

other languages are derived from it. He based this claim on the teachings of the Holy Quran and elucidated this proposition in the light of several verses of the Holy Quran. He even foretold that in course of time Arabic will be found to be the mother of all the world languages.³ He wrote, in his book *Minanur Rehman*:

"All praise is due to Allah, the Sustainer, the Beneficent. To Him belongs all Excellence, Grace and Goodness. He created man and taught him a plain language. And out of one language He created various languages in different countries just as He created various colors (of mankind); out of one color. And He made Arabic the mother of all languages. He made it the like of the sun in brightness and luster."⁴

There can be several aspects of study of languages to make a case for 'Guided Evolution.' Some are listed here:

1. All languages are derived from one mother tongue pointing to one possible source of this faculty of mankind. If the development of languages was a blind and unguided process, it would stand to reason that several mother languages could have evolved in different geographic locations.
2. There is a scientific premise that the present is a guide to the past, this has been applied to most branches of science. Its application to the study of languages is that whatever processes created languages in the past should be visible even today.
3. Present day linguists believe that the root words in languages are arbitrary as the development of languages was not a thoughtful and conscious process. Therefore, if in Semitic languages, like Arabic and Hebrew, we can show that many root words have profound and inherent meanings, then we would be making a case for premeditation and hence, 'Guided Evolution.'
4. A strong piece of evidence to support revelation in the origin of mother tongue is to be found, according to Promised Messiah^{as}, in the highly organized system of root words (Mufradaat) possessed by Arabic language.
5. If grammar of languages can be shown to be 'irreducibly complex' then that is a strong case for revelation of the mother language.

In this article we will limit ourselves to the first two possible avenues to make the case for possible revelation or 'Guided Evolution.'

Since the pioneering research of Mohammad Ahmad Mazhar, linking Arabic to different languages, in the sixties and seventies, in the last few decades, a lot of new information has become available. One of the strongest proof for language being revealed is the fact that whereas, life has evolved into 30 million different species, it is considered that eyes evolved in the animal kingdom as many as 40 times independently, yet there is a gathering consensus among the linguists that all languages have come from one prototype. If languages could evolve blindly without the Providence of Allah, as the mankind was divided into clans and tribes with limited means of transportation and communication then it would seem likely that several groups of languages should have evolved in different clans and tribes.

Six thousand different languages have been documented in the world. Documenting the state of affairs in South American and Malay Archipelago, Friedrich Max Müller, Professor of Philology at Oxford, writes:

“The language changes from clan to clan, from cottage to cottage, so that often the members of one and the same family only understand each other. Nay, the very power of speech seems sometimes to become extinct.

...

In a district about one hundred miles long by thirty miles wide, not less than ten distinct languages are spoken. Some of them are confined to single villages, others to groups of three or four; and though of course they have a certain family resemblance, they are yet so distinct as to be mutually unintelligible.”⁵

According to the famous linguist Merritt Ruhlen:

"A careful study of languages around the world has led linguists to conclude that there are, in fact, no primitive languages anywhere on earth. All extant human languages are today considered of equal "complexity" by virtually all linguists, despite the fact that there is no recognized way of measuring complexity in language. Across the same decades, biologists were coming to understand that there are no primitive *peoples* on earth either. All humans exhibit very similar cognitive and linguistic abilities, across the entire species; differences between languages do not represent differences in brain structure, and it is well known that any human child is capable of learning any human language to which he or she is exposed.”⁶

Despite such diversity all languages seem to be coming from one prototype language. The oneness of the mother language points to a unified and possibly dramatic beginning of human faculty of speech, and

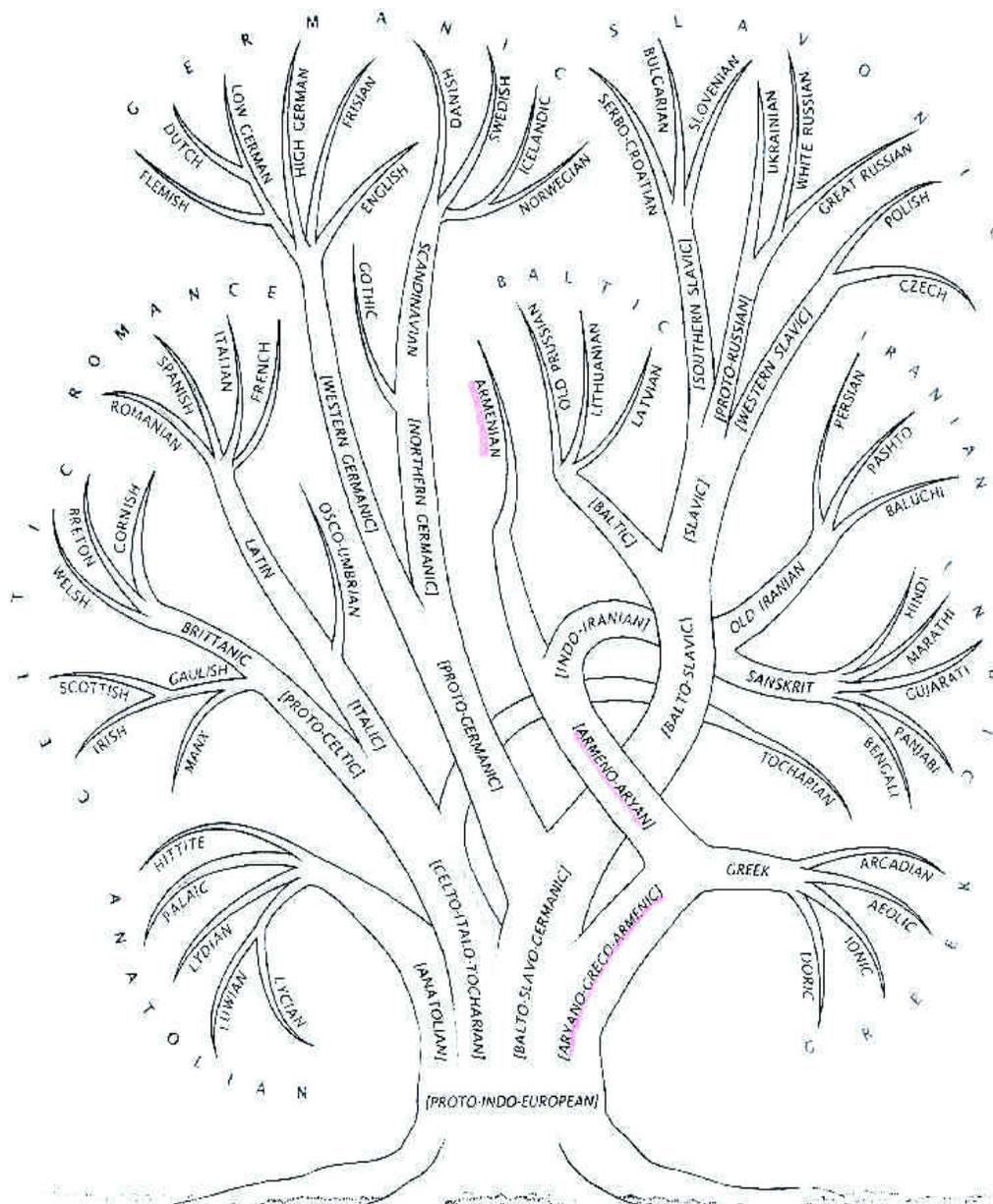
lack of blind evolution in this domain.

Early studies of Indo-European languages focused on those most familiar to the original European researchers: the Italic, Celtic, Germanic, Baltic and Slavic families. Affinities between these and the 'Aryan' languages spoken in faraway India were noticed by European travelers as early as the 16th century. That they might all share a common ancestor was first proposed in 1786 by Sir William Jones, an English jurist and student of Eastern cultures. He thus launched what came to be known as the Indo-European hypothesis, which served as the principal stimulus to the founders of historical linguistics in the 19th century.

Promised Messiah^{as} writes in Minanur Rehman:

"When we examine the customs of God the Glorious, we find that His creative system is one of unity. This is something which God Almighty has adopted for the right guidance of the people in order that it might be proof of His being one, and that it might be a proof that He alone is the Creator--the one without an associate. There is no one in the earth or heavens who is an associate with Him. He who created man from a single essence--how can one ascribe to Him numerousness which is unorganized and how can languages be considered to be from Him which are disorganized. Dost thou not know that in numerousness He has kept an eye on oneness, and He has hinted at it in His Holy word which is the guide for the righteous? In His shining Book He has stated that He created all living things from water, therefore, look at the customs of God how He has returned numerousness to oneness."⁷

Thomas V. Gamkrelidze and V. V. Ivanov are the authors of *the Indo-European Language and the Indo-Europeans*, a two-volume work published in Russian in 1984; an English version is published by Mouton de Gruyter. Gamkrelidze directs the Tsereteli Institute of Oriental Studies in Tbilisi and is a professor of linguistics at Tbilisi State University. Ivanov is professor of linguistics and chair of the department of Slavic languages at the Institute for Slavic and Balkan Studies in Moscow. The common ancestor of these languages has been traced to Asia rather than to Europe, the authors say. The once-clear distinction between the family's Eastern and Western branches is now blurred. The following picture of family tree of the Indo-European languages is borrowed from their work:



Guy Deutscher in his book *the Unfolding of Language: An Evolutionary Tour of Mankind's Greatest Invention*, published in 2005, also draws a similar family tree of the Indo-European languages on page 57 to show how all the Indo European languages are related and are derived from a Proto-Indo-European language. He also drew a tree of Semitic languages.⁸ This Semitic tree with slight modification will make Arabic as the mother of all languages. "It is not that I doubt that language evolved

only once,” Steven Pinker a famous linguistic writes, “one of the assumptions behind the search for the ultimate mother tongue.”⁹

Friedrich Max Müller raises a strong natural presumption in favor of common origin of languages:

“If you wish to assert that language had various beginnings, you must prove it impossible that language could have had a common origin. No such impossibility has ever been established with regard to a common origin of the Aryan and Semitic dialects; while on the contrary the analysis of the grammatical forms in either family has removed many difficulties, and made it at least intelligible how, with materials identical or very similar, two individuals, or two families, or two nations, could in the course of time have produced languages so different in form as Hebrew and Sanskrit.”¹⁰

The indo-European languages are labeled as the Aryan languages and Arabic, Syriac, Hebrew, Aramaic, Akkadian, Sabaic, Edomite, Berber dialects of Northern Africa, some other African languages; Hausa and Galla are included among the Semitic languages. Friedrich Max Müller talking about the relationship of Aryan and Semitic languages states:

“It is impossible to imagine an Aryan language derived from a Semitic, or a Semitic from an Aryan language. The grammatical framework is totally distinct in these two families of speech. This does not exclude, however, the possibility that both are diverging streams of the same source; and the comparisons that have been instituted between the Semitic roots, reduced to their simplest form, and the roots of the Aryan languages, have made it more than probable that the material elements with which they both started were originally the same.”¹¹

Mario Pei, Italian-born American linguist whose many works helped to provide the general public with a popular understanding of linguistics and philology. Pei immigrated to the United States with his parents when he was seven years old. By the time he was out of high school he knew not only English and his native Italian but also Latin, Greek, and French. Over the years he became fluent in five languages, capable of speaking some 30 others, and acquainted with the structure of at least 100 of the world’s 3,000 spoken languages. As a graduate student at Columbia University, New York City, he learned such early languages as Sanskrit, Old Church Slavonic, and Old French. He joined the Columbia faculty in 1937 and from 1952 to 1970 was professor of Romance philology.¹² We conclude this section in his words:

“Is there a possibility that our present classification of languages will be improved? More light is being shed upon language affiliations as more material is discovered. It is even possible that one day dream of some linguists will come true, and all languages be proved to have a common origin. Linguists, however, are hard headed scientists, not

impractical theorists. Before, they will accept a hypothesis, however attractive, the proof must be cogent beyond a shadow of doubt.”¹³

ISLAMIC PERSPECTIVE OF PROVIDENCE OF GOD IN HUMAN LANGUAGES

الرَّحْمَنُ

عَلَّمَ الْقُرْآنَ

خَلَقَ الْإِنْسَانَ

عَلَّمَهُ الْبَيَانَ

“Bounteous God, taught the Quran, created man (as a social being) and taught him the mode of expression.” (Al Quran 55:2-4) So, our task in the domain of languages is to see whether there is evidence of evolution of languages or only devolution or transformation.

Promised Messiah^{as} wrote in Minanur Rehman:

“The fact of the matter, however, is that except for the Holy Quran, no one has appeared in the world who might have pointed towards instituting research in to the science of languages. It is this sacred Book which has said:

وَمِنْ آيَاتِهِ خَلْقُ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَالْخِيَلِ وَالسِّنِّيَّتِكُمْ وَالْوَزَائِكُمْ إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لَآيَاتٍ لِّلْعَالَمِينَ

(Al Quran 30:23)

(i.e. among the signs in support of the existence and unity of God Almighty are the creation of earth and heavens and the difference of languages and colors. These are indeed great signs for God recognition - for those, however, who are gifted with knowledge). **It will be noticed how great is the emphasis on the need of investigation into the science of languages--it is declared to be the basis of God recognition.** Is there any such verse in the Gospels? I hold it out as a challenge that there is no such verse. Fie for shame!

Arabic is the mother of all languages and is a composite of all their qualities and forms. It is truly and really the language for mankind. It is an inspirational vocabulary from God

Almighty. It is the completer and fulfiller of the purpose underlying the birth of mankind which the best of creators has brought into existence.

Again, I discovered from the revelation of Almighty God that Arabic is a treasure of arguments in favor of prophethood of the Holy Prophet (may peace and the blessings of God be upon him). It is a collection of weighty pieces of evidence in favor of the *Shariat*. I therefore fell in prostration before the Best of Givers, and the attraction of my passionate longing constrained me to travel deep into Arabic and to acquire proficiency in it. So, in proportion to the fund of my human capacity I entered its deep waters and with the help of God Almighty went inside its city walls. I began to walk upon its pathways and roads, and its footpaths and lanes, so that I might recognize its veiled inmate, brought up in its own house, so that I might taste the food contained in its pot, so that I might pick the fruit of its trees, and that I might bring out the pearls from its rivers. So, by God's Grace, I became one of those who succeed. I did not fail in any upward ascent, nor did I return empty handed from any meadow. I saw its freshness and browsed upon its greenery, and I was given by my Lord a large share of knowledge and acquaintance with the Arabic language, so much so, that I had grasped its pearls and had come by its milk and its mines, and other localities were opened up for me, my God demonstrated for me that Arabic is a merciful revelation and the chief foundation for recognizing religion."¹⁴

The emphasis and the reference of the verse of the Holy Quran have been added by the author of this article.

NO EVIDENCE OF EVOLUTION OF LANGUAGES

Language is mankind's greatest invention - except, of course, that it was never invented. Guy Deutscher

The word evolution is used in several meanings and connotations. In this article when it is mentioned that there is lack of evidence for evolution, what is meant there is no increase in complexity or organization of languages. Change and transformation in languages abound and that needs to be distinguished from evolution. In the words of John McWhorter, "Language evolution is not geared toward improvement. Instead, languages change like the lava clump in a lava lamp: always different but at no point differentiable in any qualitative sense from the earlier stage. The process is better termed transformation than evolution."¹⁵ When words are used with these connotations in the study of languages then we see plenty of examples of transformation or metamorphosis but none of 'evolution.'

Guy Deutscher begins his book *the Unfolding of Language: An Evolutionary Tour of Mankind's Greatest Invention*, by stating:

“Of all mankind's manifold creations, language must take pride of place. Other inventions - the wheel, agriculture, sliced bread - may have transformed our material existence, but the advent of language is what made us human. Compared to language, all other inventions pale in significance, since everything we have ever achieved depends on language and originates from it. Without language, we could never have embarked on our ascent to unparalleled power over all other animals, and even over nature itself.”

But the amazing paradox in the opinion of the modern day linguists is that whereas all the other inventions of mankind were consciously made and tried out the crown invention was achieved unconsciously, in total oblivion with nobody minding the shop. This is amazing; the day dreaming that is possible under the umbrella of science can excel the fantasy and myth making of false religions!

Very quickly he goes onto making a confession about lack of evidence for the tall claims that he will keep making in his book:

“Small tribes with stone-age technology speak languages with structures that sometimes make Latin and Greek seem like child's play.’When it comes to linguistic form, Plato walks with the Macedonian swineherd, Confucius with the head-hunting savage of Assam,’ as the American linguist Edward Sapir once declared. (Later on, I shall even argue that some aspects of language tend to be *more* complex in simpler societies.)

Needless to say, the lack of any reliable information about when and how speech first emerged has not prevented people from speculating. Quite the reverse - for centuries, it has been a favorite pastime of many distinguished thinkers to imagine how language first evolved in the human species. One of the most original theories was surely that of Frenchman Jean-Pierre Brisset, who in 1900 demonstrated how human language (that is to say, French) developed directly from the croaking of frogs. One day, as Brisset was observing frogs in a pond, one of them looked him straight in the eye and croaked 'coac'. After some deliberation, Brisset realized that what the frog was saying was simply an abbreviated version of the question 'quoi que tu dis?' He thus proceeded to derive the whole of language from permutations and combinations of 'coac coac.'

It must be admitted that more than a century on, standards of speculation have much improved. Researchers today can draw on advances in neurology and computer simulations to give their scenarios a more scientific bent. Nevertheless, despite such progress, the speculations remain no less speculative, as witnessed by the impressive range of theories circulating for how the first words emerged: from shouts and calls; from hand gestures and sign language; from the ability to imitate; from the ability to deceive; from grooming; from singing, dancing and rhythm; from chewing, sucking and licking; and from almost any other activity under the sun. The point is that as long as there is no evidence, all these scenarios remain 'just so' stories. They are usually fascinating, often entertaining, and sometimes even plausible - but still not much more than fantasy.”¹⁶

Having defined the situation very clearly for us in the introductory section of his book, Guy Deutscher goes onto weave make-believe stories of his

own in the rest of the book. In his 358 page book he does not cite even one genuine example of improving order in languages over time. But he does share a useful metaphor with us about his childish vision of the elders of ancient Rome. He writes:

"I had childish visions of the elders of ancient Rome, sitting in assembly one hot summer day and debating what the case endings should be. They first decide by vote that *-orum* to be the plural ending of the 'genitive' case ('of the cactuses'), and then they start arguing about the plural ending for the 'dative' case ('to the cactuses'). One party opts for *-is*, but another passionately advocates *-ibus*. After heated debate, they finally agree to reach an amicable compromise. They agree that the nouns in the language will be divided into different groups, and that some nouns will have the ending *-is*, while others will take *-ibus* instead.

In the cold light of the day, I somehow suspected that this wasn't really a very likely scenario. Still, I couldn't begin to imagine any plausible alternative which would explain where all these endings could have sprung from. If this intricate system of conventions had not been designed by some architect and given the go-ahead by a prehistoric assembly, then how else could it have come about?"¹⁷

Yet, in the scientific circles there is almost a religious belief that language evolved slowly. For example review this statement by Terrence W Deacon, "Modern languages, with their complex grammars and syntax, their massive vocabularies, and their intense sensorimotor demands, evolved incrementally from simpler beginnings. Though simple languages exist in no society found today, they almost certainly existed at some point in our prehistory. These simple languages were superseded by modern complex languages, and the brains that originally struggled to support simple languages were replaced by brains better suited to this awkward adaptation."¹⁸ He accepts, 'though simple languages exist in no society found today,' but that does not interfere with his 'certainty' as he immediately goes onto say, 'they almost certainly existed at some point in our prehistory.' By choosing the word 'prehistory' he has quickly forsaken any responsibility to find evidence for his claim!

When such assumptions do not yield any evidence then some of the scientists are ready to take longer leaps of faith. They begin to propose models suggesting 'hopeful monster.' Here is a detailed description of this phenomenon:

"The claim that language is the product of a unique one-of-a-kind piece of neural circuitry that provides all the essential features that make language unique (e.g., grammar). But this does not just assume that there is a unique neurological feature that correlates with this unique behavior, it also assumes an essential biological discontinuity. In other words, that language is somehow separate from the rest of our biology and neurology. It is as

though we are apes *plus* language-as though one handed a language computer to a chimpanzee.

This reminds me of a wonderful piece of modern mythology from a recent film entitled *Short Circuit*. A sophisticated robot is accidentally transformed from a mechanism that 'just runs programs' into a conscious, self-aware being as a result of being struck by lightning. The power surge damaged its circuits in just the right way. The now conscious robot, of course, does not think of this as "damage." From his perspective, the lightning bolt corrected a design limitation. As a cinematic device, the bolt of lightning accomplishes two important things. The catastrophic and unpredictable nature of lightning provides a vehicle for invoking drastic and unprecedented change, and it's intrinsically chaotic-and, by tradition, miraculous-character obviates any possibility of describing exactly what alterations changed a computer mechanism into a human-type mind. For the sake of the story, we suspend critical analysis and allow this miraculous accident to stand in place of an otherwise inexplicable transformation. As an allegory of human mental evolution, it offers a paradigm example of what biologists call a "hopeful monster" theory: the evolutionary theorist's counterpart to divine intervention, in which a freak mutation just happens to produce a radically different and serendipitously better-equipped organism.

The single most influential 'hopeful monster' theory of human language evolution was offered by the linguist Noam Chomsky, and has since been echoed by numerous linguists, philosophers, anthropologists, and psychologists. Chomsky argued that the ability of children to acquire the grammar of their first language, and the ability of adults effortlessly to use this grammar, can only be explained if we assume that all grammars are variations of a single generic 'Universal Grammar,' and that all human brains come With a built-in language organ that contains this language blueprint. This is offered as the only plausible answer to an apparently insurmountable learning problem. Grammars appear to have an unparalleled complexity and systematic logical structure, the individual grammatical 'rules' aren't explicitly evident in the information available to the child, and when they acquire their first language children are still poor at learning many other things. Despite these limitations children acquire language knowledge at a remarkable rate."¹⁹

Encyclopedia Britannica as recently as 1947, eight decades after the publication of the *Origin of Species* by Charles Darwin had to say:

"On ultimate origin of language speculation has been rife, more among philosophers than among philologists. Some scholars (among them quite recently W. Schmidt) see the insufficiency of usual theories, and giving up all attempts at explaining it, in a natural way, fall back on the religious belief that first language was directly given to the first man by God."²⁰

Over the subsequent decades the details and data have not changed just the make-believe stories now come with contemporary flavors. Everything has to originate from something and according to Darwinian assumptions something fully developed cannot come from nothing out of the blue. Charles Darwin wrote in the *Origin of Species*, "If it could be demonstrated

that any complex organ existed which could not possibly have been formed by numerous, successive, slight modifications, my theory would absolutely break down.”²¹

Wilbur Marshall Urban (1873–1952) was an American philosopher of language, influenced by Ernst Cassirer. He wrote in 1951 about interjectional theory that presupposes that natural sounds uttered in the state excited feelings were the beginning of speech, “All attempts at explaining the language in this way have been fruitless. There is no tangible evidence, historical or other, tending to show that the mass of speech elements or processes has evolved out of interjections.”²²

LANGUAGES HAVE BEEN DEVOLVING NOT EVOLVING

Talking about how the European languages were derived from Latin, Friedrich Max Müller writes:

“If the six dialects which sprang from Latin have become six independent languages, it would seem to follow that the same Latin word must have taken a different form in each of them. French is different from Italian, Italian from Spanish, Spanish from Portuguese, because the same Latin words were pronounced differently by the inhabitants of the countries conquered or colonized by Rome, so that, after a time, the language spoken by the colonists of Gaul grew to be unintelligible to the colonists of Spain.”²³

There is no evolution just metamorphosis and possibly devolution.

The human condition is, as Plato would make Socrates say in the Republic (7.514a ff.), comparable to that of prisoners of an underground cave, whose unfortunate fate is to confuse reality with passing shadows created by a fire inside their miserable abode and kept in motion by clever manipulators, who in the name of politics, religion, science, and tradition control the human herd. To uphold their Darwinian assumptions the professors of linguistics in different universities in the last few decades have been weaving make-believe stories about evolution of languages. But when you look at the actual data or facts only phenomenon we see is gradual destructive change in languages over time.

Examples of devolution and destruction in languages abound. Guy Deutscher’s book *the Unfolding of Language: An Evolutionary Tour of Mankind's Greatest Invention* is filled with example after example highlighting the destructive forces at work changing languages to worse and less organized states.

Muhammad Ahmad Mazhar writes about Hebrew:

“The word Hebrew or EBRI means to cross over (عبر to cross a river). The name was given to Israelites coming from the East of Euphrates. Admittedly, Hebrew belongs to the Semitic group of languages. In this book we need not mention Hebrew and Syriac because there is no doubt or dispute among the intelligent about their common origin and these two languages are the altered form of Arabic (Minan, P. 106).

And Syriac was the first to emerge out of Arabic in an altered form. That is why the ancients called it earliest Arabic (Minan, P.90).

In this connection it may be noted that Hebrew alphabet does not possess 6 letters of Arabic alphabet viz., غ، ظ، ض، ذ، خ، ث

Therefore it goes without saying that the Hebrew vocabulary will fall short of numerous Arabic roots which contain these six letters and which are separate and independent words. And in any case Hebrew vocabulary will be contained within the Arabic vocabulary. Hebrew is not as vast, scientific and systematic as Arabic.”²⁴

The phenomenon of devolution of language is well documented in the Bible:

“Now the whole world had one language and a common speech. As men moved eastward, they found a plain in Shinar and settled there. They said to each other, ‘Come, let’s make bricks and bake them thoroughly.’ They used brick instead of stone, and tar for mortar. Then they said, ‘Come, let us build ourselves a city, with a tower that reaches to the heavens, so that we may make a name for ourselves and not be scattered over the face of the whole earth.’ But the Lord came down to see the city and the tower that the men were building. The Lord said, ‘If as one people speaking the same language they have begun to do this, then nothing they plan to do will be impossible for them. Come, let us go down and confuse their language so they will not understand each other.’ So the Lord scattered them from there over all the earth, and they stopped building the city. That is why it was called Babel--because there the Lord confused the language of the whole world. From there the Lord scattered them over the face of the whole earth.”²⁵

Mario Pei commenting on the Biblical description writes:

Perennially the question comes up, if there was original unity among such widely diversified tongues as English, Russian, Greek, Armenian and Hindustani, what is there to belie the possibility that at much remoter epoch all the world’s languages may have sprung from one common stock. May not the Biblical account of Babel’s tower of confusion be figuratively, even if not literally true? There is nothing to belie this possibility.”²⁶

LANGUAGES A FRUITFUL AREA FOR RELIGIOUS RESEARCH

The simple reason being that ‘the fossil record’ is complete in the form of the modern languages and in their relationship with each other. We have possibly 6000 complete specimens with all their intricate details to argue from.

The paleontologists work with fossils the geneticists work with genes and the neo-Darwinists sometimes work with actual data and sometimes with make belief stories! The linguists work with languages the roots and history of their words and grammar of the languages. According to Christine Kenneally in the book *the First Word: The Search for the Origins of Language*:

“Of all the formidable obstacles to solving this mystery, the first lies in the nature of the spoken word. For all its power to wound and seduce, speech is our most ephemeral creation; it is little more than air. It exits the body as a series of puffs and dissipates quickly into the atmosphere. On the evolutionary timescale, bone can last long enough to leave an impression, enabling us to track, for example, the adaptations that shaped 150 million years of ichthyosaurs. We can now see from the fossil evidence how these ocean dwellers changed over time, ballooning from a half meter into four-meter monsters, lengthening their spectacular snouts, and evolving fins and flukes from lizard bodies, before vanishing from the earth forever. But there are no verbs preserved in amber, no ossified nouns, and no prehistoric shrieks forever spread-eagled in the lava that took them by surprise.

Writing is a kind of fossil and so can tell us a little about the languages that have been recorded since it was invented. While it shares a lot including most of its words and much organizational structure, writing cannot be considered the bare bones of speech, for it is something else entirely. Writing is static, structured by the conventions of punctuation and the use of space. The kinds of sentences that occur in writing bear only an indirect relationship to the more free-flowing and complex structures of speech. Writing has no additional channels for avoiding ambiguity, as speech has with intonation and gesture. And writing is only six thousand years old.

In the absence of petrified words, evidence of change in language-related body parts offers a compelling clue to the course of language evolution. The brain, the tongue, the larynx, the lungs, the nose, and the uvula—the pendulous flap that swings in the throat of screaming Looney Tunes characters—are all intimately involved in speech production. But on the geologic timescale, soft tissue doesn’t last much longer than a sound wave. It leaves traces only in very peculiar cases, like the skin of a thirty-thousand-year-old mammoth stalled in Siberian permafrost or the famous prehistoric iceman, a five-thousand-year-old mummy naturally preserved in an alpine glacier on the Italian-Austrian border.²⁷

She continues her description of lack materials or fossil record in paleontology and their limitations, by writing:

“For a long time the closest we could get to language-related fossils were the impressions left by the bones of distant ancestors. Scientists gained some information by interpreting cranial remnants, since skull size is an interesting, if indirect, measure of brain volume. Assumptions about the language skills of our forebears can also be made when considering the length of the neck vertebrae and the progression of other skeletal changes over time.

But the size of a skull or a femur takes you only so far. It doesn't tell you when the first word was uttered. Nor does it tell you if it was a noun like “tiger,” a verb like “eat,” or an imperative—“Run!” Bones can't tell you who said the first word or who was listening. Did language begin as a soliloquy, or is the fundamental nature of language to be communicative?”²⁸

Despite the limitations of available materials in studying the past, regarding other aspects of evolution, fortunately in the field of languages, we have the equivalence of a complete fossil record if we are able to study most of the extant languages. This gives us very extensive materials to observe evolution of languages or lack thereof. Additionally as languages are a relatively recent phenomenon that covers only thousands of years rather than millions of years this gives less ground to the linguists to build their make-believe stories, shifting the balance towards those who believe in revelation having jump started human faculty of speech. The treasures of materials for study that the extant languages and the written record offer the linguists are unprecedented in any other field, to say the least.

THE PRESENT IS THE KEY TO THE PAST -- TRANSFORMATION OF ENGLISH IN THE LAST 1000 YEARS

Guy Deutscher in his book *the Unfolding of Language: an Evolutionary Tour of Mankind's Greatest Invention* has named one of his seven chapters the Forces of Destruction. When we study languages we find that the forces of destruction abound yet the forces of evolution are nowhere to be seen except in the make believe fairy tales of the linguists who do not have the moral courage to believe in revelation, yet are gullible enough to believe in any fairy tale that suits their assumptions.

Guy Deutscher shares a fundamental insight of linguists with us by highlighting a simple yet a powerful principle that the present is the key to the past. He writes:

"So without any safe anchor in time, how can linguists ever hope to reconstruct what might have taken place in that remote period? The crux of the answer is one of the fundamental insights of linguistics: *the present is the key to the past*. This tenet, which was borrowed from geology in the nineteenth century, bears the intimidating title

'uniformitarianism', but stands for an idea that is as simple as it is powerful: the forces that created the elaborate features of language cannot be confined to prehistory, but must be thriving even now, busy creating new structures in the languages of today. Perhaps surprisingly, then, the best way' of unlocking the past is not always to peer at faded runes on ancient stones, but also to examine the languages of the present day."²⁹

Having highlighted the golden principle of linguistic studies that the present is the key to the past, he goes on to share an elaborate example with us as to how English has changed over the last millennium:

"Here is a short excerpt from the Book of Genesis, which relates the story of the Flood:

English around 2000

The Lord regretted having made humankind on the earth. . . So the Lord said: 'I will wipe the human beings I have created off the face of the earth, people together with animals and reptiles and birds of the air, because I regret having made them' . . .

And God said to Noah ' . . . Make yourself an ark of gopher wood. . . and cover it inside and out with pitch. For my part, I am going to bring a flood of waters on the earth, to destroy all flesh in which there is the breath of life.'

From modern, albeit literary English, let's now jump four centuries back in time, to the year 1604, when King James I, newly installed on the throne of England, and desiring to soothe the religious strife that had plagued the realm for more than a century, commissioned the best scholars in the land to produce a translation of the Bible into the English of the day. Forty-seven scholars labored on the text for the suitably biblical period of seven years, until finally, in 1611, what has come to be known as the King James Version was published:

English around 1600 (King James Version)

It repented the Lord that he had made man on the earth. . . And the Lord said: 'I will destroy man whom I haue created from the face of the earth, both man, and beast, and the creeping thing, and the foules of the aire, for it repenteth me that I haue made them.'

And God said vnto Noah: 'Make thee an arke of gopher wood. . . and [thou] shalt pitch it within and without with pitch. And behold, I, euen I, doe bring a flood of waters vpon the earth, to destroy all flesh wherein is the breath of life.'

Because of the enduring prestige of the King James Version, its language still seems quite familiar, give or take a few thee's and thou's. But if one only ventures further back in time, to two centuries before King James commissioned his group of scholars, the going soon gets a little tougher. The first translation of the entire Bible into English was undertaken towards the end of the fourteenth century by a group of heretical scholars led by John Wycliffe, a forerunner of the Protestant Reformation who challenged the authority of the Church. Wycliffe and his associates worked on rendering the Bible into the vernacular of the day, to make the 'law of God' available to everyone who could read

an audacious undertaking for the time. Their translation finally appeared around 1390, a few years after Wycliffe's death:

English around 1400 (Wycliffe Bible)

It forthou3t* him that he had made man in erthe. 'I shal do away,' he seith, 'man, whom I made of nou3t, fro the face of the erthe, fro man vnto thingis hauynge soule, fro crepynge beest vnto fowles of heuen; forsothe it othenkith me to haue maad hem.'

He seide to Noe: 'Make to thee an ark of planed trees; and with yune and with oute thou shal di3ten it with glew. Se, I shal lede to watres of a flood vpon the erthe, and I shal slee al flehs in the which spiryt of lijf is.'

Wycliffe's may have been the first complete Bible to appear in English, but some parts of the Bible had been rendered into English as early as four centuries before. One of the first English translations was made at the turn of the first millennium, by AElfric's, Abbot of Eynsham. AElfric was celebrated as the greatest prose writer of Anglo-Saxon England, but for speakers of modern English, his language might seem just a tad odd:

English around 1000 (Translation of AElfric)

Gode ofouhte* oa oxt he manu geworhte ofer eoroan . . . And cwaeo: 'Ic adylgie oone man, oe ic gesceop, fram oaere eoroan ansyne, fram oam men oo oa nytenu, fram oam slincendum oo oa fugelas: me ofoingo soolice oaet ic hi worhte.'

And God cwaeo oa to Noe: 'Wyrç oe nu ane arc of aheawenum bordum and claemst wiinnan and wioutan mid tyrwan. Efne ic gebringe flodes waeteru ofer eoroan, oaet ic ofslea eal flaesc on oam oe is lifes gast.'

The four passages above reveal the waywardness of the 'English language' over the last thousand years, and highlight just how thoroughly it has changed.

...

AElfric's English is not merely strange - it sounds like double Dutch. Within a span of only about thirty generations, 'English' has undergone such a thorough overhaul that what is supposed to be one and the same language is barely recognizable. Indeed, AElfric's language seems so entirely foreign that one might need some convincing to accept that it even has anything to do with English at all. And yet, on closer inspection, and with a word-for-word gloss into modern English, it turns out that the two 'Englishes' have a lot more in common than meets the eye:

Gode ofthuhte tha thaet he mann geworhte ofer eorthan,
to. God displeased then that he man wrought over earth

And cwaeth: Ic adylgie thone man, the ic ge-sceop

And said I destroy the man that I shaped
 fram there eorþan ansyne fram þam
 from the earth's face from the
 men oþ tha nytenu, fram þam slincendum oþ tha fugelas
 men to the beasts, from the crawlers to the fowls

Armed with this gloss, it may become easier to accept that AElfric's language and modern English really do represent two stages of the same language. Quite a few words are the same (and, he, men), and others are much of a muchness (ifer 'over', fram 'from') or at least close enough to be identifiable: eorþan 'earth', geworhte 'wrought', cwccth 'quoth', fugelas 'fowls'. Even so, the knowledge that AElfric's language really was the 'English' of a millennium ago only makes the extent of the changes seem more baffling.³⁰

It is indeed baffling but has it evolved in complexity and order or has it devolved? From this metamorphosis Guy Deutscher wants to make a case for evolution. But where is it? It is not like beauty that is in the eye of the beholder. We need to see some additional order or complexity developing over time to call it evolution. None of that! Despite the presence of printing press, the developed state of the British society in the last millennium and greater means of communication and travel we do not see any development in the language or any additional complexity or order in the words or grammar. Guy Deutscher writes, "Perhaps the most surprising feature of AElfric's English is that, like Latin, it had a complex case and gender system, so that nouns and even the definite article 'the' had an array of different forms depending on their role in the sentence and on their gender and number."³¹ This is certainly loss of detail and order and simplification not evolution. Steven Pinker describes a similar example of metamorphosis and possible devolution of English language in the last millennia using the change in Lord's Prayer.³²

Guy Deutscher also makes a tall claim:

"It took a long time before linguists managed to show that the forces of creation are not confined to remote prehistory, but are alive and kicking even in modern languages. In fact, it is only in recent decades that linguists have begun to appreciate the full

significance of these creative forces, and have amassed enough evidence from hundreds of languages around the world to allow us a deeper understanding of their ways. At last, linguists are now able to present a clearer picture of how imposing linguistic edifices can arise, and how intricate systems of grammatical conventions can develop quite of their own accord. So today, it is finally possible to get to grips with some of the questions which for so long had seemed so intractable."³³

But nowhere in his book have we seen any genuine example of evolution or development of language. The only way the linguists can demonstrate evolution in languages is by indulging in make-believe. According to Friedrich Max Müller, Professor of Philology at Oxford:

"If you consider that, whatever view we take of the origin and dispersion of language, nothing new has ever been added to the substance of language, that all its changes have been changes of form, that no new root or radical has ever been invented by later generations, as little as one single element has ever been added to the material world in which we live."³⁴

He goes onto write later in his book, the full text of which can be reviewed in the google.com book section:

"Since the beginning of the world no new additions has ever been made to the substantial elements of speech, any more than to the substantial elements of nature. There is a constant change in language; a coming and going of words; but no man can ever invent an entirely new word. We speak to all intents and purposes substantially the same language as the earliest ancestors of our race; and, guided by the hand of scientific etymology, we may pass on from century to century through the darkest periods of world's history, till the stream of language on which we ourselves are moving carries us back to those distant regions where we seem to feel the presence of our earliest forefathers, and to hear the voices of the earth-born sons of Manu."³⁵

Mohammad Ahmad Mazhar argues that if the prehistoric, primitive man could invent a language why cannot the advanced man of the twentieth century invent a single word?³⁶

EPILOGUE

وَمِنْ آيَاتِهِ خَلْقُ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَاجْتِلاثُ أَلْسِنَتِكُمْ وَالْوَأْنِكُمْ إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لآيَاتٍ لِّلْعَالِمِينَ

And among His Signs is the creation of the heavens and the earth, and the diversity of your tongues and colors. In that surely are Signs for those who possess knowledge. (Al Quran 30:23)

In this verse, of the Holy Quran there is a subtle hint that as all the races have come from one race or color of the skin; likewise, all the languages have come from one mother tongue or language. We are also invited to study languages among other subjects as 'in that surely are Signs for those who possess knowledge.' Inference being that by studying languages and showing that they all come from one prototype, one source, we may be led to 'Guided Evolution' and to religion in turn. For this purpose we need to just establish that languages are not evolving but devolving or transforming from one prototype. Showing that Arabic is that prototype has additional benefits but is not necessary to demonstrate that all languages have been formed by numerous, successive, slight modifications of one mother tongue.

This verse points to a fertile area of future research and an objective and scientific refutation against blind evolution that has been pointed to us by Promised Messiah^{as}, drawing inspiration from different verses of the Holy Quran, especially the one that calls Mecca as the mother of all the towns.³⁷

Language is that makes us human, the most advanced and dominant species on the planet earth. It is the climax of the so called creative processes on the planet. If we demonstrate and objectively establish, God's Providence in the revelation of 'mother of all languages,' then we will be making a strong case for 'Guided' or 'Theistic Evolution.' The success of such undertaking is underwritten and guaranteed by God Himself, as hinted to, in the verse in the beginning of this section.

So, after all we may be able to demonstrate that in the final analysis humans are not just another animal species, owing its existence to merely 'blind chance' and 'survival of the fittest.' What separates us from other apes is the revelation of mother language at some prehistoric time and subsequent revelation of spiritual and moral code through the prophets, starting with the Prophet Adam, in the last 6 millennia.

A lot of ground work is already in place. For example, Promised Messiah^{as} wrote that Syriac was the first to emerge out of Arabic in an altered form. That is why the ancients called it earliest Arabic (Minan, P.90). Numerous researchers and faculty members in different universities of the world are working on this subject and the research is being funded by National Foundation of Sciences. It is not their intent but all this research will in the final analysis serve the Holy Quran as is foretold 'in the diversity of your tongues ... surely are Signs for those who possess knowledge.' (Al Quran 30:23) Friedrich Max Müller writes:

“Language has been called sacred ground, because it is the deposit of thought. We cannot tell as yet what language is. It may be a production of nature, a work of human art, or a divine gift. But to whatever sphere it belongs, it would seem to stand unsurpassed—nay, unequalled in it—by anything else. If it be a production of nature, it is her last and crowning production which she reserved for man alone. If it be a work of human art, it would seem to lift the human artist almost to the level of a divine creator. If it be the gift of God, it is God's greatest gift; for through it God spake to man and man speaks to God in worship, prayer, and meditation.”³⁸

‘The present is the key to the past’ and as we keep demonstrating that languages are only devolving and never evolving, in the strict sense of the word, we would have established that language is a gift and revelation from God! But there is certain urgency about this work as in this information age many of the local languages are dying fast. Steven Pinker estimates, “Between 3600 to 5600 languages, as many as 90% of world’s total, are threatened with extinction in the next century.”³⁹ Guy Deutscher echoes the same sentiment in his book *the Unfolding of Language: An Evolutionary Tour of Mankind's Greatest Invention* by writing:

“At an estimated death-rate of one language every two weeks, it seems that before this century is out, between half and three-quarters of the world’s six thousand or so languages will have disappeared, and among them almost all the languages of small preliterate societies.”⁴⁰

Time is of the essence and it is urgent for the mankind and especially the Muslims to document the languages under the guidelines revealed by Allah to the Messiah of this age.

¹ Ian G Barbour. When science meets religion. Haper Collins Publisher, 2000. Page 1.

² US data from Gallup poll, Nov, 1991, see US News and World Report, 23 Dec, 1991, p 59.

³ Mohammad Ahmad Mazhar. English traced to Arabic. Sunrise Art Printers, 1967, page 4.
<http://www.alislam.org/topics/arabic/>

⁴ The Promised Messiah. Minan-ur-Rahman - Arabic - the mother of all languages.
<http://www.alislam.org/topics/arabic/>

⁵ Friedrich Max Müller. The Science of Language: Founded on Lectures Delivered at the Royal Institution 1861 and 1863. Charles Scribner's Sons, 1891. Page 35-38.

⁶ Merritt Ruhlen. The origin of language. John Wiley and Sons, 1994. Page 148.

⁷ Promised Messiah. Minanur Rehman. English Translation published by Ahmadiyya Muslim Mission Nigeria. Page 96-97.

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- ⁸ Guy Deutscher. *The Unfolding of Language: An Evolutionary Tour of Mankind's Greatest Invention*. Published in 2005 by Henry Holt and Company. Pages 179.
- ⁹⁹ Steven Pinker. *The Language Instinct: How the Mind Created Language*. Harper Perennial Modern Classic, 2007. Page 262.
- ¹⁰ Friedrich Max Müller. *The Science of Language: Founded on Lectures Delivered at the Royal Institution 1861 and 1863*. Charles Scribner's Sons, 1891. Page 320.
- ¹¹ Friedrich Max Müller. *The Science of Language: Founded on Lectures Delivered at the Royal Institution 1861 and 1863*. Charles Scribner's Sons, 1891. Page 269.
- ¹² "Mario Pei." *Encyclopædia Britannica*. 2009. *Encyclopædia Britannica Online*. 17 Feb. 2009
<<http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/448818/Mario-Andrew-Pei>>.
- ¹³ Mario Pei. *The Story of Language*. Edition: 2, revised. Published by Lippincott, 1965; Original from the University of Michigan. Page 34.
- ¹⁴ Promised Messiah. Minanur Rehman. English Translation published by Ahmadiyya Muslim Mission Nigeria. Page 62-63.
- ¹⁵ John McWhorter. *The Power of Babel*. Perennial: Harper Collins, 2003. Page, 13.
- ¹⁶ Guy Deutscher. *The Unfolding of Language: An Evolutionary Tour of Mankind's Greatest Invention*. Published in 2005 by Henry Holt and Company. Pages 14-15.
- ¹⁷ Guy Deutscher. *The Unfolding of Language: An Evolutionary Tour of Mankind's Greatest Invention*. Published in 2005 by Henry Holt and Company. Page 4-5.
- ¹⁸ Terrence W Deacon. *The Symbolic Species: the Co-evolution of the language and the brain*. WW Norton and company, 1997. Page 44-45.
- ¹⁹ Terrence W Deacon. *The Symbolic Species: the Co-evolution of the language and the brain*. WW Norton and company, 1997. Page 35.
- ²⁰ *Encyclopædia Britannica: A New Survey of Universal Knowledge*. Walter Yust, University of Chicago - *Encyclopaedia Britannica* - 1947. Page 702.
- ²¹ Charles Darwin. *On the Origin of Species by Means of Natural Selection*. Edited by Joseph Carroll. Published by Broadview Press, 2003. Page 213.
- ²² Wilbur Marshall Urban. *Language and reality: the philosophy of language and the principles of symbolism*. 1951. Page 73.
- ²³ Friedrich Max Müller. *The Science of Language: Founded on Lectures Delivered at the Royal Institution 1861 and 1863*. Charles Scribner's Sons, 1891. Page 325.
- ²⁴ Mohammad Ahmad Mazhar. English traced to Arabic. Sunrise Art Printers, 1967, page 41.
<http://www.alislam.org/topics/arabic/>

²⁵ Genesis 11: 1-9.

²⁶ Mario Pei. *The Story of Language*. Edition: 2, revised. Published by Lippincott, 1965; Original from the University of Michigan. Page 363.

²⁷ Christine Kenneally. *The First Word: The Search for the Origins of Language*. Penguin books, 2007. Page 4-5.

²⁸ Christine Kenneally. *The First Word: The Search for the Origins of Language*. Penguin books, 2007. Page 5-6.

²⁹ Guy Deutscher. *The Unfolding of Language: An Evolutionary Tour of Mankind's Greatest Invention*. Published in 2005 by Henry Holt and Company. Page 9.

³⁰ Guy Deutscher. *The Unfolding of Language: An Evolutionary Tour of Mankind's Greatest Invention*. Published in 2005 by Henry Holt and Company. Pages 46-49.

³¹ Guy Deutscher. *The Unfolding of Language: An Evolutionary Tour of Mankind's Greatest Invention*. Published in 2005 by Henry Holt and Company. Page 50.

³² Steven Pinker. *The language instinct: How the Mind Created Language*. Harper Perennial Modern Classic, 2007. Page 250.

³³ Guy Deutscher. *The Unfolding of Language: An Evolutionary Tour of Mankind's Greatest Invention*. Published in 2005 by Henry Holt and Company. Page 8.

³⁴ Friedrich Max Müller. *The Science of Language: Founded on Lectures Delivered at the Royal Institution 1861 and 1863*. Charles Scribner's Sons, 1891. Page 27.

³⁵ Friedrich Max Müller. *The Science of Language: Founded on Lectures Delivered at the Royal Institution 1861 and 1863*. Charles Scribner's Sons, 1891. Page 324.

³⁶ Mohammad Ahmad Mazhar. *English traced to Arabic*. Sunrise Art Printers, 1967, page 10.
<http://www.alislam.org/topics/arabic/>

³⁷ Al Quran 6:93.

³⁸ Friedrich Max Müller. *The Science of Language: Founded on Lectures Delivered at the Royal Institution 1861 and 1863*. Charles Scribner's Sons, 1891. Page 3.

³⁹ Steven Pinker. *The language instinct: How the Mind Created Language*. Harper Perennial Modern Classic, 2007. Page 262.

⁴⁰ Guy Deutscher. *The Unfolding of Language: An Evolutionary Tour of Mankind's Greatest Invention*. Published in 2005 by Henry Holt and Company. Page 273-274.