Preservation of the Holy Quran

Surely, We Ourself (Allah) have sent down this Exhortation, and we will, most surely, safeguard it.” (Al Quran 15:10).

“We may upon the strongest presumption affirm that every verse in the Quran is the genuine and unaltered composition of Muhammad himself.” (Sir William Muir)

“Slight clerical errors there may have been but the Koran of Othman contains none but the genuine elements.” (Encyclopedia Britannica 1888 AD)

“As often as we approach the Quran, it always proves repulsive anew; gradually, however, it attracts, it astonishes, and, in the end forces admiration.” (Johann Wolfgang von Goethe)
MAURICE BUCAILLE—A FRENCH SURGEON ON THE COMPILATION OF THE HOLY QURAN

Thanks to its undisputed authenticity, the text of the Qur'an holds a unique place among the books of Revelation, shared neither by the Old nor the New Testament. In the first two sections of this work, a review was made of the alterations undergone by the Old Testament and the Gospels before they were handed down to us in the form we know today. The same is not true for the Qur'an for the simple reason that it was written down at the time of the Prophet; we shall see how it came to be written, i.e. the process involved.

In this context, the differences separating the Quran from the Bible are in no way due to questions essentially concerned with date. Such questions are constantly put forward by certain people without regard to the circumstances prevailing at the time when the Judeo-Christian and the Quranic Revelations were written; they have an equal disregard for the circumstances surrounding the transmission of the Quran to the Prophet. It is suggested that a Seventh century text had more likelihood of coming down to us unaltered than other texts that are as many as fifteen centuries older. This comment, although correct, does not constitute a sufficient reason; it is made more to excuse the alterations made in the Judeo-Christian texts in the course of centuries than to underline the notion that the text of the Quran, which was more recent, had less to fear from being modified by man.

In the case of the Old Testament, ..... The situation is very different for the Quran. As the Revelation progressed, the Prophet and the believers following him recited the text by heart and it was also written down by the scribes in his following. It therefore starts off with two elements of authenticity that the Gospels do not possess. This continued up to the Prophet's demise. At a time when not everybody could write, but everyone was able to recite, recitation afforded a considerable advantage because of the double-checking possible when the definitive text was compiled.

The Quranic Revelation was made by Archangel Gabriel to Muhammad. It took place over a period of more than twenty years of the Prophet's life, beginning with the first verses of Sura or chapter 96, then resuming after a three-year break for a long period of twenty years up to the demise of the Prophet in 632 A.D., i.e. ten years before Hegira and ten years after Hegira. ..... Four Suras dating from a period prior to Hegira refer to the writing down of the Qur'an before the Prophet left Makkah in 622 (Sura 80, verses 12 to 17):

“By no means! Indeed it is a message of instruction, Therefore whoever wills, should remember, On leaves held in honor, Exalted, purified, In the hands of scribes Noble and pious.”

Yusuf Ali, in the commentary to his translation, 1934, wrote that when the Revelation of this Sura was made, forty-two or forty-five others had been written and were kept by Muslims in Makkah (out of a total of 114).

Sura 85, verses 22 and 23:
"Nay, this is a glorious reading, On a preserved tablet"

_Sura_ 56, verses 78 to 81:

"This is a glorious reading, In a book well kept Which none but the purified teach. This is a Revelation from the Lord of the Worlds."

_Sura_ 25, verse 6:

"They said: Tales of the ancients which he has caused to be written and they are dictated to him morning and evening."

Here we have a reference to the accusations made by the Prophet's enemies who treated him as an imposter. They spread the rumour that stories of antiquity were being dictated to him and he was writing them down or having them transcribed (the meaning of the word is debatable, but one must remember that Muhammad was illiterate). However, this may be, the verse refers to this act of making a written record which is pointed out by Muhammad's enemies themselves.

A _Sura_ that came after Hegira makes one last mention of the leaves on which these divine instructions were written:

_Sura_ 98, verses 3 and 4:

"An (apostle) from God recites leaves, Kept pure where are decrees right and straight."

The Qur'an itself therefore provides indications as to the fact that it was set down in writing at the time of the Prophet. **It is a known fact that there were several scribes in his following, the most famous of whom, Zaid Ibn Thābit, has left his name to posterity.**

Extremely diverse materials were used for this first record: parchment, leather, wooden tablets, camels' scapula, soft stone for inscriptions, etc.

At the same time however, Muhammad recommended that the faithful learn the Quran by heart. They did this for a part if not all of the text recited during prayers. Thus there were _Hafizun_ who knew the whole of the Qur'an by heart and spread it abroad. The method of doubly preserving the text both in writing and by memorization proved to be extremely precious.

**Not long after the Prophet's demise (632), his successor Abu Bakr, the first Caliph of Islam, asked Muhammad's former head scribe, Zaid Ibn Thābit, to make a copy, this he did, on Omar's initiative (the future second Caliph), Zaid consulted all the information he could assemble at Madinah: the witness of the _Hafizun_, copies of the Book written on various materials belonging to private individuals, all with the object of avoiding possible errors in transcription. Thus an extremely faithful copy of the Book was obtained.**

The sources tell us that Caliph Omar, Abu Bakr's successor in 634, subsequently made a single volume (_mushaf_) that he preserved and gave on his demise to his daughter Hafsa, the Prophet's widow.

The third Caliph of Islam, Uthman, who held the caliphate from 644 to 655, entrusted a commission of experts with the preparation of the great recension that bears his name. It checked the authenticity of the document produced under Abu Bakr which had remained in Hafsa's possession until that time. The commission consulted Muslims who knew the text by heart. The critical analysis of the authenticity of the text was carried out very rigorously. The
agreement of the witnesses was deemed necessary before the slightest verse containing debatable material was retained. It is indeed known how some verses of the Quran correct others in the case of prescriptions: this may be readily explained when one remembers that the Prophet’s period of apostolic activity stretched over twenty years (in round figures). The result is a text containing an order of Suras that reflects the order followed by the Prophet in his complete recital of the Quran during Ramadan.

For a complete description please go to the link:

http://home.swipnet.se/islam/quran-bible.htm

**SIR WILLIAM MUIR ON COMPILATION OF THE HOLY QURAN**

You can read this in the article posted on alislam.org:


**EXPLANATION OF THE VERSE FROM 5 VOLUME COMMENTARY**

This verse quoted in the very beginning furnishes a powerful proof of the truth of the Quran and of its divine origin. In fact, the promise about the preservation of the Quran made in this verse has been so remarkably fulfilled that even if there had been no other proof of the truth of Islam, this alone would have sufficed to establish its divine origin.

Verse 8 of this Sura contains the demand mockingly made by disbelievers that if the Quran were really as grand a book as it was claimed to be, it ought to have descended under the guardianship of angels. This ridicule of disbelievers has been answered in the present verse, which emphatically says that the Quran is indeed a sublime book and that God Himself has undertaken to act as its Guardian and that He will always protect it against every kind of corruption and interference. And in order that this promise...
about the protection of the Quran may gain still more force, particles expressive of special emphasis, such as ﴾ إِنَّا (verily We) and ﴾ نَحْنُ (Ourself) and again ﴾ إِنَّا followed by ﴾ لَ (most surely) have been used in this verse. Thus the claim has been made in the most emphatic and forceful language.

The statement that God Himself is the Guardian of the Quran does not mean that angels do not guard it. They also do so, for when the master himself is guarding a thing, the servants must also be necessarily engaged in that service. By saying, *most surely We will be its Guardian*, God, however, points to the fact that there are certain peculiarities of the Quran which it is beyond the power of angels to guard and, therefore, God Himself, has undertaken to do that work.

This *Sura* was revealed at Makkah. According to Ibn Hisham, it was revealed in the fourth year of the Holy Prophet’s ministry. Sprenger, Rodwell and Noldeke all agree that it belongs to the Makkan period. Now it is a well-known fact that during the Makkan period, the life of the Holy Prophet saw and his followers was extremely precarious. They did not even know how to save themselves or where to hide themselves. For no less than three years the Prophet and his few helpless followers were virtually imprisoned in the *Shi’b* (valley) of Abu Talib from where they could not venture out. They were under a ban. Is it not then astonishing that when the very lives of Muslims were in peril and the enemy was so strong that he could easily crush the new Faith, unbelievers were challenged to do all that lay in their power to destroy the Quran, and were told that God would frustrate all their designs because He Himself was its Guardian? The challenge was open and unequivocal and the enemy strong and ruthless. But what was the result? The Prophet and his Companions not only remained safe and sound but threw and prospered and the number of converts continued to swell and the Quran remained safe against all corruption and has ever continued to enjoy perfect security. This distinctive feature of the Quran has not been shared by any other book revealed to any other Prophet.

Sir William Muir, the well-known critic of Islam, says about the Quran: 
“We may, upon the strongest presumption, affirm that every verse in the Quran is the genuine and unaltered composition of Mohammad himself.” Again, “There is otherwise every security, internal and external, that we possess the text which Mohammad himself gave forth and used.” Again, “To compare (as the Muslims are fond of doing) their pure text with the various readings of our Scriptures, is to compare things between which there is no analogy.” (Introduction to ‘The Life of Muhammad’).

Prof. Noldeke, the great German Orientalist writes as follows:

*Slight clerical errors there may have been, but the Quran of Othman contains none but genuine elements, though sometimes in very strange order. Efforts of European scholars to prove the existence of later interpolations in the Quran have failed.* (Enc. Brit.).

Professor Nicholson, says in his “Literary History of the Arabs”:

*Here (in the Quran) we have materials of unique and incontestable authority for tracing the origin and early development of Islam -- such materials as do not exist in the case of Buddhism or Christianity or any other*
ancient religion.
The following additional factors also very materially contributed to the preservation of the Quran:

(1) That God has inspired the Muslims with an extraordinary love for the Quran. They enjoy the reading of the Book even if they do not understand the meaning of the text. This leads to its being preserved in their hearts.

(2) That the rhythm of the Quran is so sweet and its language so charming and so easy to learn and the construction of its sentences so beautiful that it can be committed to memory with great ease.

(3) That God so ordained that immediately after the Quranic revelation became complete, it spread far and wide, to the remotest corners of the world, among all nations and all peoples, so that it became practically impossible for anyone to tamper with its text.

(4) That from the beginning the Quran formed for Muslims the basis of all the sciences and learning they acquired and developed with a view to serving it. Various branches of knowledge such as Grammar, Rhetoric, History, Philosophy and Logic were cultivated and developed by Muslims for the sake of a better understanding of their holy Book.

(5) That God has preserved Arabic, the language of the Quran, as a living language, while the languages of all other revealed Books, which were not meant to last for ever, have become practically dead.

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For the rest of the details please see the 5 volume commentary at www.alislam.org/quran/

The quotes attributed to Professor Nicholson can be reviewed at the following link:

http://books.google.com/books?id=WNolAAAAAAMAAJ&pgis=1

The quotes attributed to Professor Noldeke can be reviewed at the following links:

http://books.google.com/books?id=8HJ9TKeb8VkJC
http://books.google.com/books?id=BZ0MAAAAYAAJ
http://books.google.com/books?id=-hd-69IeT5gC

SO CALLED “SATANIC VERSES”

Now that we have established that the present day Quran is exactly the same as compiled soon after the demise of the Holy Prophet Muhammad(saw), the only question that needs to be addressed is that whether he put forward only one version in his life time. The first argument to be put forward in this regards is that if he were to make changes in what he was attributing to All Knowing God, there would have been large scale apostasy as a result of that. The early Muslims were living in very difficult circumstances without any political clout or secular advantage, if there was evidence to show that the Prophet was anything but a true ambassador of Allah, there would have been no reason to stand by him.

In the novel, the Satanic Verses and in some other books of the Orientalists, there is an insinuation that the Prophet was ready to negotiate on the issue of Monotheism. The main point of contention relates to a few verses from Surah Al-Najm, the 53rd
Chapter of the Holy Qur’an. The verses in question are numbers 20 and 21:

‘Now tell me about Lat and Uzza; And Manat, the third one, another goddess.’

These critics have woven quite a fantastic story of his having once become a victim to satanic influence. It is stated that one day at Makkah, when the Holy Prophet saw recited this Surah before a mixed assembly of Muslims and disbelievers and during the recitation he came to these verses, Satan contrived to put in his mouth the words:

‘these are exalted goddesses and their intercession is hoped for.’

This is sheer confabulation, the whole of the Holy Quran and the 63 years of well documented life and character of the Holy Prophet saw absolutely defy this accusation. **Human personality is very hard to change.** If it were to change, whether for good or bad, it will change ever so slowly. This is a fact firmly grounded in the study of psychology and psychiatry. If we are to believe that a devout republican can wake up one fine morning to be a staunch democrat or a born again Christian can wake up to be a Buddhist, then human rationality will be catapulted to a land of total chaos.

The Holy Prophet was the most devout monotheist that the world has ever seen! It is well documented that the opponents of the Holy Prophet saw had gone to his uncle Hadhrat Abu Talib and said to him, “You are one of our chiefs and for your sake we have so far spared your nephew, Muhammad. The time has come, however, when we should put an end to this national crisis, this conflict, in our midst. We ask and demand that he should desist from saying anything against our idols. Let him proclaim that God is One, but let him not say anything against our idols. If he agrees to this, our conflict and controversy with him will be over. We urge you to persuade him. But if you are unable to do so, then one of two things must happen. Either you will have to give up your nephew, or we, your people, will give you up.” (Hisham)

Abu Talib was confronted with a hard choice. To give up his nephew was hard. Equally hard was it to be disowned by his people. Arabs had little in the way of money. Their prestige lay in their leadership. They lived for their people, and their people for them. Abu Talib was much upset. He sent for the Prophet and explained to him the demand made by the elders of Makkah. “If you do not agree,” he said with tears in his eyes, “then either I have to give you up or my people will give me up.” The Prophet was in evident sympathy with his uncle. Tears came to his eyes and he said, “I ask you not to give up your people. I ask you not to stand by me. Instead, you may give me up and stand by your people. But the One and Only God is my witness when I say that even if they were to place the sun on my right and the moon on my left, I would not desist from preaching the truth of the One God. I must go on doing so until I die. You can choose your own pleasure.” Hadhrat Abu Talib was his main protector at that time but the Prophet did not have the slightest reluctance to give up this protection for the sake of One God and a firm reliance on Monotheism. (Hisham and Zurqani).

Several years after this episode and after the revelation of the mentioned verses of the Holy Quran, as a result of blows to his head, in the battle of Uhad, the Holy Prophet Muhammad saw had fainted. After a little while, the Prophet returned to consciousness.
The guards who surrounded him sent out messengers to tell Muslims to assemble again. A disrupted force began to assemble. They escorted the Prophet to the foot of the hill of Uhud. Abu Sufyan, the enemy commander, seeing these Muslim remnants, cried aloud, “We have killed Muhammad.” The Prophet heard the boastful cry but forbade the Muslims to answer, lest the enemy should know the truth and attack again and the exhausted and badly-wounded Muslims should have again to fight this savage horde.

Not receiving a reply from the Muslims, Abu Sufyan became certain the Prophet was dead. He followed his first cry by a second and said, “We have also killed Abu Bakr.” The Prophet forbade Abu Bakr to make any reply. Abu Sufyan followed by a third claim, and said, “We have also killed Umar.” The Prophet forbade Umar also to reply. Upon this Abu Sufyan raised the national slogan, “Glory to Hubal. Glory to Hubal! For Hubal has put an end to Islam.” (Hubal was the Makkans’ national idol.) The Prophet could not bear this boast against the One and Only God, Allah, for Whom he and the Muslims were prepared to sacrifice their all. He had refused to correct a declaration of his own demise. He had refused to correct a declaration of the death of Abu Bakr and of Umar for strategic reasons. Only a small remnant of his force had been left. The enemy forces were large and buoyant. But now the enemy had insulted Allah. The Prophet could not stand such an insult. His spirit was fired. He looked angrily at the Muslims who surrounded him and said, “Why stand silent and make no reply to this insult to Allah, the Only God?”

The Muslims asked, “What shall we say, O Prophet?”

“Say, ‘Allah alone is Great and Mighty. Allah alone is Great and Mighty. He alone is High and Honored. He alone is High and Honored.’

The Muslims shouted accordingly. This cry stupefied the enemy. They stood stunned at the thought that the Prophet after all had not died. Before them stood a handful of Muslims, wounded and exhausted, to finish them was easy enough, but they dared not attack again! (Life of Muhammad by Hadhrat Mirza Bashir-ud-din Mahmud Ahmad Khalifatul Masih II)

At another place the Holy Quran describes the security and integrity of the process of transmission of Allah’s message to the Prophets:

Allah is the Knower of the unseen; and He reveals not His secrets to anyone, except to a Messenger of His whom He chooses. And then He causes an escort of guarding angels to go before him and behind him that He may know that His Messengers have delivered the Messages of their Lord. And He encompasses all that is with them and He keeps count of all things. (Al Jinn 72:27-29)

For a more detailed handling of this issue see the book, Rushdie - Haunted by His Unholy Ghosts by Mohamed Arshad Ahmed. The full text is available on www.alislam.org/books/.

Also review the biography of the Prophet Muhammad by Karen Armstrong a former Catholic nun. She has devoted a full chapter in her book to this subject.
**SO CALLED ABROGATED VERSES**

Sir Zafarulla Khan writes about Hadhrat Maulawi Nurud Din, the first Khalifah of Promised Messiah, in his biography, “A Turkish resident of Madinah, who owned a large library, developed a fondness for Maulawi Nurud Din and being impressed by his love of the Holy Quran offered to lend him any book that he might wish to read. He asked him for some book that might enlighten him on the question of the abrogation of a certain number of the verses of the Holy Quran. He brought him a book in which it was affirmed that as many as six hundred verses had been abrogated. This left him puzzled. His friend then brought him *Itqan*, from which he gathered that only nineteen verses had been abrogated. He was much pleased and thought of looking into Shah Waliullah’s book *Fauzul Kabir*, which he had bought in Bombay, but had not yet read. He was filled with joy when he discovered that according to Shah Waliullah only five verses had been abrogated. This convinced him that the whole question of abrogation was a matter of reflection and understanding.”

Later on, when Hadhrat Maulawi Nurud Din, took his oath of initiation at the hands of Promised Messiah in 1889, he became completely aware and comfortable with the fact that not even a part of a verse was abrogated.

Ahmadiyya Movement in Islam, under the Divine guidance that was bestowed to Promised Messiah has done away with all ideas derogatory to the dignity of the Holy Quran. Thus it has exposed the error of the doctrine of abrogation (*naskh*). The idea of abrogation crept into the Muslims in the middle ages, on the basis of certain Hadith reports none of which can be traced to the Holy Prophet, and which in fact contradict each other. The allegation that certain verses cannot be reconciled with others amounts virtually to the admission that there are discrepancies in the Holy Book:

> “Will they not then meditate on the Quran? Had it been from anyone other than Allah, they would have found therein many a contradictions.” (Al Nisa 4:83)

Again it is said in the Holy Quran:

> “Nay, but it is a glorious Quran. In a well guarded tablet.” (Al Buruj 85:22-23)

Rejecting the doctrine of abrogation, the Ahmadiyya Movement stands for a complete Quran, in which nothing is abrogated and from which nothing has been left out.

The main verse discussed under the subject of abrogation is in *Sura Baqarah*, “Whatever Sign We abrogate or cause to be forgotten, We bring one better than that or the like thereof. Dost thou not know that Allah has the power to do all that He wills?” (Al Baqarah 2:107)

Some Commentators have attempted to infer from this verse that some of the verses of the Quran have been abrogated by others. But this conclusion is grievously erroneous and unwarranted. There is nothing in this verse to indicate the word *آيَة* (Sign) occurring here refers to the Quranic verses. Both in the preceding and the following verses, a reference is made to the People of the Book and their jealousies for the new revelation, which clearly shows that the word *آيَة* spoken of in this verse as being abrogated, refers to the previous revelations. For example the preceding verse is, “They
who disbelieve from among the People of the Book, or from among those who associate gods with Allah, desire not that any good should be sent down to you from your Lord; but Allah chooses for His mercy whomsoever He pleases; and Allah is of exceeding bounty.”

It is pointed out in the verse under discussion that the previous scriptures contained two kinds of commandments. Firstly, those which, owing to the changed conditions of the world and the universality of the new revelation, required abrogation; secondly, those containing eternal truths which did not require abrogation but simply resuscitation so that people might be reminded of the forgotten truth. It was, therefore, necessary (1) to abrogate certain portions and bring in their place new ones, and (2) to restore the lost ones. So, God abrogated some portions of the old Books, re-placing them with new and better ones, and at the same time He reintroduced the missing portions by similar ones. This is the only meaning which is consistent with the context and the general spirit of Quranic teaching.

The Jews themselves admit that after the Israelites were carried as captives to Babylon by Nebuchadnezzar, the whole of the Pentateuch was lost (Enc. Bib, 653-654). If we study the compilation and history of New Testament in detail, it becomes abundantly clear that there are numerous historical distortions and contradictions, within the Bible. As a result, it becomes self evident that Allah would have sent another revelation. For a basic introduction on the compilation of Bible see the book by Dr. Maurice Bucaille, *the Bible, the Quran and Science*. The full text of the book is available online.

The meanings put on the verse by some translators that certain verses of the Quran stand abrogated is not only opposed to the words of the Quran and the context of the verse, but is also against reason; nor can any authentic saying of the Holy Prophet be quoted in its favour. On the contrary, the Holy Prophet Muhammad(saw) is reported to have said that the whole of the Quran must be strictly followed and he himself acted upon all its teachings throughout his life. Besides this, the Quran itself testifies to its own purity and integrity in several places.

Again, there is absolutely no self-contradiction in the Quran, and therefore no need of resorting to the theory of abrogation. So-called contradictions only betray lack of deep study on the part of those who proclaimed them. When one fails to understand two verses in their true relations, one is inclined to see a contradiction between them and then takes recourse to the convenient theory that one of the two verses must have been abrogated by the other. As soon as they appear to be reconcilable, the abrogation theory becomes uncalled for. This is why those who have upheld the abrogation theory have gradually been compelled to reduce the number of abrogated verses; for whereas the abrogated verses were formerly thought to be as many as 500, they have, by later scholars, been gradually reduced to only five, as mentioned above.

In short, this verse of *Sura Baqarah* only means that a teaching with limitations including a restricted scope in time should be replaced with a better teaching with a universal mission. That is why the Holy Quran was revealed to replace the Holy Bible through friendly persuasion and not hostile propaganda or physical force.
**NEGATIVE CAMPAIGN AGAINST ISLAM SHOULD CHANGE**

Usually, in any work of fiction, there is a disclaimer to the effect that ‘all the events and characters in the book are entirely fictitious, and are not intended to represent any actual event or real person, either living or dead.’ Interestingly enough Rushdie makes no such declaration in his notorious novel, and yet it is considered that his speech is not a hate crime but a piece of art! It is bewildering to note that he has been knighted for slander and libel. In short, the accusations made by his book and like, have their basis in Islam phobia rather than any facts.

**Like negative campaigns are looked down upon, in the political life, with increasing human awareness, it is time to extend that courtesy to religious domains also.** The treatment of the west towards Islam, since the time of Crusades, has not been kind, to say the least. This is well documented in the writings of numerous western writers. For the sake of example, we can cite Karen Armstrong, Dr. Maurice Bucaille, Sir Thomas Carlyle and the Vatican herself. For example, the Office for Non-Christian Affairs at the Vatican, produced a document, under the title Orientations for a Dialogue between Christians and Muslims (Orientations pour un dialogue entre chrétiens et musulmans). It is a very important document in that it shows the new position adopted towards Islam, and recognizes some of the limitations of the past.

In the words of Mohamed Arshad Ahmed, in his book, *Rushdie - Haunted by His Unholy Ghosts*, “There can be no denying that the book Satanic verses was not the work of Salman Rushdie alone. His very limited knowledge of Islam coupled with a totally un-Islamic upbringing, the huge financial backing to this project and the similarity with earlier literary attacks on the Holy Prophet(saw) and Islam, all point to a powerful conspiracy against the religion that is regarded as a threat to Western thinking and idealism.

.....

It is almost as if (God forbid), that Muhammad(saw) had succumbed to satanic thoughts right at the end of his life. Could these ever be the thoughts of someone who throughout his life had preached the Unity of God with the firmness of faith never witnessed before? Rushdie must have been living in a fools’ paradise to insinuate such ludicrous and farcical claims. He fooled no-one in trying to pass all this off as fiction. This has been a deliberate and premeditated attack on anything and everything to do with Islam and it was meant to hurt all Muslims around the world.

Salman Rushdie could never have dreamt of this alone; nor could he have taken the risk of inciting the latent passions of the Muslim fundamentalists on his own; unless, of course, he was promised more money than he could handle, more fame than he could live with and promised comprehensive protection should things get out of hand.” (The full text of the book can be reviewed on www.alislam.org/books/, page 8 and 108)

Several proofs can be put forward to demonstrate that Rushdie’s book was not a solo effort. Professor Richard Dawkins claims in his book the *God Delusion* that he was one of the 37 authors who
were chosen to defend Rushdie at the time of publication of his so called novel.

Karen Armstrong, describing the historical Islam phobia, writes:

“In the 12th century, Peter the Venerable, Abbot of Cluny, initiated a dialogue with the Islamic world. ‘I approach you not with arms, but with words,’ he wrote to the Muslims whom he imagined reading his book, ‘not with force, but with reason, not with hatred, but with love.’ Yet his treatise was entitled Summary of the Whole Heresy of the Diabolical Sect of the Saracens and Seged repeatedly into spluttering intransigence. Words failed Peter when he contemplated the ‘bestial cruelty’ of Islam, which, he claimed, had established itself by the sword. Was Muhammad a true prophet? ‘I shall be worse than a donkey if I agree,’ he expostulated, ‘worse than cattle if I assent!’”

She concludes this essay by stating that this prejudice is still all too pervasive, “Neither the Danish cartoonists, who published the offensive caricatures of the Prophet Muhammad last February, nor the Christian fundamentalists …., would ordinarily make common cause with the Pope; yet on the subject of Islam they are in full agreement.”

We, one human race sharing this planet, need to change and put an end to these negative traditions and Islam phobia and in the words of the mantra of Barack Hussein Obama ‘yes we can’!

**FRIDAY SERMON**

On January 11, 2008, Khalifah-tul-Masih V, Hadhrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad, continued with his discourse on verse 130 of *Surah Al Baqarah*, its translation reads:

’And, Our Lord, raise up among them a Messenger from among themselves, who may recite to them Thy Signs and teach them the Book and Wisdom and may purify them; surely, Thou art the Mighty, the Wise’.

He also talked about the verse about the preservation of the Holy Quran under discussion. In this regards he also read out brief extracts from the writings of Western scholars like John … B u c a i l l e ,  t h a t  v e r i f y  t h a t  t h e  o r i g i n a l  t e x t  o f  t h e  H o l y  Q u r a n ,  a s  r e v e a l e d  t o  t h e Holy Prophet(saw) remains unaltered. To listen to his sermon or to review a summary in English please go the web link: [http://www.alislam.org/archives/y?y=2008](http://www.alislam.org/archives/y?y=2008)

**BOOK REVIEW: “MANJI-ANOTHER PAWN ADVANCED”**

By Atif Munawar Mir

Muslims need to rediscover true Islam to deal with the issues of the modern life as opposed to modifying Islamic principles to fit the preferences of modern society. This is the main argument forwarded by Ansar Raza in his new book: “Manji another pawn advanced”. As evident by its name, this book is intended to be a response to the series of accusations launched by Irshad Manji against Islam in her book, “The Trouble with Islam”. Manji’s book is “written for a general audience and not for academics or
scholars.” Therefore, Raza’s response is in “simple conversational style” as well. In his analysis, Raza discusses three methods employed by Manji to slander Islam: “hiding the truth”, “perverting words” and “confounding truth with falsehood”. In a simple and yet powerful way, Raza builds his analysis by identifying the number of accusations made by Manji and responds to them in the light of Islamic teachings.

Manji’s logical technique, in the words of Raza, is to “amass divergent statements, put them in a clay pot, shake them well and offer to her readers a heap of irreconcilable oscillating philosophy”. For instance, the author points out that Manji wrongly blames Islam for dark-aged teachings, such as the practice of stoning. If she, despite her prejudice, finds anything positive in Islam she credits it to the influence of Judaism. She conveniently forgets to mention that the punishment of stoning was an “integral part of Jewish law, which was also practiced by Christian clergy.” Raza emphasizes that Holy Quran has “quite clearly and unequivocally laid down flogging as the punishment for adultery.” The author argues that if the stoning persists in Islamic cultures, it is because of the misunderstanding of the teachings of Islam.

To show shortcomings in Manji’s research, Raza, among other examples, uses Manji’s discussion of the “Pact of Umar”, which she argues contained discriminatory clauses. To support her argument, she claims that Dr. Abdulaziz Sachedina admitted to such clauses in his book “The Islamic Roots of Democratic Pluralism”. Raza mentions as to how after reading the relevant portion of the Dr. Sachedina’s book, he was shocked to observe how “criminally” Manji had distorted and misrepresented his views. Raza made personal contact with Dr. Sachedina and upon his permission included Dr. Sachedina’s remarks about Manji in his book that “Ms Manji...depends on secondary sources about Islam, and retrieves only those materials that she intends to polimicize or utilizes to support her own personal interpretation”.

Manji “alleges that the Holy Quran forbids Muslims to think”. To reform itself, Manji argues, Islam needs Ijtihad. She gives an impression in her book that Ijtehad was devised, flourished and practiced in Muslim Spain due to the influence of Jews and Christians. Raza, after correcting her historical understanding and definition of Ijtehad, proves using Quranic verses that Islam does encourage the use of intellect and mind. In addition, he points out, “Islam has...built-in function of reformation” as Allah has promised and taken care of the periodic revival and reformation of Islam through divine reformers. Raza discusses that in the 14th century of the Islamic era, the promise has been fulfilled in the person of Hadhrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, the Holy Founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement in Islam, who declared that “religious wars had come to an end and a new phase of peace, modernity and tranquility had begun”. Hadhrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad also taught the Muslims to “create and foster a pluralistic society, promote tolerance and diversity of ideas, seek knowledge from whatever source they may find and be grateful to those who treat them with justice, equity and benevolence”.

[Editor: You can read the book ‘Manji—another Pawn Advanced’ online at www.alislam.org/books/ or order a copy from Alislam Store: http://store.alislam.org]
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