



Organisation for Promoting Shari'ah Compliant Sufism

Vision: Enable ourselves to attain the state of Ehsan as desired in Hadith Jibrael (Sahih Muslim, Book of Faith, Hadith No.1).

Mission: Promulgate Mujadidi Sufi Path through a dedicated educational curriculum of Muraqiba, Dhikr and Prayers for Blessings and Peace of ALLAH upon Prophet Muhammad (Salat-wa-Salam).

QUR'AN: COMPILATION AND COLLATION

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In the Name of ALLAH, the Beneficent, the Merciful

QUR'AN: COMPILATION AND COLLATION

1. DEVINE PROTECTION OF QUR'AN

a) By THE ALMIGHTY ALLAH as revealed in Qur'an itself;

"Certainly we, it is we who have sent down admonition (The Qur'an), and certainly we are indeed its guardian". (Chapter 15 (Surah Al-Hijr), verse 9)

"(O Prophet), do not move your tongue (during revelation) for (reciting) it (The Quran) to receive in hurry. O It is surely undertaken by us to store it (in your heart), and to let it be recited (by you) after revelation is completed". (Chapter 75 (Surah Al-Qiyamah), verses 16-17)

Qur'an was revealed in parts and with intervals as deemed appropriate by THE ALMIGHTY ALLAH, and, so as to be preserved in heart of Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) for onward easy preaching of people.

"Said those who disbelieved, "why has the Qur'an not been revealed to him at once?" (it has been sent down) in this way (i.e. in parts) so that we make your heart firm, and we revealed it little by little. (Chapter 25 (Surah Al-Furqan), verse 32)

"We have divided the Qur'an in portions, so that you may recite it to the people gradually, and we have revealed it little by little". (Chapter 17 (Surah Bani Israil), verse 106)

b) Companions (May ALLAH be pleased with them) of Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) not only wrote down the revelation as preached to them through oral recitation by the Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) but also remembered by heart as well.

"But it (The Qur'an in itself) is (a package of) evident signs in the hearts of those who are given knowledge. And no one rejects our verses except the wrongdoers". (Chapter 29 (Surah Al-Ankabut), verse 49).

Disbelievers besides many other efforts to oppose the Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) and Qur'an, also use to propagate that Muhammad (ﷺ) has got some scripture from old times people written for him. Quran says it below;

"And they said, "(These are) the tales of the ancients he (the messenger) has caused to be written and they are read out to him at morning and evening". (Chapter 25 (Surah Al-Furqan), verse 5)).

"Say: This has been sent down by Him, who knows the secrets within the heavens and the earth. Indeed, He is All Forgiving, All Merciful." (Chapter 25 (Surah Al-Furqan), verse 6))

2. MATERIAL USED FOR WRITING DOWN QUR'AN

PARCHMENT (ARABIC: RAQ)

Thin membrane obtained from cattle flesh. Earlier scrolls of Bible and books of Greek philosophers available in different libraries and museums are mostly written of parchments.

Qur'an has also referred to parchment.

"By the mount of Tur and by a book written on an unrolled scroll" (Chapter 52 (Surah At-Tur), verses 1-3)

- Tanned, perfumed goat skin (Arabic: Adeem)
- Slate (Arabic: Lakhaf)
Grayish white stone tiles made for writing
- Bones of camel
A soccer shaped portion from camel's shoulder bone, carefully separated and processed for writing.
- Broad part of dates tree branches, close to trunk of tree (Arabic: Aseeba)
- Thin plain and quadrilateral shape wooden plates, processed for writing. (Arabic: Qatab)

NOTE: What is commonly found in books that Qur'an was written upon leather or bones, these incomplete details give the impression that Qur'an was written in very hard condition and without availability of proper writing material of the time. This impression is totally wrong. Material described above was used not only in Arab but in Iranian and Roman empires as well, because this was the best available material in Middle East and Roman empire. Paper has been in use in China but not yet introduced westward to Iran, Rome and Middle East.

3. ORDER OF VERSES AND CHAPTERS

Qur'an is not revealed chapter by chapter, such as a chapter is completed and next to started. Whatever verses revealed, Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) remembered them by heart instantaneously.

Thereafter, the Prophet recite new revelation to companions (May ALLAH be pleased with them) and telling the chapter and place of addition. Those who were appointed to learn by heart, they learn it by heart and those designated to write, immediately write the new verses. The order and placement of chapters and verses also revealed by THE ALMIGHTY ALLAH through Archangel Gabriel (Peace be upon Him). A Musnad Ahmed's hadith describes the process narrated in under mention hadith of Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ):

Interpretation of Hadith: Archangel Gabriel (Peace be upon Him) arrived and told me to put this verse in this chapter at that position.

Moreover, Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) after writing down of revelation immediately asked to read that back, so as to confirm the text is written correctly.

During Mecca time before hijra normally besides some others, Sayyidina Othman Ghani and Sayyidina Ali ibn Abi Talib (May ALLAH be pleased with them) were the designated earliest writers.

Later then on, after hijra when proper institution of writing revelation was established in Madinah Munawara, many officially designated companions (May ALLAH be pleased with them) performed this duty.

The head of this institute was Hanzalah Bin Rabi (May ALLAH be pleased with him). Number of other members of institution are reported as 42. Never the less, this number used to fluctuate as per requirements and availability of Qur'an writers.

4. COLLECTION OF QUR'AN IN SINGLE BOOK FORM

Qur'an was already available and preserved in the heart of thousands of companions (May ALLAH be pleased with them) and in written form with institute of companions designated for writing down Qur'an during the whole revelation period.

During times of first caliph Sayyidina Abu Bakr (May ALLAH be pleased with him), in a war against Musaylimah Al-Kazzab The False Prophet (a man who claimed to be a partner of the Prophet Muhammad in the prophethood during the lifetime of Muhammad), around 700 huffaz (plural of hafiz: those who remember Quran by heart) martyred. This incident provoked Sayyidina Umer Ibn Khattab (May ALLAH be pleased with him) to request first righteous caliph to compile the Qur'an in one book form, from written manuscript available with companions in the form of individual chapters. The caliph constituted a seven members committee headed by Zaid Ibn Sabit (May ALLAH be pleased with him).

5. TERMS FOR REFERENCE FOR COMMITTEE SAYYIDINA ABU BAKR (MAY ALLAH BE PLEASED WITH HIM) ISSUED FOLLOWING DIRECTIONS

- a) Firstly, all seven members exchange with each other, the remembered and written Qur'an available with them.
- b) Before writing any verse read it for all of them.
- c) When agreed unanimously compare it with available written material which had been presented to and authenticated by the Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) during period of revelation.
- d) Each member shall then bring forward the recorded script and jointly compare the verse for establishing exacting standards of accuracy.
- e) The process provided 14 witness, seven each on the basis of their remembrance (hifz) and production of written record from available treasure of scripts.
- f) After all, 14 witnesses, additional two witnesses for each verse will be taken from people outside the committee.
- g) Two companions should testify each verse that they have listened and remembered as it is being written by the committee.
- h) Thereafter, two written documented evidence shall be produced from written revelation outside of committee for further verification.
- i) Two persons outside of committee shall give witness for such documented verses.
- j) Only after completion of above said process the verse should be written in official book format of Qur'an.
- k) All 114 chapters should be written in one paper size. (Ref: Muhazarat e Qur'ani (Urdu) author Dr. Mehmood Ahmed Ghazi).

Many copies of this compiled script were made and kept in Madina Munawara and distributed to each governor in all the then Muslim world, the caliphate. This process presented Qur'an in a single volume in the order of verses and chapters as taught by Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ). The same order is still existing.

6. OLDEST QUR'AN MANUSCRIPT, BIRMINGHAM UNIVESITY, UK

It is worth mentioning that in 2015, Birmingham University found few parchments of Qur'an and upon carbon dating it was scientifically proved that parchment belong to an era of 568AD – 645AD (Carbon dating process does not give exact date and year of the parchment but a block period). We know that Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) born in 571AD. Prophet Muhammad (Blessings and peace be upon him) received first revelation in 610AD and last revelation in 632AD before passing away to the eternal world.

First caliph Sayyidina Abu Bakr (May ALLAH be pleased with him) died in 635AD, so the parchments are in fact from era after the completion of revelation. Any reader like to get detail upon it, could google search with words "Birmingham Qur'an" and would find the details at Birmingham University website.

7. DIFFERENCE IN RECITATION DIALECT

After 14-15 years of compilation, during the reign of third righteous caliph Sayyidina Othman Ghani (May ALLAH be pleased with him), the boundaries of caliphate had enormously expanded in all directions. All Arabs and millions from non-Arabs territories embraced Islam and started reciting Qur'an.

A new challenge of difference in dialect, accent and pronunciation appeared.

a) Intra Arab differences

As all languages encounter difference and change in accent and dialect with geographical distance, same was existing between geographically segregated and separated Arab tribes and Clans, for example;

- i. Banu Huzail (Hazali tribe) recite alphabet "Ha" as "Aa", such as pronouncing phrase "Hatta Hein" as "Atta Aein".
- ii. Banu Asad for example recite "Teilamun" instead of "Ta'lamün"
- iii. Ansar of Madina used to recite word "Taboot" as "Tabüh".
- iv. Qais tribe replace alphabet "Kaaf" with "Sheen".
- v. Tamim tribe pronounce word "Ün" as "A'an".
- vi. Another tribe used to pronounce alphabet "Seen" as alphabet "Tä".

b) Non-Arab recitation differences

As the difference of dialect and accent among Arabs was big it had been a bigger challenge for non-Arabs to counter. Some areas recite alphabet "Qauf" as "Kha" and some recite it as "Kä" even the name "Qur'an" is written with the two differences, it would appear as, "Khur'an" or "Kur'an".

Hence if each group of people had started writing in their indigenous accents using alphabets of their own, we might have had found thousands of different written/printed Qur'ans now and none of these group of people could be able to recite the copy of Qur'an of any other group.

Note: All material except Paragraph No. 5 & 6 is taken from "Tadween-e-Qur'an" of Mawlana Syed Manazir Ahsan Gilani. The words have been changed at some places for ease of reading.

8. ADDRESSING THE ISSUE OF DIFFERENCE OF ACCENT AND DIALECT

- a) Some such incidents came into notice of caliphate government that people due to difference in accent and dialect even named each other the kafir (non-believers).
- b) First companion who raised the issue to third righteous caliph was Hudaifa bin Yamaan (May ALLAH be pleased with him).
- c) Sayyidina Othman Ghani (May ALLAH be pleased with him) brought forward the issue in front a board of senior companions (May ALLAH be pleased with them).
- d) Ali ibn Abi Talib (May ALLAH be pleased with him) says that Othman Ghani (May ALLAH be pleased with him) did right, and whatever he decided to address the issue decided with our consent and advice. Caliph Othman Ghani (May ALLAH be pleased with him) asked the board for solution. The Board in turn asked the caliph's opinion. The Caliph said that he believes to bring the people on a standardized script. The board agreed unanimously and caliph Othman Ghani (May ALLAH be pleased with him) constituted a commission under the chairmanship of Zaid bin Sabit (May ALLAH be pleased with him) who was the head of commission for compilation of Qur'an during first caliph times.

- e) Caliph Othman Ghani (May ALLAH be pleased with him) ordered that Qur'an shall be written in accent, dialect and alphabets of tribe of Madhar as it was revealed upon a Madhari Arab (The Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ)).
- f) It is worth mentioning that Arabs at Macro scale were divided as two elementary tribes. Northern 2/3 of Arabs were Madhari and Southern 1/3 was Yamani. The further downward division as Quraish, Thaqif, Hawazin (examples of Madhari such tribes) and Azdi, Dausi (Yamani such tribes) was the sub division of greater Madhari and Yamani tribes.
- g) Finally, the official volume of Qur'an written in the accent and dialect of Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ), completed. Later on, copies of this Qur'an were made and sent to every governorate with instruction to discard all previous copies.
- h) After this Qur'an, up to written script become one and standard, approved and accepted by all companions (May ALLAH be pleased with them) of Prophet Muhammad (Blessings and peace be upon him).
- i) This effort standardized Qur'an as single scripture with fixed alphabet. As we narrated earlier the Qur'an had already been compiled in one volume during first caliph times in order of verses and chapters as described by Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ).

9. CONSTRAINTS OF ACCENT AND DIALECT

Accent and dialect of humankind has limitations and constraints, and therefore cannot be avoided. Islam being religion of nature (DEEN FITRAH), hence, it encompasses all humanly limitations. Similarly, these constraints and limitation has very effectively been addressed by the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) in following (Prophetic traditions).

- a) **Interpretation of Hadith:** Qur'an is revealed in seven alphabets (for recitation).
Explanation: Apparently it means that every word can be recited in seven accent and dialect.
- b) **Interpretation of Hadith:** I repent (astaghfar) daily hundred times.
Explanation: Prophet (ﷺ) used to repent a lot.
- c) **Interpretation of Hadith:** seventy thousand people from my following (ummah) will enter into paradise without questioning and judgement.
Explanation: here also seventy thousand means countless or too many.
- d) Similarly, seven recitation hadith means that Qur'an will be recited in many different accents and dialects.
- e) Hence, Caliph Sayyidina Othman Ghani (May ALLAH be pleased with him) and his advisors, the companion of Holy Prophet successfully brought Qur'an in writing with officially standardized and agreed alphabets.

Now even if different people e.g. recite alphabet "Qaf" (ق) as "Kaaf" (ك) or "Khaaf" (خاف) but it will be written as "Qaf" (ق). Hence, accent and dialects constraints will remain but will not affect the writing and printing script.

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