas (see BELIEF AND UNBELIEF; CREEDS). The other conception is anthropological, and because of the reason just mentioned, it is represented only outside of the world of Islam, although not only by non-Muslims: some Muslims, admittedly very few (and usually not living in Muslim countries), also maintain this conception of the Qurʾān. For those who subscribe to the first conception, the Qurʾān is the eternal speech of God (see WORD OF GOD; ETERNITY; CREATEDNESS OF THE QURʾĀN); for those who maintain the second position, the Qurʾān is a text which has a history. The same conceptual dichotomy is to be found concerning the language and the style of the Qurʾān. To remove any doubt and misunderstanding on this issue we will try to deal with each of these conceptions independently, setting apart the Islamic theological thesis from the hypotheses of the Arabists.

The theological thesis on the language of the Qurʾān

For clarity of exposition, we shall first introduce this thesis in a general and theoretical way, followed by a more detailed development of some points contained therein.

The general formulation of the theological thesis

By "theological thesis" is meant the position which imposed itself definitively in Islam around the fourth/tenth century, but which had already existed from the end of the second/eighth and the beginning of the third/ninth centuries, although not in

such a formalized, theoretical format. It begins with the assertion: The language of the Qurʾān is Arabic. But which Arabic (see DIALECTS)? This question found an answer in Islamic theology, wherein a special way of interpreting the qurʾānic text itself follows the qurʾānic statement: "And we never sent a messenger (q.v.) save with the language/tongue of his folk, that he might make [the message] clear for them" (*li-yubayyina lahum,* Q 14:4). The exegetes conclude from this verse that the language of the Qurʾān is that of Muḥammad and his Companions (see COMPANIONS OF THE PROPHET), understood as the dialect of Ḥijāz (see PRE-ISLAMIC ARABIA AND THE QURʾĀN), and more particularly of the Quraysh (q.v.). To that first identification, qurʾānic Arabic = the Ḥijāzī dialect or the dialect of the Quraysh *(al-lugha al-ḥijāziyya, lughat Quraysh),* they added a second one: the language of the Quraysh = *al-lugha al-fuṣḥā.* This last expression is the Arabic denomination of what the Arabists themselves call "classical Arabic."

That identification originates less in the qurʾānic text than in an Islamic conception of the Qurʾān, as it appears in the work of the philologist and jurist Ibn Fāris (d. 395/1004). In the Qurʾān itself *lugha,* with the meaning of language, or the feminine comparative *fuṣḥā* do not occur, but only the masculine of this last form: "My brother Aaron (q.v.) is more eloquent than me in speech [or, "speaks better than me"; *afṣaḥu minnī lisānan*]" (Q 28:34). This verse shows, however, that the *faṣāḥa* 1) is above all, a quality of the one who speaks, 2) that there are degrees in it, and 3) that it is only metonymically transferred from the locutor to the language, in this case by the means of a specification (in Arabic grammar *tamyīz;* here *lisānan* indicates eloquence "concerning" language).

We find an echo of the qurʾānic formulation in the following affirmation of a scholar of Rayy quoted by Ibn Fāris with a chain of authority (see ḤADĪTH AND THE QURʾĀN), Ismāʿīl b. Abī ʿUbayd Allāh Muʿāwiya b. ʿUbayd Allāh al-Ashʿarī (d. first half third/ninth cent.), whose father was the vizier and secretary of the caliph al-Mahdī: "The Qurayshites are the most refined of the Arabs by their tongues and the purest by their language *(afṣaḥ al-ʿarab alsinatan wa asfāhum lughatan).*" To that affirmation no justification is given, save a dogmatical one: "The reason is that God… has chosen and elected (see ELECTION) them among all the Arabs *(dhālika anna llāha… khtārahum min jamīʿ al-ʿarab wa-ṣṭafāhum),* and among them he has chosen the prophet of mercy (q.v.), Muḥammad" (Ibn Fāris, *al-Ṣāḥibī,* 52; Rabin, *West-Arabian,* 22-3).

The metonymy is again seen at work in the book of the grammarian Ibn Jinnī (d. 392/1002; *Khaṣāʾiṣ,* i, 260; see GRAMMAR AND THE QURʾĀN) saying of the language of the Ḥijāz: "it is the purest and the oldest *(al-lugha al-fuṣḥā al-qudmā).*" Here, it is true, a third idea appears, linking superority to precedence or antiquity. It is already in Sībawayhi (d. 177/793 or 180/796; *Kitāb,* ed. Derenbourg, ii, 37, l. 15; ed. Būlāq, ii, 40; ed. Hārūn, iii, 278): "the Ḥijāzī is the first and oldest language" (*wa-l-ḥijāziyya hiya l-lugha l-ūlā l-qudmā;* Levin, Sībawayhi's attitude, 215-6, and n. 61). Of course, this declaration could be a later interpolation. It is the qualification of a philologist, the counterpart of the concept of "the corruption of language" *(fasād al-lugha):* to say that language is subject to corruption is to aknowledge but also to condemn linguistic change, which is diachronic. Traditionally the linguistic superiority of the Quraysh has been seen as the consequence of their being at greatest remove from the non-Arabic speaking areas: "Therefore, the dialect [or, better, "manner of speaking," Fr. *parler,* Ger. *Redeweise*] of the Quraysh

was the most correct and purest Arabic dialect *(afṣaḥa l-lughāti l-ʿarabiyyati wa-aṣfaḥa),* because the Quraysh were on all sides far removed from the lands of the non-Arabs" (Ibn Khaldūn, *ʿIbar,* 1072; Eng. trans. Ibn Khaldūn-Rosenthal, iii, 343). But Ibn Fāris himself (*al-Ṣāḥibī,* 52) considers this superiority to be the product of the selection of the best elements of the different Arabic dialects, a selection made possible by the fact that Mecca (q.v.) was the center of an inter-tribal pilgrimage (q.v.; we shall see the interpretation given by Kahle to this conception).

The Qurʾān on its own language and style. Does the Qurʾān really say it is in "a clear Arabic tongue"?

As the Qurʾān is a very self-referential text (Wild, *Mensch,* 33), it has often been said that it was "somewhat self-conscious with respect to its language" (Jenssen, Arabic language, 132), providing commentary on its own language, style, and perhaps arrangement. Support for this view is drawn, first of all, from the apparent qurʾānic qualification of itself as being "plain/clear Arabic tongue/speech/language."

It would appear, however, that most of the occurrences of *lisān* in the Qurʾān refer to "tongue" as a vocal organ (Wansbrough, *QS,* 99; see also LANGUAGE, CONCEPT OF), like Q 39:28: "A lecture in Arabic, containing no crookedness (*ghayra dhī ʿiwajin,* without distortion)"; and in this case it can be related to a topos of prophetical communication (see PROPHETS AND PROPHETHOOD; REVELATION AND INSPIRATION), reflecting the speech difficulties associated with the calling of Moses (q.v.; Exodus 4:10-7): "O my lord, I am not eloquent, neither heretofore, nor since you have spoken unto your servant, but I am slow of speech, and of a slow tongue" (verse 10). The Qurʾān, too, knows this story, as evidenced by Q 20:27, wherein Moses says: "And loose a knot from my tongue" (cf. also Q 28:34, "My brother Aaron is more eloquent than me in speech *[afṣaḥu minnī lisānan],*" which is a reversal of Exodus 4:14-5: "Is not Aaron thy brother? I know that he can speak well […]. And thou shalt speak unto him, and put words in his mouth and I will be with thy mouth [or: I will help you speak], and with his mouth."). Such is the case also for Q 19:97: "And we make it [this scripture] easy for your tongue *(yassarnāhu bi-lisānika)*." It should be noted that the same expression in Q 44:58 has been translated by Pickthall, with no apparent reason for translating the two passages differently, as: "[…] easy in thy language." This theme becomes a refrain in Q 54:17, 22, 40: "And in truth we have made the Qurʾān easy to remember" (see MEMORY). Such texts "could support the hypothesis that linguistic allusions in the Qurʾān are not to the Arabic language but rather, to the task of prophetical communication" (Wansbrough, *QS,* ibid.; cf. Robinson, *Discovering,* 158-9).

The Qurʾān says not only that it is in Arabic or Arabic tongue/speech/language *(lisān),* but it seems also to declare that it is in a plain/clear *(mubīn)* tongue/speech/language: "We have revealed it, a lecture *(qurʾānan)* in Arabic" (Q 12:2; 20:113); "We revealed it, a decisive utterance *(ḥukman)* in Arabic" (Q 13:37); "a lecture in Arabic" (Q 39:28; 41:3; 42:7; 43:3); "this is a confirming scripture in the Arabic language" *(lisānan ʿarabiyyan)* (Q 46:12); "in plain Arabic speech" *(bi-lisānin ʿarabiyyin mubīnin)* (Q 26:195; cf. 16:103; see Rippin, Foreign vocabulary, 226).

The reasons why the Qurʾān insists on the quality and value of its own language seem to be polemical and apologetic (see POLEMIC AND POLEMICAL LANGUAGE). The argument for its Arabic character, first of all, should be put in relation with Q 14:4: "We never sent a messenger save with the language/tongue of his folk *(bi-lisāni*

qawmihi), that he might make [the message] clear for them." This declaration, by stressing the language of this messenger (Muḥammad) and this folk (the Arabs), can be understood as a declaration of the ethnocentric nature of this prophetic mission, but also as a divine proof of its universality (Wansbrough, *QS,* 52-3, 98), challenging another sacred language, Hebrew (op. cit. 81), perhaps also Syriac, or more generally Aramaic (see INFORMANTS).

But in stressing that it is in Arabic, the Qurʾān answers also to accusations which were adressed to Muḥammad during the Meccan period (see OPPOSITION TO MUḤAMMAD): "And we know well what they say: Only a man teaches him. The speech of whom they falsely hint *(yulḥidūna ilayhi)* is outlandish *(aʿjamī),* and this is clear Arabic speech" (Q 16:103). The commentators explain *yulḥidūna* (Kūfan reading: *yalḥadūna;* Ṭabarī, *Tafsīr,* xiv, 180; see READINGS OF THE QURʾĀN) by "to incline to, to become fond of" (Muqātil, *Tafsīr,* ii, 487; Farrāʾ, *Maʿānī,* ii, 113), which is the meaning of the Arabic *laḥada*. But these explanations seem not to be convincing. Indeed, it has been shown elsewhere that the linguistic and social context to which this verse refers could be a Syriac one: the Arabic root *l-ḥ-d,* being probably an adaptation of the Syriac *lʿez,* "to speak enigmatically," "to allude to," like the Arabic root *l-gh-z* (Luxenberg, *Lesart,* 87-91; Gilliot, Coran, § 6; see also INFORMANTS).

The contrast of *aʿjamī,* often understood as barbarous or outlandish, with *ʿarabī*/ Arabic, becomes very significant, if we consider Q 41:44: "And if we had appointed it a lecture in a foreign tongue *(qurʾānan aʿjamiyyan)* they would assuredly have said: If only its verses (q.v.) were expounded *(fuṣṣilat)* [so that we might understand]? What! A foreign tongue and an Arab *(aʿjamiyyun wa-ʿarabiyyun)*?" (or, in the rendition of Arberry: "If We had made it a barbarous Koran […] Why are its signs (q.v.) not distinguished? What, barbarous and Arabic?"). *Fuṣṣilat* was undertood by an early exegete, al-Suddī (d. 128/745), as "clarified" (*buyyinat,* Ṭabarī, *Tafsīr,* xxiv, 127; Thaʿlabī, *Tafsīr,* not quoting al-Suddī: "whose verses are clear; they reach us so that we understand it. We are a people of Arabs, we have nothing to do with non-Arabs *[ʿajamiyya]*"; cf. Muqātil, *Tafsīr,* iii, 746: "Why are its verses not expounded clearly in Arabic?").

The expression "In plain/clear Arabic speech/tongue *(bi-lisānin ʿarabiyyin mubīnin)*" (Q 26:195; cf. 16:103) still needs more reflection, because the translation given here is — like most translations of the phrase — misleading from the point of view of morphology, and consequently of semantics. *Mubīn* is the active participle of the causative-factitive *abāna,* which can be understood as: "making [things] clear." Such an understanding of that expression is suggested by Q 14:4, which utilizes the causative factitive *bayyana:* "And we never sent a messenger save with the language/ tongue of his folk, that he might *make* [the message] *clear* for them *(li-yubayyina lahum)*."

But the adjectival opposition found in Q 16:103 between *aʿjamī* on the one hand, and *ʿarabī* and *mubīn,* on the other, was understood by the exegetes as "barbarous," i.e. non-Arabic *(ʿajamī)* and indistinct *(aʿjamī),* in contradistinction with clear/ pure Arabic (Wansbrough, *QS,* 98-9; see LANGUAGE, CONCEPT OF; for the opposing traditional view, variously expressed, i.e. "in clear Arabic/pure tongue," see Widengren, *Apostle,* 151-2, in relation to the question of a pre-Islamic Arabic translation of the Bible; Horovitz, *KU,* 75).

The consequence, according to the theologians, is that the Qurʾān must be in a "smooth, soft, and plain/distinct speech

(sahl, layyin, wāḍiḥ)": "In the Qurʾān there is no unusual/obscure *(gharīb)* sound-complex *(ḥarf)* from the manner of speaking *(lugha)* of the Quraysh, save three, because the speech *(kalām)* of the Quraysh is smooth, soft, and plain/distinct, and the speech of the [other] Arabs is uncivilized *(waḥshī),* unusual/obscure" (Abū l-ʿIzz Wāsiṭī, d. 521/1127, *al-Irshād fī l-qirāʾāt al-ʿashr,* quoted by Suyūṭī, *Itqān,* chap. 37, ed. Ibrāhīm, ii, 124). This dogma of the alleged superiority of the Ḥijāzī dialect did not have, in reality, great consequences in choosing among the various readings of the Qurʾān. In fact, "the home dialect of the Prophet has not occupied a particular place" in the qurʾānic readings (Beck, ʿArabiyya, 182), but, rather, the grammarians and exegetes tried to preserve a certain scientific autonomy in this respect (Gilliot, Précellence, 100; id., *Elt,* 135-64; 171-84). Some contemporary Muslim scholars have, for this reason, accused them of "distorting" the qurʾānic readings, e.g. the book entitled "Defence of the readings transmitted via different channels against the exegete al-Ṭabarī" (Anṣārī, *Difāʿ ʿan al-qirāʾāt al-mutawātira*…).

The superiority of the Arabic language and the excellence of the Arabic of the Qurʾān

The Muslim scholars of religious sciences (see TRADITIONAL DISCIPLINES OF QURʾĀNIC STUDY) and the ancient Arab philologists have spared no effort in enhancing the alleged superiority of the Arabic language over other languages: "Of all tongues, that of the Arabs is the richest and the most extensive in ways of expression *(madhhaban)*. Do we know any man except a prophet who apprehended all of it?" (Shāfiʿī [d. 204/820], *Risāla,* 42, no. 138/[modified] Eng. trans., 88; Fr. trans., 69; Ibn Fāris, *al-Ṣāḥibī,* 40-7; Goldziher, Sprachgelehrsamkeit, iii, 207-11). The Kūfan exegete, grammarian and jurist, al-Farrāʾ (d. 207/822), explains the superiority of the speech of the Quraysh in a particular way, namely as based upon the pilgrimage and their outstanding taste and capacity of selection: "[His fictive interlocutor saying] Sagacity and beauty came to them merely because the Arabs were accustomed to come to the sanctuary for *ḥajj* and *ʿumra,* both their women and men. The women made the circuit round the House unveiled and performed the ceremonies with uncovered faces. So they selected them by sight and thought after of dignity and beauty. By this they gained superiority besides those qualities by which they were particularly distinguished. [al-Farrāʾ answers] We said: In the same way they were accustomed to hear from the tribes of the Arabs their dialects; so they could choose from every dialect that which was the best in it. So their speech became elegant and nothing of the more vulgar forms of speech was mixed up with it" (a text of al-Farrāʾ in Kahle, *Geniza,* 345; Eng. trans. Kahle, Arabic readers, 70). In a word, the Quraysh through their sagacity in choice were prepared to become the "chosen people of God" in language, that is Arabic.

The Muʿtazilite theologian and man of letters, al-Jāḥiẓ (d. 255/867; see MUʿTAZILĪS) is no less explicit on this subject, using the example of poetry whose "excellence is limited to the Arabs and to those who speak the tongue of the Arabs, and it is impossible that [Arabic] poetry should be translated and it cannot be conveyed [into another language]." He explains that, in translation, the meter, the rhyme, the rhythm, arrangement *(nazm)* and verse would be destroyed. Of course, everybody, including al-Jāḥiẓ, is familiar with the difficulty of translating poetry. But for this theologian only the Arabs have poetry in the sense of the Arabic term *qaṣīda* (odes) and accord with its norms; his primary

point is the superiority of the Arabic language as a presupposition for the excellence of the qurʾānic Arabic (Jāḥiẓ, *Ḥayawān,* i, 74-5; Gilliot, *Elt,* 86). We could, of course, continue to quote a number of philologists, exegetes and theologians on this matter drawn from all periods of Islamic history up to the present day; but these samples are sufficient to provide an insight into the essential features of this apologetic discourse.

The "Challenge Verses"

In the religious *imaginaire* on the language of the Qurʾān, the Challenge Verses (*āyāt al-taḥaddī:* Q 2:23; 10:38; 11:13; 17:88; 52:33-4; see Wansbrough, *QS,* 79-82; Gilliot, *Elt,* 84-6; Radscheit, *Herausforderung;* van Ess, *TG,* iv, 607-8; see also PROVOCATION; INIMITABILITY) have also played a major role in the elaboration of a conception of a *lingua sacra*. These verses continue to be an important theme of Muslim apologetics, although they might be better explained in the context of Jewish polemics. The objection of the adversaries of Muḥammad here seems to have had nothing to do with language, and the answer of the Qurʾān, "then bring a sūra like unto it," also appears not to refer to language (see SŪRAS). Three of these verses are a response to the accusation of forgery (q.v.) against Muḥammad: "He has invented it" (*iftarāhu,* Q 10:38; 11:13; *taqawwalahu,* Q 52:33). The framework indicates a "'rabbinical' test of prophethood" (Wansbrough, *QS,* 79): "Verily, though humankind and the jinn (q.v.) should assemble to produce the like of this Qurʾān, they could not…" (Q 17: 88). The audience was not at all impressed by the product given by Muḥammad, which they did not find particularly coherent — in any case, not as coherent as the other revealed books (Muqātil, *Tafsīr*, iii, 234; Ṭabarī, *Tafsīr,* xix, 10, ad Q 25:32; van Ess, *TG,* iv, 608; see BOOK): "Why is the Qurʾān not revealed unto him all at once? [It is revealed] thus that we may strengthen your heart (q.v.) therewith; and we have arranged it in right order" (*wa-rattalnāhu tartīlan;* Arberry: "better in exposition," Q 25:32).

But the same verbal noun *(nomen verbi), tartīl,* is problematic (Paret, *Kommentar,* 492). Several interpretations have been given by ancient exegetes: to proceed in a leisurely manner, pronounce distinctly, to recite part after part (Ṭabarī, *Tafsīr,* xxix, 126-7, ad Q 73:4; Lane, *Lexicon,* i, 1028). Besides, it can be understood elsewhere as recitation or cantilation: "and chant the Qurʾān in measure" (*wa-rattili l-qurʾāna tartīlan,* Q 73:4; Arberry: "and chant the Koran very distinctly"; Andrae, *Ursprung,* 192: "and recite the Koran in equal sections"). But this last passage has been also understood as "and make the Qurʾān distinct," perhaps alluding to Muḥammad "at the labour in composition" (Bell, *Origin,* 97; id., *Commentary,* ii, 444). It could also refer to the style of the Qurʾān: "the sense of the word [in Q 25:32] is not exactly known, but it is likely to refer to the rhyme, the existence of which cannot be denied" (Mingana, Qurʾān, 545 b).

The adversaries of Muḥammad — but not only they — in fact, most of the Quraysh were not particularly impressed by the language or the content of his predication: "muddled dreams (see DREAMS AND SLEEP); nay, he has but invented it; nay, he is but a poet. Let him bring us a portent even as those of old [i.e. messengers] were sent [with portents]" (Q 21:5; Blachère, *Histoire,* ii, 232). Despite the original auditors' apparent skepticism as to the excellence of the qurʾānic language, Muslim exegetes, philologists, jurists and theologians (see THEOLOGY AND THE QURʾĀN) opened the door to an elaboration of sacral representations and mythical constructions on the pre-eminence of the Arabic language and the supposed superiority and inimitability of the qurʾānic language,

sentiments which were not present *expressis verbis* in the Qurʾān.

The foreign words

But Q 41:44 became also a *locus classicus* in qurʾānic exegesis in the debate over the occurrence of foreign words in the Qurʾān (in addition to Rippin, Foreign vocabulary, 226, see Ibn al-Jawzī, *Funūn,* 186-93) and, with Q 16:103, on the informants of Muḥammad (see Madigan, *Self-image,* 199-200; see also INFORMANTS). Some ancient exegetes had general pronouncements on the issue: according to the Kūfan companion of Ibn Masʿūd, Abū Maysara al-Hamdānī (d. 63/682): "There are [expressions] in the Qurʾān from every language *(lisān)*" (Ibn Abī Shayba, *Muṣannaf,* [*Kītāb* 22. *Faḍāʾil al-Qurʾān, bāb* 7], vi, 121, no. 29953; Ṭabarī, *Tafsīr,* i, 14, no. 6/Eng. trans. *Commentary,* i, 13; Suyūṭī, *Itqān,* chap. 38, ed. Ibrāhīm, ii, 126; id, *Muhadhdhab,* 194, ed. al-Hāshimī, 60-1). The same words are also attributed to the Khurasānī exegete al-Ḍaḥḥāk b. Muzāḥim (d. 105/723; Ibn Abī Shayba, ibid., no. 29952; Suyūṭī, *Muhadhdhab,* 194, ed. al-Hāshimī, 61). Or, according to another Kūfan, Saʿīd b. Jubayr (d. 95/714): "There is no language *(lugha)* on the earth which God has not revealed in the Qurʾān. And he [Ibn Jubayr or somebody else in the chain] said: the name of Jibrīl (Gabriel, q.v.) is the servant/man *(ʿabd)* of God, and the name of Mikāʾīl (Michael, q.v.) is the small servant/man of God" (see for this etymology Ṭabarī, *Tafsīr,* ii, 389-92, ad Q 2:97: *jabr* means *ʿabd,* servant/man). Wansbrough (followed, unfortunately, by Gilliot, *Elt,* 103), writes that the tradition of Ibn Jubayr was transmitted by Muqātil (*QS,* 218). It is indeed in Muqātil (*Tafsīr,* ii, 606), but it was added with a chain of authority by one of the transmitters of this book, ʿAbdallāh b. Thābit al-Tawwazī (d. 308/920; Gilliot, Muqātil, 41; see ḤADĪTH AND THE QURʾĀN). Or, according to Wahb b. Munabbih (d. 110/728): "There are only a few languages which are not represented in some way in the Qurʾān" (Suyūṭī, *Itqān,* chap. 38, ed. Ibrāhīm, ii, 135; id., *Muhadhdhab,* 213, ed. al-Hāshimī, 106-7; id., *Durr,* i, 335, l. 16-7, ad Q 2: 260, quoted from the qurʾānic commentary of Abū Bakr b. al-Mundhir, d. 318/930). But the tradition of Ibn Jubayr is also presented as one of the occasions of the revelation (q.v.) of the verse under discussion, Q 41:44 (Ṭabarī, *Tafsīr,* xxiv, 127; Thaʿlabī, *Tafsīr,* ad Q 41:44), because of the word *aʿjamī,* linked by ancient exegetes to the theme of the informants (Muqātil, *Tafsīr,* iii, 745-6; Thaʿlabī, *Tafsīr,* quoting Muqātil; see Gilliot, Informants, 513). That which "is not of the speech of the Arabs" was not, however, to everybody's taste, and some ancient philologists who had extreme arabophile sentiments had hard opinions on this issue and condemned others: "some knowledgeable *(naḥārīr)* [philologists] sometimes introduce non-Arabic words as pure Arabic out of their desire to mislead people and make them fail" (al-Khalīl b. Aḥmad, d. 175/791, *Kītāb al-ʿAyn,* i, 53, quoted by Talmon, *Arabic grammar,* 122).

All this entirely contradicts the quasi-dogma of the "purity" of the Arabic of the Qurʾān, but a theologian can always find a solution to a seeming contradiction, namely by transforming its object into a quality or a "miracle" (q.v.): "Other books were revealed only in the language of the nation to whom they were adressed, while the Qurʾān contains words from all Arabic dialects, and from Greek, Persian, and Ethiopic besides" (Ibn al-Naqīb, d. 698/1298, in Suyūṭī, *Itqān,* chap. 38, ed. Ibrāhīm, ii, 127; Gilliot, *Elt,* 101; Rabin, *West-Arabian,* 19). It is possible that a tradition attributed to Muḥammad and transmitted from Ibn Masʿūd had an influence here on the theological representation of the superiority of the Qurʾān over the other revealed books: "The first book was

revealed from a single door, in a single manner (*ḥarf,* or, "genre, sound-complex"; this last, in other contexts, according to Rabin, *West-Arabian,* 9), but the Qurʾān was revealed in seven manners…" (Ṭabarī, *Tafsīr,* ed. Shākir, i, 68, no. 67; Gilliot, Les sept "lectures." II, 56; id., Langue, 91-2).

The problems of qurʾānic grammar

Up until the present day, special books have been written by Muslims on this issue, particularly with the aim of finding a solution to the following problem: "What the grammarians forbid, although it occurs in the Qurʾān" (Ḥassūn, *al-Naḥw l-qurʾānī,* 12-114; Anṣārī, *Nazariyya;* see also GRAMMAR AND THE QURʾĀN), or related issues, like "The defence of the Qurʾān against the grammarians and the Orientalists" (Anṣārī, *al-Difāʿ ʿan al-Qurʾān*…).

The mythical narratives on the superiority of Arabic

Interpretrations of the passages of the Qurʾān that understand the language in a sacral and theological orientation, combined with ethnocentric Arab conceptions, have contributed to the elaboration of a hierarchy of languages, at the summit of which stands Arabic. Even if these ideas existed before, they were only systematically collected during the second half of the second/eighth and the third/ninth centuries. The constitution of an empire and the construction of a mythical conception of a common "perfect" language go together.

We find a statement about this hierarchy by the Cordoban jurist and historian ʿAbd al-Malik b. Ḥabīb (d. 238/852), for whom the languages of the "prophets" were Arabic, Syriac and Hebrew: All the sons of Israel (q.v.; i.e. Jacob, q.v.) spoke Hebrew (see also CHILDREN OF ISRAEL); the first whom God allowed to speak it was Isaac (q.v.). Syriac was the language of five prophets: Idrīs (q.v.), Noah (q.v.), Abraham (q.v.), Lot (q.v.) and Jonah (q.v.). Twelve of them spoke Arabic: Adam (see ADAM AND EVE), Seth, Hūd (q.v.), Ṣāliḥ (q.v.), Ishmael (q.v.), Shuʿayb (q.v.), al-Khiḍr (see KHAḌIR/KHIḌR), "the three in Sūrat Yā Sīn" (Q 36:14), Jonah, Khālid b. Sinān al-ʿAbsī, and Muḥammad. According to ʿAbd al-Malik b. Ḥabīb, Adam first spoke Arabic, but later this language was distorted and changed into Syriac (ʿAbd al-Malik b. Ḥabīb, *Taʾrīkh,* 27-8; Suyūṭī, *Muzhir,* i, 30-1/Eng. trans. Czapkiewicz, *Views,* 66-7; Goldziher, *Grammar,* 44-5; Loucel, Origine. IV, 167-8).

This last opinion is supported by a tradition attributed to an individual often cited on such matters, the cousin and Companion of Muḥammad (who was ca. 10 years old when Muḥammad died), namely Ibn ʿAbbās (d. 69/688): "His [i.e. Adam's] language in paradise (q.v.) was Arabic, but when he disobeyed his lord (q.v.), God deprived him of Arabic, and he spoke Syriac. God, however, restored him to his grace *(tāba ʿalayhi),* and he gave him back Arabic" (Ibn ʿAsākir, *Taʾrīkh,* vii, 407; Suyūṭī, *Muzhir,* i, 30; Loucel, Origine. IV, 167). It has been said that Adam "spoke 700,000 languages, of which the best was Arabic" (Thaʿlabī, *Tafsīr,* ad Q 55:4, from an anonymous source; Goldziher, *Grammar,* 45, quoting Baghawī, *Maʿālim,* presently still only in manuscript form; but the figure "700" in Baghawī, *Maʿālim,* iv, 266 has to be corrected!). The exegetes *(ahl al-taʾwīl)* explain the diversity of languages in the following way: God taught all the languages to Adam, but when his sons were scattered, each of them spoke one language, then each group that issued from them spoke its own language (Wāḥidī, *Wasīṭ,* i, 116; Nīsābūrī, *Tafsīr,* i, 220; Abū Ḥayyān, *Baḥr,* i, 145, ad Q 2:31).

These endeavors of the Muslim exegetes and theologians express a mimetic concurrence with trends found among the Jews

(see JEWS AND JUDAISM) and the Syrians; for the latter, however, Adam spoke Syriac/Aramaic (Grünbaum, *Beiträge,* 63). Other sources refer to seventy two, seventy or eighty languages in the world (Goldziher, *Grammar,* 45-6; Loucel, Origine. IV, 169-70: only for 72).

The influence of the theological representations appears in the desperate attempts of the jurists to give sense to a set of contradictory, or disparate, ideas or facts: at the beginning there was a single language which God taught to Adam (see KNOWLEDGE AND LEARNING), and it was, of course, the best one, Arabic (because the Qurʾān is in Arabic); there are several languages; the Arabic of the Qurʾān is the best Arabic; the Prophet was an Arab, and he belonged to the tribe of Quraysh (see TRIBES AND CLANS). One of the solutions found, with recourse to legends and argumentation, was the following: at the beginning God taught a single language to humankind; the other languages were taught only later to the offspring of Noah, after the flood (according to Abū Manṣūr ʿAbd al-Qāhir al-Baghdādī, d. 429/1037); according to Ibn ʿAbbās, the first to speak Arabic was Ishmael, which is interpreted as "pure Arabic," meaning the Arabic of the Quraysh, "because the Arabic of Qaḥtān and Ḥimyar [South Arabic] was spoken before Ishmael" (Zarkashī, *Baḥr,* ii, 16; Suyūṭī, *Muzhir,* i, 27, quoting him; Goldziher, *Grammar,* 44).

These mythical narratives on language which are quoted in different genres of literature (exegesis, historiography, *adab,* etc.), and, even up to the present, appear in popular books, play a major role in the linguistic *imaginaire* of the Muslims. They are as important as the arguments of the scholars, who, moreover, also quote them to confirm their line of argument and to establish it definitively in the minds of their readers (for the origin of speech according to the grammarian Ibn Jinnī, see Versteegh, *Arabic linguistic tradition,* 100-14; on al-Suyūṭī's [d. 911/1505] presentation, see A. Czapkiewicz, *Views,* 64-6).

The "creation" of a Prophet against his competitors (poets, soothsayers, orators, story-tellers, etc.)

The strategy of Muḥammad and of the first generations of Muslim scholars concerning poetry and poets had a reason other than the traditional tribal defense of honor (q.v.; *ʿirḍ;* Nahshalī, *Mumtiʿ,* 220-7: How the Arabs protected themselves and defended their honor with poetry; Jacob, *Beduinenleben,* 176-8; Farès, *Honneur,* passim), even if Muḥammad saw himself more and more as a supra-tribal chief and was concerned to defend his own reputation. This other reason was a linguistically theological one.

Not only had the Qurʾān to be sharply distinguished from poetry (Hirschberg, *Jüdische und christliche Lehren,* 27-32; Gilliot, Poète, 378-9, § 111, 116) and the rhymed prose (q.v.; *sajʿ*) of the Arab soothsayers (q.v.), but its superiority to poetry had to be demonstrated, an idea which was not obvious. Before the Arab poets, diviners (see DIVINATION; FORETELLING) and orators, Muḥammad had to "create" himself with the help of his supporters and to be "created" by the first generations of Muslim scholars. *The* Prophet whose language was excellent, "the most Arab of the Arabs," is depicted as, after his birth, having been placed in the care of another in order to be nursed (see LACTATION; WET-NURSING; FOSTERAGE) and brought up in clans whose Arabic was the "purest" (see also SĪRA AND THE QURʾĀN). According to the Companion Abū Saʿīd al-Khudrī, Muḥammad is supposed to have said: "I am the Prophet who does not lie (q.v), I am the son of ʿAbd al-Muṭṭalib, I am the one who speaks the best Arabic (or "the most Arab of the Arabs," *aʿrab al-ʿArab*). The Quraysh has procreated

me, I grew up in the tribe of Saʿd b. Bakr [his nurse Ḥalīma was of that clan]! [So you should not ask] from where this my manner of speaking comes *(fa-annā yaʾtīnī l-laḥnu)*" (Ṭabarānī, *Kabīr,* vi, 35-6, no. 5437; Ibn al-Sarrāj al-Shantarīnī, *Tanbīh,* 121-2; Gilliot, Poète, 385). Or: "Of you, I am the one whose Arabic is the best *(anā aʿrabukum),* I am from the Quraysh, my language is that of the Saʿd b. Bakr" (Ibn Saʿd, *Ṭabaqāt,* i, 113; cf. Suyūṭī, *Khaṣāʾiṣ,* i, 63); "I am of the Arabs whose language is the most pure and understandable *(anā afṣaḥ al-ʿArab)*." This long translation is the nearest to the meaning of *faṣīḥ* at this time: whose Arabic is *"rein, verständlich,"* in opposition to the foreign languages, but also to the Arabic of the Arabs of the "frontiers" (Vollers, in his review of Nöldeke *[Zur Grammatik],* 126). Or: "I am the most eloquent creature" (Suyūṭī, *Muzhir,* i, 209-13; Wansbrough, *Qs,* 93-4). Or, more expressly in relation to the Qurʾān: "Love the Arabs for three reasons, because I am Arab, the Qurʾān is Arabic, and the speech of the people of paradise is Arabic" (Ibn al-Anbārī, *Īḍāḥ,* i, 21; Kahle, Qurʾān, 174, no. 28; 173, no. 22; cf. Muqātil b. Sulaymān declaring: "The speech *[kalām]* of the inhabitants of the sky is Arabic"; Ibn al-Sarrāj al-Shantarīnī, *Tanbīh,* 77. This declaration was included in a tradition attributed to Muḥammad which continues: "and their language when they are standing before God in the last judgment [q.v.]"; Kahle, Qurʾān, 173-4, no. 25).

It should be noticed that these declarations of (or sayings attributed to) Muḥammad on the best language pertain to the categories of the pride (q.v.; *fakhr*) of the ancient Arabs and their poetry, and that they can be extended to other fields, for instance in that other saying of Muḥammad transmitted from the Companion Anas b. Mālik: "I was made superior to people with four qualities: generosity (see GIFT-GIVING), bravery (see COURAGE), frequency of sexual intercourse *(kathrat al-jimāʿ),* great violence *(shiddat al-baṭsh)*" (Abū Bakr al-Ismāʿīlī, *Muʿjam,* ii, 621-2, no. 251; Ibn ʿAsākir, *Taʾrīkh,* viii, 69-70). These traditional tribal values of the ancient Arabs, and above all the quality of the language, were transformed into proofs of prophecy.

This was and still is a necessary presupposition to persuade the Arabs and the non-Arab Muslims of the so-called superiority and inimitability of the qurʾānic language, style and content (Gilliot, *Elt,* 73-93, but also chaps. four and five). Through lack of written Arabic texts at their disposal (see ORALITY AND WRITING IN ARABIA), they could only lean on the "thesaurus of the Arabs" *(dīwān al-ʿArab),* poetry, according to a celebrated declaration attributed again to Ibn ʿAbbās (Ibn al-Anbārī, *Īḍāḥ,* i, 99-101, no. 118, 120; taken up by Suyūṭī, *Itqān,* chap. 36, 281, ed. Ibrāhīm, ii, 67; Wansbrough, *Qs,* 217; Gilliot, Poète, 374-5; cf. Goldziher, *Richtungen,* 70). This ancient poetry became a benediction from the divine favor (see BLESSING; GRACE) because the "best language," Arabic, was destined to prepare the coming of a still "more excellent" language, tongue and speech, the language of the Qurʾān (Abū Ḥātim al-Rāzī, *Zīna,* i, 92), the *lingua linguarum, scilicet Verbum Dei!*

But these scholars were conscious that the poet had been a dangerous competitor to the Prophet of Islam and to the text he presented as revelation (Gilliot, Poète, 331-2; 380-8). Indeed, according to the Baṣran philologist, also a specialist in ancient poetry and qurʾānic readings, Abū ʿAmr b. al-ʿAlāʾ (d. 154/771), in a statement transmitted by his pupil, the Baṣran philologist al-Aṣmaʿī (d. 213/828): "The poets occupied, among the Arabs (bedouins, see BEDOUIN) during the Age of Ignorance (q.v.), the rank occupied by prophets in the nations [which have received a revelation];

then the sedentaries entered in relation with them *(khālaṭahum)* and were taken on by poetry *(iktasabū bi-l-shiʿri),* and the poets lost their rank. And after that came Islam and the revelation of the Qurʾān, and poetry became vilified and qualified as falsehood *(bi-tahjīn al-shiʿr wa-takdhībihi)*. As a consequence, the poets lost their rank even further. At last they used flattery and fawning *(al-malaq wa-l-taḍarruʿ),* and people disdained them" (Abū Ḥātim al-Rāzī, *Zīna,* i, 95; cf. Nahshalī, *Mumtiʿ,* 25). This ideological break between the "Age of Ignorance" — in another epistemological context the "savage thought" of C. Levi-Strauss — and Islam will lead Muslim scholars to a paradox: on the one hand, pre-Islamic poets and poetry are disparaged, but on the other hand their language, although it is, from their point of view, less sublime than the language of the Qurʾān, is extraordinarily praised because the verses of these poets are considered to be the best, sometimes the only evidence that can be quoted as support *(shawāhid)* for argumentation in the sciences of language (Baghdādī, *Khizāna,* i, 5-17/Fr. trans. Gilliot, Citations, 297-316). A certain nostalgia may be seen behind the laudatory break which al-Aṣmaʿī traces between "savage thought" on the one hand and "culture" — here, Islam — on the other when he declares: "Poetry is harsh *(nakid);* therefore it is strong and easy in evil (see GOOD AND EVIL), but if it is used in good, it becomes weak. For instance, Hassān b. Thābit was one of the best poets *(fuḥūl al-shuʿarāʾ)* in the Age of Ignorance, but when Islam came, his poetry was dropped *(saqaṭa shiʿruhu)*" (Ibn al-Athīr, *Usd,* ii, 6, l. 17-18; Goldziher, Alte und neue Poesie, 136; with some difference in Ibn Qutayba, *al-Shiʿr,* 170, l. 9-11). But al-Aṣmaʿī, like the other philologists, collectors of poetry, jurists, exegetes, etc., is "at the borders of the orality (q.v.) to which he wishes to put an end […]. The *ʿālim* [scholar] establishes a civilization of literacy and of its ways of thinking. As the builder of a culture he wants to control the relations between written science and knowledge which is orally transmitted" (Bencheikh, *Essai,* II).

But before poetry came to be controlled by philologists who were also jurists and specialists in the Qurʾān, traditions were employed to create a "united" language, or, better, the imaginary model of such a language, which had to be, more or less, in accordance with the "qurʾānic model." These prophetic, or alleged prophetic, traditions had to be recalled, produced, or coined, against or in favor of poetry, giving a certain status to poets and poetry, so that they would not be competitors to the Prophet and to the book he had delivered. Ancient poetry was necessary to explain, justify and enhance the alleged pre-eminence of the qurʾānic language; but it had also to be put in its "proper place," so that the Qurʾān should not be compared with human productions.

The philologists and theologians, in arranging and harmonizing the different and even contradictory traditions which circulated about the Arabic of the Qurʾān, the "eloquence" of the Prophet and of the Arabs — traditions whose enormous numbers, variety, contradictions and repetitions make the reader's head swim, so that one is tempted simply to believe them and stick to the reasoning of the theologians — have established the enduring conception of a *lingua sacra*. Not only believers, but also many Orientalists in their presentations of the Arabic and qurʾānic language have been influenced by the power of this conviction.

The hypotheses of the Arabists

A gulf lies between the theological thesis and the approach of a linguist, as it already appears in the following declaration

of one of the founders of the Arabists' school, F.L. Fleischer (d. 1888): "The question for us is not: What is the purest, the most beautiful and correct Arabic, but what is Arabic in general?" (Über arabische Lexicographie, 5).

What constitutes the strength of the theological thesis for believers is precisely what represents its weakness for the critical scholar: It is based only on the qurʾānic text and upon conviction, without any verification of another nature. The extant (and scanty) epigraphic material (see EPIGRAPHY AND THE QURʾĀN) that evidences a language close to classical Arabic, insofar as its graphemes and the hazards of deciphering them allow, comes exclusively from northern Arabia (see ARABIC SCRIPT; ORTHOGRAPHY). More precisely, it is from areas that were under the control of the Ghassān and the Lakhm, considered to be Arabs whose "linguistic habit was not perfect *(fa-lam takun lughatuhum tāmmat al-malaka)*" "because they had contact with non-Arabs *(bi-mukhālaṭat al-aʿājim)*" (Ibn Khaldūn, *ʿIbar,* 1072/Eng. trans. Ibn Khaldūn-Rosenthal, iii, 343).

Moreover, from the data preserved by the Arab grammarians and compiled by Rabin (*West-Arabian*, passim), it appears that pre-Islamic Arabic was heterogenous, but that a regional east-west differentiation could be seen in it (for a detailed list of the features, above all morphological and syntactic, see Blachère, *Histoire,* i, 70-5; Versteegh, *Arabic,* 41-6). Now, what the Arabs call *al-lugha al-fuṣḥā* and the Arabists term classical Arabic coincides with neither eastern nor western Arabic, although — taken as a whole — it is closer to the eastern sphere.

The different arabist hypotheses have their origin in the contradiction between the theological thesis and these data. These hypotheses can be reduced to two: one weak, the other strong. Moreover, they have in common the presupposition of a diglossic situation in ancient Arabia: i.e. the coexistence of, on the one hand, the various dialects of the Arab tribes, and, on the other, a common language (which, among other things, was the vehicle of poetry, and for that reason, has been termed poetic *koinê*). Poetic *koiné* pertains to the ancient Arabic linguistic type, whereas the dialects should be, if not entirely at least partly, of the neo-Arabic type. The difference between both is the presence of *iʿrāb* (case and mood endings) in the common language, its absence in the dialects.

But the Arabists do not agree on the origin of this *koiné*. For some — who think in terms of the Greek *koiné,* the basis of which is Attic Greek — it has a geographic origin: according to this hypothesis, this shared language began as an inter-tribal or super-tribal language, at the point of encounter of the two dialectical areas of Arabia, that is to say in central or north-eastern Arabia. For others — who consider it along the lines of the Homeric Greek model — it is a *Kunstsprache,* an artificial language of great antiquity, without any connection to the linguistic reality. The Arabists also do not agree on the interpretation of *iʿrāb*. For some, it is syntactic, even if they recognize that its functionality is weak, not to say non-existent (see the debate between Blau, Synthetic Character, and Corriente, Functional yield; id., Again on the functional yield). For others it is linked to the constraints of prosody and rhyme in an oral-formulaic poetry (Zwettler, Classical Arabic poetry).

In this context, the weak hypothesis is that of the majority of Arabists. For them the qurʾānic Arabic is, save for some "Ḥijāzī" peculiarities, basically the same as the Arabic of pre-Islamic poetry; hence the qualification of "poetic and qurʾānic *koiné,*" sometimes given to that language, and which is considered to be the basis of

classical Arabic (Blachère, *Histoire,* i, 82: "*koïnè* coranico-poétique").

The strong hypothesis is originally that of Vollers (d. 1909). He concludes that the Qurʾān was first delivered by Muḥammad in the vernacular of Mecca (q.v.), a west Arabian speech missing, among other features, the *iʿrāb* (Vollers, *Volkssprache,* 169; Zwettler, *Oral tradition,* 117-8, with discussion of this thesis; Versteegh, *Arabic,* 40-1), before it was later rewritten in the common language of poetry (Vollers, *Volkssprache,* 175-85). For Vollers this language, though it is the basis of the literary classical language, is primarily an eastern Arabic speech, fitted, among other features, with *iʿrāb*. More than the question of the *iʿrāb,* that of the "glottal stop" (*hamza,* Vollers, *Volkssprache,* 83-97) best summarizes the hypothesis of Vollers. It is said that the inhabitants of the Ḥijāz were characterized by the loss of the glottal stop *(takhfīf al-hamza),* contrary to the other Arabs who used the glottal stop *(taḥqīq al-hamza)*. And we know that the qurʾānic orthography attests the addition of the *hamza,* a mark of the realization of the glottal stop.

The hypothesis of Vollers was taken up again by P.E. Kahle (d. 1964), but in a modified form (he does not maintain that the Qurʾān was rewritten). He admits, without any further explanatory discussion, that the consonantal ductus (see CODICES OF THE QURʾĀN; COLLECTION OF THE QURʾĀN; MUṢḤAF), traditionally attributed to the caliph ʿUthmān (q.v.) represents the Arabic spoken in Mecca (Kahle, *Geniza,* 142), but for him the "readings" *(qirāʾāt, variae lectiones)* of that ductus express the influence of the poetic language. He based his hypothesis on a great number of traditions, more than 120, quoted in the *Tamhīd fī maʿrifat al-tajwīd* of al-Ḥasan b. Muḥammad al-Mālikī (d. 438/1046), in which people are exhorted to recite the Qurʾān, respecting the *iʿrāb* (Kahle, Qurʾān, 171-9). Since Kahle's contributions appeared, older works containing the traditions upon which he based his theory have been made available (e.g. Abū ʿUbayd, *Faḍāʾil,* 208-10, and passim; Ibn Abī Shayba, *Muṣannaf, [Kitāb* 22. *Faḍāʾil al-Qurʾān*, *bāb* 1*],* vi, 117-8, nos. 29903-19).

As Kahle remarks: "The recommendation to read the Koran with these vocalic endings presupposes that they were often not read" (*Geniza,* 145 n. 1). As some of these traditions were also known by the grammarian al-Farrāʾ (d. 207/822; Kahle, *Geniza,* 345-6 [Ar. text], 143-6 [Eng. trans.]; we should also add that some of the traditions were also known by Abū ʿUbayd al-Qāsim b. Sallām [d. 224/838] and by Ibn Abī Shayba [d. 235/849]), this reveals the existence of a problem in the second/eighth century.

Two interpretations of that issue are possible. The first, a minimalist understanding, is that there was a slackening in the recitation of the Qurʾān (q.v.) because of the non-Arab converts: in this case, these traditions are a call to order, reprimands, to stop a prevalent "lax reading" and to enforce an "exact reading" (Kahle, *Geniza,* 147). But the other possibility is that the grammarians and readers *(qurrāʾ, qaraʾa)* want to enforce on the community a reading and recitation consonant with an ideal Arabic that they have just established by the means of a large collection of data gathered from the bedouins and from poetry. Kahle inclines to this second interpretation, putting forward the concept he encountered in al-Farrāʾ (and which is also to be found in Ibn Fāris; see the translation of the text of al-Farrāʾ above), who presents the Arabic of the Ḥijāz, and thus of the Qurʾān, as a selection from the best of the various dialects (Kahle, Qurʾān, 179-82; id., *Geniza,* 145-6; id., Arabic readers, 69-70). To him the presentation of

al-Farrāʾ is an acknowledgment of the influence of poetic language on that of the Qurʾān, although he "antedated the influence of Bedouin poetry to an earlier period" (Kahle, *Geniza,* 146). Indeed, when it is released from its subjective elements, such a conception amounts to saying that the qurʾānic language borrows features from different dialects (Fr. *parlers*), in other words that it is an inter-language.

Whereas the hypothesis of Vollers caused a scandal in Muslim circles and prompted a debate among the Arabists (Geyer, Review; and notably Nöldeke, Einige Bemerkungen; id., Der Koran und die ʿArabīja), it seems that the hypothesis of Kahle has not really garnered much attention, with the notable exception of J. Fück (d. 1974), who rejected it (Fück, *ʿArabīya,* 3-4, n. 4/Fr. trans., 4-5, n. 4; see also Rabin, Beginnings, 25-9).

Now, however, things are changing with the progress in Arabic studies of sociolinguistics and of the history of linguistics. The Arabists today have gone beyond the diglossic representation of Arabic and are in favor of a polyglossic conception of Arabic and of a continuum, even of an inherent variation. In doing so they take up again, in some way, the conception that the most ancient Arab grammarians, notably Sībawayhi, had of Arabic. These last did not understand the *lughāt* ("dialects") as discrete varieties, but only as variants, good or bad, of one and the same language. In this context, the various "readings" *(qirāʾāt)* of the Qurʾān can be seen as the reflection of this linguistic variation. J. Owens has shown recently that the practice of the "major assimilation" (*al-idghām al-kabīr,* i.e. a consonantal assimilation between words) traditionally linked with the reader Abū ʿAmr (d. 154/770), did not imply linguistically the loss of the inflexional ending, but only the absence of short vowels, inflexional or not, at the ending. This means that "[Voller's] assumption that there was a koranic variant without case ending receives plausible support from the koranic reading tradition itself" (Owens, Idġām al-kabīr, 504).

Lastly, it should be noticed that none of the hypotheses of the Arabists challenges the following two assertions of the Muslim tradition: 1) the Qurʾān transmits the predication of the one Muḥammad, and 2) there exists an ʿUthmānic codex. This discussion of qurʾānic language would be enlarged if, on the one hand, the hypothesis of Wansbrough *(QS)* — i.e. that there was a slower elaboration of the qurʾānic text than is traditionally supposed — were taken into consideration, and, on the other, if, besides the "small variation" (different readings of the same ductus), the "great variation" (the existence of a non-ʿUthmānic codex) were also taken into account (Gilliot, Coran, § 29; id. Reconstruction, § 15).

From language to style

The link between qurʾānic language and the linguistic style of the Qurʾān itself is the notion of *bayān,* and it is not by chance that the founder of Bābism (see BAHĀʾĪS), ʿAlī Muḥammad (d. 1850) wrote a book intended to replace the Qurʾān, entitled *al-Bayān* (Bausani, Bāb). *Bayān,* a verbal noun *(nomen verbi:* distinctness; Fr. *le fait d'être distinct),* occurs only three times in the Qurʾān (Q 55:4; 75:19; 3:138; Bell, *Commentary,* ii, 329; Paret, *Kommentar,* 465; Blachère, ii, 74-5), e.g. Q 55:3-4: "He has created man. He has taught him utterance" (*al-bayāna;* or, "the capacity of clear exposition"; Arberry: "the Explanation"; Blachère: "l'Exposé"). Moreover, *tibyān* (exposition, explanation) occurs once (Q 16:89), and the active participle *(nomen agentis), mubīn,* twice qualifies the "Arabic tongue" (*lisān ʿarabī,* Q 16:103; 26:195; see LANGUAGE, CONCEPT OF). But twelve times *mubīn* qualifies "book" (*kitāb,* Q 5:15; 6:59; 10:61; 11:6; 12:1; 15:1; 26:2; 27:1, 75; 28:2; 34:3; 44:2), seven

times it modifies *balāgh* (Q 5:92; 16:35, 82; 24:54; 29:18; 36:17; 64:12), and twice *qurʾān* (Q 15:1; 36:29). In this context, *mubīn* can be interpreted as the active participle *(nomen agentis)* of the fourth (causative) verbal form, *abāna,* used with an implicit object, simply a synonym of the second verbal form, *bayyana,* meaning "making [things] distinct/clear." But *abāna* can also be seen as an implicitly reflexive causative, and in this case *mubīn* is interpreted as "showing [itself] distinct/clear," as suggested by the explicit reflexive in Q 37:117: "*al-kitāb al-mustabīn*" (the clear scripture). The high number of the occurrences of the root *b-y-n* and its derivatives indicates that *bayān* is a characteristic of speech.

Developed at length by Shāfiʿī (d. 204/820), the idea is that the Qurʾān says things clearly; jurist that he was, he demonstrates this theory beginning with the legal obligations (see BOUNDARIES AND PRECEPTS; LAW AND THE QURʾĀN; AMBIGUOUS; ABROGATION). But this is said with the underlying conviction that the Qurʾān expresses itself clearly because it is in Arabic (we should remember here that "Qurʾān" is qualified six times as "Arabic"; Shāfiʿī, *Risāla,* 20-40/Eng. trans. 67-80/Fr. trans. 53-68; Yahia, *Contribution,* 361-410; 368-71: on Jāḥiẓ; cf. Bāqillānī, *Intiṣār,* 256-71; Gilliot, *Elt,* 73; id., Parcours, 92-6). The central character of *bayān* in matters of style is attested by the fact that the phrase *ʿilm al-bayān* (see von Grunebaum, Bayān) competes with *ʿilm al-balāgha* for denoting Arabic rhetoric (which is not an oratorical art, but the art of all manners of speaking: poetical, oratorical, epistolary, etc.). But, for the most part — as opposed to *ʿilm al-maʿānī* — it designates the part of *ʿilm al-balāgha* which deals with the expression of the *maʿnā* i.e. the *latz,* in other words, stylistics. It should be noticed that the dogma of the inimitability of the Qurʾān was linked with the theme (almost an article of faith) of the "eloquency" *(balāgha)* of Muḥammad, which is in accordance with the theological representations on the "purity" of the language of Quraysh, and naturally the consummate "purity" of the language of the "chosen/purified *(al-muṣṭafā)*" one, Muḥammad, their kinsman, as seen above (see Rāfiʿī [d. 1937], "The inimitability of the Qurʾān and the prophetic eloquence" [in Arabic; *Iʿjāz al-Qurʾān wa-l-balāgha al-nabawiyya*], 277-342; on this book, see Boullata, Rhetorical interpretation, 148).

The theological thesis on the style of the Qurʾān

The theological thesis about the style of the Qurʾān, however, goes far beyond the proclamation of the alleged clarity of the qurʾānic discourse, this clarity itself being linked to the language in which it is formulated. Its core is certainly the dogma of the *iʿjāz al-Qurʾān* (van Ess, *TG,* iv, 609-11; see also INIMITABILITY). Two points should be emphasized here. First, the dogma of the Qurʾān's inimitability is to the style of the Qurʾān what the equation "language of the Qurʾān = the speech of the Quraysh = *al-lugha al-fuṣḥā*" is to its language; i.e. it, too, is the result of the intersection of a textual element (the so-called Challenge Verses) and of the Islamic conception of the Qurʾān as the speech of God *(kalām Allāh)*. Secondly, the "inimitability" is bound to the stylistic order through the clear theological affirmation of the Muʿtazilite theologian and philologist al-Rummānī (d. 384/994) on the *balāgha* of the Qurʾān: "Its highest [rank is such that it] incapacitates *(muʿjiz)* [anyone who attempts to reach it]; it is the *balāgha* of the Qurʾān" (*Nukat,* in Rummānī et al., *Rasāʾil,* 75). From this point of view, most books on Islamic rhetoric function as the "maidservant of theology" *(rhetorica ancilla theologiae),* as illustrated by the title of the book by the great rhetorician ʿAbd al-Qāhir al-Jurjānī (d. 471/1078): "The proofs of the

inimitability [of the Qurʾān]" (*Dalāʾil al-iʿjāz;* Abu Deeb, *al-Jurjānī;* Boullata, Rhetorical interpretation, 146-7).

The literary structure and arrangement or construction (*nazm,* a root which does not occur in the Qurʾān; see Abu Deeb, *Al-Jurjānī,* 24-38; for Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī: Lagarde, *Index,* no. 2564; Gilliot, Parcours, 100-6) of the Qurʾān is far from being self-evident. For this reason, Muslim scholars have not only dealt with this theme, but have composed works entitled *Nazm al-Qurʾān* (for this genre and a list of such books, see Audebert, *L'inimitabilité,* 58-9, 193-4; see also LITERARY STRUCTURES OF THE QURʾĀN). But the theological debate concerning the core of its "inimitability" and the question of its createdness or uncreatedness also played a role in the genesis of this genre (van Ess, *TG,* iv, 112; many Arabic studies on this theme have been published: e.g. on Zamakhsharī: Jundī, *al-Nazm al-qurʾānī*). Eventually, entire qurʾānic commentaries came to contain this word in their title, e.g. the Karrāmite of Nīshāpūr, al-ʿĀṣimī (Abū Muḥammad Aḥmad b. Muḥammad b. ʿAlī, d. 450/1058), composed the *Kitāb al-Mabānī li-nazm al-maʿānī,* whose introduction has been published (Jeffery, *Muqaddimas,* 5-20; for the identification of the author, see Gilliot, Théologie musulmane, 182-3). This genre was also related to the principle of correspondence (*munāsaba;* see Suyūṭī, *Itqān,* chap. 62, ed. Ibrāhīm, iii, 369-89 *[Munāsabat al-āyāt wa-l-suwar];* id., *Muʿtarak,* i, 54-74; id., *Taḥbīr,* 371-7; for Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī: Lagarde, *Index,* no. 2479; Gilliot, Parcours, 106-9) between the sūras and between the verses (see also al-Suyūṭī's special book entitled "The symmetry of the pearls. On the correspondence of the sūras," which he seems to have compiled from his larger book "The secrets of revelation" *[Asrār al-tanzīl];* see Suyūṭī, *Tanāsuq,* 53-4). The qurʾānic commentary of Burhān al-Dīn Abū l-Ḥasan Ibrāhīm al-Biqāʿī (d. 885/1480) combines in his title the words "arrangement/construction" and "correspondence" *(nazm, tanāsub):* "The string of pearls. On the correspondence of the verses and sūras" *(Nazm al-durar fī tanāsub al-āyāt wa-l-suwar).*

Generally speaking, all of the elements of style to be found in all great literature are seen as unique and almost special to the Qurʾān because of the dogma of its inimitability. Even its weaknesses are viewed as wonderful, if not miraculous (see the introduction of Ṭabarī, *Tafsīr,* ed. Shākir, i, 8-12/Eng. trans. in *Commentary,* i, 8-12; Gilliot, *Elt,* 73-8).

The positions of the Arabists on the style of the Qurʾān

Some positions until recently

Read with eyes other than those of faith, qurʾānic style is generally not assessed as being particularly clear, and "much of the text… is… far from being as *mubīn* ("clear") as the Qurʾān claims to be!" (Puin, Observations, 107; cf. Hirschfeld, *New researches,* 6-7). Moreover, it does not arouse the general non-Muslim audience to such a degree of "enthusiam" (Sfar, *Coran,* 117-8, 100-1) as that of the Muslims who are alleged to have fallen down dead upon hearing its recitation (Wiesmüller, *Die vom Koran getöten;* cf. Kermani, *Gott ist schön,* chap. 4, "Das Wunder," 233-314; id., Aesthetic reception).

To understand this reaction of the non-believer, the Qurʾān should first be characterized as "speech" (Fr. *discours*) as opposed to such comparable "texts," i.e. the Hebrew Bible and the Gospels (q.v.; see also TORAH). To proceed so, it is possible to refer to a noteworthy opposition found within the Arabic linguistic tradition, that of two types of speech *(kalām),* the *khabar* and the *inshāʾ,* which is equivalent to the Austinian categories of "constative," as

opposed to "performative utterances" (Austin, *How to do things with words*). According to these categories, the Hebrew Bible and the Gospels present themselves as *khabar*s (narratives on the creation [q.v.] of the world, the history of the Jewish people, the life of Jesus), even if these texts, whether considered as historical or mythic, are also edifying. On the other hand, the Qurʾān presents itself as non-narrative speech (*inshāʾ;* cf. the traditional appellation: paranesis): the narratives (q.v.) it contains, often incomplete, are a type of argumentation by example (see NATURE AS SIGNS; MYTHS AND LEGENDS IN THE QURʾĀN).

The lack of a narrative thread and the repetitions in the Qurʾān, when they do not provoke a negative reaction, compel the specialist to search for another organizational schema of the text, beyond that which is immediately apparent. The need for an alternative pattern behind the ordering of the text appears above all in the problem of the structure of the sūras. Of course, the ancient Muslim scholars, being experts in the Arabic language, were well aware of the organizational infelicities in the qurʾānic text, but as men of faith they had to underscore the "miraculous" organization *(nazm)* of the entire text, and to find rhetorical devices to resolve each problematic issue, e.g. the *iqtiṣāṣ,* the "refrain" (Fr. *reprise*), when the passage was too allusive, incomplete or even truncated. In this case of the "refrain," the exegete had to refer to another verse in the same sūra or in another, from which the truncated passage is supposed to have been "taken" *(maʾkhūdh min),* or where it is "told accurately" (Ibn Fāris, *al-Ṣāḥibī,* 239; Suyūṭī, *Itqān,* ed. Ibrāhīm, iii, 302), e.g. "and we gave him his reward in the world, and lo! in the hereafter (see ESCHATOLOGY) he verily is among the righteous" (Q 29:27), has to be understood [as taken] from "But whoso comes unto him a believer, having done good works (see GOOD DEEDS), for such are the good stations" (Q 20:75; see REWARD AND PUNISHMENT). This phenomenon could perhaps be related to a variety of the *enthymema*.

For reasons which have been put forth above, it is sacrilegious in a Muslim milieu to compare the Qurʾān to poetry, but it is evident that the language of the Qurʾān can be studied by a linguist in the same way as poetic language. The poetics of Jakobson (Closing statements), is one example of how the expertise of a linguist may be applied to the Qurʾān, especially from the point of view of "parallelism," a central concept of that poetics.

In view of the position it has taken with respect to the Qurʾān, the religious thought of Islam has tended to impose a conception that became more radical over time. According to this conception, the Qurʾān is an original work that owes nothing to an external influence, be it local or foreign. The polemics against the orators (*khaṭīb*s) and soothsayers (*kāhin*s), as well as those against the appearance of loanwords in the Qurʾān and those surrounding the meaning of the adjective *ummī* (q.v.), as it is applied to Muḥammad in the Qurʾān (Q 7:157, 158; "illiterate" messenger as opposed to messenger "of the community"; see ILLITERACY), should be interpreted in this context. Concerning this last-mentioned debate, A. Jones maintains that "[T]he notion that *ummī* means 'illiterate' is neither early nor accurate. It can only mean 'of the *umma*' " (Oral, 58, n. 5). Contrary to the theological views concerning the style of the Qurʾān, Jones has shown, despite the scarcity of preserved materials, that the qurʾānic style owes much to previous Arabic styles. These previous styles can be summarized in the following four categories: the style of the soothsayer (Jones, Language, 33-7: *kāhin* utterances), of the orator (Jones, Language, 38-41: *khaṭīb*

utterances), of the story-teller (Jones, Language, 41-2: *qāṣṣ*), of the "written documentary style" in the Medinan material (Jones, Language, 42-4: a comparison between a part of the Constitution of Medina and Q 2:158, 196). In support of this thesis of Jones, the following declaration attributed to Muḥammad can be quoted: "This poetry is rhymed expression of the speech of the Arabs *(sajʿ min kalām al-ʿArab)*. Thanks to it, what the beggar asks for is given to him, anger is tamed, and people convene in their assemblies of deliberation *(nādīhim)*" (Subkī, *Ṭabaqāt,* i, 224; Goldziher, Higâʾ-Poesie, 59). Jones would argue that Muḥammad knew well the efficacy of rhymed prose, and for that reason he used it in the Qurʾān.

Finally, Jones provides two very helpful visual representations of the registers of Arabic at the rise of Islam (Jones, Oral, 57). Although practically nothing survives of these registers, he sketches the relationships between — and among — the literary prose registers, on the one hand (poets, soothsayers and preachers), and the dialects of the people, on the other. These charts are useful for conceptualizing the place of the Qurʾān within the linguistic streams of pre-Islamic Arabia (see also ORALITY AND WRITING IN ARABIA).

The question of the rhymed prose *(sajʿ)* in the Qurʾān still needs further research, because, as noticed a long time ago, Semitic literature has a great liking for it, and, as seen above, Muḥammad knew its effects very well: it "strikes the minds through its allusions, echoes, assonances and rhymes" (Grünbaum, Beiträge, 186). Later Muslim rhetoricians distinguished three or four types of rhymed prose in the Qurʾān: 1) *al-muṭarraf* (touched at the extremity), words having a different prosodic measure *(wazn)* at the end of the elements of the phrase, but similar final letters: Q 71:13-4 *(waqāran* vs. *aṭwāran);* 2) *al-mutawāzī* (parallel), with similar prosodic measure, i.e. the same number of letters, and the same final letters *(al-wazn wa-l-warī):* Q 88:13-4 *(marfūʿa* vs. *mawḍūʿa);* 3) *al-muwāzana* (cadence), final words with similar prosodic measure, but different endings: Q 88:15-6 *(masfūfa* vs. *mabthūtha);* 4) *al-mumāthala* (similarity), wherein all the words have corresponding prosodic measure in each member, but different endings: Q 37:117-8 (Ibn Abī l-Iṣbaʿ, *Badīʿ,* 108-9; Rāzī, *Nihāya,* 142-3; Ibn al-Naqīb, *Muqaddima,* 471-5; Nuwayrī, *Nihāya,* vii, 103-5; Garcin de Tassy, *Rhétorique,* 154-8; Mehren, *Rhetorik,* 167-8). In the best examples of the genre, each of the members (here *fawāṣil,* pl. of *fāṣila,* "dividers") have the same measure: Q 56:28-9, "*fī sidrin makhḍūdin/wa-ṭalḥin manḍūdin* (Among thornless lote-trees/And clustered plantains)." The second or third member can, however, be a little longer than the previous one (Q 69:30-3). But for the same rhetoricians, the contrary is not permitted, save when the difference is tiny (Q 105:1-2). For them the most beautiful rhymed prose is that whose members have only a few words, from two to ten; if otherwise, it is considered to be "drawling," as Q 8:43-4 (Mehren, *Rhetorik,* 166-7; on the dividers in the Qurʾān, from the traditional Muslim point of view, see Ḥasnāwī, *al-Fāṣila fī l-Qurʾān*).

There are still other valuable points of view and theses on the style of the Qurʾān which have not been presented here (for some discussion of these, see INIMITABILITY). Some examples are the discussions on the literary features and rhetorical devices (see Ṣammūd, *al-Tafkīr al-balāghī,* 33-46, and passim; see also LITERATURE AND THE QURʾĀN; LITERARY STRUCTURES OF THE QURʾĀN), and especially the interesting studies of A. Neuwirth on the relationship between liturgy and canonization of the text, "the structurally definable verse groups," contextuality, etc. (Neuwirth,

Einige Bermerkungen; id., Vom Rezitationstext/Fr. trans. Du texte de récitation; see also her article FORM AND STRUCTURE OF THE QUR'ĀN).

The ancient Christian or Syriac connection

Some scholars (unfortunately, too few) have drawn attention to the importance of the Aramaic or Syriac substratum in the formation of the Qur'ān, basing their hypotheses on the fact that Syro-Aramaic or Syriac was the language of written communication in the Near East from the 2nd to the 7th centuries C.E. and was also a liturgical language. The stylistic idiosyncrasies of the Qur'ān did not escape Th. Nöldeke (Nöldeke, Sprache/Fr. trans. *Remarques critiques*). In addition to his observations on the Syriac loanwords in the Qur'ān, which others, prior to him, had noted, A. Mingana noticed that the qur'ānic style "suffers from the disabilities that always characterize a first attempt in a new literary language which is under the influence of an older and more fixed literature," and that "its author had to contend with immense difficulties" (Mingana, Syriac influence, 78). But his observations led him to a hypothesis that is the opposite of the "credo" of Nöldeke which, until today, has been prevalent among most western scholars of Islam. This "credo" of Nöldeke is that, in spite of its "drawling, dull and prosaic" style (Nöldeke, *Geschichte,* 107), the Arabic of the Qur'ān is "classical Arabic." In his research, Mingana observed and emphasized the Syriac influences on the phraseology of the Qur'ān, and placed them under six distinct headings: proper names, religious terms, common words, orthography, construction of sentences and foreign historical references (see also FOREIGN VOCABULARY). Unfortunately, his remarks, although referred to by some scholars, were not taken into general account for two reasons: First, Mingana, too occupied with other works on Syriac, had no time to develop his hypothesis further. (His argument was further undermined by the fact that the material he had gathered in his article was not very important.) Secondly, the "dogma" of the Islamicists *(Islamwissenchaftler, islamologues)* on the "classicism" of the qur'ānic Arabic continued and still continues to impose itself as self-evident proof, in spite of numerous objections to their own thesis expressed by the supporters of the alleged *al-ʿarabiyya al-fuṣḥā* of the Qur'ān.

Without being particularly influenced by Mingana's article and having other concerns than this scholar, the German liberal Protestant theologian and Semitist G. Lüling wrote an important study which has also been overlooked and ignored (Ger. *totgeschwiegen*) by Islamicists and Arabists. This study, *Über den Ur-Qur'ān* ("On the primitive Qur'ān"), has recently been translated into English under the title *A challenge to Islam for reformation*, with the suggestive subtitle, "The rediscovery and reliable reconstruction of a comprehensive pre-Islamic Christian hymnal hidden in the Koran under earliest Islamic reinterpretation." The point of departure is not the Qur'ān, but Lüling's own scholarly orientation defined as promoting an "emphasis directed at self-criticism against the falsification of Christianity by its Hellenization resulting in the dogma of the trinity [sic, with a lowercase "t"] […], as well as against the falsification of the history of Judaism" (*Challenge,* lxiii, a passage not present in the German original). The theses of Lüling on the Qur'ān are as follows: 1) About one-third of the present-day qur'ānic text contains as a hidden groundlayer an originally pre-Islamic Christian text. 2) The transmitted qur'ānic text contains four different layers, given here chronologically: the oldest, the texts of a pre-Islamic Christian strophic hymnody;

the texts of the new Islamic interpretation; historically parallel to the second layer is the original purely Islamic material, which is to be attributed to Muḥammad (about two-thirds of the whole Qurʾān); and, finally, the texts of the post-Muḥammadan editors of the Qurʾān. 3) The transmitted Islamic qurʾānic text is the result of several successive editorial revisions. 4) The presence of the successive layers in the qurʾānic text can be confirmed by material in Muslim tradition (Gilliot, Deux études, 22-4; Ibn Rawandi, Pre-Islamic Christian strophic, 655-68). Of course, the theses of Lüling should be discussed, and not simply ignored, as has been the case until now (for more details on this work, see the reviews of Rodinson, Gilliot and Ibn Rawandi. For a second book of Lüling, *Die Wiederentdeckung des Propheten Muhammad,* see the reviews of Gilliot and Ibn Rawandi).

Recently, another Semitist scholar, Ch. Luxenberg, has taken up Mingana's thesis in his work on the Syriac influence on the Qurʾān and outlined the heuristic clearly. Beginning with those passages that are unclear to western commentators, the method runs as follows: First, check if there is a plausible explanation in qurʾānic exegesis, above all that of al-Ṭabarī (d. 310/923), possibly overlooked by western scholars. If this does not resolve the problem, then check whether a classical Arabic dictionary, primarily Ibn Manẓūr's (d. 711/1311) *Lisān al-ʿArab,* records a meaning unknown to Ṭabarī and his earlier sources. If this turns up nothing, check if the Arabic expression has a homonymous root in Syriac, with a different meaning that fits the context. In many cases, Luxenberg found that the Syriac word with its meaning makes more sense than the Arabic term employed by the Qurʾān. It is to be noted that these first steps of the heuristic do not alter the consonantal text of the Cairene edition of the Qurʾān. If, however, these steps do not avail, he recommends changing one or more diacritical marks to see if that results in an Arabic expression that makes more sense. Luxenberg found that many instances of problematic lexemes may be shown to be misreadings of one consonant for another. If this method does not produce results, then the investigator should change one or several diacritical points and then check if there is a homonymous Syriac root with a plausible meaning. If there is still no solution, he checks to see if the Arabic is a calque of a Syriac expression. Calques may be of two kinds: morphological and semantic. A morphological calque is a borrowing that preserves the structure of the source word but uses the morphemes of the target language. A semantic calque assigns the borrowed meaning to a word that did not have the meaning previously, but which is otherwise synonymous with the source word (Luxenberg, *Lesart,* 10-15; Phenix and Horn, Review, § 12-4; Gilliot, Langue, § 4).

Of course, Luxenberg's work must be discussed by Semitists and Islamicists, and poses other complicated problems, e.g. on the history of the redaction of the Qurʾān. But some of his theses do appear convincing, at least to the present writers. For instance, Q 108 (Sūrat al-Kawthar), a text which has little meaning for a normal reader, and which is also a *crux interpretum* for the Islamic exegetes, has been convincingly deciphered by Luxenberg. Behind it can be found the well-known passage of 1 Peter 5:8-9: "Be sensible, watch, because your adversary the devil (q.v.) walks about seeking someone he may devour, whom you should firmly resist in the faith" (Luxenberg, *Lesart,* 269-76). We could mention also Luxenberg's treament of Q 96 (op. cit., 276-85). But his dealing with Q 44:54 and Q 52:20, concerning the supposed "virgins of paradise" (houris, q.v.) has already struck a number of those who have read

this book. Instead of these mythic creatures "whom neither man nor jinn (q.v.) has deflowered before them" (Q 55:56; Bell, *Commentary,* ii, 551), or "whom neither man nor jinni will have touched before them" (Pickthall), are the grapes/fruits of paradise "that neither man nor jinn have defiled before them": "Darin [befinden sich] herabhängende [pflückreife] Früchte, die weder Mensch noch Genius vor ihnen je bepfleckt hat" (Luxenberg, *Lesart,* 248-51; also discussed in the following reviews of Luxenberg's work: Nabielek, Weintrauben statt Jungfrauen, 72; Gilliot, Langue, § 4; Phenix and Horn, Review, § 30-4).

In support of the thesis of Luxenberg we could refer to the informants (q.v.) of Muḥammad in Mecca, some of whom, according to the Islamic tradition, read the scripture or books, or knew Jewish or Christian scriptures. There is also the fact that the secretary of Muḥammad, Zayd b. Thābit, certainly knew Aramaic or Syriac before Muḥammad's emigration (q.v.) to Yathrib (Medina, q.v.). In a well-known Muslim tradition, with many versions, Muḥammad asks Zayd b. Thābit to learn the Hebrew and/or Aramaic/Syriac script (see Lecker, Zayd b. Thābit, 267; Gilliot, Coran, § 9-12). The hypothesis has been expressed according to which these traditions proceed to a situation reversal: the Jew Zayd b. Thābit already knew Hebrew and/or Aramaic/Syriac script; this, however, was embarrassing for Muḥammad or for the first or second generation of Muslims because it could be deduced, as in the case of the informants of Muḥammad, that the Prophet had borrowed religious knowledge from his secretary, and consequently from the Jewish or Christian scriptures. So the origin of Zayd's literary knowledge (see LITERACY) may have come from an initiative, on the part of Muḥammad, to suppress these allegations (Gilliot, Langue, § 4). But the following text of the Muʿtazilite theologian of Baghdād, Abū l-Qāsim al-Balkhī (al-Kaʿbī, d. 319/931), which seems a confirmation of our hypothesis of a reversal of the actual situation, has recently become available:

> I [Kaʿbī], concerning that issue, asked people well-versed in the science of the life of the Prophet (*ahl al-ʿilm bi-l-sīra,* see SĪRA AND THE QURʾĀN), among whom were Ibn Abī l-Zināḍ, Muḥammad b. Ṣāliḥ (d. 252/866) and ʿAbdallāh b. Jaʿfar (probably Ibn al-Ward, d. 351/962) who impugned that firmly, saying: How could somebody have taught writing to Zayd, who had learned it before the messenger of God came to [Medina]? Indeed, there were more people who could write in Medina than in Mecca. In reality when Islam came to Mecca, there were already about ten who could read, and when it was the turn of Medina, there were already twenty in it, among whom was Zayd b. Thābit, who wrote Arabic and Hebrew […]" (Abū l-Qāsim al-Balkhī [al-Kaʿbī], *Qābūl al-akhbār,* i, 202; Gilliot, Coran, § 12).

Without his realizing it, Luxenberg's work falls within the tradition and genre of the readings *(qirāʾāt)* of the Qurʾān. It becomes still more obvious if we distinguish between "the small variation" (various readings of the same ductus) and "the great variation" (variations of the ductus, i.e. non-"ʿUthmānic" codices), on the one hand, and "a greater variation" (an Arabic/Aramaic transliteration of the ductus), on the other hand. The method of Luxenberg applied to passages of the Qurʾān which are particularly obscure cannot be brushed aside by the mere repetition of the Nöldeke/Spitaler thesis, or, as some would say, dogma (see Spitaler, Review of Fück, *ʿArabīya*). It must be examined seriously. From a linguistic point of view the undertaking of Luxenberg is one of the most

interesting. It will provoke in some Islamic circles the same emotion as did the hypothesis of Vollers formerly, because it amounts to seeing in the Qurʾān a kind of palimpsest. Such hypotheses, and the reactions they generate, push scholarship on the language and style of the Qurʾān continually to examine and question its acknowledged (and implicit) premises.

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Last Day

see ESCHATOLOGY; APOCALYPSE; LAST JUDGMENT

Last Judgment

God's final assessment of humankind. The subject of the last judgment *(yawm al-dīn, yawm al-qiyāma)* is one of the most important themes in the Qurʾān. It appears in many forms, especially in the first Meccan sūras (see CHRONOLOGY AND THE QURʾĀN), which are dominated by the idea of the nearing day of resurrection (*yawm al-qiyāma,* see RESURRECTION) when all creatures, including jinn (q.v.) and animals (see ANIMAL LIFE), must be judged (see JUDGMENT).

Belief in the last judgment, with the concomitant belief in paradise (q.v.; *al-janna*) for those who performed good deeds (q.v.) and in hell (*jahannam,* see HELL AND HELLFIRE) for those who did not believe in God and did evil (see GOOD AND EVIL; EVIL DEEDS), became one of "the pillars of faith" (*arkān al-īmān,* cf. Q 4:136; see FAITH; BELIEF AND UNBELIEF), as these were called by later Muslim sources. Many sūras indicate that those who trust in God and in the day of resurrection are considered to be believers (Q 2:62, 126, 177; 3:114; 4:162; 5:69; 9:18) and those who refute these tenets are unbelievers, or those who have gone "astray" (q.v.; Q 4:136), and Muslims must fight them (Q 9:29; see JIHĀD; FIGHTING; WAR). The ḥadīth literature adds material to emphasize the importance, in Islam, of belief in the resurrection (*al-qiyāma,* al-Bayhaqī, *Shuʿab al-īmān,* ii, 5-72; see ḤADĪTH AND THE QURʾĀN).

Certain Western researchers suppose (Seale, Arab's concern, 90-1) that Muḥammad tried, at the beginning of his prophecy, to convince his audience that there was going to be a day of resurrection. Considering their reaction (Q 75:3-4; 79:10-1) to this concept, Muḥammad then warned them that there was going to be a day of judgment (Q 44:40). This line of thinking also maintains that the Meccans' refutation of Muḥammad's doctrine of resurrection and a day of reckoning — and their tendency to ridicule these issues — may explain the abundance of references to these themes in the Qurʾān, as well as the conflation of *yawm al-qiyāma* and *yawm al-dīn*. There is reason to believe that such qurʾānic abundance, supported by a flux of interpretations and ḥadīths elaborating the details of the last judgment, may have led P. Casanova to the following explanation for Muḥammad's failure to designate a successor: namely, Muḥammad was convinced that the end of the world was so close at hand that he himself would witness it, and, consequently, there was no need for him to name a successor (Casanova, *Mohammed*, 12; for a critical view, see Watt-Bell, *Introduction,* 53-4; see CALIPH).

Qurʾānic appellations of the day of the last judgment

The most frequently occurring terms that refer to the last judgment in the Meccan sūras are, as mentioned above, "day of resurrection" (*yawm al-qiyāma,* seventy times in Meccan and Medinan sūras) and "day of judgment" (*yawm al-dīn,* thirteen times: Q 1:4; 15:35; 26:82; 37:20; 38:78; 51:12; 56:56; 70:26; 74:46; 82:15, 17, 18; 83:11; and four times without *yawm,* Q 51:6; 82:9; 95:7; 107:1). In the Medinan sūras, the dominant terms are "the last day" (*al-yawm al-ākhir,* twenty-six times: Q 2:8, 62, 126, 177, 228, 232, 264; 3:114; 4:38, 39, 59, 136, 162; 5:69; 9:18, 19, 29, 44, 45, 99; 24:2; 29:36; 33:21; 58:22; 60:6; 65:2) and *al-ākhira* (115 times). This last term, however, is mostly used for "the life to come," "the last dwelling." Some exegetes explain this term as "the mansion of the last hour" (*dār al-sāʿa al-ākhira,* Nasafī, *Tafsīr,* ad Q 6:32) or "the upraising, resurrection, paradise, hell, reckoning and balance" (… *al-ākhira… ay al-baʿth wa-l-qiyāma wa-l-janna wa-l-nār wa-l-ḥisāb wa-l-mīzān,* Ibn Kathīr, *Tafsīr,* ad Q 2:4).

The "day of resurrection" *(yawm al-qiyāma)* is also termed *al-yawm al-ākhir,* "since it is the last day and there is no day after it" (Ṭabarī, *Tafsīr,* i, 271).

Many terms or locutions appear in the Qurʾān that are explained by the majority of exegetes as synonymous with *yawm al-dīn*. The following are the most important of these designations: "the hour" (*al-sāʿa,* thirty-five times: Q 6:31, 40; 7:187; 12:107; 15:85; 16:77; 18:21, 36; 19:75; 20:15; 21:49; 22:1, 7, 55; 25:11; 30:12, 14, 55; 31:34; 33:63; 34:3; 40:46; 41:47, 50; 42:17, 18; 43:61, 66, 85; 45:27, 32 ; 47:18; 54:1, 46; 79:42); "dreadful day" (*yawm ʿaẓīm,* Q 6:15; 10:15); "the day of anguish" (*yawm al-ḥasra,* Q 19:39); "barren day" (*yawm ʿaqīm,* Q 22:55; "since after it there will be no night," cf. Ṭabarī, *Tafsīr,* i, 272); "the day of the upraising" (*yawm al-baʿth,* Q 30:56); "the day of decision" (*yawm al-faṣl,* Q 37:21; 44:40; 77:13, 14, 38; 78:17); "the day of reckoning" (*yawm al-ḥisāb,* Q 38:16, 26, 53; 40:27; see WEIGHTS AND MEASURES) and "the day when the reckoning will be established" (*yawma yaqūmu l-ḥisābu,* Q 14:41); "the day of encounter" (*yawm al-talāq,* Q 40:15); "the day of the imminent" (*yawm al-āzifa,* Q 40:18) and "the imminent" (*al-āzifa,* Q 53:57); "the day of invocation" (*yawm al-tanādi,* Q 40:32); "the day of gathering" (*yawm al-jamʿ,* Q 42:7; 64:9); "the day of the threat" (*yawm al-waʿīd,* Q 50:20); "the day of eternity" (*yawm al-khulūd,* Q 50:34; see ETERNITY); "the day of coming forth" (*yawm al-khurūj,* Q 50:42); "the terror" (*al-wāqiʿa,* Q 56:1; 69:15); "the day of mutual fraud" (*yawm al-taghābun,* Q 64:9; see LIE; HONESTY; MARKETS); "the indubitable" (*al-ḥāqqa,* Q 69:1, 2, 3; see TRUTH); "the clatterer" (*al-qāriʿa,* Q 69:4; 101:1, 2, 3); "the great catastrophe" (*al-ṭāmma al-kubrā,* Q 79:34); "the blast" (*al-ṣākhkha,* Q 80:33); "the promised day" (*al-yawm al-mawʿūd,* Q 85:2) and "the enveloper" (*al-ghāshiya,* Q 88:1).

Exegetes add some expressions which are said to refer to the day of the last judgment: "[fear] a day when no soul (q.v.) shall avail another" (*yawman lā tajzī nafsun ʿan nafsin shayʾan,* Q 2:123); "the day when some faces (see FACE) are whitened, and some faces blackened" (*yawma tabyaḍḍu wujūhun wa-taswaddu wujūhun,* Q 3:106); "a day wherein shall be neither bargaining nor befriending" (*yawmun lā bayʿun fīhi wa-lā khilālun,* Q 14:31; see FRIENDS AND FRIENDSHIP); "the day when their excuses shall not profit the evildoers" (*yawma lā yanfaʿu al-ẓālimīna maʿdhiratuhum*, Q 40:52), or "a day when no soul shall possess aught to succor another soul" (*yawma lā tamliku nafsun li-nafsin shayʾan,* Q 82:19). This list is far from exhaustive. Al-Ghazālī (d. 505/1111), for example, gives more than one hundred names or epithets designating *yawm al-qiyāma* (Ghazālī, *Iḥyāʾ,* vi, 161; Fīrūzābādī, *Baṣāʾir,* v, 416-21; Ibn Kathīr, *Ashrāṭ al-sāʿa,* 83-4, citing ʿAbd al-Ḥaqq al-Ishbīlī's *Kitāb al-ʿĀqiba;* ʿAwājī; *al-Ḥayāt al-ākhira,* i, 45-55.

Creating a comprehensive vision

The qurʾānic material on the last judgment is very rich and colorful but the allusions in the holy book do not provide a comprehensive picture of all of its details. As the various phases of the day of resurrection (*yawm al-qiyāma*) are mentioned in different sūras, sometimes clearly, sometimes metaphorically (see METAPHOR), but generally without an arranged description of these phases, there was a need to reconstruct the qurʾānic vision of this theme in order to provide a complete picture. Such a task was performed by a number of Muslim authors, who drew upon one or more of the following categories to assist them in their efforts at elaborating upon the qurʾānic material: exegetical literature (*tafsīr,* see EXEGESIS OF THE QURʾĀN: CLASSICAL AND MEDIEVAL), ḥadīth, prophetic biography

(*sīra,* see SĪRA AND THE QURʾĀN), ascetic literature (*zuhd,* see ASCETICISM), the "tales of the prophets" *(qiṣaṣ al-anbiyāʾ),* material of Jewish and Christian origin *(isrāʾīliyyāt),* and Ṣūfī writings (see ṢŪFISM AND THE QURʾĀN). These genres contributed to the evolution of a new branch in the Muslim religious literature dealing with the day of resurrection *(yawm al-qiyāma),* including its preliminary signs (*ashrāṭ al-sāʿa,* cf. Q 47:18), detailed descriptions of its events, the last judgment, the intercession (q.v.) of the prophets (see PROPHETS AND PROPHETHOOD) and then the reward or punishment (see REWARD AND PUNISHMENT) of each human being according to his or her behavior on earth. This branch is generally known as *ahwāl yawm al-qiyāma* ("dreads of the day of resurrection"). One of the oldest treatises dedicated to this topic is the *Kitāb al-Ahwāl* of Ibn Abī al-Dunyā (d. 281/894; see also TRADITIONAL DISCIPLINES OF QURʾĀNIC STUDY).

Time of the last judgment

The Qurʾān has a variety of allusions to the time of the day of judgment: (a) nobody, including the Prophet, can anticipate when it is expected to happen: only God knows its exact date (Q 7:187; 31:34; 33:63; 41:47; 43:85; 79:42-4); (b) "the hour" *(al-sāʿa)* may be very close (Q 21:1; 33:63; 42:17; 54:1; 70:6-7; it is "as a twinkling of the eye or even nearer," *ka-lamḥi l-baṣari aw huwa aqrabu,* Q 16:77; cf. 54:50); (c) it will occur suddenly (*baghtatan,* Q 6:31; 7:187; 12:107; 22:55; 43:66; 47:18). Ibn Kathīr (d. 774/1373) gives a very detailed list of qurʾānic verses and traditions on this matter (*Ashrāṭ al-sāʿa,* 26-35; Wensinck, *Handbook,* s.v. *s-w-ʿ*).

Signs of the hour

A number of preliminary "signs of the hour" *(ashrāṭ al-sāʿa)* are enumerated in the Qurʾān. On many occasions, and more especially in the Meccan sūras, the Qurʾān denotes signs that will presage and foretell the last judgment (see APOCALYPSE). Most of these signs are natural catastrophes and some of them appear collectively in Q 81:1-14: the sun (q.v.) will be darkened, the stars (see PLANETS AND STARS) will be thrown down, the mountains will be set moving, the pregnant camels (see CAMEL) will be neglected, the savage beasts will be mustered (see ANIMAL LIFE), the seas will be set boiling (or will overflow), the souls will be coupled (with their bodies), the buried female infant will be asked for what sin she was slain (see INFANTICIDE), the scrolls (q.v.; of deeds, good and bad) will be unrolled (see RECORD OF HUMAN ACTION), heaven will be stripped away, hell will be set blazing and paradise (see GARDEN) will be brought near. The mountains (will fly) like "tufts of carded wool" (Q 101:5) and graves will be overturned (Q 100:9; see DEATH AND THE DEAD; COSMOLOGY).

Later Islamic literary genres add other signs like the rising of the sun from the west; the appearance of the Antichrist (q.v.; *al-masīḥ al-dajjāl,* or simply *al-dajjāl*); the descent from heaven of the Messiah ʿĪsā b. Maryam (see JESUS; some reports attest that *al-mahdī al-muntazar* is ʿĪsā b. Maryam; Dānī, *Sunan,* v, 1075-80) who will fight the Antichrist, break the crosses (of the Christians; see CHRISTIANS AND CHRISTIANITY) and exterminate the pigs (*yaksiru* or *yaduqqu l-ṣalīb wa-yaqtulu l-khinzīr;* Dānī, *Sunan,* 239-40, 242; Ṣibṭ Ibn al-Jawzī, *Mirʾāt,* i, 582-5; Ṣāliḥ, *Qiyāma,* i, 71-5; see JEWS AND JUDAISM; POLEMIC AND POLEMICAL LANGUAGE); the appearance of the *dābba* (the reptile or the beast of burden) mentioned in Q 27:82 (ʿAbd al-Razzāq, *Tafsīr,* ii, 84; Muslim, *Ṣaḥīḥ, K. al-Fitan,* n. 2901; Nuʿaym b. Ḥammād, *Kitāb al-Fitan,* 401-5). Three countries (in the east, the west and Arabia; see GEOGRAPHY) will sink, and a fire from ʿAdan will drive

humankind to the gathering place *(al-maḥshar)*. Gog and Magog (q.v.; Yaʾjūj and Maʾjūj) will attack the entire world, but will be eliminated near Jerusalem (q.v.; Nasāʾī, *Sunan,* vi, 424 ad Q 27:82 gives a list of ten signs including the qurʾānic ones; Gardet, *Les grands problèmes,* 262, n. 6). The literature of apocalyptic portents (*fitan* and *malāḥim,* Fahd, Djafr; id., Malḥama; Bashear, Apocalyptic materials, and the literature cited there; id., Muslim apocalypses) abounds in prophecies about wars predicting the last judgment. As an aside, modern Aḥmadī (see AḤMADIYYA) *tafsīr* regards *al-dajjāl* as representing the missionary activities of the western Christian peoples, and Yaʾjūj and Maʾjūj as representing their materialistic and political authorities (*Tafsīr Sūrat al-Kahf,* 105).

The resurrection

In Q 39:67-75, there is a detailed description of the events of the resurrection (*al-qiyāma, al-baʿth, al-maʿād* or *al-nushūr;* cf. Izutsu, *God,* 90-4). The entire earth will be grasped by God's hand (q.v.) and the heavens will be rolled up in his right hand. The trumpet *(al-ṣūr)* shall be blown and all creatures, including angels (see ANGEL), will die, except those whom God wills. Then, it shall be blown again and they will be standing and looking on: "And the earth (q.v.) shall shine with the light of its lord (q.v.), and the book (q.v.) shall be set in place, and the prophets and witnesses (*al-shuhadāʾ,* see MARTYR; WITNESSING AND TESTIFYING) shall be brought, and justly the issue be decided between them, and they not wronged. Every soul shall be paid in full for what it has wrought; and God knows very well what they do. Then the unbelievers shall be driven in companies into hell until, when they have come forth, then its gates will be opened… It shall be said, 'Enter the gates of hell, do dwell therein forever!'… Then those that feared their lord shall be driven in companies into paradise, until, when they have come forth, and its gates are opened, and its keepers will say to them: '… enter in, to dwell forever'… And you shall see the angels encircling about the throne (see THRONE OF GOD) proclaiming the praise of their lord (see LAUDATION; GLORIFICATION OF GOD); and justly the issue shall be decided between them.…"

Such a description raises some questions in Islamic theology (the question of anthropomorphism [q.v.; *tajsīm*]: God's hand, his right hand; the questions of God's justice that arise if the identity of believers and unbelievers is known; see FREEDOM AND PREDESTINATION; JUSTICE AND INJUSTICE; THEOLOGY AND THE QURĀN) and provokes discussions in the eschatological literature, particularly about the identity of the creatures who will be exempted from dying after the first blow of the trumpet: the angel/angels Gabriel (q.v.; Jibrīl), Michael (q.v.; Mīkāʾīl), Isrāfīl, "the angel of death" *(malak al-mawt),* or God's throne-bearers and the fair females (*al-ḥūr al-ʿīn,* cf. Q 44:54; 52:20; 55:72; 56:22; Nasafī, *Tafsīr,* iv, 66; see HOURIS), or the martyrs (*al-shuhadāʾ,* cf. Q 3:169: *qutilū fī sabīli llāhi;* see PATH OR WAY), or the prophets (possibly Moses [q.v.; Mūsā]?) or the immortal boys (*wildānun mukhalladūna,* Q 56:17; 76:19); and the interval of time between the two trumpet-calls (forty days, weeks, months or years; cf. Qurṭubī, *Tadhkira,* i, 194-201). Since the ordering of events at this stage of the judgment day is not consistent and is sometimes even contradictory, many authors tried to arrange them (Ibn Kathīr, *Nihāya,* i, 270-373; ʿAwājī, *al-Ḥayāt al-ākhira*). Following these sources, an attempt of arrangement of these supposed events is presented below.

(a) "The blowing of the trumpet" *(al-nafkh fī l-ṣūr)*. This is attested ten times in the Qurʾān (also *nuqira fī l-nāqūr; nāqūr* is

attested once, at Q 74:8; *al-nāqūr = al-ṣūr;* Fīrūzābādī, *Baṣāʾir,* v, 113). In the Qurʾān, the identity of the blower is not revealed. In all the verses dealing with *al-nafkh fī l-ṣūr,* the verb appears in the passive tense. Traditions relate that the archangel Isrāfīl is appointed to this task (Ibn al-Jawzī, *Tabṣira,* ii, 309-11). He will stand at the eastern or western gate of Jerusalem (Īliyāʾ; Suyūṭī, *Durr,* v, 339) or at "the rock of Jerusalem" (*ṣakhrat bayt al-maqdis,* Ṭabarī, *Tafsīr,* xvi, 183) and blow. After the first blowing, generally called *nafkhat al-ṣaʿq,* "whosoever is in the heavens and whosoever is in the earth shall swoon *(ṣaʿiqa),* save those whom God wills" (Q 39:68). The exegetes explain the verb *ṣaʿiqa* in this context as "to die" (*māta, Lisān al-ʿArab,* s.v. *ṣ-ʿ-q;* Nasafī, *Tafsīr,* iv, 66; this meaning is peculiar to the usage of the tribes of ʿUmān, cf. Ibn ʿAbbās [attr.], *al-Lughāt fī l-Qurʾān,* 17). There were also discussions concerning the number of times the trumpet was blown. Most exegetes mention two, the blowing of the "swooning" *(nafkhat al-ṣaʿq)* and that of the resurrection *(nafkhat al-baʿth)*. Some, drawing upon Q 27:87-8, add a third blowing, "the terrifying" (*nafkhat al-fazaʿ,* ʿAwājī, *al-Ḥayāt al-ākhira,* i, 189-97). There are also traditions attributed to Muḥammad that he will be the first to be resurrected, but will be surprised to see Moses holding God's throne (Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ,* vi, 451; Muslim, *Ṣaḥīḥ,* iv, 1844).

(b) The returning to life. It should be noted here that some believe that *al-baʿth,* the "returning to life," understood as the "resurrection of the souls and bodies" (Ibn Kathīr, *Tafsīr,* iii, 206), means the "corporal rising" from the graves (*al-maʿād al-jismānī,* Safārīnī, *Mukhtaṣar,* 387).

(c) "The gathering" *(al-ḥashr)*. Creatures, including humankind, jinn and animals, will be gathered (Q 6:38; 42:29; 81:5). Relying on Q 7:29 and 21:104, the exegetes explain that humankind will be gathered "barefoot, naked and uncircumcised" (*ḥufāt-an ʿurāt-an ghurlan,* see CLOTHING; CIRCUMCISION). The unbelievers will be gathered to hell prone on their faces (*yuḥsharūna ʿalā wujūhihim,* Q 25:34; cf. 17:97). Al-Bukhārī (d. 256/870; *Ṣaḥīḥ,* vi, 137) reports that Muḥammad replied to somebody who did not understand this situation, saying: "Will not the one who made the person walk on his feet in this world (see CREATION), be able to make him walk on his face on the day of resurrection?"

(d) "The standing" before God *(al-qiyām, al-wuqūf)*. All creatures, including angels and jinn, have to stand (cf. Q 78:38). The unbelievers will stand in the blazing sun, finding no shade anywhere (Q 56:42-3; 77:29-31; see HOT AND COLD).

(e) "The survey" (*al-ʿarḍ,* Q 11:18; cf. 18:48; 69:18). This term is likened in many sources to "a king surveying his army or his subjects." Al-Rāzī (d. 606/1210) rejects this interpretation and prefers to interpret *al-ʿarḍ* as "the settling of accounts with, and the interrogation" (*al-muḥāsaba wa-l-musāʾala,* Rāzī, *Tafsīr,* xxx, 110).

(f) The personal books *(kutub)* or sheets *(ṣuḥuf, ṣaḥāʾif al-aʿmāl)* containing all the acts of each person will be laid open (Q 17:13; 52:2-3; 81:10). The one "who is given his book in his right hand" will enter paradise, but "whosoever is given his book in his left hand" will roast in hell (Q 69:19-37). Some are given their books behind their backs; they will invoke their own destruction (Q 84:10-1). In some cases, God will change the evil into good deeds (Q 25:70).

(g) The balances of justice *(al-mawāzīna al-qisṭa)* will be set up (Q 21:47). "Whosoever's scales [of good deeds] are heavy, they are the prosperous [by entering paradise] and whosoever's scales are light, they have lost their souls [by entering hell]" (Q 7:8-9; 23:102-3; cf. 101:6-9).

(h) The creatures will bear witness against

themselves (Q 6:130). Their hands, legs, ears, eyes, tongues and skins will testify against them (Q 24:24; 36:65; 41:22; 75:14). The prophets will submit testimony against their peoples (Q 5:109). Jesus will be a witness against the misguided among the People of the Book (q.v., *ahl al-kitāb*) — the Jews who believed that they had already crucified him and the Christians who believed that he is the son of God (Q 4:159).

(i) "The investigation" *(al-musāʾala)*. God will interrogate the messengers (see MESSENGER) and the peoples to whom they were sent (Q 7:6). The messengers will be interrogated about the response they received from people to their message (Q 5:109). The investigation will also include angels (Q 34:40-1).

(j) The intercession *(shafāʿa)* in favor of somebody will not be accepted that day except from the one to whom God has given permission (see Q 2:254; 7:53; 10:3; 20:109; 21:28; 74:48). The exegetes make a connection between *al-kawthar* (Q 108:1), a river in paradise and *al-ḥawḍ,* Muḥammad's private basin outside or inside paradise, from which believers will be invited to drink. Traditions stress the superiority of Muḥammad to all other prophets since he alone has been given this privilege (ʿAwājī, *al-Ḥayāt al-ākhira,* i, 277-530). P. Casanova (*Mohammed,* 19-20) hypothesized that the first Muslim generation believed that Muḥammad, the last prophet, had to preside over the last judgment and to serve as their advocate in the presence of God. Shīʿī literature states that later the *shafāʿa* was bestowed on the Prophet's descendants, the imāms (Bar-Asher, *Scripture and exegesis,* 180-9; see IMĀM; SHĪʿISM AND THE QURʾĀN).

(k) A bridge *(ṣirāṭ)* will be set up above and across hell (Q 37:22-3) from one end to the other. Ḥadīth literature adds very rich descriptions of this bridge and the manner in which different kinds of people will cross it. The sinners will slope downward into hell and the believers will enter paradise.

Some details cited above led the exegetes and other Muslim scholars to accept the doctrine of predestination since the identity of sinners and believers is known before doomsday (Q 74:31). But it is at the day of judgment *(yawm al-dīn)* that the fate (q.v.) of each creature is made explicit.

Explanation of some eschatological terms

Some terms dealing with the last judgment raised problems, which the exegetes and lexicographers tried to solve. One of the early Meccan sūras, Q 75, is called *al-Qiyāma* ("The Resurrection") because the word appears in its first verse. This term is generally explained by the lexicographers as *yawm al-baʿth, yaqūmu fīhi l-khalqu bayna yaday al-ḥayy al-qayyūm,* "the day of returning to life, when all the creatures will rise before the ever-living, the one who sustains (see GOD AND HIS ATTRIBUTES)." It seems that this word, *qiyāma,* is not Arabic. Ibn Manẓūr (d. 711/1311) cites in the *Lisān al-ʿArab* an anonymous tradition that suggests that *qiyāma* is a borrowing from the Syriac/Aramaic *qiyamathā*. Al-Suyūṭī (d. 911/1505) repeats this assertion when he speaks about *al-qayyūm* (*Itqān,* 172). The "first judgment" or *al-qiyāma al-ṣughrā* is supposed to be *ʿadhāb al-qabr,* "the torment of the grave," also termed the punishment of *al-barzakh* (purgatory; see BARZAKH), which includes the interrogation of the two angels, Munkar and Nakīr. Many utterances attributed to Muḥammad and cited in the canonical corpus ascribe to the Jews the first allusions to *ʿadhāb al-qabr* (Nawawī, *Sharḥ,* v, 85-6).

In Arabic, the root *d-y-n (dīn)* poses some difficulties since it has three different etymologies and, in consequence, different connotations: (1) religion; (2) custom, usage *(al-ʿāda wa-l-shaʾn);* (3) punishment, reward *(al-jazāʾ wa-l-mukāfaʾa;* cf. *Lisān al-ʿArab)*

or judgment (*Ibn ʿAbbās… al-dīn: yawm ḥisāb al-khalāʾiq wa-huwa yawm al-qiyāma;* cf. Rāzī, *Tafsīr,* i, 29). This last connotation forms the basis of interpretations like the one — attributed to Qatāda (d. ca. 117/735) — that explains *yawm al-dīn* in Q 1:4 as "the day on which God will judge humankind according to their acts" (*yawm yadīnu llāhu l-ʿibāda bi-aʿmālihim,* ʿAbd al-Razzāq, *Tafsīr,* i, 37). The dominant meaning of *dīn* in Arabic is, however, "religion, religious law, custom" (Gardet, Dīn; id., *L'Islam,* 29-32). It seems that the sense "judgment" and "custom" is borrowed from the Hebraeo-Aramaic usage, which has its roots in Akkadian (*dīnum,* "judgment," *dayyānum,* "judge"). On the basis of this root, the meaning of "sentence" is presumed. The title *dayyānum* was given in Akkadian to a judge, king or god. The *dināti,* "laws," served as direction or guidance for the judges to pass sentence on each case (*Encyclopaedia biblica,* s.v. mishpaṭ). In view of this etymology, it seems that M. Gaudefroy-Demombynes (*Mahomet,* 449-58, especially 454-5) was correct when he translated *yawm al-dīn* as "the day when God gives a direction to each human being." See also LAW AND THE QURʾĀN.

The place of the last judgment

The Qurʾān does not identify explicitly the place of the last judgment. The Companions of the Prophet (q.v.; *ṣaḥāba*), his Followers *(tābiʿūn)* and later exegetes tried to find hints which could help to identify the precise location. For example, Q 57:13 was explained as referring to Jerusalem (Wāsiṭī, *Faḍāʾil,* 14-6, no. 14-7) and Q 50:41 to the rock of Jerusalem (ibid., 88-9, no. 143-5). The need for a satisfactory answer caused the Muslims to search the traditions of Judaism and Christianity, since both allotted Jerusalem a dominant role in eschatology (q.v.) and considered it as the scene of the envisioned end of days (Prawer, Christian attitudes, 314-25). In this context, it is worth remembering that, at the beginning of the second/eighth century, Jerusalem was generally recognized in Muslim circles as the third holy place in Islam (Kister, You shall only set; Neuwirth, Sacred mosque). Later, there emerged traditions of Jewish or Christian origin where the connection was made between verses of the Qurʾān pertaining to the end of days and Jerusalem: "Nawf al-Bikālī [the nephew of Kaʿb al-Aḥbār] reported to the caliph ʿAbd al-Malik (r. 65-85/685-705) that in a verse of the Bible, God said to Jerusalem *(bayt al-maqdis):* 'There are within you six things: my residence, my judgment place, my gathering place, my paradise, my hell and my balance *(inna fī kitābi llāhi l-munazzal anna llāha yaqūlu: fīka sittu khiṣālin, fīka maqāmī wa-ḥisābī wa-maḥsharī wa-jannatī wa-nārī wa-mīzānī)*' " (Wāsiṭī, *Faḍāʾil,* 23).

The Umayyad regime openly encouraged this view because it gave them legitimization to move the Muslim center of worship from Medina (q.v.), the city of the Prophet, to Syria (q.v.), which includes Jerusalem: Muʿāwiya b. Abī Sufyān (d. 60/680), the first Umayyad caliph, propagated the use of the term "land of ingathering and resurrection on judgment day" *(arḍ al-maḥshar wa-l-manshar)* with regard to Jerusalem (Wāsiṭī, *Faḍāʾil,* introduction, 20). At that time, the Muslims did not see any harm in absorbing Jewish and Christian traditions (Kister, Ḥaddithū ʿan banī isrāʾīl), particularly if the traditions reinforced the words of the Qurʾān or explained unclear matters (see AMBIGUOUS; DIFFICULT PASSAGES). One of the oldest sources to preserve such material is the *Tafsīr* of Muqātil b. Sulaymān (d. 150/768; here it should be noted that ʿAbdallāh M. Shaḥāta, the editor of the *Tafsīr,* chose to transfer from the text to the footnotes these and other traditions extolling Jerusalem, since "most of them are *isrāʾīliyyāt*" [Muqātil, *Tafsīr,* ii, 513-5], in

spite of the fact that they were included in the body of the text of three out of the four manuscripts which he had consulted for his edition). Here are some examples of such traditions: "God will set his seat on the day of the resurrection upon the land of Jerusalem"; "Jesus is destined to descend from heaven in the land of Jerusalem"; "God will destroy Gog and Magog in Jerusalem"; "The gathering of the dead and their resurrection will be in the land of Jerusalem"; "The *sirāṭ* (the narrow bridge over Gehenna) goes forth from the land of Jerusalem to the garden of Eden and hell" (see the English translation of these traditions in the appendix of Hasson, The Muslim view of Jerusalem). But this tendency of the early Islamic tradition to absorb Jewish and Christian material brought forth a reaction. The most vigorous representative of this reaction is Ibn Taymiyya (d. 728/1328), who attacked all the traditions connecting the resurrection day with Jerusalem (see his *Qāʿida*).

The last judgment in some previous religions

The Qurʾān supposes that, in genuine Judaism and Christianity, the belief in *al-ākhira,* the resurrection and punishment or reward, formed a basic part of the message of Moses (Mūsā) and Jesus (ʿĪsā, Q 12:101; 19:33; 20:14-6; 40:42-3). The Muslims think that the Jews, after "having perverted words from their meanings" (Q 2:75; 4:46; 5:13, 41; see FORGERY), removed the concept of the resurrection from the Bible (ʿAwājī, *al-Ḥayāt al-ākhira,* i, 116-23). Muslim tradition connects the punishment after death in the grave *(ʿadhāb al-qabr)* to a Jewish source (Nawawī, *Sharḥ,* v, 85-6). It is therefore worth reviewing similar ideas in previous religions and in Islam.

Most of the signs of the hour *(ashrāṭ al-sāʿa)* appear in the Hebrew Bible and in rabbinic literature; these are known as *ḥevlei mashiyyaḥ,* "the tribulations preceding the coming of the Messiah" (Grossman, Jerusalem, 295-303). Some examples of the similarities between the qurʾānic and biblical descriptions of these events are: the vision of the dry bones in Ezekiel 37; Yaʾjūj and Maʾjūj (Q 21:96) — the biblical Gog and Magog — "will swiftly swarm from every mound"; "signs of the hour" abound in *Isa* 24; and *Isa* 27:1, but especially 27:13, "… the great trumpet shall be blown, and they shall come which were ready to perish in the land of Assyria, and the outcasts in the land of Egypt, and shall worship the lord in the holy mount of Jerusalem," bring to mind *al-ṣūr* or *al-nāqūr,* particularly in view of the Muslim explanation that *al-ṣūr* is a horn (Tirmidhī, *Ṣaḥīḥ,* iv, 620; Abū Dāwūd, ii, 537), the traditional Jewish *shofar*. The traditions explaining that the gathering and the last judgment must be in Jerusalem have their origin, perhaps, in this verse and in the *midrashim,* the homiletic interpretations of the scriptures. The blowing of the trumpet, the day of the lord, "a day of darkness and of gloominess," the earth which shall quake, the heavens which shall tremble, and the sun and the moon which shall be dark are mentioned in Joel 2. The gathering of all the heathen will be in the valley of Jehoshaphat: "for there will I sit to judge all the heathen round about" (*Joel* 4:12; see also *Amos* 5:18-20; *Zeph* 1; *Isa* 66:16, 24). To explain the prevalence of such imagery, H. Gressmann (*Ursprung*) claimed one century ago that there circulated, among many ancient peoples in the epoch of the prophets of Israel, prophecies about disasters (earthquakes, fires and volcanoes…) which would destroy the world and about a paradise with rivers of milk, honey and fresh water.

In the Book of Daniel 12:2, which retained a Persian influence and was very popular in the first century of Islam since many Muslims wanted to know the exact date of the last judgment, there appears

the idea of the resurrection and of everlasting life for some and everlasting shame and contempt for others. S. Shaked and W. Sundermann (Eschatology) very clearly show Zoroastrian and Manichean influences on eschatological material within Second Temple Judaism, Christianity and, later, on Islam. M. Gaudefroy-Demombynes (*Mahomet,* 405) claimed that, in the period of the emigration (q.v.; *hijra*) to Medina, the qurʾānic verses stopped reporting about the punishment of sinners on earth and began to mention the last judgment. While a similar sequence has been suggested for the Hebrew Bible, there is no consensus on this matter among scholars of the Qurʾān.

In the New Testament, the Revelation of John contains many elements of the resurrection, but they do not resemble the qurʾānic scheme. Gibb (*Mohammedanism,* 26-7) is certain that the doctrine of the last judgment in the Qurʾān was derived from Christian sources, especially from the writings of the Syriac Christian Fathers and monks (see SYRIAC AND THE QURʾĀN; MONASTICISM AND MONKS). Tor Andrae, who devoted considerable attention to possible Christian antecedents (see esp. *Der Ursprung des Islams und das Cristentum*), finds expression of the idea that nobody can determine the date of the last hour in Mark 13:32. Only God knows about that day or hour. Finally, many last judgment scenes appear, with some modifications, in early Christian apocalypses (Maier, Staging the gaze). Although the "beast" in *Hermas vision* 4, which represents a coming persecution, or the "leviathan" in Isaiah 27:1, which represents evil powers, are reminiscent of the *dābba* in Q 27:82 which became one of the "signs of the hour" *(ashrāṭ al-sāʿa),* Annemarie Schimmel correctly asserts that "the Koranic descriptions of Judgment and Hell do not reach the fantastic descriptions of, for example, Christian apocalyptic writing."

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Laudation

The act or instance of praising or extolling, the object of such praise often being God. More precisely, laudation *(ḥamd)* in the qurʾānic context refers to the specific formulaic phrase "praise belongs to God" *(al-ḥamdu li-llāh),* which occurs twenty-four times in the Qurʾān. Perhaps the most significant instance of this formulaic phrase appears in the opening chapter of the Qurʾān (see FĀTIḤA), directly following the *basmala* (q.v.). Here (i.e. Q 1:2), in the very first line of the Qurʾān, the phrase is assertive (*inshāʾī,* see FORM AND STRUCTURE OF THE QURʾĀN; LANGUAGE AND STYLE OF THE QURʾĀN) in its use, as the one uttering it creates a verbal expression of the actual praise (q.v.) he directs toward God. Given its prominent position in the text, this instance of lauding God becomes an essential and vital act for those who believe, a trial (q.v.) and test for those who submit (see FAITH; BELIEF AND UNBELIEF). In addition to this formulaic phrase, there are

several rhetorical variations of *ḥamd* that also point to the act of commending one's lord (q.v.), which occur in twenty-one other qurʾānic verses.

According to al-Ṭabarī (d. 310/923; *Tafsīr*, i, 136), the phrase "praise belongs to God" means that gratitude belongs entirely to God alone for all the generous gifts he has bestowed upon his servants (see GRATITUDE AND INGRATITUDE; GIFT-GIVING; SERVANT). Praise may not be directed to anything that might be worshipped besides him nor to anything he has created (see CREATION; WORSHIP). Not only the praising of the speaker, but all possible praising belongs to God alone. Only God has the power to give his creation the sustenance, nourishment and the means through which one can achieve eternal salvation (q.v.; see also ETERNITY; BLESSING; GRACE). No one has the right to claim or demand what God freely gives; for this reason alone all praise belongs to him. In the revelatory proclamation (see REVELATION AND INSPIRATION), all praiseworthiness proceeds from him and to him it must return.

The exegetical literature (see EXEGESIS OF THE QURʾĀN: CLASSICAL AND MEDIEVAL) debates the rather intricate relationship between *ḥamd*, "praise," *shukr*, "gratitude," and other forms of exaltation (for *subḥāna llāhi*, see GLORIFICATION OF GOD). Some traditions suggest that by giving praise to God one is thanking him for all he has given; others say praise means expressing one's subservience *(al-istikhdhāʾ)* or one's commendation *(thanāʾ)* to him. Others assert a more qualitative difference between praising and thanking: when one praises God one praises him for his most beautiful names and attributes (see GOD AND HIS ATTRIBUTES), but when one thanks him, one is thanking him for his munificence and favors. However that debate is decided, God orders his servants to extol him in terms befitting him. Praise belongs to him for all things, both beneficial and painful (see also GOOD AND EVIL).

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Laughter

Sound and/or facial expressions generally indicative of merriment. Laughter does not figure prominently in the Qurʾān: verb forms and participles derived from *ḍ-ḥ-k* occur just ten times compared to a stunning 179 appearances of its synonymous Hebrew cognates *s-ʾ-ḥ-q/ṣ-ḥ-q* in the Hebrew Bible. *B-s-m* for smiling appears just once and never the onomatopoetic *q-h-q-h* for strong laughter (an Arabic root form which, incidentally, more or less reverses and doubles the western Semitic onomatopoetic **-ḥ-q* from which the various triliterals for laughter seem to be derived). Laughter in the Qurʾān usually expresses disbelief in God and his messages/messengers (Q 11:71; 43:47; 53:60; see BELIEF AND UNBELIEF; MESSENGER). This is also apparent when the unbelievers laugh at and mock the believers (Q 23:110; 83:29). Laughter is thus closely linked with the subject of mockery (q.v.). Only once does it express harmless amusement (Q 27:19) and twice joy (Q 9:82; 80:39; see JOY AND MISERY). But while the joyful laughter of hypocrites (see HYPOCRITES AND HYPOCRISY) who stay behind instead of fighting (q.v.) for God's cause (see JIHĀD; PATH OR WAY) signals a sinful disobedience (q.v.) that equals disbelief, the laughing faces of those who achieved paradise (q.v.) are the

reward of dutiful belief (see REWARD AND PUNISHMENT).

The references to laughter predominantly reflect the initial experience of Muḥammad as well as any other prophet (as attested by similar references to laughter and mockery in the Hebrew Bible; see PROPHETS AND PROPHETHOOD): their message is derided. The qurʾānic message counters this derision with eschatological threats (see ESCHATOLOGY). The last judgment (q.v.) will bring a reversal of fate (q.v.) and those who laughed sinfully will cry (Q 9:82; see WEEPING) and be laughed at by the believers (Q 83:34; for a similar threat of reversal in the New Testament, see *Luke* 6:25; for a corresponding prediction regarding mockery in the Qurʾān, see Q 9:79).

To explicate these overriding assessments, several verses and exegetical statements merit more detailed comments. First of all, the Qurʾān never categorically condemns laughter as such. Pellat's (Seriousness, 354) interpretation of Q 9:82 is clearly mistaken: the laughing hypocrites will be punished with prolonged crying for staying behind, not simply for laughing. The only verse to suggest that crying might generally be more appropriate than laughing is Q 53:57-62: "The approaching (hour) is imminent. None but God can avert it. Do you wonder at this news and laugh and will you not weep? You are raising your heads proudly [or, amusing yourselves: *wa-antum sāmidūna*]. Prostrate yourselves before God and worship!" Here (Q 53:60), it may be argued, it is not just the surprised laughter of disbelief in the last judgment that is inappropriate, but laughter in general, as opposed to crying (Ammann, *Vorbild und Vernunft,* 78). This can be interpreted as recommending a serious and more specifically pious attitude towards life instead of godless frivolity (see PIETY). But it remains open to debate whether, first, the recommendation holds true beyond the very moment of speaking or the limited period during which the revelation expected the end of the world to happen at any moment (see APOCALYPSE; REVELATION AND INSPIRATION); and, second, whether weeping should be limited to times of prayer (in the moderate sense of "There is a time for weeping and a time for laughing," *Eccles* 3:4) or cultivated as much as possible. The latter, rather extreme literalist view — that weeping should be cultivated as much as possible — was taken by the ascetic "weepers" *(bakkāʾ),* those mystics who denounced laughter and shed many tears during their devotional exercises (Meier, Bakkāʾ; see ṢŪFISM AND THE QURʾĀN; PRAYER). The minimalist view — that at least prayer is certainly not a time for laughing — found acceptance in several law schools (ʿAbd al-Razzāq, *Muṣannaf,* i, nos. 3760-8 and 3770-8; Ibn Abī Shayba, *Muṣannaf,* i, 387 f.; see LAW AND THE QURʾĀN).

The eschatological contempt for this world betrayed by Q 53:60 and best attested by its dismissal as mere play and amusement in Q 6:32 flourished in pious circles and especially among early ascetics who provided numerous dicta against laughter (Ammann, *Vorbild und Vernunft,* 74 f.), some of which found their way into ḥadīth collections and qurʾānic exegesis (see ASCETICISM; ḤADĪTH AND THE QURʾĀN; EXEGESIS OF THE QURʾĀN: CLASSICAL AND MEDIEVAL). Thus, the "small" and "big" (i.e. sin) of Q 18:49 could be interpreted as laughter, or as smiling and laughing, respectively (Ṭabarī, *Tafsīr,* ad Q 18:49; see SIN, MAJOR AND MINOR). But if such arbitrary embellishments are discounted, the one instance of qurʾānic reserve against laughter that is open to exegetical generalization is a far cry from the Bible's unconditional loathing (*Eccles* 7:6; *James* 4:9; *Sir* 21:20; *Eccles* 2:2; *Eph* 5:4; and, most instructive by comparison, *Luke* 6:25).

Q 53:60 is remarkable for another aspect that often goes unnoticed: it reflects the popular conception already attested in pre-Islamic Arabian poetry (see POETRY AND POETS; PRE-ISLAMIC ARABIA AND THE QURʾĀN) that laughter is caused by surprise *(taʿajjub)*. Much later medical and philosophical theories of laughter based on this conception seem to be indebted to theological debates rather than Greek authors (Ammann, *Vorbild und Vernunft,* 14-9; see THEOLOGY AND THE QURʾĀN; MEDICINE AND THE QURʾĀN; PHILOSOPHY AND THE QURʾĀN). The debates were triggered by two verses. In Q 11:71-4, God's messengers reassure a frightened Abraham (q.v.); his wife Sara laughs, is told that she will give birth to Isaac (q.v.; Isḥāq) and Jacob (q.v.; Yaʿqūb) and, being old, she wonders at this strange thing *(shayʾ ʿajīb)*. Her surprise, in turn, is called into question by the messengers: "Do you wonder *(taʿjabīna)* at God's command?" This is one of the rare examples where doubt (q.v.) in a prophetic message is noted, but not condemned as sinful. The chronology of the biblical version of the story (*Gen* 18:10-5), in which Sara laughs *after* she hears the lord's announcement, makes clear the reason for Sara's laughter: she is surprised at the idea of giving birth at her age. But Muslim commentators, beginning with Muḥammad's cousin Ibn ʿAbbās (d. 68/686-8), were faced with a text that has Sara laughing *before* she even knows what to laugh at. There were three solutions to this problem (Ammann, *Vorbild und Vernunft,*19 f.; Ṭabarī, *Tafsīr* and Ṭabarsī, *Majmaʿ,* ad Q 11:71): some exegetes restored the Bible's sequence and meaning, others identified an earlier reason for surprised or joyful laughter, while a third group claimed that *ḍaḥikat* here actually means *ḥāḍat* — she menstruated (see MENSTRUATION). The last opinion is not supported by sound philological evidence and seems particularly ill-advised since there is no reason for surprise if Sara had already menstruated before she is told she will give birth, but it has been duly cited by lexicographers ever since its initial proposal. The etymological message of the biblical story — Isaac (Isḥāq) takes his name from his parents' laughter — is clear in Hebrew, but not in Arabic, and thus escaped Muslim commentators. The loss of this detail need not be greatly regretted since the value of this folk etymology has been doubted anyway: the name Isḥāq is probably of theophoric origin and expressed the wish that God should either laugh, that is, welcome the new-born or grown-up bearer of the name, or make him laugh, that is, happy.

This leads to Q 53:36-44, which contains the only theological statement about laughter in the Qurʾān (Q 53:43-4). It portrays God as the creator or ultimate cause of laughter and weeping: "Was it not prophesied to him what is [said] in the scrolls (q.v.) of Moses (q.v.; Mūsā) and Abraham […] that God is the end [of all], and that it is he who causes to laugh and to weep *(aḍḥaka wa-abkā),* and that it is he who causes to die and to live *(amāta wa-aḥyā)?*" It is in the context of God's primordial and eschatological roles of creator and terminator that God is credited with causing woman and man to laugh and to weep (see CREATION; FREEDOM AND PREDESTINATION). The verses, in fact, summarize how human destiny (q.v.) must be interpreted from the point of view of salvation history (see HISTORY AND THE QURʾĀN; SALVATION). The joy and grief expressed by laughter and tears, corresponding, in the final analysis, to life (q.v.) and death (see DEATH AND THE DEAD), are both sent by God. The exact wording conspicuously reverses the internal sequence of the two pairs: laugh — weep, die — live (see PAIRS AND PAIRING). There is more to this than just the formal exigency of rhymed prose (q.v.; *sajʿ*). Ending on a note of hope (q.v.), the final *aḥyā* suggests that the creator both

causes people to live in this world and revives them in the hereafter, that is, finally raises them from the dead. This may mean that at least believers have more reason to laugh than to weep, and it certainly invalidates the maximalist reading of the end of Q 53:60-2 (mentioned above), which would like to rule out laughter completely. For Muslim commentators, the theological question posed by this verse was whether God literally creates human laughter and weeping or only the reasons for it, such as joy and grief. The latter explanation was promoted by Muʿtazilīs (q.v.) bent on defending free will against the determinist causative phrasing of the verse. But there was one concession: irresistible laughter is God-sent laughter; thus the involuntary act is interpreted as willed by God (Ammann, *Vorbild und Vernunft,* 21 f.; Ṭabarī, *Tafsīr;* Ṭabarsī, *Majmaʿ;* Rāzī, *Tafsīr* ad Q 53:43).

In the Qurʾān (as opposed to the biblical portrayal), God is never portrayed as laughing, but in several ḥadīths he is (see Gimaret, *Dieu à l'image de l'homme,* 265-79). This portrayal also sparked theological objections, this time against the implied anthropomorphism (q.v.). One of the more fascinating arguments jointly refutes God's laughter and surprise by pointing out that only someone who originally did not know could wonder and laugh at something — whereas God is all-knowing (see GOD AND HIS ATTRIBUTES). Surprise and laughter here and elsewhere are both seen as prerogatives of humans and linked with their rational faculties (Ammann, *Vorbild und Vernunft,* 42 f. and 26 f.; Lecomte, *Traité des divergences,* 235 f.; Zamakhsharī, *Kashshāf,* ad Q 37:12; see INTELLECT).

The perplexing *fa-tabassama ḍāḥikan min qawlihā* of Q 27:19 is probably best understood as "he [Solomon] smiled amused at her [the ant's] word" (Ammann, *Vorbild und Vernunft,* 9 f.; see SOLOMON; ANIMAL LIFE). But it may also reflect a long-standing rule of Near Eastern etiquette attested by Christian, Persian and also pre-Islamic Arabic sources (see e.g. the verse by Aws b. Ḥajar about women who "laugh but smilingly," *mā yaḍḥakna illā tabassuman*). This rule of cultured laughter subdued to a mere smile was later attributed to the Prophet (Ammann, *Vorbild und Vernunft,* 88-109 and 47-61). There is no reason to believe that the ḥadīth in question was not fabricated. But it constitutes a respectable compromise between the Prophet's well-attested loud laughter in some instances and his ominous warning that "If you knew what I know, you would laugh little and weep much!" (Ammann, *Vorbild und Vernunft,* 48 and 65-68).

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Law and the Qurʾān

The Qurʾān has a curious function in Islamic law. It is doubtless considered the first and foremost of the four major sources of the law (i.e. the *sharīʿa*). Yet in substantive legal terms and in comparison with the full corpus of the *sharīʿa,* the Qurʾān provides a relatively minor body of

legal subject matter, although a few of the most central rulings that govern the life of Muslim society and the individual (see COMMUNITY AND SOCIETY IN THE QUR'ĀN; ETHICS AND THE QUR'ĀN) are explicitly stated in it, or derived from one or another of its verses. The centrality of the Qur'ān in the *sharī'a* stems more from theological and intellectual considerations of the law and less from its ability to provide substantive legal subject matter (see THEOLOGY AND THE QUR'ĀN).

The early legal history of the text

While it is true that the Qur'ān is primarily a book of religious and moral prescriptions, there is no doubt that it encompasses pieces of legislation strictly defined. In propounding his message, the Prophet wished to break away from pre-Islamic Arabian values and institutions, but only insofar as he needed to establish, once and for all, the foundations of the new religion (see ISLAM; PRE-ISLAMIC ARABIA AND THE QUR'ĀN). Pragmatically, he could not have done away with all the social practices and institutions that had prevailed prior and up to his time. Among the multitude of exhortations (q.v.) and prescriptions found in the Qur'ān, there are a good number of legal and quasi-legal stipulations. Thus legislation was introduced in select matters of ritual (see RITUAL AND THE QUR'ĀN), alms-tax (see ALMSGIVING; TAXATION), property (q.v.) and treatment of orphans (q.v.), inheritance (q.v.), usury (q.v.), consumption of alcohol (see INTOXICATION; WINE), marriage, separation, divorce (see MARRIAGE AND DIVORCE), sexual intercourse (see SEX AND SEXUALITY), adultery (see ADULTERY AND FORNICATION), theft (q.v.) and homicide (see MURDER; BLOODSHED).

Medieval Muslim jurists and modern scholars seem to agree that the Qur'ān contains some five hundred verses with explicitly legal content. In comparison with the body of qur'ānic material as a whole, the legal verses appear rather exiguous, conveying the impression that the Qur'ān's preoccupation with legal matters is nothing more than incidental. At the same time, it has frequently been noted by Islamicists that the Qur'ān often repeats itself both literally and thematically. If we accept this to be the case, it would mean that the relative size of the legal subject matter, where repetition rarely occurs, is larger than previously thought. And if we consider the fact that the average length of the legal verse is twice or even thrice that of the average non-legal verse, it is not difficult to argue that the Qur'ān contains no less legal material than does the Torah, which is commonly known as "The Law" (Goitein, The birth-hour, 24). Therefore, while qur'ānic law constitutes a relatively minor part of the *sharī'a,* the Qur'ān, in and by itself, is no less legalistic than the Torah.

The law of the Torah, Gospel and Qur'ān

This affirmation of significant legal content in the Qur'ān is crucial since it goes against conventional wisdom, which asserts that the Qur'ān acquired legal importance for early Muslims only toward the end of the first century A.H. (ca. 720 C.E.). Even in Mecca (q.v.), the Prophet already thought of the community he aimed to create in terms of a political and social unit (see POLITICS AND THE QUR'ĀN; SOCIAL RELATIONS). This explains his success in organizing the Arab and Jewish tribes (see TRIBES AND CLANS; JEWS AND JUDAISM; ARABS) in a body politic immediately after arriving in Medina (q.v.). The constitution that he drafted in this city betrays a mind very familiar with formulaic legal documents, a fact that is hardly surprising in light of the legal thrust of the Qur'ān and the role he had played as an arbitration judge (*ḥakam,* see JUSTICE AND INJUSTICE; MUḤAMMAD). In Medina, he continued to

play this role for some time, relying in his decisions, so it seems, on customary law and tribal practices hitherto prevailing. But from the Qur'ān we learn that at a certain point of time after his arrival in Medina the Prophet came to think of his message as one that carried with it the law of God, just as did the Torah (q.v.) and the Gospel (q.v.). Sūra 5, revealed at Medina, marshals a list of commands, admonitions and explicit prohibitions concerning a great variety of issues, from eating swine meat to theft (see FOOD AND DRINK; LAWFUL AND UNLAWFUL; PROHIBITED DEGREES; BOUNDARIES AND PRECEPTS). References to the Jews and Christians (see CHRISTIANS AND CHRISTIANITY), and their respective scriptures recur throughout. In Q 5:43 God asks, with a sense of astonishment, why the Jews resort to Muḥammad in his capacity as a judge "when they have the Torah which contains the judgment (q.v.) of God." The Qur'ān continues: "We have revealed the Torah in which there is guidance and light (q.v.), by which the prophets who surrendered [to God] judged the Jews, and the rabbis and priests judged by such of God's scriptures (see BOOK) as they were bidden to observe" (Q 5:44). In Q 5:46, the Qur'ān addresses the Christians, saying in effect that God sent Jesus (q.v.) to confirm the prophethood (see PROPHETS AND PROPHETHOOD) of Moses (q.v.), and the Gospel to reassert the "guidance and advice" revealed in the Torah. "So let the people of the Gospel judge by that which God had revealed therein, for whosoever judged not by that which God revealed: such are sinners" (Q 5:47).

This is sufficient to show that the Prophet not only considered the Jews and Christians as possessing their own divine law but also as bound by the application of this law. If the Jews and Christians each have their own law, then what about Muslims? The Qur'ān here does not shirk from giving an explicit answer: "We have revealed unto you the book (viz. the Qur'ān) with the truth, confirming whatever scripture was before it… so judge between them by that which God had revealed, and do not follow their desires away from the truth… *for we have made for each of you* (i.e. Muslims, Christians and Jews) *a law and a normative way to follow.* If God had willed, he would have made all of you one community" (Q 5:48). But God did not wish to do so, and he thus created three communities with three sets of laws, so that each community could follow *its own* law. And like the Christians and Jews, the Prophet is again commanded (repeatedly throughout the Qur'ān) to judge by what God revealed to him, for "who is better than God in judgment?" (Q 5:49-50).

Sūra 5, or at least verses 42-50 therein, seems to have been precipitated by an incident in which certain Jewish tribes resorted to the Prophet to adjudicate among them. It is unlikely that such an event would have taken place any later than 5 A.H., since the repeated references to rabbis implies a context of time when there remained a substantial Jewish presence in Medina, which could not have been the case after this date. Be that as it may, the incident seems to have marked a turning point in the career of the Prophet, and from that point on he began to think of his religion as one that should afford the Muslim community a set of laws separate from those of other religions. This may also account for the fact that it is in Medina that the overwhelming bulk of qur'ānic legislation occurred (see CHRONOLOGY AND THE QUR'ĀN; OCCASIONS OF REVELATION).

Muḥammad and the caliphs and the law

Although the Qur'ān did not provide Muslims with an all-encompassing system of law, the evidence suggests that the Prophet

was strongly inclined to move in that direction. This inclination finds eloquent testimony in the stand of the Qur'ān on the matter of the consumption of date- and grape-wine. In the Meccan phase, wines were obviously permitted: "From date-palm and grapes you derive alcoholic drinks, and from them you make good livelihood *(rizqan ḥasanan)*. Lo! therein is indeed a portent for people who have sense" (Q 16:67). In Medina, the position of the Qur'ān changes, expressing a growing distrust toward alcoholic beverages. "They ask you (viz. Muḥammad) about wine *(khamr)* and gambling (q.v.; *maysir*). Say: 'In both there is sin (see SIN, MAJOR AND MINOR), and utility for people'" (Q 2:219). The sense of aversion increases further: "O you who believe (see BELIEF AND UNBELIEF), do not come to pray when you are drunken, till you know what you utter" (Q 4:43). Here, one observes a provisional prohibition against the consumption of alcohol only at times when Muslims intended to pray (see PRAYER). Finally, a categorical command is revealed in Q 5:90-1, whereby Muslims are to avoid alcohol, games of chance (see DIVINATION; FORETELLING) and idols altogether (see IDOLS AND IMAGES; IDOLATRY AND IDOLATERS). It is interesting that the final, decisive stand on alcohol occurs in sūra 5 which, as we have seen, marks a turning point in the legislative outlook of the Prophet.

This turning point, however, should not be seen as constituting an entirely clean break from the previous practices of the Prophet, for he already played the role of a judge, both as a traditional arbitrator as well as a prophet. The turning point only marked the beginning of a new process whereby all events affecting the nascent Muslim community had therefore to be adjudicated according to God's law, whose agent was none other than the Prophet. This is clearly attested to not only in the Qur'ān but also in the so-called Constitution of Medina, a document whose authenticity can hardly be contested.

That all matters should have been subject to the divine and prophetic decree must not be taken to mean that all the old problems encountered by the Prophet were given new solutions. Although a historical record of this early period is lacking in credibility (see HISTORY AND THE QUR'ĀN; ḤADĪTH AND THE QUR'ĀN), we may assert that, with the exception of what may be called the qur'ānic legal reform, the Prophet generally followed existing pre-Islamic Arab practices. Indeed, one might argue that while these practices constituted the bulk of prevalent norms, the qur'ānic legislation constituted nothing more than a supplement. It was not until later that pre-Islamic Arab practices were Islamicized by their inclusion under the rubric of prophetic sunna (q.v.).

Before the prophetic sunna came to play an important role in the law, and even while the conquests were underway and Medina was still the capital, there were mainly two sets of laws on the basis of which the leaders of the nascent Muslim community modeled their conduct, namely, pre-Islamic Arab customary law and the Qur'ān. The former was by and large the only "system" of law known to the conquerors, while the latter contained and symbolized the mission in whose name these conquerors were fighting (q.v.; see also EXPEDITIONS AND BATTLES). The importance of the Qur'ān and its injunctions for the early Muslims can hardly be overstated. Early Monophysite sources inform us that when Abū Bakr, the first caliph (q.v.; d. 13/634), deployed his armies to conquer Syria (q.v.), he addressed his generals with the following words: "When you enter the land, kill neither old man nor child.… Establish a covenant with every city and people who receives you, give

them your assurances and let them live according to their laws.… Those who do not receive you, you are to fight, conducting yourselves carefully in accordance with the ordinances and upright laws transmitted to you from God, at the hands of our Prophet" (Brock, Syriac views, 12, 200; see WAR). It is interesting to observe that in this passage the reference to the Qur'ān is unambiguous, although one is not entirely sure whether or not the "upright laws" might refer in part to legal ordinances other than those laid down in the Qur'ān. But even more interesting is the contrast drawn between the laws of the conquered nations and the law transmitted from God through the Prophet. Abū Bakr's orders to allow the mainly Christian inhabitants of Syria to regulate their affairs by their own laws is rather reminiscent of the Qur'ān's discourse in sūra 5, where each religion was to apply to itself its own set of laws. Here, Abū Bakr was implicitly and, later in the passage, explicitly adhering to the Qur'ān's letter and spirit, and in a sense to the personal stand adopted by the Prophet on this issue which is inextricably connected with the very act of revelation (see REVELATION AND INSPIRATION).

The early caliphs, including the Umayyads, considered themselves the deputies of God on earth, and thus seem to have felt free to dispense justice in accordance with the Qur'ān. Abū Bakr, in consonance with the wishes expressed in his speech to the army of Syria, seems to have adhered, as a rule, to the prescriptions of the Qur'ān. Among other things, he enforced the prohibition on alcohol and fixed the penalty for its violation at forty lashes (see CHASTISEMENT AND PUNISHMENT). While enforcing the law in this case indicates the centrality of the qur'ānic injunctions, it also demonstrates that beyond the very fact of the qur'ānic prohibition (see FORBIDDEN) there was little juristic experience or guidance to go by. For this punishment, deemed to have been fixed arbitrarily, was soon altered by ʿUmar and ʿAlī (see ʿALĪ B. ABĪ ṬĀLIB) to eighty lashes, the reasoning being, so it seems, that intoxication was deemed analogous to the offense of falsely accusing a person of committing adultery *(qadhf)*, for which the Qur'ān fixed the penalty of eighty lashes. ʿUmar was not only the first to impose the new penalty for inebriation but he is also reported to have forcefully insisted on strict adherence to the Qur'ān in matters of ritual, which became an integral part of the law.

The increasing importance of the Qur'ān as a religious and legal text manifested itself in the need to collect the scattered material of the book and thence to establish a vulgate (see COLLECTION OF THE QUR'ĀN; CODICES OF THE QUR'ĀN). ʿUthmān (q.v.), who followed in the steps of his two predecessors in enforcing the rulings of the Qur'ān, took it upon himself to discharge this task. The collection of the Qur'ān must have had a primary legal significance, for it defined the subject matter of the text and thus gave the legally-minded a *textus receptus* on which to draw. The monumental event of establishing a vulgate signified the beginning of what may be described as the textual attention accorded the Qur'ān (see TRADITIONAL DISCIPLINES OF QUR'ĀNIC STUDY; FORM AND STRUCTURE OF THE QUR'ĀN; LANGUAGE AND STYLE OF THE QUR'ĀN; GRAMMAR AND THE QUR'ĀN). This attention reached its zenith only centuries later, but the decades that followed the event determined the direction of what was to come.

During the ensuing decades, Muslim men of learning turned their attention to the explicit legal contents of the Qur'ān. The paucity of credible sources from this period does not allow us to form a comprehensive picture of the developments in qur'ānic studies. The scope of activities

that took place in connection with the development of the theory of abrogation (q.v.), however, may give us some clues as to the extent to which the Qur'ān played a role in elaborating Islamic jurisprudence.

Origins of the theory of abrogation

The rudimentary beginnings of the theory of abrogation seem to have arisen in response to the need for reconciling what appeared to the early Muslims to be seeming contradictions within the body of legal verses in the Qur'ān. The most immediate concern for these Muslims was neither theology nor dogma (see FAITH; CREEDS), for these were matters that acquired significance only later. Rather, their primary interest lay in how they might realize or manifest obedience (q.v.) to their God, a duty that was explicitly stressed in the Qur'ān. In other words, Islam meant, even as early as the middle of the first century, adherence to the will of God as articulated in his book. Thus it was felt necessary to determine what the stand of the Qur'ān was with regard to particular issues. Where there was more than one qur'ānic decree pertinent to a single matter, such a determination was no easy task. And to solve such difficulties, it was essential to determine which verses might be deemed to repeal others in the text of the Qur'ān.

The Companions of the Prophet (q.v.) are reported to have provided the impetus to such discussions. But the Muslim sources make relatively few references to the activities of the Companions in this field. It was the generation of the Successors that became most closely associated with discussions on abrogation, and with controversies about the status of particular verses (see EXEGESIS OF THE QUR'ĀN: CLASSICAL AND MEDIEVAL). The names of Ibrāhīm al-Nakha'ī (d. 95/713), Muslim b. Yasār (d. 101/719), Mujāhid b. Jabr (d. 104/722), and al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī (d. 110/728) were among the most prominent in such discussions. Qatāda b. Di'āma al-Sadūsī (d. 117/735) and the renowned Ibn Shihāb al-Zuhrī (d. 124/742) also left writings that attest to the birth of the theory of abrogation, which by their time had already been articulated in writing. Though their original works were likely subjected to revision by later writers, the core of their thought has proven difficult to dismiss as inauthentic. Even if this core is reduced to a minimum, it nonetheless manifests an awareness on the part of these scholars of the legal thrust of the qur'ānic text. For it is clear that the treatises were exclusively concerned with the ramifications of those verses that had direct bearing on legal issues.

The theory of abrogation appears to have developed in a context in which some qur'ānic prescriptions contradicted the actual reality and practices of the community, thus giving rise to the need for interpreting away, or canceling out, the effect of those verses seen to be discordant with other verses more in line with certain practices. Whatever the case may have been, the very nature of this theory points up the fact that whatever contradiction or problem needed to be settled, it had to be settled within the purview of qur'ānic authority. This accords with the assertion that the Umayyad caliphs not only saw themselves as the deputies of God on earth, and thus the instruments for carrying out God's justice as embodied in the Qur'ān, but also as the propounders of the law in its (then) widest sense. In addition to fiscal laws and rules of war, they regularly concerned themselves with establishing and enforcing rules regarding marriage, divorce, succession, manumission (see SLAVES AND SLAVERY), pre-emption, blood money (q.v.), ritual and other matters. The promulgation of these rules could only have been carried out in the name of the lord on

whose behalf these caliphs claimed to serve as deputies.

The Qur'ān in legal theory

With the evolution of the doctrine of abrogation and other aspects of qur'ānic legal studies, legal theory *(uṣūl al-fiqh)* began to emerge during the second/eighth and third/ninth centuries. In this theory, the Qur'ān occupied a central role as the first source of the law, and this because, logically and ontologically, everything else either depends on or derives from it. Just as consensus and the inferential method of juridical *qiyās* were justified by means of prophetic sunna, this sunna, together with its derivatives, were justified by the Qur'ān. The explicit commands to obey the Prophet and to emulate his behavior ensured that the apostolic example (see MESSENGER) became a source of law which supplements, in substantive terms, the qur'ānic legal content, and guarantees, in theoretical terms, the authoritativeness *(ḥujjiyya)* of other legal sources subsidiary to it. The chain of authority thus begins with God's book in which his attribute of speech (q.v.; see also GOD AND HIS ATTRIBUTES; WORD OF GOD) not only manifests itself but is also made identical with the law.

Qur'ānic authority

The Qur'ān also guarantees the authoritativeness of the legal sources in epistemological terms. Metaphysically, God's existence is assumed to be apodictically demonstrated, which entails the certainty that the Qur'ān is an embodiment of God's speech. That the Qur'ān is known with certainty to embody one of the most essential of God's attributes does not necessarily entail the conclusion that its subject matter, as known to the post-apostolic community, is certain. It is after all acknowledged as conceivable that its contents, or portions thereof, may have been forgotten or distorted, just as the Christians and Jews are said to have corrupted their own scriptures (see CORRUPTION; FORGERY). As a safeguard against such distortions and omissions, or perhaps in defense of qur'ānic authenticity, among other things, legal theory developed the doctrine of multiple, recurrent transmission, known as *tawātur*. According to this doctrine, three conditions must be met for the *tawātur* transmission to take place. First, the channels of transmission must be sufficiently numerous as to preclude any possibility of error (q.v.) or collaboration on a forgery. Second, the very first class of transmitters had to have received sensory knowledge (see SEEING AND HEARING) of what the Prophet declared to be revelation. Third, these two conditions must be met at each stage of transmission beginning with the first class and ending with the present community.

The recurrent mode of transmission yields necessary, certain knowledge, so that the mind, upon receiving reported information of this type, need not even exercise its faculty of reasoning and reflection. Upon hearing recurrent transmissions of the verses, the mind has no choice but to admit the contents of the verses *a priori* as true and genuine. Unlike acquired knowledge, which occurs to the mind only after it conducts inferential operations, necessary knowledge is lodged in the mind spontaneously (see KNOWLEDGE AND LEARNING). Thus, upon hearing a verse, or for that matter any report, from a single transmitter, one is presumed to have gained probable knowledge of its contents and its authenticity. In order to reach a level of necessary knowledge, the verse must be transmitted a sufficient number of times and each time by a different transmitter. Thus, the Qur'ān's expansive assimilation in the Muslim community, in both

synchronic and diachronic terms, guarantees the certainty of its contents in the sense that its language is passed down through generations of Muslims in complete and accurate fashion (see TRUTH).

But does this guarantee certitude in construing the signification of its language? Qurʾānic legal language, the jurists admitted, suffers in many instances from ambiguity — a situation that gave rise to the taxonomy known as *muḥkam/mutashābih* (clear/ambiguous). According to this taxonomy, the Qurʾān contains univocal and equivocal language, the former having the epistemological status of certainty because it is capable of but one interpretation yielding a single, unquestionable meaning. The latter, however, is merely probable since it lends itself to be construed in more than one way. Thus, in theory, the qurʾānic language distinguishes itself from prophetic ḥadīth in that while it includes both *muḥkam* and *mutashābih* — a problem which also pervades the ḥadīth — its transmission is deemed to be ever certain, whereas the ḥadīth's transmission is considered to be often, if not dominantly, suspect (see ḤADĪTH AND THE QURʾĀN).

Fashioned thus, the theoretical discourse was agenda-laden. In order to exclude probability from the mode of qurʾānic transmission, the text was to be defined by the very terms of the transmission that guaranteed its certainty. In other words, instead of including in the qurʾānic text material that could be defined as probable, the *textus receptus* was limited to that body of material that was considered to have undergone *tawātur* transmission. The admittedly insignificant material that boasted only probabilistic status, such as Ibn Masʿūd's (d. 32/652-3) recension, was *a priori* excluded from the *textus receptus*. Dubious recensions were to be treated as equivalent to prophetic ḥadīths, the justification being that such Companions as Ibn Masʿūd may have thought that the material they had heard from the Prophet was qurʾānic when in fact it was from the sunna.

Be that as it may, the qurʾānic text presented the jurist with no problem insofar as transmission and authenticity were concerned. Rather, the difficulty was with hermeneutics; i.e. how to interpret the qurʾānic language in the ultimate task of constructing legal norms. The aim of linguistic interpretation is to determine whether, for instance, a word is ambiguous, univocal, general, particular, constituting a trope, a command, etc. Each word is analyzed in light of one or more of these categories, one of the first being the category of tropes. The great majority of legal theorists maintain that most words in the Arabic language are used in their real sense and that metaphorical language is limited. Some jurists, however, such as Abū Isḥāq al-Isfarāʾīnī (d. 418/1027), are reported to have taken the position that tropes do not occur in the Arabic language, the implication being that the Qurʾān is free of metaphors (see METAPHOR). A few others admit the existence of metaphors in the language but reject the claim that the Qurʾān contains any such words. The majority, however, hold the position that the Qurʾān does contain metaphors, and in support of this they adduce, among others, Q 19:4: "And the head has flared up with grey hair." It is obvious that the head itself does not "flare up" and that the metaphor issues from the substitution of fire (q.v.) for hair.

Words used in their real meanings are said to be either clear *(mubayyan, mufassar)* or ambiguous *(mujmal)*. The latter category encompasses all expressions the denotations of which are so general and imprecise that the hearer would be expected to understand neither the intention of the speaker nor the point being made. The ambiguity stems from the fact that the ref-

erent in the case of such words includes several attributes or different genera. In Q 17:33: "And he who is killed wrongfully, we have given power *(sulṭān)* to his heir," the term "power" (see POWER AND IMPOTENCE) is utterly ambiguous, since it could refer to a variety of genera, such as retaliation (q.v.), right to blood money, or even the right to pardon the murderer. This ambiguity explains why *mujmal* words tend to prevent texts containing them from having binding legal effect, for the ruling or the subject of that ruling derived from them would not be sufficiently clear as to enable Muslim jurists to understand what exactly is being commanded. It is only when such words are brought out of the realm of ambiguity into that of clarity by means of other clear "speech" that the legal effects of *mujmal* texts become binding.

Ambiguity is the result not only of the use of vague language, as evidenced in the aforementioned verse, but also of homonymous nouns that designate more than one object. An example illustrating the difficulty is the Arabic word *ʿayn,* which equally refers to an eye (see EYES), to the spring (see SPRINGS AND FOUNTAINS) from which water issues, and to a distinguished person of noble lineage. Furthermore, ambiguity may accrue to an otherwise clear expression by virtue of the fact that it is associated with an ambiguous statement. For instance, Q 5:1: "The beast of cattle is made lawful unto you (for food)" is, as it stands, fairly clear. Immediately thereafter, however, the verse continues with the statement: "except for that which is unannounced for you," thus rendering the earlier statement ambiguous, since what is unannounced cannot be known without further documentation.

Univocal language in the texts of revelation is known as *naṣṣ,* since its meaning is so clear as to engender certitude in the mind. When we hear the word "four" we automatically know that it is neither three nor five, nor any other number. To know what "four" means we have no need for other language to explain the denotation of the word. It is self-sufficiently clear. Against those few who maintained that the *naṣṣ* rarely occurs in connection with legal matters, the majority of jurists argue that univocal language is quite abundant in the texts.

Equivocal words

Words whose signification is not readily obvious are of two types, the first of which includes those whose meaning is so general *(ʿāmm)* that they need to be particularized if they are to yield any legal effects. The second type includes words with two or more possible meanings, one of which — the *ẓāhir* — is deemed, by virtue of supporting evidence, superior to the others. Words that equally include two or more individuals of the genus to which they refer are deemed general *(ʿāmm)*. Thus all plurals accompanied by a definite article are general terms, e.g. *al-muslimūn,* "the Muslims." Some jurists considered words of this kind to belong to the category of the general even when not accompanied by a definite article. In addition to its function of defining words, this article serves, in the Arabic language, to render words applicable to all members of a class. Accordingly, when the article is attached to singular nouns, these nouns will refer to the generality of individuals within a certain class. *Al-insān* or *al-muslim* thus refers not to a particular individual but, respectively, to human beings or to Muslims generally. Yet another group of words considered to be general is that of the interrogative particles, classified in Arabic as nouns.

A general word in the Qur'ān may be particularized only by means of relevant words or statements provided by the

revealed texts. By relevant is meant words or statements that apply to the same genus denoted by the general word. Particularization *(takhṣīṣ)* thus means exclusion from the general of a part that was subsumed under that general. For example, while in Q 2:238, which reads "Perform prayers, as well as the midmost prayer (see NOON)," the midmost prayer is specified, it cannot be said to have been particularized. Particularization would have applied if the verse had been revealed as saying "Perform prayers except for the midmost one."

A classic example of particularization occurs in Q 5:3, "Forbidden unto you (for food) is carrion," which was particularized by a prophetic report allowing the consumption, among others, of dead fish (see HUNTING AND FISHING). This example also makes clear that such reports, including solitary ones, can, at least according to some jurists, particularize the Qur'ān. Similarly, the Qur'ān can, as one can expect, particularize the sunna. Indeed, the vast majority of jurists held that statements in one of the two sources could particularize statements in the other.

There are at least two other types of particularization that apply to two different texts. The first type of particularization takes place when a proviso or a condition *(sharṭ)* is attached to, or brought to bear upon, a general statement. Q 3:97, for example, reads: "And pilgrimage (q.v.) to the house (see KA'BA; HOUSE, DOMESTIC AND DIVINE) is a duty unto God for mankind, for him who can find a way thither." It is plain here that the obligation to go on pilgrimage is waived in the case of those who have no means to perform it. The second type, on the other hand, is particularization by means of introducing into the general statement, not a condition, but a quality *(ṣifa)*. This is known as the qualification *(taqyīd)* of an unrestricted *(muṭlaq)* word or statement. For instance, in cases where a man swears not to resume a normal marital relationship with his wife *(zihār),* but later does, the penalty fixed in the Qur'ān is "freeing a slave" (Q 58:3). But the penalty for accidental homicide is "freeing a believing slave" (Q 4:92). The attribute "believing" has qualified, or particularized, the word "slave."

When a qualifying attribute is to be found nowhere in the texts, the unrestricted expression must be taken to refer to the general category subsumed under that expression. And when a qualified word appears without an object to qualify, the word must be taken to apply only to that case which is subject to the qualification. Some difficulties arise, however, concerning the extent to which the principle of qualification should be applied when an unrestricted word meets with a qualifying attribute. In Q 58:4, it is stipulated that the penalty for *zihār* is either "fasting (q.v.) for two successive months (q.v.)" or "feeding sixty needy persons." Unlike the general command to feed sixty persons, fasting here is qualified by the requirement that it be successive. Since these are two different types of penance (see REPENTANCE AND PENANCE), one relating to feeding, the other to fasting, the qualification applicable to the latter must not be extended to the former. But when the two penances (or rulings) are of the same nature, the attribute must be taken to qualify the unrestricted word or sentence. For instance, Q 2:282: "have witnesses (attest to the sale) when you sell one to another" is qualified by an earlier passage in the same verse stipulating "call to witness, from among you, two witnesses, and if two men are not available, then a man and two women" (see WITNESSING AND TESTIFYING; GENDER).

In this case, both the qualified and the unrestricted rulings are one and the same, and they pertain to a single case, namely, concluding a contract of sale (see SELLING

AND BUYING). But what would the interpretative attitude be in a situation where the qualified and unrestricted rulings are identical but the cases which give rise to them are different? Such is the case with *ẓihār* and accidental homicide. The penalty for the former is "freeing a slave" whereas for the latter it is "freeing a believing slave" (Q 58:3, 4:92). In such an event, the latter must be considered to qualify the former, a consideration said to be grounded in reasoning, not in the actual language of the texts. That is to say, in the contract of sale God made it clear in the language *(lafẓ)* of the Qur'ān that a witness of a certain sort is meant, but in *ẓihār* and accidental homicide there is no provision of specific language to this effect; the jurist merely reasons, on the basis of the text, that this was God's intention.

We have said that equivocal words are classifiable into two broad categories, one encompassing general terms *('āmm),* together with those that may be called unrestricted *(mufaṣṣal),* and the other including words that are capable of more than one interpretation. Through a process of interpretation, technically known as *ta'wīl,* one of the meanings, the *ẓāhir,* is deemed by the interpreter to be the most likely among the candidates, because it presents evidence that is absent in the case of the other possible meanings. An example of this sort of evidence would be language that takes the imperative *(amr)* or prohibitive *(nahy)* form, to mention the two most significant linguistic types in legal hermeneutics.

The jurists are unanimous in their view that revelation is intended to lay down a system of obligation and that the imperative and the prohibitive forms (whose prototypes, respectively, are "Do" and "Do not do") constitute the backbone of that system's deontology. Without coming to grips with the hermeneutical ramifications of these two forms, obedience to God can never be achieved. For it is chiefly through these that God chose to express the greatest part of his revelation.

Commands and prohibitions

Perhaps the most important question with regard to the imperative form was its legal effect. When someone commands another by saying "Do this," should this be construed as falling only within the legal value of the obligatory *(wājib)* or also within that of the recommended *(mandūb)* or the indifferent *(mubāḥ)?* The Qur'ān states "Hold the prayer" (Q 2:43), a phrase that was unanimously understood to convey an obligation. At the same time, the Qur'ān stipulates "Write (your slaves a contract of emancipation) if you are aware of any good in them" (Q 24:33), language which was construed as a recommendation. Furthermore, in Q 5:2, the statement "When you have left the sacred precinct, then go hunting" was taken to indicate that hunting outside the Ka'ba is an act to which the law is indifferent.

Adducing such texts as proof, a minority among the jurists held that the imperative form in qur'ānic language is a homonym, equally capable of indicating obligation, recommendation and indifference. Others maintained that it signifies only recommendation. The majority of jurists, however, rejected these positions and held the imperative to be an instrument for decreeing only obligatory acts. Whenever the imperative is construed as inducing a legal value other than obligation, this construal would have to be based on evidence extraneous to the imperative form in question. Conversely, whenever the imperative form stands apart from any contextual evidence *(qarīna),* it must be presumed to convey an obligation.

Once adopted by the majority, the position that the imperative form, in the

absence of contextual evidence, indicates obligation was given added support by arguments developed by a number of leading jurists. The chief argument (drawn, as would be expected, from both the Qur'ān and the sunna) is that when God commanded Muslims to perform certain acts, he meant them as obligations that can only be violated on pain of punishment: "When it is said unto them: Bow down, they bow not down! Woe unto the repudiators on that day" (Q 77:48-9).

A corollary of the determination of linguistic signification is that the jurist needs to reconcile conflicting texts relevant to a particular case whose solution is pending. He must first attempt to harmonize them so that each may be brought to bear upon a solution to the case. But should the texts prove to be so contradictory as to be incapable of harmonization, the jurist must resort to the theory of abrogation *(naskh)* with a view to determining which of the two texts repeals the other. Thus, abrogation involves the replacement of one text, which would have otherwise had a legal effect, by another one embodying a legal value contradictory to the first.

Elaboration of the theory of abrogation

The juridical justification for the theory of abrogation derives from the common idea, sanctioned by consensus, that the religion of Islam abrogated many, and sometimes all, of the laws upheld by the earlier religions (see SCRIPTURE AND THE QUR'ĀN; RELIGIOUS PLURALISM AND THE QUR'ĀN). It is a fundamental creed, furthermore, that Islam not only deems these religions legitimate but also considers itself to be the bearer of their legacy. That the Prophet repealed his predecessors' laws therefore goes to prove that abrogation is a valid hermeneutical instrument, one which is specifically approved in Q 2:106: "Such of our revelation as we abrogate or cause to be forgotten, we bring (in place) one better or the like thereof," and Q 16:101: "When we put a revelation in place of another, and God knows best what he reveals, they say: 'Lo, you are but inventing. Most of them know not.' " These verses were taken to show that abrogation is applicable to revelation within Islam.

It must be stressed that the wide majority of jurists espoused the view that it is not the texts themselves which are actually abrogated, but rather the legal rulings comprised in these texts. The text *qua* text is not subject to repeal, for to argue that God revealed conflicting and even contradictory statements would entail that one of the statements is false, which would in turn lead to the highly objectionable conclusion that God has revealed an untruth.

Why there should be, in the first place, conflicting and even contradictory rulings is not a question in which the jurists were very interested. That such rulings existed, however, was undeniable and that they should be made to abrogate one another was deemed a necessity. The criteria that determined which text abrogates another mainly revolved around the chronology of qur'ānic revelation and the diachronic sequence of the Prophet's career. Certain later texts simply abrogated earlier ones.

But is it possible that behind abrogation there are latent divine considerations at work mitigating the severity of the repealed rulings? Only a minority of jurists appears to have maintained that since God is merciful and compassionate he aimed at reducing hardships for his creatures (see MERCY). Abrogating a lenient ruling by a less lenient or a harsher one would run counter to his attribute as a merciful God. Besides, God himself had pronounced that "He desires for you ease, and he desires no hardship" (Q 2:185). Accordingly, repealing a ruling by a harsher one would contravene his own pronouncement. Their oppo-

nents, however, rejected this argument. They maintained that to say that God cannot repeal a ruling by another which involves added hardship would be tantamount to saying that he cannot, or does not, impose hardships in his law, and this is plainly false. Furthermore, this argument would lead to the absurd conclusion that he cannot cause someone to be ill after having been healthy or blind after having enjoyed perfect vision (see ILLNESS AND HEALTH; VISION AND BLINDNESS). They reject the aforementioned qur'ānic verse (Q 2:185) as an invalid argument since it bears exclusively upon hardships involved in a quite specific and limited context, namely, the fast of Ramaḍān (q.v.). They likewise reject their opponents' interpretation of the qur'ānic verse 2:106, which states that God abrogates a verse only to introduce in its place another that is either similar to, or better than it. What is "better," they argue, is not necessarily that which is more lenient and more agreeable but rather that which is ultimately more rewarding in this life and in the hereafter (see REWARD AND PUNISHMENT; ESCHATOLOGY). And since the reward is greater, it may well be that the abrogating text comprises a less lenient ruling than that which was abrogated.

Criteria for abrogation

If God's motives for abrogation cannot be determined, then these motives cannot serve to establish which of the two conflicting legal rulings should repeal the other. The criteria of abrogation must thus rest elsewhere. The first, and most convincing criterion may be found in an explicit statement in the abrogating text, stating, for instance, that it was revealed specifically in order to repeal another. The second is the chronological order of revelation, namely, that a later text, in point of time, repeals an earlier one. The difficulty that arises here is to determine the chronology of texts. The first obvious evidence is one that appears in the text itself, as with the previous criterion. But such explicit statements are admittedly difficult to come by. Most conflicting texts therefore have to be dated by external evidence.

The third criterion is consensus. Should the community, represented by its scholars, agree to adopt one ruling in preference to another, then the latter is deemed abrogated since the community cannot agree on an error. The very fact of abandoning one ruling in favor of another is tantamount to abrogating the disfavored ruling. A number of jurists, however, rejected consensus as having the capability to abrogate, their argument being that any consensus must be based on the revealed texts, and if these texts contain no evidence of abrogation in the first place, then consensus as a sanctioning instrument cannot decide in such a matter. To put it differently, since consensus cannot go beyond the evidence of the texts, it is the texts and only the texts that determine whether or not one ruling can abrogate another. If a ruling subject to consensus happened to abrogate another conflicting ruling, the abrogation would be based on evidence existing in the texts, not on consensus.

If consensus is rejected as incapable on its own of abrogating a ruling, it is because of a cardinal principle in the theory of abrogation which stipulates that derivative principles cannot be employed to abrogate all or any part of the source from which they are derived. This explains why consensus and juridical inference *(qiyās),* both based on the Qur'ān and the sunna, were deemed by the great majority of jurists, and in fact by mainstream Sunnism, to lack the power to repeal either prophetic reports or qur'ānic verses.

The other cardinal principle, to which resort is quite often made in jurisprudential

arguments, is that an epistemologically inferior text cannot repeal a superior one. Thus a text whose truth or authenticity is only presumed (= probable: *zannī*) can by no means abrogate another text qualified as certain *(qaṭ', yaqīn)*. On the other hand, texts which are considered of equal epistemological value or of the same species may repeal one another. This principle seems to represent an extension of Q 2:106 which speaks of abrogating verses and replacing them by similar or better ones. Hence, it is a universal principle that, like the Qur'ān, concurrent prophetic reports *(mutawātir)* may abrogate one another. The same rule applies in fact to solitary reports *(āḥād)*. Furthermore, according to the logic of this principle, an epistemologically superior text can abrogate an inferior one. Thus the Qur'ān and the concurrent sunna may abrogate solitary reports, but not vice versa.

Within the Qur'ān and the sunna, moreover, a text expressing a pronouncement *(qawl)* may repeal another text of the same species, just as a text embodying a deed *(fi'l)* may repeal another text of the same kind. Moreover, in conformity with the principle that a superior text may repeal an inferior one, the abrogation of a "deed-text" by a "pronouncement-text" is deemed valid. For the latter is equal to the former in that it represents a statement relative to a particular ruling, but it differs from the former in one important respect: namely, that a "pronouncement-text" transcends itself and is semantically brought to bear upon other situations, whereas the "deed-text" is confined to the very situation which gave rise to it in the first place. A "deed-text" bespeaks an action that has taken place; it is simply a statement of an event. A "pronouncement-text," on the other hand, may include a command or a generalization that could have ramifications extending beyond the context in which it was uttered. Q 6:135 and 155, taken to be "pronouncement-texts," enjoin Muslims to follow the Prophet. So does Q 33:21: "Verily, in the messenger of God you have a good example *(uswatun)*."

Since one qur'ānic verse can repeal another, it was commonly held that a verse may abrogate a prophetic report, particularly because the Qur'ān is deemed to be of a more distinguished stature. In justification of this view, some jurists further argued that since the Qur'ān is accepted as capable of particularizing the sunna, it can just as easily abrogate it. Other jurists, while adopting the position that the Qur'ān can repeal the sunna, rejected the argument from particularization. Particularization, they held, represents an imperfect analogy with abrogation — the latter entails a total replacement of one legal text by another, whereas the former does not involve abrogation, but merely delimits the scope of a text so as to render it less ambiguous.

Qur'ān and sunna

The qur'ānic abrogation of the sunna has also historical precedent to recommend it. One such precedent was the Prophet's peace treaty with the Qurayshīs (see QURAYSH) of Mecca (q.v.) whereby he agreed to return to Mecca all those who converted to Islam as well as those who wished to join his camp. But just before sending back a group of women who had adopted Islam as a religion, Q 60:10 was revealed, ordering Muslims not to continue with their plans, thereby abrogating the Prophet's practice as expressed in the treaty. Another instance of qur'ānic abrogation is found in verses Q 2:144 and 2:150, which command Muslims to pray in the direction of Mecca instead of Jerusalem (q.v.), the direction which the Prophet had earlier decreed to be valid (see QIBLA).

More controversial was the question of

whether the sunna can repeal the Qur'ān. Those who espoused the view that the Qur'ān may not be abrogated by the sunna advanced Q 2:106 which, as we have seen, states that if God repeals a verse, he does so only to replace it by another which is either similar to, or better than it. The sunna, they maintained, is neither equal to, or better than the Qur'ān, and thus no report can repeal a qur'ānic verse. On the basis of the same verse they furthermore argued that abrogation rests with God alone, and that this precludes the Prophet from having the capacity to abrogate.

On the other hand, the proponents of the doctrine that the sunna can abrogate the Qur'ān rejected the view that the Prophet did not possess this capacity, for while it is true that he could act alone, he did speak on behalf of God when he undertook to abrogate a verse. The central argument of the proponents of this view, however, revolved around epistemology: both the Qur'ān and the concurrent reports yield certitude, and being of equal epistemological status, they can abrogate each other. Opponents of this argument rejected it on the grounds that consensus also leads to certainty but lacks the power to repeal. Moreover, they maintained, the epistemological equivalence of the two sources does not necessarily mean that there exists a mutuality of abrogation. Both solitary reports and *qiyās,* for instance, lead to probable knowledge, and yet the former may serve to abrogate, whereas the latter may not. The reason for this is that these reports in particular, and the sunna in general, constitute the principal source *(aṣl)* from which the authority for *qiyās* is derived. A derivative can by no means repeal its own source and since, it was argued, the Qur'ān is the source of the sunna as well as superior to it, the sunna can never repeal the Qur'ān.

Another disagreement with far-reaching consequences arose concerning the ability of solitary reports to repeal the Qur'ān and the concurrent sunna. One group of jurists, espousing the view that solitary reports can abrogate the Qur'ān and concurrent sunna, maintained that their position was defensible not only by rational argument but that such abrogation had taken place at the time of the Prophet. Rationally, the mere notion that a certain solitary report can substitute for a particular concurrent sunna or a qur'ānic verse is sufficient proof that this sunna or verse lacks the certitude that is otherwise associated with it. Since certainty is lacking, the solitary report would not be epistemologically inferior to the Qur'ān and the concurrent sunna, and therefore capable of abrogating the latter. It was further argued that solitary reports had been commonly accepted as capable of particularizing the concurrent sunna and the Qur'ān, and that if they had the power to particularize, they must have the power to repeal. But the most convincing argument in support of this position was perhaps that which drew on the dynamics of revelation at the time of the Prophet. A classical case in point is Q 2:180, which decrees that "It is prescribed for you, when death approaches one of you, if he has wealth, that he bequeath unto parents and near relatives (see FAMILY; KINSHIP) in kindness." This verse, some jurists maintained, was abrogated by the solitary report "No bequest in favor of an heir." Since parents and near relatives are considered by the Qur'ān as heirs, Q 2:180 was considered repealed, this constituting clear evidence that solitary reports can repeal the Qur'ān and, *a fortiori,* the concurrent sunna.

The opponents of this doctrine rejected any argument which arrogated to solitary reports an epistemological status equal to that of the Qur'ān and the concurrent sunna. The very possibility, they argued, of

casting doubt on the certainty generated by these texts is *a priori* precluded. As they saw it, solitary reports, being presumptive to the core, can by no means repeal the Qur'ān or concurrent reports. Furthermore, any attempt at equating particularization with abrogation is nullified by the fact that particularization involves the substitution of partial textual evidence for other evidence by bringing two texts to bear, conjointly, upon the solution of a given legal problem. Abrogation, in contrast, and by definition, entails the complete substitution of one text for another, the latter becoming devoid of any legal effect. The example of *qiyās* served to bolster this argument: this method of legal inference is commonly accepted as capable of particularizing the Qur'ān and the sunna but it cannot, by universal agreement, repeal these sources. Finally, opponents of this doctrine dismissed the occurrence of abrogation on the basis of a solitary report in the case of bequests as an instance of faulty hermeneutics. The solitary report "No bequest in favor of an heir" did not, they insisted, abrogate the aforementioned qur'ānic verse. Rather, the verse was abrogated by Q 4:11 which stipulates that parents, depending on the number and the degree of relation of other heirs, must receive fixed shares of the estate after all debts have been settled and the bequest allocated to its beneficiary. The specification that the parents' shares are determined *subsequent* to the allocation of the bequest is ample proof that it is this verse which repealed Q 2:180, and not the solitary report. If anything, these jurists argued, this report served only to confirm the qur'ānic abrogation, a fact made clear in the first part of the report — a part usually omitted by those who used it to support their case for the abrogation of qur'ānic verses by solitary reports. In its entirety, the report reads as follows: "God has given each one his due right; therefore, no bequest to an heir." The attribution of the injunction to God, it is argued, is eloquent confirmation that the Prophet acknowledged and merely endorsed the abrogation of Q 2:180 by Q 4:11.

The Qur'ān in later legal discourse

The preceding outline represents the mainstream juristic discourse on the Qur'ān, discourse which was to dominate legal theory until the nineteenth century. Nonetheless, there were a number of theoretical attempts to formulate different legal concepts of the Qur'ān's function in law. The most notable and influential of these was al-Shāṭibī's (d. 790/1388) singular and creative doctrine.

Al-Shāṭibī's holistic theory

Going beyond the conventional, atomistic view of the Qur'ān, al-Shāṭibī presents us with a unique theory in which the text is seen as an integral whole, where one verse or part cannot be properly understood without reference not only to other parts but also to the particular and general circumstances in which the text was revealed *(asbāb al-nuzūl)*. Without such a referential approach, the meaning of the verses and the intention of God behind revealing them will not be intelligible to the human mind. All this, however, presupposes full knowledge of the linguistic conventions prevalent among the Arabs during the time of revelation (see ARABIC LANGUAGE; LANGUAGE, CONCEPT OF). God addressed the Arabs in a language they understood with reference to a reality that was specifically theirs, and since both language and reality may — and al-Shāṭibī implies that they do — differ from later usages and realities, the jurist must thoroughly ground himself in the linguistic and historic context of the Qur'ān's revelation.

Thus adequate knowledge of the Arabic

language and of the circumstances of revelation, coupled with a holistic reading of the text, can guarantee what al-Shāṭibī deems a reasonable, moderate, and middle-of-the-road interpretation. To be properly understood, a qur'ānic verse must be viewed in light of the verses that preceded it in time. Passages in the text revealed later must therefore be explained in terms of the earlier ones just as the entire Medinan revelation must be viewed in light of the Qur'ān's Meccan phase. And within each of the phases (Medinan and Meccan), the latter verses are to be interpreted only after full consideration is given to what was revealed earlier. An example of this general principle is the Meccan sūra, Sūrat al-An'ām (Q 6, "The Cattle"), which embodied a holistic structure of the universal principles *(uṣūl kulliyya)* of the law. Setting aside any part of it will lead to blighting the entire legal system. When the Prophet migrated to Medina (see EMIGRATION), Q 2, Sūrat al-Baqara ("The Cow"), was revealed in order to explicate the general principles of the law. Though some of these details appeared elsewhere, here are found specific laws of ritual, diet, crime, commercial transactions (see BREAKING TRUSTS AND CONTRACTS), marriage, etc. The universal principles established in Q 2 concerning the preservation of one's religion, life, mind, offspring and property are all confirmed in the sūra. Thus what was revealed in Medina subsequent to Sūrat al-Baqara must be viewed in its light. The significance of chronology here can hardly be exaggerated.

That the later sūras and verses explain what was revealed prior to them in time leads to a certain hierarchy in the Qur'ān, with the very early sūras being the most comprehensive. Even if a Medinan verse appears general in scope, there must always be a more general verse revealed earlier, the later verses always supplementing the earlier ones. The Meccan revelation thus constitutes the ultimate reference, particularly those parts of it revealed at the outset of the Prophet's career. These latter lay down the most general and universal principles, namely, the protection of the right to religion, life, thought, progeny and property. Later revelation, particularly the Medinan, may complement these principles, but they primarily provide explanations and details relative to these universals.

Whether or not the Qur'ān contains all the details of the law, God perfected for Muslims their religion by the time the last verse of the text was revealed. Citing Q 5:3, "Today I have perfected your religion for you," al-Shāṭibī argues that the Qur'ān contains all the basic elements of faith, spiritual and practical. It treated of all things and, conversely, nothing that is essential in religion and life stands outside its compass.

The logical consequence of this argument represents no less than a complete relegation of the prophetic sunna to a secondary status and al-Shāṭibī, to be sure, does reach this very conclusion. But though the Qur'ān lays down the foundations of the law and religion, no rulings should be extracted from it without consulting the sunna because the latter, just like the Medinan revelation, provides explanation of and detailed annotation to the Qur'ān. Nevertheless, al-Shāṭibī affirms the completeness and self-sufficiency of the latter and, in consequence, rejects the view that the sunna offers any substantive addition to the Qur'ān.

Al-Shāṭibī's position here is no doubt novel, signaling a total departure from the conventional view propounded in legal theory. He asserts that in the jurisprudent's reasoning about individual legal cases, the Qur'ān merits attention before the sunna.

The latter's demotion to second place here is the result of the higher degree of certitude the Qurʾān enjoys. While both sources *as a whole* are certain, the individual verses possess a degree of certitude higher than that enjoyed by individual prophetic reports.

The traditional doctrine of legal theory affirms that when the Qurʾān is ambiguous on a particular matter, or when it fails to address a given problem with exactitude and clarity, the sunna intervenes to determine the specific intent of the divine lawgiver. A case in point is the qurʾānic injunction to cut off the thief's hand. The sunna delimited the qurʾānic instruction by decreeing that the punishment can only be imposed when theft is accompanied by breaking and entering and when the value of the stolen goods exceeds a certain prescribed amount. In the same vein, the general qurʾānic permission for matrimony was narrowed down by the sunna in the form of a ban on marriage with the maternal or paternal aunt of one's wife. Al-Shāṭibī does accept the authority of the sunna in such cases, but only insofar as it complements the Qurʾān. The sunna, in his view, merely brings out and articulates the intention of the Qurʾān. If a jurist establishes the exact meaning of a verse, we cannot say, al-Shāṭibī analogically argues, that the ruling based on that verse stems from the authority of the jurist himself. He, like the sunna, functions only as an interpreter of what is ultimately the very word of God.

Al-Shāṭibī on competing evidence in legal cases

When the jurist is presented with two different or contradictory pieces of evidence, both of which enjoy the same degree of certainty — thus precluding the possibility of one superseding the other — the common practice was to choose the evidence that was more suitable to the particular case at hand, even though it might not be qurʾānic. Al-Shāṭibī sees no problem with doing so because the evidence in the sunna represents, in the final analysis, an explanation or reformulation of a general qurʾānic text. Put differently, the evidential competition is not between the Qurʾān and the sunna, but, ultimately, between two different or seemingly contradictory statements within the Qurʾān. The latter, al-Shāṭibī reaffirms, contains the essence of the *sharīʿa,* while anything else represents, so to speak, footnotes to the self-sufficient book. Here al-Shāṭibī's hypothetical interlocutor replies by citing a number of qurʾānic verses (such as Q 4:59, 5:92, 59:7) to the effect that the Prophet must be obeyed and that his sunna constitutes a source of authority equal to that of the Qurʾān. The specific directive to bow to the Prophet's authority clearly indicates that he did introduce injunctions unspecified in the Qurʾān. Several prophetic reports to the same effect are then cited, condemning those who make the Qurʾān their sole reference.

But al-Shāṭibī does not see how this evidence refutes his position. When the sunna clarifies a verse pertaining to a particular legal ruling, the same ruling ultimately remains grounded in the Qurʾān, not the sunna. Both God and the Prophet presumably bestow on it a certain authority. Distinguishing between the two sanctioning authorities does not entail differentiating between two different rulings. In other words, when the Qurʾān calls, as it does, upon believers to obey God and the Prophet, it is understood that the Prophet's authority derives, in the final analysis, from that of God. And since no distinction is being made between two different rulings belonging to a single case, then there is no proof that the sunna contains material that falls outside the compass of the Qurʾān.

A major role which the sunna plays vis-à-vis the Qur'ān is to privilege one verse over another in deciding a particular case of law. For instance, the Qur'ān generally permitted the consumption of good food and forbade that of putrid victuals without, however, defining the status of many specific types. The sunna then intervened to decide each kind in accordance with the principles regulated in the Qur'ān, by subsuming certain foods under one legal norm or the other. In this way, the meat of donkeys and certain predatory animals came to be prohibited. Similarly, God forbade the ingestion of inebriants but permitted non-alcoholic beverages. The rationale behind this prohibition was the effect of alcohol on the mind in distracting the Muslim from worshipping his lord, let alone its negative social effects. The sunna interfered here by determining to which of the two categories date-wine and semi-intoxicating beverages belong. On the basis of qur'ānic data, the sunna furthermore articulated the classic dictum that any beverage which inebriates when consumed in large quantities is prohibited even in small quantities.

Al-Shāṭibī on the subsidiarity of the sunna

But all this does not change the fact that the roots of the sunna ultimately lay in the book. Indeed, the sunna may contain some legal subject matter which is found neither in a terse statement of the Qur'ān nor even in its more ambiguous or indirect passages (see DIFFICULT PASSAGES). Yet, its subject matter still has its origins in the Qur'ān. It is al-Shāṭibī's fundamental assumption that each qur'ānic verse or statement possesses multifaceted meanings, some direct and others oblique. While a verse may exist in its own particular context and may appear to have an immediate, obvious meaning, this very verse may, at the same time, manifest another meaning that is identical to those found in other verses. Put differently, a group of verses may have one theme in common which happens to be subsidiary to the main meaning in each verse. The inductive corroboration of one verse by the others lends the common theme a certain authority that would reach the degree of certitude. But whereas this theme remains hidden in the linguistic terrains of the Qur'ān, the sunna reveals it in the form of a prophetic report. The result of one such case of corroboration is the well-known and all-important prophetic report "No injury and counter injury in Islam."

The Qur'ān, however, does provide what al-Shāṭibī characterizes as the most important foundation of the law, namely, the principles that aim to serve the interests of people, be they those of the individual or the community. For, after all, the entire enterprise of the *sharī'a* was instituted in the interests of Muslims whether these pertain to life in this world or in the hereafter. In order to safeguard these interests, the *sharī'a* seeks to implement the principles of public welfare. The sunna, in the detail it lends to particular cases, is none other than an extension and detailed elaboration of the all-embracing qur'ānic principles.

By relegating the sunna to a status subsidiary to the Qur'ān and by hierarchically and chronologically structuring qur'ānic material, al-Shāṭibī was aiming at achieving a particular result. He was of the opinion that Meccan revelation, with all its characteristic universality, is general and simple in nature, intended for an unlettered audience (see ILLITERACY). It is addressed to the community at large, to the legal expert and layman alike. Every Muslim, hailing from any walk of life, can comprehend it and can thus heed its injunctions without any intermediary. The Medinan revelation, on the other hand, came down to explicate, in some technical

detail, the universal principles laid down earlier. Hence, only the legal experts are equipped to deal with and understand the Medinan text. The complexity of its subject matter simply precludes the layman from confronting it directly.

The universality and generality of the Meccan revelation in effect means that it is devoid of mitigation and juridical license. The Medinan texts were thus revealed in order to modify and qualify the rigor that was communicated at an earlier point in time. Al-Shāṭibī reminds us at this stage that the Ṣūfīs set aside the Medinan licenses and adhered solely to the stringent demands of the Meccan sūras (see ṢŪFISM AND THE QUR'ĀN). He strongly insinuates that the Ṣūfīs attempted to impose their view of the law upon the general public of laymen. By insisting on the intellectual simplicity of the Meccan revelation, al-Shāṭibī was in effect arguing that laymen should be left alone to understand and comply with this revelation. He seems to say that if the Ṣūfīs choose to subject themselves to rigorous piety (q.v.), so be it. But it is not within their legitimate right to impose their will and perception of the law on the community of laymen. In these terms, he addresses himself equally to the jurisconsults who, he advises, must not make evident to the public any of their practices that are unusually strict. It is, therefore, for the purpose of achieving this end that al-Shāṭibī recast the traditional, mainstream qur'ānic methodology in a new form.

The Qur'ān in modern legal reform

It is to be stressed that of all traditional sources and legal elements, the Qur'ān alone survives largely intact in modern thinking with respect to the sources of law. The prophetic ḥadīth is being largely and progressively marginalized; consensus is being radically reformulated and recast to fit western principles of parliamentary democracy; *qiyās* has been largely abandoned; public interest *(maṣlaḥa, istiṣlāḥ)* and juristic preference *(istiḥsān)* are still being invoked, but they too are being laden with modern notions which would render them unrecognizable to a traditional jurist.

While it is true, however, that the Qur'ān survives intact in the sense that no change has been effected in the perception of its contents and authority (see CONTEMPORARY CRITICAL PRACTICES AND THE QUR'ĀN; EXEGESIS OF THE QUR'ĀN: EARLY MODERN AND CONTEMPORARY), it has, as have all the other sources, been stripped of the traditional interpretive tools that were employed in exploiting its positive legal repertoire. Thus, such notions as the ambiguous, univocal and metaphorical are no longer deemed pertinent for the modern legal interpretation of the text.

Much of the law of personal status in the Muslim world today still derives from the *sharī'a,* although certain changes and modifications in this law have taken place. The Qur'ān afforded a good deal of subject matter in the construction of family law, a fact which explains why the reformers have been reluctant to affect fundamental reform in a legal sphere that has been for centuries so close to the heart of Muslims.

But the fact remains that the modern law of Muslim states has no theoretical, religious or intellectual backing. Realizing the total collapse of traditional legal theory, *uṣūl al-fiqh,* a number of twentieth-century Muslim intellectuals have attempted to formulate a theoretical substitute for the traditional methodology of the law. The great majority of reformers have been unsuccessful in their quest to construct a new theoretical function for the Qur'ān. To varying degrees, they have intentionally or otherwise abandoned the traditional theoretical apparatus and yet at the same time have failed to locate a theoretical substitute

that is direly needed. Many have reduced the law to a fairly narrow utilitarian concept, thereby relegating revelation to a position subservient to utilitarian imperatives. One of the most notable reformers, and one in whose theory the Qur'ān plays a major role, is the Pakistani scholar and intellectual Fazlur Rahman (d. 1988).

Rahman's method

Rahman takes strong exception to the traditional theory and its authors, blaming them for a fragmented view of the revealed sources, especially the Qur'ān. In his opinion, both the traditional legal theorists and the exegetes treated the Qur'ān verse by verse, and the sunna, report by report. The lack of cross-reference to the textual sources was thus responsible for the absence of an effective *Weltanschauung* that is cohesive and meaningful for life as a whole. A central ingredient in the task of understanding the qur'ānic message as a unity is to analyze it against a background, and that background is the Arabian society in which Islam first arose. Thus a thorough understanding of the Meccan social, economic and tribal institutions becomes necessary in order to understand the import of revelation for the purpose of universalizing it beyond the context of the Prophet's career.

In an attempt to explain the significance of understanding the Qur'ān as a whole and within a situational context, Rahman takes the case of alcoholic beverages, declared prohibited by the traditional jurists. As we have already seen, the Qur'ān initially considered alcohol among the blessings of God, along with milk (q.v.) and honey (q.v.; Q 16:66-9). Later, when Muslims moved to Medina, some Companions urged the Prophet to ban alcohol. Consequently, Q 2:219 was revealed, stipulating a qualified prohibition of wine. Thereafter, on two successive occasions (Q 4:43, 5:90-1), wine was finally banned categorically.

From this gradual prohibition of alcohol, the jurists concluded that the last verse, Q 5:90-1, abrogated those which preceded it, and in an attempt to rationalize this abrogation they resorted to what Rahman terms the "law of gradation," according to which the Qur'ān sought to wean Muslims from certain ingrained habits in a piecemeal fashion, instead of commanding a sudden prohibition. Hence, it was necessary to support this law of gradation by other considerations in order to make the contradiction between the various verses intelligible. In the Meccan period, the Muslims were a small minority, constituting an informal community, not a society. It appears, Rahman says, that alcohol consumption in the midst of this community was in no way a common practice. But when the more prominent Meccans converted to Islam at a later stage, there were many who were in the habit of drinking alcohol. The evolution of this minority into a community and then into an informal state coincided with the growing problem of alcohol consumption; hence the final qur'ānic prohibition imposed on all inebriating substances.

It is thus necessary to draw from the isolated verses, which are particular and fragmented in nature, a general principle that embodies the rationale behind a certain ruling. The failure of the traditional jurists to elicit such principles, Rahman argues, has led to chaos. A telling example of this failure may be found in the case of polygamous marriage. In Q 4:2, the Qur'ān alludes to, and forbids, the guardians' abuse and unlawful seizure of the property of orphaned children with whom they were entrusted. In Q 4:127, the Qur'ān says that these guardians should marry the orphaned girls when they come of age rather than return their property to them. Accordingly, in Q 4:3 the Qur'ān says that

if the guardians cannot do justice to the orphan's property and if they insist on marrying them, then they may marry up to four, provided that they treat them justly. If they cannot afford them such a treatment, then they must marry only one. On the other hand, Q 4:129 stipulates that it is impossible to do justice among a plurality of wives. Like the case of alcohol, the Qur'ān is seemingly contradictory here: while it permits marriage to four wives if they can be treated with justice, it declares that justice can never be done in a polygamous marriage. But it must not be forgotten, Rahman asserts, that the whole qur'ānic discussion occurred within the limited context of orphaned women, not unconditionally. The traditional jurists deemed the permission to marry up to four wives as carrying a legal force, whereas the demand to do justice to them was considered to be a mere recommendation, devoid of any binding effect. With this interpretation, the traditional jurists turned the issue of polygamy right on its head, taking a specific verse to be binding and the general principle to be a recommendation. In "eliciting general principles of different order from the Qur'ān… the most general becomes the most basic and the most deserving of implementation, while the specific rulings will be subsumed under them" (Rahman, Interpreting the Qur'ān, 49). In accordance with this principle, Rahman argues, the justice verse in polygamous marriages should have been accorded a status superior to that of the specific verse giving permission to marry up to four wives. The priority given to the justice verse in this case is further supported by the recurrent and persistent qur'ānic theme of the need to do justice.

Rahman's "double movement theory"

The task of eliciting general principles from specific rulings in the Qur'ān and the sunna must be undertaken, then, with full consideration of the sociological forces that produced these rulings. Inasmuch as the Qur'ān gives, be it directly or obliquely, the reasons for certain ethical and legal rulings, an understanding of these reasons becomes essential for drawing general principles. The multifaceted ingredients making up the revealed texts, along with those ingredients making up the background of revelation, must therefore "be brought together to yield a unified and comprehensive socio-moral theory squarely based upon the Qur'ān and its *sunna* counterparts" (Rahman, Towards reformulating, 221). But it may be objected that the process of eliciting general principles in this manner is excessively subjective. In refuting this claim, Rahman invokes the fact that the Qur'ān speaks of its own purposes and objectives, a fact that should contribute to minimizing subjectivity. Furthermore, whatever difference of opinion results from the existing subjectivity should be of great value, provided that each opinion is seriously and carefully considered.

This process of eliciting general principles represents the first step towards implementing a new methodology of the law. This methodology consists of two movements of juristic thought, one proceeding from the particular to the general (i.e. eliciting general principles from specific cases), the other from the general to the particular. Hence the designation of Rahman's methodology as "the double movement theory." In the second movement, the general principles elicited from the revealed sources are brought to bear upon the present conditions of Muslim society. This presupposes a thorough understanding of these conditions, equal in magnitude to that required to understand the revealed texts against their background. But since the present situation can never be iden-

tical to the prophetic past, and since it could differ from it "in certain important respects," it is required that "we apply those general principles of the Qur'ān (as well as those of the sunna) to the current situation espousing that which is worthy of espousing and rejecting that which must be rejected" (Rahman, Interpreting the Qur'ān, 49). Just what the criteria are for rejecting certain "important respects" and not others is a crucial question that Rahman does not seem to answer decisively. For if these respects are important and yet are capable of being neutralized, then there is no guarantee that essential qur'ānic and sunnaic elements or even principles will not be set aside.

The weakness of Rahman's methodology also lies in the not altogether clear mechanics of the second movement, that is, the application of the systematic principles derived from the revealed texts and their contexts to present-day situations. Furthermore, the relatively few cases which he repeatedly cites in his writings on the subject do not represent the full spectrum of cases in the law, with the result that his methodology may be considered incapable of providing a scope comprehensive enough to afford modern Muslims the methodological means of solving problems different in nature than those he so frequently cites. What of those cases for which a textual statement is available but no information as to the context of its revelation? Or, still, how do modern Muslims address fundamental problems facing their societies when no applicable qur'ānic or sunnaic text can be located? That Rahman does not seem to provide answers for such questions may be a function of his interest in elaborating a methodology confined in outlook to the revealed texts rather than a methodology of law proper.

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Lawful and Unlawful

That which is legally authorized, and that which is not. Among its various legislative pronouncements, the Qurʾān declares certain objects and actions lawful or unlawful. The words *ḥalāl,* "lawful, allowed, permitted," and *ḥarām,* "unlawful, forbidden, prohibited," and cognate terms from the triliteral roots *ḥ-l-l* and *ḥ-r-m,* respectively, most often designate these two categories and are of relatively frequent occurrence. Qurʾānic declarations of lawfulness or unlawfulness are limited to a relatively few areas of the law as later elaborated by Muslim jurists: for the most part, ritual, family law and dietary matters (see RITUAL AND THE QURʾĀN; FAMILY; MARRIAGE AND DIVORCE; FOOD AND DRINK). On the other hand, the lawful/unlawful rubric also has non-legislative functions in the Qurʾān. Although the seemingly primary categories of *ḥalāl* and *ḥarām* were largely eclipsed by jurisprudential rubrics that were developed subsequently, the terms retained significance in ascetic thought (see ASCETICISM) and have recently become prominent in popular handbooks of religious law.

Vocabulary

Apart from denoting lawfulness, the root *ḥ-l-l* indicates an exit from the ritual state connected with the pilgrimage (q.v.) and re-entry into the profane state (*idhā ḥalaltum,* Q 5:2; see RITUAL PURITY). In this sense, too, it is the antonym of *ḥ-r-m* (see below). Concretely, it refers to dissolution (e.g. Q 66:2, metaphorically, of an oath; see BREAKING TRUSTS AND CONTRACTS; OATHS) and also alighting (e.g. Q 20:86, again metaphorically, of God's wrath; see ANGER). The most common means for indicating lawfulness in the Qurʾān is to use the causative verb *aḥalla,* "to make lawful," usually with God as the subject (e.g. Q 7:157, "He makes the good things lawful for them") but it is sometimes passive (e.g. Q 5:1, concerning certain livestock; see ANIMAL LIFE; BOUNTY). In one instance it occurs in the first person plural, in an address to Muḥammad (Q 33:50; see FORM AND STRUCTURE OF THE QURʾĀN; LANGUAGE AND STYLE OF THE QURʾĀN). Very occasionally, people are made the subject of this verb, to suggest that they wrongly deem something lawful (e.g. Q 9:37, though words derived from *ḥ-r-m* are more common in such accusations; see below). Finally, it should be noted that the intransitive verb *ḥalla,* "to be lawful," occasionally appears in the negative, to indicate that something is not lawful (e.g. Q 2:230, providing that one's wife ceases to be lawful, i.e. available for sexual intercourse, after divorce). The Qurʾān also employs the adjectives *ḥill* and *ḥalāl* to indicate lawfulness (e.g. in Q 5:5 and Q 8:69, respectively, concerning certain foods).

Words derived from the root *ḥ-r-m* not only connote God's making something unlawful but also frequently express the idea of sacredness (see SANCTITY AND THE SACRED), e.g. *al-shahr al-ḥarām,* "the sacred month" (Q 2:194; see MONTHS); *al-ḥaram,* "the sacred precinct," where the Kaʿba (q.v.) is located (Q 28:57); *ḥurum,* persons in the ritual state associated with pilgrimage (e.g. Q 5:1); and *ḥurumāt,* certain sacred ordinances or institutions (Q 2:194; 22:30). The *ḥ-r-m*-derived counterpart to *aḥalla* is the causative verb *ḥarrama,* "to make un-

lawful," and, as in the case of the former, God is frequently its subject (e.g. Q 2:173, concerning foods). The Qurʾān does not employ an intransitive verb derived from *ḥ-r-m,* making do instead with the passive of *ḥarrama* (e.g. Q 5:3, also concerning foods) and the related passive participle (e.g. Q 6:145, again concerning foods; the corresponding participial form from *aḥalla* is not found in the Qurʾān). A number of passages use *ḥarrama* in the first person plural and in most of these God recounts how he had previously made certain things, especially foods, unlawful for the Jews (Q 4:160; 6:146; 16:118; 28:12; see JEWS AND JUDAISM). The counterpart of the adjective *ḥalāl* is *ḥarām,* though they only appear together twice (Q 10:59; 16:116). There is no *ḥ-r-m*-derived equivalent to the form *ḥill* but in Q 21:95 the Kūfan tradition of variant readings (see READINGS OF THE QURʾĀN) substitutes the word *ḥirm* for *ḥarām* (see Jeffery, *Materials,* e.g. 62, codex of Ibn Masʿūd). Later legal theorists paired *ḥill* with the non-qurʾānic term *ḥurma* (e.g. Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī [d. 606/1210], *Maḥṣūl,* i, 15).

Especially in regard to dietary rules, *ḥalāl* and *ḥarām* parallel to a degree the Levitical categories of clean and unclean, respectively. As noted, though, *ḥalāl* and *ḥarām* also connote profaneness and sacredness, respectively, suggesting a potentially puzzling link between what is sacred and what is unclean. Possibly, a pre-qurʾānic connection existed between sacredness and ritual-related restrictions *(ḥarām)* on the one hand and the profane state and a general lack of restrictions *(ḥalāl)* on the other. Thus, the objects of qurʾānic prohibitions would have been assimilated to a category of ritually mandated restrictions rather than ritual impurity (see Heninger, Pureté). However that may be, the qurʾānic terms are paralleled to some extent by the Hebrew pair *mūtar* and *asūr,* meaning permitted ("loosened," semantically equivalent to *ḥ-l-l*) and forbidden (q.v.; Wansbrough, *Qs,* 174).

Certain other terms in the Qurʾān also connote lawfulness and unlawfulness. A number of passages use the word *junāḥ,* "sin," in variants of the phrase "It is not a sin for you to…" as an indirect means of describing lawful activities (e.g. Q 2:198, permitting commercial activity while in the ritual state required of pilgrims; see MARKETS; SELLING AND BUYING; SIN, MAJOR AND MINOR). Rhetorically, passages employing *junāḥ* often imply that the activity in question might have been thought unlawful and hence required clarification. Commentators (see EXEGESIS OF THE QURʾĀN: CLASSICAL AND MEDIEVAL) gloss the word *ḥijr* as meaning *ḥarām* in two passages. In Q 6:138, unnamed persons declare certain produce and livestock *ḥijr,* which means, according to the commentators, that it was declared *ḥarām,* "off-limits, or sacrosanct," in connection with a pagan rite (e.g. Ṭabarī, *Tafsīr,* xii, 139-40). In Q 25:22, the phrase *ḥijr maḥjūr* appears in the following sentence: "On the day they see the angels (see ANGEL), there will be no glad tidings then for the wrongdoers, and they will say *ḥijran maḥjūran*." Some commentators attribute the phrase in question to the angels and gloss it as meaning *ḥarām muḥarram,* that is, either paradise (q.v.) or the glad tidings (see GOOD NEWS) will be "strictly forbidden" to the wrongdoers (e.g. Bayḍāwī, *Anwār,* ii, 37). The phrase *ḥijr maḥjūr* also appears in Q 25:53, where it seems to refer concretely to physical separation (e.g. Bayḍāwī, *Anwār,* ii, 43), and the word *ḥijr* appears alone in Q 89:5, where it is traditionally understood to mean "intelligence" (e.g. Bayḍāwī, *Anwār,* ii, 401; see INTELLECT; KNOWLEDGE AND LEARNING). The word *suḥt* appears at Q 5:42 and twice

at Q 5:62-3, always in the phrase "eaters/eating of *suḥt*" *(akkālūna lil-suḥti, aklihimu l-suḥta),* an apparently derogatory reference to the Jews. The commentators took *suḥt* to refer either generally to unlawful gain or specifically to bribes accepted by Jewish judges (e.g. Ṭabarī, *Tafsīr,* x, 318-24, 447-8), thus connecting it with the remainder of Q 5:42, in which the Prophet is given permission to adjudicate Jewish legal matters. In Leviticus 22:25, a Hebrew cognate, *mashḥat,* refers to inherent "corruption" or "mutilation" which renders certain ritual offerings unfit (see CONSECRATION OF ANIMALS; CORRUPTION) but the more usual sense of the biblical Hebrew cognate is "destruction," which is how a related Arabic word is used at Q 20:61. According to Jeffery (*For. vocab.,* 165-6), *suḥt* means "unlawful" in a technical sense. He notes an interesting parallel with the Talmud (Shabb. 140b, discussing the principle of *bal tashḥīt* derived from *Deut* 20:19) but opts for a Syriac origin of the word (*sūḥtā,* "depravity, corruption"). The remainder of this discussion deals only with words derived from the roots *ḥ-l-l* and *ḥ-r-m*.

What is lawful and unlawful?

As noted above, qurʾānic declarations of lawfulness and unlawfulness pertain mostly to ritual, dietary law and family law. For example, Q 5:96 declares the hunting of land animals while in the ritual state for the pilgrimage to have been outlawed *(ḥurrima)* but fishing and eating the catch lawful (*uḥilla,* see HUNTING AND FISHING). In regard to dietary matters, the most prominent and oft-repeated rule provides that God has made unlawful *(ḥarrama)* carrion (q.v.), blood, swine flesh and what is consecrated to other than God (Q 2:173; 16:115; and with slight variations at Q 5:3 and 6:145). The largest number of rules that use this rubric concern family law. Q 4:22-4, for example, details which women have been made unlawful *(ḥurrimat)* to marry and which lawful *(uḥilla).* A noteworthy principle of Islamic commercial law at Q 2:275 provides that God made lawful *(aḥalla)* sales transactions and forbade *(ḥarrama)* usury (q.v.).

In contrast to the many overtly legislative passages which pronounce on lawfulness and unlawfulness, other passages employ the lawful/unlawful rubric to suggest that the Muslims are, perhaps, subject to fewer legal restrictions than previous communities. Several such passages use words derived from the roots *ḥ-l-l* and *ṭ-y-b* to suggest that God has begun to expand the category of the lawful, as in Q 5:5: "Today the good things *(al-ṭayyibāt)* have been made lawful for you *(uḥilla lakum)*" (see also Q 2:172-3 [with *ḥ-r-m*]; 5:4, 88; 7:157; 16:114). Other passages contain an implicit or explicit charge that certain human beings have mistakenly declared things lawful or unlawful (mostly the latter). These fall into three main groups: those in which people are enjoined not to outlaw what God has provided (Q 5:87; 6:140; 7:32; 10:59); those which generally complain that people have wrongly forbidden or made lawful unspecified things (Q 6:148; 9:29; 16:35, 116; 66:1); and those in which people are accused of wrongly outlawing (or permitting) certain specified things, mostly in connection with pagan practices (see generally Q 6:138-50; 9:37; see IDOLATRY AND IDOLATERS).

Finally, several passages use the lawful/unlawful rubric to suggest that the Jews labored under a more burdensome law than the Muslims, either because the former created unnecessary rules (Q 3:93) or because God wished to punish them (Q 4:160; 6:146; 16:118). The process of repealing this more onerous law imposed on the Jews apparently begins with Jesus (q.v.), who says in Q 3:50 that he has come as a confirmation of the Torah (q.v.), to make

lawful *(li-uḥilla)* some of the things which had previously been forbidden (*ḥurrima,* compare *Matt* 5:17-9, in which Jesus denies that he has come to relax the Law).

Post-qurʾānic developments

Early commentators, such as Ibn ʿAbbās (d. 68/687) and Muḥammad al-Kalbī (d. 146/763) are said to have recognized declarations of lawfulness and unlawfulness *(ḥalāl wa-ḥarām)* as one among several fundamental modes of qurʾānic discourse (Versteegh, *Arabic grammar,* 64, 106; see also Wansbrough, *QS,* 149, 173-4; see LITERARY STRUCTURES OF THE QURʾĀN). Exegetes and legal theorists, however, soon moved beyond this basic qurʾānic distinction. The commentator and grammarian al-Farrāʾ (d. 207/822), for example, differentiates between qurʾānic prohibitions (sing. *nahy*) which aim merely to inculcate proper etiquette *(adab)* and those which function to outlaw something (*nahy muḥarrim;* Kinberg, *Lexicon,* 863). This move marks the extraction of an abstracted and generalized concept of unlawfulness (and implicitly lawfulness), inferable from a text's language and capable of being applied and elaborated outside the confines of those qurʾānic passages that used the root *ḥ-r-m (*or *ḥ-l-l)*. Al-Shāfiʿī (d. 204/820), for example, applied this same *adab/taḥrīm* distinction to prophetic ḥadīth (Shāfiʿī, *Risāla,* par. 926-60; see ḤADĪTH AND THE QURʾĀN).

Scrutiny of the variously formulated legislative provisions in revealed texts, and speculation on their potentially disparate legal consequences, led jurists to a theory of gradations of legal obligation. More precisely, legal theorists developed a classificatory scheme of moral evaluations *(aḥkām,* sing. *ḥukm)* to which all human acts could be assigned: mandatory *(wājib),* recommended *(mandūb),* merely permitted *(mubāḥ),* disapproved *(makrūh),* and forbidden *(ḥarām* or *maḥẓūr)*. In a sense, the first four categories could be considered refinements of what is *ḥalāl* (Jackson, *Islamic law,* 118) but it is really only the outer categories of mandatory and forbidden that have the force of rules (Weiss, *The spirit,* 18-9), and they do not parallel the categories of *ḥalāl* and *ḥarām* (*ḥalāl*/lawful being a broader and different sort of category than *wājib*/mandatory). This graded scale eclipsed the fundamental qurʾānic binary of *ḥalāl*/*ḥarām,* which came to be applied only in much more limited fashion to certain things (e.g. wine [q.v.; see also INTOXICANTS]) and persons (e.g. potential spouses; Schacht, *Introduction,* 121 n. 2; see PROHIBITED DEGREES). Contrasting with these developments in speculative legal hermeneutics, there emerged a pietistic tendency to view the world as fundamentally divisible into realms of lawfulness and unlawfulness. This "scrupulosity" (for a good example of which, see Cooperson's description of Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal [d. 241/845], *Arabic biography,* 112-8) may, perhaps, be considered a concern with ritual purity in the widest possible sense, but is in any event connected with the rise to prominence of the traditionists, part of whose "programme" was "to identify the categories 'forbidden' and 'invalid' " (Schacht, *Introduction,* 46). The great theologian al-Ghazālī (d. 505/1111) may be said to have reconciled to some extent the legal-hermeneutical and ethical-ascetic uses of the lawful/unlawful rubric in Book xiv of his *Iḥyāʾ ʿulūm al-dīn* (Revivification of the religious sciences), the *Kitāb al-ḥalāl wa-l-ḥarām* ("Book of the lawful and the unlawful," Fr. trans. R. Morelon, *Le livre du licite et de l'illicite*). Al-Ghazālī criticizes the view that the world has become so corrupted that one is no longer in a position to observe the distinction between *ḥalāl* and *ḥarām.* He insists, rather, that scrupulosity *(waraʿ),* an even stricter standard than *ḥarām,* is still possible. Practicing *waraʿ*

requires that one avoid not only what is *ḥarām* but also many things (and actions) which, though technically *ḥalāl,* possess the quality of *shubha,* "dubiousness" (for the more usual technical legal meaning of which, see Rowson, Shubha). Al-Ghazālī's technically accomplished analysis represents an interesting application of speculative modes of juridical thinking to an antitheoretical, pietistic concern (see THEOLOGY AND THE QUR'ĀN).

In recent times, a number of popular books giving practical guidance on the application of Islamic law in everyday life take the categories of lawful and unlawful as their organizing principle. A prominent such work is *al-Ḥalāl wa-l-ḥarām fī l-Islām* (Eng. trans. *The lawful and the prohibited in Islam*) by Yūsuf al-Qaraḍāwī (b. 1926). In the introduction, al-Qaraḍāwī says that he is the first to author a work devoted entirely to the topic of *ḥalāl* and *ḥarām.* Whatever al-Ghazālī might have thought of that claim, al-Qaraḍāwī's work unleashed a virtual flood of books (some critical of al-Qaraḍāwī for his liberal views) devoted to distinguishing the *ḥalāl* from the *ḥarām* in daily life. Such works, including that of al-Qaraḍāwī, are now widely available in languages other than Arabic. Their contents derive, however, from the subsequently developed categories of classical Islamic law and, as such, they extend well beyond qur'ānic declarations of lawfulness and unlawfulness, to cover the full range of activities possible in contemporary life. See also LAW AND THE QUR'ĀN; ETHICS AND THE QUR'ĀN.

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Laziness see VIRTUES AND VICES, COMMANDING AND FORBIDDING

Leader see KINGS AND RULERS; IMĀM

Leaf see WRITING AND WRITING INSTRUMENTS; SCROLLS; TREES

Learning see KNOWLEDGE AND LEARNING

Leather see HIDES AND FLEECE; ANIMAL LIFE

Left Hand and Right Hand

The terminal part of each arm, often with connotations of evil and good, respectively (see GOOD AND EVIL; HANDS). The left hand *(shimāl,* pl. *shamā'il, mash'ama)* and the right hand *(yamīn,* pl. *aymān, maymana)* appear in the Qur'ān in two contexts: first, the *ḥisāb,* a record or statement of personal

deeds to be given to every person on the day of judgment (*yawm al-dīn,* see LAST JUDGMENT; RECORD OF HUMAN ACTIONS); second, the placement of the resurrected (see RESURRECTION) before they are sent off to either paradise (q.v.) or hell (see HELL AND HELLFIRE). In this connection, the left hand or the left side is attested six times and the right hand or the right side fourteen times.

Those who refused to believe in the resurrection or persisted in their terrible sins (*al-ḥinth al-ʿazīm,* frequently explained as polytheism; see POLYTHEISM AND ATHEISM; SIN, MAJOR AND MINOR) will receive their record in their left hand (Q 56:41; 69:25) and will regret having relied on their wealth or power (*sulṭān,* Q 69:25-9). They are identified as *al-ḍāllūn al-mukadhdhibūn* (those who erred and denied Muḥammad's prophethood, Q 56:51; see ASTRAY; ERROR; OPPOSITION TO MUḤAMMAD). They will be punished (see REWARD AND PUNISHMENT) with burning winds (see AIR AND WIND) and boiling waters (see WATER) and will eat of a tree called Zaqqūm (Q 56:9, 41-56; see AGRICULTURE AND VEGETATION); they will be fettered with a chain seventy cubits long and will roast in hell (Q 56:92-4; 69:30-7; 84:10-25; 90:19-20). In contrast, those who followed their *imām* (q.v.; generally explained as prophets or holy books; see BOOK; PROPHETS AND PROPHETHOOD) and performed good deeds (q.v.) such as freeing a slave (see SLAVES AND SLAVERY), feeding an orphan (see ORPHANS) in famine (q.v.) or exhorting one another to show pity and compassion will be given their record *(kitāb)* in their right hand (Q 17:71; 90:12-8). Their reckoning will be easy (Q 84:7-9) and their light (q.v.) will run forward before them and by their right hands (Q 57:12; 66:8). Their abode will be paradise, there to be served by immortal boys while enjoying spreading shade, plentiful waters, abundant fruits and perfect virgins (Q 56:8, 27-40, 90-1; 69:19-24; see HOURIS). They include a group from among the pre-Muḥammadan believers *(al-sābiqūn)* and Muḥammad's followers (*al-ākhirūn,* cf. Muqātil, *Tafsīr,* iv, 219). They will ask one another about those who entered hell (*saqar,* Q 74:39-56; cf. 90:18 f.).

Exegetes (see EXEGESIS OF THE QURʾĀN: CLASSICAL AND MEDIEVAL) deal extensively with these topics, using traditions attributed to the Prophet, to his Companions (see COMPANIONS OF THE PROPHET) or even to *quṣṣāṣ* (preachers and tellers of legends; see ḤADĪTH AND THE QURʾĀN). They make a connection between *aṣḥāb al-mashʾama* (Q 56:9) or *aṣḥāb al-shimāl* (Q 56:41) with those who will be given their records *(kitāb)* in their left hand, and *aṣḥāb al-maymana* (Q 56:8) or *aṣḥāb al-yamīn* (Q 56:38, 90-1) with those who will be given their *kitāb* in their right hand. The term *al-mutalaqqiyāni* recorded in Q 50:17-8 is explained as referring to the two "recording angels" sitting *(qaʿīd),* one on the right of each human being, recording his good acts *(ḥasanāt)* and one on the left recording his sins (Ibn al-Jawzī, *Tabṣira,* ii, 254). These records form the *ṣaḥāʾif al-aʿmāl,* which will be presented during the final reckoning and judgment. Exegetes tried to elaborate and complete the qurʾānic picture of the various elements that constitute this special phase of the last judgment. Since the qurʾānic references to this reckoning are abundant but not always sequenced, there were many attempts to assign a chronological order to the different stages of this critical process. The most prevalent accounts assert that after the resurrection each person will be escorted by his two recording angels (Qurṭubī, *Tadhkira,* i, 295-6). All will be gathered in the courtyards *(ʿaraṣāt al-qiyāma)*. Those who receive their *kitāb*s in their left hands or behind their backs (*warāʾa ẓahrihi,* Q 84:10; the explanation of receiving the book behind the back is that

the right hands of these people will be fettered to their necks and their left hands will be turned to their backs, Ibn Kathīr, *Tafsīr,* viii, 378-9 ad Q 84:7-10) will regret that death was not their final step and that now they must be judged (see JUDGMENT). Their good deeds will be annulled and their bad deeds (see EVIL DEEDS) will be doubled in order to double their penalty (Qurṭubī, *Jāmiʿ,* xix, 271-3 ad Q 84:7-10). Their reckoning *(ḥisāb)* will be discussed, that discussion being a sign of their imminent punishment. Those who receive their *kitāb*s in their right hands will undergo an "easy reckoning" (*ḥisāb yasīr,* Q 84:7) consisting merely of a simple *ʿarḍ,* God's review or inspection of the resurrected (Qurṭubī, *Tadhkira,* i, 382), and will rejoin their relatives in paradise. Al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī (d. 110/728) speaks about three *ʿurūḍ,* the first and the second comprising elements of discussion *(jidāl)* and excuse *(maʿādhīr),* the third, the scattering of the sheets (*taṭāyur al-ṣuḥuf,* Ibn Kathīr, *al-Nihāya,* ii, 41). In some sources, these records *(kutub)* are connected with the *mawāzīn,* "balances" (recorded in Q 7:8, 9; 23:102, 103; 101:6, 8; see INSTRUMENTS; WEIGHTS AND MEASURES). The good deeds will tilt the balance and open the way to paradise. Those whose balance of good deeds is too light will be sent to hell (Schimmel, *Deciphering the signs,* 219-41).

There were attempts to interpret the qurʾānic verses dealing with *aṣḥāb al-yamīn* and *aṣḥāb al-shimāl* as references to specific persons or parties (see PARTIES AND FACTIONS). According to al-Zuhrī (d. 124/742), the first two brothers to receive their records will be the Companion Abū Salama b. ʿAbd al-Asad who will receive it in his right hand and the enemy of the Prophet, Sufyān b. ʿAbd al-Asad, who will receive it in his left hand (al-Nabīl, *Awāʾil,* 34, no. 82). Shīʿī sources (see SHĪʿISM AND THE QURʾĀN), citing a tradition attributed to the sixth imām Jaʿfar al-Ṣādiq (d. 148/765), report that Q 69:19 refers to ʿAlī b. Abī Ṭālib (q.v.) as the first to receive his *kitāb* in his right hand and that Q 69:25 refers to Muʿāwiya b. Abī Sufyān or *al-Shāmī laʿanahu llāh,* "the Syrian, may God curse him," who will receive his *kitāb* in his left hand (Qummī, *Tafsīr,* ii, 384; Majlisī, *Biḥār al-anwār,* viii, 518, l. 11-12). A report attributed to ʿAlī b. Abī Ṭālib attests that the *aṣḥāb al-yamīn* in Q 56:27 are *atfāl al-muslimīn,* "children of Muslims" (ʿAbd al-Razzāq, *Tafsīr,* ii, 270; Ṭabarī, *Tafsīr,* xxvii, 179). Qatāda (d. ca. 117/735) reportedly interpreted *"min aṣḥābi l-yamīn"* in the verse "'Peace be with you' from those on the right hand" (*fa-salāmun laka min aṣḥābi l-yamīn,* Q 56:91) as meaning "from God" *(min ʿindi llāhi)* or "from his angels" (cf. Ṭabarī, *Tafsīr,* xxvii, 213); but al-Qummī (fl. fourth/tenth cent.; *Tafsīr,* ii, 350) reports that the reference is to *aṣḥāb amīr al-muʾminīn,* meaning the adherents of ʿAlī, the "prince of the believers."

The question of *qadar,* "predestination," (see FREEDOM AND PREDESTINATION) which forms part of the pillars of belief (*arkān al-īmān,* see FAITH; BELIEF AND UNBELIEF) is addressed by most exegetes when they deal with the question of *aṣḥāb al-yamīn* or *aṣḥāb al-shimāl*. Traditions report that Muḥammad appeared one day with two lists, one in each hand: the one in his right hand containing the names of those who will enter paradise, and the other, in his left hand, containing the names of those destined for hell (Tirmidhī, *Ṣaḥīḥ,* no. 2067; Ibn Ḥanbal, *Musnad,* no. 6275). The records *(kutub)* will be distributed before they are examined and each group will be directed to their destiny (q.v.). Since one of the most beautiful names of God (*al-asmāʾ al-ḥusnā,* see GOD AND HIS ATTRIBUTES) is *al-ʿadl,* "the righteous," authors tried, each one according to his creed (see CREEDS) or sectarian affiliation, to harmonize the contra-

dictory qurʾānic statements. This trend led to the belief that the last judgment will be a mere formality. Generally, with the exception of the Muʿtazila (see MUʿTAZILĪS) and the Qadariyya (the group which held the position of free will), authors discussing the problem of the last judgment dealt more with the definition of a believer or unbeliever than with the matter of deeds themselves (Rippin, *Muslims,* 68-82; Gimaret, *Théories,* 335-6 [for the Muʿtazilites]).

According to Q 39:67, on the day of resurrection, "the heavens (see HEAVEN AND SKY) shall be rolled up in his right hand." Traditions add that the earth (q.v.) shall be rolled up in God's left hand (Muslim, *Ṣaḥīḥ, Ṣifat al-qiyāma,* no. 4995; see APOCALYPSE). Generally, this is taken to refer to God's power (see POWER AND IMPOTENCE), especially by the Muʿtazila and the negators of anthropomorphism (q.v.), but some circles, like the Ḥanbalīs and particularly the Wahhābīs, interpret it literally. Such interpretation led to the belief that God has two hands but that both are right ones, since the left hand is an epithet of created beings, and not of the creator (see CREATION): *inna li-khāliqinā yadayn kiltāhumā yamīnān, lā yasāra li-khāliqinā idhi l-yasāru min ṣifati l-makhlūqīn* (Ibn Khuzayma, *al-Tawḥīd,* 66; Ibn Fūrak, *Mushkil al-ḥadīth,* 37-8; Blachère, *Introduction,* 216-21; Gimaret, *Dieu à l'image,* 202-4; Abdel Haleem, *Understanding the Qurʾān,* 107-22). Saʿīd b. Jubayr (d. 95/714) attributed to Ibn ʿAbbās a tradition stating that the letter *yāʾ* at the opening of Q 19 *(kāf, hāʾ, yāʾ, ʿayn* and *ṣād)* stands for *yamīn* which is one of the names of God (*Lisān al-ʿArab,* s.v. *y m n,* xiii, 459). According to a ḥadīth, the Kaʿba (q.v.) is considered to be the right hand of God since it is touched and kissed *(istilām)* during the pilgrimage (q.v.; *Lisān al-ʿArab,* op. cit.).

In many ancient cultures, the right side was considered better than the left side (*Gen* 48:13-20). It symbolized goodness and kindness, while the left represented evil, the sinister, the bad. In Latin, the term *sinistra* means both left and sinister. In the Bible, God's right hand represents his strong arm (*Exod* 15:15; *Isa* 62:8; *Ps* 118:15-6; 139:10). The Qurʾān itself (as discussed above) and later Islamic tradition attest to similar understandings of "left" *(shimāl)* and "right" *(yamīn)*. The *bayʿa,* "pledge of allegiance," must be performed with the right hand (see CONTRACTS AND ALLIANCES; OATHS); eating with the left is prohibited since this hand is used for cleansing after elimination and since Satan (see DEVIL) usually eats and drinks using his left hand (Muslim, *Ṣaḥīḥ,* no. 3763-6; see FOOD AND DRINK; RITUAL PURITY; LAWFUL AND UNLAWFUL). One should enter a mosque (q.v.) with the right leg and leave with left. During the prayer (q.v.), it is prohibited to expectorate in the direction of the *qibla* (q.v.) or the right side; while it is permitted toward the left side (ʿAbd al-Razzāq, *Muṣannaf,* i, 430-4). Until recently, it was customary in some Muslim countries to oblige left-handed children to use their right hand. This practice is based on the beliefs mentioned above and goes back at least to the first period of Islam: when Khālid b. al-Walīd received Abū Bakr's (q.v.) letter ordering him to leave Iraq (q.v.) for Syria (al-Shām) to support the Muslim forces there, his furious reaction was: "this [decision] was surely taken by the left-handed man," meaning ʿUmar b. al-Khaṭṭāb (q.v.; cf. Ṭabarī, *Taʾrīkh,* iii, 415). ʿUmar was, in fact, left-handed *(Lisān al-ʿArab,* iv, 565, *ʿ-s-r)*. Finally, it is worth mentioning that the Arabic root *y-s-r* means both "to be or become easy, prosperous," and "left, left side." In Q 87:8, *al-yusrā* is explained as paradise and in Q 92:10, *al-ʿusrā* is hell.

The terms *shimāl* and *yamīn* also represent north and south. In the archives of Mari,

the Old Babylonian royal city on the banks of the middle Euphrates river, the west Semitic *yamīna,* "right," designates the cardinal point south, and *simʾal,* "left," indicates north. This use of south and north is deduced from the designation, known only from Mari, of certain tribes as *dumu.Meš-yamīna* and *dumu.Meš-simʾal,* 'sons of the right' and 'sons of the left' respectively (Malamat, *Mari and the early Israelite experience,* 33, 67-8; cf. id., *Mari and the Bible,* 299). The term *semol,* spelled *s-m-ʾ-l,* appears in Genesis 14:15 and is generally translated as "north" — the north representing calamity (*Jer* 1:14). In later Jewish sources, the Devil is called Samaʾel or Semiʾel (see SAMUEL). The Arabic name for Greater Syria is al-Shaʾm or al-Shaʾām. Arab lexicographers explain that this name is derived from *shuʾm,* "bad luck, misfortune" (Bashear, Yemen, 351-3). But, might one also suppose that Shaʾm is an Arabic derivation of the West Semitic Simʾal = Shimʾal, particularly in the light of the clear etymology of al-Yaman (Yemen), another ancient Arabic designation of a geographic area and a cardinal point?

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Leg

see ANATOMY; ANTHROPOMORPHISM

Legends

see NARRATIVES; MYTHS AND LEGENDS IN THE QURʾĀN

Legion

see RANKS AND ORDERS

Legislation

see LAW AND THE QURʾĀN

Leper

see ILLNESS AND HEALTH

Letters

see MYSTERIOUS LETTERS; ARABIC SCRIPT

Liar

see LIE

Lie

To deceive; anything which deceives. The polemical context of the qurʾānic revelation and the discursive nature of qurʾānic

scripture make lying one of the most frequently mentioned sins in the Qurʾān (see SIN, MAJOR AND MINOR). Furthermore, the Qurʾān's oft-repeated references to itself as "the truth" (q.v.; *al-ḥaqq*) and the declaration that God created the entire world "with truth" (Q 46:3), make dishonesty a central characteristic of unbelief *(kufr)* and polytheism *(shirk),* such links sometimes being explicitly stated (Q 16:39; 29:17; see BELIEF AND UNBELIEF; POLYTHEISM AND ATHEISM; IDOLATRY AND IDOLATERS). Thus, the foremost liars in the Qurʾān are polytheists *(mushrikūn)* who make false claims about God and his prophets, among them the accusation that the prophets lie (see PROPHETS AND PROPHETHOOD). Both sides in this polemic (see POLEMIC AND POLEMICAL LANGUAGE) use the same terms: the most common being *kadhaba, iftarā* and *ifk*. In the mouths of unbelievers such falsehoods are regarded as among the most serious of sins. In the Qurʾān, various forms of *kadhaba* are attested eighty-two times, *iftarā* sixty times, and *ifk* in the sense of "lie" thirteen times. Other terms include *zūr,* attested four times, and a form of *kh-r-q* that is used once with the meaning to "falsely attribute" (offspring) to God (*kharaqū,* Q 6:100; see GOD AND HIS ATTRIBUTES; CHRISTIANS AND CHRISTIANITY; ANTHROPOMORPHISM).

The gravity of lying is seen in the repeated question "who is more wicked than one who invents falsehoods about God…" *(wa/[fa]-man aẓlamu mimman iftarā ʿalā llāhi kadhiban)*. This question is posed nine times in this form (Q 6:21, 93, 144; 7:37; 10:17; 11:18; 18:15; 29:68; 61:7), and twice with derivatives of *k-dh-b* (Q 6:157; 39:32). This is usually directed at polytheists but Q 61:7, following an excursus on those who rejected Jesus (q.v.), seems directed at Jews (see JEWS AND JUDAISM). Commentators such as al-Ṭabarī (d. 310/923), al-Zamakhsharī (d. 538/1144) and al-Rāzī (d. 606/1210) think that Jews and Christians may also be targets in other cases. These passages and others also show that lying in the sense of "freely inventing falsehoods" cannot in the qurʾānic context be wholly dissociated from "denying the truth" *(kadhdhaba)* as in "who is more wicked than one who invents falsehoods about God or *(aw)* denies the truth" (*aw-kadhdhaba bi-l-ḥaqq,* Q 29:68). Due to this, and to the fact that terms such as *kadhaba* and *kharaqa* may denote not only a false statement that the speaker knows to be false (and by which he means to deceive others), but also a false statement that the speaker thinks true, it is sometimes difficult to restrict the qurʾānic meaning of "lies" to "freely invented falsehoods"; for those who cling to what is simply false — or dress the truth with falsehood — (*bāṭil* in Q 2:42; cf. 29:68 and eleven other places) are also taken to task (see ERROR; ASTRAY). The hypocrites (*munāfiqūn,* see HYPOCRITES AND HYPOCRISY) are, in the case of Muḥammad's prophetic mission, the second most prominent liars after the polytheists. "God bears witness that the hypocrites are lying" (Q 63:1; see also Q 3:167 and 9:77; see WITNESSING AND TESTIFYING). Other notable liars include those who slander other people's wives (the scandal of ʿĀʾisha, Q 24:11-24; see ʿĀʾISHA BINT ABĪ BAKR; GOSSIP; WIVES OF THE PROPHET), Joseph's (q.v.) brothers and Potiphar's wife (Q 12:17, 23-8; see WOMEN AND THE QURʾĀN) and, of course, poets (Q 26:224-6; see POETRY AND POETS).

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Life

The vital force that distinguishes organic from inorganic matter. At the heart of the qurʾānic evocation of life are a paradox and two paradigms. The paradox arises from a dual attitude to, or sense of, "life" *(ḥayāt)*. On the one hand, life as an animating force in the body is perceived as utterly sacred. Humans are urged not to kill their children (q.v.) out of fear of being reduced to poverty (*imlāq,* Q 17:31; see POVERTY AND THE POOR). God promises that he will provide for both parent and child (see FAMILY; PARENTS) and warns that infanticide (q.v.) is a grievous sin (see SIN, MAJOR AND MINOR). The sanctity of life is stressed again a little later in the same sūra: "Nor take life *(al-nafs)* — which God has made sacred *(allatī ḥarrama Allāh)* — except for just cause" (*bi-l-ḥaqq,* Q 17:33; see BLOODSHED; MURDER; RETALIATION). Yūsuf ʿAlī's translation of *nafs* in Q 17:33 is closer to the corporeal sense intended than Arberry's which reads: "And slay not the soul *(al-nafs)* God has forbidden (q.v.), except by right *(bi-l-ḥaqq)*."

Life in the sense of living out one's corporeal existence is, however, paradoxically fraught with danger, illusion and deception. The Qurʾān exhibits an almost platonic rejection of the life of this world *(al-ḥayāt al-dunyā),* characterizing it as nothing but "play and amusement" *(laʿib wa-lahw)* and contrasting it with the reward of the righteous in the hereafter (Q 6:32; see GOOD AND EVIL; REWARD AND PUNISHMENT). There is a virtual repetition of the same words in Q 57:20 where this leitmotiv of *al-ḥayāt al-dunyā* as *laʿib wa-lahw* is further amplified by its being powerfully designated as "goods and chattels of deception" *(matāʿ al-ghurūr)*. In the emphasis placed by the text on a physical world of transitory illusion and deception, and the explicit contrast in Q 6:32 of this world and the next, there are obvious echoes of the lament in Ecclesiastes 1:2-3.

The first paradigm flows directly from God's qurʾānic designation as "the living" (*al-ḥayy,* Q 2:255; 3:2; 20:111; 25:58; 40:65; see GOD AND HIS ATTRIBUTES): God is the central focus of life *(al-ḥayāt)* in the Qurʾān. From him all else that is alive takes its being; by him everything is created *ex nihilo* (see CREATION; COSMOLOGY). To use Ibn Sīnā's (d. 428/1037) famous phrase, the production of all other life means that God is "the necessitating force behind existence" (*wājib al-wujūd,* Goichon, *Lexique,* 417-8). The Throne Verse (see THRONE OF GOD), which enshrines this concept in the Qurʾān, is rightly accorded considerable prominence and respect in Islam:

> God! There is no god but he, the living *(al-ḥayy),* eternal *(al-qayyūm)*. No slumber can seize him, nor sleep (q.v.). His are all things in the heavens (see HEAVEN AND SKY) and on earth (q.v.). Who is there who can intercede (see INTERCESSION) in his presence except as he permits? He knows what [appears to his creatures as] before or behind them. Nor shall they compass aught of his knowledge except as he wills. His throne does extend over the heavens and the earth, and he feels no fatigue in preserving them both. For he is the most high, the supreme [in glory] (Q 2:255).

This Throne Verse is "one of the most famous and beloved of the verses of the Qurʾān, frequently recited as a protection against harm or evil" (Netton, *Popular dictionary,* 45; see POPULAR AND TALISMANIC USES OF THE QURʾĀN; EVERYDAY LIFE, THE QURʾĀN IN). It is a verse which proclaims God's life, his self-subsisting and eternal nature, his vigilance, his divine ownership of his creation, his omniscience, his divine will (see FREEDOM AND PREDESTINATION), his transcendence and unknowableness, his

power, his glory (q.v.) and his unity. It thus encapsulates a lucid, thumbnail sketch of many of the most important divine attributes. Although they are articulated as separate epithets, "the living" *(al-ḥayy)* and "the eternal" *(al-qayyūm)* are logically to be identified as a unity according to the classical doctrine of the oneness of God (*tawḥīd,* see POLYTHEISM AND ATHEISM; ETERNITY). Commenting on this verse, Yūsuf ʿAlī (1872-1953) notes: "His Life is absolute Life, his Being is absolute Being, while others are contingent and evanescent…" (Yūsuf ʿAlī, *Holy Qurʾān,* 103, n. 297). For Islam and the Qurʾān, God is life and the creator and divine dispenser of life.

R. Arnaldez (Ḥayāt, 302) reminds us that "al-Zamakhsharī [d. 538/1144] states that *ḥayy,* in the technical language of the theologians, describes one who has knowledge and power" (see KNOWLEDGE AND LEARNING; POWER AND IMPOTENCE). This concentration of "life" and "power" is an ancient archetype of the divine as seen, for example, in the hieroglyphic portrayals of the deities in Egypt (q.v.; see Hornung, *Conceptions of God,* 199-200; but cf. 230-3). Further, such ancient archetypes portray an idea of "the creator's loving care" for his creation — rather than Aristotle's "unmoved" First Mover. In the Islamic paradigm, as well, the creator maintains (chosen) life by means both ordinary and extraordinary. Divine benefaction and sustenance *(rizq)* is mentioned frequently as are such acts of intervention as sending angels (see ANGEL) to fight on the side of Muḥammad at the battle of Badr (q.v.) in 2/624 (Q 3:123-5; 8:4, 9).

The verses in the Qurʾān which refer to life *(al-ḥayāt)* and to God as "the living" *(al-ḥayy),* were revealed in a particular historical milieu (see HISTORY AND THE QURʾĀN; CHRONOLOGY AND THE QURʾĀN). Despite such barbarities as the burial alive of newly born female infants (see Q 17:31; Yūsuf ʿAlī, *Holy Qurʾān,* 703 n. 2214), the pre-Islamic notion of Mecca (q.v.) as a sanctuary for visitors and as a sacred territory (*ḥaram,* see GEOGRAPHY) together with the concept of sacred months (q.v.; Shaban, *Islamic history,* 3; Q 2:194, 217), illustrate an environment in which there was some attempt at respect for, and preservation of, life. Later under the new qurʾānic dispensation, blood revenge (*thaʾr,* see BLOOD MONEY) would be replaced by just retaliation (*qiṣāṣ,* see Q 2:178-9; 17:33), thus inaugurating a new "respect for life" and, theoretically, further diminution of bloodshed and life lost.

God's fundamental generative power whereby he creates new life *ex nihilo* is a basic leitmotiv of the sacred text. It is clothed with a basic biology (Q 23:12-16; see BIOLOGY AS THE CREATION AND STAGES OF LIFE) in which the human body is portrayed as developing, dying (see DEATH AND THE DEAD) and then being brought to life again (lit. *tubʿathūna,* Q 23:16) on the day of judgment (*yawm al-qiyāma,* see LAST JUDGMENT). The image here is of new, eternal life being born, or reborn, out of the distress, fires, convulsions and terrors of that last day, with a greater fire (q.v.), that of hell, as the final reward of the wicked (Q 52:13-4; see HELL AND HELLFIRE). While eternal life will be born out of the cataclysm of the last day, humankind's diurnal present life *(al-ḥayāt al-dunyā)* is likened in the Qurʾān to rainwater (*māʾ,* see WATER; NATURE AS SIGNS; BLESSING). This is sent down by God from the skies to refresh the earth (see AGRICULTURE AND VEGETATION), assist in the production of food and provide an, albeit ephemeral, earthly paradise (q.v.) which God will cause to pass (Q 10:24; see FOOD AND DRINK; GARDEN). It is this temporary aspect of the results of the life-giving water which is stressed here, together with the transient dimension of human life. There is a vivid

and obvious contrast that can be made between these images and the water imagery of the New Testament in which it is proclaimed "The water I give him will be a spring of water within him, that flows continually to bring him everlasting life" (John 4:14; see SCRIPTURE AND THE QUR'ĀN).

The first paradigm mentioned above is that of God's creative gift of life and of the individual's grateful return of that life to God at the moment of death. This life has, ideally, been enriched by faith (q.v.) and good works (Q 2:277; 9:19-20; see GOOD DEEDS) if paradise is to be the final destination of the individual (see GRATITUDE AND INGRATITUDE; GIFT-GIVING). In the beginning, God creates the first man, Adam (see ADAM AND EVE), from clay (q.v.), breathes into him his spirit (q.v.) and displays him to the angels for their admiration and respect (Q 15:26-39). There is an archetypical "gifting" at the beginning of human time of new life to a new creation. And God does not forget his creation but guides, sustains and cures the previous life he has instituted (Q 26:78-80; see ASTRAY; ILLNESS AND HEALTH), sends the final revelation, that of the Qur'ān as the last and ultimate guidebook to paradise (Q 31:3; see REVELATION AND INSPIRATION). On the last day, he will raise the old life to a new one (Q 26:81; see RESURRECTION). According to this paradigm, God, the archetypical and only creator and controller of life, gives life twice, first at birth and then by ultimately raising his creation to a new form of existence (Q 56:60-2).

The second paradigm interwoven into, and to be extrapolated from, the fabric of the Qur'ān is that of life as a journey (q.v.) from terrestrial to celestial life. Man's life involves much exertion and a hard toiling (*kādiḥ,* see WORK) towards his lord (q.v.) but the final encounter is assured (Q 84:6) after a journey from "stage to stage" (*ṭabaqan ʿan ṭabaqin,* Q 84:19). As Yūsuf ʿAlī puts it in his comment on the latter verse: "Man travels and ascends stage by stage. In Q 67:3 the same word in the form *ṭibāqan* was used of the heavens, as if they were in layers one above another. Man's spiritual life may similarly be compared to an ascent from one heaven to another" (Yūsuf ʿAlī, *Holy Qur'ān,* 1711 n. 6047).

During the life journey the human is tested (Q 2:155; 3:186; 47:31; 57:25; see TRIAL) and perhaps the archetypical "questing and testing" encounter in the Qur'ān, one which graphically illustrates that in such testing God's ways are not human ways, is the famous encounter between Moses (q.v.; Mūsā) and al-Khiḍr (see KHAḌIR/KHIḌR). This occupies a substantial section of the eighteenth sūra, Sūrat al-Kahf ("The Cave," Q 18:60-82). The essential nature of a human's life journey (a journey palely adumbrated in this qur'ānic encounter between Moses and al-Khiḍr but with a different objective) is that it is always a return to God, for reward or punishment. The created return to their source, the creator (Q 6:60, 72; 10:45-6).

Life, then, in the Qur'ān has both a macro and a micro dimension, if it is viewed in terms of a journey *(riḥla)*. From the global or macro viewpoint, all living beings, originating in, and created by, God, are journeying *en masse* in multifarious form towards the final cataclysm of the last day, a day of rebirth as well as destruction: "One day the earth will be changed to a different earth, and so will be the heavens" (Q 14:48; see APOCALYPSE). From a micro perspective, each human life has an individual path to tread and an individual salvation (q.v.) to achieve: the wicked will be reborn to new life in eternal torment and the just and the righteous, who have followed "the straight path" (*al-ṣirāṭ al-*

mustaqīm, see PATH OR WAY) articulated so clearly and so often in the Qurʾān, will be reborn to eternal bliss. It is a return and a rebirth to a new life which will be accomplished in profound haste, almost as if both return and rebirth were long overdue, or the divine cosmic patience with humanity had suddenly exhausted itself: "On that day we shall leave them to surge *(yamūju)* like waves on one another: the trumpet will be blown, and we shall collect them all together (Q 18:99).… The day whereon they will issue from their sepulchres in sudden haste *(sirāʿan)* as if they were rushing *(yūfiḍūna)* to a goal-post [fixed for them]" (Q 70:43).

In conclusion, earthly life, the return and the eschaton are, for the Muslim, different aspects of a single, multi-dimensional, eschatological frame (see ESCHATOLOGY). This is, as it were, our ultimate paradigm and ultimate paradox. Real life, for Islam, of necessity involves death coupled with a realizable eschatology whose basis is eternal life:

All of human history, then, moves from the creation to the eschaton. Preceding the final judgement will come signs (both cosmic and moral) signaling the arrival of the Hour as well as the specific events of the resurrection and assessment. Within this overall structure is the individual cycle which specifies the events of creation, death and resurrection. Part of the fatalistic determinism of the pre-Islamic Arabs was their sense that each human life is for a fixed term or ajal. It is immutably set; on the appointed day one's life comes to an end. This idea of an ajal is repeated in the Qurʾān, both for individuals [Q 6:2; 7:34; 16:61; 20:129] and for nations [Q 10:49, 15:4-5]" (Smith and Haddad, *Islamic understanding,* 5).

This remains the fundamental Islamic paradigm for both medieval and modern Islamic theology (see THEOLOGY AND THE QURʾĀN), whatever the glosses of individual verses *(āyāt)* by contemporary exegesis (see EXEGESIS OF THE QURʾĀN: EARLY MODERN AND CONTEMPORARY). It is worth noting, however, that the medieval philosophers *(falāsifa)* often developed a different set of conceptions about the cycle of life, some of which appear difficult to reconcile with the basic theological positions of the Qurʾān (see Arnaldez, Ḥayāt, 303).

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Life after Death

see ESCHATOLOGY; RESURRECTION; PARADISE; HELL AND HELLFIRE; REWARD AND PUNISHMENT

Lifetime

see DESTINY; FATE; LIFE; DEATH AND THE DEAD

Light

The emanation from a light-giving body: the essential condition for vision (see VISION AND BLINDNESS; SEEING AND HEARING) — the opposite of darkness (q.v.). The Qurʾān is rich in references to light, both in the literal sense of the word as well as in symbolic and metaphoric senses (see METAPHOR; SYMBOLIC IMAGERY). The most common word for light is *nūr,* although *ḍiyāʾ* also appears on three occasions (also *miṣbāḥ* and *sirāj;* see also LAMP and FIRE).

Light as *nūr* most frequently appears juxtaposed to darkness *(ẓulumāt)*. This is most common in the phrase "From the darkness into the light" *(mina l-ẓulumāti ilā l-nūri)* which appears at least seven times in the Qurʾān (Q 2:257; 5:16; 14:1, 5; 33:43; 57:9; 65:11). In this context, light functions both as that with which one can see clearly in a literal sense and also as a metaphoric source of guidance and illumination, wherein darkness is akin to ignorance (q.v.) and being led astray (q.v.). In the first sense, light versus darkness is compared to having sight versus being blind (e.g. Q 13:16: "Say: Is the blind equal with one who sees or is darkness equal with light?"; this verse is repeated almost verbatim in Q 35:19). Elsewhere the direct connection between light and seeing versus darkness and not seeing is clearly evoked: "God took away their light and left them in darkness so they could not see" (Q 2:17), and the evocative "Or like the darkness in a deep ocean surmounted by crashing waves with dark clouds above — darknesses, one on top of the other. If he puts out his hand he can hardly see it. Therefore for anyone for whom God did not make a light, there is no light" (Q 24:40).

In its sense as guidance, light is very closely related to the important issues of revelation and prophecy (see REVELATION AND INSPIRATION; PROPHETS AND PROPHETHOOD). The Torah (q.v.) and Gospel (q.v.; *injīl*) are referred to as "guidance and light" *(hudan wa-nūrun)* in Q 5:44 and Q 5:46. This is repeated for the Torah again in Q 6:91: "Say: Who sent down the book (q.v.) that Moses (q.v.; Mūsā) brought as light and guidance for humankind *(nūran wa-hudan lil-nās)?*" Elsewhere, the word *ḍiyāʾ* is used for the revelation sent to Moses: "Indeed we gave Moses and Aaron (q.v.; Hārūn) the criterion (q.v.; *al-furqān*) and a light *(ḍiyāʾan)* and a reminder for those who do right" (Q 21:48; see MEMORY).

Light is also used to indicate the revelation received by Muḥammad (see NAMES OF THE QURʾĀN): "So believe in God and his messenger (q.v.), and the light *(nūr)* that we sent down" (Q 64:8); "And thus we sent to you a spirit (q.v.; *rūḥ*) by our command. You did not know what the book was nor faith (q.v.), but we made it a light *(nūr)* with which we guide whom we wish of our servants" (Q 42:52); "O humankind! Indeed a proof (q.v.; *burhān*) has come to you from your lord (q.v.). And we sent down to you a manifest light *(nūran mubīnan)*" (Q 4:174). The majority of instances, however, appear to use "light" *(nūr)* as a reference to prophecy rather than qurʾānic revelation: "There has come to you from God a light and a clear [or manifest] book *(kitābun mubīnun)*" (Q 5:15); "It is those who believe in him, honor him, help him, and follow the light that is sent down with him — it is they who will prosper" (Q 7:157). In one instance, Muḥammad is referred to explicitly as a source of light: "And an inviter to God by his leave, and a light-giving lamp *(sirājan munīran)*" (Q 33:46; see NAMES OF THE PROPHET).

The word *mubīn,* normally translated as "clear" or "manifest," has a special significance in instances where "light" refers to revelation and prophecy, since in Arabic *mubīn* and the root *b-y-n* mean not only "clear" but also "readily apparent." Thus phrases such as *kitāb mubīn,* "clear book" (as in Q 5:15 mentioned above) or the common *āyāt bayyanāt,* "manifest signs (q.v.), clear verses (q.v.)," carry a connotation of being "lit up" and clearly visible, not just "clear" in the sense of "easily understood."

Three verses refer to the light *(nūr)* of God: "And the earth will shine with the light of its lord" (Q 39:22); two are almost identical in their phrasing: "They wish to extinguish the light of God with their mouths, but God will not allow but that he would perfect his light, even though the unbelievers detest it" (Q 9:32; also Q 61:8; see BELIEF AND UNBELIEF). Commentators on the Qurʾān (see EXEGESIS OF THE QURʾĀN: CLASSICAL AND MEDIEVAL) have understood this variously to refer to the glory (q.v.) of God or to his message.

Light also refers to the sun (q.v.) and moon (q.v.) where moonlight is called *nūr* and sunlight *ḍiyāʾ:* "He is the one who made the sun a light and the moon a light (*jaʿala l-shams ḍiyāʾan wa-l-qamar nūran,* Q 10:5). Elsewhere, the moon is referred to as light *(nūr)* while the sun is called a lamp (*sirāj,* Q 71:16; cf. 25:61; 78:13).

The most important reference to light is in Q 24:35: "God is the light of the heavens and the earth. The parable of his light is as a niche *(mishkāt)* in which is a lamp; the lamp encased in glass; the glass as if it were a shining star lit from a blessed tree, an olive, neither of the east nor of the west, whose oil would burn bright even if no fire touched it. Light upon light, God guides to his light whom he wishes, and God puts forth parables for human beings, and God is knowing of all things." The sūra of the Qurʾān in which this verse occurs is named Sūrat al-Nūr, "The Light," and the verse is popularly known as the Light Verse *(āyat al-nūr).* It has enjoyed a special significance in mystical commentaries on the Qurʾān (see ṢŪFISM AND THE QURʾĀN). Thus the early and influential Ṣūfī Sahl al-Tustarī (d. 283/898) sees this verse as a reference to the "light of Muḥammad" *(nūr Muḥammad),* which functions in its primordial sense as a veil to hide the inscrutable nature of God (Böwering, *Mystical,* 149-51). The Persian mystic Rūzbihān Baqlī al-Shīrāzī (d. 606/1209) took a particularly esoteric reading of this verse, speaking of a darkness of non-being *(zulmat al-ʿadam)* lying between the letters *kāf* and *nūn* of the word *kawn,* "existence," and untouched by the light of either letter (see ARABIC SCRIPT). *Kawn,* existence, is like an illuminated niche, lit up by the light of divine qualities (*ṣifāt;* see GOD AND HIS ATTRIBUTES). By looking at this niche we can see the light of the letters *kāf* and *nūn* of "existence" (Shīrāzī, *ʿArāʾis,* 81; cf. Bursawī, *Tafsīr,* vi, 152 f., for further discussion of this verse).

Light as an important religious concept became central to Ṣūfī practice and in the philosophy of virtually all Muslim neo-Platonists (see PHILOSOPHY AND THE QURʾĀN). It also occupied a central place in the Persian Islamic philosophical tradition commonly referred to as the illumination *(ishrāqī)* school, whose most famous exponent, Shihāb al-Dīn Yaḥyā al-Suhrawardī, was executed for holding heretical beliefs in 587/1191 (see HERESY; LITERATURE AND THE QURʾĀN).

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Lightning

see WEATHER

Lion

see ANIMAL LIFE

Lips

see ANATOMY

Listen

see HEARING AND DEAFNESS; SEEING AND HEARING

Literacy

The ability to read and, often, to write. Literacy (framed in contemporary Arabic by expressions such as *maʿrifat al-qirāʾa wa-l-kitāba, thaqāfa* and their derivatives) is in many cultures considered a primary requisite for learning and education. In Arabia at the beginning of the first/seventh century, however, oral transmission of knowledge, memorization and the spoken word had a long tradition and were highly appreciated among the tribes (see TRIBES AND CLANS; ORALITY AND WRITING IN ARABIA; MEMORY; SPEECH). Until that time, the use of writing and written matter — due also to the material conditions at that time — played a minor role (see MATERIAL CULTURE AND THE QURʾĀN). Apparently reflecting this situation, the Qurʾān seems to consider issues related to literacy of subordinate importance to those of its counterpart, illiteracy. Nevertheless, literacy is implied to a certain extent and acquires significance whenever mention is made of the holy book (q.v.; *al-kitāb, al-Qurʾān*), reading and teachings from holy scriptures *(kutub, ṣuḥuf),* knowledge and education in more general terms (see KNOWLEDGE AND LEARNING), or means of writing such as ink and pencil (see WRITING AND WRITING MATERIALS; INSTRUMENTS).

The qurʾānic statements concerning the theologically important question of whether the Arabian Prophet was literate or not remain ambiguous. In Q 25:5, for example, Muḥammad's opponents (see OPPOSITION TO MUḤAMMAD) discredit the Prophet by claiming that he was not receiving a divine revelation but was merely relying on "writings of the ancients (*asāṭīr al-awwalīn,* see GENERATIONS) which he has written down [or which he has had written down] *(iktatabahā)* and which were dictated to him *(tumlā ʿalayhi)* at dawn and in the early evening (q.v.; see also DAY, TIMES OF)." On the other hand, Q 29:48 addresses Muḥammad by stating "not before this [revelation] did you read/recite *(tatlū)* any book or inscribe it with your right hand, for then those who follow falsehood would have doubted." (For this question and for the possible meanings of *al-nabī al-ummī,* see Günther, Muḥammad, 7-12; see also UMMĪ; ILLITERACY.)

The five verses that are generally considered by Muslim tradition to comprise the first revelation to Muḥammad stress the written nature of religious knowledge:

Read/recite *(iqraʾ)* in the name of your lord who created. Created man of a blood-clot (see BLOOD AND BLOOD CLOT)! Read/recite [words of the holy scripture]! And your lord, the most generous, is the one [variant a:] who taught [the use of] the pen [variant b:] who taught by the pen. Taught man what he knew not [before]! (Q 96:1-5).

Although another tradition favors Q 74:1-5 as the first verses revealed, Q 96:1-5 nevertheless belongs to the very oldest parts of the *textus receptus* of the Qurʾān. This would mean that Islam, from its very beginning,

in a remarkably impressive way prioritizes the gaining of (religious) knowledge, learning and education.

Q 96:4-5, "who taught by the pen, taught man what he knew not" *(alladhī ʿallama bi-l-qalami; ʿallama l-insāna mā lam yaʿlam)* seems, according to a translation variant, to make an allusion to the "art of writing" as being a divinely granted human ability. The prepositional expression *bi-l-qalami* is then not to be understood as instrumental ("with the help of the pen") but as a kind of second object ("the pen," like in Q 2:282, with its allusion to God's teaching writing; see GRAMMAR AND THE QURʾĀN). This understanding, "who taught writing with the pen" *(ʿallama al-khaṭṭa bi-l-qalami),* is reported to have been found in the ancient Qurʾān codex of ʿAbdallāh b. al-Zubayr, who was a member of the commission appointed by the third caliph, ʿUthmān (r. 23-35/644-56), to collect officially and publish the text of the Qurʾān (cf. Jeffery, *Materials,* 229; see COLLECTION OF THE QURʾĀN; CODICES OF THE QURʾĀN). It would indicate that God is the one who taught humankind the script "and other things" they did not know before (*maʿa ashyāʾa ghayri dhālika,* Ṭabarī, *Tafsīr,* xii, 646) by teaching them the use of the pen. This understanding is reflected in the Qurʾān translations by Yūsuf ʿAlī, "He who taught (the use of) the pen," Shakir, "Who taught (to write) with the pen," and Paret (see also Nöldeke, Review, 723; and Paret, *Kommentar,* 515).

It is also possible (as a second variant), however, to understand the phrase as a general reference to knowledge of the revelation (see REVELATION AND INSPIRATION), which has been handed down by God to humankind through holy scriptures (Buhl, *Das Leben,* 137-8; Bell, *Origin of Islam,* 93-4; id., *Qurʾān,* ii, 635; Paret, *Kommentar,* 515; the translations by Arberry, "Who taught by the pen," and Pickthall, "Who teacheth by the pen" are in this vein). Such an understanding would associate the content of these — God's teachings — with the "guarded tablet" (*al-lawḥ al-maḥfūẓ,* Q 85:22; see PRESERVED TABLET; HEAVENLY BOOK), on which the revelation is preserved in heaven in written form (see also Fück, Das Problem, 1). It would refer to the heavenly archetype of the Qurʾān, whose "pages [are] highly-honored, uplifted, purified by the hands of scribes *(safara)* noble, pious" (Q 80:13-5; see also 85:21-2; 56:77-80; 98:2-3; 74:52; for *safara* meaning "scribes," "reciters" or "angels," see Ṭabarī, *Tafsīr,* xii, 445-6; Qurṭubī, *Jāmiʿ,* xix, 216; for the Semitic context of *safara* that clearly indicates the meaning of "scribes," see Horovitz, *Proper names,* 229; furthermore Jeffery, *Qurʾān,* 13, 15; Paret, *Kommentar* 502).

On the other hand, this passage could refer more specifically to the holy scriptures (see also Q 2:151; 4:113; 6:91; 55:1-4), which had emerged from the heavenly "tablet" and which had been revealed to prophets before Muḥammad (such as *ṣuḥuf Ibrāhīm wa-Mūsā,* the "scrolls of Abraham [q.v.] and Moses [q.v.]," in Q 87:18-9; also 2:53; 46:12; see PROPHETS AND PROPHETHOOD). Jews and Christians had been reading these older scriptures (*yaqraʾūna l-kitāb,* Q 10:94), even though some among them had denied them when Muḥammad came to them (Q 2:101-2; see JEWS AND JUDAISM; CHRISTIANS AND CHRISTIANITY). (For the meaning of *kitāb* and *ahl al-kitāb* in the Qurʾān, see BOOK, PEOPLE OF THE BOOK, SCRIPTURE AND THE QURʾĀN; Augapfel, Das *kitāb*, also provides specific information; cf. Berg, Tabari's exegesis; Buhl, 'Die Schrift'; Künstlinger, Die Namen; Tisdall, 'The Book'.)

The term *talā,* "reading" and/or "reciting," occurs sixty-three times in the Qurʾān: the Children of Israel (q.v.) study the scripture (*tatlūna l-kitāb,* Q 2:44); Jews

read in the Torah (q.v.; Q 3:93); Jews and Christian read/recite their scripture (*yatlūna l-kitāb,* Q 2:113), some of them at night (Q 3:113; see DAY AND NIGHT). Reading the scripture in an accurate manner means to believe in God or, believe in it (i.e. the Scripture; Q 2:121). Biblical narratives, which provide exemplary instruction for believers, are reported to have been read, and it is said that they be read/"re"-cited: such narratives include the story of Cain and Abel (q.v.; Q 5:27), Solomon (q.v.; Q 7:175), Noah (q.v.; Q 10:71), Abraham (Q 26:69), Moses and the Pharaoh (q.v.; Q 28:3). Q 18:83 indicates that Muḥammad (or possibly Moses) is even directed to read/recite something relating to *dhū l-qarnayn* (generally understood to be Alexander the Great, but possibly here referring to the devil [q.v.]; see ALEXANDER) when asked about him. But reading or reciting is not solely a human activity: satans read/re-cite *(tatlū)* something about Solomon (Q 2:102).

Most times, however, *talā* refers in general terms to reading the holy scriptures *(kitāb, ṣuḥuf),* reciting verses of the Qurʾān, or reading the Qurʾān (Q 2:44, 113; 129, 151, 252; 3:58, 101, 108, 164; 6:151; 8:2, 31; 10:15, 16, 61; 13:10; 17:107; 18:27; 19:58; 19:73; 22:72; 23:66, 105; 27:92; 28:45, 53; 28:59; 29:45, 51; 31:7; 33:34; 34:43; 37:3; 39:71; 45:6, 8, 25, 31; 46:7; 62:2; 65:11; 68:15 like 83:13; 98:2; see RECITATION OF THE QURʾĀN). *Talā ʿalā* indicates more emphatically that God establishes a rule for people, which they learn by reading/reciting the teachings of the holy book (Q 4:127; 5:1; 22:30; 23:72; see LAW AND THE QURʾĀN; BOUNDARIES AND PRECEPTS; LAWFUL AND UNLAWFUL; FORBIDDEN; PROHIBITED DEGREES). In Q 68:15 and Q 83:13, an unnamed unbeliever is mentioned who, "when our signs (q.v.) are read/re-cited to him," will say "[these are only] 'writings of the ancients'." That the expression *asāṭīr al-awwalīn,* which is relevant in this regard as well, refers to "writings" can be understood, for example, from Q 68:37, "Or do you have a book in which you study!" (For further references, see ILLITERACY; for *yasṭurūna* meaning *yakhuṭṭūna, yaktubūna,* see Ṭabarī, *Tafsīr,* xii, 177-8.)

Another important term, *qaraʾa,* also indicates both "reading" and "reciting." Only the verses of Q 96:1-3 start with the imperative, *iqraʾ,* to introduce God's command to the Prophet to "repeat" verses of the revelation (see also Paret, *Muhammed,* 47-8). This mode of introduction, "re-cite" or "read," seems to express in one word the primary motive for the entire proclamation of the Qurʾān and its programmatic character: Muḥammad was called upon to speak aloud a holy text. If *qaraʾa* means "reciting," however, it would not necessarily imply a writing or the ability to read as prerequisites. If it refers to "reading," Muslim commentators have noted that Muḥammad was inspired by a scripture in a divine language (see LANGUAGE, CONCEPT OF), which would not require any knowledge of reading or writing profane language. (For the idea that it was a "writing" from which Muḥammad was ordered to "read," see the famous biography of the Prophet by Ibn Isḥāq [d. ca. 150/767]; see Ibn Isḥāq, *Sīra,* i, 236, n. 5; Ibn Isḥāq-Guillaume, 106; see also, Schoeler, *Charakter,* 59-117; for the etymology and the meaning of the word "Qurʾān," see NAMES OF THE QURʾĀN, ARABIC LANGUAGE; ARABIC SCRIPT, SCRIPTURE AND THE QURʾĀN; RECITATION OF THE QURʾĀN.)

Q 7:145 confirms that God had "written" *(kataba)* for Moses "an admonition (see EXHORTATIONS) of every kind, and a distinguishing of everything," and he had done so "upon the tablets," which he had handed over to Moses on Mount Sinai (q.v.) so that he would command his people according to those laws (see COMMAND-

MENTS). Q 5:110 states that God had taught Jesus (q.v.) the "book *(kitāb),* the wisdom (q.v.), the Torah and the Gospel" (q.v.; see also Q 3:48-9). The Qurʾān is taught by God as well (Q 53:5; 55:1-2). It is then the duty of God's messengers (see MESSENGER) to "read" God's signs to the people *(yatlū ʿalayhim āyātihi)* and to "teach them the book and the wisdom, and [to] purify them" (Q 3:164; also Q 2:129, 151; 4:113; 62:2; 65:4).

A warning of certain writings is given in Q 2:78-9; there are books written by some Jews who do not "read" (or consciously "ignore") the holy scripture but fabricate by themselves writings different from the holy text as revealed (see FORGERY): "And there are some among them (i.e. the Jews) who are not reading the holy scripture *(ummiyyūn),* who do not know the book but know only fancies and mere conjectures. But woe to those who write the book with their hands and then say 'This is from God,' that they may sell it for a small price. So woe to them for what their hands have written.…"

The books in which all the deeds of human beings are recorded until the day of judgment (see LAST JUDGMENT), and the idea that God "writes" *(kataba)* everything that people do, are mentioned many times (see RECORD OF HUMAN ACTIONS). For example, the Qurʾān warns that God "write[s] down what they (the people) send before and what they have left behind. [He has] taken account of everything in a clear register" (Q 36:12); his "messengers (i.e. the guardian angels) are writing down what you are devising" (Q 10:21; also 43:80); "everything that they have done is in the scrolls (of the former generations); and everything, great or small, is inscribed *(mustaṭar)*" (Q 54:52-3); God "writes down" *(wa-llāhu yaktubu)* everything that some people think up all night (or plot, *yubayyitūna*) "other than" what you [Muḥammad] say (Q 4:81; cf. also Paret, *Der Koran,* 68).

Sūra 68, entitled "The Pen," starts with the oath "[I swear] by the pen, and that which they inscribe" *(wa-l-qalami wa-mā yasṭurūna)*. This verse, possibly the second oldest verse in the qurʾānic revelation (Ṭabarī, *Tafsīr,* xii, 645), lends itself to several explanations: it is understood to allude to (a) the art of writing or (b) the scripture of revelation or, again, to (c) the pen with which all the deeds and the fate of every person are recorded (Paret, *Kommentar,* 516). Medieval commentators draw special attention to the latter concept, i.e. that before heaven (see HEAVEN AND SKY), water (q.v.) and earth (q.v.), God created the pen which inscribes all happenings until the day of resurrection (q.v.; *awwālu mā khalaqa llāhu al-qalam*…, based on a prophetic saying; see e.g. Ṭabarī, *Tafsīr,* xii, 177-8). Incidentally, the idea of the many pens and seas of ink (*midād,* Q 18:109; cf. 31:27) also occurs in Jewish sources (cf. Strack/Billerbeck, *Kommentar,* ii, 587; Haeuptner, *Koranische Hinweise,* 99-100).

Writing as a way to fix juridical matters, however, is clearly favored in the Qurʾān. In Q 2:282-3, the need for people who are able to write, the importance of written documents, and the practices of writing and dictating become evident. Detailed instructions as to how to proceed are even given: "O believers, when you contract a debt (q.v.) one upon another for a stated term, then write it down! And let a writer *(kātib)* write it down between you justly. And let not any writer refuse to write it down, as God has taught him [i.e. the art of writing]. So let him write it down. And let the debtor dictate! […] And if the debtor be a fool, or weak, or unable to dictate himself, then let his guardian (see GUARDIANSHIP) dictate justly… […] And be not loath to write it down, whether it (i.e. the amount) be small or great…! That is more equitable in God's sight… But take

witnesses whenever you are trafficking one with another! And let neither a scribe nor a witness suffer harm. […] And if you are upon a journey, and you do not find a writer, then a pledge [?] in hand [should be required]" (cf. Ṭabarī, *Tafsīr,* iii, 117; Tyan, *Histoire,* i, 73; Schacht, *Origins,* 186; Nöldeke, *GQ,* i, 78-84; Buhl, *Das Leben,* 136-8; Khoury, *Koran,* iii, 249-54 for more detailed explanations and references).

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Literary Structures of the Qurʾān

Rhetorical, grammatical and linguistic devices utilized in the conveyance of meaning. The message of the Qurʾān is couched in various literary structures, which are widely considered to be the most perfect example of the Arabic language (q.v.; see also LANGUAGE AND STYLE OF THE QURʾĀN). Arabic grammars were written based upon the qurʾānic language (see GRAMMAR AND THE QURʾĀN), and, by the general consensus of Muslim rhetoricians, the qurʾānic idiom is considered to be sublime. This article is concerned with these literary structures and how they produce meaning in the Qurʾān in an effective way.

Muslim doctrine holds that the Qurʾān is inimitable, its inimitability (q.v.) lying not only in its matchless literary style (see FORM AND STRUCTURE OF THE QURʾĀN) but also in its religious content. As such, the Qurʾān is considered the avowed miracle (see MIRACLES) of the prophet Muḥammad, testifying to the truth (q.v.) of his prophethood and the enduring veracity of his message (see PROPHETS AND PROPHETHOOD; MESSENGER). These doctrinal considerations frame classical Muslim considerations of the literary structures of the Qurʾān and their manner of generating religious meaning. It should be emphasized that these literary structures are not

deemed mere otiose embellishments of the text of the Qurʾān but are rather the factors that produce its powerful effect in the specific forms presented. If the form of a qurʾānic text is changed in any way, however small or seemingly innocent, the meaning is modified, often significantly. Take, for example, *"iyyāka naʿbudu"* (Q 1:5). By syntactically placing the pronominal object *(iyyāka)* before the verb *(naʿbudu)*, rather than after it (as the pronominal suffix *-ka*), the meaning of the qurʾānic verse is specified to be "only you do we worship." This is significantly different from "we worship you" *(naʿbuduka)*, which declares worship of God but does not exclude the possibility of worshiping other deities as well (see POLYTHEISM AND ATHEISM). Syntax, therefore, is an important element of the literary structures of the Qurʾān, for it helps to determine the specific meaning of the text.

A further example will highlight another aspect of the quality of qurʾānic literary structures: *"wa-lakum fī l-qiṣāṣi ḥayātun"* (Q 2:179), which means "and in retaliation (q.v.), there is life for you." Muslim rhetoricians have compared this qurʾānic verse with the pre-Islamic Arabian proverb, *"al-qatlu anfā lil-qatli,"* which means "killing is more likely to preclude killing" (see PRE-ISLAMIC ARABIA AND THE QURʾĀN; MURDER; BLOOD MONEY). Although the two statements are not exactly congruent, they both advocate the application of the death penalty in cases of murder, maintaining that such a punishment results in a safer society, as it both deters others and removes the murderer from the community (see COMMUNITY AND SOCIETY IN THE QURʾĀN; CHASTISEMENT AND PUNISHMENT). Attention has been drawn to the sound of the words in these two statements; the phonemes of the pre-Islamic proverb are difficult to pronounce in succession, alternating — as they do — between the sounds of *a* and *q* at opposite ends of the laryngeal uttering process, interposed between the repetitive dental cluster *tl*, whereas the phonemes of the qurʾānic verse, in contrast, flow easily on one's tongue. Phonology, therefore, is another important element in literary structures, for it governs and ensures the acoustic and phonic fluidity of the qurʾānic text, helping it to achieve good reception and deliver its meaning effectively (see RECITATION OF THE QURʾĀN).

As these examples demonstrate, the Arabic language forms the basis for the literary structures of the Qurʾān, and is the vehicle through which the intended meaning has been conveyed. The Qurʾān was revealed to the prophet Muḥammad in Arabic, as the text itself reiterates (e.g. Q 12:2; 20:113; 39:28; 41:3; 42:7; 43:3) and it is in Arabic that his contemporaries first heard the message, a message that affected both their hearts (see HEART) and minds (see INTELLECT). It is in Arabic that later generations of Muslim believers of all ethnic and linguistic backgrounds have continued to hear and recite the qurʾānic text, the text from which they have drawn guidance to shape their lives. To them a translation of the Qurʾān into any other language is not really the Qurʾān (lit. "recitation"; see ORALITY; ORALITY AND WRITING IN ARABIA), irrespective of its accuracy and faithfulness to the Arabic original. Furthermore, like other languages, Arabic has its own specific way of conveying meaning, which has been connected with particular cultural contexts; the Qurʾān's use of this idiom is notably unique and, for believers, miraculous. Muslims therefore celebrate this unique and inimitable Qurʾān, and aspire to retain the authentic association of language, culture and faith (q.v.) so central to their lives.

The qurʾānic text in the prophet Muḥammad's lifetime

According to tradition, the Qurʾān was revealed piecemeal to the prophet Muḥammad in about twenty-three years (between 610 and 632 C.E.). It was orally received and memorized (see MEMORY), and some qurʾānic passages were probably written down by his literate Companions (see COMPANIONS OF THE PROPHET) on flat stones, shoulder blades, palm leaves, parchment and other materials (see CODICES OF THE QURʾĀN; LITERACY). Although qurʾānic passages of different lengths were revealed intermittently — frequently with specific reference or in response to particular circumstances and events — and were thus not necessarily intended or taken as continuing where the previously revealed text had left off (see OCCASIONS OF REVELATION; CHRONOLOGY AND THE QURʾĀN), it was the prophet Muḥammad who — according to tradition — instructed the early believers as to the proper placement of these passages in the larger (and growing) oral text that would become the holy scripture of Islam. By the end of Muḥammad's life in 10/632, the Qurʾān had 114 sūras ranging from the shortest — with three verses (Q 103, 108, and 110) — to the longest, with 286 verses (Q 2). Muslim tradition says that Muḥammad designated the position of every verse but one (Q 4:176), since that verse was revealed just before his death. His Companions chose the place for this verse based upon its meaning, context, and style (see Draz, *Introduction,* 15, n. 3).

The qurʾānic text after the prophet Muḥammad's death

When the oral Qurʾān was later "collected" by the Prophet's Companions in "book" form in ca. 28/650, the 114 sūras were arranged largely according to size, and not according to the chronological order of revelation; the longer sūras were placed first and the shorter ones followed in a generally descending order of length. The notable exception to this arrangement is Q 1, Sūrat al-Fātiḥa ("The Opening"), which, although it has only seven verses, was placed at the beginning of the qurʾānic codex. According to Muslim tradition, copies of the Qurʾān have normally been disseminated in this form since its initial collection (one revisionist theory of the collection and compilation of the Qurʾān is provided by John Wansbrough, who, in his *Qurʾānic studies,* argues that the Qurʾān did not attain its current form until about the end of the second/eighth and beginning of the third/ninth century; see COLLECTION OF THE QURʾĀN; MUṢḤAF).

One should keep in mind the originally oral character of the Qurʾān and the amount of time that elapsed before each of its sūras, especially the longer ones, were revealed in their entirety. Hence, it is necessary to look at the literary structures of the sūras (q.v.) to discover how each forms a unit, canonically constituting one chapter. Some pre-modern Muslim exegetes (see EXEGESIS OF THE QURʾĀN: CLASSICAL AND MEDIEVAL) examined these structures, and offered theories of *nazm* (lit. "order") highlighting the verbal organization of the sūra's wording with regard to its syntax and rhetorical figures of speech (see RHETORIC OF THE QURʾĀN); others offered theories of *munāsaba* or *tanāsub* (lit. "relationship") about the linear relatedness of verses (q.v.) within the sūra, or even of one sūra and the next. But the treatment of the sūra as a unit was not really broached by Muslim scholars until the twentieth century, notably by Amīn Aḥsan Iṣlāḥī (1906-97) and Sayyid Quṭb (1906-66).

The sūra *as a unit*

In his *Tadabbur-i Qurʾān* (1967-80), Amīn Aḥsan Iṣlāḥī concentrates on the semantic

and thematic content of the sūra as a coherent unit. He finds that, semantically, the sūras are linked in complementary pairs and that the Qurʾān contains seven groups of sūras, each with a block of Meccan sūras and a block of Medinan ones, which deal, respectively, with theoretical and practical aspects of the block's theme. Iṣlāḥī's concept is insightful, if a little too schematized, but it does not give literary structures their due place in generating and conveying the meaning of the qurʾānic sūras in his systematized scheme.

In his *Fī zilāl al-Qurʾān* (1952-9), Sayyid Quṭb focuses on the coherent unity of each sūra — mostly with regard to its semantic and thematic qualities — but he does identify structural characteristics related to its diction, syntax, imagery and phonology that reflect the intended meaning and mood of the sūra. He finds that each sūra has a core or central point, a theme that he calls its *miḥwar* (lit. its "axis"), around which it revolves. In his view, the sūra may have one topic *(mawḍūʿ)* tightly bound to its theme or it may have more topics so bound; the theme may sometimes be double-lined (as in long *sūra*s), but each line *(khaṭṭ)* of the theme is then strongly bound to the other. For example, Sayyid Quṭb believes that Q 2 has a double-lined theme whose two lines are strongly bound together. The first thematic line revolves around the hostile attitude of the Jews (see JEWS AND JUDAISM) to Islam in Medina (q.v.) and their friendly relations with the Arabian polytheists and hypocrites (see HYPOCRITES AND HYPOCRISY). The second thematic line revolves around the corresponding attitude of the Muslims in Medina and their growth as a believing community prepared to carry the responsibility of God's call after Jewish rejection. Both lines are complementary and tightly bound together throughout the sūra, which eventually ends as it began: by exhorting (see EXHORTATIONS) human beings to belief in God (see BELIEF AND UNBELIEF), his prophets, his scriptures (see BOOK; SCRIPTURE AND THE QURʾĀN) and the metaphysical unseen world (see HIDDEN AND THE HIDDEN). From beginning to end, the several topics of the sūra are related to this double-lined theme.

In all circumstances, Sayyid Quṭb believes each sūra has a special atmosphere *(jaww)* integrating its topic or topics harmoniously and a musical rhythm *(īqāʿ mūsīqī)* consonant with its topic or topics. He maintains that both *jaww* and *īqāʿ mūsīqī* strengthen the effective delivery of its intended meaning. The aesthetic effects of the Qurʾān's literary structures are discussed at some length by Sayyid Quṭb in his books *al-Taṣwīr al-fannī fī l-Qurʾān* (1945) and *Mashāhid al-qiyāma fī l-Qurʾān* (1947), where he gives a detailed view of the manner in which the structures generate the intended meaning and deliver it with verbal beauty and psychological power.

Some Western scholars, on the other hand, have criticized the Qurʾān because they perceived it as lacking in certain literary virtues. None other than T. Nöldeke stated "dass der gesunde Sprachsinn der Araber sie fast ganz davor beewahrt hat, die eigentlichen Selsamkeiten und Schwächen der Koransprache nachzuahmen" (Zur Sprache, 22; Fr. trans. "Le bon sens linguistique des Arabes les a presque entièrement préservés de l'imitation des étrangetés et faiblesses propres à la langue du Coran," in id., *Remarques critiques,* 34). Thomas Carlyle (cf. Arberrry, *Koran,* i, 12), no mean admirer of the prophet Muḥammad as a hero, thought of the Qurʾān as "toilsome reading" and considered it to be "a wearisome, confused jumble, crude, incondite." R.A. Nicholson (cf. Arberry, *Koran,* ii, 9) referred to European readers of the Qurʾān who held that "it is obscure, tiresome, uninteresting; a farrago of

long-winded narratives and prosaic exhortations." W. Montgomery Watt (Watt-Bell, *Introduction,* 73) spoke of "disjointedness" as "a real characteristic of Qurʾānic style."

Yet Mohammed Marmaduke Pickthall, the first modern British Muslim to make an English translation of the Qurʾān (which he did not call "The Qurʾān," but pointedly entitled *The meaning of the glorious Koran* and subtitled "An explanatory translation") refers to the Qurʾān in his foreword as "that inimitable symphony, the very sounds of which move men to tears and ecstasy." Another Englishman, Arthur J. Arberry, who also translated the Qurʾān into English, offered his translation as only *The Koran interpreted* and devised "rhythmic patterns and sequence-groupings" in it to reflect certain aspects of its literary structures in Arabic. Although in his introduction Arberry admits (*Koran,* i, 24) that it is "a poor copy of the glittering splendour of the original," he later says that each "*sūra* will now be seen to be a unity within itself, and the Koran will be recognized as a simple revelation, self-consistent to the highest degree" (*Koran,* ii, 15-6). More recently, the works of Angelika Neuwirth have focused on the literary merit and integrity of whole sūras (cf. e.g. Neuwirth, Zur Struktur der Yūsuf-Sure; see also N. Robinson, *Discovering the Qurʾān*).

The study of the qurʾānic sūra as a unit with coherent unity is still in need of focused, philological elaboration in modern scholarship. With the possible exception of the German school of qurʾānic studies, the analytical tools and categories for such research, as well as the relevant technical methods and terminology, need to be developed and established, as has been achieved — however dissonantly — with the study of other scriptures and of other literary genres. Such a study will help better understand not only the sūra and its literary structures, but also — ultimately — the whole Qurʾān as a holy scripture with a singular message. The study of the macrostructure of the Qurʾān should build on the conclusions of studying its microstructures as manifested in the sūra and its individual, componential pericopes (see NARRATIVES; for an example of the contemporary German scholarship on the macro- and microstructures of the Qurʾān, see the *EQ* articles by Angelika Neuwirth, esp. SŪRAS; FORM AND STRUCTURE OF THE QURʾĀN; RHETORIC OF THE QURʾĀN).

The prose of the Qurʾān

As Arabic is the language of the Qurʾān, its use in a variety of literary forms should be closely examined. To be noted first and foremost is the fact that the qurʾānic text is written in prose. It is a very special kind of prose, to be sure, and it is unique in many ways; but it is definitely prose and not verse. Classical Arabic verse has regular meter and recurring rhyme as two of its basic features, which are partly responsible for its symmetry and harmony. These features are clear in the long tradition of the Arabic *qaṣīda,* the ode. The prose of the qurʾānic text, on the other hand, is not at all metrical; furthermore, its rhyme is neither regular nor constantly based on an identical rhyme-letter as in classical Arabic verse. It is often replaced by assonance, and, sometimes, completely ignored.

Muslim scholars have been reluctant to call the prose of the qurʾānic text *sajʿ,* "rhymed prose" (q.v.), possibly because this term is associated with the prose pronouncements of pagan priests and the prose utterances of fortune-tellers (see FORETELLING; DIVINATION) or soothsayers (q.v.) in pre-Islamic Arabia (see also POETRY AND POETS), as well as with the prose of later Arabic writings in Islamic history characterized by a degree of artificiality or mannerism. The term *sajʿ,* how-

ever, is not appropriate mainly because not all of the qurʾānic text is written in rhymed prose. Muslim scholars prefer to designate the prose of the qurʾānic text as one divided into *fawāṣil,* "rhetorical periods" (singular *fāṣila*). Each period in the text contains a semantic-grammatical unit forming an *āya,* "a verse," usually ending with rhyme or assonance echoing the rhyme or assonance of other verses in the proximate textual neighborhood. Sometimes, however, a rhetorical period ends without such rhyme or assonance.

An *āya* may be short and can consist of as few as one word (e.g. Q 69:1; 101:1) or even a couple of "mysterious letters" (q.v.) at the beginning of certain sūras (e.g. Q 20:1; 36:1). It may also be quite long and consist of as many as fifty words or more. When the *āyāt* are short, the effect of the rhymes or assonances in the text is powerful because, given their proximity to one another, they continue to ring in the immediate memory of the reader or listener and instill the meaning with persistence. When, however, the *āyāt* are long, the effect of the rhymes or assonances as such is less powerful on account of the distance between one and the next, thus possibly allowing for them to fade in the immediate memory; in these instances, however, their effect is usually reinforced through their inclusion within a brief rhyming phrase or clause tagged to the end of the *āya* as a coda, a device which can serve to remind the reader or listener of the preceding statement, pressing it home, and clinching the argument of the *āya*.

A few examples will suffice to demonstrate the nature of rhyme or assonance in both the short and long verses of the Qurʾān. Some examples of the short verses are as follows: 1. After the *basmala* (q.v.), Q 112 (in full) reads: (1) *qul huwa llāhu aḥad* (2) *Allāhu l-ṣamad* (3) *lam yalid wa-lam yūlad* (4) *wa-lam yakun lahu kufuwan aḥad*. Here the rhyme is *-ad*. To be noted is the fact that the final inflection of the rhyme-word is disregarded lest the rhyme be broken; otherwise, the final words would not rhyme and would read, respectively: *aḥadun, l-ṣamadu, yūlad,* and *aḥadun*. 2. Verses 9-11 of Q 93 read: (9) *fa-ammā l-yatīma fa-lā taqhar* (10) *wa-ammā l-sāʾila fa-lā tanhar* (11) *wa-ammā bi-niʿmati rabbika fa-ḥaddith*. Here the rhyme of verses 9 and 10 is *-ar* but it is ignored in verse 11. Examples of long verses are as follows: 1. Q 2:143 has forty-five words, ending with the coda *inna llāha bi-l-nāsi la-raʾūfun raḥīm,* the rhyme of which is *-īm,* echoing the majority of the other rhymes in the sūra, which consist of *-īm* and of the assonantal *-īn* and *-ūn*. There are, however, verses in this sūra that end in *-īr* (Q 2:148) or *-āb* (Q 2:165-6), or *-ār* (Q 2:167), as well as other consonantal endings, in which the rhyme or assonance of the majority of the verses of the sūra is ignored. 2. In the same sūra, verse Q 2:255 has fifty words and ends with the coda *wa-huwa l-ʿaliyyu l-ʿaẓīm*. The verse that follows, Q 2:256, which consists of twenty-four words, ends with the coda *wa-llāhu samīʿun ʿalīm*. Both verses rhyme in *-īm,* echoing most of the other rhymes and assonances in the sūra, and the coda in each reinforces and clinches the argument of the *āya*.

From the above, it can be observed that the verses of the qurʾānic text are of various lengths. In the longer sūras, the verses are usually long and in the shorter sūras they are usually short, but this is not an invariant rule. Even within a single sūra, the verses vary in length. Although they tend to be of a fairly similar length, they are not necessarily equal in length nor are they composed of parallel and corresponding syllables, as in metrical composition with prosodic feet, to produce the exact symmetry of versification. Nonetheless, the prose of the qurʾānic text has a certain rhythm to it, which varies from sūra to sūra

and even within one sūra, particularly if it is a long one. This rhythm is not that of a fixed meter but that of a unique composition that allows the topic at hand to qualify it and modify its cadences, using verses of varying lengths, mostly with rhymes or assonances and sometimes without. The topic of the sūra may gradually unfold different aspects of its major theme, and the verses of the sūra may accordingly have a different rhyme-letter for each aspect, especially in sūras of some length; but, again, this is not an invariant rule.

In sum, the prose of the Qurʾān is not totally rhymed prose, nor is it totally unrhymed free prose. It is a unique blend of both, with an important contribution by assonance, couched in a variety of short and long verses dispensed in sūras of various lengths. The different patterns of rhymes, assonances and free endings in the verses, as well as the different lengths and rhythms of these verses and the varying lengths of the sūras themselves, are all literary structures related to the meaning offered. In the final analysis, they comprise an essential element of the effective delivery of the total message of the Qurʾān.

Phonology

From the Arabic text of the Qurʾān, it is obvious that sound plays a major role in the effect its words produce, an effect that a translation of the Qurʾān into other languages fails to preserve, despite the best efforts of the translators. Arthur J. Arberry made a genuine effort in his English translation of the Qurʾān "to devise rhythmic patterns and sequence-groupings in correspondence with what the Arabic presents." Despite his commendable effort, he admits that, in the end, his interpretation is a poor echo of the original, as noted above.

The sound of Arabic words in the Qurʾān is an important element of literary structure in producing a rhetorical medium that delivers the meaning effectively. This element functions at different levels. At the level of vocabulary, there is what rhetoricians would come to describe as the "eloquence of the single word" *(faṣāḥat al-mufrad):* the individual words in the Qurʾān consist of letters that flow harmoniously without tongue-twisting difficulties or ear-jarring sounds, each word agreeing with common usage and the morphological rules of Arabic. These later rhetoricians also noted the "eloquence of composition" *(faṣāḥat al-murakkab)* with regards to the wording of individual verses: the order of words is such that their phonemes flow with ease from one word to the next in pronunciation and are aurally perceived with a pleasant sensation. Meanwhile, the construction follows the rules of correct syntax, allowing variations that cater to the rhetorical intention and effectiveness of semantic delivery. At the level of passages consisting of shorter or longer sequences within a sūra, the verses of varying lengths are threaded together by rhymes and assonances, their rhythms varying according to their topics and modulated according to their moods in order to produce maximum effect. At the level of the whole Qurʾān, which consists of short, middle-sized and long sūras, the total message leaves a phonological and semantic impression that is considered absolutely sublime and that has often been said to go beyond the exquisite harmony of music; this is "that inimitable symphony" according to Marmaduke Pickthall. Muslim rhetoricians have called this unique composition of the Qurʾān *nazm al-Qurʾān* (lit. "the order of the Qurʾān"), a reference to the beautiful fusion of its wording and meaning in accordance with principles of grammar, rhetoric, and phonology, briefly outlined above. Considering the Qurʾān's divine provenance to be a matter of faith and deeming its content transcendent and

its composition unique, Muslim theologians have considered it to be the prophet Muḥammad's miracle and declared it to be beyond human ability to imitate. By the early part of the third/ninth century, they developed the doctrine of *iʿjāz al-Qurʾān,* literally, the Qurʾān's incapacitation (of humans and jinn [q.v.]), but technically denoting the miraculously inimitable character of the Qurʾān. According to the theologians, the doctrine that human beings and jinn are incapable of imitating the Qurʾān has been proven by their continuing inability to meet its clear challenge to them to do so (Q 10:38; 11:13; 17:88; see Boullata, Rhetorical interpretation, 149-57).

Transtextuality

As in music, repetition plays an essential role in any literary text of poetic effectiveness. In the Qurʾān, it takes the form of repeated rhythms, rhymes, assonances, refrains, patterns of structure and variations on the same theme. It is meant to inculcate the qurʾānic message with power while employing a sublime language that seizes the heart and mind — without being enthralling or entrancing in the pejorative, incantatory sense of enslaving comprehension, spiritual absorption, and meaningful reaction.

Transtextuality allows several kinds of repetition, whereby a usage with strong associations of meaning in one part of the Qurʾān is encountered in another part or in other parts of it with echoes of the earlier usage, either at the intratextual level of the same sūra or at the intertextual level of all the sūras. Two obvious examples of refrains may be used to demonstrate this repetition at the intratextual level. The refrains are repeated several times, with a stronger effect each time as the text builds to a climax. The first example is Q 55, a sūra consisting of seventy-eight short verses, of which thirty are a refrain asking the rhetorical question: "Which then of the favors (see GRACE; BLESSING) of your lord (q.v.) will you two deny?" The first instance of this refrain occurs after verse 12, and appears thereafter following every verse or two; after verse 44, the refrain alternates with every verse until the end of the sūra. The sūra enumerates the bounties of God to the two kinds of creatures: human beings and jinn (see CREATION). It mentions God's creation of humankind, the jinn, the orderly universe and the world (see COSMOLOGY) with its wonders, blessings, gifts, bounties, and benefits that are granted to all out of his mercy (q.v.). One of these blessings is God's teaching of the Qurʾān. On the day of judgment (see LAST JUDGMENT), all creatures will be rewarded or punished according to their deeds (see GOOD DEEDS; EVIL DEEDS; RECORD OF HUMAN ACTIONS). The sūra describes the physical features of the reward and punishment (q.v.), leaving no excuse for anyone to deny the prior favors of the lord, which are incrementally stressed throughout the sūra, culminating in the climax, with the thirty repetitions of the rhetorical question.

The other example of refrains recurring throughout a single sūra is found in Q 77, which consists of fifty short verses, ten of which are a refrain in the form of a threat: "Woe on that day to those who deny" (see LIE; GRATITUDE AND INGRATITUDE). The day in question is *yawm al-faṣl,* "the day of decision," on which the physical features of the world will collapse and all creatures will be brought before God for judgment (see APOCALYPSE). The sūra begins with a succession of enigmatic oaths (q.v.) assuring everyone that what has been promised will indeed occur. Then it proceeds to a frightening description of the universe as it collapses. Creatures are reminded that God had created them and the world's benefits for them. They are reminded that

God had destroyed the evil-doers of yore (see GENERATIONS) and will punish all sinners (see SIN, MAJOR AND MINOR), whose tricks will not avail against them nor protect them from the blazing flames (see FIRE; HELL AND HELLFIRE). Meanwhile, the righteous will dwell amid shades and fountains, eating fruits and consuming and drinking what they desire, in just reward for their pious lives (see GARDEN; PARADISE; FOOD AND DRINK; PIETY). God's favors and his promised punishment throughout the sūra are punctuated by the repeated threat of woe to those who, on that day of decision, deny the truth of God's power, but will not be permitted to speak and excuse themselves. The repeated threats serve to highlight the fearful punishment and, in contrast, the blissful joy of reward (see JOY AND MISERY; HOPE).

Repetitions in the form of refrains like these two examples do not occur elsewhere in the qurʾānic text. There are, however, other kinds of repetition in the form of words or turns of phrase that are too many to enumerate, which contribute to that specific quality of the qurʾānic style, giving it a particular tone. That which was called coda above, namely a maxim that comes at the end of a verse clinching its purport, is an example of such a repetition, a refrain that occurs in the Qurʾān at both the intratextual and the intertextual levels. An example of such a coda is *wa-huwa l-ʿazīzu l-ḥakīm,* "And he is the mighty, the wise" (Q 29:42). This also occurs without the definite article but usually with *Allāh* ("God") instead of the pronoun *huwa* ("he"), as in Q 5:38: *wa-llāhu ʿazīzun ḥakīm,* "And God is mighty, wise." This coda occurs about forty times in the Qurʾān. Variations — with a different attribute of God (see GOD AND HIS ATTRIBUTES) — also occur, such as Q 44:42: *innahu huwa l-ʿazīzu l-raḥīm,* "Verily, he is the mighty, the merciful," or Q 67:2: *wa-huwa l-ʿazīzu l-ghafūr,* "And he is the mighty, the forgiving" (see FORGIVENESS). Among the many other codas is the one found in Q 2:20: *inna llāha ʿalā kulli shayʾin qadīr,* "Verily, God is powerful over everything," which also occurs without *inna* ("verily") and begins with *wa* ("and"), as in Q 2:284: *wa-llāhu ʿalā kulli shayʾin qadīr,* "And God is powerful over everything." The pronoun *huwa* or *hu* may also be substituted for *Allāh,* as in Q 30:50 and Q 41:39, respectively. This coda occurs about thirty times in the Qurʾān.

Another form of repetition in the Qurʾān is the telling of punishment stories (q.v.), in each of which a messenger is sent by God to a certain people to teach them, to turn them away from their evil deeds and to warn (see WARNER) them against God's punishment if they do not heed. When they persist in their evil ways, God's punishment is visited upon them in a variety of terrible ways. Such is the story of the messenger Hūd (q.v.) sent to the Arabian pre-Islamic group of people called ʿĀd (q.v.). Likewise, it is the story of the messenger Ṣāliḥ (q.v.) sent to a certain people of ancient Arabia called Thamūd (q.v.). Some of the stories have biblical equivalents, such as the story of the messenger Shuʿayb (q.v.) sent to the people of Midian (q.v.) or the story of Noah (q.v.) and his people or of Lot (q.v.) and his people or some aspects of the story of the prophet Moses (q.v.) and Pharaoh (q.v.). Q 26 contains a group of these punishment stories, some of which are repeated with variations in Q 54, Q 7, Q 11, Q 51, and elsewhere. Not only is the pattern of events in these stories generally parallel, but the wording is often similar, sometimes even identical in certain parts of the story (see Welch, Formulaic features). The oral nature of the original qurʾānic message is very evident in these stories, repeated in a variety of similar ways to suit different audiences in the Prophet's lifetime. Their purpose, then and later, is to

warn and threaten unbelievers, to convince them of the power of God and the certainty of his punishment, and to reassure those who believe in God and accept Muḥammad's message that he is truly God's messenger sent to the world as a warner and a bearer of good tidings (see GOOD NEWS) about a new religion and a new societal order. The rhetoric of thematic and verbal repetition in the stories inculcates this purpose strongly and helps instill the meaning effectively.

Imagery and figurative language

Metaphors (see METAPHOR) and other figures of speech abound in the Qurʾān. As in the scriptures of other world religions and in the literatures of all nations, figurative language is used to enhance the effect of what is said by making it beautiful, impressive, aesthetically striking, and semantically powerful. It persuades through literary devices that stir the imagination and appeal directly to the senses. On this count, the Qurʾān often offers dramatic uses of figurative language in its literary structures, as well as original and daring insights of unforgettable aesthetic and semantic effect.

There is much in the Qurʾān that continues to adhere to the literal usage of the Arabic language, that is, the use of words for what they have commonly been used to designate. Yet, as in other languages, there are some words whose figurative usage has become so common as to be accepted as normal literal usage. English words like leg, neck, and eye, which originally refer to parts of humans or animals, are no longer considered metaphorical when used in such expressions as "the leg of a table," "the neck of a bottle" and "the eye of a needle." In a similar manner, the Arabic word *sharīʿa,* which originally refers to a path leading to water sought for drinking, has come to refer metaphorically to religious law, as attested in Q 45:18 (see LAW AND THE QURʾĀN). This religious law is — if obeyed — the path leading to the quenching of spiritual thirst and the preservation of societal health and well-being, hence the connection of *sharīʿa* referring to Islamic law. Another similar qurʾānic use is the Arabic word *fatra,* which originally meant tepidity, but has been commonly used to mean interval of time between happenings; Q 5:19 reads: *qad jāʾakum rasūlunā yubayyinu lakum ʿalā fatratin min al-rusuli,* "Our messenger has come to you to make things clear to you after an interval between the messengers." Here *fatra* may also effectively be read — as originally intended in Arabic — to mean tepidity. The qurʾānic statement can then be understood as saying: "Our messenger has come to you to make things clear to you after the tepidity of [people's faith in earlier] messengers" (for further discussion, see Abu-Deeb, Studies in the *majāz*). Aside from these matters, however, the Qurʾān has an amazing abundance of fresh and vivid images and figures of speech in its literary structures, an abundance that has made a perceptive modern literary critic and exegete like Sayyid Quṭb argue that what he calls *taṣwīr fannī,* "artistic imagery," is indeed the preferred style of the Qurʾān (see Boullata, Sayyid Quṭb's literary appreciation). Classical rhetoricians and exegetes of the Qurʾān writing in Arabic, like al-Jurjānī (d. 471/1078) and al-Zamakhsharī (d. 538/1144), among others, have long drawn particular attention to this inherent quality of imagery in the qurʾānic style.

The primary instance to be noted is the fact that the Qurʾān speaks of God in anthropomorphic language (see ANTHROPOMORPHISM). Although it says of God *laysa ka-mithlihi shayʾun* (Q 42:11), "Nothing is like unto him," it speaks of the "hand of God" (e.g. Q 3:73; 5:64; 48:10) and sometimes speaks of "his hand" (e.g. Q 23:88;

36:83; see HAND[S]). Muslim theologians have long discussed such wording and often differ — each according to his theological school — about the explanation. But it appears evident that, linguistically, there is figurative speech here, the word hand metonymically referring to God's power (see POWER AND IMPOTENCE). The same applies to the "eye of God," as in *li-tuṣnaʿa ʿalā ʿaynī* (Q 20:39), i.e. "that you [Moses] may be formed before my eye," metonymically meaning under God's protection and according to his will (see EYES). In the same manner, the Qurʾān ascribes attributes to God, such as mercy (q.v.), knowledge (see KNOWLEDGE AND LEARNING), hearing (see HEARING AND DEAFNESS), sight (see VISION AND BLINDNESS; SEEING AND HEARING), speech (q.v.), love (see LOVE AND AFFECTION), justice (see JUSTICE AND INJUSTICE), power, generosity (q.v.), forgiveness, oneness, wisdom (q.v.), glory (q.v.), greatness and so on. God is also said to have sat on the throne (*thumma stawā ʿalā l-ʿarsh,* Q 7:54; 10:3; 13:2; 25:59; 32:4; 57:4 and elsewhere), with the word "throne" taken to be a symbol (see SYMBOLIC IMAGERY) of his omnipotence and majesty (see THRONE OF GOD).

Likewise, the afterlife (see ESCHATOLOGY) is described in the Qurʾān in terms of physical pleasure in paradise and physical pain in hell, denoting, respectively, reward and punishment for deeds done on earth (q.v.) in this life, and fulfilling God's promise of reward and his threat of punishment elaborated in the Qurʾān. The material joys of paradise are concurrent with the spiritual satisfaction of being near God, experiencing eternal peace and bliss, and delighting in the beatitude of salvation (q.v.). The material sufferings of hell are concurrent with the spiritual affliction of being exiled from God's presence, the frustrating experience of eternal self-blame and regret, and the permanent agony of being condemned to the misery of damnation. Jewish and Christian literature have parallel details of the afterlife, but the qurʾānic image is, on the whole, *sui generis*. This image can be culled from different, scattered texts of various lengths in the Qurʾān, most of them found in the Meccan sūras. Each text concentrates on specific scenes from paradise or hell, or from both, usually presented in a contrastive way. Each text, with its different details, adds to the total picture of the afterlife. In his *Mashāhid al-qiyāma fī l-Qurʾān,* Sayyid Quṭb surveys 150 scenes taken from eighty sūras of the Qurʾān, sixty-three of them from the Meccan period and seventeen from the Medinan period.

Perhaps even more graphic is the qurʾānic image of the last day, the time when history comes to a climax: the universe is dismantled, the dead are resurrected (see DEATH AND THE DEAD; RESURRECTION), the last judgment occurs, and an eternity (q.v.) in paradise or hell begins for those consigned to either according to their deeds. What happens on this last day is described in ominous words such as in Q 82:1-5: "(1) When heaven is cleft asunder, (2) When the stars (*al-kawākib,* see PLANETS AND STARS) are dispersed, (3) When the seas are burst, (4) And when the tombs are laid open, (5) Each soul shall then know its former and latter deeds." Or, Q 81:1-14, "(1) When the sun is rolled up, (2) When the stars *(al-nujūm)* are darkened, (3) When the mountains are made to move, (4) When the ten-month pregnant she-camels are abandoned (see CAMEL), (5) When the wild beasts are herded together, (6) When the seas are made to seethe, (7) When the souls are united, (8) When the female infant buried alive (see CHILDREN; INFANTICIDE) is asked, (9) For what sin she was killed, (10) When the scrolls (q.v.) are spread out, (11) When heaven is stripped off, (12) When hell is set ablaze, (13) And

when paradise is brought near, (14) Each soul shall then know what it has produced." Of grammatical note in these qurʾānic passages is the fact that the main verbs are used in the passive voice and without mention of the specific doer of the action, or that they occur in the seventh or eighth morphological verbal form, forms which usually denote passivity. This structure increases the perception of the passivity of the universe at the end of time as it obeys an omnipotent God who does not even need to be mentioned as the doer because he is known to be the only one with commensurate power and authority to act at that cosmic scale.

There are several other qurʾānic passages with such ominous, eschatological and cataclysmic scenes foreshadowing humans being brought to account on the last day, the day of resurrection and the day of judgment. The event is heralded by a terrible shout (*ṣayḥa,* Q 36:53), a thunderclap (*ṣākhkha,* Q 80:33), one blast of a trumpet (Q 69:13: *nufikha fī l-ṣūri nafkhatun wāḥida*) or two blasts (Q 39:68: *nufikha fī l-ṣūri […] thumma nufikha fīhi ukhrā*), and other portents (as mentioned above). The Qurʾān often gives this day a special, alarming attribute such as *al-ḥāqqa* (Q 69:1) or *al-qāriʿa* (Q 101:1) or *yawm al-faṣl* (Q 77:13). In order to magnify the unknown and unexpected dread of the day, it immediately follows this attribute with a rhetorical question or double question, asked in awe-inspiring tones, as in Q 69:2-3, "What is *al-ḥāqqa?* And what shall make you know what *al-ḥāqqa* is?" or Q 101:2-3, "What is *al-qāriʿa?* And what shall make you know what *al-qāriʿa* is?" or Q 77:14, "And what shall make you know what *yawmu l-faṣl* is?" In a similar way, the Qurʾān gives hell other names, such as *saqar* (Q 74:26) or *al-ḥuṭama* (Q 104:4) and follows that name with a rhetorical question, asking as in Q 74:27, "And what shall make you know what *saqar* is?"; and Q 104:5, "And what shall make you know what *al-ḥuṭama* is?" A menacing description is then provided, with terrifying details.

Among the other qurʾānic names of hell are *al-jaḥīm* ("the hot place"), *al-saʿīr* ("the blaze"), *laẓā* ("flame"), and *al-nār* ("the fire"). These very names evoke the physical torment of the damned by fire and burning, hence the qurʾānic image of hell's inmates asking those in paradise for water but being denied it (Q 7:50). To drink, they are given boiling water like molten lead *(ka-l-muhli),* scalding their faces (Q 18:29), or they are given festering liquid pus *(māʾin ṣadīdin)* which they can hardly swallow (Q 14:16-7). They are given to eat from the *zaqqūm* tree, whose bitter fruits are like heads of devils (Q 37:62-5; see AGRICULTURE AND VEGETATION). They burn in hell but do not die or live, and they are not consumed; whenever their skins are seared, they are given fresh skins so that they may continue to be tormented (Q 4:56). Their torment reaches to their very souls and they wish they could ransom themselves with all their earthly possessions and they feel remorse within them on seeing their punishment (Q 10:54; see REPENTANCE AND PENANCE). They bite their hands in regret and wish they had chosen the messenger's way (Q 25:27). They wish they could return to the world and be believers (Q 26:102), and they cry for help to the lord to be let out in order to do righteous deeds, but they will not be helped, for they had been forewarned (Q 35:37).

In contrast, the eternal reward of the good and just people is a place of physical pleasure and spiritual bliss; it is *jannāt al-naʿīm* ("the gardens of delight") or *jannāt al-firdaws* ("the gardens of paradise") or simply *al-janna* ("the garden"). Through it, rivers flow (Q 5:119), rivers of unpolluted water, rivers of milk (q.v.) unchanging in flavor, rivers of delicious wine (q.v.), and

rivers of clear honey (q.v.; Q 47:15). The inmates recline with their spouses on couches in pleasant shades, enjoying fruits and whatever they call for (Q 36:56-57). They are adorned with bracelets of gold (q.v.) and wear green garments of silk (q.v.) and brocade (Q 18:31). They are served by immortal youths carrying goblets, ewers, and cups filled from a pure spring (see SPRINGS AND FOUNTAINS); and they do not have headaches by drinking therefrom, nor are they intoxicated (see INTOXICANTS). They eat fruits and the flesh of fowls as they desire. They have fair wide-eyed maids who are like well-preserved pearls (see HOURIS). No vain or sinful talk do they hear, but rather greetings of peace (Q 56:17-26; see GOSSIP). They experience no fear (q.v.) or sorrow (Q 7:49) and they are happy forever (Q 11:108). Their faces are radiant, looking toward their lord (Q 75:22-3); for they are the *muqarrabūn*, "those brought near" (Q 56:11), in the gardens of delight.

Although these contrasting images can be filled out with further details from other qurʾānic passages on the afterlife, they suffice here to give an idea of the impressive imagery of the Qurʾān. They demonstrate some of the most striking aspects of the imaginative power of the Arabic language to paint large scenes. The literary structures of the Qurʾān, however, also use this imaginative power to paint small scenes. This usage is found in many of the Qurʾān's similes (q.v.), metaphors, and figures of speech of every kind. A few examples should give an idea of the wide-ranging qurʾānic employment of such figurative language. The following is one of the complex similes: The futility of praying to false gods who never respond (see IDOLS AND IMAGES) is likened to a man who stretches out his open palms to scoop water to his mouth but cannot bring any water to it (Q 13:14). One of the metaphors utilizes an oath, swearing by the personified morning as it begins: *wa-l-ṣubḥi idhā tanaffasa* (Q 81:18), meaning, "And by morning when it breathes." The vivid expressiveness comes not from the mere personification of morning, but from the ascription of breathing to the rise of day, denoting the resumption of life and movement after night's stillness. Another example of a metaphor appears when Zechariah (q.v.; Zakariyyā) describes his old age. In Q 19:4, he is reported as saying, "And my head is ablaze with hoary hair" *(wa-shtaʿala l-raʾsu shayban)*. The spread of white hair on his head with advancing age is portrayed as the spread of fire, which may first begin with one or two sparks then grows inexorably into a flame. The image is made more striking by its grammatical construction: the head itself is the subject of burning, not the hoary hair, which is added as an accusative of specification.

In conclusion, it can be said that the Qurʾān utilizes a wide variety of literary devices to convey its message. In its original Arabic idiom, the individual components of the text — sūras and *āyāt* — employ phonetic and thematic structures that assist the audience's efforts to recall the message of the text. Whereas scholars of Arabic are largely agreed that the Qurʾān represents the standard by which other literary productions in Arabic are measured, believing Muslims maintain that the Qurʾān is inimitable with respect to both content and style (see LITERATURE AND THE QURʾĀN). From a linguistic standpoint, moreover, an understanding of the harmony within and between the Qurʾān's literary structures will be further enhanced by continuing study of macro and micro units of the text.

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Literature and the Qurʾān

This article deals with two main topics: the Qurʾān as literature, which focuses on the literary aspects of the Qurʾān, and the Qurʾān in literature, which focuses on the use of the Qurʾān in various Islamic literatures: Arabic, Persian, Urdu, Punjabi, and Malay. For further and more comprehensive discussion of the utilization of the Qurʾān in various non-Arabic Islamic literatures, see the articles SOUTH ASIAN LITERATURE AND THE QURʾĀN; SOUTHEAST ASIAN LITERATURE AND THE QURʾĀN; TURKISH LITERATURE AND THE QURʾĀN; PERSIAN LITERATURE AND THE QURʾĀN; AFRICAN LITERATURE.

Qurʾān as literature

The literary study of the Qurʾān focuses on how the Qurʾān uses its form, i.e. its language, style, and structure (see LANGUAGE AND STYLE OF THE QURʾĀN; FORM AND STRUCTURE OF THE QURʾĀN) to convey its message or content, i.e. its worldview, values and norms (see ETHICS AND THE

QURʾĀN). The emphasis in such a study falls on the "how" rather than on the "what" of the qurʾānic presentation. The literary aspect of the Qurʾān has been, in one form or another, a subject of study since early times but generally the context of such treatment has been theological, confessional or didactic rather than literary (see THEOLOGY AND THE QURʾĀN). The starting point in most such works on this topic is the challenge that the Qurʾān issues to the disbelievers, namely, to produce a work like the Qurʾān if they doubt its divine origin (see INIMITABILITY; REVELATION AND INSPIRATION; BOOK; WORD OF GOD). This approach is illustrated by the works of Abū Bakr al-Bāqillānī (d. 403/1012) and ʿAbd al-Qāhir al-Jurjānī (d. 471/1078) — *Iʿjāz al-Qurʾān* and *Dalāʾil al-iʿjāz,* respectively. Both al-Bāqillānī and al-Jurjānī seek to show that, as the word of God, the Qurʾān is inimitable and, since it cannot be replicated by any human being, in whole or in part, it constitutes a miracle (q.v.). As such, it is a proof (q.v.) of the authenticity of Muḥammad's prophecy (see PROPHETS AND PROPHETHOOD) and, consequently, of the religion of Islam. Such works do not, in principle, attempt to isolate the literary aspect of the Qurʾān for independent consideration. In 1939, Sayyid Quṭb (d. 1966) wrote that while works on the rhetorical aspect *(balāgha)* of the Qurʾān do indeed exist (see RHETORIC OF THE QURʾĀN), no independent literary, i.e. artistic, study of the Qurʾān exists "to this day" (Quṭb, Taṣwīr, i, 206). In recent years, the literary aspect of the Qurʾān has received greater attention. A significant work in this connection is *Literary structures of religious meaning in the Qurʾān,* edited by Issa Boullata (see LITERARY STRUCTURES OF THE QURʾĀN). As Boullata (*Literary structures,* x) points out in his introduction, literary structures include such diverse elements as "diction, phonology, morphology, syntax [see GRAMMAR AND THE QURʾĀN], rhythm, rhetoric, composition and style, in addition to matters related to tone, voice, orality [q.v.], imagery, symbolism [see SYMBOLIC IMAGERY; METAPHOR], allegory, genre, point of view, intertextuality, intratextual resonance and other literary aspects — all of which are set within a historic epistemology and cultural ambiance." In combination with one another, these elements produce "the total meaning which it (the Qurʾān) contains and which many generations have tried to comprehend" (ibid.).

Historically, the atomistic style of exegesis (see EXEGESIS OF THE QURʾĀN: CLASSICAL AND MEDIEVAL), which has dominated in qurʾānic studies, has militated against the development of a proper literary approach to the Qurʾān. In the atomistic approach, individual verses (q.v.) and verse segments become the focus of study, with little literary significance attached to the larger units of composition. Little wonder that this approach laid the Qurʾān open to the charge of disjointedness: the reader gets a strong impression that the Qurʾān moves from one subject to another quickly and arbitrarily, and perhaps without following any organizing principle. And it is no surprise that few studies of narrative — of plot, dialogue, characterization — in the Qurʾān consequently exist, for the very concept of narrative presupposes the existence of sustained presentation, which an atomistic approach does not allow (see NARRATIVES; MYTHS AND LEGENDS IN THE QURʾĀN).

One can argue that the charge of disjointedness against the Qurʾān is overstated. First, it obviously does not apply to many of the shorter sūras (q.v.; for example, to sūras 80-114), to a number of medium-sized sūras, and to many passages and sections in larger sūras. In many places, an easily identifiable principle of

composition is seen to impart unity to portions of the text, as in Q 56:7-44 and Q 37:72-148, where a brief opening statement in each case is followed by details. Second, a closer study of the Qur'ān can identify certain patterns of composition in it. Al-Zarkashī (d. 794/1391) has shown, for instance, that the Qur'ān follows certain rules of ordering with fair regularity. Thus, it nearly always mentions existence before nonexistence, the heavens (see HEAVEN AND SKY) before the earth (q.v.), place (see GEOGRAPHY; SPATIAL RELATIONS) before time (q.v.), darkness (q.v.) before light (q.v.) and night before day (see DAY AND NIGHT), hearing before sight (see SEEING AND HEARING), messenger (q.v.; *rasūl*) before prophet *(nabī)*, Jesus (q.v.) before Mary (q.v.), and the Meccan Emigrants before the Medinan Helpers (see EMIGRANTS AND HELPERS; see, for these and other details, Zarkashī, *Burhān,* iii, 233 f.). Rules are likewise respected in serial descriptions; Q 4:23-4, for example, lists, in order of increasingly distant relationships, the women a man is forbidden to marry (see PROHIBITED DEGREES). Third and most important, the Qur'ān, perhaps more than any other scripture, has a living context that is vital to understanding its message. This living context is comprised of the direct and immediate record of the life and struggle of Muḥammad (q.v.) and his followers in first/seventh-century Arabia (see PRE-ISLAMIC ARABIA AND THE QUR'ĀN), and, in many cases, includes, as background, unspoken assumptions, unstated questions and objections, unexpressed concerns, doubts, and reservations, knowledge of all of which was shared among the participants in a given situation (see OPPOSITION TO MUḤAMMAD; OCCASIONS OF REVELATION). Proper consideration of this living context shows that the Qur'ān possesses a high degree of coherence and continuity. It must also be noted that a number of modern scholars of the Qur'ān, Muslim and non-Muslim, have seen many patterns at work in the Qur'ān and have drawn attention to previously unnoticed compositional elements therein (see EXEGESIS OF THE QUR'ĀN: EARLY MODERN AND CONTEMPORARY; CONTEMPORARY CRITICAL PRACTICES AND THE QUR'ĀN).

Literary features

The Qur'ān has a rich repertoire of literary features, among the best known being rhymed prose (q.v.; *saj'*) and economy of expression, with its two subtypes of "ellipsis" *(ḥadhf)* and "terseness" *(ījāz)*. The rhythm of the Qur'ān is best appreciated when the Qur'ān is recited or chanted (see RECITATION OF THE QUR'ĀN). In the pages that follow, we will review selected literary features of the Qur'ān, to see how they are used to convey, enhance and set off its meaning-content.

Words. Individual words used in many places in the Qur'ān turn out, on closer examination, to have special significance in the contexts in which they occur. The prophet Jonah (q.v.), convinced that the people of Nineveh would never believe, decides to leave the city. The word used to describe his departure is *abaqa* (Q 37:140), a word which is typically used in Arabic for a runaway slave (see SLAVES AND SLAVERY). Jonah is no slave. But then he is indeed one — God's (see SERVANT). Being in the service of God, Jonah ought not to have decided on his own to quit prophesying but should have waited for God's command. The use of *abaqa* for Jonah, thus, transforms his departure from a simple physical act to one that is fraught with moral implications. Again, the city of Medina (q.v.), which is almost invariably so called in the Qur'ān, is designated by its pre-emigration name, Yathrib, only once, in Q 33:13. This is significant because in that verse the call "O people of Yathrib" is made by those

who would desert the ranks of the Muslims at a time of crisis, hoping that Islam would soon be wiped out and that Medina would revert to its earlier pagan status and to its pre-Islamic name, Yathrib (see HYPOCRITES AND HYPOCRISY; POLYTHEISM AND ATHEISM; IDOLATRY AND IDOLATERS). The use of "Yathrib" in Q 33:13, thus, graphically portrays the mentality of a certain group of people at a crucial juncture in the early history of Islam.

Two words used for the same object or phenomenon in the Qur'ān each appear to have contextual relevance. *ʿAṣā,* the general word for a rod (q.v.), occurs when the referent is the staff of Moses (q.v.; as in Q 2:60 and 7:117). But the word for an old man's staff is *minsaʾa,* and it is a *minsaʾa* on which Solomon (q.v.) leans just before his death (Q 34:14), the word indicating, without any further help from the context, that Solomon died an old man. Similarly, Q 10:5 uses the word *ḍiyāʾ,* which denotes bright light and also heat, for sunlight, but the word *nūr,* which is more general, for moonlight (see SUN; MOON).

In a large number of cases, sets of two or more words acquire their full meaning only when they are seen in a dialectical relationship with each other (see PAIRS AND PAIRING). An obvious category of examples is that of the divine attributes, of which one example should suffice (see GOD AND HIS ATTRIBUTES). Many verses speak of God as being powerful *(ʿazīz)* and wise *(ḥakīm):* since he is wise, he does not abuse his might; since he is mighty, his is not ineffectual wisdom (q.v.; see also POWER AND IMPOTENCE). A complementary relationship thus comes to exist between the attributes of *ʿazīz* and *ḥakīm*. On a higher level, the Qur'ān sometimes uses several words for one essential meaning — except that each word has a different nuance. A most interesting example occurs in Q 7:198. In describing expertly crafted idols (see IDOLS AND IMAGES) that look quite real, this verse employs three words for the verb "to see": *wa-tarāhum yanẓurūna ilayka wa-hum lā yubṣirūna* (see VISION AND BLINDNESS). A detailed analysis of the highly complex relationship between the three words — *raʾā, naẓara,* and *abṣara* — is not possible here, though a tentative English translation, "And you *notice* that they are *looking* at you, but they do not *see*," might suggest the degree of complexity.

In view of its concern with nuance, one can expect to find wordplay in the Qur'ān. Q 12:70 has an extended play on the word *saraqa,* "to steal" (see THEFT): Joseph's brothers are "accused" of stealing the king's cup (see CUPS AND VESSELS) but are, in fact, being accused of having "stolen" Joseph (q.v.) away from his father. In a similar manner, Q 2:61 plays on the word *miṣr,* which means both a "city" (q.v.) and "Egypt" (q.v.). Thus, Moses, unhappy at the wandering Israelites' (see CHILDREN OF ISRAEL; JEWS AND JUDAISM) demand for the good food to which they were accustomed in Egypt, says: "Go into some *miṣr* and you shall have what you have asked for!" As an indefinite noun, *miṣr* means "city," but as a diptote it is the name of the country, Egypt. The use of *miṣr* in the verse draws a contrast between the simple food eaten in the freedom of desert life and the more elegant food eaten in a state of servility in Egypt and, thus, the Israelites' demand is put in a political and moral context.

Imagery. Sayyid Quṭb (d. 1966) has argued that the distinctive literary feature of the Qur'ān is its ability to picture abstractions. A fine example is Q 24:35, the Light Verse, which states at the outset that God is the light of the heavens and the earth, then proceeds to give details of that light in terms of a similitude. Other examples of this phenomenon are found in the many passages that give graphic details of the cataclysmic last hour and have a truly epi-

cal quality (e.g. Q 39:67; 69:13-8; 82:1-4; see APOCALYPSE; LAST JUDGMENT). The frequent occurrence of similes, metaphors and parables in the Qurʾān gives evidence of the Qurʾān's tendency to create vivid imagery.

Although many of the qurʾānic similes are drawn from the everyday life of the Arabs (q.v.) and from the environment familiar to them, the contexts in which they appear radically change their function and quality. The Arabs had seen tree-stumps being blown around by a strong wind but they must have been struck by the description of the rebellious people of ʿĀd (q.v.) being destroyed by a fierce wind, their dead bodies drifting about "as if they were stumps of hollow date-palms" (Q 69:7; see also 54:20; see AIR AND WIND; PUNISHMENT STORIES). Q 54:7 depicts a scene of the last day, where human beings, raised from the dead (see DEATH AND THE DEAD) and in a state of confusion, are "as if they were locusts scattered all over" (cf. Q 101:4: "like moths scattered all around"). The mountains, which today seem immovable, will, on the last day, float around "like carded wool" (Q 101:5; see also 70:9). Q 29:41 says that those who rely on someone other than God rely on the spider's web — "the weakest of houses."

The metaphors of the Qurʾān, like its similes, use images that were familiar to the Arabs but acquire new significations in the Qurʾān. Q 2:187 calls husband and wife "garments" to each other, implying, on the one hand, that marriage protects one's chastity (q.v.), and, on the other, admonishing the marriage partners to remain faithful to each other (see MARRIAGE AND DIVORCE). And since the Arabs engaged in trade and commerce, several metaphors involving the notions of buying, selling, and giving a loan hark back to this context (e.g. Q 2:16, 141, 245; 9:111; 35:29; 57:11; see SELLING AND BUYING; DEBT; MARKETS).

Qurʾānic parables usually illustrate key ideas of the Qurʾān. There is a variety of such parables, which are often signaled by a phrase like "The parable of [such-and-such a person] is…." We may take as an example Q 2:17-8, which describes the attitude of those who refuse to accept the guidance they have been looking for when it is presented to them — ironically missing the opportunity for which they have been looking: "Their parable is that of a man who kindled a fire (q.v.); when it had lit up the surrounding area, God took away their light, leaving them in layers of darkness, unable to see as they are. Deaf (see HEARING AND DEAFNESS), dumb, blind — so they shall not return!" Q 2:264-5 makes the point that only acts of charity done to win God's pleasure will be rewarded in the hereafter (see ESCHATOLOGY; REWARD AND PUNISHMENT; GOOD DEEDS): condescension toward or harm of the recipient of a favor will wipe out a charitable act, just as the dust on a rock is wiped clean by rain, whereas charitable acts done in a true spirit of piety will grow, just as a garden on a height will grow and prosper even if it gets a drizzle.

Parallelism, chiasmus, and epanados. Various kinds of emphasis are produced through parallelism, which has an ABA'B' structure (as in Q 11:24: those who are blind and those who are deaf/those possessed of sight and those able to hear; see also Q 20:118-9; 28:73). Emphasis is also produced through chiasmus or reverse parallelism, which has an ABB'A' structure (as in Q 40:58: those who are blind and those who are sighted/those who believe [see BELIEF AND UNBELIEF] and do good deeds and those who do evil deeds [q.v.]). Some of these arrangements are quite elaborate and complex, as in Q 35:19-22, where parallel and chiastic structures interpenetrate. In the story of Joseph in the twelfth sūra, the plot is constructed on the principle of

chiasmus; as Mustansir Mir (The qur'ānic story of Joseph) has shown, the first half of the sūra builds a series of tensions which are then resolved in reverse order in the second half. In *epanados,* one returns to the idea with which one started *(reditus ad propositum),* highlighting, on the one hand, the importance of the reiterated idea and, on the other hand, the interconnectedness of the materials enclosed between the two occurrences of the idea. Q 17:22-39, thus, begins and ends with the prohibition of setting up false deities; and Q 23:1-11 enumerates a number of qualities of the true believers — those who will "achieve success" — the passage underscoring the importance of the prayer (q.v.) ritual by referring to it at the beginning (Q 23:2) and toward the end (Q 23:9; cf. a similar emphasis on prayer in the large section of Q 2:163-238, where prayer is mentioned at the beginning, in Q 2:177 and at the end, in Q 2:238).

Other devices. We will briefly note several other devices used in the Qur'ān, giving one example of each and indicating the purpose it serves in its context. Q 2:51 accuses all of the Israelites of worshipping the calf (see CALF OF GOLD) when only some of them had done so. This substitution of the whole for a part *(synecdoche)* underscores the principle of collective responsibility. God sends down rain from the skies but Q 45:5 says that God sends down *rizq,* "sustenance": by substituting effect for cause *(metonymy),* the verse focuses our attention on the actual products of the rainwater we consume, eliciting from us a response of gratitude (see GRATITUDE AND INGRATITUDE; BLESSING; GRACE). Q 4:102 asks the embattled Muslims to "take their guard *(ḥidhr)* and their weapons *(asliḥa)*." The verb for "take," *akhadha,* applies literally to "weapons," but only metaphorically to "guard." The use of one verb in two senses *(syllepsis)* indicates that the best way to take one's guard in a situation of war (q.v.) is to have one's weapons ready. Q 9:62, using the singular pronoun for God and Muḥammad when one would expect the dual, deliberately violates grammar for effect *(enallage),* implying that, in order to please God, the believers must first please his messenger by obeying him, for to obey Muḥammad is to obey God (see OBEDIENCE). Q 21:89-90 says that God granted Zechariah's (q.v.) prayer for a son, even though Zechariah was very old and his wife was sterile: "We granted his prayer and gave him John (see JOHN THE BAPTIST), and we made his wife fertile for him." The sequence, one feels, should have been: We granted his prayer; we made his wife fertile for him; and [having done so] we gave him John. The reversal of the expected sequence *(hysteron proteron)* in the verse suggests immediacy: Zechariah's prayer was granted without any delay at all, so much so that the detail itself, "We made his wife fertile for him," was not allowed to intervene between the prayer and its acceptance. In many verses, a series of divine attributes is presented without the use of the conjunction "and" *(wa),* as in Q 59:23: "He, God, is the one other than whom there is no god: King, possessor of glory, [source of] peace, giver of security, protector, mighty, dominant, proud." Such an omission of the conjunction *(asyndeton)* serves to emphasize the unity or integrality of all the divine attributes and their simultaneous existence in the same deity — and, by thus negating division or distribution of the attributes among several deities, to reinforce the doctrine of monotheism. In Q 21:63, Abraham (q.v.), tongue in cheek, rejects the charge of demolishing the idols of the temple, imputing the act to the chief idol, whom he had spared, and suggesting that the temple custodians ask the broken idols about the matter. This affirmation through denial *(apophasis)* enables him to

checkmate his opponents, for he means to drive home the point that a dumb piece of rock does not deserve to be deified.

Irony. Irony is created through a contrast between appearance and reality, for example, between a situation as it is or might develop and the situation as it appears to someone. In tempting Adam and Eve (q.v.) in the garden (q.v.) of Eden, Satan (see DEVIL) suggests to them that the fruit of the forbidden tree could transform them into angels but that God would not like them to become angels; hence the prohibition to eat of the tree (Q 7:20). But the angels have already bowed (see BOWING AND PROSTRATION) before man (Q 2:30-4) and acknowledged his supremacy, so that man's attempt to become an angel (q.v.) constitutes a descent, not an ascent, on his part (see FALL OF MAN). In the story of the People of the Garden (Q 68:17-33), the rich but niggardly owners of the orchard, upon seeing their orchard destroyed, think that they must have arrived at someone else's orchard, and so they exclaim, "We have lost our way!" (*innā la-ḍāllūna,* Q 68:26). But they do not realize that they have lost their way not in the literal sense but in the figurative — moral — sense. Upon realizing that it is their own orchard they have reached after all, they say that they are *maḥrūmūn* (Q 68:27), that is, deprived of the produce, not realizing that they have been deprived of God's blessings in this world and the next. The qur'ānic story of Joseph (Q 12), like the biblical, offers a dramatization of the thesis that God's purposes are inexorably fulfilled and irony is one of the principal means of establishing that thesis (see Mir, Irony in the Qur'ān).

Characterization and dialogue. Very few of the persons mentioned or referred to in the Qur'ān are actually named. In almost all cases, however, they are distinctive enough to be recognizable. The qur'ānic Moses is, of course, unmistakable, but so is the unnamed man who comes rushing in from the far end of the city to inform Moses of the Egyptians' plot to kill him (Q 28:20). The qur'ānic Joseph is easily recognizable but so is the unnamed Egyptian noblewoman who tries to seduce him (Q 12:23). A few points about characterization in the Qur'ān may be noted (comparisons with characterization in the Bible will be fruitful). First, there is very little physical description. This absence indicates that such detail is not a crucial element of character: people must not be judged on their appearance but on the strength of their deeds (cf. Q 49:13: "The noblest of you in the sight of God is the most pious one of you"; see PIETY). Second, the Qur'ān does not recount the day-to-day events and happenings in the lives of its characters, whom we encounter only at decisive moments when, through their speech or action, they reveal their true selves, or provide significant clues about their views, attitudes, and inclinations, and help us "place" them. Third, there are not only individual but also collective characters in the Qur'ān. In many places (e.g. in Q 11, "Hūd"), the Qur'ān speaks of small or large groups of people, even nations, as if they were a single personality speaking or acting in unison. Thus, in a dialogue, a prophet might be represented as addressing a number of courtiers or nobles who speak and act as if they were a single entity. The implication, of course, is that the view held in common, or the action done in concert, is more important than the individuality of the characters. Even in these cases, however, the group *qua* group is usually seen to have its distinctive identity. Thus, Joseph's brothers (in Q 12), the magicians of Pharaoh (q.v.; Q 7:113-26; 20:65-73; 26:41-51), and the People of the Garden (Q 68:17-32) have clearly identifiable personalities. Fourth, just as there are groups that look like individuals, so there are individuals

who represent types. It is true that qur'ānic characters are, as a rule, presented within the general framework of the conflict between good and evil (q.v.), but they are not abstractions. Regardless of their moral alignment, most characters come across as men and women of flesh and blood and display traits that are very much human. And while many of the qur'ānic characters are either "good" or "bad," they can hardly be called flat — in the sense in which E.M. Forster famously used the term. Moses, quite obviously, is a multidimensional figure, as are Abraham, Joseph, the Queen of Sheba (see BILQĪS), and Pharaoh's magicians, who all undergo some kind of change and development with time. (On dialogue in the Qur'ān, see DIALOGUES.)

Taṣrīf *as a narrative principle. Taṣrīf,* a word used in the Qur'ān to denote the changing patterns of movement of the winds (Q 2:164; 45:5) and also the diverse modes of presentation of the qur'ānic message (*nuṣarrifu,* as in Q 6:65; and *ṣarrafnā,* in Q 17:41; 46:27), may be called a qur'ānic narrative principle. Typically, the Qur'ān does not present, for example, a story all in one place but breaks it up into several portions, relating different portions in different places, often with varying amounts and emphasis of detail, as they are needed and in accordance with the thematic exigencies of the sūras in which they occur. The Qur'ān does not tell a story for its own sake but in order to shed light on the theme under treatment in a particular sūra. In doing so, it eliminates chronology (see CHRONOLOGY AND THE QUR'ĀN) as an organizing principle in narration, replacing it with the principle of thematic coherence, a principle that determines which portion of a story will be narrated in what place. In other words, the story told in a given sūra is likely to be sūra-specific. A number of Western writers — among them Angelika Neuwirth, Anthony Johns, Neal Robinson and Matthias Zahniser (see bibliography) — have attempted to see qur'ānic sūras as unities or as possessing thematic and structural coherence.

Repetition. The Qur'ān appears to be repetitive in respect of both thematic substance and formal expression. Muslim scholars who have dealt with this phenomenon have concluded that repetition in the Qur'ān, whether in form or substance, is usually quite significant and purposeful. At a basic level, repetition serves to put emphasis on a point, catching an overflow of meaning, as in Q 19:42-5, where Abraham, imploring his father to abandon the worship of idols, utters *yā abati* ("O my dear father!") no fewer than four times, the repetition indicating his deep love and concern for the salvation (q.v.) of his father. Sometimes, repetition is used to insure a cumulative impact, as when a series of verses or sentences, beginning with the same word or words create a crescendo effect, leading to a climactic point (e.g. Q 7:195; 52:30-43). One or more phrases repeated two or more times, say, at the beginning of a series of passages, may serve as a frame for presenting an argument or making a comment. Q 26:104-90 relates the stories of five prophets — Noah (q.v.), Hūd (q.v.), Ṣāliḥ (q.v.), Lot (q.v.) and Shuʿayb (q.v.) — and their nations. All five passages in this section have an almost identical beginning. The repetition in this passage may appear to be formulaic but in fact it highlights (here and in many similar passages, e.g. Q 7:59-102) several things: that the many prophets sent by God all preached the same essential message; that each of these prophets was a member of the nation he addressed, so that the people, who knew him to be truthful and thus had little reason to reject his message, opposed him out of sheer stubbornness (see LIE; TRUTH; INSOLENCE AND OBSTINACY); that

although each prophet sought to rectify the evil peculiar to his nation, all of them began their preaching by calling their peoples to the correct faith (q.v.), which is the foundation of all good conduct; and that Muḥammad the prophet should not grieve at his rejection by the people of Mecca (q.v.), for just as God has punished the rebellious nations of those prophets, so he will punish the Meccans if they continue to oppose him. The formal identity of expression in the several parts of the passage thus conveys a complex set of meanings.

At times the Qurʾān employs refrain. A celebrated example occurs in Q 55, where the verse "Which of the blessings of God will you, then, deny?" occurs no fewer than thirty-one times. According to Amīn Aḥsan Iṣlāḥī (1906-97), this sūra was revealed in Mecca at a time when Muḥammad's opponents adamantly refused to accept the Qurʾān, defiantly asking for the punishment with which they were threatened in case they disbelieved. The sūra, accordingly, uses the refrain to force their attention. As Iṣlāḥī puts it: "This stylistic feature of repeatedly drawing someone's attention to something is, of course, used only when the addressee is either so stubborn that he is unwilling to accept what goes against his wishes, or so obtuse that he cannot be expected to see reason unless he is held by the scruff of his neck and forced to pay attention to every single thing" (Iṣlāḥī, *Tadabbur-i Qurʾān,* vii, 119). In other words, the refrain in Q 55 serves to bring into relief the particular mentality of the Meccan disbelievers at a certain stage of Muḥammad's ministry. Iṣlāḥī notes that Q 54 was revealed in a similar set of circumstances, and that it, too, has a refrain ("How were my punishment and my threat?" see id., *Tadabbur-i Qurʾān,* vii, 119).

The classical works on the Qurʾān are important aids to understanding the Qurʾān. Yet, from an artistic or literary point of view, they have certain limitations; the principal one being that, in these works, the literary study of the Qurʾān rarely achieves independence of theological considerations. In this respect, the study of the Qurʾān as literature in the modern sense of the term is in its beginning stages. Such study will definitely be helped by insights gleaned from the study of the Bible as literature, though the differences between the two scriptures will require that each be approached essentially on its own terms (see SCRIPTURE AND THE QURʾĀN). The field of the literary study of the Qurʾān holds considerable promise and is one in which cooperation between Muslim and Western scholars can be quite fruitful.

Qurʾān in literature

There is no doubt that the Qurʾān exerted a tremendous influence on various Islamic literatures, just as it did in other areas of artistic and intellectual activity in Islamic civilization. Its influence on Arabic literature in particular was, as expected, the earliest, but also the most intensive and enduring: Arabic, after all, was the language in which the Qurʾān was revealed. But as Islam moved beyond its initial area of dissemination, both in the first centuries of its expansion but also in subsequent periods of commercial, military and missionary activity, the Qurʾān interacted with numerous linguistic and literary cultures.

Qurʾān in Arabic literature

Although Arabic, as a language and a literary tradition, was quite well developed by the time of Muḥammad's prophetic activity, it was only after the emergence of Islam, with its founding scripture in Arabic, that the language reached its utmost capacity of expression, and the literature its highest point of complexity and sophistication. Indeed, it probably is no

exaggeration to say that the Qurʾān was one of the most conspicuous forces in the making of classical and post-classical Arabic literature.

According to the Muslim scholars (both of the Qurʾān and of literature), the use of the Qurʾān in literature is to be clearly distinguished from the "imitation" of the Qurʾān, *muʿāraḍa,* deemed to be beyond the capability of human beings. Comparing the two phenomena, the literary scholar al-Thaʿālibī (d. 429/1039) has the following to say in the theoretical introduction to the earliest and most comprehensive book on the subject, his *al-Iqtibās min al-Qurʾān al-karīm* (Thaʿālibī, *Iqtibās,* i, 37-9; see also Gilliot, Un florilège coranique). He first dwells on the idea of the Qurʾān as God's most beautiful and majestic speech (q.v.) whose revelation sent shock waves among the eloquent Arabs of the time and made them admit humbly of its superiority, of their inability to produce anything like it, and hence of its being the Prophet's miracle — like Moses' rod and Jesus' ability to heal the sick and raise the dead. Understandably, he concludes, anyone who tried to imitate the Qurʾān after the spread of Islam failed; what people could do was "to borrow" from it (*iqtibās,* as in the book's title). Consequently, according to al-Thaʿālibī, whereas imitation of the Qurʾān was a breach of the distinctive status of the Qurʾān and the Prophet, unfeasible and foolish, borrowing from the Qurʾān protected the Qurʾān's and the Prophet's distinguished status, and was therefore both feasible and wise. It adorned the litterateurs' speech, beautified it, and made it more eloquent, elevated, and sublime. Thaʿālibī offers this as an explanation for the borrowing from the Qurʾān that was widely practiced by all involved in the various branches of literary expression, both oral and written, up until his own day.

Al-Thaʿālibī — writing in the late fourth/early eleventh century — was not only in favor of qurʾānic borrowing in literature but also completely oblivious to the issue of its legitimacy. Before him, only two religious scholars had expressed their aversion to it: al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī (d. 110/728; see Qalqashandī, *Ṣubḥ,* i, 190) and al-Bāqillānī (d. 403/1012; see Zarkashī, *Burhān,* i, 483). Later, however (possibly as late as the eighth/fourteenth century), the question of the legitimacy of qurʾānic borrowing became a subject of discussion in the works of scholars of the Qurʾān, literature, and rhetoric (see Zarkashī, *Burhān,* i, 481-5; Suyūṭī, *Itqān,* i, 147-9; Qalqashandī, *Ṣubḥ,* i, 190-1; Macdonald/Bonebakker, Iḳtibās, 1092). Significantly, though, almost all of these scholars noted that, with the exception of the Mālikīs, the vast majority of the scholars found qurʾānic borrowing either permissible or commendable. While these authors themselves did not object to the *principle* of mixing the sacred (see SANCTITY AND THE SACRED) with the profane (q.v.), they examined and regulated its *suitability:* there were places where such usage could be considered befitting, and hence would be acceptable (e.g. in sermons, speeches, testaments); not unbefitting, and hence permissible (e.g. in love poetry, letters, stories); and unbefitting, and hence impermissible (e.g. in jest, vulgarity and profanity; and cf. Thaʿālibī, *Iqtibās,* chap. 16). In these judgments they seem to have been guided by matters of precedence and historical reality. For the scholars could not deny the numerous reports that the Prophet and some of his most venerable Companions (see COMPANIONS OF THE PROPHET) had used qurʾānic citations in their speech/ḥadīth (see ḤADĪTH AND THE QURʾĀN), as well as the fact that borrowing from the Qurʾān in literature was very widespread in the works of litterateurs, among them some of the most pious and strict religious scholars, such as al-Shāfiʿī (d. 204/820) and

ʿAbd al-Qāhir al-Baghdādī (d. 429/1037). All of this confirms — as is alluded to by al-Suyūṭī (d. 911/1505; *Itqān,* i, 147, l. 11-2) — that the theoretical discussion of the legitimacy of qurʾānic borrowing is a late phenomenon and that before that time the Qurʾān was used freely in literature.

What the scholars meant exactly by "borrowing" can be gleaned from the terms they used to describe this phenomenon. The first two terms which we encounter are rather peculiar and seemingly negative: they are *sariqa,* "theft or plagiarism" — as in the title of ʿAbdallāh b. Yaḥyā b. Kunāsa's (d. 207/822) now lost book, *al-Kumayt's [d. 126/744] thefts [*sariqāt*] from the Qurʾān* (Ibn al-Nadīm, 77/70-1/i, 155) — and *ikhtilās,* "theft or misappropriation" — as in al-Hamdānī's (d. 334/945) description of Bishr b. Abī Kubār al-Balawī's (d. after 202/817) Qurʾān-studded letters (Hamdānī, *Ṣifāt,* 86). The context of these terms, however, indicates that they meant something positive like "plucking" — a kind of stealthy, unexpected appropriation of qurʾānic materials which takes the readers/listeners (pleasantly) by surprise. After the fourth/tenth century, the terms for qurʾānic borrowing become more clearly neutral and more or less standardized: *intizāʿ,* "extraction," *taḍmīn,* "insertion" (a word taken over from the insertion of poetry or proverbs in prose), *iqtibās,* "borrowing," *ʿaqd* (used for the Qurʾān in poetry only), also *istishhād,* "citation," *talwīḥ/talmīḥ,* "allusion," *ishāra,* "reference," in addition to two more words which mean "extraction": *istinbāṭ* and *istikhrāj* (Tawḥīdī, *Baṣāʾir,* ii, 230; Thaʿālibī, *Iqtibās,* i, 193; Zarkashī, *Burhān,* 483; Qalqashandī, *Ṣubḥ,* i, 189, 194, 197, 199, 200; Suyūṭī, *Itqān,* i, 147; Jomaih, *The use of the Qurʾān,* 1-2). As understood by Muslim scholars, then, qurʾānic borrowing in literature occurs when litterateurs extract some material from the Qurʾān and insert it skillfully into their literary products in the form of citation, reference, or allusion.

The use of the Qurʾān in Arabic literature began as early as the lifetime of the Prophet, for we know that some of the new poet-converts to Islam, ʿAbdallāh b. Rawāḥa (d. 8/629), Kaʿb b. Zuhayr (d. 26/645), and Ḥassān b. Thābit (d. 54/674), used it extensively in their poetry (Khan, *Vom Einfluss des Qurʾāns;* see POETRY AND POETS). As the Islamic community expanded, this use grew conspicuously and was undertaken not only by Muslims but also by non-Muslims, like the Christian Umayyad poet al-Akhṭal (d. 90/709) and the Sabian ʿAbbāsid prose writer Abū Hilāl al-Ṣābī (d. 384/994). This was unavoidable for a number of reasons: the Qurʾān was not only a powerful religious guide and companion in ritual for the believers but also an equally powerful literary text for all of the residents of the Islamic realm, believers and non-believers alike. Its text and script (see ARABIC SCRIPT; ARABIC LANGUAGE; COLLECTION OF THE QURʾĀN; CODICES OF THE QURʾĀN) were standardized early enough to make it reasonably accessible even to non-native speakers of Arabic. From the earliest times, professional Qurʾān reciters roamed the empire, teaching and transmitting it (see TEACHING AND PREACHING THE QURʾĀN). Teachers in the informal schools made it a primary item in their curricula; scholars established disciplines of learning to investigate each aspect of it (see TRADITIONAL DISCIPLINES OF QURʾĀNIC STUDY); and the supremacy of Arabic as the language of state, society and civilization made it practically impossible to escape its impact. Indeed, before the end of the Umayyad period (132/750), the Qurʾān was identified by the chief secretary of the central chancery, ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd al-Kātib (d. 132/750), as the first item in the required list of studies needed by the state's secretaries (al-Qāḍī, The

impact of the Qur'ān, 287), many of whom became leading figures of Arabic literature for centuries to come. This idea became rooted so deeply that it was repeated by scholars over and over again (see Qalqashandī, *Ṣubḥ*, i, 200-1). In the sixth/twelfth century a secretary to the Fāṭimids, Ibn al-Ṣayrafī (d. 542/1147), wrote an entire book entitled *Intizā'āt al-Qur'ān al-'azīm* (as yet unpublished) in which he listed the qur'ānic verses that could be used by the state's secretaries in the presentation of a multitude of topics. On another level, the Qur'ān seemed to be the only — or at least, the principal — factor of stability in the early, turbulent decades of Islam, when factionalism was rampant, there were conflicts galore and the search for the "true" Islam was taken very seriously in all the sectors of the community. This made the Qur'ān an indispensable reference for all those groups and, with that, it became an organic part of their consciousness. In addition, the Qur'ān — in this crucial formative period — was frequently memorized (see MEMORY), even when its study was accompanied by a written text, as indeed it still is today. This gave it, from the early days of Islam, a prominent mental presence in the minds of the people living in Islamic lands and it could not but become part of the literature they produced.

The main areas in which the Qur'ān exerted noticeable influence on Arabic literature are diction and themes; other areas are related to the literary aspects of the Qur'ān, particularly oaths (q.v.), metaphors, imagery, motifs, and symbols. As far as diction is concerned, one could say that qur'ānic words, idioms, and expressions, especially "loaded" and formulaic phrases, appear in practically all genres of literature and in such abundance that it is simply impossible to compile a full record of them (see SLOGANS FROM THE QUR'ĀN). For not only did the Qur'ān create an entirely new linguistic corpus to express its message, it also endowed old, pre-Islamic words with new meanings and it is these meanings that took root in the language and subsequently in the literature. Again, because in qur'ānic borrowing words can be taken out of their qur'ānic context, there are almost limitless contexts in which they may be used.

Qur'ānic themes also occur frequently in literature. Themes pertaining to God and his power/mercy (q.v.), to the Qur'ān with its many names (see NAMES OF THE QUR'ĀN), to prophethood and the stories of various prophets and messengers, to the relation of God to humans and of humans to God with various aspects, to the human condition from the Fall onward, to the Islamic experience and early history beginning with the mission of Muḥammad, and to many aspects of morality, ethics, law (see LAW AND THE QUR'ĀN), theology, cosmology (q.v.) and eschatology, are, among others, themes that many litterateurs used in their work. Such themes tended to occur in some genres more than others; one encounters them most frequently, for example, in elegies, self-praise, panegyric and its opposite, satire, and above all in ascetic, Ṣūfī and devotional literature (see ṢŪFISM AND THE QUR'ĀN).

The use of the literary aspects of the Qur'ān is more difficult to categorize: it could occur anywhere, sometimes in the most unexpected places, as in a poem on wine-drinking — hardly a positive activity in Islam (Zubaidi, The impact, 328; see WINE; INTOXICANTS). Other examples collected by Zubaidi (The impact, 325, 326, 334) indicate that images in literature derived from the Qur'ān can be coined through similes and metaphors as well as qur'ānic motifs, like the motif of exile from heaven, as in al-Farazdaq's (d. 110/728)

portrayal of himself after he had divorced his beloved wife: "She was my paradise (q.v.), from which I was exiled/Like Adam when he rebelled against his lord (q.v.; see also REBELLION)."

More frequently, qur'ānic characters with powerful symbolic values (like Joseph for beauty [q.v.], Abraham for faith, Pharaoh for persistence in disbelief, and so forth; see BELIEF AND UNBELIEF) are mentioned in literature to draw striking images of the ideas the litterateur wants to communicate. The most enduring of these symbolic characters is the devil, the arch-representative of disobedience and sin (see SIN, MAJOR AND MINOR), whose image is often portrayed vividly and in great detail in political and other literature, notably by ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd al-Kātib (see al-Qāḍī, The impact, 304-6).

Initially, the insertion of qur'ānic material in Arabic literature happened effortlessly and without any particular purpose in mind, as manifested by the poetry of the Prophet's contemporaries (mentioned above). With the passage of time — but still quite early — as the litterateurs became more aware of the Qur'ān's great potential, they drew upon it with both more consciousness and more sophistication. They began to use it out of piety, to beautify their literary products, to render them more witty, forceful and effective (particularly in sermons, speeches and political literature), or to make them more convincing to their audiences, especially when dealing with controversial issues that could benefit from divine sanction, like sectarian beliefs (see Jomaih, *The use of the Qur'ān,* loc. cit.). The letters of the second/eighth century prose writer Bishr al-Balawī (see below) are a shining example of the degree of sophistication and complexity that qur'ānic borrowing reached, as we find, for example, in a letter describing his delight at the addressee's promise to give him money, and then his despair when this promise was rescinded (al-Qāḍī, *Bishr ibn Abī Kubār,* 161):

… when I mentioned [my need to you], you brightened up like dawn, rejoicing as if at good news (cf. Q 80:38-9), and you promised "a fair promise" (Q 20:86). So I spent my pension on account of your brightening up, and I became liberal with my children on account of your rejoicing, and I borrowed from my friends on account of your promise. But when I came to you requesting fulfillment, you frowned and showed displeasure (cf. Q 74:22), then you turned away in pride (cf. Q 74:23). Now the money is gone, hope (q.v.) is cut off, and I have despaired of [attaining] my ambition "as the disbelievers have despaired of those who are in the graves" (Q 60:13).

The use of the Qur'ān for ideological purposes and for propaganda also occurred early due to historical circumstances and it still occurs today. Its use for social and political criticism resonates in many literary works and has lately become particularly conspicuous in modern Arabic literature, as in the politically scathing poems of the contemporary Egyptian poet Aḥmad Maṭar, where one reads, for example (*Lāfitāt,* 11):

I read in the Qur'ān:
"The power of Abū Lahab will perish." (Q 111:1)
The submission media declared:
"Silence is golden."
[But] I loved my poverty . . . [So] I continued to recite:
"And he will perish." (Q 111:1)
"His wealth and gains will not exempt him." (Q 111:2)
My throat was confiscated,
For incivility.

And the Qurʾān was confiscated,
Because it spurred me to [incite] trouble.

The way in which qurʾānic materials were used in both poetry and prose varied greatly from one author to another and within the works of a single author, sometimes even within a single piece (see al-Qāḍī, The limitations). Not infrequently, qurʾānic words, expressions, parts of *āya*s and full *āya*s are cited verbatim; and sometimes more than one of these elements are juxtaposed in a literary text and linked together with some sort of a conjunction. More frequently than not, such qurʾānic citations are inserted in the text without an explicit introduction or antecedent statement indicating that the Qurʾān is being used. Explicit indication, however, does occur sometimes, and sentences like "as God, may he be exalted, said in his book" signal the author's departure from his words to those of the Qurʾān.

Since literal citation is costly for litterateurs, in that it forces them to make both syntactical and stylistic accommodations to their texts (the poets had to deal with the additional restrictions of meter and rhyme), the litterateurs, more often than not, tended to modify or rephrase qurʾānic materials before inserting them into their texts. This gave them greater freedom in their selection of qurʾānic materials, and kept their own stylistic preferences intact, all the while enabling them to achieve what they wanted from qurʾānic borrowing. In fact, modified borrowing could give their text greater force since, with the source of their borrowed segments obscured, they could easily appropriate those segments and, skillfully blending them into their own texts, convey the impression that the segments' words were their own. And, since modified borrowing in one instance did not bar literal citation in another, it became quite usual in the works of versatile writers to mix both ways, even within a single work.

The techniques used by authors to modify qurʾānic materials are numerous and can be studied on the level of syntax and style (see al-Qāḍī, *Bishr ibn Abī Kubār,* 99-109; id., The impact, 289-307). On the level of syntax, authors made changes in person (first to third, or second to third) and number (plural to singular, and vice versa). They used pronouns for qurʾānic nouns when they needed, and replaced the nouns with verbs from the same root. A qurʾānic definite noun could become indefinite, and a phrase in the imperative mood could be changed to the indicative if the syntax required such a modification. Changes of qurʾānic materials dictated by style are a little more complex and their detection requires familiarity not only with the qurʾānic text but also with the writer's style. If the writer tends to use parallelism in his work, he is likely to resort to amplification, where he would take, for example, a two-word qurʾānic expression, break it up, bring a synonym for each word, then add a conjunction in the middle, thereby ending with a pair of parallel expressions. To amplification also belongs a technique called analogy, where the writer takes a qurʾānic expression, adds to it one or more parallel expressions of his own, thereby amplifying the text analogically. Conversely, an author may also resort to reduction when brevity is the goal, as in invocations, for example. Of the techniques of reduction, one could mention coining. This consists of the creation of single-word terms that are summations of whole qurʾānic phrases. Another technique, grammatical translation, consists of taking one or more qurʾānic *āya*s of a particular mood (e.g. imperative) and then "translating" them into words (e.g. He ordered…), thereby causing the qurʾānic statements to be reduced. On a simpler level, a writer could, for stylistic purposes,

use synonyms or antonyms for qur'ānic words, re-arrange words and expressions in the borrowed sentences, and consciously change the length of the borrowed or added segments so as to accord with the author's preferences in musical cadence.

Finally, the use of the Qur'ān in literature also took the form of allusion or reference, whereby a writer makes incidental mention of some qur'ānic material which is so well-known as to evoke clear and strong associations, like, for example, Abraham's fire (Q 21:68-71), Lot's wife (Q 66:10), Joseph's shirt (Q 12:18), Moses' rod (Q 2:60; 7:107, 117, 160; 26:32, 45, 63; 27:10; 28:31), Ṣāliḥ's she-camel (Q 7:73, 77; 11:64-5; 17:59; 26:155-7; 91:13-4), or the People of the Cave (*aṣḥāb al-kahf,* Q 18:9-26; see MEN OF THE CAVE). Since this technique requires minimal accommodation from the writer and at the same time allows him optimal benefit from the Qur'ān's presence in the text, it was used very frequently in literature, particularly in poetry.

The Qur'ān is used slightly differently in Arabic poetry than in Arabic prose. This is due to two differences between poetry and prose: genre and historical origin. With the exception of the relatively recent free verse, the generic restrictions of meter and rhyme in Arabic poetry limited qur'ānic borrowing quantitatively and qualitatively. In comparison with prose writers, who could introduce their borrowed materials by statements indicating their source (e.g. "as God, may he be exalted, said in his book…"), cite verbatim entire *āya*s no matter how long, and relate in detail entire qur'ānic narratives, poets had to limit the number of *āya*s on which they could draw, cut them short except in rare instances, depend heavily on various techniques of reformulation and give precedence to allusion and reference over citation and leisurely tracing. Consequently, while a prose piece could have most of its sentences drawn from qur'ānic materials, like many of the sermons of Ibn Nubāta (d. 374/984; see Canard, Ibn Nubāta), a poem comprised entirely of qur'ānic references is considered a noticeable aberration and could be judged flatly as "bad" (Tha'ālibī, *Iqtibās,* ii, 57).

Another factor in the greater latitude of Arabic prose in qur'ānic borrowing is that, at the rise of Islam, it had shallow roots in the pre-Islamic literary tradition — in contrast with poetry, which was deeply entrenched in that tradition: the highly stylized, complex, and sophisticated poetic form, the ode *(qaṣīda),* had an extremely important social function as it reflected the Arabs' environment, activities, beliefs, and value system. Thus, when the Qur'ān became a part of the Arabs' new world, prose fell almost completely under its spell. Poetry resisted — despite the Qur'ān's hostile attitude towards pagan poets and poetry (see Q 26:224-6). This tension is particularly notable since the Qur'ān did not offer itself as a poetic work to replace the old poetic tradition but was rather an inimitable divine revelation (see Q 21:5; 37:36-7; 52:30-1; 69:40-1). As a result, the ode as a mono-rhymed, dual hemstitched form and segmented structure survived and remained, with variations, the basic form of poetic expression in Arabic literature until modern times, allowing the Qur'ān to influence its diction, themes, powerful images, motifs and symbols. Prose, on the other hand, allowed the Qur'ān to influence, in addition to the above, its very form and structure, style and rhythm, even to the point of creating new genres in it.

In the area of form, the Qur'ān generally influenced Arabic literary prose, contrary to poetry. Like each of the Qur'ān's sūras, a typical prose piece would begin with the Qur'ān-based formula "in the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate," called the *basmala* (q.v.); indeed, prose

pieces lacking the *basmala* are considered *batrāʾ,* "clipped" or "docked," indicating imperfection. In epistolary prose — the most pervasive genre in Arabic literature until the modern period — in particular, this beginning is often followed, after naming the sender and the addressee, by another Qurʾān-based formula "I praise [before you] God other than whom there is no god," as attested from the first/seventh century in the papyri and elsewhere (see e.g. Becker, *Papyri,* 58, 62, 68, 92, 96, 100). Still another qurʾānic formula is found at the ends of most letters: "peace be upon you," or briefly "peace." In a way, perhaps not unlike qurʾānic sūras, Arabic prose displayed a great deal of formal variety within a recognizable unity. Genres as diverse as letters, treatises, testaments, sermons, invocations, and incantations exist, and works from each of these genres vary in length and complexity. Yet, each would be recognizable as a letter, treatise, testament, etc. Perhaps this is what explains a rather peculiar phenomenon in Arabic literary prose, namely that a piece of it — usually a short one — would be composed exclusively of one or more qurʾānic verses.

On the level of structure, prose pieces often betray specific qurʾānic influence in that they build upon a qurʾānic concept, phrase, or word and allow those elements to dictate their structure. One example is the letters or sermons which begin with the qurʾānic formula *al-ḥamdu li-llāh* (thanks/praise be to God) or, less frequently, the almost synonymous and equally qurʾānic *subḥāna llāh* (see GLORIFICATION OF GOD; LAUDATION). Such prose pieces tend to be cyclical in structure since each section (or cycle) begins with the same formula, followed by what God is being praised for (see ʿAbbās, *ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd*, 161-2; al-Qāḍī, The impact, 295-6). This kind of writing was developed in the early second/eighth century and was so distinct and potent that it was given the name *taḥmīd (te deum)* genre. Similarly, letters or testaments which begin with the qurʾānic concept *ūṣīka bi-taqwā llāh,* "I counsel you to fear God," tend to have a spiral structure, in the sense that they are composed of successive pieces of advice that end only when the author has completed his treatment of the virtues he wishes to advocate (see VIRTUES AND VICES, COMMANDING AND FORBIDDING). A third example consists of letters or proclamations that begin with qurʾānic concepts and phraseology to the effect that God chose Islam to be his religion. Such prose pieces normally have a carefully constructed three-part "sequential" structure, the first of which discusses pre-Muḥammadan human history, the second the mission of Muḥammad, while the third discusses the main topic of the piece.

Stylistically, the Qurʾān greatly influenced Arabic prose. It is conceivable that one of the most conspicuous features of Arabic prose, parallelism *(izdiwāj),* i.e. repeating one meaning in two or more phrases, goes back to qurʾānic influence. More certainly, the fairly frequent tendency of prose writers to use antithetical pairing *(taḍādd)* has its origin in the style of the Qurʾān, where opposites are often juxtaposed (e.g. good/evil; believers/non-believers). Probably even rhymed prose *(sajʿ),* whose use flourished in mid- and late medieval times but was never completely absent from prose in other periods, had its roots in the Qurʾān's style, too (see Heinrichs and Ben Abdesselem, Sadjʿ, 734-6). This matter is somewhat problematic since *sajʿ* was condemned by the Prophet. Because, however, this condemnation is linked to the utterances of the pre-Islamic pagan soothsayers (q.v.; *kuhhān*) and is thus deemed unsuitable for supplication (*duʿāʾ;* see Wensinck, *Concordance,* ii, 431), its use outside this sphere was taken, in varying degrees, to be acceptable. Such was especially the case as the Qurʾān,

by example, rendered it implicitly permissible. All of the stylistic features that have been mentioned serve the musical cadence of sentences, an area in which the Qurʾān excelled, particularly at the ends of *āyas*. And here, again, Arabic prose followed in the footsteps of the Qurʾān, making musical cadence a stylistic value after which it constantly strives.

Finally, there are some genres of prose whose very existence would have been inconceivable had the Qurʾān not been their guiding light, in particular that of the sermon, which is almost entirely dependent on qurʾānic ideas, formulations and stories of ancient peoples (see GENERATIONS). On another level, there are two Arabic literary works whose foundational principle lies deep in the qurʾānic vision of the day of judgment and the fate of people in heaven or hell (see HELL AND HELLFIRE); without this vision they could not have been written. These are Ibn Shuhayd's (d. 393/1003) *al-Tawābiʿ wa-l-zawābiʿ* and al-Maʿarrī's (d. 449/1057) *Risālat al-ghufrān,* both of which consist of imaginary journeys undertaken by their respective authors to the afterworld where they encounter litterateurs and scholars and ask them about their salvation or about their condemnation to hellfire, in addition to discussing with them matters of art, language and literature. Al-Maʿarrī's other work, *al-Fuṣūl wa-l-ghāyāt,* must also be mentioned among the works whose *raison d'être* is the Qurʾān. This book, whose very title, "The book of paragraphs and endings composed as an analogy of the verses and sūras [of the Qurʾān]," speaks of its indebtedness to the Qurʾān, is an ascetical piety work devoted to the praise of God and the poet's expression of fear of him and hope in his forgiveness (q.v.). It is actually written as an imitation of the styles of the Qurʾān. Last but not least, no study of the Qurʾān in Arabic literature is complete without a pause at the Yemeni second/eighth-century prose writer mentioned above, Bishr b. Abī Kubār al-Balawī, who was "famous for stealing/appropriating the Qurʾān" (Hamdānī, *Ṣifat,* 86). Although only seventeen of his letters have survived, it is clear that the Qurʾān is the overpowering force behind them, driving them in diction, style, images, symbols, word-, phrase- and sentence-order, and in both their internal and external structures. Indeed the Qurʾān governs the totality of each letter in its artistic imagination and internal movements, as well as its details. Indeed, at the hands of al-Balawī, the use of the Qurʾān in literature became an art unto itself.

Qurʾān in Persian literature

The Muslim conquest of Persia in the first/seventh century led to the rise of a new literature, produced in Arabic by the converts to Islam. But the Pahlavi literary tradition continued to exist and prosper. The attempt of Firdawsī (d. 411/1020) to avoid the use of Arabic words in his *Shāhnāma,* a poetical recounting of Sasanian history down to the Muslim conquest of Iran, represents the will to assert the independence of the native literary tradition rather than the rejection of Arabic literature — with the Qurʾān at its center — as an alien tradition. Niẓāmī (d. 605/1209) in his romance *Haft paykar,* "Seven beauties," deals with a similar theme — the life-story of the Sasanian ruler Bahrām Gūr — but his work, though it draws heavily on that of Firdawsī, contains many references and allusions to the Qurʾān.

The Qurʾān influenced Persian literature in several ways. The qurʾānic literary feature of *sajʿ,* "rhymed prose," influenced not only the stylized prefaces and introductions that the authors wrote for their works but, in varying degrees, the general style of authors, as well. The literary genre known

as "mirrors for princes" came to include a treatment of qurʾānic themes and characters. Since study and knowledge of the Qurʾān were an important part of classical Persian culture in the Islamic period and since this culture was shared between the secular and religious sectors of society, the ability, in conversation and writing, to cite appropriately from the Qurʾān and to recognize such citations came to be viewed as a mark of sound general education. Reference to the Qurʾān can be expected to occur in almost all genres of literature — and in almost any writer's work. Abū Naṣr Aḥmad b. Manṣūr Asadī (d. before 423/1041) invented the *munāẓara* ("debate") poem (see DEBATE AND DISPUTATION). In one such poem (Browne, *Literary history,* ii, 150-2), Night and Day each claim to be superior to the other, both presenting a series of arguments, many of them based on the Qurʾān. Night argues, for example, that it was at night that Muḥammad departed for his heavenly journey (Q 17:1) and that it is the Night of Power (q.v.; *laylat al-qadr*), that, in the Qurʾān, is deemed better than a thousand months (q.v.; Q 97:3). Day retorts that fasting (q.v.) is observed during the day (Q 2:187), that the Friday prayer (q.v.) is performed during the day (Q 62:9) and that resurrection (q.v.) will occur at daytime. ʿUmar al-Khayyām (d. before 530/1135) is not a particularly religious writer. Yet, in one of his quatrains (*Rubaiyyat,* 210, no. 379), he justifies wine-drinking by claiming to have found in the Qurʾān a "luminous verse" on wine *(bar-gird-i payāla āyatī rawshan ast),* and, in another (ibid., no. 381), compares the wine-cup to Noah's ark (q.v.), saying that it will save one from the storm of sorrow (*ṭūfān-i gham,* see JOY AND MISERY). To ʿUmar al-Khayyām is also attributed a satirical quatrain, quoted by Browne (*Literary history,* ii, 254), in which the apparently cryptic *bal hum* is, as Browne explains (ibid., n. 2), a reference to Q 7:179 (vs. 178 in Browne) and Q 25:46 (vs. 44 in Browne), a qurʾānic comment to the effect that a certain type of people are "like animals, or rather even more misguided."

It is, however, in Persian mystical poetry that the influence of the Qurʾān, in terms of both substance and language, is most evident. The *Manṭiq al-ṭayr* of Farīd al-Dīn ʿAṭṭār (513-627/1119-1230) takes its name from Q 27:16 and the birds of the story are guided in their search for their king, Simurgh, by the wise hoopoe — the bird mentioned in the same sūra (Q 27:20; ʿAṭṭār makes use of the unmistakable wordplay on the hoopoe's Arabic name, *hudhud,* and the qurʾānic concept of *hudā,* "guidance"). Saʿdī's *Majālis-i panjgāna,* "Five sessions," are studded with qurʾānic quotations. Ḥāfiẓ (d. 791 or 792/1389 or 1390), addressing himself, swears "by the Qurʾān you have preserved in your breast" to support his claim of having written exquisite poetry (*Dīwān,* 280). Indeed, his poetry contains not only easily identifiable qurʾānic phrases but also subtle allusions to qurʾānic events and characters. *Gar man ālūda dāmanam chi ʿajab/hama ʿālam gawāh-i ʿiṣmat-i ūʾst,* "What is the wonder if my hem is soiled [i.e. if I am seen to be guilty] — the whole world bears witness to his/her innocence!" (ibid., 36) is a verse that is clear in itself but is also a powerful appropriation of a qurʾānic incident: in Q 12, the innocent Joseph is framed and Potiphar's wife, Joseph's would-be seducer, is allowed to go scot-free. The allusion enables Ḥāfiẓ to imbue his verse with the ironic overtones present in the qurʾānic narration of the incident.

But it is, perhaps, Jalāl al-Dīn Rūmī's poetry that offers the most remarkable instance of the influence of the Qurʾān on Persian literature. Nicholson's index *(fihrist)*

of the qurʾānic verses that have been cited by Rūmī in his *Mathnawī* gives some idea of the Qurʾān's influence (*Mathnawī,* iv, 391-408). It is, however, not exhaustive, for Rūmī not only cites actual phrases and verses from the Qurʾān but also reworks them, gives a Persian rendition of them and makes subtle allusions to qurʾānic themes or characters. In the First Book *(daftar)* of the *Mathnawī* alone there are about two hundred explicit or implicit references to the Qurʾān, only a few of which we will note here. Emphasizing the need to surrender to God's will, Rūmī says: *ham-chu Ismāʿīl pīshash sar bi-nih,* "Lay down your head before [i.e. obey] God like Ishmael (q.v.)" (who willingly offered to be sacrificed by Abraham at God's behest; *Mathnawī,* i, 8; see Q 37:102-3). In one of the stories, the hare succeeds in ensnaring the mighty lion and then rushes off to inform the other animals: *sūi nakhchīran dawīd an shīr-gīr/kaʾbshirū yā qawmu idh jāʾa l-bashīr,* "That lion-catcher ran off to the animals, saying, 'Good news (q.v.) for you, my people, for one bearing good tidings has come' " (*Mathnawī,* i, 83). *Abshirū* is the greeting the people of heaven will receive (Q 41:30), whereas *idh jāʾa l-bashīru* evokes Q 12:96, wherein a harbinger informs Jacob (q.v.) in Canaan of the safety and well-being of his son Joseph in Egypt. Stressing the importance of listening over speaking, Rūmī first says that hearing is the proper path to speech and then writes an Arabic couplet, the first hemistich of which (*udkhulū l-abyāta min abwābihā/wa-ṭlubū l-aghrāḍa fī asbābihā,* "Enter houses by the door, and seek goals using the means proper to them") is a slightly modified version of Q 2:189, a verse criticizing certain pre-Islamic pilgrimage (q.v.) practices. Again, immortality is to be sought only through self-loss in God: *kullu shayʾin hālikun juz wajh-i ū/chūn naʾī dar wajh-i ū hastī majū,* "Everything is going to perish except his countenance; if you are not before his countenance, do not seek to have existence," a line clearly reliant on Q 28:88 (see FACE OF GOD). Rūmī keeps bringing his readers back to the Qurʾān, ensuring that their contact with the Qurʾān, whether on the level of thought or of language, is never broken. Not without reason did the poet ʿAbd al-Raḥmān Jāmī (d. 898-9/1492) call the *Mathnawī* the Qurʾān in Pahlavi.

Qurʾān in Urdu literature

Compared with Persian, Urdu is a young language, whose proper literary career did not start until the early eighteenth century. While it continued the historical legacy of the Perso-Arabic Islamic culture in India — it succeeded Persian as the court language of Mughal India — Urdu developed under certain peculiar circumstances. Unlike Persian, Urdu was strongly influenced in its formative phase by writings with a religious and moral orientation. In fact, the history of the development of Urdu as a language is closely linked with the history of Islamic reformism in India. Some of the figures in this broad reform movement whose writings contributed to the growth of Urdu as a literary language are the first translators of the Qurʾān into Urdu, Shāh Rafīʿ al-Dīn (1750-1818) and Shāh ʿAbd al-Qādir (1753-1813), who were sons of Shāh Walī Allāh al-Dihlawī (1703-73); Sayyid Aḥmad Khān (1837-98), the founder of the Aligarh Movement; Naẓīr Aḥmad (1831-1912), author of several edifying novels (one of these, *Tawbatuʾn-naṣūh,* takes its title from Q 66:8); and Alṭāf Ḥusayn Ḥālī (1837-1914), author of the powerful poem *Rise and ebb of Islam.* The writings of these authors reflect their preoccupation with Islamic, including qurʾānic, themes and motifs. There are, of course, writers in whose works such themes

and motifs receive a deliberately pronounced emphasis, as in the poetry of the eighteenth-century mystic Khwāja Mīr Dard (1721-1785), who is preoccupied with the transience of worldly existence and in the masterly prose of the twentieth-century reformist Abū l-Kalām Āzād, who frequently cites qur'ānic verses to support his arguments, inviting Muslims to base their thought and action on the Qur'ān.

References and allusions to the Qur'ān will, however, be encountered in all manner of Urdu literature. In Mīr Ḥasan's (d. 1786) *Siḥru l-bayān,* "The spellbinding story," one of the best known of the Urdu *mathnawī*s, the childless king is dissuaded from becoming a hermit by his courtiers who remind him of the qur'ānic injunction of *la taqnaṭū,* "Do not despair" (Q 39:53). In a *qaṣīda,* Sawdā showers praise on a ruler, saying that, compared with him, even Solomon would be dwarfed to an ant — an allusion to the story of Solomon and the ants in Q 27:18-9 (see ANIMAL LIFE). In a *ghazal,* Ibrāhīm Dhawq (1790-1854) says: "He who is not found to be a world-loving dog (q.v.) — the like of him will not be found among angels," which recalls Q 7:176. In another verse, he says that killing a tiger, lion or python is not as great a feat as is the killing of the *nafs-i ammāra* (the baser self that impels one to evil), to which allusion is made in Q 12:53. In his poetry, Ghālib (d. 1869) makes a number of allusions to the Qur'ān, most of them playful. In one place (*Dīwān,* 49), he says that one like him would have withstood the impact of the divine epiphany much better than Moses (according to Q 7:143, Moses fell down unconscious when, at his demand, God manifested himself on Mount Sinai; see SINAI), commenting wryly that a wine-drinker should be served only as much wine as he can take without losing his senses. He compares his dejection-filled heart to Joseph's dungeon — a reference to Q 12 (ibid., 9). One of his verses reads (ibid., 188): *waraq tamām hu'a awr madḥ bāqī hai/safīna chāhi'e is baḥr-i be-karān ke li'e,* "The sheet of paper is filled up, but there is still more praise to offer: a ship is needed to cross this boundless sea." This is a possible allusion to Q 31:27, according to which God could not be praised enough even if all the trees in the world were to become pens and all the seas were to become ink (see WRITING AND WRITING MATERIALS). In a few verses Ghālib cites portions of qur'ānic verses verbatim (e.g. ibid., 74, 214).

It is, however, Muḥammad Iqbāl's (d. 1938) poetry that bears the deepest imprint of the Qur'ān; this is true of Iqbāl's Persian as well as his Urdu poetry, but only the latter will be discussed here. Many of his verses appear to be adaptations of qur'ānic verses. For example, Iqbāl describes some of the qualities of a true Muslim in the following words (*Kulliyyāt,* 507): *ho halqah-i yārān to baresham ki tarah narm/razm-i ḥaq-o-bāṭil ho to fawlād hai mu'min,* "In the company of friends the believer is soft like silk (q.v.), but in the clash of truth and falsehood he is like steel." This instantly brings to mind Q 48:29. Alluding to Q 21:68-9, according to which Abraham was thrown into the fire by the king of his time (called Nimrod [q.v.] by tradition), Iqbāl points to the modern challenges to Islam, asking a question (ibid., 257): "Again there is a fire, there is Abraham's offspring, and Nimrod, too!/Is all of this meant to put someone to the test?" In a poem about Khiḍr (Ar. Khiḍr; the Islamic literary tradition gives this name to the man, referred to in Q 18:65, who was sent by God to initiate Moses into some of the mysteries of the divine administration of the universe; see KHAḌIR/KHIḌR), Iqbāl writes (*Kulliyyāt,* 256): *kashti-e miskīn-o jān-i pāk-o dīwār-i yatīm/*

ʿilm-i Mūsā bhī hai tere sāmne ḥayrat-firōsh, "The poor man's boat, the pure soul (q.v.), and the orphan's (see ORPHANS) wall! Even Moses' knowledge suffers from bewilderment before you." Here, the first hemistich, which consists of three two-word phrases, makes a compact reference to the three uncommon incidents which are narrated in Q 18:71-82, and which a surprised Moses witnessed in the company of Khiḍr. Iqbāl borrows or adapts from the Qurʾān a large number of terms and phrases, but these terms and phrases in his works are not, as they might have been in another writer's, embellishments, but are rather essential instruments of his thought. A full study of the impact of the Qurʾān on Iqbāl's poetry is yet to be made.

Qurʾān in Punjabi literature

Punjabi Ṣūfī literature shows definite signs of the influence of the Qurʾān. Addressing a wide but illiterate audience and using earthy language while drawing on scenes and events of daily life, Muslim mystics stress the need to worship God with a pure heart, live a simple, honest life, seek a wisdom higher than that found in dry books, shun empty ritualism (see RITUAL AND THE QUR'ĀN), abandon pride, greed and hypocrisy, and remember death and the day of judgment. These are broad Islamic themes but, in many instances, they have a definite qurʾānic basis, as a study of the works of major Ṣūfī poets will show. In a poem, Bullhe Shāh (d. 1172/1758) wonders why people are quarreling over God when God is closer to them than their jugular vein, a clear reference to Q 50:16 (see ARTERY AND VEIN). In more than one place, Bullhe Shāh says that all one needs to study is *alif,* the first letter of the Arabic alphabet and the first letter of the divine name, *Allāh.* This is a simple but dramatic way of highlighting the centrality of the doctrine of God in the Qurʾān — *Allāh* being, incidentally, the noun with the highest frequency in the Qurʾān. Implying that advice and guidance will be lost on a confirmed sinner, Sulṭān Bāhū (d. 1103/1691) says that rain will not benefit a stony heart, which reminds one of Q 2:264; and, again, that a stone is better than a heart that is forgetful of God, an obvious reference to Q 2:74. Bābā Farīd (569-665/1173-1266) says that one who has been misled by Satan will not listen even if words of wisdom and good counsel were shouted at him — a statement that brings to mind Q 2:17 (possibly also Q 7:175 and 58:19). Shāh Ḥusayn's (d. 1002/1593) frequent references to the transient nature of the world and of worldly pleasures are qurʾānic in their spirit. In a number of instances, Punjabi Ṣūfī poets cite short phrases from the Qurʾān, either in the original Arabic or in translation. A careful reader of these poets, especially of Sulṭān Bāhū, cannot fail to note the influence of the Qurʾān — both at the level of theme and at the level of language — on this literature.

Qurʾān in Malay literature

Islam arrived in the Malay world in the fourteenth century C.E. but, notwithstanding the works of a writer like the mystic Ḥamza Fansūrī (sixteenth-seventeenth centuries), Malay language and literature cannot be said to have been influenced by Islam or the Qurʾān in the same way as were some of the other Muslim languages and literatures. Like Malay society, Malay literature emphasizes uniformity and conventionality and tends to view assertion of individualism or originality and expression of spontaneous feeling as wayward and disruptive (anonymity of authorship is typical of classical Malay literature). This emphasis limited the stock of literary themes and devices available to a writer,

who was further limited by the social context of this literature. As essentially a palace literature, a literature of patronage, Malay writers depicted mostly the lives and exploits of rulers and aristocrats. The emphasis on conventionality also restricted the scope of foreign literary influence. Accordingly, classical Malay literature, even when it was influenced by Islam, largely retained its pre-Islamic thematic repertoire and structural framework. Thus, the well-known and predominant genre of prose romance called *ḥikāyat* continued to deal with the themes of the ancient Hindu epics. Even when heroes from Muslim history were introduced or substituted in stories, they were usually cast in the roles of familiar pre-Islamic figures, the *ḥikāyat* generally receiving only an Islamic varnishing. But instances of Islamic or qur'ānic influence on *ḥikāyat* literature do exist, as suggested by such titles as *Ḥikāyat Iblīs* and *Ḥikāyat nabī Yūsuf,* and — as clearly and significantly illustrated in the *Ḥikāyat mahārāja ʿAlī* — by the employment of qur'ānic terms, phrases and invocatory expressions (see EXHORTATIONS), by the treatment of such qur'ānic themes as God's ability to accomplish his purposes against all odds and the need for human beings to put their trust in God (see TRUST AND PATIENCE) and by the adaptive use of such qur'ānic stories as that of the prophet David (q.v.) and his wise son Solomon (Q 21:78-9) or that of Jesus' miraculous power to revive the dead (Q 3:49).

There is one other, and rather peculiar, way in which the Qur'ān influenced Malay literature. Classical Malay written literature, which no less than Malay oral literature was meant to be heard rather than read, acquired certain qualities associated with oral literature. Since Malay literature, in general, had to be chanted, the tradition of Qur'ān recitation, according to Sweeney (*Authors and audiences,* 32), gave a "definite Islamic flavor to the chant."

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Liturgical Calendar

see FESTIVALS AND COMMEMORATVE DAYS

Load or Burden

Something carried or borne, often with difficulty. The concept of load or burden appears in the Qurʾān approximately fifty times, in several forms, conveying a range of implications that can be classified as descriptive, metaphorical (see METAPHOR), and morally didactic.

As a term of physical description, variants of the radical *ḥ-m-l* frequently depict the load borne by animals such as cattle, donkeys and camels (Q 12:72; 16:7; 62:5; see CAMEL; ANIMAL LIFE); as the cargo aboard ships (q.v.; Q 23:22; 40:80) or related to natural elements such as clouds laden with rain (Q 51:2; see AIR AND WIND; NATURE AS SIGNS). It also applies, usually as the verbal noun *ḥaml,* to the bearing of children (q.v.; Q 7:189; 22:2; 65:6; see also BIOLOGY AS THE CREATION AND STAGES OF LIFE). Its usages, however, are not restricted to expressly material burdens, as, for example, angels (see ANGEL) are described as supporting the weight of the heavenly throne (Q 40:7; 69:17; see THRONE OF GOD).

As a metaphor, the Qurʾān may specify load or burden as a generalized onus, the significance of which depends on the

surrounding context. It alludes to the burdens *(awzār)* of war (q.v.; Q 47:4) or it contrasts two men, one who follows the straight path (see PATH OR WAY) while the other is a burden *(kall)* upon his master (Q 16:76; see SLAVES AND SLAVERY; CLIENTS AND CLIENTAGE). The term *iṣr* which occurs more rarely, refers at one point to the load placed by God upon those who accept his covenant (q.v.; Q 3:81) and elsewhere to the load that the Prophet will lift as a yoke, to relieve those who heed his message (Q 7:157). Another passage mentions the earth (q.v.) "throwing out its burdens" (*athqāl,* Q 99:2), an apocalyptic image which al-Bayḍāwī (d. ca. 700/1301; *Anwār,* ad loc.) interprets as the tombs yielding up their dead (see DEATH AND THE DEAD; APOCALYPSE). Likewise, the Qurʾān speaks of God opening up the breast (see HEART) of Muḥammad and "removing your burden which was breaking your back" (Q 94:2-3) which appears to indicate the anxious and vulnerable circumstances Muḥammad experienced at the outset of his mission in Mecca (q.v.; see also OPPOSITION TO MUḤAMMAD).

Finally, load or burden arises in a number of similar phrases that reflect a key teaching of the Qurʾān regarding the fundamental responsibility of each individual for his or her own moral and religious growth and integrity (see ETHICS AND THE QURʾĀN). The line "no one who carries a burden bears the load of another" occurs with slight variation six times (Q 6:164; 17:15; 24:54; 35:18; 39:7; 53:38) and in every instance it is accompanied by allusions, direct or indirect, to the day of judgment (see LAST JUDGMENT). The *Ǧalālayn* consistently offer a succinct gloss for "burden" *(wāzira)* in commenting on these passages, equating it with *āthām* or *dhunūb,* meaning sins or faults (see SIN, MAJOR AND MINOR). Likewise, they and other commentators emphasize the reference to the accountability of each single individual before God in the acquisition of eternal reward or punishment (see EXEGESIS OF THE QURʾĀN: CLASSICAL AND MEDIEVAL; REWARD AND PUNISHMENT; ETERNITY).

One instructive variant on this theme recounts an incident when disbelievers called upon believers (see BELIEF AND UNBELIEF): "Follow our way; we shall carry the burden of your sins." In response, the Qurʾān not only refutes the fallacy of this presumption on the part of the disbelievers but adds that those who lead others astray (q.v.) by such claims "will carry their own loads and other loads besides their own" (Q 29:12-3). This passage offers a qualification of the statements that limit the moral responsibility of individuals to their own behavior by indicating that leading others astray by offering to bear their burdens, will reap a penalty of the sort that renders these deceivers an extra measure of culpability in much the fashion that they themselves had suggested.

Al-Ṭabarī (d. 310/923) notes that this doctrine of individual moral accountability echoes the Prophet's recognition of the consequences of personal freedom in moral terms (see FREEDOM AND PREDESTINATION), just as his statement with regard to belief was formulated in his famous final declaration: "You have your religion and I have my religion" (Q 109:6; see FAITH; RELIGIOUS PLURALISM AND THE QURʾĀN). A number of ḥadīths (see ḤADĪTH AND THE QURʾĀN) elaborate upon these verses with accounts of a surprise encounter after one's death at which each individual soul will be confronted by a set of vivid forms, one beautiful and the other repulsive, which will identify themselves as the good and evil deeds (q.v.) performed during that person's lifetime (see also GOOD DEEDS; GOOD AND EVIL; RECORD OF HUMAN ACTIONS).

More recent schools of interpretation,

such as those represented in the twentieth century by al-Mawdūdi and Rashīd Riḍā, reflecting upon these same verses, have emphasized a reformist agenda. They point out, for instance, that the logic of strictly individualized merit and retribution serves to refute many aspects of popular piety (see FESTIVALS AND COMMEMORATIVE DAYS). They have been especially critical of elaborate funerary and memorial rituals, including the establishment of *waqf* endowments in support of such tomb-centered practices as well as the cult of saints and prayerful appeals for their intercession (q.v.).

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Loan

see DEBTS; ECONOMICS; USURY

Locust

see ANIMAL LIFE; PLAGUE

Lord

One who has power and authority. One of the most frequent nouns in the Qurʾān, "lord" generally refers to God but on a few occasions designates a human master. Three terms in the Qurʾān can be rendered into English as lord: *rabb, mawlā* and *walī*.

Rabb recurs 971 times in the Qurʾān, never as an isolated word with the definite article *(al-rabb)* but always as the first term in a genitive construct (i.e. the lord of the heavens and the earth), most often with a personal pronoun as suffix. *Rabb* conveys not only the meanings of lord and master but also of caregiver, provider, sustainer (cf. the Arabic verb *rabba,* "to be lord," and also "to bring up, to care for"). The word is used to express the universal lordship of God (cf. Q 4:1, the lord of all humankind *[al-nās]*) with special reference to his (but see GENDER for a discussion of the complexities of gender in Arabic grammar) creative act ("the lord of all the worlds/of the whole creation" [q.v.; *rabb al-ʿālamīn*], in forty-two instances); the lord of previous prophets ("the lord of Moses [q.v.] and Aaron [q.v.]," Q 7:122; 26:48; cf. 20:70; see PROPHETS AND PROPHETHOOD); as well as the special relationship between the lord and the believer ("God is my lord," Q 19:36, "and Noah [q.v.] called unto his lord," Q 11:45; see BELIEF AND UNBELIEF). When in the plural *(arbāb),* the term indicates gods other than the one God and the opposition between the numerous gods and the one God is emphasized (Q 9:31: "they have taken their rabbis and their monks for their lords *[arbāb]* beside the God [*min dūni llāhi,* see JEWS AND JUDAISM; CHRISTIANS AND CHRISTIANITY; MONASTICISM AND MONKS]; and "… diverse lords… or the one God," Q 12:39; also Q 3:64; cf. Quṭb, *Ẓilāl,* 15; see POLYTHEISM AND ATHEISM).

The term *rabb* with reference to a human master is found in Sūrat Yūsuf ("Joseph," Q 12). In this lively and linguistically interesting narrative of Joseph's life (see NARRATIVES), the tension between loyalty to the human master and to the eternal lord is sustained by the consecutive use of the same term in both its meanings; Joseph (q.v.) says to the wife of his master (Potiphar): "Goodly has my master *(rabbī)* made my lodging" (Q 12:23), with the narrative continuing "and he [Joseph] would have succumbed had he not seen a proof of his

lord's truth *(burhān rabbihi)*" (Q 12:24). The link is even more evident in Joseph's own words to the king's messenger: "Go back to your lord (*rabbika,* "the king") … my lord *(rabbī)* [alone] has full knowledge of their [the women's] guile" (Q 12:50). *Rabb* as human master occurs again in Q 12 with reference to the Egyptian king in Q 12:41 and 42 (see PHARAOH).

The lordship and majesty of God over the whole creation are conveyed through expressions such as *rabb al-ʿālamīn,* as mentioned earlier, and also "the lord of the heavens (see HEAVEN AND SKY) and the earth (q.v.) and what is between them" (Q 26:24), "the lord of the east and the west and what is between them" (Q 26:28), "the lord of the seven heavens" (Q 23:86), and "the lord of the two easts and the two wests" (Q 55:17). Lordship expressed through creation implies not a once and for all action but a continuous process (Quṭb, *Ẓilāl,* 15-7): *rabb* is not only the originator but also that which preserves, manages and regulates this creation (Ibn al-ʿArabī, *Tafsīr,* 10).

In some instances the terms *rabb* and *Allāh* are found together so as to reiterate the identity and specificity of lordship and divinity: "My lord is God" (*rabbī Allāh,* Q 40:28), or "God is my lord" (Q 3:51; 19:36; 43:64), as well as "our lord is God" (Q 22:40; 46:13). Moreover, the use of *rabb* as lord could imply the correct relationship to be entertained between the creator and his creation, especially with the human being whose role as servant (q.v.; *ʿabd*) is to worship the creator (cf. Q 3:51; 89:28-9; cf. Abū Ḥayyān, *Baḥr,* 18; Qūnawī, *Iʿjāz,* 293). The majority of classical as well as modern exegetical *(tafsīr)* works (see EXEGESIS OF THE QUR'ĀN: CLASSICAL AND MEDIEVAL; EXEGESIS OF THE QUR'ĀN: EARLY MODERN AND CONTEMPORARY) provide explanations for the meanings of the term *rabb* in the Qur'ān. *Rabb* describes God as master, sustainer and owner of his creation (Ṭabarī, *Tafsīr,* i, 141-3; Ālūsī, *Rūḥ,* i, 77-8), as the incessant caretaker of the whole universe (Quṭb, *Ẓilāl,* 15, Rashīd Riḍā, *Tafsīr,* 36). *Rabb* indicates the lord of creation by virtue of the act of bringing the world into existence out of non-existence (Rāzī, *Tafsīr,* i, 233-4; see COSMOLOGY). Accordingly, being creator, God is the only one worthy of lordship (*rubūbiyya;* Bayḍāwī, *Anwār,* ii, 123; Ṭabāṭabā'ī, *Mīzān,* i, 29-30). Elaborating on this aspect, mystical exegesis (see ṢŪFISM AND THE QUR'ĀN) identifies the term *rabb* with the level at which divine lordship, being related to the act of creation, can be known. Consequently, scholars such as Sahl al-Tustarī (d. 283/896), Ibn al-ʿArabī (d. 638/1240) and al-Qūnawī (d. 673/1274) distinguish the level of God as *rabb* (i.e. lord of creation) from that of God as *Allāh* which they consider to express divinity untouched by creation (Qūnawī, *Iʿjāz,* 296). Ṣūfīs such as Abū l-Ḥasan al-Nūrī (d. 295/907), or al-Muḥāsibī (d. 243/857) before him, express a similar concept by stressing the relation between *rabb* (master) and *marbūb* (subject) to indicate the first human cognitive stage of the majesty of God (see KNOWLEDGE AND LEARNING).

The modernist Egyptian scholar Maḥmūd Shaltūt, *shaykh* of al-Azhar during 1958-63, elaborates further on the lordship of God by linking it to three main aspects of divine providence. Firstly, God is the sole lord of the world through his physical creative providence, which not only caused the world to come into existence but also constantly preserves, nourishes and protects it. Secondly, God is lord as he provides humankind with the rational faculty which allows humans to identify the signs (q.v.) of God in the world and to distinguish good from evil (see GOOD AND EVIL). Thirdly, God is lord through revelation of the laws he communicated through inspiration to the prophets and which are

preserved in the scriptures as constant reminders to the whole of humankind (see REVELATION AND INSPIRATION; SCRIPTURE AND THE QUR'ĀN; BOOK).

In his seminal and controversial work *The foreign vocabulary of the Qur'ān* (136-9), the scholar Arthur Jeffery believed the qur'ānic use of the term *rabb* with reference to God to be the result of a linguistic borrowing from Aramaic or Syriac and also that the use of *rabb* to indicate "human chieftains" but also pre-Islamic gods was already attested by pre-Islamic poetry and inscriptions (ibid., 137; see FOREIGN VOCABULARY). It should nevertheless be added that there is evidence of the use of *rabb* or *rabbanā* as a title to address the pre-Islamic *kāhin,* "priest/officiant of sacrifices" (Fahd, *Divination,* 107-8; see SOOTHSAYERS). In a 1958 article, the French Islamicist J. Chelhod, applying criteria similar to those used in biblical textual criticism, analyzed the frequency of occurrence of the terms *rabb* and *Allāh* for a tentative chronology of the qur'ānic sūras. Chelhod noted that while the use of the term *rabb* clearly decreases in the Medinan sūras, that of *Allāh* increases considerably from the third period of Meccan sūras onwards. Such observations led Chelhod to posit some hypotheses (summarized in Böwering, Chronology, 329-30), which importantly link qur'ānic language and style (see LANGUAGE AND STYLE OF THE QUR'ĀN) to the inner chronology of the Qur'ān (see CHRONOLOGY AND THE QUR'ĀN).

The Qur'ān also uses *mawlā,* "tutor, trustee, helper, ally," carrying the connotation of protector to signify divine lordship (Q 47:11: "God is the *mawlā* of the faithful, the unbelievers have no *mawlā*"; also Q 2:286; 3:150; 6:62; 8:40; 9:51; 22:78; 47:11; 66:2). In other instances, however, *mawlā* is clearly used in a non-religious non-divine sense to indicate a friend, an ally (Q 16:76; 19:5; 44:41). *Walī,* one of the ninety-nine divine names (see GOD AND HIS ATTRIBUTES), occurs in several instances as lord in the sense of protector, guardian (Q 2:257; 3:68; 4:45; 7:155; 13:11), but also of friend (Q 5:55; 6:14; 42:9; 45:19; see FRIENDS AND FRIENDSHIP). It is also used, often in the plural form *(awliyā'),* with reference to a human protector or friend (Q 3:28, 175; 4:89, 144; 5:51; etc.).

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Lot

The prophet sent to the people of Sodom as mentioned in both the Bible and the Qur'ān. In the latter, he is attested twenty-seven times. Among the qur'ānic stories of divine punishment (see PUNISHMENT STORIES; CHASTISEMENT AND PUNISHMENT), that of Lot (Lūṭ) and Sodom is second in terms of quantity to that of Noah (q.v.) and the flood. As in the Bible, it continues, in Q 11:69-83, 15:57-77, and Q 29:31-5, the story of the three angels (see ANGEL) who visited Abraham (q.v.), announcing the birth of Isaac (q.v.), and of Abraham's

dispute with them on the fate of Sodom (*Gen* 18-9). More frequently it is an independent tale, the angels playing their part as Lot's guests: Q 7:80-4; 26:160-74; 27:54-8; 37:133-8; 54:33-7.

In many details, the story is the same as other qurʾānic tales of divine punishment: Lot was the brother *(akhū)* of his people (*qawm,* see BROTHER AND BROTHERHOOD), a messenger (q.v.; *mursal, rasūl*) who admonished his people to fear (q.v.) God; he demanded obedience (q.v.) and did not ask for remuneration. Like Noah, Hūd (q.v.), Ṣāliḥ (q.v.), Moses (q.v.) and other prophets (see PROPHETS AND PROPHETHOOD), he was accused of being a liar (cf. Q 3:184; see LIE). His people were addicted to homosexuality (q.v.), held up travelers (see HOSPITALITY AND COURTESY; HIGHWAY ROBBERY), and practiced wickedness in their councils (see GOOD AND EVIL; SIN, MAJOR AND MINOR). In vain Lot tried to convert them, offering them his daughters for marriage (see MARRIAGE AND DIVORCE). He showed hospitality to the angels, protecting them from the obtrusiveness of his people. The evildoers (see EVIL DEEDS) tried to enter his house by force but were deprived of their eyesight by divine interference (see VISION AND BLINDNESS). When the inhabitants threatened to expel Lot from the city, he prayed to God for help. The angels told Lot and his family to leave the city at night, forbidding them to turn back. Punishment came at sunrise. Rain fell on the evildoers, the city was turned upside down, and stones *(ḥijāra min sijjīl)* hailed from the sky. According to other versions, the punishment was a cry, a sandstorm *(ḥāṣib)* or a convulsion from the sky *(rijz min al-samāʾ).* Lot and his family were rescued but his wife remained in the city and died. She was punished because she had conspired with the sinners. Like Noah's wife, she is an example of unbelieving wives who betrayed their husbands (Q 66:10; see WOMEN AND THE QURʾĀN).

In Muslim folklore the story has been developed extensively from biblical and extra-biblical Jewish and Christian tradition, much of which has been included in the exegetical tradition (*tafsīr,* see EXEGESIS OF THE QURʾĀN: CLASSICAL AND MEDIEVAL). Lot's people lived in three cities, five cities according to some, of which Sodom was the capital. It was reduced to an ugly, evil smelling lake, which is obviously the Dead Sea. God made it "a sign for those who believe" (Q 15:77; see BELIEF AND UNBELIEF; SIGNS; GEOGRAPHY). The cities are called *al-Muʾtafikāt* because Gabriel (q.v.) tore them out of the earth, lifted them with his wing, turned them upside down, and crushed them on the ground, then stones were hurled on them. Lot's people, men and women alike, were the first of humankind to practice homosexuality. The men were married but had unnatural intercourse with their wives. Lot did not offer them his own daughters, for as a prophet he was the father of his community, the same as Muḥammad (whose wives have been called "mothers of the believers"; cf. Q 33:6; see WIVES OF THE PROPHET). In Arabic, homosexuality is *"lūṭiyya"* and unnatural intercourse of men with women is termed "minor *lūṭiyya*" (*lūṭiyya ṣughrā,* cf. Wensinck, *Concordance,* vi, 152; see SEX AND SEXUALITY). According to a ḥadīth (see ḤADĪTH AND THE QURʾĀN), *lūṭiyya* is forbidden on pain of death for both partners. Homosexuals will be stoned as stones killed Lot's people (see STONING; BOUNDARIES AND PRECEPTS). Abū Ḥanīfa (d. 150/767) taught that the transgressors should be thrown from a height *(al-lāʾiṭ yulqā min shāhiq),* and then stoned.

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Lote Tree

see AGRICULTURE AND VEGETATION; TREES; ASCENSION

Love and Affection

Feelings of personal attachment induced by kinship (q.v.) or sympathy. *Aḥabba* is the most used verb to express the idea of love. The lexical field of the concept "love" has other roots, however, such as *w-d-d,* among others. The verbal noun *ḥubb,* "love," is mentioned nine times in the Qurʾān. Love links humankind to God, human beings to one another and the individual to earthly life and its pleasures. As far as God's love is concerned, it focuses on persons but also on their qualities or their actions. In fact, the human being is often split between two contradictory attachments, one capable of leading to his damnation, the other to his salvation. And thus love is not dissociated from faith (q.v.) in the relationship with God or with humankind.

God takes the initiative in everything and his love anticipates that of human beings: "He will cause people to come whom he will love and who will love him" (Q 5:54). This divine love appears as a pure act of election (q.v.), especially in the case of a prophet (see PROPHETS AND PROPHETHOOD) such as Moses (q.v.): "And I have projected upon you a love *(maḥabba)* on my part" (Q 20:39). Nonetheless, people attract God's love to themselves by their works and especially by imitation of the Prophet, but there can be no pretension of loving God on their own initiative. It is said thus to the Prophet: "Say: if you truly love God, follow me, God will love you" (Q 3:31). To say that one is loved by God is, in the view of the Qurʾān, all the more unacceptable in that such a pretension is part and parcel of a certain confusion of the human and the divine (cf. Q 5:18, "The Jews and the Christians have said: We are the sons of God and his well-beloved ones" *[aḥibbāʾuhu],* see JEWS AND JUDAISM; CHRISTIANS AND CHRISTIANITY).

The Qurʾān qualifies God as he who loves *(al-wadūd),* a name which, in the two places it occurs (Q 85:14; cf. 11:90, where the definite article is not used), is linked to the attributes of mercy (q.v.) and forgiveness (q.v.). In the same way it is the "all-merciful" *(al-raḥmān)* who places in the hearts (see HEART) of the believers (see BELIEF AND UNBELIEF) love of or attachment to him *(wudd)* by way of response to their faith and their works (cf. Q 19:96). If the name *al-wadūd* gives the clearest expression to the reciprocity of love between God and humans, other divine names also suggest on God's part a form of affection comparable to that of humans: He is the good, the merciful (*al-barr al-raḥīm,* Q 52:28), just as people are good towards their parents (q.v.; cf. Q 19:14, 32; see also FAMILY). He shows compassion as does the Prophet towards the believers: "He has at heart that which you suffer, he has care

for you, for the believers, compassionate *(raʾūf)* and merciful" (Q 9:128). This same compassion *(raʾfa)* can be found in the disciples (see APOSTLE) of Jesus (q.v.), although it is not clear whether the sentiment is directed towards God or towards creatures. It is doubtlessly both, since the tender care shown to John (q.v.; Yaḥyā) by God *(ḥanānan min ladunnā)* manifests itself in his filial piety (cf. Q 19:13, 14).

Love, in the sense of affection and compassion, thus appears as a movement by God towards humans that is reciprocated, and then a movement by a human being towards his fellow creature. The verb *aḥabba/yuḥibbu* often, however, indicates another type of relationship. God is said to love or not to love such conduct. Love, and its opposite, establishes from then on a law defining human actions according to the extent to which they conform or fail to conform to the divine will (see LAW AND THE QURʾĀN). God loves those who act for the best (*al-muḥsinūn,* five times; see GOOD DEEDS; GOOD AND EVIL) or the just (*al-muqsiṭūn,* three times; see JUSTICE AND INJUSTICE), in such a manner that whoever performs acts lovable to God attracts the divine love to himself: "those men who love to purify themselves and God loves those who purify themselves" (Q 9:108). On the other hand, God does not love qualities that clash with his nor does he love types of behavior contrary to his law, such as shown by the unjust (*al-ẓālimūn,* three times) or the transgressors (*al-muʿtadūn,* three times; see BOUNDARIES AND PRECEPTS), etc.

As we shall soon see, love or friendship between human beings is not fully recognized by the Qurʾān unless confirmed by faith. It is also worth noting that the term *ḥubb,* in the sense of human love, is only used once with an apparently negative connotation. In Q 12 (Sūrat Yūsuf, "Joseph"), love in all its various forms plays a complex role. Jacob's (q.v.) preference for Joseph (q.v.) and the jealousy (see ENVY) of the latter's brothers ("Joseph is more beloved *[aḥabbu]* of our father than are we," Q 12:8; see BROTHER AND BROTHERHOOD; BENJAMIN) are indirectly the cause of the love of the wife of al-ʿAzīz (see KINGS AND RULERS). But whether or not Joseph was sensitive to this, according to the divergent interpretations of the commentators (see EXEGESIS OF THE QURʾĀN: CLASSICAL AND MEDIEVAL) on Q 12:24 (cf. De Prémare, Joseph, 63-5), the passionate type of love that grips the heart (cf. Q 12:30, *qad shaghafahā ḥubban*) is attributed only to women (see WOMEN AND THE QURʾĀN). Tempted afresh, Joseph calls on divine protection against the wiles of women and states that he would prefer *(aḥabbu)* prison to his inclination for woman (*aṣbu ilayhinna,* Q 12:33-4). Even if subsequent tradition places (greater) value on the love between Joseph and Zulaykha, we have to recognize that it is the love of Jacob for his son that guides the story, from beginning to end. By way of contrast, the legitimate attraction felt by the daughter of Jethro (Shuʿayb [q.v.]) for Moses is only barely hinted at (cf. Q 28:25-6). This also applies to the Prophet's attraction for Zaynab (Q 33:4; see WIVES OF THE PROPHET), another instance which illustrates how little attention the Qurʾān devotes to the love of a man for a woman or that of a woman for a man. In Q 33 (Sūrat al-Aḥzāb, "The Clans"), despite an entire passage being devoted to the Prophet's spouses, marital love is only alluded to in the command given to the Prophet to ensure that his wives experience joy (see JOY AND MISERY) and satisfaction (cf. Q 33:51). Several verses recall that in the beginning man and woman were a unique entity which marriage implicitly aims to re-establish (see MARRIAGE AND DIVORCE). Developing this idea, however, one verse qualifies the love between spouses as one of those mysteries of cre-

ation (q.v.) which lead to knowledge of God (see KNOWLEDGE AND LEARNING): "Among his signs (q.v.) he has created for you, out of your very souls (see SOUL), spouses so that you may find rest in them and he has placed between you love *(mawadda)* and mercy. Surely there are in that signs for people who reflect" (Q 30:21). Seen from this vantage point, the happiness obtained by or for wives and by the descendants issuing from this happiness is expressed by a term (*qurrat aʿyun,* "the freshness of the eyes") that emphasizes its paradisiacal nature (compare Q 25:74 and 33:51 with Q 32:17; see PARADISE). As a whole, the passages in Q 2 (Sūrat al-Baqara, "The Cow") and Q 4 (Sūrat al-Nisāʾ, "Women") that relate to marriage deal with the relationships between spouses in terms that are too legal to suggest bonds of love or affection. The reciprocal attraction between the future spouses is simply suggested in connection with re-marriage or a proposal of marriage (Q 2:232, 235), or with reference to the equality to be observed between the spouses (Q 4:3, 129). As the commentators emphasize in their interpretation of these latter verses, equality cannot relate to love that man cannot control. A further qurʾānic image of spouses is found in Q 2:187, in which the pair are portrayed as garments for each other (see CLOTHING).

The passages giving strong expression to the love between God and humans or between spouses thus occur infrequently in the Qurʾān. The term *ḥubb* (and verbal derivatives of *ḥ-b-b* such as *aḥabba*) is used much more often for that which occupies the human heart first and foremost, passion and worldly goods: "and you devote to material goods a terrible love" (Q 89:20; see WEALTH). Humans are inevitably pushed to the desire for things and persons rather than to the things or persons themselves: "Embellished for people is the love of desires, the desire of women, of children, of massed quintals of gold (q.v.) and silver, thoroughbred horses, flocks and crops. That is the joy of the life here below, but being with God is an excellent return" (Q 3:14). The opposition between the love of things and the return to God is contained in an element of the qurʾānic discourse that places faith in opposition to other attitudes (such as hypocrisy or disbelief; see HYPOCRITES AND HYPOCRISY). Thus the love of God is opposed to the worst of sins (see SIN, MAJOR AND MINOR): "There are people who choose, outside of God, rivals whom they love as the love of God, but the believers have a stronger love for God (*ashaddu ḥubban lillāhi,* Q 2:165).

In the same way that human beings are naturally borne towards sensual desires, "it is God who has made you love *(ḥabbaba)* the faith and has embellished it in your hearts and has made you detest *(karraha)* impiety, prevarication (see LIE) and disobedience" (q.v.; Q 49:7). Humanity thus finds itself split between two incompatible loves: the one that leads to faith and conformity with the divine will, and the other, which brings one to the nether world (cf. Q 2:216; see HELL AND HELLFIRE). The close link between faith and love also conditions love between human beings. One can only truly love believers, since love for unbelievers separates one from God and attracts one towards this world: "You will not find people who believe in God and the last day (see LAST JUDGMENT) and who [also] show their friendship (*yuwāddūn,* see FRIENDS AND FRIENDSHIP) towards those opposed to God and to the one he has sent" (Q 58:22). Here friendship *(mawadda)* links up again with the concept of *walāya,* "friendship, alliance, attachment" (see CONTRACTS AND ALLIANCES). Adopting unbelievers as friends or allies *(walī,* pl. *awliyāʾ)* is equivalent to lining up on the side of the enemies (q.v.) of God (cf. Q 60:1). God alone can

turn this hostility into friendship. But meanwhile one can show goodness and justice towards the unbelievers on condition that they show no hostility towards Islam (cf. Q 60:7-8). It is one of the duties incumbent on the one who calls on God to bring about the transformation of the enemy into a close friend (*walī ḥamīm,* cf. Q 41:34). In the same way, the relationships with the People of the Book (q.v.) are defined in terms of friendship and hostility. They cannot be adopted as *awliyāʾ* (cf. Q 5:51). A distinction is made, however, between the Jews and the Christians, "closer in friendship *(aqrabahum mawaddatan)* to the believers" (Q 5:82). True friendship thus rests on faith and a shared expectation of the world to come (see ESCHATOLOGY), so much so that on the day of the resurrection (q.v.) the unbelievers will find themselves without "a close friend" (*ṣadīq ḥamīm,* cf. Q 26:101; also Q 40:18; 70:10). It is in this kind of eschatological context that the Prophet appeals to love or friendship for one's relatives (*al-mawaddata fī l-qurbā,* Q 42:23). Al-Ṭabarī (d. 310/923; *Tafsīr,* xxv, 15-7) lists four different interpretations of this expression, while showing preference for the first: 1) the Qurayshites (see QURAYSH) are invited to love the Prophet because of his kinship with all the clans of his tribe; 2) the believers should love the close kin of the Prophet (see FAMILY OF THE PROPHET); 3) they must love God in approaching him through their works; 4) they should also love their own kin. From an historical point of view the first two interpretations could, respectively, correspond to the Meccan and Medinan phases of the revelation (see CHRONOLOGY AND THE QURʾĀN; OCCASIONS OF REVELATION; REVELATION AND INSPIRATION), while the second two minimize the importance of the love of the Prophet's family, the People of the House (q.v.; *ahl al-bayt*). Taken overall, these ancient commentaries show the many possible directions of love in the Qurʾān: love of God confirmed by works, love of the Prophet and his kin, love for one's own kin, which, in a sense, implies the whole body of believers, as is also said of the *walāya* (cf. Q 5:55; see COMMUNITY AND SOCIETY IN THE QURʾĀN). The presence of God, the source and finality of all things, gives direction to the entire discourse of the Qurʾān: love and friendship can only come from God and lead back to him. The loving relationship between man and woman is disregarded except on this condition. The ideal wives are called *qānitāt,* obedient and devoted, both to God and to their husbands (cf. Ṭabarī, *Tafsīr,* viii, 294, on the subject of Q 4:34). In the Qurʾān only the love and friendship of God extend beyond the limits of this world.

The few passages in the Qurʾān dealing with love have scarcely encouraged authors to extract from the Qurʾān the fundamentals of divine and human love. Traces of the affective side of love are found mainly in the sunna (q.v.; see also ḤADĪTH AND THE QURʾĀN). The Ṣūfīs themselves (see ṢŪFISM AND THE QURʾĀN), when quoting verses such as Q 2:165 or Q 5:54, are more likely to express their love for God in terms of the Arabic tradition, poetic and private. In his *Ḥaqāʾiq al-tafsīr,* al-Sulamī (d. 412/1021) is more preoccupied with bringing together the statements concerning love made by the spiritual masters than he is with commenting on Q 3:31. A commentator such as Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī (d. 606/1210; *Tafsīr,* iv, 204-8) gives an outline of a theory of love based on Q 2:165. But Ibn al-ʿArabī (d. 638/1240) in his *al-Futūḥāt al-makkiyya* (ii, 327-32; Gloton, *Traité,* 69-92) has especially illuminated the foundations of the metaphysical doctrine of love found in the Qurʾān. Yet — unless the present writer is mistaken — it seems that no author has attempted a synthesis of all the passages

in the Qurʾān dealing with love and its associated concepts.

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Lowly see OPPRESSED ON EARTH, THE

Loyalty

Being true to anyone to whom one owes fidelity. The idea or concept of "loyalty" occurs discursively in the Qurʾān and is dispersed under a variety of rubrics. Even though there is no single term that specifically deals with the theme of "loyalty," it nevertheless features in the discussions and exegesis of a number of verses (see EXEGESIS OF THE QURʾĀN: CLASSICAL AND MEDIEVAL). The concept is most frequently encountered in relation to "pacts of mutual assistance" (*muwālā,* see CONTRACTS AND ALLIANCES; BREAKING TRUSTS AND CONTRACTS) and other formations of the Arabic root *w-l-y,* whose basic meaning is "friend/ally" (*walī,* see FRIENDS AND FRIENDSHIP). In an eschatological context (see ESCHATOLOGY), on the day of judgment (see LAST JUDGMENT), those who are consigned to hell (q.v.; see also REWARD AND PUNISHMENT) are said to have no "bosom" or "close" — i.e. "loyal" — friend (*ḥamīm,* e.g. Q 69:35; *ṣadīq,* Q 26:101) or intercessor (see INTERCESSION). The notions conveyed by terms like "friend," "close" and "ally" normally, however, occur as adjectives in the Qurʾān and are therefore not exact equivalents of the English noun, "loyalty."

Loyalty is not explicitly defined in the commentaries but it is frequently described and illustrated contextually. Two kinds of loyalty are discernable from various Qurʾān passages: (1) corporate loyalty that demands a commitment to the community of faith (q.v.; see also COMMUNITY AND SOCIETY IN THE QURʾĀN) and (2) individual loyalty displayed towards fellow Muslims as well as to non-Muslims, a phenomenon that is more ambiguous and complex (see ETHICS AND THE QURʾĀN). Corporate loyalty is framed by those passages of the Qurʾān that regulate the relationship between believers and unbelievers as well as those verses that define the covenantal relationship between the Muslim and God (see BELIEF AND UNBELIEF; COVENANT). The qurʾānic narrative unmistakably implies that inter-human conduct — irrespective of whether it occurs within the confessional community of Muslims or with outsiders — is largely contingent on the relationship between humans and God.

This theistic dimension casts its shadow on the themes of loyalty and friendship. Thus, the believers who fulfill God's will are clearly identified with God's cause and his people (see PATH OR WAY). Any partisanship and association with those who reject God's will shall have castigatory consequences depending on the extent to which such links are offensive to God and the cause of righteousness on earth. Showing affection or displaying dislike to any human being ought to be exclusively for the sake of God *(al-ḥubb lillāh wa-l-bughḍ lillāh),* a phrase frequently cited by commentators as a saying attributed to the Prophet (see ḤADĪTH AND THE QURʾĀN). Thus, the God of the Qurʾān mediates the

most intimate bonds of friendship, confidence, privacy and loyalty (see TRUST AND PATIENCE).

Explicit traces of Islam's founding history (see HISTORY AND THE QUR'ĀN; OCCASIONS OF REVELATION) are evident in qur'ānic narratives (q.v.) and norms that structure the notions of friendship and loyalty. The qur'ānic narrative reflects the vagaries of the intense inter-communal relationships between believers on the one hand, and polytheists, Jews and Christians on the other, as the nascent community of believers became a sizeable political entity in Medina (q.v.; see also JEWS AND JUDAISM; CHRISTIANS AND CHRISTIANITY; POLYTHEISM AND ATHEISM). Initially, qur'ānic pronouncements meticulously regulate the political relationships, but the moralizing discourse that colors these identities gradually grows and intensifies (see POLITICS AND THE QUR'ĀN; RELIGIOUS PLURALISM AND THE QUR'ĀN).

Prior to the normative influence of Islam (q.v.) in Arabia, alliances customarily were based on grounds of kinship (q.v.; *nasab*) while military and political strength depended on one's choice of political friends or allies (*walī*, pl. *awliyā'*, see PRE-ISLAMIC ARABIA AND THE QUR'ĀN). The increasing hostilities between the Muslims and their Meccan opponents, exacerbated by the support of the Medinan Jews for Muḥammad's enemies (q.v.) correlate directly with the Qur'ān's prohibition and restriction of corporate loyalty and mutual help pacts *(muwālā)* between Muslims and non-Muslims (see OPPOSITION TO MUḤAMMAD). Verses in seven different passages repeatedly stress the fact that believers ought not to take unbelievers as their allies (Q 3:28; 4:89, 139, 144; cf. 5:51, 57, 80-1).

In one instance even the People of the Book (q.v.; Jews and Christians in this case), towards whom the Qur'ān generally shows deference, are deplored as potential partners in alliance since they are alleged to have loyalties with each other and they are suspected of harboring vengeful enmity towards the Muslim community (Q 5:51). In fact, the rhetoric becomes so intense that the verse even goes on to assert that those Muslims who transgress this prohibition and form such alliances are deemed to "be part of them," namely one of the Jews or Christians, a severe rejection that equates the identity of the offender with the ideological "other." The Qur'ān specifically prohibits loyalty treaties with non-Muslim parties when the latter are favored "in preference to believers" (*min dūni l-mu'minīn,* Q 3:28). In other words, if alliances with non-believers turn out to harm the interests of fellow Muslims then they are outlawed as a matter of principle. Only expediency (*taqiyya,* see DISSIMULATION) permits the continuation of loyalty treaties with unbelievers, especially if breaking such treaties would pose a genuine threat to the welfare and safety of Muslims.

Nevertheless, the Qur'ān does permit Muslims to show kindness as well as to exhibit virtuous conduct and justice to those non-Muslims who are not engaged in active hostility towards them (Q 60:8-9). While this passage has general implications, and could easily be viewed as also sanctioning corporate loyalty across religious boundaries, many commentators only permit its interpretation as reference to individual and private loyalty. Again, such relationships are subject to the caveat that they do not harm the general welfare of Muslims. Q 58:22 also reinforces the theme of individual loyalty found in Q 60:8-9. It, however, forcefully plays off loyalties based on kinship against loyalties based on faith. Q 58:22 deems it unimaginable that one can show "love" (q.v.) to

someone who is related by blood and kinship ties but who contests and disputes the divine message and prophecy (see PROPHETS AND PROPHETHOOD). The inference is clear: bonds of faith outweigh loyalties based on family and kinship ties. Even though he is said to have lied three times (cf. Gilliot, Trois mensonges), the prophet Abraham (q.v.; Ibrāhīm) is cast as the paragon of loyalty toward the divine as in Q 53:37. Abraham's willingness to fulfill *(waffā)* his commitments to God, including his readiness to sacrifice (q.v.) his son (cf. Q 37:99-111) and his disavowal of his father's idolatry (cf. Q 6:74-84; see IDOLATRY AND IDOLATERS), turns him into God's loyal friend (Q 4:125; see ḤANĪF). In Q 2:40 the Children of Israel (q.v.) are reminded of their duty to fulfill their part of the covenant *(wa-awfū bi-ʿahdī ūfi bi-ʿahdikum)* as a sign of loyalty to God. Fulfillment *(īfāʾ)* of promises, contracts and agreements are crucial supplements to the Qurʾān's covenant-based worldview (see OATHS). There is also an isomorphic relationship between secular and cosmological loyalties because it is presumed that one who has a sound creed (see CREEDS) would also be better equipped ethically to fulfill worldly commitments and contractual obligations.

Some pre-modern and modern exegetes (see EXEGESIS OF THE QURʾĀN: EARLY MODERN AND CONTEMPORARY) are confronted by two major interpretative questions with regard to the exegesis of loyalty. Firstly, controversy exists about whether Q 60:8-9, which permits relations with non-hostile unbelievers, is abrogated by the later revelation of Q 9:5 (known as the "verse of the sword"; see ABROGATION; FIGHTING). The latter abrogates all agreements and treaties that Muḥammad had with non-Muslim political entities and fosters an uncompromising hostility towards all unbelievers. Secondly, if Q 60:8-9 is not abrogated, then does it sanction the tolerance of personal and individual loyalty across religious boundaries as opposed to the prohibition of corporate loyalty of a political nature?

The Persian exegete al-Ṭabarī (d. 310/923) argues that Q 3:28 decisively prohibits believers from taking unbelievers *(kuffār)* as their "helpers *(aʿwān)*, protectors *(anṣār)* and partisans *(zāhirīn)*." Taking non-Muslims as protectors in preference to believers, he adds, is tantamount to affirming their religion, thereby strengthening the false beliefs of the enemy against those of the Muslims (Ṭabarī, *Tafsīr*, iii, 228). Even though believers are admonished not to make pacts that favor unbelievers in "preference to fellow believers," most exegetes deem it acceptable to maintain strategic loyalties for the purpose of survival. In the view of a number of commentators, the struggle of belief against unbelief is a permanent one and thus there is an — albeit implicit — general rule that prohibits loyalty pacts. Therefore, al-Ṭabarī views the act of a Muslim displaying loyalty to non-Muslims to be an extremely displeasing and a hostile act against God, his Prophet and the believers at large. And any Muslim who shows loyalty to Jews and Christians, he goes on to say, has "declared war on the people of faith" (Ṭabarī, *Tafsīr*, vi, 276).

Interestingly, the Shīʿī exegete al-Ṭabarsī (d. ca. 552/1157; see SHĪʿISM AND THE QURʾĀN) understands the Qurʾān's prohibition against alliances and friendships with non-Muslims to be for reasons of power. Seeking alliances and loyalty pacts with non-Muslims is tantamount to seeking a position of invincibility with those whose faith is unacceptable to God. Such alliances undermine the believers' faith in God and affect God's estimation of their

belief (Ṭabarsī, *Majmaʿ*, v, 261). The terms "Jews" and "Christians" generically represent all classes of unbelievers, towards whom hostility is obligatory and thus friendship and loyalty with them is, implicitly, outlawed (Ṭabarsī, *Majmaʿ*, vi, 119). Al-Ṭabarsī treats unbelief in an almost undifferentiated manner, because he maintains that all non-Muslims have "a single hand against the Muslims." He also believes that the summons to show virtuous and equitable treatment of non-Muslims in Q 60:8-9 was abrogated by the "verse of the sword." He concedes, though, that Q 60:8-9 allowed some Muslims during the Prophet's time to interact with their non-Muslim relatives who did not actively show hostility to Muslims. This specific verse permits loyalty affiliations with non-Muslims with whom Muslims have treaties, says al-Ṭabarsī, citing a general consensus that permits the demonstration of kindness to persons deemed to be subjects of the "territory of war" (q.v.; *dār al-ḥarb*).

The Andalusian exegete al-Qurṭubī (d. 671/1272) declares with unequivocal finality that unbelievers, Jews as well as those Muslims who espouse heretical tendencies (see HERESY), cannot be treated as friends and relied upon as loyal intimates (*Jāmiʿ*, iv, 178). He believes that Q 3:118 strictly forbade believers to take as loyal confidants *(biṭāna)* a person from another religion. "Every person," he adds, "who is contrary to your way of life *(madhhab)* and religion *(dīn)*, [surely] there is no need for you to converse with him." He goes so far as to say that appointing "protected persons" *(ahl al-dhimma)* as agents in transactions or as clerks and secretaries in government is not permissible. In his jeremiad he rails against the "ignorant and stupid governors and princes" of his day who had ignored the Qurʾān's teachings on these matters (Qurṭubī, *Jāmiʿ*, iv, 179). Al-Qurṭubī's vehemence stems from the prohibition found in Q 5:51 that severs loyalty pacts *(muwālā)* with unbelievers, a command he claims will remain in force "till the day of judgment" (Qurṭubī, *Jāmiʿ*, vi, 217). He went so far as to disallow the employment of non-Muslims even in instances that might be beneficial to the religion of Islam (Qurṭubī, *Jāmiʿ*, v, 416). Al-Qurṭubī's antipathy for alliances and interactions with non-Muslims was most likely fuelled by the common perception among the Muslim religious classes of his day that the rulers of his native Andalusia had capitulated to Christian political influences and had endangered the suzerainty of Islam in the Iberian peninsula.

For the modern revivalist commentator Sayyid Quṭb (d. 1966), the verses examined above suggest the impossibility of inter-religious political co-existence. For him, the Qurʾān mandates the "total isolation" of Muslims from other ideological communities (Quṭb, *Ẓilāl*, ii, 907). Employing a qurʾānic idiom, Quṭb says that Muslims are the only group that can legitimately be called "the party of God" *(ḥizāb Allāh)* as a model for universal moral rectitude (see PARTIES AND FACTIONS). Among worldviews, he attributes this separatist understanding as unique to Islam, for it necessarily and inevitably anticipates an ideological confrontation with the anti-Islamic mores and norms of non-Muslim societies at large. This separatist imperative, in his view, makes it impossible for Muslims to give political loyalty to any other ideological group since doing so would be tantamount to apostasy (q.v.). Islam's tolerance for the People of the Book should not be confused with an endorsement of loyalty pacts. Quṭb argues that modern history — especially the history of colonialism, and the creation of the state of Israel that resulted in the dispos-

session and expulsion of the Palestinians from their native land — was achieved as a result of a hostile Christian and Jewish collusion. He saw this as conclusive proof that loyalty to such religious communities could be nothing but an anathema to Muslim sensibilities (Quṭb, *Ẓilāl,* ii, 907-17; id., *Maʿālim,* passim).

In his commentary on Q 60:8-9, Quṭb retreats from his earlier position, which was absolutely against loyalty pacts across religious boundaries. Here he concedes that God permits "mutual friendly relations" *(mawadda)* on an individual level towards those non-Muslims who do not show aggression towards Muslims. While reiterating the ban on loyalty pacts, he implicitly concedes that pacts may be possible with friendly non-Muslim entities (Quṭb, *Ẓilāl,* vi [xxviii], 3544). His rhetoric becomes conciliatory by arguing that Islam is a dogma *(ʿaqīda)* of love and it has no interest in conflict if there is no hostility directed at Muslims.

The Pakistani ideologue S. Abū Aʿlā Maudūdī (d. 1979) interprets the verses that deal with loyalty pacts in a functional manner. For him they serve as a reminder to Muslims not to become instruments in the service of enemies who, in the end, will undermine their existential interests. While Maudūdī's tone, unlike that of Quṭb, is subdued, he also argues that the Qurʾān prohibits friendship with hostile non-Muslims and taking them into confidence, while recommending kind and just treatment for those non-Muslims who do not demonstrate active enmity towards Muslims (Maudūdī, *Message,* ii, 19). Muḥammad Asad (d. 1992), the Austrian-born convert and Qurʾān commentator, states that the verses prohibiting loyalty pacts with non-Muslims cover both political and moral alliances. His interpretation is that those who deny the truth of the divine message are precluded from being real friends to believers in a corporate sense, while not ruling out friendship between individuals of different religions (Asad, *Message,* 252-3, n. 82). The Qurʾān, however, permits corporate loyalty pacts with those non-Muslims who are well disposed towards them (Asad, *Message,* 155, n. 73).

From this brief and select sample of exegetical materials it becomes apparent that the notion of loyalty is framed within the evolving narrative of the Qurʾān's discourses on the construction of the Muslim individual and corporate "self" in the mirror of the non-Muslim "other." Genuine loyalty can only occur among those who are ideologically of one's own kind, according to some Muslim exegetes. Most early commentators follow a strict chronological hermeneutic. One sees therefore an initial tolerance for loyalty based on kinship being gradually supplanted by a loyalty based on faith as the pax-Islamica grows in Arabia. Corporate inter-faith loyalty, in turn, can only occur under certain limited conditions, while there is some leeway for Muslims to maintain individual loyalties across the boundaries of faith. Theism and bonds of faith ultimately mediate loyalty. Loyalty to a fellow-believer reinforces one's belief in a common God which, in turn, creates a notion of community that transcends kinship and ethnicity.

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Luqmān

A personage whom the Qurʾān notes for his wisdom. Only Q 31, the sūra bearing his name, mentions this wise man, and it devotes eight of its thirty-four verses (Q 31:12-19) to Luqmān's wisdom (q.v.). At the time of Muḥammad, the Arabs may have known two Luqmāns: one, the son of ʿĀd (q.v.), renowned for intelligence, leadership, knowledge, eloquence and subtlety (Heller, Luḳmān, 811; see KNOWLEDGE AND LEARNING); the other, Luqmān the Sage *(al-ḥakīm),* famous for his wise pronouncements and proverbs (see PRE-ISLAMIC ARABIA AND THE QURʾĀN). The latter — if these two are not in fact one — appears in Q 31.

Luqmān's identity, however, is by no means certain. Muslim interpreters (see EXEGESIS OF THE QURʾĀN: CLASSICAL AND MEDIEVAL) identify him as a Nubian, an Ethiopian or an Egyptian slave who worked as a carpenter or a shepherd. Some others place him among the Hebrews as the nephew of Job (q.v.), the son of Bāʿūrāʾ, son of Nāḥūr, son of Tāriḥ, the father of Abraham (q.v.; Ibrāhīm) who lived long enough to provide knowledge for David (q.v.; Dāʾūd) the king. The majority of interpreters agree that he was not a prophet and not an Arab (see PROPHETS AND PROPHETHOOD; ARABS). Orientalists (see POST-ENLIGHTENMENT ACADEMIC STUDY OF THE QURʾĀN) have associated Luqmān with such figures as Prometheus, Lucian and Solomon (q.v.). He is identified with the biblical Baalam (= Ibn Bāʿūrāʾ), partly because the Hebrew *bālaʿ* and the Arabic *laqima* both meaning "to swallow." The modern commentator al-Qāsimī (d. 1914; see EXEGESIS OF THE QURʾĀN: EARLY MODERN AND CONTEMPORARY) also mentions this connection. Because his admonition, "lower your voice; for the harshest of sounds… is the braying of the ass" (Q 31:19), finds a counterpart in the Syriac sayings of Aḥiqār, Luqmān has also been identified with that legendary sage (see SYRIAC AND THE QURʾĀN). Finally, the contemporary scholar Mahmud Muftic shows that the Luqmān of the Qurʾān can be identified with the Greek physician and Pythagorean philosopher Alcmaeon (571-497 B.C.E.), a position also assumed by some Orientalists. Their names are clearly similar and the extant fragments of Alcmaeon's writing exhibit a striking similarity to the teachings of Q 31. Muftic finds in this sūra a physicians' oath that he thinks is superior to the oath of Hippocrates (460-377 B.C.E.; cf. Muftic, Which oath?; see MEDICINE AND THE QURʾĀN).

Two themes occurring prominently in the Luqmān section of Q 31 provide coherence for the sūra: (1) the greatness of the one God (see GOD AND HIS ATTRIBUTES) and the necessity of worshipping him exclusively and (2) the importance of being good to parents (q.v.) within the limits of a higher allegiance to God. Luqmān models ideal parenthood, instructing his son in a life of gratitude and exclusive worship (q.v.) of God (Q 31:12, 13; see GRATITUDE AND INGRATITUDE; CHILDREN; FAMILY). The striking shift from Luqmān's voice to God's voice in verses 14 and 15 focuses the reader's attention on the commands in the verses: be good (see GOOD AND EVIL) to parents; show gratitude to God and to them; and obey them unless they require worship of something other than God (see OBEDIENCE). The sūra closes with a warning: neither parent nor child can help each other on the day of judgment (Q 31:33; see

LAST JUDGMENT; INTERCESSION). A final verse stresses the greatness of God (Q 31:34). Whatever his more specific identity may have been, Luqmān stands out in the Qurʾān as a wise parent, exhorting his son to grateful worship of God, grateful obedience to his parents, personal piety (q.v.) and communal responsibility (see COMMUNITY AND SOCIETY IN THE QURʾĀN).

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Lust see VIRTUES AND VICES, COMMANDING AND FORBIDDING; DESIRE; SEX AND SEXUALITY

Lūṭ see LOT

M

Madness

see INSANITY

Madyan

see MIDIAN

Magians

Originally a term for the professional priesthood of the pre-Islamic religious institution in Iran, in qurʾānic usage it is presumably a term for all followers of that religion. The Arabic term translated as "Magians," *(al-majūs)* is attested once at Q 22:17, a late Medinan sūra (see CHRONOLOGY AND THE QURʾĀN), where the list Jews (see JEWS AND JUDAISM), Christians (see CHRISTIANS AND CHRISTIANITY) and Sabians (q.v.) attested in Q 2:62, now also includes them. The etymology and history of the term and the question whether the Magians are People of the Book (q.v.) are the two large issues raised by this single attestation.

The old Persian *maguš* as the title for a professional priestly tribe is well attested in surrounding languages, Akkadian, Armenian, Hebrew, Aramaic, Syriac, Greek, Sanskrit and presumably old Sinitic (see FOREIGN VOCABULARY). These religious professionals appear to have traveled far beyond Iranian held lands. Their religious aura seems to have been widely recognized but they also played administrative, military and commercial roles. In the Sasanian dynasty a wider array of titles were used within the priestly bureaucracy but the special status of the title in its middle Persian forms survived. The older term, however, also was widely circulated, presumably because of the prominent Christian mention of the Magi in the birth stories of Jesus. It likely passed into Arabic through Syriac (see SYRIAC AND THE QURʾĀN; ARABIC LANGAUGE). Early Muslim commentators do not limit the term to professional priests and describe the Magians as worshippers of the sun (q.v.), an interpretation also attested in Sanskrit sources. Later commentators recognize that fire (q.v.) is the stereotypical object of worship by the Magians. The fire-cult is the hallmark of the Magian tradition for later heresiographers and in Islamic literature, especially within the Persianate context (see PERSIAN LITERATURE AND THE QURʾĀN).

The enumeration of apparently six forms of religion in Q 22:17 has been the primary focus of commentary (see EXEGESIS OF THE QURʾĀN: CLASSICAL AND MEDIEVAL). The text lists believers, Jews, Sabians, Christians, Magians and those who associate

something else with God (see POLYTHEISM AND ATHEISM; BELIEF AND UNBELIEF; GOD AND HIS ATTRIBUTES). Debate on this and other passages has focused on the status of the intermediate four traditions. Are they to be classed with the believers or the associators or are they in an intermediate position (see FAITH)? While some have argued that there is only one true and five false religions here mentioned, the bulk of the tradition either recognizes that at least some members of the four named traditions are to be classed with the believers or the traditions themselves are the so-called religions of the book in addition to Islam (q.v.; see also RELIGION; RELIGIOUS PLURALISM AND THE QUR'ĀN). Whether the Magians were to be included among the People of the Book (q.v.) was debated since it appeared that the religion lacked a prophet (see PROPHETS AND PROPHETHOOD) and a scripture (see BOOK), and there was also significant theological controversy concerning their identity as monotheists and their doctrine of the creation (q.v.) and the power of evil (see GOOD AND EVIL; THEOLOGY AND THE QUR'ĀN).

Apologists worked hard to counter these charges and to argue that they belonged in the category of religions of the book. The story of Alexander the Great's (q.v.) destruction of the original scripture became prominent and the attempts already made by the Sasanians to organize the remaining written tradition were consolidated. The legend of Zoroaster was remolded to present him along the lines of Islamic prophethood. In general, Islamic authorities have granted them partial status as a People of the Book (see LAW AND THE QUR'ĀN). Interestingly, Muslim authorities have also recognized the affinity that exists between the Magian priest and the Islamic judge, exercising a political and juridical role that depended on the close cooperation of religious functionary and ruler, a Persian ideal that became central to Islamic notions of the state (see KINGS AND RULERS; POLITICS AND THE QUR'ĀN).

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Magic

The art which claims to produce effects by the assistance of supernatural beings or by a mastery of secret forces in nature. The contrast between the rational and the irrational, of supreme importance to the human being, even in the present day, suggests the question: "Is magic credible?" The Qur'ān replies in the affirmative, both when speaking about magic — describing its deeds and consequences — as well as by concluding with two apotropaic sūras, which are often regarded as protective talismans (see POPULAR AND TALISMANIC USES OF THE QUR'ĀN), and thus confirmations of magic. To this could be added the various ḥadīths of the Prophet (see ḤADĪTH AND THE QUR'ĀN) in which something like magic is spoken of (see DIVINATION; FORETELLING; GAMBLING), or enchanting magical acts that affect the Prophet himself are described. Despite this apparent credibility of magic, it should be understood that normative Islam does not conceive of or admit to the existence of powers other than those of God (see POWER AND IMPOTENCE), or to a belief that one can accept help from anyone or anything other than God (see

BELIEF AND UNBELIEF; POLYTHEISM AND ATHEISM). Magic, therefore, is depicted as a distorted appropriation of fideistic values, wrongly understood or poorly expressed by demons, as the Qurʾān itself states numerous times.

In this, the religion of the pre-Islamic Arabs, who made sacrifices to the gods and the forces of nature, and who trusted magic without, however, experiencing the necessity of believing in a future life (see FATE; DESTINY; SACRIFICE; PRE-ISLAMIC ARABIA AND THE QURʾĀN) is totally different from the religion of Islam. I would therefore assert that the hypothesis, put forward by various scholars (Chelhod, *Introduction;* id., *L'arabie du sud,* for example), that Islam might derive from religions present in pre-Islamic Arabia should be rejected (see AGE OF IGNORANCE; SOUTH ARABIA, RELIGION IN PRE-ISLAMIC).

The Arabic word used for magic, *siḥr (*from *s-ḥ-r),* can be understood in both a restrictive and an expansive sense. The word appears twenty-eight times in the Qurʾān (Q 2:102; 5:110; 6:7; 7:116; 10:76, 77, 81; 11:7; 20:57, 58, 63, 66, 71, 73; 21:3; 26:35, 49; 27:13; 28:36, 48; 34:43; 37:15; 43:30; 46:7; 52:15; 54:2; 61:6; 74:24). *Siḥr* literally means "enchantment" and etymologically the word seems to indicate that type of seduction which affects a hypnotized person. It can also mean a circumlocution of an exaggeratedly rhetorical nature (thus one speaks of beautiful words giving rise to enchantment). The great theologian Ibn al-ʿArabī (d. 638/1240) defined magic as something that passes *(ṣarf)* from its true nature *(ḥaqīqa)* or from its natural form *(ṣūra)* to something else, something that is unreal, or merely an appearance *(khayāl)*.

From the root *s-ḥ-r* is derived the qurʾānic word for "witch" *(sāḥira* or *saḥḥāra;* masc. *saḥḥār);* the infinitive verbal form *saḥara* indicates "to bewitch, to fascinate"; the wizard or conjurer is termed *saḥḥār,* or *sāḥir* (some other Arabic terms for those who deal in magic, which do not occur in the Qurʾān, are *silʿāt,* "sorceress," and *quṭrubī,* "wizard"). The Persian *magu (*Gk. *magos)* was used by the Zoroastrian priests, and furnished the term *majūs* in Arabic, where it continued to indicate the Zoroastrian priests. It is in this same form that we find the word in the Qurʾān, used to specify the very same Zoroastrian priests (Q 22:17; see MAGIANS). To denote an astrologer, or fortune-teller, we have the word *kāhin,* from the triliteral root *k-h-n*. In pre-Islamic Arabia, the *kāhin* very closely resembled the figure of a priest (the term can be linked to the Hebrew *kōhēn,* which, for the most part, carries the meaning of "priest"). From the same root is derived the verbal noun *kahāna,* "premonition and prophecy," and *kahana,* "predicting the future" (Q 52:29: "Therefore, take heed *[fa-dhakkir]* because, by the grace of your lord, you are neither a fortune-teller *[kāhin]* nor possessed *[majnūn]*"; see LIE; INSANITY). But in pre-Islamic Arabia, it is very possible that the "prophetess" (or sibyl, *kāhina*) played the more important role, with her male counterpart, the *kāhin,* as *ʿarrāf* (deriving from *ʿirāfa:* having a knowledge of invisible things and future events), being relegated to the function of relocating lost or stolen objects (see GENDER; PATRIARCHY).

As they pronounced their oracles in rhymed prose (q.v.; *sajʿ*), the *kuhhān* were considered poets (*shāʿir,* pl. *shuʿarāʾ;* see POETRY AND POETS), with whom they were often confused in pre-Islamic Arabia. The verbal polemics among the Arab tribes of this period, occasioned by major feast days (see FESTIVALS AND COMMEMORATIVE DAYS), large markets (q.v.), or great pilgrimages (see PILGRIMAGE), were famous. Each of these tribes was guided by a judge (*ḥakam, ḥākim,* see JUDGMENT; JUSTICE AND INJUSTICE) who was often a poet fortune-

teller. Such poets would praise the feats of war (q.v.), the power and the honor (q.v.) of the tribe (see TRIBES AND CLANS), countering the self-praise of his opponents. Such contests for precedence and glory *(mufākharāt, munāfarāt)* generated a large body of poetic literature which has been the subject of study and authentication.

Various *kuhhān* enter the legends surrounding Muḥammad, as for example the magician Saṭīḥ, who is said to have lived six centuries and, after having predicted the advent of Islam, died on the very same day in which the Prophet was born. The Qurʾān, which more than once alludes to the accusations that Muḥammad engaged in "magic," attests to the fact that the Prophet himself was called *sāḥir* and *mashūr,* "bewitched," and even "poet" in the fortune-teller sense of the word (Q 10:2; 11:7; 21:2-3; 25:7-8; 34:43-7; 37:14-5; 38:4; 43:30-1; 46:7; 52:29-30; 54:2; 69:38-43; see OPPOSITION TO MUḤAMMAD; POLEMIC AND POLEMICAL LANGUAGE). Walīd b. Mughīra, one of the richest idol worshipers (see IDOLS AND IMAGES; IDOLATRY AND IDOLATERS) of Mecca (q.v.), was heard saying, upon hearing the Prophet: "In all this, I find only borrowed magic."

Despite the qurʾānic and Islamic denunciation, even renunciation, of magic, there are two main currents of "magic" in the Islamic world: that found in the Mediterranean region and that of central Asia. The first, based upon an ancient philosophical heritage, evinces the fruits of the indestructible Mesopotamian teachings of astrology, of numerology (q.v.), and talismanic arts (of which the Babylonians and the Chaldeans were perhaps the greatest inventors). Also evident here is an Egyptian influence (particularly in reference to Hermes Trismegistus, Ar. *Hirmis al-muthallath bi-l-ḥikma*), as well as the legacy of King Solomon (q.v.), the incontestable founding figure of great magicians. The second current gathers elements from Shamanism, Taoism and Hinduism, all of which are very rich in magicians, magical arts and magical texts. Whereas the Mediterranean culture gave rise to numerous theories and practices which penetrated European countries via various forms of translation (in particular that of alchemy, *al-kīmiyā*), the central Asiatic culture gave birth to great currents of mystic thought. This "mysticism" was studied by various Ṣūfī orders (see ṢŪFISM AND THE QURʾĀN), especially in some orders *(ṭuruq,* sing. *ṭarīqa)* of the Ḥurūfiyya, the Bektashiyya and the Miṣriyya, wherein it was adapted to the charisma of the particular order.

Let us now turn our attention to the last two sūras of the Qurʾān, Q 113 (Sūrat al-Falaq, "The Oncoming Dawn," or "The Crack"; *al-falaq* being the moment of separation between day and night) and Q 114 (Sūrat al-Nās, "Humankind"), which are known as the *muʿawwadhitān,* "the two seekers of refuge." Popular Muslim practice holds that by reciting them one is saved from curses through the search of a divine protector. According to the traditional Muslim chronology of revelation (see REVELATION AND INSPIRATION), they are, respectively, the twentieth and the twenty-first sūras (see CHRONOLOGY AND THE QURʾĀN). As they were revealed in Mecca (q.v.), they are considered to be among the most ancient. The "darkness" (q.v.; *ghāsiq*) mentioned in the third verse of Q 113 ("from the evil of darkness as it spreads") is, according to the commentators, not evil in itself but a favorable moment for the propagation of evil, of malicious deeds (see EVIL DEEDS), of criminal acts (see SIN, MAJOR AND MINOR), of the actions of demons and sorcerers (see GOOD AND EVIL; NIGHT AND DAY). This is linked to the belief that the influence of magic was more easily diffused during the night. The fourth verse of the same sūra ("and from the evil

of the women who blow on knots") refers to the blowing upon knots made in the proper fashion (i.e. tied nine or eleven times), a magical practice much in use in Semitic circles, above all Canaanite, Mesopotamian, Egyptian and Hebrew, but also found in many tribes of central Asia. It was particularly popular in Jewish circles, despite its rigid prohibition in the Pentateuch (*Deut* 18:9-14; regarding this, one may turn to *Gen* 44:5; *Lev* 19:31; *Num* 22:7-11; *Ezek* 21:26-8, etc.; see JEWS AND JUDAISM). An allusion to this practice is found in the Sumerian *Maqlū (The Burnt Tablets),* where we read: "His knot is open, his witchcraft has been cancelled, and his spells now fill the desert." The blowing itself, the bad breath and the spit, are considered an enemy's curse. Along these lines, Babylonian writings define an "evil one" as "the one with an evil face, mouth, tongue, eye, lip, and saliva."

Well-known in Arabia long before the advent of Islam, these knots were used to tie good and evil forces in equal measure. As he left his house, an Arab would tie a knot around a branch of a hedge. If upon his return he discovered that the knot had been undone, he understood that his wife had betrayed him (see ADULTERY AND FORNICATION). A similar practice is followed today in the oases of the Sahara desert, where healers make eleven knots in a red or black woolen thread, reciting at each knot the appropriate invocations in a soft voice. They then wrap the thread around the head of anyone who wishes to be healed of eye discomfort.

Muslim tradition mentions a particular situation of this in relation to Muḥammad. A sorcerer had made eleven knots in a rope, reciting spell-like formulas in order to do harm to the Prophet, who then became ill. He returned to normal health only after having recited Q 113 and 114 eleven times. Q 113 relates above all to the evil spells used against one's physical state, against the healthy body, protecting it against that which could render turbid one's psyche, soul, and serenity (see ILLNESS AND HEALTH). It is believed to save one from the psychic disturbances inserted in human mortals by Satan (that occult persuader; see DEVIL), whether through demons (see JINN) or through other evil humans (see ENEMIES; for further discussion of the use of Q 113 and 114 as imprecations for deliverance from evil, see Graham, *Beyond,* 109).

The very first sūra of the Qurʾān, Sūrat al-Fātiḥa ("The Opening," see FĀTIḤA) is also considered a talisman of great potency. According to the traditional chronology, it is the fifth sūra revealed to the Prophet at Mecca (in the year 610 or 611). All of the letters of the Arabic alphabet (see ARABIC SCRIPT; ARABIC LANGUAGE) are contained therein, except seven *(f, j, sh, th, z, kh, z)*. These seven letters came to be called "the missing letters of Sūrat al-Fātiḥa" (*sawāqiṭ al-fātiḥa,* cf. Mandel Khān, *L'alfabeto arabo,* 177). Those who fashion talismans consider these letters rich in magical virtue and thus often use them in their charms.

The three sūras mentioned above were, for many centuries, used as talismans, written on pieces of paper and carried on one's person or enclosed in a specially shaped case. These cases were often made of silver (q.v.) and had an oblong shape, frequently in hexagonal sections. From the ninth/fifteenth century onwards, the cases were often made from hard stone and no longer had an inner space to enclose writings, thereby becoming imitations of the original case. Nevertheless, these cases became, in themselves, a sort of luck charm, even when they no longer contained verses from the Qurʾān (see EPIGRAPHY AND THE QURʾĀN).

In addition to the above-mentioned verses, which are held to be the most effective, other verses, of an apotropaic nature, were used to ward off danger. For example, Q 21:80, a short verse known as "the tunic of arms," or "the iron-shirted tunic," was carried into battle by soldiers, in the hope of avoiding the enemy's blows. Soldiers also made use of Q 67:22, to guard against being bitten by a possibly rabid dog (q.v.) or other animal (see AMULETS for further discussion of the use of qurʾānic verses for protection from harm).

The Qurʾān itself contains teachings related to other magical valences. Q 41:16-7 speaks of days full of misfortune. For Muslims, the lucky days are Monday, Thursday, and Friday. A popular tradition of al-Ṭabarī (d. 310/923; *Tafsīr,* xxiv, 95) cites Tuesday as the day in which God created all that is detestable for humankind. For the Shīʿīs (see SHĪʿISM AND THE QURʾĀN) and for all who were drawn into their sphere, the last Wednesday of the month of Ṣafar (which is the second month of the Muslim calendar; see CALENDAR; MOON) was notoriously unlucky, and nicknamed "Black Wednesday." The months (q.v.) that were considered to be totally unlucky were — always in the Muslim calendar — the first month of the year, Muḥarram, and the second, Ṣafar. Islamic astrologers used Q 41:16-7 to support their belief that, according to the days of the week and the position of the stars (see PLANETS AND STARS), human beings experience lucky days and unfavorable days, as reported in full detail by Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī (d. 606/1210; *Tafsīr,* xxvii, 113).

Two qurʾānic prophets have long been associated with the realm of magic and the esoteric: Moses (q.v.) and Solomon. Narratives about Moses (Mūsā) may be found, with variations and repetitions, in sūras 2, 5, 7, 10, 18, 20 and 28, in addition to brief mention in other passages. In Q 20:56-70, the Qurʾān touches upon his "magic contest," in which, with the help of God, he is victorious over the magicians of Pharaoh (q.v.). Q 18:60-82 is understood to allude to another magical episode involving Moses, which post-qurʾānic tradition describes as having taken place on a journey in search of the fountain "of eternal youth."

Q 2:101-2 and its reference to Solomon (Sulaymān) is of particular importance because it speaks of the probable origins of magic on the earth. This was due to Hārūt and Mārūt, hung by their feet in the well of the Temple of Astarte in Babylon. According to a Hebrew legend, also present in the pre-Islamic milieu, Hārūt and Mārūt were two angels, condemned by God to live upon earth because they had become infatuated with a woman (cf. Thaʿlabī, *Qiṣaṣ,* 43-7 for an Islamic version of this story; see HĀRŪT AND MĀRŪT for further [Islamic and pre-Islamic] details on these figures). In the Hebrew environment, this brings to mind the "sons of Elohim," who loved the daughters of man and the fallen angel, masters of magic.

Al-Bayḍāwī (d. ca. 716/1316-7), using his concise and terse style, dedicates an entire page of his commentary to Hārūt and Mārūt, while al-Zamakhsharī (d. 538/1144), in his *Kashshāf,* devotes a page and a half. Even longer sections are to be found in the commentaries of al-Ṭabarī and al-Rāzī (see EXEGESIS OF THE QURʾĀN: CLASSICAL AND MEDIEVAL). These commentators discuss another "magical" allusion in the Qurʾān, one found in Q 15:16-8; 37:6-10; 67:5 and 72:8-9: these passages recount how demons sometimes push forward towards the limits of a celestial judicial assembly, listen to what the angels and the blessed are saying, and then descend to earth to treacherously whisper

what they have heard to magicians and sorcerers.

In the short verses of Q 27:17; 34:12-4; and 38:34-40, the Qurʾān speaks repeatedly of Solomon, and of the magical powers which God bestowed upon him, offering him the aid of jinn. Narratives such as these contributed to the legends found in later European sources, in which Solomon appears as a great magician, endowed with a supernatural power over demons, the forces of nature and animals (see ANIMAL LIFE). He perfectly understood all their languages (see Mandel Khān, *Salomone* [in addition to SOLOMON] for further discussion of the powers of this qurʾānic figure). According to such tales, he even wrote magic procedures in various books, which he then had buried under his throne (or inserted into its base) and these books would one day be re-discovered, at least in part, and spread about by ordinary magicians.

Ḥadīths also speak widely of magic. Abū Saʿīd al-Khudrī (cf. Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ,* 75:33) makes specific reference in a ḥadīth to the protective value of the recitation of the Fātiḥa used as an act of exorcism. Al-Aswād b. Zayd remarked that he questioned ʿĀʾisha (see ʿĀʾISHA BINT ABĪ BAKR) about the use of magic as a cure for poisonous animal bites and she answered: "The Prophet authorizes its use against every sort of poisonous animal" (Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ,* 76:37). Also, according to ʿĀʾisha, the Prophet was able to perform exorcisms while invoking God (Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ,* 76:38, 2). According to a Companion of Muḥammad, Abū Qatāda (see COMPANIONS OF THE PROPHET), the Prophet stated: "Our good dreams (see DREAMS AND SLEEP; FORETELLING) come from God, and the bad ones from the demonic. When one of you has a bad dream, breathe three times once you are awake, and recite the talismanic sūras that protect us from evil, and your dream will not cause you any harm" (Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ,* 76:39, 1). An evil eye launched against the Prophet was also described in detail by ʿĀʾisha (Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ,* 76:47).

On the basis of the magic accepted by the Qurʾān and ḥadīth, there arose a series of eminent Islamic scholars, essayists, and authors of treatises upon specialized subjects of magic, some of whom were magicians themselves. Many books were written about the topic from a sociological or a psychological point of view. More popular works were composed about how to construct talismans, lucky charms, or an evil eye to circulate among people, using either praiseworthy "white" magic *(al-ṭarīqa al-maḥmūda)* or blameworthy "black" magic *(al-ṭarīqa al-madhmūma)*. The following are only the principal figures from this myriad of authors: In the third/ninth century there were Abū ʿAbdallāh Jābir b. Ḥayyān, a Ṣūfī alchemist and magician known as Geber in Europe, and Dhū l-Nūn Abū l-Fayḍ al-Miṣrī (d. 246/861), a great Ṣūfī master. Later came Ibn al-Nadīm Muḥammad b. Isḥāq, author of the *Fihrist* (fl. fourth/tenth cent.), Abū Ḥāmid al-Ghazālī (d. 505/1111) one of the greatest Ṣūfī and Muslim theologians, and Abū l-Qāsim Maslama b. Aḥmad al-Majrīṭī (d. 398/1007), known in Europe as "pseudo Picatrix" (the "pseudo Hippocrates") who, along with Ibn Waḥshiyya (fl. prob. fourth/tenth cent.), was very well known in the occidental world, and from whose books "the secret alphabets" and the symbols used by alchemists were taken. In the sixth/twelfth century, one can count the famous theologian and exegete Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī, whose studies are of exemplary balance, and Abū l-ʿAbbās al-Būnī (d. 622/1225), of whose works manuscripts abound (cf. Dietrich, al-Būnī). Of paramount importance is the first sociologist of Islam, the historian Ibn Khaldūn (d. 808/

1406), who in his writings dealt fully with magic and talismans. In the present day, both Yūsuf al-Hindī and Muḥammad al-Afghānistānī of Cairo have written much and gathered a large amount of information related to curses and evil spells as well as lucky charms.

Reading the texts of the many Muslims who busied themselves with magic, both of the authors cited here, and of many others, it becomes apparent that, in practice, the topic is subdivided into different fields: 1) the "science of letters," letters divided into the quadrants of fire, air, earth, and water (see COSMOLOGY; NATURE AS SIGNS); 2) the "mysterious letters" (q.v.) of the Qurʾān which open some sūras, and those "missing" in the first sūra; 3) the value of numbers; 4) the power of the ninety-nine exceptional and indescribable name-attributes of God (see GOD AND HIS ATTRIBUTES), in particular that of the secret name, the hundredth, to perform miracles; 5) the use of the names of demons in invocations related to black magic.

We also observe the construction and utilization of magical quadrants such as lucky charms for protection from the evil eye or as reinforcements in exorcisms. The culmination of this science is the production of lucky charms and talismans, for which the following are utilized: 1) texts from the Qurʾān; 2) the hand motif (*khamsa,* the five fingers), called "the hand of Fāṭima" in the West (for one example, see Figure x of EPIGRAPHY); 3) vegetative and related materials; 4) animal motifs; 5) hard, precious stones (see METALS AND MINERALS); and 6) tattooing.

Some scholars have seen a relation between knowledge of these values and those necessary for the spiritual evolution of the mystic of Islam, the Ṣūfī, who nears a greater comprehension of God by rising to the seven levels of spiritual evolution, symbolized by: 1) sound (see HEARING AND DEAFNESS); 2) light (q.v.); 3) number (geometry, construction, subdivision of luminosity; see MEASUREMENT; NUMBERS AND ENUMERATION); 4) a letter (the secret meanings of names, grammatical constructions; see GRAMMAR AND THE QURʾĀN); 5) word (*dhikr,* the recitation of the ninety-nine names of God, or the recitation of the Qurʾān [q.v.]); 6) symbol (see METAPHOR; SIMILE); 7) rhythm and symmetry.

One can note in summation that while the Qurʾān counters the human tendency to ascribe divinity, or divine attributes, to various supernatural beings, it does not deny the existence of such beings. Rather, while recognizing the human need to come to terms with the intangible — be it through dreams, fables or magic — the primary message of the Qurʾān is the affirmation of the submission of all of creation — visible and invisible — to the one God. See also SOOTHSAYERS.

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Magog

see GOG AND MAGOG

Maidens

see MODESTY; VIRTUE; SEX AND SEXUALITY; HOURIS

Maintenance and Upkeep

Preservation and repair of property, or, more commonly in the Qurʾān, the care for one's dependents. In Islamic law, *nafaqa* indicates the obligation to maintain one's dependents (see GUARDIANSHIP). The Qurʾān uses *nafaqa* of expenditures in general, even those against Islam at Q 8:36. It is enjoined by Q 2:215-6 for the benefit of parents (q.v.), relatives (see KINSHIP), orphans (q.v.), the poor (see POVERTY AND THE POOR) and wayfarers (see JOURNEY; similarly Q 17:26; 30:38). Repeated injunctions to do good to one's parents *(wa-bi-l-wālidayn iḥsānan)* have also been taken to require their maintenance (Q 4:36; 6:151; 17:23; 46:15). Q 2:240 calls for the maintenance of the widow (q.v.) for a year, apparently from the man's estate. Q 25:67 indicates that they do best whose expenditures are neither excessive nor stingy. In the context of divorce, finally, Q 65:6-7 enjoins husbands to allow their wives to live where they themselves do and not to be hard on them if they are pregnant (see MARRIAGE AND DIVORCE).

Later Islamic law (see LAW AND THE QURʾĀN) lays out the duty of maintenance in specific terms, which have the advantage of being more or less enforceable by temporal authority but necessarily lack the generous, free character of the qurʾānic injunctions. Jurisprudents agree that *zakāt* covers one's duty of maintenance toward non-relatives (see ALMSGIVING; COMMUNITY AND SOCIETY IN THE QURʾĀN). The duty of maintenance is laid especially on men but also, with reference to Q 2:233 and 65:7, on women toward their children (see WOMEN AND THE QURʾĀN; BIRTH). Maintenance specifically includes food (see FOOD AND DRINK), clothing (q.v.), shelter (see HOUSE, DOMESTIC AND DIVINE) and the provision of a servant (q.v.) if the beneficiary's social status requires it (see also SLAVES AND SLAVERY; SOCIAL RELATIONS). For men, it may also include *iʿfāf,* the provision of a licit sexual partner (see CONCUBINES; SEX AND SEXUALITY). Partly on the basis of Q 2:219, wives claim maintenance before parents or children, for they provide reciprocal favors. If a husband refuses to maintain his wife, she may ask the religious judge *(qāḍī)* to dissolve the marriage. Jurisprudents disagree over the relatives to whom one owes *nafaqa,* the Mālikīs going so far as to require maintenance of parents and children alone. See also WEALTH.

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Majesty see GOD AND HIS ATTRIBUTES

Majūs see MAGIANS

Male see GENDER

Malice see ENEMIES

Malikis (Mālikī) see LAW AND THE QURʾĀN

Manāt see IDOLS AND IMAGES

Manna see MOSES; FOOD AND DRINK

Manners see HOSPITALITY AND COURTESY

Manslaughter see MURDER; BLOODSHED

Manual Labor

Literally "work with one's hands," it often carries the implication of strenuous physical exertion. Manual labor is not a topic explicitly addressed in the Qurʾān though the term "forced laborer" *(sukhrī)* is mentioned once and the Qurʾān describes some of the ancient prophets (see PROPHETS AND PROPHETHOOD) as having been able to achieve prominence by using forced and voluntary labor in great building projects (see ART AND ARCHITECTURE AND THE QURʾĀN; ARCHAEOLOGY AND THE QURʾĀN).

The Qurʾān states that it is God who "raises some to levels above others so that some of them compel others to work for them" (Q 43:32; see SOCIAL INTERACTIONS; SOCIAL RELATIONS; COMMUNITY AND SOCIETY IN THE QURʾĀN). The point of this verse is not to justify forced labor. Rather, it is to deny that this kind of worldly power, although permitted by God, is an indication of God's favor (see BLESSING; GRACE; KINGS AND RULERS; POLITICS AND THE QURʾĀN; POWER AND IMPOTENCE; AUTHORITY). Accompanying verses state that even though Muḥammad was not the most successful man in Mecca (q.v.) or Medina (q.v.), God nonetheless chose him as his prophet. In Q 43:32, "the mercy (q.v.) of your lord (q.v.) is better than what they amass," the last term is understood as a reference to wealth (q.v.) and worldly success.

The qurʾānic description of Solomon (q.v.) regally commanding labor from jinn (q.v.) and satans (Q 21:82; 34:12-3; see DEVIL), perhaps as a form of punishment (*ʿadhāb,* Q 34:14; see CHASTISEMENT AND PUNISHMENT), contrasts sharply with the humble image he and other prophets assume in early Islamic literature. Only Moses (q.v.) is explicitly stated in the Qurʾān to have done work requiring physical strength (Q 28:26). Nevertheless, the "stories of the prophets" *(qiṣaṣ al-anbiyāʾ)* relate that all the prophets practiced a trade. Books on economics (q.v.) also discuss the professions of the prophets: a work attributed to al-Shaybānī (d. 189/804) relates that Solomon wove baskets, Noah (q.v.) was a carpenter and Idrīs (q.v.) was a tailor (Shaybānī, *Kasb,* 76).

The significance of the attribution of humble labor to the prophets can perhaps best be discerned in the story that David (q.v.) — who is described in the Qurʾān only as having been "taught by God" how to forge iron (Q 21:80) and that God "made iron soft for him" (Q 34:10; see METALS AND MINERALS) — actually worked the iron with his own hands in order to support himself after having been criticized for "eating from the state treasury" (Shaybānī, *Kasb,* 77). This echoes the criticism leveled against the Umayyad caliphs for drawing from the state treasury for all their

expenses, in contrast to the "rightly guided caliphs" who are said to have tried to support themselves (see CALIPH).

Similarly, a group of early Ṣūfīs (see ṢŪFISM AND THE QUR'ĀN) is criticized for refusing to earn a living, preferring to live on charity (see ALMSGIVING). The obligation to earn a living *(al-kash, al-iktisāb)* is particularly advocated by scholars like Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal (d. 241/855) who criticize any dependence on the support of corrupt governments (see LAW AND THE QUR'ĀN). To avoid forbidden earnings it may be necessary to engage in manual labor, these scholars argue, using examples of the prophets and Companions (see COMPANIONS OF THE PROPHET) to support their position that there is nothing inherently dishonorable in manual labor (Mattson, *Believing slave,* 220). Indeed, argues al-Shaybānī (*Kash,* 73), Muslims could not fulfill their ritual obligations (see RITUAL AND THE QUR'ĀN; RITUAL PURITY) if, among other things, some people did not make jars to carry water for ablution (see CLEANLINESS AND ABLUTION) and others did not weave clothes to cover the body for prayer (q.v.).

The issue of the honor (q.v.) or dishonor of manual labor is not prominent in the Qur'ān despite the great importance this issue assumes in the corpus of ḥadīth and early anti-Ṣūfī polemics (see ḤADĪTH AND THE QUR'ĀN). Similarly, the Qur'ān does not discuss the effect a woman's status will have on whether she is required to perform household chores, although this is an important legal issue in early Islam (Mattson, *Believing slave,* 192). The Qur'ān indicates that status differences based on family and tribal affiliation (see KINSHIP; TRIBES AND CLANS) were generally more important at the rise of Islam than considerations of profession. No doubt this can be attributed to the fact that the Ḥijāz at the rise of Islam was not as well developed as the urban centers of the Fertile Crescent, where sharp divisions of labor and hereditary professions were important aspects of society (see GEOGRAPHY; CITY; BEDOUIN; IRAQ; PRE-ISLAMIC ARABIA AND THE QUR'ĀN).

The issue of honor aside, early Muslim scholars admitted that it was generally difficult and tiring to earn a living. According to some commentators, one of the worst consequences of being removed from paradise (q.v.) for Adam (see ADAM AND EVE) was that he subsequently had to exhaust himself earning a living (Shaybānī, *Kash,* 75). The Qur'ān indicates that one of the rewards of paradise will be freedom from having to engage in tiring work (*al-naṣab,* Q 35:35; see also MAINTENANCE AND UPKEEP).

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Manuscripts of the Qur'ān

Within the handwritten heritage of the Islamic world (see ORTHOGRAPHY; ARABIC SCRIPT), the Qur'ān occupies by far the most conspicuous place — at least in terms of sheer volume. Until the present day, copyists, amateurs as well as professionals, have devoted much time and effort to transcribing the revealed text by hand. It is therefore no wonder that the topic "manuscripts of the Qur'ān" should cover a wide variety of cases: Qur'āns are found in one volume (*muṣḥaf,* q.v.) or sets *(rab'a)* from two to sixty volumes but also as excerpts, usu-

ally connected with prayers (see PRAYER). In all these cases, the manuscripts take the form of a codex, that is a book made up of one or many quires obtained by folding together a varying number of sheets of parchment, paper or perhaps also papyrus. Qur'āns are also found on other materials, like wood or textile, and in other formats, rolls or sheets, for instance, both being used as talismans. The following article will focus solely on the manuscripts in codex form. It should, however, be noted that the study of these manuscripts is unevenly developed: some aspects like illumination (see ORNAMENTATION AND ILLUMINATION) or calligraphy (q.v.) have already been well investigated while others, e.g. the early written transmission of the text, still await comprehensive studies. The bulk of the material, manuscripts without illumination or in more ordinary hands of later periods, have not even been examined or catalogued in spite of their importance for the study of a wide range of subjects, from popular piety to the diffusion of the book in the Islamic lands.

Modern printed editions (see PRINTING OF THE QUR'ĀN) tend to reproduce the features of "classical" Qur'āns — including even the catchwords — which were prevalent during past centuries. Yet, before this "classical" form was attained, the qur'ānic manuscripts underwent many changes, at a rather rapid pace, during the first centuries of Islam. As a consequence, this article will devote a great deal of attention to the early period, since it witnessed many variations and reforms and paved the way for the modern qur'ānic codex.

Pre-ʿUthmānic manuscripts

The first "manuscripts" are only known through the reports of early Muslim scholars. According to their sources, the text was initially written on shoulder blades from camels (for a later example, see Fig. III of FĀTIḤA), flat stones or pieces of leather during the Prophet's lifetime in order to preserve the revelations as they came (see OCCASIONS OF REVELATION). Even if the concept of "book" (q.v.; *kitāb*) was already familiar to the first Muslim community, there is no evidence that any codex with the text of the revelation was available before Muḥammad's death (see CODICES OF THE QUR'ĀN). Such a format is closed and therefore ill-adapted to a situation in which the Qur'ān was still receiving additions. The heterogeneous materials mentioned in the Muslim tradition suggest that these amounted to notes meant for private use, and hence quite different from a text which has been "published" in a sense close to the modern use.

Be that as it may, nothing from these early notes has been preserved — another argument supporting the idea that they were not considered manuscripts in the full sense of the word — and the later development of the qur'ānic codex left all these materials completely aside (see COLLECTION OF THE QURĀN). Shoulder blades with Qur'ān excerpts are known from later periods, but do not correspond to any attempt to have had the whole text recorded in that fashion. According to one Christian source, early Muslims did write the text of the Qur'ān on scrolls, in imitation of the Jewish Torah (q.v.; al-Kindī, *Risāla*). Here again, though, no material evidence has survived that would substantiate that claim; the parchment rolls with qur'ānic text published by S. Ory are *rotuli* and not *volumina* like the Torah.

Some time before the sixth/twelfth century, ancient copies of the Qur'ān gained the reputation of having been written by ʿUthmān (q.v.) or ʿAlī (see ʿALĪ B. ABĪ ṬĀLIB) or other prominent figures of early Islam: in some cases, as in Cordoba, the text in question contained only a few pages, while in Damascus, an entire copy

of such a Qur'ān was kept in the Great Mosque (al-Harawī, *Kitāb al-Ishārāt,* 15; Ṣ. al-Munajjid, *Études,* 45-60). Judging from the manuscripts that have survived, the attribution is often based on a note by a later hand but sometimes a colophon does seem to lend support to this claim. Ṣ. al-Munajjid has attempted to counter such claims, maintaining that the material involved is later, dating mainly from the third/ninth century (see for instance Topkapı Sarayı Museum, TKS A1, or Türk Islâm Eserleri Müzesi, TIEM 458 — both in Istanbul). Additionally, the above-mentioned colophons sometimes contain gross mistakes (in Istanbul, one example is found at the Topkapı Sarayı Museum, TKS Y 745: the copyist is supposed to be ʿAlī b. Abū *[sic]* Ṭālib; his name is written at a right angle to the normal disposition of the text). Original expressions of worship developed around these relics: in Cordoba, two servants took the bound volume with the leaves from a treasury in the Great Mosque; a third man, carrying a candle, walked in front of them. They all went to the place where the imām (q.v.) stood for prayer in order to lay the volume on a Qur'ān stand (al-Maqqarī, *Nafḥ,* i, 360; see RITUAL AND THE QUR'ĀN). A. Grohmann has compiled a list of dated early qur'ānic manuscripts (Problem, 216 n. 17): the oldest dates from 94/712-3 but this Qur'ān has never been published and there is considerable doubt about it. Qur'ānic palimpsests have also been said to antedate the ʿUthmānic edition (Mingana and Lewis, *Leaves*).

The Ḥijāzī and Umayyad codices

The earliest Qur'ān manuscripts and fragments do not contradict the information provided by the Islamic sources about the "edition" of an official recension of the Qur'ān by the third caliph, ʿUthmān (r. 23-35/644-56). Attempts to assign codex fragments to an earlier period have not been conclusive: the palimpsests published by A. Mingana and A. Lewis are certainly among the earliest fragments preserved, but nothing indicates that they necessarily predate many others. The same also holds for the two palimpsests sold at an auction in 1992. The oldest text on both is written in the so-called "Ḥijāzī" script, a designation coined by M. Amari in the middle of the nineteenth century — he spoke of "écriture du Ḥidjāz" — on the basis of Ibn al-Nadīm's (d. ca. 385/995) description of the earliest Arabic scripts:

> The first of the Arab scripts was the script of Makkah, the next of al-Madīnah, then of al-Baṣrah, and then of al-Kūfah. For the *alifs* of the scripts of Makkah and al-Madīnah there is a turning of the hand to the right and lengthening of the strokes, one form having a slight slant (trans. B. Dodge).

The study of the early Qur'ān manuscripts and fragments in the Paris collection enabled Amari to identify those fragments that demonstrated the various features noted by Ibn al-Nadīm. Unfortunately, his work has remained largely ignored, and research on these documents did not advance significantly until N. Abbott's contribution to the subject *(Rise of north Arabic script)*. The methodical publication in facsimile of these early Qur'āns was begun in 1998 (cf. Déroche and Noseda [eds.], *Sources de la transmission du texte coranique*).

The name of the script — Ḥijāzī — (like the designation "Kūfic") does not mean that these manuscripts were transcribed in the Ḥijāz. The bulk of the material presently known comes from three repositories of old qur'ānic codices, in Damascus, Fusṭāṭ and Ṣanʿā'. (The present locations of these codices also cannot be taken as a conclusive argument as to their origin,

which remains for the moment uncertain.) On the other hand, the fact that the collection in Qayrawān does not contain such material only has the value of an argument *e silentio*. A preliminary survey shows that the script varies widely — as if the peculiarities of the individual hands were of little concern to the scribes, the patrons or the readers. This diversity might be ascribed to regional habits, but this does not satisfactorily explain why, in manuscripts written by more than one scribe from the same region, the hands of the various copyists are so different from one another that they can be recognized at first glance (e.g. Bibliothèque nationale de France, BNF Arabe 328a f. 28a and b [for f. 28a see Fig. 1], or Dār al-Makhṭūṭāt, inv. no. 01-21.1). A common standard concerning the script had probably not yet developed, and it would thus be safer to speak of Ḥijāzī style, rather than Ḥijāzī script. For the sake of convenience, we shall use here the designation of Ḥijāzī codex.

The dating of this material relies mainly on paleographic arguments: slant and shape of the *alif,* elongation of the shafts, but also the similarities with the script of the earliest papyri as pointed out by M. Amari and later by A. Grohmann. So far, no direct evidence — for instance, a colophon — has been found. One could perhaps expect confirmation from a Carbon 14 analysis of the parchment, but, since the geographic provenience is not clear, such results could only be taken as an indication of its age. The dating to the second half of the first/seventh century can therefore only be tentative, and future research might throw light on the chronology of the Ḥijāzī codices. The defective writing of the *alif* (*qala* instead of *qāla* being the best known instance) adds weight, however, to the early dating of these manuscripts and fragments, some of which count the *basmala* (q.v.) as a verse (see Bibliothèque nationale de France, BNF Arabe 328a). With the exception of these peculiarities, most of the manuscripts currently known are very close to the canonical text. Some fragments of Ḥijāzī codices found in Ṣanʿāʾ are said to include some textual variants which were not recorded by later literature (see READINGS OF THE QUR'ĀN), and to offer an order of the sūras differing from the arrangements of both the canonical text and the codices of Ibn Masʿūd and Ubayy (Puin, Observations, 111; see FORM AND STRUCTURE OF THE QUR'ĀN).

In these Ḥijāzī codices [of Ṣanʿāʾ], the script is slender and regularly spread out on the page. The spaces between characters, regardless of whether the said character is part of a word or not, are always identical; as a consequence, words can be divided at the end of a line. Clusters of dots show the ends of verses but groups of five or ten verses do not seem initially to have been singled out. Vowels are not recorded and diacritical dots are used in varying degrees by the copyists; when two or more copied a text together, they do not appear to have agreed on common rules but dotted the letters according to their own habits (compare for instance Bibliothèque nationale de France, BNF Arabe 328a f. 7b and 38a). The number of lines varies from one page to another, even though the copyists used ruling. A blank space is left between sūras, but some of the fragments suggest that crude decorations in ink were already allowed (if they do not belong to a second stage of the Ḥijāzī codices). The sūra titles found on these manuscripts are often in red ink: they were added later. There are a few instances of division of the text into seven parts, with the indication within the written area itself — i.e. British Library, BL Or. 2165, where such division is indicated in green ink. This is in contrast to the later practice

of adding the indications of the textual divisions in the margins (the indications that do not appear in the margins are also additions but the shortness of these marks makes it impossible to date them, and thus to assess how much time had elapsed between their addition and the copying of the qur'ānic text itself).

The material available to us shows that early Muslims made a choice which was to shape the history of the Qur'ān as a manuscript: they adopted for their own scriptures the kind of book which was common at that time, namely the codex, and started copying the text in long lines — whereas in other book traditions of the Middle East the texts were arranged in columns. Most of the Ḥijāzī codices are in the then usual vertical format, except a few, which are in the oblong format that was to become the rule for Qur'ān codices during the second/eighth century: as the script of these latter manuscripts is more regular than in other Ḥijāzī codices, it has been suggested that they belong to a later stage of development — perhaps the end of the first/seventh or the beginning of the second/eighth century.

All of the earliest qur'ānic manuscripts that have come down to us were written on parchment. The amount of text on the few fragments of papyrus published by A. Grohmann is too small to establish whether Qur'ān codices on papyrus existed side by side with parchment ones or not: these fragments could just as well have come from extracts. As is the case with the script, the way in which the parchment was used to produce quires varies greatly from one manuscript to another — inasmuch as enough folios remain to allow a reconstruction of the original quires.

The anticipated use of the various Ḥijāzī codices cannot be determined: the size of many of them would suggest a public use, in a mosque (q.v.) for instance. Judging by the evidence of a Paris manuscript (Bibliothèque nationale de France, BNF Arabe 328a; see Fig. 1), these codices seem to have been cared for over a long period of time: some places of this manuscript where the ink appears to have faded have been written over by a hand which can not be dated to earlier than the end of the third/ninth century.

By the end of the first/seventh or beginning of the second/eighth century, a new trend was changing the appearance of the qur'ānic codex. As far as can be determined by the best reconstruction of the chronology of the qur'ānic scripts, it was the Umayyad period that witnessed the emergence of a style in which the letter forms were more regular and the shafts more vertical. This may be linked with the reforms of ʿAbd al-Malik who decided that the chancery of the empire should use Arabic instead of Greek and Persian, thus promoting the use of the Arabic script. On the other hand, one consequence of these administrative decisions could have been the emergence of the concept of specifically qur'ānic scripts. The script of the papyri of the first/seventh century and that of the Ḥijāzī codices have similarities; this will no longer be the case in the following period, and the gap between qur'ānic and secular scripts will widen. Another argument for the dating of this style to the Umayyad period are sūra headbands of a Qur'ān found among the Damascus fragments (Türk Islâm Eserleri Müzesi, TIEM ŞE 321) which are clearly related to the decorative repertory of the mosaics on the Dome of the Rock (see AQṢĀ MOSQUE). Ornament is thus making its way into the qur'ānic manuscripts (the evidence that is available today indicates that this is the first instance of the use of gold in qur'ānic ornamentation). Other experimentations are documented in this group of manuscripts and fragments: in some of them, as

was usual at that time, a blank line has been left between two sūras, but the place is highlighted by the use of colored inks (red and/or green) for the first lines of the beginning of the next sūra and sometimes also for the last lines of the preceding one. This is also when groups of ten verses begin to receive a special marker, in some cases only a letter with numerical value *(abjad)*. In one fragment (Bibliothèque nationale de France, BNF Arabe 330c), it is written in gold. Other attempts which can be attributed to this period or somewhat later are more puzzling: for example, calligrams with colored inks developing over the writing surface. The orthography itself was changing: it is far from homogeneous from one manuscript to another, and sometimes even changes within the same manuscript, but overall it does show an evolution towards the *scriptio plena*.

Another Qurʾān attributed to the Umayyad period is more difficult to evaluate: some fragments (Dār al-Makhṭūṭāt, inv. no. 20-33.1) are the only remnants of a large manuscript (51 × 47 cm), which originally contained about 520 folios. The impressive illuminations (particularly the two representations of a mosque) have no equivalent and the script foreshadows later developments; an elaborate frame surrounds the written area on the first folios of the text (for examples of these fragments, see Figs. 1 of FĀTIḤA and 1 of ORNAMENTATION AND ILLUMINATION).

The qurʾānic codex in early ʿAbbāsid times

Our knowledge of the Qurʾāns of the third/ninth century, which include a few dated manuscripts, is fairly developed. The earlier part of the ʿAbbāsid period, however, remains somewhat unclear as the information about it is still very scarce. Here again, the dating of Qurʾāns to the second/eighth century relies mainly on paleography. But, as compared with the evidence from the first/seventh century, we are on surer footing in this century, since more paleographic evidence has survived. The qurʾānic scripts of that period are traditionally known as "Kūfic," but "early ʿAbbāsid scripts" would be more accurate; the linking of any of them with the town of Kūfa remaining unclear. As a whole, the scripts bear witness to the emergence of a body of highly skilled scribes and a complex set of rules concerning the use of the various styles. In the eighties of the twentieth century, a tentative typology was created in order to classify the material: it defines six groups of scripts (called A to F), subdivided into a varying number of styles (for instance B II or D IV; see Déroche, *Abbasid tradition,* 34-47; id., *Catalogue, I/1. Aux origines de la calligraphie coranique,* 37-45). The terminology and results of this typology have been used here in order to provide clarity to the following account.

A major development of this period is the introduction of a system for the notation of the vowels. These are indicated through the positioning of red dots with respect to the consonant: an "a" — *fatḥa* — above the letter, an "i" — *kasra* — below it or a "u" — *ḍamma* — after it; the indefinite case ending *(tanwīn)* is noted by a duplication of the dot. Although it was reportedly invented by Abū l-Aswad al-Duʾalī (d. 69/688), this system does not seem to have been used before the end of the first/seventh century. Qurʾāns from the Umayyad period have red dots: but are they contemporaneous with the script itself? Since the dots were necessarily an addition (neither the ink nor paint nor the writing implement were those used for the copy of the unadorned orthography, i.e. *rasm*), doubt always remains about the time that elapsed between the copying of the text and the addition of the dots. The system was later perfected with the addition of dots for the glottal stop — *hamza* — (green

or yellow) and the consonantal duplicator — *shadda* — (yellow, orange or blue); sometimes their modern form is written with colored ink. The sign for the absence of a vowel — *sukūn* — is rarely indicated. Other signs were used in the Maghrib in order to note more accurately the pronunciation (see Nuruosmaniye Library 23, completed in Palermo in 372/982-3). This system remained dominant until the end of the fourth/tenth century and was apparently still used late into the tenth/sixteenth century for a Yemeni (?) Qur'ān. In the Maghrib, but also in qur'ānic manuscripts in Sūdānī script, the *hamza* was indicated by a dot until very recently (see Bibliothèque nationale de France, BNF Arabe 576, dated 1195/1781).

Early in the period under discussion here, some Qur'āns were still in the vertical format: the B I group of scripts could be typical for the early part of the second/eighth century (see Institute of Oriental Studies in St. Petersburg, IOS C 20 or Bibliothèque nationale de France, BNF Arabe 331) and bear witness to the transition from the Ḥijāzī codex — to which its somewhat slender script is probably related — to the early ʿAbbāsid one. Alongside this tradition, which was gradually fading out, another stouter kind of script (akin to that of Dār al-Makhṭūṭāt, inv. no. 20-33.1) came to be the qur'ānic script *par excellence*. It is commonly associated with the oblong format, although the change from the vertical format cannot have been motivated solely by script aesthetics. One reason for this shift — unrecorded in our sources, however — may have been a desire to give the Qur'ān a visual identity clearly different from that of the Torah (roll) or the Gospels (vertical codex; see GOSPEL). Another development which probably played a role in the horizontal lay-out of the Qur'ān, but about whose influence on this matter the sources are also silent, is the nearly contemporary controversy about writing down ḥadīth (see ḤADĪTH AND THE QUR'ĀN). During the period, the number of lines to the page became increasingly regular: this evolution may stem from a will to control the text more easily.

The earliest sūra titles contemporaneous with the copy of the text itself are found in manuscripts tentatively attributed to the second/eighth century, but such texts are not the rule. For, up until this time, the sūras were separated from each other by a blank space or by an ornament — ranging from very crude ones to highly sophisticated illuminations. The headband had not yet found its shape: some ornaments occupy irregularly the rectangular space of the line, others are already enclosed within an outer rectangular frame; the vignette also appears, sometimes at both ends of the headband (see Forschungs- und Landesbibliothek, FLB Ms. orient. A 462, ff. 6 b and 11 a). The origin of the vignette has been connected with the *tabula ansata* of classical Antiquity; but since the early sūra headbands are an-epigraphic and devoid of vignette, one wonders whether this explanation, borrowed from epigraphy (see EPIGRAPHY AND THE QUR'ĀN), can be applied to manuscripts. Coptic paragraph marks show that marginal devices were known to the copyists of the period. At any rate, the need for information led very soon to the introduction of the sūra titles into the Qur'āns. Depending on the manuscripts, these were noted either at the beginning or at the end of the sūra. In the former case, the sūra title is introduced by a formula including the word *fātiḥa* ("opening"), in the latter by *khātima* ("ending"; both can be developed in various ways and even combined). During the third/ninth century, it became the rule to indicate the title at the beginning of the sūra, without any introductory formula. The names given to some of the sūras vary from one

manuscript to another. The number of verses is generally given next to the title and the ends of the verses are usually, but not always, indicated. Only rarely do ornamental verse end markers number the individual verses with *abjad* numerals (see NUMBERS AND ENUMERATION; NUMEROLOGY): most copies distinguish only groups of five and ten verses.

The most impressive achievement of the period is a group of giant Qur'āns (Bibliothèque nationale de France, BNF Arabe 324 and Forschungs- und Landesbibliothek, FLB Ms. orient. A 462 contain fragments of one of them), dating probably from the second part of the second/eighth century (a Carbon 14 dating of one page suggested a date between 640 and 765 C.E.; the earlier date seems more in keeping with other data). They may have been inspired by earlier attempts, like the above-mentioned Dār al-Makhṭūṭāt, inv. no. 20-33.1. The manuscripts measure roughly 68 × 53 cm and have twelve lines of text per page — in one case, the figure is slightly more than double this amount: twenty-five lines on a single page. Reconstructions based on the state of the manuscripts indicate that they would have had more than 600 folios, each of them composed of the hide of one animal. In spite of their thickness, they seem to have been bound as single-volume Qur'āns. These manuscripts were much larger than any earlier Qur'ān that has been preserved, and their production would have required an extraordinary financial investment. They were most probably ordered for mosques, but their size suggests that they would have served a purpose other than simply recitation or reading (see RECITATION OF THE QUR'ĀN). We are told that ʿUmar b. al-Khaṭṭāb abhorred Qur'āns in small script and was delighted when he saw large copies. In spite of the anachronism of this anecdote, it draws attention to the fact that large copies were favored by Muslims of the first centuries. Since congregational readings, such as that during the Friday prayer (q.v.), do not require such massive volumes, they may have served an apologetic or political function.

There is no clear evidence that multi-volume sets existed before the beginning of the third/ninth century, even if some of the earlier manuscripts contain marginal indications of divisions into sevenths, for instance. But from the third/ninth century on, both the manuscripts and the texts attached to them – mainly endowment documents *(waqfiyyāt)* — indicate that multi-volume sets were common. Some of the scripts, like D I, actually seem closely connected with this kind of Qur'ān, their size demanding a full text of such magnitude that it would have been impossible to bind all the folios as a single book. This led to the appearance of boxes *(tābūt, ṣundūq)* which could keep all the volumes of a set together. In the case of Amājūr's Qur'ān, the endowment document *(waqfiyya)* of 262/876 states that two boxes were needed to store the thirty *juz'* (Déroche, Qur'ān of Amāğūr, 61). This manuscript had only three lines to the page — which means that the total number of folios was enormous. It seems that such multi-volume Qur'āns were the solution needed for the production of manuscripts in this period that were, in the end, as large as the second/eighth century giant Qur'āns described earlier. As a rule, wealthy patrons ordered them for mosques. Qur'ānic codices are also known to have been the property of individuals: a few are actually dated according to notes recording births or deaths in a family. These were usually single volumes written in smaller scripts like B II, for instance.

There is also a greater range of illumination to be found in Qur'āns from the early ʿAbbāsid period, which may be, however,

simply due to the fact that more material has been preserved than for the earlier period. Some Qur'āns have no decoration whatsoever, or minimal indication of titles and divisions in red, green or yellow, while others use gold for the same purpose. The most sophisticated manuscripts may have an opening page — without any text — that spans two folios (very few have more than two such pages), sūra headbands with a vignette in the margin and a variety of verse or group markers. The beginning of the text itself is sometimes set into a decorated frame. Some Qur'āns also have an illuminated double page at the end. Multi-volume sets offered as many opportunities as there were volumes in which to illuminate the beginning (and possibly the end) of each section of text (see the series of which Topkapı Sarayı Museum, TKS EH 16 is part). Gold is heavily used in illumination, but also for the copying of the text. In spite of earlier statements by Muslim scholars like Mālik b. Anas (d. 179/796) against the use of gold for that purpose, chrysography seems to have received wide acceptance. Even if the story reported by Ibn al-Nadīm (*Fihrist,* 9) that a Qur'ān in gold script was produced for ʿUmar II were a forgery, a famous manuscript of ʿAbbāsid times, the "Blue Qur'ān," is far from being the only instance of gold script used for copying the Qur'ān. Other refinements, like dyed parchment, were also in use: blue parchment has been mentioned, but yellow, pink and orange are also documented.

With the exception of a text by al-Jahshiyārī, who recorded an anecdote about silver binding in Umayyad times (*Kitāb al-Wuzarā',* 26; Latz, *Das Buch,* 79), we have no information about the bindings of qur'ānic manuscripts until the third/ninth century. From that period onwards, various collections, but mainly that of Qayrawān, have bindings of a distinctive shape: they are indeed closer to boxes than to any kind of binding previously known. The boards are made of wood and are covered with leather, often decorated; in front of the three outer edges, a continuous strip of leather glued onto the lower board protects the Qur'ān. When the upper board is down and the book is closed, a leather thong fastened to the gutter side of the lower board can be tied over a metal peg projecting out of the edge of the upper board: the manuscript can thus be kept tightly closed. Bindings of non-qur'ānic manuscripts are almost unknown for this period, making comparison impossible; but it has been suggested that the bindings described here were specifically made for the Qur'āns.

A century of change

During the fourth/tenth century, the appearance of the qur'ānic codex is altered by various developments, some of which were already in evidence by the end of the third/ninth century. The first one involves the scripts: a new style, connected to scripts already in use in non-qur'ānic manuscripts and administrative documents, received increasing acceptance as a qur'ānic script, only to be superseded — slightly later — by *naskhī* and *naskhī*-related scripts.

This new style is the last script to have been in use in qur'ānic manuscripts all over the Islamic world. While variants appear in the execution, it basically relies on well-defined aesthetics and a clear repertoire of letterforms. The names given to the more refined versions of this script — Persian Kūfic, Oriental Kūfic — are somewhat misleading: the earlier name of "Kūfic *naskhī*" is a better descriptive since the basic shapes are closer to the so-called "cursives." The earliest Qur'ān in this script is a multi-volume set copied on parchment before 292/905, possibly in a Persian speaking area; in addition to the

script, its vertical format foreshadows the changes of the next decades (Chester Beatty Library, CBL 1431). The new style was nevertheless also used in manuscripts with an oblong format, like the Qur'āns copied on parchment in Palermo in 372/982-3 (Nuruosmaniye Library 23; see Fig. 11 of ORNAMENTATION AND ILLUMINATION) or on paper in Iṣfahān in 383/993 (Türk Islâm Eserleri Müzesi, TIEM 453-6).

The calligraphic possibilities of the new style might explain why it remained in use for a considerable period of time. Whereas the last dated Qur'ān in early ʿAbbāsid script from the central Islamic lands was — according to the current state of our knowledge — written in 362/972, the latest dated qur'ānic manuscript in the new style was finished in 620/1223 (Mashhad, Āsitān-i Quds 84). One cannot exclude the existence of later copies since it remained a favorite script among illuminators, and was used, for instance, in titles. A short excerpt of the Qur'ān was even written in a highly ornamental variant of the script as late as 909/1503 (Topkapı Sarayı Museum, TKS R. 18 in Istanbul).

A major evolution of the fourth/tenth century was the use of so-called cursives, commonly called *naskhī,* as qur'ānic scripts. The earliest dated example of a *naskhī*-related script for a Qur'ān originates from Upper Mesopotamia or northern Syria; it is dated to 387/997. Somewhat later in the same century, a parchment fragment in the oblong format with the last sūras in an unmistakably Maghribī hand bears a colophon stating that the copy was ended in Rajab 398/March-April 1008. This evidence indicates a growing trend towards making the qur'ānic codex more legible to the ordinary people, and towards closing the gap between the script of the qur'ānic codices and that which was used in daily matters, a gap which had opened during the second half of the first/end of the seventh, beginning of the eighth century, but was gradually disappearing. It also documents the emergence of a split between the eastern and western parts of the Islamic world represented by the Maghribī script, which would become the hallmark of the manuscript production in the Maghrib and in Muslim Spain. Interestingly enough, the earliest Maghribī fragments show a greater respect for the material aspects of the qur'ānic codex tradition, namely the oblong format and the parchment. Once again the transition to the "modern" scripts was by no means a quick one, as is witnessed by the production of Qur'āns in the 'new style' during a long period, albeit in decreasing numbers; further research will have to investigate the possible use in the Maghrib of early ʿAbbāsid scripts after the end of the fourth/tenth century. Even if calligraphers of the early ʿAbbāsid period skilled in very small script succeeded in reducing the number of pages and the size of the Qur'āns, early manuscripts in *naskhī* (for instance British Library, BL Add. 7214; see Fig. 111) attained an even greater compactness, perhaps explaining the success of these last-named copies (which may also have been less expensive).

The development of grammar (see GRAMMAR AND THE QUR'ĀN) led to the invention of systems that were increasingly precise in order to note the correct pronunciation of the Qur'ān. The modern system of vowels was used on the Qur'ān of 292/905, but since the older system of red dots is also present on that manuscript, it is highly probable that the modern vowels are a later addition. The Palermo Qur'ān, on the other hand, is fully punctuated: vowels but also other orthoepic signs indicate the correct pronunciation. The modern system of vowels and orthoepics came into use during the fourth/tenth century. During this period, the modern signs

for *shadda* and *sukūn,* both in color, were associated with the red-dot vocalization. Modern vowels and orthoepics were written in color by the copyist of the "Nurse's Qur'ān" in Qayrawān in 410/1019-20: the document recording his work states that he vocalized the manuscript. The same 'Uthmān b. Ḥusayn al-Warrāq completed a thirty-volume Qur'ān in 466/1073-4, probably in eastern Iran: he also recorded that he added vowels and orthoepics — in color — to the text (Mashhad, Āsitān-i Quds 4316). The famous "Qur'ān of Ibn al-Bawwāb" contrasts with this practice: vowels and orthoepics are written with the same ink as the rest of the text (Chester Beatty Library, CBL 1431, dated 391/1000-1); this is also the case in the manuscript of 387/997. The western Islamic world followed another path, as will be shown below.

The second major development of the period is the introduction of paper, which gradually replaced parchment — at least in the east. The earliest datable Qur'ān on paper was completed by the end of the first half of the fourth/tenth century, almost a century later than the earliest non-qur'ānic Arabic manuscript on paper. The increasing use of this material also altered the appearance of the qur'ānic codex. The third development, perhaps connected with the second, has to do with the format of the text: a return to a vertical format is seen in this period. Even if, as evidenced by the Iṣfahān Qur'ān, it was possible to produce paper Qur'āns in the oblong format, the majority were now in the vertical format, thus suggesting that it was better adapted to the new material. All these changes did not go hand in hand, even if they seem somewhat interrelated, and they did not meet with general acceptance overnight. Their economic implications also need to be evaluated. Paper was less expensive than parchment, even if we do not know exactly how much cheaper it was. Should we assume that books became more affordable for a larger number of people, even though they remained a luxury, and that therefore their production pace had to increase? There were two ways in which the need for more manuscripts could be met: the first one being an increase in the copyist's speed, the second one an increase in the number of copyists. There is finally another question that arises: was the new style more legible for readers as well as faster for copyists, since it was easier to write?

The new vertical sizing also forced the qur'ānic manuscripts to adapt new formats for complete page illumination. It appears that this was not simply a matter of rotating the existing compositions by ninety degrees since the relationship between height and width had changed. Rather, this changed dimension of the illuminations is possibly the reason why compositions based either on a central circle or on the repetition of a small pattern in order to cover the surface became increasingly popular. Another evolution was the introduction of text into the illuminated opening pages: the earliest instances are not clearly dated (perhaps already at the end of the third/ninth century) but a few dated manuscripts of the fourth/tenth century include on the opening double page information about the number of sūras, verses, words and letters found in the Qur'ān.

Few manuscripts document the continued production of large Qur'āns during this period. Multi-volume sets, however, remain quite common. The Iṣfahān Qur'ān had four volumes and The Nasser D. Khalili Collection of Islamic Art Qur 89, which is perhaps slightly later, had originally seven; many had thirty. All are of a comparatively small size, particularly those composed by division into thirtieths *(juz')*. The "Nurse's Qur'ān" attests to the production of large-

sized Qurʾāns in the western part of the Islamic world. In 410/1019-20, the otherwise unknown scribe *(warrāq),* ʿAlī b. Aḥmad, wrote the thirty *juzʾ* of this Qurʾān in Qayrawān; he was also responsible for its vowel signs, illumination and binding. 552 pages of this work have been preserved: they measure 45 × 29 cm and have only five lines of text on a page. The set was kept in a large wooden box that contains an inscription commemorating its being donated to a mosque by Fāṭima, the nurse of the Zirid ruler al-Muʿizz b. Bādīs.

Towards the modern qurʾānic codex

Over the following centuries and down to the present day, Qurʾāns were written in a wide variety of the so-called "cursive" scripts, some of them — such as *nastaʿlīq* (see Topkapı Sarayı Museum, TKS HS 25, dated 945/1538-9) — used only in exceptional cases. A few styles were more frequently used for qurʾānic manuscripts than other documents. Even if copyists would also transcribe other texts with these styles, their designation as "qurʾānic" scripts retained its validity. In the central Islamic lands, the manuscripts of higher quality were most frequently written in the scripts which the literature about calligraphy calls *naskh (*also *naskhī), muḥaqqaq, rayḥānī (*also *rayḥān)* and *thuluth (*also *thulth).* Regional varieties of scripts emerged in other areas. In India, for instance, Biḥārī was in use during the late eighth/fourteenth and the ninth/fifteenth century. Classical styles could undergo regional modifications: the script typical of Chinese Qurʾāns of the ninth/fifteenth century has been described as a peculiar form of *muḥaqqaq* deriving from earlier Persian models. The Biḥārī might in turn have been imitated on the eastern coast of Africa, where the influence of India is known to have been felt (The Nasser D. Khalili Collection of Islamic Art Qur 706, dated 1162/1749).

The particular script usually remains homogeneous from the beginning to the end of a manuscript — this also applies to copies with alternating lines in two or three different styles. In some cases, the word *Allāh* or even entire sentences are highlighted: they are either written in larger letters or in ink different from that of the text itself (see for example John Rylands University Library, UL 760-773). Other manuscripts are more puzzling: in some, only the names *Aḥmad* (Q 61:6) and *Muḥammad* (Q 48:29) are written in larger letters (see Bibliothèque nationale de France, BNF Arabe 413 [see Fig. VI], and The Metropolitan Museum of Art, MMA Rogers Fund 1940). Such features could be related to specific forms of religious behavior, which still need to be investigated.

Page setting was seen by copyists and patrons as a way of enhancing the appearance of the text. At the beginning of our period, the Qurʾāns were apparently all written in long lines of identical height and length. Later, the copyists started playing with both elements, perhaps influenced by chancery traditions that are apparent in pilgrimage certificates from Saljūq times found in Damascus. An early example of this revised page setting is Chester Beatty Libray, CBL 1438, dated 582/1186 (see Fig. IV). In some Qurʾāns in Biḥārī script, the copyists used two sizes of script side by side, the larger one for the first and last lines of each page, the smaller one for the rest of the text (Leiden University Library [Oriental Department], Or. 18320 dated 811/1408-9). Later manuscripts document the use of various colors of ink in order to achieve a more complex effect on the whole page. In Persianate areas, but also in Turkey, a complex grid, usually with three larger lines framing two groups of smaller script written in black ink became popular; the larger lines, in white, blue, red or gold, contrast sharply with the rest. This page

setting is also known in Chinese Qur'āns where the difference between the lines is somewhat subdued — in terms of size as well as of color, black being used throughout the page. From the eleventh/seventeenth century onwards, Indian qur'ānic manuscripts feature a page setting which looks like that found in Qur'āns from Safavid Iran: the written surface, defined by a golden frame, is divided into identically-sized large bands in which the text is written, and which are separated from one another by smaller bands that could contain a translation. A second frame, close to the edge of the page and larger than the former one, marks off an area surrounding the text which may either be blank — with the exception of markers for the groups of verses or such indication — or contain a commentary to the Qur'ān.

It is obviously difficult to summarize here the "rules" of qur'ānic illumination: the material available is far too vast and offers many variations. The following, therefore, are only a few of what may be termed "general guidelines." One rule is strictly observed: the qur'ānic manuscript was never illustrated — to date, the only published example of an "illustrated" qur'ānic manuscript (Gottheil, Illustrated copy, 21-4) is a fake. Even if scholarly interest has been primarily focused on the works of master illuminators found on the most expensive manuscripts, one has to remember that many Qur'āns received an ornament of some kind, even if it was only a rubricated frame for the beginning of the text. The concept of the double-page played a major role in qur'ānic manuscripts, especially in their illumination: the artists tried to balance the composition, overcoming the physical division of the two pages and giving it an overall unity. Whatever its quality may be, illumination held more or less the same role and place which had been progressively agreed upon during the first centuries. The function of the ornament is primarily to indicate the beginning or the end of a part of the text: it can be the beginning of the manuscript and, since these Qur'āns have no title page, the ornament is meant to send a kind of signal or, with the help of qur'ānic quotations, to "name" the book. Q 56:77-80 is perfectly suited to this task: "That this is indeed a *Qur'ān* most honorable in a *book* (q.v.) well-guarded, which none shall touch but those who are clean." After the preliminary pages — one double-page or more of pure ornament, with or without writing — illumination occurs in various places: within the written surface are the divisions into verses or groups of verses but also the titles of the sūras. In the margins are indicators for the verse groupings (more developed than those already mentioned), for the various divisions of the text into equally-sized parts, or for the ritual prostrations (*sajda*, see BOWING AND PROSTRATION; RITUAL AND THE QUR'ĀN), and the vignettes corresponding to the sūra headings. The beginning and the end of the text itself can also be highlighted by an illuminated frame: for the beginning of single-volume Qur'āns, the main option is either to have the opening sūra, the Fātiḥa (q.v.), on a double page and the first verses of sūra 2 on the next one, or to have the Fātiḥa facing the beginning of sūra 2 on the same double page. In some early multi-volume Qur'āns, the Fātiḥa is repeated at the beginning of each *juz'*. The last sūras may also be set within a frame; some Qur'āns have additional illuminated pages with a prayer and/or a divination formula *(fāl-nāma)*. In some multi-volume qur'ānic manuscripts, a first-page illumination may provide the number of the volume within the series; the end of each volume may receive an ornament with Q 83:26.

The repertoire of ornamentation inher-

ited from the previous period relied mainly on geometric and vegetal forms. Illuminations were geometrically structured until the end of the ninth/fifteenth century, when more fluid forms of ornament were introduced. These broad orientations were translated in various ways in the different parts of the Islamic world: this is reflected in the studies on qurʾānic illumination which usually present the material according to periods and regions. Such categorizations are often decisive in determining the provenance of a Qurʾān. One should nevertheless be aware that some areas have not yet been sufficiently investigated, or offer various difficulties. This, for instance, is the case of India, where the existence of many centers of Qurʾān-production with local orientations, as well as lasting ties with Afghanistan or Iran may have confused the researchers, often unable — at least for the moment — to distinguish Qurʾāns copied in India from others imported from the north. For areas like China or Indonesia, the study of illumination is only beginning and, even if its features seem as a whole quite distinctive, it has to be remembered that some periods remain unexplored.

The early qurʾānic bindings that have been preserved were apparently meant to distinguish the Qurʾān from any other manuscripts. When this practice came to an end is not clear; bindings from the fifth/eleventh century indicate that Qurʾāns of that time were bound in the same manner as other manuscripts, but solutions had to be found in order to identify easily the sacred book of Islam. According to authors like al-ʿAlmawī (d. 981/1573), the etiquette concerning book storage recommended that Qurʾāns should be put on top of the pile. But this might have been insufficient (in medieval times, books were stored horizontally), hence the practice of using qurʾānic quotations in lieu of a title on the binding. The fore-edge flap was likely the primary place for such a quotation: stamping a text on bindings was not completely new, since some early bindings for Qurʾāns already had inscriptions on their boards — usually eulogies like *al-mulk li-llāh* ("God's is the dominion") — and later bindings of multivolume sets bore the number of each volume on the fore-edge flap: the Qurʾān in ten volumes completed in Marrakesh by ʿUmar al-Murtaḍā in 654/1256 bears witness to this practice (see British Library, BL Or. 13192). Mamlūk bindings show early instances of the use of qurʾānic verses thereon (Museum für Islamische Kunst, SMPK I. 5622). The stamping of texts was facilitated by the development of the binders' techniques which led to the introduction of plates in the stamping process: on later bindings, it became customary to have Q 56:77 on the fore-edge flap; Q 6:115 is more unusual in this place. On the boards, there was room for more developed texts: around the field, a series of cartouches could contain qurʾānic verses (Q 2:255 or 56:77-80; both appear on Chester Beatty Library, CBL 1545) or ḥadīth (see Türk Islâm Eserleri Müzesi, TIEM 423). Quotations also occur on the inner side of the board: Q 2:255, the "Throne Verse (see THRONE OF GOD)," and Q 33:56 (see Bibliothèque nationale de France, BNF Arabe 418). The use of precious metals and stones was continued: very ancient examples do not seem to have survived, but Ottoman bindings are well-known (Topkapı Sarayı Museum, TKS Inv. 2/2121; see MATERIAL CULTURE AND THE QURʾĀN).

Animal hides (mainly sheep and goats) were used as the raw material for parchment; the dimension of the final sheet was limited by the size of the species used. Paper technology allowed for the production of far larger sheets: the mobile form

technique limited their size to what craftsmen were able to handle in and out of the paste vat, while the fixed form, although not as efficient as the former in production levels, could help in the manufacture of very large sheets of paper. On the other hand, pasting was opening possibilities unknown to parchment users. The development of very large Qur'āns benefited from these technical advances during the seventh/thirteenth and eighth/fourteenth centuries. Both single and multi-volume qur'ānic manuscripts are involved: the Ölcaytu Qur'ān in thirty *juz'* has five lines of text on pages reaching 72 × 50 cm, and the pages of the so-called Baysonghur Qur'ān measure 177 × 100 cm. The latter has been related to an anecdote recorded by Qāḍī Aḥmad, showing Tīmūr despising a miniature Qur'ān written by a calligrapher who, a few months later, came back with a Qur'ān so huge that it had to be carried on a cart. In Mamlūk Egypt, a number of very large single-volume Qur'āns — they usually measure about 100 cm high or more — were ordered for the mosques by wealthy patrons. The use of multi-volume qur'ānic manuscripts is also better documented: those produced for sultans or emirs were part of the stipulations of the documents of religious endowments *(waqfiyya)* they established in Cairo. The texts of these legal documents show that readers were appointed for daily recitation of the *juz';* a keeper in charge of the manuscripts would also distribute them among the readers. Rashīd al-Dīn's provisions for his own tomb in Tabrīz included qur'ānic reading by three persons.

In the fourth/tenth century, some of the manuscripts begin to include "scientific information" about the text itself. Previously, such information had been limited to the sūra titles and possibly to their verse count. Now, on double page illuminations, global data about the text and its various components (sūras, verses, words, letters, and so on) are available. At the same time, concordances (in fact, methodical repertories of verse endings) often register an increasing wealth of information for each sūra: for example, the various verse counts and the relative position within the revelation. Together with the title, this information, which may also have been available in contemporary works of exegesis *(tafsīr),* found its way into qur'ānic manuscripts possibly during the fifth/eleventh century. As far as we know, Qur'āns with alternative readings (see READINGS OF THE QUR'ĀN) were produced during the sixth/twelfth century: The Nasser D. Khalili Collection of Islamic Art Qur 572 was provided in 582/1186 with abbreviations in red within the text and notes in the margins giving information about the correct recitation of the text and its variants. At the end of the manuscript, the qur'ānic text is followed by a series of short pamphlets on subjects like the recitation of the Qur'ān, the authorized readings (here, the Ten) as well as the differences in verse counts according to the various schools or the chronology of the revelations. This tradition of "scientific" Qur'āns, which were probably used for teaching purposes or as memoranda for scholars, was maintained over the centuries — as shown by the manuscript Bibliothèque nationale de France, BNF Arabe 448, dated 979/1572, which contains such information.

Qur'āns with interlinear translation were probably not meant for the same audience, although the situation is not always completely clear with respect to qur'ānic commentaries *(tafsīr),* which sometimes look like qur'ānic manuscripts. Assessing the date of the introduction of interlinear translations proves to be difficult: it is sometimes hard to be certain about the contemporaneousness of the qur'ānic text and translation — which latter is, *de facto,*

an addition. In many — but not all — instances, the page layout is planned so as to leave room for the interlinear translation. Among the earliest dated manuscripts of this group are Mashhad, Āsitān-i Quds 464 (translation into Persian, dated 584/1188) and Türk Islâm Eserleri Müzesi, TIEM 73 (translation into eastern Turkish, dated 734/1333-4). Qur'āns with marginal *tafsīr* can also be mentioned here: they were not necessarily meant for scholars, and they also often include an interlinear translation (usually below the line, rarely above it). Most seem to have been written in Iran and India after the tenth/sixteenth century, and the Persian commentary is written in the margins according to a carefully planned page layout. Qur'ānic manuscripts copied in India in Biḥārī script during the ninth/fifteenth century and provided with commentaries written in a more casual manner are among the early instances of the integration of such texts into qur'ānic manuscripts (see King Faisal Centre, Riyadh 2825). Commentaries added to a Qur'ān well after it had been written are clearly quite another case.

The manuscripts of the Qur'ān very often also contain other texts. As stated above, there are early examples of literature related to the correct reading of the text, as well as indications of its components (the number of sūras, verses, letters, etc.). Often at the end of the Qur'ān, there is the prayer that is recited upon the completion of the reading/reciting of the text. Its length and appearance vary: in luxury copies, it is written on a double page in gold letters, within an illuminated frame (see, for instance, Chester Beatty Library, CBL 1544 or Museum für Islamische Kunst, Inv. Nr. I. 42/68). Other prayers are also found in this position: in the manuscript at the Bibliothèque nationale de France, BNF Arabe 448, one of the earliest attributed to al-Ghazālī (d. 505/1111), the prayer is adapted for magical operations (see MAGIC); a second prayer, which aids in falling asleep, is also provided. Other texts are also related to the Qur'ān, like the various divination formulas *(fāl-nāma)* found in numerous manuscripts (see Bibliothèque nationale de France, BNF Arabe 418; see Fig. VII).

The qur'ānic codex in the western Islamic world and in west Africa

In the handwritten tradition of the Qur'ān, regional developments can be recognized but nowhere do they seem so pronounced as in the western Islamic world. The first qur'ānic codices in Maghribī script were written as early as the end of the fourth/tenth century, but further study of the Qayrawān collection might show that distinctive Maghribī features — i.e. script, decoration, but also techniques — were already present at an earlier stage. The earliest fragments are written on parchment, a material which remained in use until the eighth/fourteenth century. They are of the oblong format, although most Maghribī Qur'āns are in a square format reminiscent of that used for a group of manuscripts of the second/eighth century. This square shape is found mainly in copies written on vellum, but small Qur'āns of the thirteenth/nineteenth century written on paper still preserve this peculiar format (see The Nasser D. Khalili Collection of Islamic Art Qur 434). Nevertheless, when paper became the material commonly used for copies of the Qur'ān, the manuscripts as a whole changed to the vertical format.

The script has many varieties, a small hand commonly known as Andalusī being used for single-volume Qur'āns; larger scripts are found in multi-volume manuscripts. For a long time, the vowels retained the red color which was the rule in early Qur'āns; dots were still in use on the

earliest Maghribī copies, but in the fifth/eleventh century the modern signs became the rule. For an extended period, dots were also used for the *hamza* (yellow; see Bibliothèque nationale de France, BNF Arabe 576, dated 1195/1781) and sometimes for the *waṣla* (green); other orthoepics, with their modern shape, are in blue (or sometimes in red).

Illuminations were produced over a long period of time according to patterns, some of which were already in use during the fourth/tenth century; in this respect, geometry played a major role with full page illuminations, and the inscriptions were only exceptionally integrated into the illuminated opening pages (see Istanbul University Library A 6754). Not infrequently, the text was followed by an illuminated page containing a prayer or a colophon written within a frame in a script very different from that of the qur'ānic text itself (see Bibliothèque nationale de France, BNF Arabe 385; see Fig. v). Gold and silver were also used in copying the text itself: Bibliothèque nationale, Smith-Lesouëf 217 contains a few folios of a delicate example of Maghribī chrysography, and a five-volume Qur'ān was written with silver ink on paper dyed purple (Bibliothèque nationale, BNF Arabe 389-392 are four such folios). The manufacture of dyed papers for qur'ānic manuscripts continued for some time, a fact to which some manuscripts on blue and green paper bear witness (see Bibliothèque Générale et Archives, BGA D 1304).

The large Qur'ān tradition was alive in the western Islamic world as shown by the above-mentioned "Nurse's Qur'ān" and by two volumes now in Istanbul (Türk Islâm Eserleri Müzesi, TIEM 359 and 360, 52 × 55 cm): their 994 remaining folios, with seven lines to the page (one line is roughly 6.5 cm high) and their richly illuminated sūra titles indicate that a colossal investment was needed to carry out this project.

Qur'ānic manuscripts in Sūdānī script are only known in recent times — from the second half of the eleventh/seventeenth century onwards. The Sūdānī is reminiscent of Maghribī scripts and is rather conservative. The vowels are often in red, the *hamza* being indicated by a yellow dot. Illuminations are usually geometrical and seem to rely only on colors — gold has so far not been reported. The beginning of the Qur'ān is often highlighted with a larger ornament in the shape of a frame; on top of it, outside the frame, there is sometimes the *basmala* (q.v.) and also the *taṣliya.* In other manuscripts, the ornament separates the first sūra from the second one. Other larger illuminations are usually found at the beginning of the second half of the Qur'ān (which in Sūdānī tradition is equivalent to Q 19:1), but also, in addition to that, at the beginning of the second and fourth quarters (see, for instance, Leeds University Library, Arabic ms. 301). Even if the divisions into seven and sixty parts *(ḥizb),* as well as the subdivisions of the latter into eight sections, are frequently indicated in the margins, in this handwritten tradition, the four parts are evidently of greater importance.

These qur'ānic manuscripts are also set apart by their traditional binding: the flap is oversized — its extremity almost reaching the back of the volume when it is closed — and terminates with a leather thong that can be rolled several times around the book in order to keep it closed. Moreover, in a number of cases the manuscript was provided with a leather pouch (in those instances in which it is missing, it may have been lost), which was intended as an external protection for the Qur'ān. These peculiarities may be related to another feature of Sūdānī manuscripts, namely the fact that they were written on

bi-folios or even folios that were left loose; with neither quires nor sewing, a very protective binding was the only solution against the folios being lost or mixed up.

Later developments

With the exception of the *juz'* (thirtieth) and the *ḥizb* (sixtieth), some of the divisions of the text into parts of identical size fell into disuse and were only rarely indicated in the margins of single-volume Qur'āns. Sets of four or seven volumes became rarer, even if some examples could still be found: a seven-part Qur'ān was written in India by the end of the twelfth/eighteenth century (The Nasser D. Khalili Collection of Islamic Art Qur 70), while four-volume sets are known in the Maghrib during the same period (see Bibliothèque nationale de France, BNF Arabe 586 or 6989). In contrast, the *juz'* became more important for organizing the text, even in single-volume Qur'āns. As early as the beginning of the ninth/fifteenth century, a Qur'ān in Biḥārī script in one volume is distinguished by the use of developed illumination in the margins of each opening corresponding to the beginning of a *juz'* (Leiden University Library Or. 18320, dated 811/1408-9), a practice which became common in later Iranian deluxe Qur'āns (see Chester Beatty Library, CBL 1542 or Staatsbibliothek, SB 10450). In less expensive copies only the middle of the text is indicated in this way (Bibliothèque nationale, BNF Arabe 418 or Chester Beatty Library, CBL 1544). Qur'ān sets in thirty volumes are plentiful, ranging from the more modest to gorgeous ones, and can be found from the Maghrib to China. This evolution may possibly be connected to a wider practice of Qur'ān reading. Other elements point in the same direction: in Iran, and also in India, according to historical records, copyists used a minute script in order to fit each *juz'* to the space available on a double page; the reader wishing to read a section of the text each day, in order to complete the reading within one month, thus had the daily reading in a concise format (for instance Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, BSB Cod. arab. 1118; see Fig. VIII). There are even instances of Qur'āns in the so-called *ghubār* script written on two pages, each being divided into fifteen areas corresponding to the *juz'* (see Sotheby's sale L00502, 10 October 2000, lot 26).

The *juz'* was evidently important in the religious customs, but also proved to be an extraordinary tool for the more efficient copying of the sacred text. Early in the twelfth/eighteenth century, Ottoman copyists apparently reached an optimal calibration of the Qur'ān and found a way of matching the *juz'* with the kind of quire they were commonly using, namely the classical ten folios quire. It followed from this that the subdivisions of the *juz'* matched a definite amount of folios. The clever use of the possibilities of extension or contraction of the Arabic script even resulted in every page finishing with a verse ending: hence the name *āyāt ber-kenār* for these Qur'āns written with fifteen lines to the page in a small format, on ca. 300 folios (that is, thirty quires of ten folios). It was perhaps a step towards a more efficient production process — to some extent reminiscent of similar moves in late medieval Europe, when the printing press was threatening the traditional book production. Illumination also became standardized to some extent, with a double opening page containing sūra 1 and the beginning of sūra 2, gilded frame for the text, floral markers for the *juz'*, and so forth. This presentation was highly successful, and modern printed editions still follow this model.

This development is certainly behind the further elaboration of the qur'ānic text. It was probably noticed at about the same time that the same words/groups of words