

قُرْآن (Qur'ān).

Occurs some seventy times, e.g. ii, 181 ; v, 101 ; vi, 19.

A reading from Scripture.

The root **قَرَأ** in the sense of *proclaim, call, recite*, does not occur in Akkadian nor in S. Semitic as represented by the S. Arabian and Ethiopic, which leads one to suspect that **قَرَأَ** is a borrowing from the Canaanite-Aramaic area.¹ The root is found in Heb. and Phon. but it is most widely used in the Aram. dialects, being found both in the O.Aram. and the Egyptian Aram., and in the Nab. and Palmy. inscriptions, as well as in Jewish Aram. and Syriac.

The verb **قَرَأَ** is used fairly often in the Qur'ān, and with four exceptions, always in reference to Muḥammad's own revelation. Of these exceptions in two cases (x, 94 ; xvii, 95), it is used of other Scriptures, and in two cases (xvii, 73 ; lxi, 19), of the Books of Fate men will have given them on the Day of Judgment. Thus it is clear that the word is used technically in connection with Heavenly Books.²

The sense of **قَرَأَ** also is *recite* or *proclaim*, that of *read* only came later.³

The usual theory is that **قُرْآن** is a verbal noun from this **قَرَأَ**. It is not found earlier than the Qur'ān, so the earlier group of Western scholars was inclined to think that Muḥammad himself formed the word from the borrowed root.⁴ There is some difficulty about this, however. In the first place the form is curious, and some of the early philologers, such as Qatāda and Abū 'Ubaida derived it from **قَرَنَ** to bring together, basing their argument on lxxv, 17.⁵ Others, as-Suyūṭī tells us, were unsatisfied with both these derivations, and said it had no root, being a special name for the Arab's Holy Book, like Taurah

¹ Noldeke-Schwally, i, 33 ; Weilhausen, *ZDMG*, lxvii, 634 ; Fischer, *Glossar*, 104 b.

² Noldeke-Schwally, i, 82 : "Vielmehr wird **قَرَأَ** im Qorane überall vom murrenden oder leuernden Hersagen heiliger Texte gebraucht."

³ Vide Hurgonje, *RHR*, xxx, 62, 155 ; Dyroff, in *MVAG*, xxii, 178 ff. ; Noldeke-Schwally, i, 81 ; and Pedersen, *Der Islam*, v, 113.

⁴ Von Kremer, *Ideen*, 224, 225.

⁵ Jawharī, sub voc. ; as-Suyūṭī, *Itq*, 118, 119.