Post Qur'an Polemical Criticism
(Reviewing the Judeo-Christian Polemical Thoughts in the Medieval Ages)

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Introduction:

Criticism on Islam has existed since Islam's formative stages. Early written criticism came from Christians, prior to 1000 AD, many of whom viewed Islam as a radical Christian heresy.(1) Clare Wilde describes that "From the inception of Islam, Christians have not hesitated to attack the Qur'ān—but this has not been the only response of Christians to the text. In fact, Christians who wrote in Arabic tended to be less polemical in their discussions of the holy book of Islam than were their non-Arabophone co-religionists."(2) Clare Wilde also gives a comprehensive overview(3) of the polemical history of Christian-Muslim debates on text and meaning of the scriptures.(4)

In traditional Islamic thought, there are three doctrines concerning the Qur'ān: its eternity; its Arabness; and its inimitability. The Qur'ān itself hints at two of these (Arabness and inimitability), but it is not until the early third/ninth century that Muslim scholars engage in full-fledged theological debates on these issues. While the theological, philosophical and philological writings of Muslims on these topics have been extensively studied, Christian Arabic writings have yet to be mined for the insight they might provide into the nuances of these debates and the milieu in which they arose. For, just like their Muslim neighbors, an ever-increasing number of Christians in *Dār al-Islām* were coming to adopt the language of the holy book of Islam. And, just as with Muslims, there were both ethnic Arabs and non-Arabs who were, by the third/ ninth century, Arabophone. How did Christians writing in Arabic view the holy book of Islam? More specifically, did ethnically Arab Christians differ from other Arabophone Christians in their estimation of the Qur'ān?(5) The Christian understanding of Islamic revelation and scriptural text conceived in their pre-occupied views. Normal Daniel clearly indicates that "the integrity of the Scriptures became a key issue with Christian polemicists, but as they resented the doctrines of Islam, and saw them in the light of their own preconceptions, they inevitably deformed them."(6) However, the main focus in this encounter lies on the textual corruption of Qur'ānic and Biblical text, while making remarks he states the position of debate in the following way:

That Christians writing in Arabic were critically engaged with Muslim

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discussions of the nature of the Qur'ān and Bible, the *kutub Allāh,* however, is attested to by the recurrence of similar themes in both Christian and Muslim texts. The Christian response to the Qur'ānic and Islamic charge that the Bible has been corrupted is the subject of the present discussion. For, one aspect of this response is that it is not the Bible but, rather, the Qur'ān that has been 'corrupted'. And, in their arguments, the Christians allude to discussions on the nature and contents—the 'textual history'—of the received 'Uthm┐nic codex circulating among their Muslim contemporaries.(7)

John of Damascus (676-750):

The earliest written criticism of the text of the Qur'ān is transmitted by John of Damascus (d. 135 A.H.) an Arab Christian. Due to his proficiency in Arabic language and familiarity with Islam his criticism or response to the Qur'ān carries much weight among the western approach toward the Qur'ān. It is said that John of Damascus is the first polemicist who selected the matter from the Qur'ān itself for his criticism and repudiation of the Qur'ān. He touches various features for his polemical work but his focus is on the allegations such as counterfeit and the ethical behavior of the Prophet. (8)

Norman Daniel is of view that Christian reactions to Islam are documented from an early date. A formula for its abjuration for converts has reasonably been thought to date from the first generations after the rise of Islam, and is related to the work of St John of Damascus, himself born about fifty years after the Hijrah.(9) John identified three issues in his understanding of the scriptures of Islam that would set the parameters of Christian interpretation of the Qur'ān for subsequent generations. Firstly, the Qur'ān was less than it claimed to be, since it contained material that could hardly be worthy of divine revelation. Secondly, Muhammad was not what he claimed to be because the Qur'ān provided insufficient evidence to support his prophetic role. Thirdly, when read properly, some statements in the Qur'ān affirmed Christian beliefs.(10) He also asserts that Muhammad (SAW) was inspired by an Arian Monk and his book had no divine origin of revelation. On this canvas, he portrayed the picture of Islamic doctrines and principles as extracted from the Bible.(11)

Theodore Abū Qurrah (d. 826 A.D.)

Abū Qurrah,(12) the pupil of John of Damascus, followed his mentor in presenting contemptuous views about the holy Qur'ān and the Prophet Muhammad (SAW)(13) He, in his time, defended the truthfulness of Christianity. His way of argumentation in defense of Christ religion looks respectful, rarely alludes defectiveness of the Qur'ān and less conflicting to Islamic literature. However, Abū Qurrah actively attacks the Qur'ān as

being a 'corrupt' scripture. Particularly, he makes some allusions regarding the actual process of the composition of the Qur'ān—how and why corruption have entered in the text. In his view:

> The Qur'ān is corrupt as it contains things falsely attributed to Muhammad…. {there} are examples of corruption in the holy book, of human tampering with the received—divine?—text. The one instance in which Abū Qurrah demonstrates a clear engagement in Muslim circles is his assertion that Q 108 and 111 were not part of the original Qur'ānic text. As these sūras have no relationship to matters to Christian doctrine or praxis, and as the exegetical tradition preserves a memory of a connection between these texts, it is conceivable that Abū Qurrah's statement is reflect of a (maybe politically-inspired) tradition within Muslim circles. Q 111 is traditionally understood to be a curse on a relative of Muhammad, and hence of the Abbasid lineage; Q 108…. is understood to refer to this same uncle of Muhammad. In the Abbasid court of al-Ma'mūn, which came to profess the 'created' nature of the Qur'ān, parts of the Qur'ān—particularly those that cast aspersions on members of the Abbasid lineage—may have been held in lesser esteem than other parts of the holy text.(14)

'Ammār al-Baṣrī (800-850)

The first century of Abbasid rule was the start of theological discussions on the Islamic tenants and principles in Arabic. This particular branch of knowledge is known as *Ilm al-kalām.* This new science is reported to come into prominence in Baṣrah, Kūfah, Baghdād the cities of Iraq. However, some non-Islamic sources dedicate the basis of *kalām* to Christian pre-Islamic thought. Whatever its roots were, the Christian Arabs began Islamic religious discourse parallel to the Muslim *mutakallimūn.* They were fluent in Arabic language and tried to get extensive knowledge of the Qur'ān to debate with the Muslims. As Muslims and Christian were living together in Iraq, *mutakallimūn* of both religions used to arrange the meetings for critically examining the tenets of their respective religious communities in the dialogical, debating manner that became the specific style of the *ilm al-kalām.(15)*

'Ammār al-Baṣrī was one of the Christian Arab *mutakallimūn* who raised various critical questions on the sanctity of the Qur'ānic text. In his polemical debates one of the fundamental argument concerns to the element of distortion of the Gospel text. In his view Muslims claim of alteration of Gospel text is the "insinuation that it is the Qur'ān that is actually the Gospel distorted". In reviewing the possible motives that anyone could have had for altering the text, in his words:

They could have made themselves a scripture according to their desires, and they could have affirmed in it that when the Jews wanted to kill Christ, and they came up to him, he blew a breath against them and consumed them with fire, and he was lifted up to heaven alive, that death did not attain him, nor did affliction come upon him; and that a man may marry as many women as he wants.(16)

With this argument 'Ammār is not, of course, mentioning anything that the Qur'ān actually teaches. Rather, his is reflecting what the Christian polemists, especially those in Greek, charged against the Qur'ān. the suspicion that Ammār who intended to turn the attack against the Qur'ān, in his defense of the Christian who faced the charge that they distorted the Gospel, is strengthened when one reads his response to those Muslims who claimed that the Christian distorted was a matter of changing the intent and the meaning of the text, without altering it outwardly.(17)

'Abd al-Masīḥ ibn Isḥāq al-Kindī :

'Abd al-Masīḥ ibn Isḥāq al-Kindī had an extremely insensitive stance towards the Qur'ān. His most renowned work is known as 'Apology of al-Kindy' (*Risālat 'Abdal-Masīḥ al-Kindī ilā 'Abdallāh al-Hāshimī*). This document is based upon a correspondence between al-ashim (a Muslim scholar) and Al-Kind (a Christian theologian). Both these documents represent of two different apologies in the book. Firstly, the Muslim preaches Islam to the Christian and secondly the Christian invites the Muslim to embrace Christianity. Obviously the large portion of the book consists of the Christian's answers.

Thus it is clear that your book [Koran] has been tampered with by many hands, each person adding or suppressing or changing what he wanted, causing discrepancies ….You [al-Hashimi] know of the enmity between Ali, Abu Bakr, Umar and Uthman; each of them interpolated into the Koran whatever favoured his own claims. In which case how can we distinguish between the genuine and the inauthentic? Al-Hajjaj also added and subtracted at will. You know perfectly well what kind of a man he was, so how can you possibly have confidence in him as to the Book of God, or believe in his honesty when he was always searching ways of pleasing the Umayyads? (18)

Risāla is considered as the first complete refutation of the Qur'ān. He rejected the divine origin of the Qur'ān and Muslim concept of revelation. Rather he emphasized that Muhammad (SAW) was influenced by a Christian monk, Sergius or Nestorius and the monk inspired Muhammad to write down the Qur'ān.(19) Encyclopedia of the Qur'ān introduces as:

An anti-Islamic polemical tract which pitted the Nestorian 'Abd al-Masī ⊢ al-Kindī against the well-known Muslim scholar, 'Abdallāh al-

Hāshimī, had a broader impact, since it denigrated the Islamic rites of pilgrimage (q.v.), the Qur'ānic account of the pleasures reserved to the righteous in paradise (q.v.) and the expeditions of the Prophet against Quraysh.(20)

Actually al-Kindī's *Risala* was a response to the Qur'ān based on the historical enmity of Christianity toward Islam. Encyclopedia of the Qur'ān interprets its influences:

Of greatest influence on the attitude of Christians to the Qur'ān was the polemical treatise in defense of Christianity published under the pseudonym 'Abd al-Masīḥ b. Isḥāq al-Kindī (not to be confused with the famous philosopher Abū Yūsuf al-Kindī), which was conceived as a response to the invitation of the Muslim 'Abdallāh b. Ismā'īl al-Hāshimī. This so-called "Apology of al-Kindī" was in all likelihood written in the third/ninth century. It is a matter of debate whether the unknown author was a Jacobite or a Nestorian. Within the scope of his elaborate discussion of Islam the author also addresses the Qur'ān the information about its origin and compilation deviates on some points from the orthodox Islamic view, however, and it does not always seem to be reliable. Above all, however, the author wants to prove the inauthentic and unoriginal nature of the Qur'ān, arguing that the contents of the Qur'ān were strongly influenced by a certain Christian monk named Sergius, alias Nestorius, who had wished to imitate the Gospels. After his death two Jews, 'Abdallāh b. Salām and Ka'b al-Aḥbār, had also added materials from Jewish sources. In any case, the argumentation of the *Risāla* reveals its author's own precise knowledge of the Qur'ān, from which he frequently makes Al-Kindī's *Risāla* had a significant effect, particularly in the west. (21)

According to him ' in the process of the codification of the Uthmanic codex human editing took place: Zayd b. Thabit and 'Abd Allah b. 'Abbās were in charge of its compilation, including reflecting what was corrupt in it.(22) He interpreted the text of the Qur'ān not as intellectual piece of literature.

All these [descriptions of paradise in the Qur'ān] suit only stupid, ignorant and simple-minded people, who are inexperienced and unfamiliar with reading texts and understanding old traditions, and who are just a rabble of rough Bedouins accustomed to eating desert lizards and chameleons. (23)

Al-Kindī's Risala was translated by Peter of Toledo from Arabic to Latin published in Latin in 1142. It was translated from Arabic to Latin by Peter of Toledo, who translated it with the collaboration of a group of translators organized by the wish of Peter the Venerable. Peter is well known figure who translated the Qur'ān in Latin first time in history. The English

translation of *Risala* was rendered by William Muir in 1880. As for as the originality of "Apology" is concerned William Muir argues that the "political allusions" contained this book:

> .. are, in the strictest affinity, not only with the traditions of an Abbasside dynasty, but of a court which had become partisan of the Alyite faction, which freely admitted Motázelite or latitudinarian sentiments, and which had shortly before declared the Coran to be created and not eternal. The Omeyyad race are spoken of with virulent reprobation; the time of Yezīd is named the "reign of terror"; and Ḥajjāj, with his tyranny and the imputation of his having corrupted the Coran, is referred to just in the bitter terms current at the time. Abu Bekr, Omar, and Othmān are treated as usurpers of the Divine right of succession which (it is implied) vested in Ali. I need hardly point out how naturally all this accords with the sentiments predominating at the Court of Al-Mamūn; but which certainly would not have been tolerated some forty or fifty years later.(24)

The collection of the Qur'ān has been severely criticized by al-kind⌐ in his 'Apology', he declares the text of the Qur'ān "The Coran as an evidence of Mahomet's Mission"(25)The allegations are asserted in such a vigorous way that William Muir has noticed in the following words:

> This long digression about the Coran is strongly coloured by Abbasside and Alyite tradition. Much of it is mere romance, resting on no historical evidence whatever. But it was no doubt the kind of talk popular at the court of Al-Mamūn (where any argument impugning the eternity of the Coran would be well received); and, indeed, our Author here and there implies as much.(26)

The disclosure may be bitter, but it will be wholesome in the end." He then proceeds to give a lengthy account of the origin of the Coran. His story in short is this. "Sergius, a Nestorian monk, was excommunicated for a certain offence. To expiate it, he set out on a mission to Arabia, and reached Mecca, which he found inhabited by Jews and idolaters. There he met Mahomet, with whom he had intimate converse, and persuaded him, after being instructed in the faith of Nestorius, to abandon heathenism, and become his disciple. This, while it excited the hatred of the Jews, was the reason of the favourable mention of the Christians in the Coran, to wit, that 'they are the nighest unto believers in friendship; and that because there are amongst them priests and monks, and because there are not haughty.' And so the matter prospered, and the Christian faith was near to being adopted by Mahomet, when Sergius died. Thereupon two Jewish doctors, 'Abd Allāh and Ka'b, seized the opportunity, and ingratiated themselves with thy Master, professing deceitfully to share his views and be his followers. Thus they concealed their object and bided their time.(27)

Ibn al-Nighrīla

Yusuf or Ismaīl Ibn al-Nighrīla(28) was a Jewish scholar and polemicist of early 5th Century. Ibn Ḥazam met him in 404 A.H. and said that he was a great scholar and debater among the Jews.(29) He wrote a Risālah titled, *'Tanāqudh fi al-Qur'ān'* that was refuted by his contemporary Ibn Ḥazam with the caption *"Al-Rad 'alā Ibn al-Nighrīla al-Yahūdī"*.(30) Nighrīla traced an alleged controversy in the start of the 6th section of his Risālah, presenting the following verse of the Qur'ān:

﴿فَإِنْ كُنْتَ فِي شَكٍّ مِمَّا أَنْزَلْنَا إِلَيْكَ فَاسْأَلِ الَّذِينَ يَقْرَءُونَ الْكِتَابَ مِنْ قَبْلِكَ لَقَدْ جَاءَكَ الْحَقُّ مِنْ رَبِّكَ فَلا تَكُونَنَّ مِنَ الْمُمْتَرِينَ﴾ (31)

He wanted to give the impression in the above mentioned verse as if Muḥammad himself was doubtful of divinely status of the Qur'ān.

Rebuttal by Ibn Ḥazam:

Responding to this notion, Ibn Ḥazam writes that "ان" in this verse doesn't correspond to conditional meaning. As this is impossible for a Prophet calling people towards *Dīn* and even fought for it on one hand and on the other hand, he is himself claiming to be uncertain over its veracity. Rather, the word "ان" corresponds to meaning of negating something, as Qur'ān uses this meaning at different places, such as:

﴿إِنْ أَنَا إِلَّا نَذِيرٌ وَبَشِيرٌ لِقَوْمٍ يُؤْمِنُونَ﴾(32)

﴿قَالَتْ لَهُمْ رُسُلُهُمْ إِنْ نَحْنُ إِلَّا بَشَرٌ مِثْلُكُمْ وَلَكِنَّ اللَّهَ يَمُنُّ عَلَىٰ مَنْ يَشَاءُ مِنْ عِبَادِهِ﴾ (33)

﴿وَقَدْ مَكَرُوا مَكْرَهُمْ وَعِنْدَ اللَّهِ مَكْرُهُمْ وَإِنْ كَانَ مَكْرُهُمْ لِتَزُولَ مِنْهُ الْجِبَالُ﴾ (34)

﴿قُلْ إِنْ كَانَ لِلرَّحْمَٰنِ وَلَدٌ فَأَنَا أَوَّلُ الْعَابِدِينَ﴾ (35)

Al-Ṭabrī's Interpretation:

Al-Ṭabrī (d.310 A.H.) interprets this verse as, even if this notion is accepted that the Prophet (PBUH) is doubtful of the revelation from God, he could ask true believers among the people of book like 'Abdullāh bin Salām etc, not from liars and non-believers. To consolidate his opinion, he brings a narration by Ibn Zaid.(36)

Interpretation by Al-Zamakhsharī:

Al-Zamakhsharī (d 538 A.H.) is of the opinion that, meanings of فان كنت فى شک -- are as presupposition and for exemplification instead of communicating with certainty. He writes:

فالغرض وصف الاحبار بالرسوخ فى العلم بصحة ما انزل الله الى رسول الله لا وصف رسول الله بشک فيه-(37)

"The real purpose is to express the soundness of the knowledge of Aḥbār about the veracity of what has been revealed by Allah (SWT) to His Prophet (SAW), not the quality of the Prophet (PBUH) of being doubtful of it".

Abū Ḥayyān al-Andalusī's View:

Accrding to Abū Ḥayyān al-Andalusī (d.745 A.H.), the use of the word "ان" here apparently conveys the sense of conditional meaning, which is preferable and this condition is to tie one thing with another one, happening of which or chance of occurrence is not necessary. Sometimes, rational perception of the occurrence of such thing seems almost impossible; sometimes it occurs against usual. He writes:

والذى اقوله ان ان الشرطية تقتضى تعليق شيئ على شيئ، ولا تستلزم تحتم وقوعه ولا امكانه بل قد يكون ذالك فى المستحيل عقلا كقوله تعالى (قل ان كان للرحمان ولد فانا اول العابدين)ومستحيل ان يكون له ولد، فكذالك هذا مستحيل ان يكون فى شك، وفى المستحيل عادة كقوله تعالى (وان كا ن كبر عليك اعراضهم فان استطعت ان تبتغى نفقا فى الارض او سلما فى السماء۔)اى فافعل۔(38)

As the conception of the being of a son of Al-Raḥmān is impossible, so is the Prophet's being in doubt about revelation. Likewise, as to take a ladder to the sky is impossible, so is the Prophet's being doubtful.

Robert of Ketton (fl. 1136-1157):

Robert of Ketton(39) is famous for his earliest(40) translation of Qur'ān, 'which remained the most widely available Western translation until the 17th century.'(41) Under the commission of Peter the Venerable, this first translation of the Qur'ān came in existence to refute Islam. This translation was completed in 1143 by Robert Ketenensis of Chester, Hermann of Dalmatia and two other associates. According to Andrew Rippin

> That translation was motivated by a plain polemical spirit; it was to allow arguments to be constructed which would counter Muslim accusations of the deficiencies of the Bile and to facilitate missionary activity.(42)

Muhammad Mohar Ali indicates some of the follies and deficiencies of Robert's translation and comments in the following way

> This translation, as already mentioned, was made professedly for *refuting* Islam and was as such not only highly prejudiced but distorted at many places. Its chief defect was that it was not quite a translation but mainly a paraphrasing of the passages of the Qur'an.(43)

Robert of Ketton was much interested in translating scientific works instead of theological texts, so, he hesitated to translate the Qur'ān. But French Abbot Peter the Venerable encouraged him much to translate the Qur'ān because Peter wanted to have an early contact with Islamic texts. The translation was completed in 1143 with the title *Lex Mahumet pseudoprophete* which was the first translation of the Qur'ān in any European language according to Encyclopedia of Britanica "The first translation into a European language, was the 12th-century Latin paraphrase of Robert of Ketton".(44) Until the 16th century this work maintained its

significance. Contemporarily it has lost all its significance as there are numerous distorted passages of the original Arabic. Later Bibliander tried to correct it as Encyclopedia of the Qur'ān indicates:

> As far as the old Toledan translation of Robert of Ketton was concerned, Bibliander had only limited possibilities to correct this text, which he himself described as "very corrupted.(45)

Robert of ketton criticizes the names of suras as a sign of irrationality and unsuitability to the status of divine scripture.(46) He is considered as a great Christian Islamicest among the earlier scholars who introduced some innovative points to deteriorate the Qur'ānic position. Since this translation appeared, it became the foundation for translations of the Qur'ān into other modern European languages.

Raymond Lull (d. 715/1316):

He is the central figure, who has been clothed upon by all the legends, an apostle and missionary in the name of Christ, in fine a martyr for that faith of which he was the champion. He is also a figure of some consequence in intellectual thought, and must not be ignored in the philosophical history of his age, for he devised an art of knowledge and reasoning, which was by no means neglected in his day, and was taught subsequently at certain centers for about two hundred years.(47)

Among the most influential works of the period included Raymond Lull's (d. 715/1316) voluminous Arabic writings, which were largely devoted to converting Muslims to Christianity.(48) Lull fiercely advocated the teaching of Arabic as part of the Church's missionary effort and has come to be referred to by some as the founder of Western Orientalism.(49)

Conclusion:

For a long time to come, these attacks represented the greatest obstacle to any genuine understanding or appreciation of Islam, Muslims or the Qur'ān at a popular level by European Christians. However, in academia, it was around this time that Lull's persistent calls for the teaching of Arabic were finally heard, and in 1311 the Council of Vienna ordered the Universities of Rome, Bologna, Paris, Oxford and Salamanca to teach Oriental languages, thus institutionalizing the scholarly study of Arabic in Europe.[50] This institutional change had remarkably little effect in practical terms at the time, but led the way for future understanding of Islam based on original Arabic texts.[51] The Christian understanding of Islamic revelation and scriptural text conceived in their pre-occupied views. Normal Daniel clearly indicates that the integrity of the Scriptures became a key issue with Christian polemicists, but as they resented the doctrines of Islam, and saw them in the light of their own preconceptions, they inevitably deformed them.

References

1   John of Damascus (d. ca. 752 C.E.). "The Discussion of a Christian and a Saracen." Translated by John W. Voorhis, *The Moslem World* [24 (1934): 391-398 or 25 (1935): 266-273]; reprinted in N. A. Newman, ed., *The Early Christian-Muslim Dialogue,* 144-150. Also See John Ernest Merrill, "Of the Tractate of John of Damascus on Islam", *The Muslim World*, XLI (1951): 88-99.

2   Clare Wilde, "Is There Room for Corruption in the 'Books' of God?", in *The History of Christian-Muslim Relations* eds. David Thomas and others (Brill NV, Leiden: Koninklijke, 2007), 6: 225.

3   For a large number of Christian encounters and responses to Islam, see J.-M. Gaudeul, *Encounters and Clashes: Islam and Christianity in History,* (Rome: 2000).

4   For the early developments in Islamic intellectual's approaches; see W.Montgomery Watt, *Islamic Philosophy and Theology* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1985).

5   Clare Wilde, "Is There Room for Corruption in the 'Books' of God?", *Op. Cit.,* p. 225.

6   Norman Daniel, *Islam and the West; the Making of an Image*, p. 35.

7   Clare Wilde, "Is There Room for Corruption in the 'Books' of God?", p. 226.

8   John of Damascus succeeded his father as one of the Muslim caliph's tax officials, and while still a government minister he wrote three *Discourses on Sacred Images, c.* 730, defending their veneration against the Byzantine emperor Leo III and the Iconoclasts. The Iconoclasts obtained a condemnation of John at the Council of Hieria in 754 that was reversed at the second Council of Nicaea in 787. See "John of Damascus, Saint", The New Encyclopædia Britannica, Ready *Reference, The University of* Chicago, Vol: 6, p. 582.

9   Norman Daniel, Islam and the West; The Making of an Image, p 13.

10 See DJ Sahas, *John of Damascus on Islam,* Leiden: Brill, 1972, for biographical details. John's writing on Islam is conveniently presented by N. A. Newman in his collection of Christian and Muslim documents entitled, *The Early Christian-Muslim Dialogue,* Hatfield: Interdisciplinary Biblical Research Institute, 1993, 133-162. Taken from Mark Ivor Beaumont's article, Early Christian Interpretation of the Qur'ān, *Transformation* 22/4 October 2005, p.196.

11 John McManners, *The Oxford History of Christianity* (Oxford: Oxford University Press), p.185

12 Theodore Abū Qurrah, who had been a monk in the environs of Jerusalem, but was himself Melkite bishop of Ḥarrān at the time of his debate before al-Ma'mūn, would probably not have been intimately familiar with the literary legacy of the 'Arabs'. Fluent enough in Arabic to be familiar with contemporary Muslim debates, and to critique the *contents* of the Qur'ān on his own, Arabic was, nevertheless, not Theodore's traditional language, and therefore he was not in a strong position to critique the *style* of thee Qur'ān. See Clare Wilde, Is There Room for Corruption in the 'Books' of God?, Op. Cit., p. 235.

13 'Abdur Rāzī Muḥammad 'Abdul Muḥsin, Dr, Al-Ghārah al-Tanṣīriyyah 'alā Iṣālah al-Qur'ān al-Karīm, p.9.

14 Clare Wilde, Is There Room for Corruption in the 'Books' of God? pp. 234-235.

15 Ibn al-Nadīm, Fihrist (N.Y: 1970), vol.1, pp. 447-449

16   Griffith, Sidney H., The Beginning of Christian Theology in Arabic (published in the Variorum Collected Studies Series by Ashgate Publishing Limited, UK and USA, 2002), p. 165.

17   For more detail see Ammār al-Baṣrī's Kitāb al-Burhān:Christian Kalām in the First Abbasid Century Le Muson 96, Louvain, 1983 in The Beginning of Christian Theology in Arabic, by Griffith, Sidney H. (Published in the Variorum Collected Studies Series by Ashgate Publishing Limited, UK and USA, 2002), pp. 165-67.

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19   Journal of the American Oriental Society, vol.13, 1889, pp. 151-203.

20   Encyclopedia of the Qur'ān, vol.4 Leiden E.J. Brill, 2004, p.71.

21   Ibd, p.236.

22   Newman, Early Christian-Muslim Dialogue, p.458.

23   Encyclopedia of the Qur'ān, vol.4 Leiden E.J. Brill, 2004, p. 18

24   William Muir, The Apology Of Al Kindy, Written At The Court of Al-Mamūn (*Circa* A.H. 215; A.D. 830), In Defense of Christianity Against Islam. *With An Essay On Its Age And Authorship Read Before The Royal Asiatic Society,* Published Under The Direction Of The Tract Committee, London: Society For Promoting Christian Knowledge (New York: E. & J. B. Young & Co, 1887), Pp.69- 87.

25   Apology of Al-Kindy, p.69.

26   Ibid. p. 70.

27   Ibid

28   There are several different opinions among the scholars in determining his original name and its orthography, some write it with '*Lām Mushaddad*' and some with '*Lām Takhfīf*'. According to Dūzī, Ibn Nighdīlah i.e. with *dāl* as mentioned In *Zakhīrah* by *Ibn Basām*. However, in *Risālah* of Ibn Ḥazam 'Ibn Nighrīla' has been declared as a correct name, relying on original manuscript, see Ibn Ḥazam, al-Andalusī, *Al-Rad 'alā Ibn al-Nighrīla al-Yahḥdī*, Maktabah Dār al-'Urūbah (Cairo: 1960/1380), p.8.

29   Ibn Ḥazam, *Al-Faṣl fil Milal wal Ahwa' wal Niḥal*, Vol.1, pp.135-152.

30   Published with the research and editing of Dr Iḥsān 'Abbās, from Maktabah Dār al-'Urūbah, Cairo in 1960.

31   Yunus, 10: 94.

32   Al-A'rāf, 7: 188.

33   Ibrāhīm, 14: 11.

34   Ibrāhīm, 14: 46

35   Az-Zukhruf, 43: 81.

36   Al-Ṭabrī, Muḥammad b. Jarīr, *Jami' al-Bbayān*, (ed) Ahmad Muhammad Shakir (Beirut: Mu'assasah al-Risālah, 2000), Vol. 15, p.200.

37   Zimakhsharī, *Al-Kashāf 'an Ḥaqā'q al-Tanzīl wa 'Uyūn al-Aqāwīl fī wujūh al-Tā'wīl,* (ed.) 'Abd al-Razzāq al-Mahdī (Beirut: Dār Iḥyā' al-Turāth al-'Arabī), Vol. 2, p.351.

38   Abū Ḥayyān al-Andalusī, Muhammad b. Yūsuf, Tafsīr Al-*Baḥr al-Muḥīṭ,* (ed) 'Adil aḥmad 'Abd al-Moujūd, 'Alī Muhammad Mu'awwadh (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyyah, 2001), Vol:5, p.190.

[39] Robert of Ketton was an English medieval theologian, astronomer and Arabist. He and his friend Herman of Carinthia visited much in the Arabian countries and got fluency in Arabic language. In 1141 Robert shifted in Spain where he got the base for Arabic translations. During the 1140s he had been the most active translator of Arabic. See Qur'ān/Translations**.** The New Encyclopædia Britannica, Ready *Reference, The University of* Chicago, under the caption.

[40] This first translation appeared in Latin, see Harmut Bobzin, "Latin Translation of the Koran: A Short Overview", Der Islam, 70, 1993, pp.193-206.

[41] G.J.Toomer, *Eastern Wisedome and Learning: The Study of Arabic in Seventeenth-century England*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press; New York: Oxford University Press, 1996), p. 9.

[42] Andrew Rippin, "Introduction" in "The Qur'ān: Style and Contents" (Aldershot: Ashgate/Variorum, 2001), p.xi.

[43] A manuscript of this first Latin translation of the Qur'ān containing the autograph of the translator exists in the Bibliotheque de l'Arsenal in Paris. According to Sale, "it deserves not the name of a translation; the unaccountable liberties therein taken, and the numberless faults, both of omission and commission, leaving scarce any resemblance of the original." Nevertheless, this work remained the sole or main translation of the Qur'ān available to the Europeans for about five centuries. It was given wide publicity during the European Reformation Movement of the 16th century. Martin Luther, who himself translated the Bible into German, wrote a preface to this Latin translation of the Qur'ān; and four editions of it together with Luther's preface and some other works of Christian propaganda were published by Thomas Bibliander from Basel and Zurich between 1543 and 1550. See Muhammad Mohar Ali, The Qur'ān and the Orientalists, p. 324.

[44] Qur'ān/Translations**.** The New Encyclopædia Britannica, Ready *Reference, The University of* Chicago,

[45] Encyclopedia of the Qur'ān (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 2004), vol.4, p. 245.

[46] Norman Daniel, Islam and the West: The Making of an Image, p.78.

[47] Arthur Edward Waite, Raymond Lully: Illuminated Doctor, Alchemist and Christian Mystic (America: Kila, Mont. Kessinger Publication, 1992), p. 10.

[48] G.J.Toomer, *Eastern Wisdom and Learning: The Study of Arabic in Seventeenth-century England*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press; New York: Oxford University Press, 1996), p. 9

[49] Bobzin,Hartmut, 'Pre-1800 Preoccupations of Qur'ānic Studies', in Jane Dammen McAuliffe (ed.), Encyclopaedia of the Qur'ān (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 2004), Vol: 4, p. 240.

[50] The initiatives taken by Archbishop Raymond and Peter the Venerable resulted in the establishment of the first School of Oriental Studies in Europe at Toledo in 1250, the College of Friars at Miramar in 1276 for the study of Arabic in which Raymond Lull of Catalania played an important part, and the resolution of the Council of Vienna in 1311 creating chairs of Arabic at the universities of Paris, Louvain and Salamanca. See Muhammad Mohar Ali, The Qur'ān and the Orientalists, p. 324.

[51] G.J.Toomer, *Eastern Wisedome and Learning, Op. Cit.,* p. 10; See also Philip K.Hitti*, Islam and the West* (New York: Van Nostrand, 1962), p.52.