

at the judgment of some of the earlier investigators, such as Marracci, *Prodromus*, i, 41: "Ita ut Alcoranus sit mixtura trium legum, seu religionum, Hebraicae, Christianae, et Israeliticae, additis paucis quisiuillis, quae e cerebro suo Mahumetus extraxit."

Closer examination of the question reveals even further and more detailed correspondences than these which appear on the surface,<sup>1</sup> and forces on one the conviction that not only the greater part of the religious vocabulary, but also most of the cultural vocabulary of the Qur'ān is of non-Arabic origin. The investigation of the "Fremdwörter" of the Qur'ān thus becomes a question of primary importance for the study of the origins of Islām, for as Hirschfeld remarks: "One of the principal difficulties before us is . . . to ascertain whether an idea or expression was Muhammad's spiritual property or borrowed from elsewhere, how he learnt it and to what extent it was altered to suit his purposes."<sup>2</sup> By tracing these words back to their sources we are able to estimate to some extent the influences which were working upon Muḥammad at various periods in his Mission, and by studying these religious terms in their native literature contemporary with Muḥammad, we can sometimes understand more exactly what he himself means by the terms he uses in the Qur'ān.

Quite early in the history of Islām, Muslims themselves were confronted with the perplexing problem of these foreign words, for it presented itself immediately they were called upon to face the task of interpreting their Scripture. With the death of the Prophet and the cutting off of the fountain of revelation, came the necessity of collecting the scattered fragments of this Revelation and issuing them in book form.<sup>3</sup> Then as the Qur'ān thus collected became recognized as the ultimate source of both religion and law, there came the necessity of interpretation.<sup>4</sup> The primary source of such interpretation was the immediate circle of the Prophet's Companions, who were naturally

<sup>1</sup> Vide Rudolph, *Abhängigkeit des Qorans von Judenthum und Christenthum*, 1922, and Ahrens, *Christliches im Qoran*, 1930.

<sup>2</sup> *New Researches*, p. 4.

<sup>3</sup> The popular Muslim account of the collection is given in as-Suyūṭī, *Itq*, 135, and in many other well-known works, e.g. *Fihrist*, 24: Ya'qūbī, *Historia*, ii, 152; Ibn al-Athīr, *Chronicon* (ed. Tornberg), ii, 279; iii, 86. See also Noldeke-Schwally, ii, 11 ff., and the criticism in Caetani, *Annali*, vii, pp. 407-418.

<sup>4</sup> Goldziher, *Richtungen*, 55 ff.