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**QUR'ANIC STUDIES IN THE BRITISH
ORIENTALIST TRADITION:
THE CASE OF ALPHONSE MINGANA**

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ABSTRACT

**QUR'ANIC STUDIES IN THE BRITISH ORIENTALIST
TRADITION: THE CASE OF ALPHONSE MINGANA**

SÜMEYYE GÜVEN

The aim of this thesis is to analyze the methodology and approaches of Alphonse Mingana towards the Qur'an and to find out his contributions to the British Orientalist tradition in the field of Qur'anic Studies. The Thesis also aims to focus on his impact and reflections in Western academia and responses from the Islamic world.

The thesis consists of three chapters. The first chapter focuses on his biographical information. Without knowing the personality and the educational background of Mingana, this study will not be fully accomplished. The second chapter evaluates his ideas and approaches on the Qur'an. The thesis found out that Mingana has three main approaches on dealing with the Qur'an and Islam. The first one is historical critical approach, the second one is linguistic and textual criticism approach and the third one is his polemical and manipulative approach in his works. Finally, the third chapter investigates Mingana's impact on the Western academia and responses from Islamic world.

Key Words: Alphonse Mingana, Qur'anic Studies, Qur'an Fragments, Orthography, British Orientalism, Christian Polemics.

ÖZ

**İNGİLİZ ORYANTALİST GELENEĞİNDE KUR'AN
ARAŞTIRMALARI: ALPHONSE MİNGANA ÖRNEĞİ
SÜMEYYE GÜVEN**

Bu tezin amacı, Alphonse Mingana'nın Kur'an'a karşı yaklaşım ve metodolojisini analiz etmek ve İngiliz Oryantalizm geleneğine olan katkılarını bulmaktır. Aynı zamanda bu tez, onun batı akademisine olan etki ve yansımalarına ve İslam dünyasının cevaplarına odaklanmayı amaçlar.

Tez üç bölümden oluşur. Birinci bölüm onun biyografik bilgilerine ayrılmıştır. Mingana'nın kişilik ve eğitim arka planını bilmeden, bu çalışma tam manasıyla sonuçlandırılmazdı. İkinci bölümde ise onun Kur'an'a karşı fikir ve yaklaşımları değerlendirilir. Bu tez Mingana'nın Kur'an ve İslam ile ilgilenirken üç ana yaklaşımla bunu yaptığı sonucuna varır. İlk olarak tarihsel eleştiriye, ikinci olarak linguistik ve metin eleştirisini, üçüncü olarak da polemik ve manipülatif bir yaklaşımı çalışmalarında kullanır. Son olarak, üçüncü bölümde Mingana'nın batı akademisine etkileri ve İslam dünyasının onun çalışmalarına verdiği cevaplar yer almaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Alphonse Mingana, Kur'an Araştırmaları, Kur'an Fragmanları, Ortografi, İngiliz Oryantalizmi, Hristiyan Polemikleri

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

A.D.	: Anno Domini
A.H.	: Anno Hegirae
C.E.	: Common Era
d.	: Died
ed.	: Edited
G.A.L.	: Geschichte der Arabischen Litteratur
i.e.	: Id est
Ibid.	: Ibidem
MS.	: Manuscript
MSS.	: Manuscripts
n.d.	: No Date
p.	: Page
p.b.u.h.	: Peace Be Upon Him
pp.	: Pages
repr.	: Reprinted
Rev. Ed.	: Revised Edition
Syr.	: Syriac
TDV	: Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı
vol.	: Volume
w. name	: Without Name

INTRODUCTION

The western scholars have been taking keen interest in Qur'anic Studies and its Manuscripts for almost two centuries. Those scholars made critical studies in this field and published many of the original Qur'anic manuscripts, palimpsests and also its translations into western languages such as English, German, French and so on. Beside the publications of the original texts, especially in the introduction parts, one can see the ideas, criticisms or theories of the editor regarding the manuscript.

Reaching the original sources became easier with the advancement of technology and improvement of the facilities, thus the number of publications in the field increased. Following these developments, contemporary Muslim scholars and also the Qur'an itself have been faced with deep criticism regarding to the authenticity, origin, language and the compilation process of the Qur'an texts, especially with the explorations of ancient *mushaf* copies -believed to be- from the first century of the Islam. Meanwhile western scholars started to compare and contrast the ancient Qur'an manuscripts with the standardized Qur'an copies to prove their claim that the Qur'an has been changed.

Theodore Nöldeke's celebrated work **Geschichte des Qurans** can be considered as the milestone in the field of Qur'anic studies and the studies on the Qur'an is proceeded until the mid-20th century. As a matter of fact Ignaz Golziher's publication **Richtungen der Islamischen Koranauslegung** in 1920 became the most influential work after Nöldeke's book. After that time, Regis Blachere, Arthur Jeffery and Alphonse Mingana became among those who contributed to Qur'anic Studies in the first half of the 20th century.¹

Scope and Purpose of the Study

Despite a controversial figure, Mingana had a fruitful academic life during spent his time in Britain, and he was a colorful figure as well. He took on several identities such as, an ex-Chaldean priest supported by Quaker society in

¹ Bilal Gökkır, "Modern Dönemde Kur'an Tarihinin Ortaya Çıkışı: Kur'an'ın Korunmuşluğu Hususunda Oryantalist İddialar ve Müslümanlardan Cevaplar" **İstanbul Üniversitesi İlahiyat Fakültesi Dergisi**, 27, 2012, p. 11.

Birmingham, a scholar of Biblical studies, has good command of Semitic languages and furthermore western languages such as Latin, French and English, coming from the East and writing from the West about the East, a manuscript collector, and so on. Consequently, while some scholars criticized him because of his works in the field of Qur'anic Studies, at the same time he influenced some of them, such as Luxenberg. However, there is a lack of studies on the approach and impact of Mingana in the academic world. Thus, this paper aims to fill the gap. That is why this study seeks answers to following questions:

- Where is Mingana's place in British Orientalist Tradition regarding Qur'anic Studies?
- What kind of methodologies and approaches did Mingana use in the Qur'anic Studies?
- How did his works get reactions from Islamic and western world? and to what extent did his academic works influence Muslim and Western world?

And based on the above questions, there are three objectives of this study.

- To find out Mingana's contribution to the British Orientalist Tradition.
- To explore the methodology and approaches of Mingana on the Qur'an.
- To analyze the impact of Mingana on the succeeding academic works.

Literature Review

Geschichte des Qurans is the widely influential work of famous German orientalist Theodore Nöldeke on the field of Qur'anic Studies. The author gives detailed information on the origin of the Qur'an, classifications of the *suras*, chronology of surah, language, combination and documentation of the Qur'an, history of the Qur'anic text and so on. Nöldeke's position toward the authority and the origin of the Qur'an is sharply criticized by Mingana in his works.

M. Mustafa al- A'zami has various studies and refutations against orientalist's claims. The article "*Isnad and Its Significance*"² and the book **On Schacht's Origins of Muhammadan Jurisprudence**³ are among them. Another study of him is **the History of the Qur'anic Text**,⁴ that is considered to be a significant work in the field, written by a Muslim scholar in English language to answer the arguments relating to Qur'an by Western academic world. The book has two parts, in the first part al-Azami discuss the history of the Qur'anic text, in the second part he discusses the history of Biblical scriptures. Under the second part he devoted two chapters to Orientalist studies toward the Qur'an. In these chapters he refutes Mingana's arguments on the Syriac influence of the Qur'an.

At the beginning of this survey, it was very hard to find detailed information on Mingana, but Samir's biographical work⁵ brightened the way. Samir delivered this paper as a lecture in the First Woodbrooke Mingana Symposium in 1990. Without the study of Samir, it would be not possible to get detailed information on the life, education, publications, expeditions and accusations towards Mingana. In that sense, his work is significant for those who study Mingana.

Not directly relating to Qur'anic studies but the Woodbrooke Mingana Symposium series is momentous on Arab Christianity and Islam. The symposium first held in 1990, the theme was *Christian Arabic Apologetics during the Abbasid Period (750-1258)*. It was planned to be held every four years. However, the second symposium was held in 1994, the third one was in 1998, the fourth one was in 2001, the fifth one was in 2005, the sixth one was in 2007 and the seventh and the final symposium was held in 2013 with the theme: *the Qur'an and Arab Christianity*.⁶

Mingana's influence in the field gained weight in the contemporary study of Luxemberg's **Die syro-aramäische Lesart des Koran: Ein Beitrag zur**

² Muhammad Mustafa Al-Azami, "Isnad and Its Significance" in **The Place of Hadith in Islam**, United States, International Graphics Printing, 1977.

³ Muhammad Mustafa Al-Azami, **On Schacht's Origins of Muhammadan Jurisprudence**, Riyadh, King Saud University, 1985.

⁴ Muhammad Mustafā al-Azami, **The History of The Qur'anic Text, From Revelation to Compilation**, Leicester, UK Islamic Academy, 2003

⁵ Samir Khalil Samir Sj, **Alphonse Mingana 1878-1937 and his Contribution to early Christian-Muslim Studies**, Woodbrooke Mingana Symposium, Birmingham, 1990.

⁶ David Bertain, "Seventh Mingana Symposium on Arab Cristianity & Islam: The Qur'an and Arab Christianity", (Online) <https://iqsaweb.wordpress.com/tag/seventh-mingana-symposium-on-arab-christianity-and-islam/>, 29 July 2019.

Entschlüsselung der Koransprache which was published in 2000. The translation of the book in English was published in 2007 and since then it became more available to the academics, and also became the centre of criticisms on the idea of influence of Syriac in the Qur'an.

In 2015, the world was astonished by the discovery of the oldest Qur'an fragment in Mingana's Collection by Alba Fedeli which is called Birmingham Qur'an manuscript. Based on the radiocarbon results, the date of the parchment ranged from "568-645 with 95.4% probability."⁷ Alba Fedeli's unpublished PhD thesis was titled *Early Qur'ānic manuscripts, their text, and the Alphonse Mingana papers held in the Department of Special Collections of the University of Birmingham*.⁸ The thesis is not open to the public, that is why I had no chance to read it. However, based on the abstract, what I understand is; Fedeli's study is manuscript studies rather than Qur'anic studies. She initiated an alternative perspective of the analysis of the physical objects and the texts. In doing so, she uses the Qur'an manuscripts in the Mingana Collection.⁹ Fedeli has significant articles¹⁰ mostly on Mingana collection. She is more interested in the manuscript study of the Qur'an rather than the theories or approaches of Mingana.

Gabrial Said Reynold's¹¹ and Tijmen C. Baarda's¹² articles on Mingana's theories and the place in the academics, are also significant for the field as contemporary studies.

Regarding this thesis, there were no comprehensive study on the place of Mingana in British Orientalist tradition and also on his approaches towards the Qur'an. So this thesis aims to fill the gap in the field. However, there is still a need

⁷"What is the Birmingham Qur'an?" (Online) <https://www.birmingham.ac.uk/facilities/cadbury/birmingham-quran-mingana-collection/birmingham-quran/what-is.aspx> 29 July 2019.

⁸"Congradulations to Dr Alba Fedeli", (Online) <https://www.birmingham.ac.uk/research/activity/itsee/news/2015/alba-fedeli-phd.aspx> 29 July 2019.

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Fedeli, Alba, "The Provenance of the manuscript Mingana Islamic Arabic 1572:Dispersed Folios From a Few Qur'an Quires", **Manuscripta Orientalia**, Vol. 17 No.1 June 2011, also, "the Digitization Project of the Qur'anic Palimpsest, MS Cambridge University Library Or. 1287, and the Verification of the Mingana-Lewis Edition: Where is Salam?" **Journal of Islamic Manuscript** 2, 2011.

¹¹ Gabriel Said Reynolds, "A Reflection on Two Qur'anic Words (Iblis and Judi) with Attention to the Theories of A. Mingana," **Journal of the American Oriental Society** 124.4, 2004.

¹² Tijmen C. Baarda, "Firmly Established in Early 20th Century Orientalism: Alphonse Mingana Among His Fellow Scholars," **Journal of Syriac Studies**, Vol. 19.1, 2016.

for the evaluation of his article entitled *An Ancient Syriac Translation of the Kur'an* for further studies.

Methodology and Sources of the Study

This thesis considers itself as the first comprehensive study in Turkey on Mingana and his works. The predominant method that will be applied in this thesis is close reading of Mingana's existing works on the subject and discourse analysis of his works. That is why this study aims to be analytical by nature, has an inductive research approach and qualitative data analysis by methodology. To find out Mingana's place in the British Orientalist Tradition and his methodology on his studies, first of all biographical details of the author will be collected from the primary and secondary sources. And then based on the objectives of the research, primary and secondary sources in the field will be studied. As primary sources, Mingana's articles, books, prefaces written by him in the manuscript publications (Mingana Collections), encyclopedia writings, column writings in newspapers and journals will be used. Beside the primary sources, all kinds of data on Mingana such as, thesis, articles, books, newspapers, video and internet sources on the subject will be used as secondary source. Most of the data will be purchased or collected from Turkish, British and American Libraries and also through online archives.

As stated earlier, this study attempts to find out Mingana's contributions to British Orientalist Tradition. To find out his contributions in the system, it is believed to be beneficial to elaborate briefly his biography and his studies on the Qur'an. The study is divided into three chapters.

The first chapter will mainly be about the biography of Mingana from his early life in Iraq till his death in Birmingham. Before moving his effects on the field, studying Mingana's life history is believed to be helpful to understand and elaborate the perspective in his studies. That is why this chapter will be devoted to his biography and short information about his studies on Islam and mainly on the Qur'an.

The second chapter will cover the methodological evaluations of Mingana. Firstly Mingana's discourse in his works on the Qur'an will be analysed. Through this analysis, the aim is to find out his methodology and approach towards the text of the Qur'an.

As for the third chapter, his impact in the succeeding academic works will be elaborated together with Muslim responses to Mingana's ideas.



CHAPTER ONE

WHO IS MINGANA?

1.1. The Life of Alphonse Mingana

Alphonse Mingana, was a well-known British “*orientalist*,”¹³ “*Syriac and Christian Arabic scholar*,”¹⁴ “*ex-Catholic priest*”¹⁵ and “*manuscript collector*.”¹⁶ According to Gabriel Reynold; Mingana is one of the most colorful and controversial figures in the history of Islamic Studies, even though his theories on Qur’an have been largely forgotten. He had a peculiar approach to the Qur’an.¹⁷ His life can be divided into two parts; the first part is his life in Iraq (1878-1913) and the second is his life in Britain (1913- 1937).

1.1.1. Life in Iraq

1.1.1.1. Childhood and Education

Mingana was born in Zakho¹⁸, a vilayet of Mosul,¹⁹ on the 23rd of December, 1878²⁰. His father was a Chaldean Catholic²¹ priest named Paolos

¹³Baarda, “Firmly Established in Early 20th Century Orientalism: Alphonse Mingana Among His Fellow Scholars”, p.5.

¹⁴ D. G. K. Taylor, “Mingana Alphonse (Formerly Hurmiz Mingana)”, **Oxford Dictionary of National Biography**, (Online) <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/59116> 29 March 2018.

¹⁵Baarda, “Firmly Established in Early 20th Century Orientalism: Alphonse Mingana Among His Fellow Scholars”, p.5.

¹⁶ Taylor, “Mingana Alphonse (Formerly Hurmiz Mingana)”.

¹⁷ Reynold, “A Reflection on Two Qur’anic Words (Iblis and Judi) with Attention to the Theories of A. Mingana”, p. 675.

¹⁸ Zakho is one of the oldest distinct regions for Jews and also for the Catholic Christians. Today it is located near the Iraqi-Turkish border. Zakho was also known as “the Jerusalem of Assyria” because of the ancient Jewish communities who lived there and its synagogues. On the other hand, it was the center of the Chaldean Catholic diocese. These details are important to understand what kind of environment Mingana grew up in and learned so many languages. Additionally, the village where he was born is called Sharansh an-Nasarah (Sharansh of the Christians) to distinguish it from the village called Sharansh al-Islam.

¹⁹ Mosul was one of the important provinces of the Ottoman State at that time and is currently located in northern Iraq.

²⁰ In some references the birth date of Mingana is written as 1881 or 1883. But in general it is written as 1878 and I take this date as the basis.

²¹ Chaldean Catholics have a long history, however in sum it can be said that the Assyrian Christian community located in Upper Mesopotamia, embraced the Nestorian ideas in the 5th century. Nestorians were adhering to the Church of East however after the schism of 1552 this community divided into two. Some of them continued in Nestorian teachings while some of them adopted the Catholic teachings. Those who accepted the Catholic adhered to the Roman Catholic Church. The language they used was Aramaic/ Syriac. For more details; Caesar E. Farah, “Chaldeans”, (Online) <https://www.encyclopedia.com/humanities/encyclopedias-almanacs-transcripts-and-maps/chaldeans> , 4 December 2018, also in Turkish information check Kadir Albayrak, “Keldanilik” **TDV İslam Ansiklopedisi**, vol. 25, Ankara, 2002, p. 209.

Mingana²² and the name of his mother was Maryam Nano.²³ Alphonse was the eldest brother of six boys and two girls in his family. As it was normal at that time, he followed the footsteps of his father and obtained education to be a priest. One of his sisters also chose to work in relation to the church and became a nun.²⁴

His birth name was Hurmiz Mingana.²⁵ As Samir states, Hurmiz was a common name at that time among the Chaldeans of Mosul who were associated with the famous monastery of *Dayr al- Rabban Hurmizd* near Alqosh.²⁶ When Mingana was thirteen years old, he was sent to the Syro-Chaldean Seminary of St John in Mosul in 1891.²⁷ This seminary was “*founded in Mosul in 1878 on the initiative of Pope Leo XIII to train priests by the Dominican monks of Mosul, under the supervision of the apostolic delegate.*”²⁸ He studied theology and also languages such as Arabic, Syriac, Turkish, Persian, Kurdish, Hebrew and Latin. He had an extraordinary capacity for learning foreign languages.²⁹ His complete command of French came from his years at the school of Saint Jean of Lion. As Samir states, based on Mingana’s daughters’ statements he spent the summer holidays in France,³⁰ however there is no detailed information on this subject.

1.1.1.2. Priesthood of Mingana

After he completed the seminary in 1902 he was ordained as a priest by Chaldean Patriarch Emmanuel II Thomas.³¹ After his ordination as a priest, he preferred to change his name, as many Chaldean priests do, and obtained the name of Alphonse. Since then, he has been known as Qass Alphonse (priest Alphonse), “*the word Qass being a part of his name even in the official Ottoman Attestation.*”³²

Samir states that Mingana’s passion for research and manuscripts started in 1902 following the decision of the patriarch who suggested Mingana should take

²² Taylor, “Mingana Alphonse (Formerly Hurmiz Mingana)”, also Baarda, “Firmly Established in Early 20th Century Orientalism”, p.5.

²³ Samir, “Alphonse Mingana 1878-1937”, p.6.

²⁴ Ibid, p.6

²⁵ Taylor, “Mingana Alphonse (Formerly Hurmiz Mingana)”

²⁶ Samir, “Alphonse Mingana 1878-1937”, p.6.

²⁷ Taylor, “Mingana Alphonse (Formerly Hurmiz Mingana)” In French it was called, Séminaire Syro-Chaldéen St. Jean.

²⁸ David Wilmshurst, **The Ecclesiastical Organisation of the Church of the East, 1318-1913**, Leuven, In Aedibus Peeters, 2000, p.213.

²⁹ Taylor, “Mingana Alphonse (Formerly Hurmiz Mingana)”

³⁰ Samir, “Alphonse Mingana 1878-1937”, p.7.

³¹ Ibid.

³² Ibid., p.6.

over the place of Awning Manna³³ as teacher of Syriac.³⁴ Then Mingana started his expeditions to collect some Syriac manuscripts for himself. “*He collected 70 manuscripts, 20 of them on vellum, which unfortunately were burnt during the first World War between 1914-1918.*”³⁵

Besides his ordination as a priest, he also worked at Dominican Press in Mosul as a redactor of Syriac and Arabic books from 1903 to 1910.³⁶ Mingana published a Syriac grammar book for his student in 1905 entitled **Clef de la Langue Araméenne, ou Grammaire Complète et Pratique des Deux Dialectes Syriaques Occidental et Oriental**. Also, in the same year he published two volumes of Narsai’s (AD 399-505) works in Syriac. “*The homilies were slightly expurgated to suppress some Nestorian affirmations*”³⁷ that may have caused some minor problems for Mingana with the ecclesiastical censor, however “*the relationship with Seminary and the Dominican Fathers was not affected.*”³⁸

1.1.1.3. Mingana’s Publications and Accusation of Forgery in Iraq

Meanwhile, Mingana published a section of the text of Bar Hadbeshabba.³⁹ Because of the importance of the text, Jean-Baptiste Chobat⁴⁰ translated it into French and mentioned the contradictions of the text.⁴¹ Mingana was hurt by these comments and “*attacked Chobat personally, saying that a man who can only read and understand Syriac with the help of a dictionary or the eyes of a chammâs is untrained in the matter.*”⁴² However as Samir states;

“the edition of the text of Bar Hadbeshabba by Addai Scher in 1907 proved clearly that Chobat was right. In his introduction, Scher says that the 25 suspect lines are not to be found in any manuscript. Nevertheless, he tries to find a compromise, suggesting that these lines ‘belong to the History by Bar Hadbeshabba and would have been inserted by some copyist into the manuscript of Mr Mingana, or its

³³ Who was a teacher of Syriac and Arabic in Seminary and was a consecrated bishop.

³⁴ Samir, “Alphonse Mingana 1878-1937”, p.7.

³⁵ Ibid., p.8.

³⁶ Taylor, “Mingana Alphonse (Formerly Hurmiz Mingana)”, also Samir, “Alphonse Mingana 1878-1937”, p.7.

³⁷ Samir, “Alphonse Mingana 1878-1937”, p.8.

³⁸ Ibid., p.9.

³⁹ The whole text would be published two years later by Addai Scher. For more details: Samir, Alphonse Mingana 1878-1937, p.11-12.

⁴⁰ The founder of the Corpus Scriptorum Christianorum Orientalium.

⁴¹ Baarda, p.9.

⁴² Samir, “Alphonse Mingana 1878-1937”, p.10.

prototype, at the end of the treaties we here publish, as a supplement.”⁴³ But the publication of the second part of this History in 1913, by François Nau, did not confirm this hypothesis: the 25 lines are not in this second part either.”⁴⁴

So, these refutations or hypothesizes lead two main questions into people’s minds; “*did he really find the 25 lines he published in the manuscript (and in that case, why does he not exhibit it?) or did he forge them?*”⁴⁵

This one was the first accusation of Mingana in his academic life. The other case was about ‘Chronicle of Arbela’. In 1907 he started to publish a new series called **Sources Syriaques**. However, he only published one volume and as Samir states; “*the first part contains the so-called ‘Chronicle of Arbela’ that Mingana attributed to Mshiha-Zkha.*”⁴⁶ This Syriac work with the French translation became so popular and was thought to be from the 10th century.⁴⁷ However, based on the expert examinations on the text conducted in the 1960s, it was found that the manuscript was not written in the 10th century but intentionally made to look old. “*The copyist is even known: he was the priest Abraham Shakwana of Alqosh, who told a friend how Dr. Mingana thought him to make MS ‘older’ by putting it in the oven and so on.*”⁴⁸ There are two more accusations towards Mingana but the above two are the worst and non-exculpated cases that started to lead to so many questions in the minds of the other scholars on the reliability of his works.

In 1908 he published two more Syriac texts with French translations and “*something must have happened because Mingana stopped his publications. He did not publish anything for five years from that time on.*”⁴⁹ Almost all sources note a clash between the Catholic Church and Mingana due to his open doubts towards the infallibility of Saint Peter that would have drastic results for the legitimacy of the Roman Catholic Church.⁵⁰ As a consequence of this clash, it is unknown what exactly happened between 1910 and 1913 but it is sure Mingana was removed from his Seminary position.

⁴³ Ibid., p.11.

⁴⁴ Ibid., p.11.

⁴⁵ Ibid., p.12.

⁴⁶ Ibid., p.12.

⁴⁷ Ibid., p.12.

⁴⁸ Ibid., p.12.

⁴⁹ Ibid., p.14.

⁵⁰ Baarda, “Firmly Established in Early 20th Century Orientalism”, p.5.

1.1.2. Life in Britain

After breaking off his relations with the Catholic Church, he started his journey in January 1913. He travelled 2 months in Persia and Ottoman State. During his traveling in Mardin he was hosted by an American Protestant missionary named Andrews⁵¹ and on March 17, 1913 he left the East with the intention not to come back again.⁵² Through the mediations of the missionary, A.N. Andrus⁵³, Mingana was introduced to Quaker James Rendel Harris; who was one of the most significant persons and supporters of Mingana for the rest of his life.⁵⁴

In Birmingham, Mingana stayed the first weeks in the house of Rendel Harris and then he moved to Woodbrooke Quaker settlement and college where he stayed for two years. During his stay there he taught “*Arabic for missionaries and Hebrew for theological students.*”⁵⁵

In 1913 he finished his study of the **Odes of Solomon**. Due to the weakness of his English, he wrote it in French and published it in a German journal in two issues.⁵⁶ This study has a strong relation with Rendel Harris due to his own discovery of the Syriac manuscript fragments in his collection in 1909. Also, through the mediations of Rendel Harris, Mingana started to meet with new orientalists such as famous travelers and scholars Dr. Anges Smith Lewis and Margaret Dunlop Gibson.⁵⁷ Upon visiting their home, Mingana “*discovered the significance of the text of some Qur’an leaves in Mrs. Lewis’s possession, which formed the subject of his first contribution to Islamic scholarship*”.⁵⁸ Together with Mrs. Lewis, they published **Leaves from Three ancient Qur’ans, possibly Pre-Othmanic** in 1914. Here pre-Othmanic means that “*these leaves could be earlier than the collection of the Qur’an which was made by the third Muslim Caliph.*”⁵⁹

In Birmingham, Mingana continued his fruitful studies. He wrote a review of Professor David Samuel Margoliouth’s book, **The Early Development of Mohammedanism**, and published it in *The Expository Times* in April 1914. As

⁵¹Samir, “Alphonse Mingana 1878-1937”, p.16.

⁵²Ibid.,p.16.

⁵³Baarda, “Firmly Established in Early 20th Century Orientalism”, p.5.

⁵⁴Ibid., p.5.

⁵⁵Samir, “Alphonse Mingana 1878-1937”, p.17.

⁵⁶Ibid., p.17

⁵⁷Ibid., p.17.

⁵⁸Ibid., pp. 17-18.

⁵⁹Ibid., p.18.

stated by Samir, they had strong relations and friendship. Even in 1930, Prof Margoliouth “was willing to retire from Oxford on condition that his successor would be Mingana”.⁶⁰ The other works of Mingana published in *The Expository Times* were the series of short articles on the Syriac Gospels and two long studies on the Early Church.

Mingana had not studied in a university and obtained a PhD. however, when he came to Britain he was faced with a new reality;

“that in this country one had to have a title, that one’s value was estimated according to external qualifications. In this context, Mingana needed to be considered a ‘Doctor’.

Furthermore, a papal doctorate of divinity’, as his biographers say, added something ‘piquant’ to this rather odd scholar, who had left the Catholic Church to live in a Protestant milieu.”⁶¹

1.1.1.4. Moving to Manchester

Meanwhile, in Woodbrooke in 1914 he met a Norwegian lady, Emma Sophie Floor and they got married in 1915. From this marriage they had two children: a son and a daughter. When he got a job at the John Rylands Library in 1915, Mingana moved to Manchester.⁶² There he would catalogue the rich Arabic MSS collection of the library. Immediately after his arrival to John Ryland Library he started to work on MSS. At the same time he published two significant articles entitled *An important old Turki manuscript in the John Rylands Library* and *Notes upon some of the Kuranic manuscripts in the John Rylands Library* in the *Bulletin of the John Rylands Library*.⁶³

Besides his position at John Rylands Library, he was a Special Lecturer at Manchester University’s Arabic department from 1916 to 1923.⁶⁴ Margoliouth and Woledge state that;

⁶⁰Ibid., p.18.

⁶¹Ibid., p.22.

⁶²Baarda, “Firmly Established in Early 20th Century Orientalism”, p.6.

⁶³ Samir, “Alphonse Mingana 1878-1937”, p.23.

⁶⁴D. S. Margoliouth and G. Woledge, “Alphonse Mingana 1881–1937”, **Catalogue of the Mingana Collection of Manuscripts**, vol. 3, 1939, pp.v–xii, (Online)

https://archive.org/stream/MinganaCatalogueOfTheMinganaCollection.III/Mingana_Catalogue%20of%20the%20Mingana%20Collection.III_djvu.txt, 25 September 2018.

“during the War of 1914 -1918 he served his adopted country by acting as censor for the letters Assyrian refugees, and by compiling for the Admiralty and the War office vocabularies of Arabic, Persian, Turkish, Kurdish, and Syriac. He also helped to inform public opinion by numerous articles in the *Manchester Guardian* on political and social conditions in the Near and Middle East. To the end of his life he maintained a lively interest in Eastern politics and church affairs, keeping in touch with ecclesiastical dignitaries there, as well as with the Syrian emigrants to the Americas.”⁶⁵

Based on his devotions and efforts for the British government, Mingana was naturalized as a British citizen in 1920 and got his first passport.⁶⁶

1.1.1.5. Mingana’s Publications and Accusations of Forgery in Britain

During the years 1922-1928 Mingana published two significant books that can be counted as Islamic-Christian apologies. The first book **Kitab al-Din wa-l Dawlah (Book of Religion and Empire)** which belongs to ‘Ali ibn Rabbân al-Tabari (d. 861)⁶⁷, got intense criticism on its reliability and authenticity. Paul Peeters, reviewed this work in 1924 and questioned the authenticity of the book. According to him, there were no references to this book in the later publications.⁶⁸ Another attack came from Maurice Bouyges, who claimed that the book was forged by Mingana himself because according to him the text seems to be from the 20th century with its vocabulary, design and division of chapters by stating that:

“Although your manuscript Crawford 531 is dated 616H(=1219), I cannot but consider that the Muslim anti-Christian apology which it contains has been written by a modern Pseudo-Tabari, in the 20th century”⁶⁹

Even though Mingana proved that he did not write the text, the manuscript was already in the library before he came,⁷⁰ Though Henry Guppy and Prof. David

⁶⁵Ibid.

⁶⁶Ibid.

⁶⁷ For more information see; Ali b, Rabben et-Taberi, **TDV Islam Ansiklopedisi**, vol. 2, Istanbul, 1989, pp. 434-436, also see Samir, p.26 and Baarda, pp. 10-11.

⁶⁸ Paul Peeters, “Review of The Book of Religion and Empire, by ‘Ali al’Tabari, edited by Alphonse Mingana,” **Analecta Bollandiana**, vol. 42, 1924, pp. 200-202. Also see, H. Daiber, D. Pingree, ed., **Islamic Philosophy and Science, Text and Studies**, Leiden, E.J.Brill, 1996, pp. 27-28 (Online) <https://www.scribd.com/document/340446845/IPTSTS-022-Muslim-Writers-on-Judaism-and-the-Hebrew-Bible-From-Ibn-Rabban-to-Ibn-Hazm-pdf> 16 Apr 2019

⁶⁹ Samir, “Alphonse Mingana 1878-1937” p. 28

⁷⁰ Baarda, “Firmly Established in Early 20th Century Orientalism”, p. 11.

Samuel Margoliouth defended the authenticity of the manuscripts, Bouyges did not change his opinion.⁷¹ The second book, published by Mingana in 1928, was **the Apology of Timothy**, this significant work interestingly did not receive any attacks and Timothy's work can be considered a respectful apology towards Islam.⁷²

The fourth and last accusation was made about a document entitled *the Letter of Philoxenus to Abu 'Afr* that Mingana published in 1925 based on a manuscript in the John Rylands Library's collection dated 1909, on the conversion of a Turkish tribe to Christianity in the time of the East Syrian Patriarch Acacius (A.D. 485-495/6).⁷³ In 1928 he was again attacked by Paul Peeters on the authenticity of the document when he said that "*the 9th century Jacobite is made to speak as if he had read the works of Bethune Baker and of J Lebon.*"⁷⁴ Mingana responded to him with a new manuscript that he had recently found, *Mingana Syr. 71*, from about 1600, however Peeters insisted on his accusation and seemed to be unimpressed by this new document. As a result, Peeters reprinted his article in 1951 maintaining his accusation.⁷⁵ Samir believes Mingana was right but he was accused of forgery and manipulation once again which shows how long his early mistakes continued to affect the minds of some scholars towards him.⁷⁶

1.1.1.6. Expeditions and Collecting the Manuscripts

Mingana made three journeys in the years 1924, 1925 and 1929 to collect Syriac and Arabic manuscripts. Most of his expeditions were financed by Dr. Edward Cadbury⁷⁷ which is why his manuscript collection was mainly established in Birmingham. During his expeditions he visited Sinai Peninsula, Alexandria, Hamadan, Sulaimania, Beirut, Aleppo, Baghdad, Damascus, Kermanshah and Mosul. He collected so many valuable manuscripts for the Islamic world and the Christian world as well. His collection was mostly sent to the Selly Oak College Library upon the request of Mr. Cadbury. When the year came to 1926 Mingana was the curator of his own collection in Birmingham however he was at the same time

⁷¹ Samir, p. 27.

⁷² Ibid., p.28.

⁷³ Baarda, p. 11, also Samir, p. 24.

⁷⁴ Samir, p. 24.

⁷⁵ Ibid.

⁷⁶ Ibid.

⁷⁷ D.S. Margoliouth, "Obituary Notice Alphonse Mingana", **Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland**, No. 1, Jan., 1938, p. 163.

working part time at John Rylands Library in Manchester where he remained until 1932.⁷⁸

1.1.1.7. Academic Activities

Besides his collection, Mingana was a well-known and respected scholar of his time. He was a supervisor and examiner of post graduate students as well. For instance, Williem van Urnik⁷⁹ wrote his Ph.D. thesis under his guidance.⁸⁰ Another Ph.D. candidate was Abraham Leene⁸¹ who had chance to get help from Mingana. Additionally, well known British Orientalist Richard Bell⁸² asked him to be a secondary examiner for Masters and Ph.D. students' dissertations. Also, Mingana was an external examiner of Mougy's thesis by the insisting requests of Prof. M.A. Canney.⁸³

Additionally, he had academic discussions through sending letters to some scholars such as German scholar Franz Taeschner (1888-1967) on his article on 'Apology' by 'Ali al-Tabari'⁸⁴, French Orientalist Jean- Baptiste Chobat (1860-1948) on manuscripts⁸⁵ and Arthur Jeffery (1892 – 1959) on Islamic tradition.⁸⁶

It can be said that Mingana spent almost 17 years in Manchester where he wrote most of his works and made three fruitful expeditions. At the same time, from his arrival in Manchester till 1932 he was preparing the catalogue of the John Rylands Library.⁸⁷ When he finished the cataloguing job of the oriental manuscripts in the John Rylands Library, he moved back to Birmingham to finish his works. Mingana was significantly busy finishing his collections' cataloguing process. He managed to finish the third and the fifth volume of **the Catalogue of the Mingana Collection of Manuscript** at the Selly Oak Colleges Library, "but did not see it printed."⁸⁸ Mingana passed away on December 5, 1937.

⁷⁸ Baarda, p.p. 6-7.

⁷⁹ Williem van Urnik was a Dutch New Testament Scholar based on Baarda's article, see page number 17.

⁸⁰ Baarda, p.17.

⁸¹ Again based on Baarda's article as stated in page 19 Levene was working for Nottingham Hebrew congregation.

⁸² The writer of **Introduction to the Qur'an** book.

⁸³ Baarda, p.19.

⁸⁴ Ibid, p.20.

⁸⁵ Ibid, p.23.

⁸⁶ Ibid, p.28.

⁸⁷ Samir, p.24.

⁸⁸ Ibid., p. 36.

1.2. Publications and Catalogues

1.2.1. “Woodbrooke Studies” and “Woodbrooke Scientific Publications”

When we search Mingana’s works we come across two different series under the names of **Woodbrooke Studies** and **Woodbrooke Scientific Publications**. Woodbrooke Studies consists of seven volumes including Syriac and Arabic texts and their English translations on Christianity published between 1927 – 1934. On the acknowledgment page of the first volume this sentence is written.

“to Mr. Edward Cadbury whose generosity and encouragement has made possible the publication of the ‘*Woodbrooke Studies*’” and in the introductory note of the first volume again Mingana states Dr. Rendel Harris writes an introduction to each treaties in this series and the original manuscript text and the translation will be placed.⁸⁹

Another new series entitled **Woodbrooke Scientific Publications** was published in 1935 “*with a large volume of 518 pages: “Book of Treasures” by Job of Edessa, which is a Syriac Encyclopedia of philosophical and natural sciences as taught in Baghdad about AD 817.*”⁹⁰ With the demise of Mingana the publication of this series ceased.

1.2.2. Catalogue of the Arabic Manuscripts in the John Rylands Library, Manchester

The John Rylands Library officially opened in 1901. Afterward, the library immediately started to collect Oriental manuscripts.⁹¹ This extensive collection consists of many manuscripts, papyri, parchment and codices from different languages such as; Hebrew, Samaritan, Pali, Syriac, Akkadian, Mo-So, Coptic, Arabic, Persian, Turkish, Ethiopian, Armenian, Malay, and Mongolian. As stated by Henry Guppy “*in 1902 the late Mr. Hope W. Hogg, Professor of Semitic Languages in the University of Manchester, was entrusted with the work of preparing a*

⁸⁹Alphonse Mingana, **Woodbrooke Studies Christian Documents in Syriac, Arabic, and Garshuni, Edited and Translated with a Critical Apparatus**, vol. I, Cambridge, W. heffer & Sons Limited, 1927, p. vii.

⁹⁰ Samir, p.35.

⁹¹Taylor, “the Oriental Manuscript Collections in the John Rylands Library” <https://www.escholar.manchester.ac.uk/api/datastream?publicationPid=uk-ac-man-scw:1m2987&datastreamId=POST-PEER-REVIEW-PUBLISHERS-DOCUMENT.PDF> 20 March 2019.

*catalogue of the Arabic Codices*⁹² but because of his busy academic duties in the University and his passing away in 1912 the cataloguing process could not have been finished⁹³ and “*nothing further was done until 1915*”.⁹⁴ When Mingana was introduced for the project by Dr. Rendel Harris, he was invited to join the library staff. Mingana’s main work in Manchester was cataloguing the Arabic Manuscripts in the John Rylands Library and immediately after he reached Manchester in 1915 he started to work and completed it in 1932.

This catalogue is different from the catalogue that Mingana prepared for the Selly Oak Colleges Library. The main difference is that the manuscripts were not totally acquired by Mingana himself. As he states;

“The name of the private collectors whose joint efforts brought together the 818 MSS. here catalogued are given between brackets at the end of each entry. They are: Crawford, Bland, Hamilton, Mingana, Rylands. The vast majority of the MSS. came from the *Bibliotheca Lindesiana* of the Earls of Crawford and Balcarres, which included also all the volumes in the Bland and Hamilton collections.”⁹⁵

Mingana acquired twenty two volumes for the library collection in his expeditions to the East and these volumes are marked as “Mingana”.⁹⁶

1.2.2.1. Brief Content of the Catalogue of the Arabic Manuscripts in the John Ryland Library, Manchester

The first part of the catalogue is devoted to Christian Literature which is in total fourteen pages that consist of nine different manuscripts’ names and definitions. Three of these manuscripts were acquired by Mingana including “*a Christian Arabic work on practical ethics*”⁹⁷, “*a work on Logic*”⁹⁸ and finally “*East Syrian Liturgies*”.⁹⁹

⁹² Alphonse Mingana, **Catalogue of the Arabic Manuscripts in the John Rylands Library Manchester**, Manchester, 1934, p. v.

⁹³ *Ibid.*, p. v.

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. v.

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. xi.

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. xi.

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 12.

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 13.

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 14.

The second part of the catalogue is devoted to Islamic MSS. under the name Mohammadan Literature. This part has seventeen chapters. In this paper, three chapters that are in relation to Qur'an will be dwelled on.

Kur'an

In this chapter Mingana classified the Qur'an MSS. based on their writing styles. There are three categories under this chapter. The first category is *Kūfi Manuscripts*¹⁰⁰. There are nine fragment entries under this title. All of them were acquired by Crawford and most of them are dated between 8th century and 10th century C.E., but only one of them is dated 18th century. Mingana gives brief information on each entry.

The second category is *Maghribi Manuscripts*¹⁰¹. There are two fragment entries under this title. Again all of them were acquired by Crawford and one of them is dated about C.E. 1000 and the other one is about C.E. 1250-1300.

The third category is *Naskhi Manuscripts*¹⁰². There are thirty six entries under this title. There is no completed Qur'an Codex under this category either. They are all fragments, some of them in good condition. There are different parts or *Juz'* of the Qur'an. The dates of the MSS. are mainly from 15th century to 19th century however the oldest MS. is dated as C.E. 1200.¹⁰³ Most of these MSS. are fragments but there is one complete Qur'an copy dated C.E. 1857 with Indian Nakshi writing. In regard to acquisition of the MSS. twenty six of them seem to have been acquired by Crawford. Seven of them were acquired by Bland and three of them by Rylands.

Commentaries on the Kur'an

Under this chapter there are six different commentaries on the Qur'an listed as follows; the second volume of Zamakhshari's famous commentary الكشاف / *the Revealer*¹⁰⁴, البحر المحيط / *the Ocean* by Abu Hayyan¹⁰⁵, تفسير الجلالين / *Commentary of the two Jalals* but this MS. only contains Suyuti's part¹⁰⁶, مواهب عليّة / *High Gifts* by Husayn bin 'Ali al Va'iz al Kashifi¹⁰⁷, انوار التنزيل / *Lights of Revelations* which

¹⁰⁰ Ibid., p.15.

¹⁰¹ Ibid., p.21.

¹⁰² Ibid., p.23.

¹⁰³ Ibid., p.23.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid., p.52.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid., p.53.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid., p.55.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid., p.56.

contains Baidawi's commentary only on Surah Nur¹⁰⁸ and lastly a commentary without the author's name called بحر العشق / *Sea of Love*.¹⁰⁹ In regards to acquisitions, *The Ocean* is from Bland's collection, the *Sea of Love* is from Hamilton's collection and the rest were acquired from Crawford's collection.

Orthography and Good Reading of the Kur'ān

Under this category six manuscripts are listed. All of them are about the reading and orthography of the Qur'an. Manuscripts are dated between the dates of the 1600s to 1700s. And all of those manuscript were acquired from Hamilton's collection.

Other parts of the Catalogue

Beside the Qur'an chapter of the catalogue, there are sixteen more catalogues under Muhammadan Literature. Theology, tradition, jurisprudence, science and history parts are the longest parts of the catalogue with their rich contents.

1.2.3. Mingana Collection of Oriental Manuscripts

The Mingana Collection of Oriental Manuscripts, in the Selly Oak Colleges Library, consists of 2700 works that were brought from the Middle East to Birmingham by the late orientalist Alphonse Mingana. The MSS. Collection is divided mainly into two groups: Christian MSS. and Islamic MSS. Based on Derek Hopwood's records; there are about 600 well known Syriac MSS., and about 270 Arabic MSS. in the Christian section of the collection, and the Islamic section contains 2000 MSS. under 1700 volumes.¹¹⁰

In the spring of 1924 Mingana began his journey with the patronage of Dr. Edward Cadbury who believed there was a great intellectual need for such manuscripts for the Quaker Society in Birmingham.¹¹¹ In the first journey he brought twenty-two Arabic, some Syriac manuscripts for the Rylands and a few Syriac

¹⁰⁸ Ibid., p.57.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid., p.59.

¹¹⁰ Hopwood, Derek, "the Islamic Arabic Manuscripts in the Mingana Collection", **The Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland**, No. 3/4, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, October 1961, p.100.

¹¹¹"History of the Mingana Collection", (Online)

<https://www.birmingham.ac.uk/facilities/cadbury/archives/mingana/history.aspx> 25 September 2018.

manuscript which are the nucleus of the famous Mingana Collection, for Dr. Cadbury. In the fall of 1925, he went for the second expedition and obtained extensive Syriac manuscripts, and some Arabic as well, especially from Damascus, Baghdad, Kermanshah and Mosul vilayet. As stated by Margoliouth and Woledge;

“During the War of 1914-1918 the East and West Syrian communities had been reduced in numbers and scattered; churches and monasteries were destroyed, and Mingana’s first two journeys were made at the moment when manuscripts which has passed into private hands could be rescued from the loss or destruction which might otherwise have overtaken them.”¹¹² Finally in 1929 he visited the Sinai Peninsula and Upper Egypt mainly to acquire Arabic Manuscripts.¹¹³

Mingana had planned to catalogue the Islamic Arabic collection in ten years¹¹⁴ however the cataloguing process of the Mingana’s Islamic Arabic manuscripts extended over thirty years. Mingana made his last expedition in 1929 and came back to Britain with large numbers of Islamic Arabic manuscripts. When he finished his works in the John Ryland Library in Manchester he moved to Birmingham to start the cataloguing of his acquisitions. At the time of his death in 1937 he had already completed three of his catalogues. The first catalogue is for Syriac MSS., the second one is for Christian Arabic MSS., and the third one is Additional Syriac and Christian Arabic MSS.¹¹⁵

Mingana had already started to catalogue Islamic MSS. part in 1937, however he did not manage to complete his mission due to his sudden death. Thus Dr. H.L. Gottschalk was appointed to complete the fourth volume of the collection in 1938. Until he left for another position in Vienna in 1948¹¹⁶, he managed to complete two fascicles for volume IV.¹¹⁷ Dr. Gottschalk had used Brockelman’s *Geschichte der Arabischen Literatur (GAL)* as his main guidance.¹¹⁸ Nevertheless Hopwood criticizes this way of cataloguing. According to him, using GAL as a tool “has let to anomalies, an author being placed under his subject heading according to GAL, even

¹¹² D. S. Margoliouth and G. Woledge, “Alphonse Mingana 1881–1937”, p. vii.

¹¹³ *Ibid.*, p.vii.

¹¹⁴ D.S. Margoliouth, “Obituary Notice Alphonse Mingana”, p. 163.

¹¹⁵ Hopwood, Derek, Rev. Ed. **Catalogue of the Mingana Collection of Manuscripts Vol IV Islamic Arabic Manuscripts**, Switzerland, Inter Documentation Company Ag Zus, 1985, preface.

¹¹⁶ Hopwood, **the Islamic Arabic Manuscripts in the Mingana Collection**, p. 101.

¹¹⁷ Catalogue of the Mingana Collection of Manuscripts, Volume IV, Islamic Arabic MSS, by H L Gottschalk Fascicle I (1948) Fascicle II (1950).

¹¹⁸ Hopwood, **Catalogue of the Mingana Collection of Manuscripts Vol IV Islamic Arabic Manuscripts**, preface.

if the collection contains only a work of his on a different topic. For example, Abu Hanifa's *al-Fiqh al-Aqbar* has been placed under the heading *Hanafi Law*.”¹¹⁹

After Dr. Gottschalk, Professor Beeston and Dr. Trimmingham were appointed to continue the cataloguing process and in 1959 Derek Hoopwood also joined the team.¹²⁰ In the last fascicle it was decided to make a new method in classification of the MSS. as Hopwood states:

“GAL references are still used but works are grouped only according to subject matter and one author may appear in several sections. These manuscripts already catalogued by Dr. Gottschalks are not re-described but are merely referred to by that number under which they appear in the first two fascicles.”¹²¹

In addition to that, in the catalogue the copies of the same works are categorized based on chronological order and works without authors or titles are also placed at the end of each relating section. Also there are two indexes in volume IV. One of them is for authors and the other one is for titles, shelf and catalogue numbers which are also included into indexes.¹²²

1.2.3.1. Brief Content of Islamic Arabic Manuscript Volume IV in the Selly Oak Colleges Library

The **Catalogue of the Mingana Collection of Manuscripts volume IV Islamic Arabic Manuscripts** consists of three fascicles. According to A. Guillaume's review in 1952 the first fascicle consists of manuscripts codes and details relating to Qur'an, Hadith and Fiqh. The second fascicle covers the topics such as dogmatism, mysticism, philosophy, history and science manuscripts of the Mingana Collection.¹²³ Moreover, it is known that the third fascicle was finished in

¹¹⁹ Hopwood, “the Islamic Arabic Manuscripts in the Mingana Collection”, p. 101.

¹²⁰ Ibid., p. 101.

¹²¹ Hopwood, **Catalogue of the Mingana Collection of Manuscripts Vol IV Islamic Arabic Manuscripts**, preface.

¹²² Ibid., preface.

¹²³ Guillaume, “Review: Catalogue of the Mingana Collection of Manuscripts now in the Possession of the Trustees of the Woodbrooke Settlement, Selly Oak, Birmingham, and preserved at the Selly Oak College's Library, vol. iv. Islamic Arabic Manuscripts” Fasc. I, Qur'an, Ḥadīṭ, Fiqh; and Fasc. II, Dogmatics, Mysticism, Philosophy, History, and Science, by H. L. Gottschalk, pp. vii, 100 and 182. Birmingham: The Selly Oak College's Library, 1948 (Fasc. I) and 1950 (Fasc. II) **Bulletin of the Schools of Oriental and African Studies**, Volume 14, Issue 1, February 1952, p.203.

1962,¹²⁴ and now we have the edited version of the whole catalogue which was published in 1985. So based on this revised version of the catalogue, this study will focus on the Qur'an section in detail.

Indeed, the catalogue starts with a Qur'anic Literature chapter. Under this chapter there are four sub-titles.

The text of the Qur'an

In this chapter, there is neither author names nor GAL reference numbers. Nevertheless the quality of the parchment and the ink are mentioned. In this section there are seven different entries.

Code 2000, 1103 and 3456 belong to three complete Qur'an copies from the 18th century. Another complete Qur'an copy is from the 15th century which was given as *waqf* in 858/1454 and its code is 1066. Other than these complete four Qur'an copies there are three more entries which are not the complete copy of the Qur'an but consisting of some complete *surah* in them. Two of these Qur'an fragments (code 1563 and 1572) are believed to have been written in the 8th century and one of them is undated (code 1087,1088,1089)¹²⁵.

In general, Mingana did not specifically mention the main source of a manuscript. In relation to Qur'anic manuscripts it can be said that all of these seven Qur'an manuscripts actually were not acquired during Mingana's three Middle East expeditions dated 1925, 1926 and 1929. Namely, he himself did not bring all these manuscripts through his manuscript collection journey. After Mingana finished his expeditions he continued to receive so many letters from manuscript dealers. Even after his death his successors in the library received letters from manuscript sellers.¹²⁶

One of the dealers that he acquired some significant Christian Arabic and Qur'an manuscripts from Mount Sinai was Eric von Scherling. Alba Fedeli gives detailed information about Mingana Isl. Ar. 1563 and 1572. As she states in her article;

¹²⁴ Hopwood, **Catalogue of the Mingana Collection of Manuscripts Vol IV Islamic Arabic Manuscripts**, preface.

¹²⁵ Here there is one entry with three different codes because each codes refers to different parts of the Qur'an which are given as *waqf* of the Emir Qarqamas of the Mosque of al-Azhar in 1192/1778-9. For more details please refer to *the Catalogue* vol.3 page 3.

¹²⁶ Fedeli, "The Provenance of the manuscript Mingana Islamic Arabic 1572: Dispersed Folios From a Few Qur'an Quires", p.46.

“As far as I know, Mingana’s correspondence contains information about MS Mingana Isl. Ar. 1563, only tracing it back to the dealer who sold it. In fact this fragment had firstly been offered to Mingana by Luzac & Company in May 1933 and by Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner & Co. in July 1935. On the other hand we can trace the deal of its purchase one year later, when Mingana sought information about the manuscript from von Scherling on 7th May 1936 and finally bought it, sending ‘a cheque for £30.1.6, for the vellum Cufic Koran’ on 20th May 1936.”¹²⁷

Additionally, the Mingana Isl. Ar. 1572 is nine leaves/folios in total and based on Fedeli’s research, it can be said that seven leaves/folios of this ancient Cufic Qur’an were purchased in September 1936 through the correspondence of Mingana and von Scherling however Fedeli mentions “as far as I know the papers of Mingana do not give any information about the acquisition of the two folios part”.¹²⁸

Commentaries on the Qur’an

In this chapter Commentaries on the Qur’an are collected. There are thirty different entries. Some of them are without name or author, and some of them belong to the same book with different copies. For example, there are four different entries for **Ma’alim at-tanzil** written by Ruknaddin Abu Muhammad al-Husain ibn Mas’ud al-Farra’ al-Bagawi, (d. 516/1122). Another example is that there are four different copies of **Tafsir al-Galalain**. Beside these, there are some famous commentaries such as Zamahsari’s **al-Kashf ‘an Haqa’iq al-Tanzil**, and al-Qurtubi’s **al-Gami‘ li-Ahkam al-Qur’an**. In this part GAL. references are mentioned.

Books on the Qur’an

Under this part books other than commentaries relating to Qur’an are classified. There are fifty-two entries however some of them belong to the same book, so it can be said that there are twenty-four different book names with GAL. references. Some of them are; **al-Qasida al-Shatibiya**, **Fath al-Rahmān bi Kashf ma Yalbas fil-Qur’an**, **al-Muqaddima al-Jazariya fi al-Tajwid**, **al-Hisn al-Hasin min Kalam Sayyid al-Mursalin** and so on.

Anonymous Works on the Qur’an

Finally in this part, there are no GAL references due to the lack of names of the authors. There are only book names that are unknown in general, such as **Risala fi Ihtilaf al-Ayat**, **al-Ifsah**, **Rahmat al-Rahman fi Tilavat al-Qur’an** and so on.

¹²⁷ Ibid., p. 48.

¹²⁸ Ibid., p. 48.

Other parts of the catalogue

The Catalogue consists of many noteworthy MSS. other than the Qur'anic Literature part. For instance, under the “*Tradition/ Hadith*” title, the code Min. 225 is one of the oldest MSS. in the hadith section. That contains some parts of *al-Bukhari*'s hadith book. Mingana himself also published a book related to this work which is called **An Important Manuscript of the Traditions of Bukhari with Nine Facsimile Reproductions** and he briefly explained the condition of the MSS. in his books's preface;

“it is incomplete at the end, and so bears no date , but on paleographical grounds it may ascribed to about A.D. 1000, or to a slightly earlier date, and may thus be considered as probably the earliest MS. Of the *Sahih* of *Bukhari* that has come down to us. It contains only three *kitab*s: the *zakat* (complete), the *saum* (incomplete at the end) and the *hajj* (incomplete both at the beginning and at the end).”¹²⁹

The code Min. 335 is a commentary to **Sunan of Ibn Maja**, dated 931/1507 by Muhammad ibn Abdal'ali az- Zubairi.¹³⁰ On the “*mysticism*” section , code Min. 774 is referring to a copy of **Kitab at-Tawahhum fi Kashf al-Ahwal Washarh al-Akhaq** by al-Muhasibi. Min. 905 contains some mystical works of as-Sulami and Shaqaiq al-Balkhi.¹³¹ There are also some works of famous mystic Ibn al-'Arabi. The oldest record of him is the fourth part of **al-Futuh al-Makkiyya** dated 672/1273.¹³² There are also some manuscripts related to legal works of al-Marghinani, al-Quduri, al-Kashghari and al-Nasafi. As stated by Hopwood;

“Min.237 is an apparently unknown commentary by al-Suyutī on al-Rabbī's well known work *Farā'id al-Urjūza ar-Rahbīya*. It was composed in 871/1466-7 and the MS. is dated 999/1590.”¹³³

There are some other sections such as “grammar”, “astronomy”, “rhetoric”, “history”, “music” and “homiletics” besides the topics related to the Qur'an and those mentioned above.

¹²⁹ A. Mingana, **An Important Manuscript of the traditions of Bukhari with Nine Facsimile Reproductions**, Cambridge, W. Heffer And Sons, limited, 1936, p.1.

¹³⁰ Hopwood, “the Islamic Arabic Manuscripts in the Mingana Collection”, p. 102.

¹³¹ *Ibid.*, p.103.

¹³² *Ibid.*

¹³³ *Ibid.*

1.2.4. Minagana's Works on Islam and the Qur'an

Throughout his life in Britain, Mingana had numerous fruitful works, most of his works on Syriac Studies and Christianity, however his studies on Islam and the Qur'an are also considerable. Nevertheless, the main area of this paper is his studies on the Qur'an and its reflections to the contemporary scholars. The chronological list of Mingana's works on Islam and the Qur'an will be beneficial for further studies.

1914

- **Leaves from Three Ancient Qur'ans, possibly Pre-Othmanic: with a list of their Variants**, edited by A. Mingana and A. S. Lewis, (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1914).

In this book Mingana and Dr. Lewis publish *scriptio inferior*¹³⁴ texts of a manuscript that contains leaves from three different Qur'ans together with a long introduction and explanation why they think these leaves can be pre-Othmanic. This publication can be considered as a milestone for the Qur'anic Studies field because by this publication Mingana opened a new methodology of criticism towards Qur'an by publishing the old Qur'an manuscript and elaborating on it.

- "The Early development of Mohammedanism", **the Expository Times**, Vol. 25, No.7, April, 1914, pp. 376-378.

This work is a review of the book entitled **the Early Development of Mohammedanism** written by Professor D. S. Margoliouth.

1915

- "An Important old Turki Manuscript in the John Rylands Library", **Bulletin of the John Rylands Library**, Vol:2, No:2, April 1915, pp. 129-138, reprinted in **the Moslem World**, Vol: 5, No:4, October, 1915, pp. 391-398.

¹³⁴ *Scriptio inferior* is a term, used to describe the previous writings in palimpsests before the rubbing process, it can also be understood as writings undertext, underlying data etc.

In this article Mingana describes the historical development of the Turkish language from Uighur language to Ottoman Turkish after that. Based on this development he elaborates on a Qur'an manuscript and its translation into Rabghuzi dialect .

- “Notes upon some of the Kuranic Manuscripts in the John Rylands Library”, **Bulletin of the John Rylands Library**, Vol:2, No:3, July- Sept.,1915, pp. 240-250.

In this article Mingana elaborates on manuscripts relating to the Qur'an in the John Rylands Library collection and gives direct quotations from them.

- “The Transmission of the Koran”, *Journal of the Manchester Egyptian and Oriental Society*, Vol:5, 1915–1916, pp. 25–47, repr. in **Moslem World**, Vol:7, No:3, July, 1917, pp. 223-232.

This study is one of the important ones related to the Qur'an. There, Mingana tries to prove the contradictions in the Islamic Tradition in regards to the collection (*jam*) and transmission of the Qur'an based on the Islamic sources.

- “The Transmission of the Kur'an According to Christian Writers”, **Journal of the Manchester Egyptian and Oriental Society**, 5, 1915–1916, repr. in **Moslem World**, Vol:7, No:4, October, 1917, pp. 402-414).

In the case of this study, Mingana uses Christian sources on the transmission of the Qur'an and tries to prove his idea of the Qur'an that was a fabricated copy of Bible¹³⁵ and changed during the process of writing.¹³⁶

1917

- “Baghdad and After”, **Bulletin of the John Rylands Library**, Vol:3, No:4, January-April, 1917, pp. 404-407.

¹³⁵Mingana, **Transmission of the Kur'an according to Christian Writers**, p. 412.

¹³⁶ Ibid., p. 413.

Mingana gives demographic information about Baghdad in the early 1900s and the importance of Baghdad and Mosul for the Christian world. Later on he explains the relationship of Muslims with Baghdad.

1918

- “Editions and Various Readings” (Sections of Article on “Qur’an”), in **Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics**, Vol.10, 1918, pp. 547-549, (Online) <https://archive.org/details/in.ernet.dli.2015.532570/page/n567>, 5 December 2018

In this encyclopaedia entry Mingana writes about the various readings of the Qur’an.

- “External evidence for the existence of the Qur’an” (Sections of Article on “Qur’an”), in **Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics**, Vol.10, 1918, pp. 547-549,(Online) <https://archive.org/details/in.ernet.dli.2015.532570/page/n5685> December 2018

In this entry, Mingana uses similar arguments that he used in the *Transmission of the Qur’an according to Christian Writes* article.

- “Translations” (Sections of Article on “Qur’an”), in **Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics**, Vol.10, 1918, pp. 547-549, (Online) <https://archive.org/details/in.ernet.dli.2015.532570/page/n569> 5 December 2018.

In the case of this entry, Mingana explains translations of the Qur’an into Western Languages and also Oriental Languages.

1920

- “A Semi-Official Defence of Islam.” **Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland**, (No. 4, 1920, pp. 481–488), *JSTOR*, (Online) www.jstor.org/stable/25209654. 3 September 2018.

Before publishing **the Book of Religion and Empire**, Mingana announced it with this article and makes a long review of the book together with his ideas on it.

1922

- **The Book of Religion and Empire: A Semi- Official Defence of Islam Written by Order of the Court and with the Assistance of the Calip Mutawakkil** by Ali al-Tabari, Translated by A. Mingana (Manchester Univ. Press ,1922).

1925

- “Remarks on Tabari’s Semi-official Defence of Islam”, **Bulletin of the John Rylands Library**, (Vol. 9, No.1, Jan., 1925 pp. 236-240), (Online) <https://www.escholar.manchester.ac.uk/api/datastream?publicationPid=uk-ac-man-scw:1m1169&datastreamId=POST-PEER-REVIEW-PUBLISHERS-DOCUMENT.PDF> 18 April 2019.

Mingana received accusations regarding the authenticity of the book of al-Tabari that he translated and published in 1922, which is why he needed to write these remarks on the subject.

- “An Ancient Syriac Translation of the Kur’an Exhibiting New Verses and Variants”, **Bulletin of John Rylands Library**, (Vol. 9, No.1, Jan.,1925, pp.188-235).

In this article Mingana elaborates the Syriac translation of the Qur’an by Jacob Barsalibi (d.1171).

1927

- “Kitab ud Din Wa-d-Daulah”, **Bulletin of the John Rylands Library**, (Vol:2, No:1, January, 1927, pp. 99-100), (Online), <https://www.escholar.manchester.ac.uk/api/datastream?publicationPid=uk-ac-man-scw:1m1209&datastreamId=POST-PEER-REVIEW-PUBLISHERS-DOCUMENT.PDF> 17 April 2019.

In this paper, Mingana writes a harsh response to accusations that he faced because of *the Book of Religion and Empire*.

- “Syriac Influence on the Style of the Kur’an”, **Bulletin of the John Rylands Library**, (Vol:11, No:1, 1927, pp. 77-98).

In this study Mingana elaborates on the Syriac influence on the Qur'an. According to him the Syriac influence can be considered under six titles “(a)proper names, (b)religious terms, (c) common words, (d)orthography, (e) construction of sentences, (f) foreign historical references.”¹³⁷ He explains all of these titles in detail.

1934

- **Catalogue of the Arabic Manuscripts in the John Rylands Library**, (Manchester, the Manchester University Press, 1934), (Online) <https://www.escholar.manchester.ac.uk/api/datastream?publicationPid=uk-ac-man-scw:3o998&datastreamId=FULL-TEXT.PDF>, 5 March 2019.

1936

- **An Important manuscript of Traditions of Bukhari: with Nine Facsimile**, Reproduction, (Cambridge, W, Heffer and Sons, 1936).

¹³⁷ Mingana, “Syriac Influence on the Style of the Kur'an” p. 80.

CHAPTER TWO

APPROACHES OF MINGANA IN QUR'ANIC STUDIES: A METHODOLOGICAL EVALUATION

Mingana has several works as listed in the previous chapter on Islam and especially on Qur'anic studies. Based on the chronological study of his life, his studies on the Qur'an appear during the period that he moved to Britain. However, it can be claimed that Mingana's ideas may have their basis from the education he obtained in Mosul Seminary on the one hand, and on the other hand Muslim environment in which he grown up in the Ottoman State. Hence, his ideas are rich in terms of content and shows that he has preliminary information on the subjects. Nevertheless, he was insisting in one of his articles that he was influenced by Prof. Casanova who "*suggested that the traditional view on the compilation of the Kur'an was not always satisfactory.*"¹³⁸

In order to have a better understanding of his ideas and methodology in Qur'anic Studies, after a critical reading of his articles, this part attempts to classify Mingana's approaches to the Qur'an.

After analyzing all of Mingana's studies on Islam and the Qur'an, it can be clearly said that Mingana uses Christian paradigms towards Qur'an; then, based on this paradigm and the facts he obtained through readings, he makes historical criticism. Another method that Mingana uses in his studies is the criticism towards the text and its comparison with the Biblical texts; thus, he makes linguistic criticism towards the language of the Qur'an by doing so he tries to prove that Qur'an is not a word of God but a copied and corrupted version of the previous scriptures such as Bible and Torah. Lastly a reader can easily recognize the polemical way of Mingana's discourse. This chapter aims to identify his approaches towards the Qur'an.

¹³⁸ Ibid., p.189.

1.3.2.1. Historical Critical Approach in Mingana's Work

2.1.1. Codex of the Qur'an: Leaves From three Ancient Qur'ans

Mingana's milestone work on the field of Qur'anic studies is the book called **Leaves From three Ancient Qur'ans Possibly Pre-'Otmanic with a List of Their Variants**. This book was published by Mingana and Dr. Agnes Smith Lewis in 1914 by Cambridge University Press that combines three different ancient Qur'an manuscript fragments. Actually the original manuscript was a combination of different Syriac and Arabic religious texts which was bought by Dr. Lewis in Suez in 1895, as Dr. Lewis stated in her introduction "*it is a palimpsest, the upper script being a series of closely-written Homilies in Arabic by early Christian Fathers.*"¹³⁹ Dr. Lewis worked on the *scripto inferior* of the manuscript "*with a re-agent, hydro-sulphide of ammonia*"¹⁴⁰ and published all the texts in 1902 as **No. XI Studia Sinaitica**.¹⁴¹ However when Mingana realized this publication in Dr. Lewis's house, he understood how important the Qur'anic texts in the book was thus they separated the Qur'an pages from the whole part of the book, and published it separately under the name **Leaves From Three Ancient Qurans Possibly pre-'Otmanic with a List of their Variants**. In this book while Dr. Lewis has six-pages introduction, Mingana has thirty-two pages of introductory notes and these pages give the outline of Mingana's thoughts and methodology towards the Qur'an.

Before moving on the topic, it is beneficial to state why this study is important in the field of Qur'anic Studies. Until this publication there were no *scriptio inferior* manuscript publications with detailed introductory as Mingana did, that is why this study affected many others in the field and has a unique place. Also, Dr. Lewis and Mingana thinks that these Qur'an leaves are pre-'Othmanic and important because;

¹³⁹ Alphonse Mingana, A. Smith Lewis, ed., **Leaves from Three Ancient Qur'ans, Possibly Pre-Othmanic: with a List of Their Variants**, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1914, p.v.

¹⁴⁰ Ibid.

¹⁴¹ Ibid.

“Muhammad, when he believed that he was receiving supernatural revelations, employed Zaid ibn Thabit to write them down for him, and this Zaid did, on potsherds, palm-leaves, strips of vellum, or whatever came handy. No doubt copies of the different Surahs were afterwards made by Zaid himself, when sufficient writing material had been obtained. It is not surprising if these contained some mistakes in spelling; especially as the rules of Arabic grammar were not then fixed. But after Muhammad’s death, Abu Bekr and ‘Othman had all these writings properly copied out and arranged in the form with which we have become familiar. In this work, be it noted, they had the help of Zaid. ‘Othman then ordered all the earlier copies to be destroyed; and the text of the Quran, as it now stands, obtained a position of unique and unchallenged authority over the Moslem world. We therefore cannot imagine anyone attempting the useless task of writing out a text like ours, after the time of ‘Othman. Putting all the facts together, as they are known to ourselves, or as they have been handed down to us by a credible tradition, we think that these vellum leaves, now happily my property, were among those whose destruction was ordered by ‘Othman and was incumbent on all true believers in Islam.”¹⁴²

Based on the above quotation, the *scriptio inferior* Qur’an texts on the leaves can be considered -as the claim of Mingana and Dr. Lewis- older than the standard Qur’an text that we have today. They are unique and among the ones that are ordered to be destroyed by the Caliph Othman. To strengthen his assertion, Mingana gives detailed information in the introduction part of the book. As he states;

“Before we examine the truth of these claims, we would wish to direct the attention of every reader of the Qur’an to the following points: (1) the sources of the Qur’an, (2) the fact that if we strip from its text the historical events and the circumstances in which it was written, it becomes an inexplicable composition, (3) the preservation of the verses of the Quran from 612 to 632(4) The compilers of the standard text that we have today, and authenticity of this compilation?”¹⁴³

2.1.2 The Origins of the Qur’an

Regarding the above statement number 1, in Islam; the Qur’an is revealed by Allah through angel Gabriel to the Prophet Muhammad (p.b.u.h.), and Muhammad is the messenger of Allah. However, most of the Christians and Jews do not accept the prophethood of Muhammad, thus they deny the Qur’an as the revelation from the God. So they do try to prove the argument that Qur’an is not revealed but fabricated by Muhammad. There are some other approaches in the issue, so Bilal Gökçır’s

¹⁴² Ibid., p.vii.

¹⁴³ Ibid., p. xii

works on the origin of the Qur'an are meaningful to understand the 19th and 20th centuries' orientalist perspective. As he states in one of his articles, especially after 19th century the arguments on the origin of the Qur'an increased. While Islam takes the 'revelation' as the source of the Qur'an, Western scholars do not accept it and produce alternative narrations to the subjects. Some of them propagate the idea that, Islam and the Qur'an is affected by Judaism, the other group including scholars such as Richard Bell, H. P. Smith and Karl Ahrens, argue that Islam was affected by Christianity, thus the Qur'an.¹⁴⁴ Other than this traditionalist perspective there is revisionist approach to the subject. John Wansbrough can be considered as the pioneer of this approach, and considers the origin of the Qur'an as the result of Jewish-Muslim polemics appeared two centuries after the demise of Prophet Muhammad.¹⁴⁵ Other than these polemical arguments/perspectives/ approaches, it can be said that Darwin's theory of evolution has also effects on the development of arguments towards the origin of the Qur'an¹⁴⁶ after 19th century as the evolution theory effected other scientific branches.

On the issue, after examining Mingana's works, we can say that Mingana has traditionalist perspective/approach towards the origin of the Qur'an, in many places he criticizes the reliability of *al-Bukhari* and persistently indicates the Syriac influence/effects on the Qur'an in many of his works.

2.1.3. The Formation of the Qur'anic Text within the Historical Context

According to above quotation number 2, Qur'an cannot be explained if historical events and the circumstances in the text were omitted. In order to understand the text one needs to have detailed information on the historical events mentioned in it. That is why Mingana states Mohamamad (p.b.u.h.) was inspired orally by Christian and Jewish colonies in Mecca and neighboring cities.¹⁴⁷ Not only that but he also claims the cave that Muhammad (p.b.u.h.) received the first

¹⁴⁴ Bilal Gökür, "Oryantalit Literatürde Kur'an'ın Kaynağı Tartışmalarının Kaynağı: Disiplinlerarası bir Yaklaşım", **Bilimname**, vol. 2004/2, pp.61-62.

¹⁴⁵ Ibid., p.63

¹⁴⁶ Ibid., p.64

¹⁴⁷ Mingana, **Leaves From Three Ancient Qur'ans**, p. xiii.

revelation “*was already a bishopric in 410 A.D.*”¹⁴⁸ Besides, he questions the relationship of the prophet and the *History of Rabban Bahira*¹⁴⁹. In the Qur’an, Bible and Torah, there are some differences in the description of the stories relating to Israelite history. In this point Mingana states that “*the internal criticism of the Qur’an will easily shew this elementary evidence of a foreign source; but what we can by no means explain, are the wonderful anachronisms about the old Israelite history*”.¹⁵⁰ Based on these examples in his writings, the reader comes up with the idea that Mingana believes that Muhammad (p.b.u.h) was influenced by Christians and Jews, and forgot some of what he heard and fabricated some; that is why there are different information and names in the Qur’an on the same subjects in the Bible and Torah.

2.1.4. The Documentation, Compilation and the Collection of the Qur’an

With regard to the third and fourth statements of Mingana, he does not give direct answers on the questions in one work, but he mentions them in different places based on two different perspectives. Mingana has two important articles on the documentation, compilation and the preservation process of the Qur’an according to Islamic and Christian sources. In these articles Mingana is looking for the answer to the question “*how the book called al-Kur’an... has come to be fixed in the form in which we read it in our days?*”¹⁵¹ To reply this question, he investigates the historical data on the issue and he divides it into two groups. First one is the historical data of Muslim scholars and the second one is the historical data of Christian scholars.

¹⁴⁸ Ibid.

¹⁴⁹ Ibid., p. xiv.

¹⁵⁰ Ibid., p. xiv.

¹⁵¹ Mingana, “Transmission of the Koran”, p.224.

2.1.4.1. Mingana's Ideas on Islamic Data on the Compilation of the Qur'an

It is known that the first historical information of the Qur'an and issues relating to it comes through oral hadith records. According to Mingana, the reliability of the data through oral Hadith collections are critical, because he considers hadiths as "precarious,"¹⁵² "medley and compact body of legends... that received unchallenged credit at the time of recrudescence of Islamic orthodoxy."¹⁵³ Other than Hadith collections, other records on the Qur'an and issues relating to it come from Ibn Sa'd's **al-Tabaqat** which is written earlier than **Sahih al-Bukhari**.¹⁵⁴

Mingana gives references about the compilation of the Qur'an both from **Sahih al-Bukhari** and **al-Tabaqat**, then compare and contrast the quotations, finally asks the following question: "Why should we prefer at all the story of Bukhari to that of Ibn Sa'd who is at least credited with priority of time?"¹⁵⁵ By this question, we understand that Mingana gives importance to 'the date of records' rather than the authenticity or the methodology of the writing process. According to these premises, works or data written earlier are more reliable than the works written later. When we compare two works, it is obvious that there is a methodology and principles in Sahih al-Bukhari collection. That is why it is considered more authentic and reliable than al-Tabaqat. There can be similar traditions in both works as well, that is so normal, however the methodology and the principles of al-Bukhari are more credited than other books.

There are some other questions on **Sahih al-Bukhari** and **al-Tabaqat**. But mainly Mingana criticizes and interrogates the recognition of hadith as a historical data while the hadith sources lead to a confusion. Additionally, besides criticizing the acceptance of oral hadith records as authentic, Mingana criticizes Nöldeke¹⁵⁶ as well because of his preference and usage of *Bukhari* hadiths in his studies.¹⁵⁷

¹⁵² Mingana, "Transmission of the Kur'an According to Christian Writers", p. 402.

¹⁵³ Mingana, "Transmission of the Koran", p.224.

¹⁵⁴ Ibn Sa'd's date of death is A.H. 230/ A.D.845 and al-Bukhari's date of death is A.H. 256/ A.D.870.

¹⁵⁵ Mingana, "Transmission of the Koran", p.228.

¹⁵⁶ Ibid., p.227.

¹⁵⁷ Ibid., p. 228

Mingana uses Islamic sources and aims to prove the contradictions among them. As well-known and accepted by the Islamic world, the revelation of the Qur'an is completed in twenty three years so those who write it may also keep the writings, or other companions even though they did not write, may keep the some parts of some chapters for their own readings or memorizations. Therefore, the number of companions who keep some parts of Qur'an writings and those who write it may increase in number, thus we can say that different sources may mention different companions about the subject.

In terms of Mingana's arguments -in attempt to show the contradiction- he compares Ibn Sad's work **al-Tabakat**, with hadiths of al-Bukhari.¹⁵⁸ When we check the names of the "companions" who collected the Qur'an in the time of the Prophet -based on Mingana's quotations-, there are different names in Ibn Sad's work than in *al-Bukhari* hadiths. According to Mingana, in **al-Tabaqat** Ibn Sa'd "*has preserved ten somewhat contradictory traditions*"¹⁵⁹ on the issue, on the other hand "*Bukhari, has a very different account in connection with the collectors of the Qur'an in the time of the Prophet.*"¹⁶⁰ Here Mingana uses two different hadiths. Both of them have four names but only one of them differs. In the first hadith the collectors are "*Ubayy ibn Ka'b, Mu'adh ibn Jabal, Zaid ibn Thabit and Abu Zaid*" and in the second one "*Abud- Darda, Mu'adh ibn Jabal, Zaid ibn Thabit and Abu Zaid.*"¹⁶¹ Later Mingana gives another example on this issue from **Fihrist**;

" the author of the Fihrist... devoted a special paragraph to the "Collectors of the Kur'an in the time of the Prothet, and then proceeds to name them without any *Isnad*. They are according to him: 'Ali b. Abi Talib, Sa'd b. 'Ubaid, Abud-Darda, Mu'adh b. Jabal, Abu Zaid, 'Ubay b. Ka'b, 'Ubaid b. Muawiah. These names occur in the list of Ibn Sa'd and that of Bukhari combined; but the Fihrist adds two new factors: 'Ali b. Abi Talib, and 'Ubaid b. Mu'awiah."¹⁶²

After **Fihrist**, Mingana states Tabari's account in this issue " *'Ali b. Abi Talib, and 'Uthman b. 'Affan wrote the Revelation to the Prophet; but in their absence it was*

¹⁵⁸ I tried to reach the both sources that Mingana used as his reference, however could not able find them. There, I would like to see which term is used for those companions in Arabic, and the number of the hadith that he uses as reference.

¹⁵⁹Ibid., p.225.

¹⁶⁰Ibid., p. 225.

¹⁶¹Ibid., p. 225.

¹⁶²Ibid., p. 229.

Ubay b. Ka'b and Zaid b. Thabit who wrote it."¹⁶³ He uses the term "companions who collected the Qur'an" but in these examples he mentions about the "companions who write the Revelation". Lastly, from **Fihrist** Mingana moves to Wakidi and states another name "Sharahbil b. Hasanah as the amanuensis of the Prophet."¹⁶⁴

At this point, following questions emerge: what does Mingana mean when he uses the term "collectors of the Qur'an?"¹⁶⁵ Again, according to him, are all the collectors at the same time the amanuensis of the Qur'an or vice versa? If not, why does he give non-sense examples and compare these hadiths?

After these examples Mingana moves to *Jam*, *ie. the* compilation of the Qur'an as Codex. On this issue Mingana again gives similar examples from **al-Tabakat** and **al-Bukhari** to question the reliability of the historical texts. According to first statement taken from **al-Tabaqat** "Uthman ibn 'Affan who collected the Kur'an under the Caliphate of 'Umar, and, therefore, not in the time of the Prothet."¹⁶⁶ Based on the second statement taken from al-Bukhari the Qur'an was firstly compiled in the time of Abu Bakr.¹⁶⁷ Then he continues with the other famous hadith about codex/*mushaf* making process of the Uthman during his own caliphate. And Mingana questions;

"this is the oral record which, appearing 238 years after the Prophet's death, was accepted as true and authentic, to the exclusion of any other, by the most eminent Orientalists of the last century, led by Nöldeke. Why we should prefer these two traditions to the great number of the above traditions sanctioned by Ibn Sa'd, an author of anterior by twenty-six years to Bukhari, and by Bukhari himself, I do not know."¹⁶⁸

Regarding the *jam* issue Mingana in his writing in the **Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics**, uses the term "collection"¹⁶⁹ in terms of "compilation" so as known the meaning of collection. Mingana also propagates the idea that Hajjaj was the one who made the Qur'an in today's form as codex and he added up some verses in it. Besides, Mingana states there must have been alternative previous versions

¹⁶³Ibid., p. 230

¹⁶⁴Ibid., p. 230.

¹⁶⁵Ibid., p. 225.

¹⁶⁶Ibid., p.225.

¹⁶⁷Ibid.

¹⁶⁸Ibid., p.227.

¹⁶⁹ Minagana, **Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics.**, p. 547.

when it was officially collected and united as one.¹⁷⁰ He also defends the idea that if the first Muslims and Zaid were less restricted, they would have changed some historical facts and errors that are not in line with Biblical teachings.¹⁷¹

2.1.4.2. Mingana's Ideas on the Christian Data on the Compilation of the Qur'an

Mingana gives importance to Christian sources to understand the situation of the Qur'an during the first centuries of Islam. That's why he quotes based on chronological order, as mentioned above, he gives importance to date of the work rather than its reliability. Mingana's first account is taken from a manuscript which is dated 874 A.D. and the written case is believed to have happened in 9 May 639 A.D. "*between Amr b. al-As and the Monophysite Patriarch of Antioch, John I.*"¹⁷² Based on this source, Mingana comes to the conclusion that "*...in the fifth year of Umar's Caliphate, ...no Islamic Book was mentioned when the colloquy took place*"¹⁷³. The irony is that, Mingana accepts this source as reliable when it has taken place in 639 and written in 874 however when it comes to *al-Bukhari* -who died in 870 and believed to have a systematic methodology to collect hadiths- he questions and criticizes. Moreover, Mingana argues "*the anonymous writer printed by Guidi, knows nothing about a sacred Book of Islam in A.D. 680.*"¹⁷⁴ Here again questions appear in readers' mind: who is this anonymous writer? How reliable is he? Lastly, Mingana mentions John Bar Penkaye's letter, and states that he had no knowledge about the sacred book of Arabs in A.D. 690.¹⁷⁵

Based on these early Christian records, Mingana defends the idea that in seventh century there were no sacred book of Islam; if there were any, above scholars would definitely mention it, the appearance of the sacred Book took place "*towards the end of the first quarters of the eighth century.*"¹⁷⁶ It is worth paying

¹⁷⁰ Mingana, "Transmission of the Kur'an According to Christian Writers", p. 409.

¹⁷¹ Mingana, "**Leaves From Three Ancient Qur'ans**", p. xxi.

¹⁷² Mingana, "Transmission of the Kur'an According to Christian Writers", p. 402.

¹⁷³ Ibid., pp. 404-405.

¹⁷⁴ Ibid., p. 405.

¹⁷⁵ Ibid., p. 406.

¹⁷⁶ Ibid.

attention to the date of the first quotation of Mingana and his criticism towards the priority of al-Bukhari, and also the Christian sources -letters and dialogues- that he defend as reliable. According to Mingana, until the end of the 8th century, Christians could not write about Islam and the Qur'an because of the "intolerant attitude of Muslim Caliphs, and governors"¹⁷⁷. Hence, at the end of the 8th century two important works took place: Abu Noh's the Refutation of the Qur'an and Timothy's apology of Christianity. However, when the Qur'an is the subject, Mingana points to the apology of Abd al-Masih ibn Ishaq al-Kindi as the most important one.¹⁷⁸ In this part Mingana quotes three pages from this apology about the history of the Qur'an. It talks about the situation of the Qur'an in Abu Bakr's time to Uthman, from his time to Hajjaj based on Christian- Muslim polemics. According to the records, even though some Muslim scholars criticize the authenticity of the source,¹⁷⁹ Mingana believes it to be authentic. Therefore, if there are no records regarding the Qur'an in early Christian sources, namely before the 8th century as mentioned in Mingana's article, how can al-Kindi have such information and his own claims? To support his arguments at the beginning of the work Mingana continues with another quotation from al- Kindi addressing Muslims:

"All that I have said is drawn from your own authorities, and no single argument has been advanced but what is based on evidence accepted by yourselves; in proof thereof, we have the Kur'an itself, which is confused heap, with neither system nor order."¹⁸⁰

Interestingly, as in the case of many of Mingana's controversial quotations, in the original pages that Mingana quotes from, there are no details on references such as the publisher, date of publication or page number.. Mingana also claims **Kitab al-Din wa al-Dawlah** was written in 855 A.D. and that it can be an answer to al-Kindi's apology.¹⁸¹ However there are no direct responses from Ali b. Rabban al-Tabari towards al-Kindi in the book.

As a result, based on the Christian sources that he mentioned above, Mingana sums up the subject in three different parts. First, the Qur'an is a fake copy of the

¹⁷⁷ Ibid.

¹⁷⁸ Ibid.

¹⁷⁹ Yusuf Sevki Yavuz, "Kindi, Abdulmesih b.Ishak", **TDV Islam Ansiklopedisi**, v. 26, Ankara, 2002, p. 39.

¹⁸⁰ Mingana, "Transmission of the Kur'an According to Christian Writers", p. 409.

¹⁸¹ Ibid., pp. 409-410.

Bible, and it was not written during the lifetime of the Prophet Muhammad.¹⁸² Second, after the demise of the Prophet, the companions produced their own copy when the concern towards the Qur'an increased. Hence, there were four different copies of the Qur'an belonging to Ubayy b. Ka'b, Ibn Mas'ud, Uthman b. Affan and Ali b. Abi Talib. But when Uthman became the caliph, naturally his copy came into prominence and because of the lack of the written language skills of the Arab tribes; most of the writing work would have been done by the amanuensis who converted from Christianity and Judaism to Islam.¹⁸³ Lastly, those companions did not give the last form of the Qur'an as codex during the time of Uthman, they preserved it as *suhufs* until the time of Abdul- Malik and Hajjaj.¹⁸⁴ In this part Mingana quotes from Prof. Casanova in French, which indicates that when the first time Qur'an was written down officially by Hajjaj, Uthman's copy was just a prototype, if there is any copy.¹⁸⁵

1.4.2.2. Linguistic and Textual Critical Approach

Mingana's second and the strongest approach towards to the Qur'an is his criticisms on the text of the Qur'an. According to him, there is an immediate need for Qur'an to be criticized textually as the language of Old Testament and the Bible had been.¹⁸⁶ As Noldeke's work was the most comprehensive study in the field at that time, there were no critical studies on the text of the Qur'an. In order to fill that gap, Mingana writes two different articles on the subject called *An Ancient Syriac Translation of the Kur'an Exhibiting New Verses and Variants* and *Syriac Influence on the Style of Kur'an*. Mingana believes that "*the Qur'an is the first genuine Arabic book that we have possessed.*"¹⁸⁷ Before the Qur'an, there was nothing written in Arabic, even pre-Islamic poetry is critical and shaky.¹⁸⁸ So based on this account, the language of the Qur'an does not look like any other classical book and the author of the book had a very difficult task to accomplish. The author was producing a text

¹⁸² Ibid., pp. 412-413.

¹⁸³ Ibid., p. 413.

¹⁸⁴ Ibid.

¹⁸⁵ Ibid., p. 414.

¹⁸⁶ Mingana, "Syriac Influence on the Style of the Kur'an", p. 77.

¹⁸⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸⁸ Ibid.

without a fixed grammar and lexicography, that is why to make it sound more original and religious, the best way was to coin new words.¹⁸⁹ In comparison with the Christianity, “*the first Christian writers have some peculiarities which clearly points to their country of origin, that was not the old Athens but the Syrian Hellenistic Palestine*”¹⁹⁰ . However, according to Mingana, the language of the Qur’an does not exhibit such peculiarities. It seems that the language of the Qur’an must be influenced from an older literature that is “*undoubtedly Syriac more than any other.*”¹⁹¹

Mingana defends the idea that to criticize the language of the Qur’an one should have a proficient language skills on Syriac, Ethiopic and Hebrew languages. Otherwise it will be hard to make a clear picture and analysis on the language of the Qur’an.¹⁹² According to him, if we take into account the “*foreign influences on the style and terminology of the Qur’an*”¹⁹³ seventy percent of it will belong to Syriac. Therefore, Mingana classifies the issues under six different headings: “*Proper names, religious terms, common words, orthography, construction of sentences and foreign historical references.*”¹⁹⁴ . In this paper these classification will be mainly elaborated under two main titles: lexicography and grammar.

2.2.1. Lexicography

The present part attempts to explain foreign words which influence the language of the Qur’an according to Mingana’s classification. Before discussing Mingana’s ideas on the foreign words in the Qur’an, it will be beneficial to state the attitude of the Qur’an towards the Bible/Gospel and the Torah. In Surat Al ‘Imran verse number three, Allah states that;

¹⁸⁹ Ibid. 78.

¹⁹⁰ Ibid.

¹⁹¹ Ibid.

¹⁹² Ibid., p. 79.

¹⁹³ Ibid., p. 80.

¹⁹⁴ Ibid.

“It is He Who has sent down the Book (the Qur’an) to you (Muhammad) with truth, confirming what came before it. And He sent down the Taurat (Torah) and the Injeel (Gospel).”¹⁹⁵

Based on this verse and many other similar verses¹⁹⁶, the Qur’an never denies its relationship with the Torah and the Bible. While Qur’an confirms the similarities, it also corrects the corrupted parts of the books by stating that;

“O people of the Scripture (Jews and Christians)! Now has come to you our Messenger (Muhammad) explaining to you much of that which you used to hide from the Scripture and pass over much. Indeed, there has come to you from Allah a light (Prophet Muhammad) and a plain Book (this Qur’an).”¹⁹⁷

In addition, Mingana elaborates on the pronunciation of the names in the Qur’an and compares them with the Hebrew, Syriac and Ethiopic versions. According to this elaboration, the pronunciation of many words are similar to Syriac pronunciation. However, to understand the difference, the reader needs to know how to read the languages that Mingana refers to in the text. He uses them in their original forms, so if one doesn’t know how to read Arabic, Hebrew, Ethiopic or Syriac s/he may not understand the difference between them.

Proper names

According to Mingana words like سليمان/Solomon, فرعون/Pharaoh, اسحاق/Isaac, اسماعيل/Ishmael, يعقوب/Jacob, نوح/Noah, زكريا/Zachariah emanated from the Syriac versions of the names. In terms of the pronunciation of مريم/Mary, in Arabic and in Syriac, it is with “a”(mar) but in Masoretic text it is with “i” (mir).¹⁹⁸ As for the names يحيى/John and عيسى/Jesus, Mingana reports “*Muhammad seems to have taken the vulgar form of these names.*”¹⁹⁹ He supports Margoliouh’s idea and states that the Qur’anic version of the name John namely *Yahya* is actually coming from the

¹⁹⁵ Muhammad Taqi-un-Din al-Hilali, Muhammad Muhsin Khan, **Translation of the meaning of The Noble Qur’an in the English Language**, Madina, King Fahd Complex, 1404 A.H., p. 67.

¹⁹⁶ Al- Qur’an, 3.3, 3.48, 4.47, 9.111, 5.68.

¹⁹⁷ Al-Hilali, Khan, **Translation of the meaning of the Noble Qur’an in the English Language**, p. 144.

¹⁹⁸ Mingana, “Syriac Influence on the Style of the Kur’an”, pp. 83-84.

¹⁹⁹ Mingana, **Leaves From Three Ancient Qur’ans**, p. xviii.

Syriac *Yohanna*. As for the name *Isa* (Jesus), Mingana affirms that before Islam, the word *Isaniyah* was used to describe the follower of Jesus and the Qur'anic version of the name reminds the Mandaean pronunciation of the name "Iso" so the name *Isa* may be derived from that.²⁰⁰ Other than these names Mingana questions "how the name of Saul could become Talut, as in Surat- Baqarah, nor how the name of Enoch could become Idris, as in Surat Mariam, nor, finally, how the name of Obaidah or of Ezechiel could become Dhul-Kifl"²⁰¹.

Religious terms

In this part, Mingana states some Arabic and Syriac religious terms, as a result of this list Mingana claims that "almost all the religious terms found in the Qur'an are derived from Syriac"²⁰², such as كاهن/priest, قربان/ sacrifice, ملاك/angel, صوم /fasting, حوب/crime, and آية/verse.

Common words

In terms of common words, Mingana claims that some words in the Qur'an are actually not commonly used in Arabic and those words are mainly from Syriac. For example, the word قرآن/Qur'an is imitated from *Kiryān* which is a technical Syriac word meaning "reading or scriptural lesson."²⁰³ Some of the other words that Mingana listed are "numbering, faithful, mountain, destroyed, hater and grace."²⁰⁴ Interestingly, Mingana insists on some Persian origin words such as musk (misk) and key (makalid) "also passed into the Qur'an through Syriac."²⁰⁵ Other than these words, there are some words such as *marjan* (coral) and *yakut* (ruby) which can be

²⁰⁰ Mingana, "Syriac Influence on the Style of the Kur'an", p. 84.

²⁰¹ Mingana, **Leaves From Three Ancient Qur'ans**, p. xxiv.

²⁰² Mingana, "Syriac Influence on the Style of the Kur'an", p. 85.

²⁰³ Ibid., p. 88, for more details check the footnote number 1 in the page.

²⁰⁴ Ibid.

²⁰⁵ Ibid.

from Greek or Syriac origin. For such words Mingana prefers to state they are more Syriac than Greek to prove his ideas regarding the Qur'an.²⁰⁶

Foreign Historical References

In this part Mingana elaborates on the historical cases placed in the Qur'an through the influence of foreign sources, and according to him these foreign references are mostly Syriac.

Mingana gives seven different cases under this title. The first one is the case of *Yajuj* and *Majuj* and their relation with *Dhul-Qarnayn*. In the Christian version of the story it is called Gog and Magog and the commander is Alexander the Great. Again here Mingana claims that the words *Yajuj* and *Majuj* are also influenced from the Syriac pronunciations of Gog and Magog. Besides, according to him, Alexander was a pagan king in Greek sources but he is a pious man and the messenger of God in the Qur'an.²⁰⁷ *Dhul-Qarnayn* is mentioned in the Qur'an as a pious man but not as a prophet, though. Among Muslim scholars, even though his prophethood is a controversial issue, according to the majority of scholars he is not a prophet.²⁰⁸

The second example is Magians, Mingana believes that this word is taken from the plural form of the Syriac word and from that form so-called Muslim authors created the singular word *majusi*.²⁰⁹ The third historical reference is on the word *Nasara* (Christians), again Mingana claims this word is used only in Syriac as *nasraya*, and the Qur'anic one is derived from this word.²¹⁰ The next example is on the Mount of *Judi*, but the derivation of the word *judi* from the Syriac one is not clear. Interestingly in the fifth example, for the word *haniyf* Mingana claims that it is derived from a Syriac word that means 'pagan' and this is a difficult word, "unhistorical and purposely invented to explain the difficulty created by the Qur'anic verses."²¹¹ The last historical reference is the word *Rum* that is used in the Qur'an to

²⁰⁶ Ibid., p. 90.

²⁰⁷ Ibid., p. 95.

²⁰⁸ Mustafa Ozturk, "Zulkarneyn", **TDV Islam Ansiklopedisi**, vol. 44, Istanbul, 2013, p.565.

²⁰⁹ Mingana, "Syriac Influence on the Style of the Qur'an", p. 96.

²¹⁰ Ibid., p. 97.

²¹¹ Ibid., p. 98.

express the Greeks, Byzantine Empire; Mingana tries to prove that this word is derived from the Syriac word *Rumaya*.²¹²

2.2.2. Grammar

Mingana criticizes the development of Arabic grammar; hence, the central issue addressed in this part is the relationship between the Arabic grammar and the Syriac grammar.

Mingana divides the early Islamic history and the development of the grammar into two periods. The first period is from the demise of the Prophet till the Mu'awiah period (632-661 C.E.) and the second period is from 661 A.D. till the beginning of scepter of Abbasids in 750 C.E. Until the accession of Abul Abbas al-Saffah, there were no systematic Arabic grammar. However, Arameans and Israelites had almost finalized their systems in grammar before Arabs.²¹³ Mingana states that before 700 C.E., well-known sentence of Jacob of Edessa in Aramaic²¹⁴ “marks the end of a systematic evaluation of phonetic studies in Syriac grammar.”²¹⁵ Thus, Mingana claims Syriac grammar has an influence on the development of the grammar in the Qur'an.

Construction of sentences

Under this category Mingana quotes five verses from the Qur'an and shows the words -according to him- that are not Arabic in nature but influenced from Syriac by grammatical structure and based on their places in the sentences. In order to have better a understanding of the words that Mingana mentioned, they are marked bold in following verses:

1. **وَكُلًّا نَقْصُ** عَلَيْكَ مِنْ أَنْبَاءِ الرُّسُلِ مَا نُنَبِّئُ بِهِ فُؤَادَكَ²¹⁶
2. **وَإِنْ فَاتَكُمْ شَيْءٌ** مِنْ أَرْوَاجِكُمْ إِلَى الْكُفَّارِ²¹⁷
3. **ثُمَّ أَنْتُمْ هَؤُلَاءِ** تَقْتُلُونَ أَنْفُسَكُمْ²¹⁸

²¹² Ibid.

²¹³ Mingana, **Leaves from Three Ancient Kurans**, p. xxvii.

²¹⁴ Translation of the sentence is “*Edessa, our mother, thou shalt live in quietness*” for the original writing see leaves from three ancient Qur'an page xxviii.

²¹⁵ Mingana, **Leaves from Three Ancient Kurans**, p. xxviii.

²¹⁶ Mingana, “Syriac Influence on the Style of the Kur'an”, p. 91 Al-Qur'an, 11/120,

²¹⁷ Ibid., p. 92, al-Qur'an, 60/11.

4. ²¹⁹ وَظَنَّكُمْ ظَنَّ السَّوِّءِ وَكُنْتُمْ قَوْمًا بُورًا

5. ²²⁰ فَتَنَادُوا وِلَاتَ جِبْنَ مَنَاصٍ

In the first verse, Mingana claims that كَلًّا is a Syriac expression and foreign to Arabic language. As written in the previous examples the word شَيْءٌ in the second verse is also used under the influence of Syriac word. In the third example, the usage of هُوَلَاءَ is in the same way as it is used in Syriac and foreign to Arabic structure. And again, according to Mingana, the words in the fourth and the fifth verses do not fit in the context by meaning; however, when they are compared with Syriac versions they make sense.²²¹

Orthography

Under this title, Mingana gives four different examples. In the first one, he gives two Arabic words حيوة (life) and صلوة (prayer) and states that they are derived from Syriac words. In the second one he writes about the elimination of the *aliph* in the word and in the third one Mingana writes the situation of *ya* in defective verbs as a result he claims that these are also derived from Syriac. The third example is not clear in explanation. However, in the last example, Minaga states that the thick dots that are used in the old Qur'an MSS. to identify short vowels are definitely “derived from the Syriac Massoretic *puhhāmés* or *nūkzé* which fill the same purpose in difficult or ambiguous words”²²² without providing any valid examples.

1.5.2.3. Polemical and Manipulative Approach: Mingana as a Revisionist Historian

In previous two parts, Mingana's historical critical, linguistic and textual criticism approaches have been discussed. In addition to these methodological approaches, Mingana has a manipulative and polemical approach as well. In this

²¹⁸ Ibid., p. 92, al-Qur'an, 2/85.

²¹⁹ Ibid., p. 93, al-Qur'an, 48/12.

²²⁰ Ibid., al-Qur'an, 38/3

²²¹ Ibid., pp. 91-94.

²²² Ibid., p. 91.

approach he prefers to use words that bear negative meanings. This can be for the sentences relating to the Qur'an or the Prophet Muhammad or the Arabs. For instance, Mingana prefers to use Hagarian and Ishmaelites words to describe the Arabs and Muslims; he states “no idea that the “Hagarian” conquerors had any sacred Book”²²³ and “it is worth observing how exactly the Aramaeo-Syrian population of that period of conquests called these Arabs by derision: Hagarians, Ishmaelites...”²²⁴. These examples and also his position towards to codex of the Qur'an bring in mind the question: Can Mingana be a revisionist historian? As stated by Shah Khagga and Warraich:

During the last quarter of the 20th century a new trend has appeared among certain orientalists who have come forward with the suggestions that not only is the Qur'an a work by human hand but that it came into being through a process of evolution and growth over the first two centuries of Islam. This group of orientalists is generally known as the “revisionists”.²²⁵

Based on this description and our analysis on the historical critical approach part, Mingana can be considered among the pioneers of the revisionist approach towards to the Qur'an.

Moreover,, when Mingana refers to the language of the Qur'an or revelation he uses “the Prophet or the editor of the Qur'an”²²⁶ to mean that the Qur'an is not a revelation by Allah but it is a fabricated or copied version of the Bible. To support this argument, he quotes Hirschfeld's statement in another article: “the Qur'an, the text book of Islam is in reality nothing but a counterfeit of the Bible”²²⁷. Besides, Mingana has a negative attitude towards the Prophet Muhammad as well as he states: “what history is unable to find, even in the XXth century, is a name more terrible than that of Muhammad.”²²⁸. With regard to Islam, he quotes Margoliouth's statement: “the theory that Islam is primarily a political adventure”. He then adds: “as in the Semitic mind political adventures cannot succeed without some

²²³ Mingana, *Transmission of the Kur'an According to Christian Writers*, p. 406

²²⁴ Mingana, **Leaves from Three Ancient Kurans**, p.xxv

²²⁵ Feroz-ud-Din Shah Khagga, M. Mahmood Warraich, “Revisionism: A Modern Orientalistic Wave in the Qur'anic Criticism”, **al-Qalam**, April 2015, (Online) https://www.academia.edu/17572188/Revisionism_A_Modern_Orientalistic_Wave_in_the_Qur%CA%BE%C4%81nic_Criticism 9 April 2019.

²²⁶ Mingana, “Syriac influence on the Style of the Kuran”, pp. 96, 97, 89, 95, 83.

²²⁷ Mingana, “Transmission of the Kur'an according to Christian Writers”, p. 412.

²²⁸ Minagan, **Leaves from Three Ancient Kurans**, p. xxv.

“persuasions” to heaven, and “dissuasions” from hell”.²²⁹ In addition to these statements, Mingana claims that for a good Qur’an commentary, one needs to have good readings and knowledge in Semitic languages, otherwise the commentary will not fully cover all the details relating to the Qur’an.²³⁰

Regarding the companions and the Muslim governors, Mingana’s statements are noteworthy. For the first four caliph he states that *“the enmity subsisting between Ali and Abu Bakr, Umar and Uthman is well known”*²³¹ Based on this argument, he claims that they may add and omit some parts to the Qur’an to favour their positions and he poses questions on how to identify these interpolations from the standard text of the Qur’an. Mingana quotes from John Bar Penkaye to portray Muslim Caliphs and governors as intolerant and cruel.²³² Last but not the least, Mingana uses Shia sources as well to prove that there are interpolations or missing parts in the Qur’an.²³³

²²⁹ Mingana, “Transmission of the Qur’an According to Christian Writers”, p. 412, also see D.S. Margoliouth, in **Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics**, VIII. p. 879.

²³⁰ Minagan, **Leaves from Three Ancient Kurans**, p. xxvi.

²³¹ Mingana, “Transmission of the Qur’an According to Christian Writers”, p. 406.

²³² Ibid.

²³³ Mingana, in **Encyclopedia of the Religion and Ethics**, p. 548.

CHAPTER THREE

IMPACTS OF MINGANA IN QUR'ANIC STUDIES

1.6.3.1. Influence on the Western Qur'anic Studies

3.1.1. Influence on Classical Orientalist Studies

From the beginning of his career as Chaldean priest in Mosul to his scholarship in Britain, Mingana had inspiring projects throughout his life. The influence of French Dominican Fathers in his education in the seminary²³⁴ and the impact of Prof. Paul Casanova²³⁵ are all undeniable facts on the formation of the ideas of Mingana towards Islam.

In Britain Mingana had good relations with Prof David Samuel Margoliouth. Both of them supported each other academically in the arguments and as stated by Marie Mingana through the article of Samir even “*Margoliouth was willing to retire from Oxford on condition that his successor would be Mingana.*”²³⁶ Margoliouth and Mingana can be considered in the same school of thought towards Islam. In his book **Mohammad and the Rise of Islam**, Margoliouth states the influences of Jews and Christians on the Prophet and the Qur'an²³⁷ that is in line with Mingana's ideas too.

Mingana had good ties with the scholars of his time, for instance Richard Bell considers Mingana as the most knowledgeable scholar in the subject of Yezidis and asks for his examination for a PhD thesis on Yezidis.²³⁸ Other than Bell, the

²³⁴ Samir, p. 7.

²³⁵ Prof. Paul Casanova is a famous French scholar of College de France and orientalist. He is the writer of “Mohammed et la Fin du monde: Etude Critique sur l' Islam primitif” (Paris, 1911). For the influence on Mingana's ideas, Mingana states in his work “Ancient Syriac Translation of Kur'an”, p.189-190; “in 1916, greatly under the influence of Prof. Casanova's investigations I contributed a monograph to the Journal of the Manchester Egyptian and Oriental Society, in which I suggested that the traditional view on the compilation of the Kur'an was not always satisfactory, and set forth the hypothesis that the Kur'an, as we have it to-day, was finally standardised at a much later date, under the Umayyad Caliph 'Abd al-Malik b. Marwan. In the article *Quran in the late Dr. Hastings; Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics*, I endeavoured to add more weight to this theory.” Also in “Transmission of the Kuran” p. 223 Mingana states “in the interesting book of Casanova who has demonstrated convincingly the existence of many interpolated passages” in the Qur'an. Again Mingana concludes “Transmission of the Kur'an According to Christian Writers” article with a long quotation from Prof. Casanova.

²³⁶ Samir., p. 18.

²³⁷ D.S.Margoliouth, **Mohammed and the Rise of Islam**, New York, the Knickerbocker press, 1905, p. 433.

²³⁸ Baarda, “Firmly Established in Early 20th Century Orientalism,” p. 19.

correspondence between Arthur Jeffery and Mingana is also known.²³⁹ Baarda states:

“Like Mingana himself, Jeffery has a critical way of studying Islam and the Qur’an in particular. He belonged to a group of scholars, also including the above mentioned Margoliouth, who were in favor of studying the history and origins of Islam and the text of the Quran in the same critical way as it was fashionable among theologians concerning Christianity and the Bible.”²⁴⁰

Arthur Jeffery uses Mingana’s study “*Syriac Influence on the Style of the Qur’an*” as his reference in his book **Foreign Vocabulary of the Qur’an**.²⁴¹ For instance with the reference of Mingana, Jeffery states that the Syriac words in the Qur’an might be introduced by the Prophet and he might have personal contact with Syriac speaking Christians.²⁴² Another example is his statement, “*we may suppose with Mingana, that this word is from Christian rather than from Jewish Aramaic...*”²⁴³ based on these examples and many other statements in the book, it can be said that Mingana’s linguistic approach has influenced Jeffery.

As stated by Nickel “*Mingana issued some new challenges to scholarly perspectives on the Qur’an that has firmly established by this time*”²⁴⁴ especially by Nöldeke. In Mingana’s works the criticisms towards Nöldeke’s ideas are clear. It can be said that there are three main area that Mingana criticizes Nöldeke. First one is Nöldeke’s position on accepting the Qur’an as “*wholly authentic, without any interpolation,*”²⁴⁵ the second criticism of Mingana toward Nöldeke is on the authority and reliability of the hadiths,²⁴⁶ and the last criticism is on the language of the Qur’an. While Nöldeke considers Arabic as the language of the Qur’an and accepts the foreign words in it, Reynold precisely explains the position of Mingana, he “*maintains that there is a total disjunction between the language of the Qur’an and that of seventh-century Arabs of the Hijaz.*”²⁴⁷ Mingana considers the Qur’an to be

²³⁹ Ibid., p. 27.

²⁴⁰ Ibid., p. 27.

²⁴¹ Arthur Jeffery, **Foreign Vocabulary of the Qur’an**, Barado, Oriental Institute, 1938.

²⁴² Ibid., p. 22.

²⁴³ Ibid., p. 171.

²⁴⁴ Nickel, “Scholarly Reception of Alphonse Mingana’s “The Transmission of the Qur’an:” A Centenary Perspective,” p.348.

²⁴⁵ Mingana, “Transmission of the Koran”, p. 223.

²⁴⁶ Ibid., p. 227.

²⁴⁷ Reynolds, “A Reflection on Two Qur’anic Words (Iblis and Judi)”, p.677, n.11.

the first written Arabic book²⁴⁸ and Syriac has so much influence on the grammar and the lexicography of it. Nöldeke is believed to be the “*first to establish the link between the Nabataean and Arabic scripts in 1865*”.²⁴⁹ Later J. Healey states the fact that the relationship of the Arabic and the Nabataean is “*almost universal accepted*”.²⁵⁰ However, Mingana did not have the chance to see Healey’s works on the issue, so his arguments on the Syriac influence are still valid. Here it will be beneficial to state that, while German school prefers the link of Nabataean language, with the influence of Mingana, the influence of Syriac on Arabic came into prominence in French School.²⁵¹

3.1.2. Influence on Contemporary Orientalist Studies

At the beginning of 21st century, polemical scholar Ibn Warraq²⁵², the writer of the book **Why I am not a Muslim?** combines the classical essays on the Qur’an in a book entitled “**the Origins of the Koran**”.²⁵³ In this book, Mingana’s two articles²⁵⁴ also find place as classical essays among the studies of well-known orientalist scholars such as Nöldeke, Jeffery, Margoliouth, Clair-Tisdall, Geiger, Torrey and Rippin. Mingana’s article; “*the Transmission of the Kuran*” keeps its significance as a reference in the orientalist tradition for the area. For instance, another contemporary scholar Stephen J. Shoemaker considers Mingana’s article in his book titled; **The Death of a Prophet** as an important study among the “*contemporary Christian*

²⁴⁸ Mingana, “Syriac Influence on the Style of the Qur’an”, p. 77.

²⁴⁹ W.name, **From Alphonse Mingana to Christoph Luxenberg: Arabic Script & The Alleged Syriac Origins of the Qur’an**, (Online) <https://www.islamic-awareness.org/quran/text/mss/vowel.html>, 29 May 2019.

²⁵⁰ Ibid., Also see J. F. Healey, “Nabataean To Arabic: Calligraphy And Script Development Among The Pre-Islamic Arabs”, **Manuscripts Of The Middle East**, 1990-1991, vol. V, p. 44; Also see J. F. Healey, “The Early History Of The Syriac Script: A Reassessment”, **Journal Of Semitic Studies**, 2000, vol. XLV, no. 1, pp. 55-67, Also, Tayyar Altıkulaç accepts the Nabataean link between Arabic in his book **Günümüze Ulaşan Mesahif-i Kadîme. İlk Mushaflar Üzerine Bir İnceleme** (Old copies of the Quran that reached Our time. A study on the Earliest Copies), Istanbul, IRCICA, 2015, p.36.

²⁵¹ Reynolds, A Reflection on Two Qur’anic Words (Iblis and Judi), p.679.

²⁵² Ibn Warraq is the pen name of the scholar, he publishes his works with this name.

²⁵³ Ibn Warraq, **The Origins of the Koran: Classic Essays on Islam’s Holy Book**, New York, Prometheus Books, 1998, pp. 76- 114.

²⁵⁴ *Three Ancient Korans* and *The Transmission of the Koran* are listed in part two.

sources”²⁵⁵ on the Qur’anic studies. He also considers Mingana’s article cited by Nicolai Sinai in his critical essay on the consonantal skeleton of the Qur’an.²⁵⁶

According to Reynolds, Mingana’s theories on the language of the Qur’an had been forgotten until the publication of Luxenberg’s **Die syro-aramäische Lesart des Koran: Ein Beitrag zur Entschlüsselung der Koransprache** in 2000.²⁵⁷ The book was translated into English in 2007, so Mingana’s theories on the influence and impact of Syriac on the language and the style of the Qur’an came into prominence again even with the dominant acceptance of the Nabataean link with Arabic rather than Syriac.

Other than Mingana’s studies on the Qur’an, he is also popular with his significant studies such as; **Sources Syriaques** and **Woodbrooke Studies**. Mingana may not directly influence Patricia Crone and Michael Cook but they use these two sources as reference in their well-known book **Hagarism**.²⁵⁸ Regarding Mingana’s influence on Crone and Cook, the following quotation is remarkable. According to Ali Khan and Hisham Ramadan;

“In the 1970s, John Wansbrough located compilation of the Qur’an dated even later toward the end of the eighth century. He asserted that the canonical Qur’an appeared in the eighth century, simultaneously with the appearance of exegetical literature. Patricia Crone and Michael Cook reaffirmed Mingana’s views and placed the Qur’an in Caliph Malik’s reign with an additional twist. Crone and Cook argued that the Qur’an was written in Caliph Malik’s reign projected back in time and attributed to the Prophet.”²⁵⁹

It is obvious that Mingana has so much influence in the western orientalist studies not only with his work on the Qur’an but also with his publications of Syriac manuscripts and the MSS. collections.

²⁵⁵ Stephen J. Shoemaker, **The Death of a Prophet: the end of Muhammad’s life and the beginnings of Islam**, Philadelphia, University of Pennsylvania Press, 2012, p.149, 322 n.139.

²⁵⁶ Nicolai Sinai, “When did the consonantal skeleton of the Qur’an reach closure?” **Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies** vol. 77, 2014, p. 273.

²⁵⁷ Reynolds, p. 675.

²⁵⁸ Patricia Crone, Michael Cook, **Hagarism: The Making of the Islamic World**, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1977.

²⁵⁹ L. Ali Khan and Hisham M. Ramadan, **Contemporary Ijtihad: Limits and Controversies**, Edinburgh, Edinburgh University Press, 2011, p. 192.

1.7.3.2. Muslim Responses to Mingana: The Case of Indian Muslims

3.2.1. Islamic Review & Muslim India

After the publication of the work *Leaves from Three Ancient Qur'an probably pre-Othmanic*, the immediate response towards the study came from the journal called *Islamic Review and Muslim India* in 1915. There are three different responses in the journal. One of them is from Henri M. Leon, it is unknown that either he is Muslim or not, but his paper will also be analyzed under this title because of his contributions to the journal.

3.2.1.1. Maulvie Sadr-ud-Din

The first response towards *Leaves* comes from Maulvie Sadr-ud-Din in the journal. This response can be considered as a refutation against the arguments that Mingana possesses in his introduction part. First of all, Sadr-ud-Din criticizes Mingana sharply and compares him with Columbus. He states;

“the result in the case of Dr. Mingana proved to his friend to be as surprising as the case of Columbus was to the world. For over thirteen hundred years, the world had been under the misconception that the Qur'an had no variants, but with the labour, coupled with a little ingenuity, unfortunately not much erudition and insight of Rev. Mingana, has proved to the satisfaction of two great doctors of divinity that there are a number of “variants,” “interpolations,” and even “omissions” in the holy scripture.”²⁶⁰

According to Sadr-ud-Din, in as much as the findings of Mingana are '*chimerical*',²⁶¹ he is also not '*free from religious bigotry and prejudice*'²⁶² towards Islam, the Qur'an and Prophet Muhammad.²⁶³ As mentioned in the previous chapter, Sadr-ud-Din also quotes the same sentence to show Mingana's negative attitude towards the Prophet. Even that quotation shows “in what spirit the research has been done”.²⁶⁴

²⁶⁰ Maulvie Sadr-ud-Din, “Leaves from Three Ancient Qur'ans,” *Islamic Review and Muslim India*, vol. III, May 1915, p. 219.

²⁶¹ Ibid.

²⁶² Ibid., p. 220.

²⁶³ “What history is unable to find, even in the twentieth century, is a name more terrible than that of Muhammad.” For further information see page 220 in Sadr-ud-Din's article.

²⁶⁴ Ibid., p.220.

In the study, Sadr-ud-Din firstly questions the date of the palimpsest that Dr. Lewis and Mingana worked on. And from this point he moves to another crucial question saying; “ *when the date of the palimpsest is so uncertain, what value can then be attached to it from a philological or a paleographical point of view?*”²⁶⁵ Another important argument that Sadr-ud-Din mentions on the issue is the aspect of Muslims selling Qur’an leaves to non-Muslims knowing that “*the leaves of the Qur’an could not be allowed to be touched by unclean hands of the unbelievers.*”²⁶⁶ So he states that he does not believe such thing might take place especially when we consider that age. The only possibility according to him is that; maybe some Muslims after the time of Uthman wrote what they have in their memories *and made some mistakes in writing them.*”²⁶⁷ But during their journey to Christian lands they may have lost those leaves or those leaves may have been stolen and later on some people might have erased the Qur’anic text and wrote upon it.²⁶⁸ Sadr-ud-Din defends the idea that the Qur’an cannot be altered by anyone at all. This is because, it was in the memory of hundreds of Muslims, being recited in daily prayers and during the month of Ramadhan -from the first day of the revelation till today- the Qur’an is recited from the memory of Muslims in Tarawih prayers all over the world from the beginning till the end.²⁶⁹ So he questions;

“there are hundreds of copies wrongly printed in existence today, but they do not constitutes variants. Why should then a few stray leaves be recognized as variants, even if they did not have any grave or serious difference from the authorized text.”²⁷⁰

After the above questions and the statements, Sadr-ud-Din refutes Mingana’s ideas under three main titles; variants, interpolations and omissions.

Variants

Mingana divides variants in the *Leaves* into two groups. In the second group he gives the original words and the words in the MS. and compares them. In most of

²⁶⁵ Ibid., p. 221.

²⁶⁶ Ibid.

²⁶⁷ Ibid., p. 221.

²⁶⁸ Ibid.

²⁶⁹ Ibid., p. 222.

²⁷⁰ Ibid.

the words the difference is either a missing letter, an extra letter, or dots of a letter. Some of the examples that Mingana gives are as following:

in the Qur'an ضلال (error), in the MS. ضل (same meaning)

in the Qur'an افلا (do not you?), in the MS. اولا (same meaning)

in the Qur'an واعراض (and oppose thou), in the MS. واعرض (and do oppose thou)

in the Qur'an باركنا حوله (we blessed, round it) in the MS. برکنا حوله (we knelt down around it).²⁷¹ All together there are thirty so-called variants in the second category. According to Sadr-ud-Din these differences are “*mistakes in spelling*”²⁷² or “*archaic spellings*”, and do not alter the sense to any appreciable extent.”²⁷³

But for the first category of variants, Mingana gives four words which are different in writing and also in meaning. Sadr-ud-Din criticizes Mingana by stating that:

“it has been said in the preface that the Qur’anic text in the palimpsest seems to have been rubbed with a pumice-stone with a view to erase it altogether. Also, that it has two other cross-writings superimposed upon it. Why then, under these circumstances, did it become hard for Rev. Mingana to believe that the 'obscure word' is simply a corruption of the real letter, either caused by a slip of the pen of the scribe himself or by rubbing it with the pumice-stone or by re-writing upon it?”²⁷⁴

Sadr-ud-Din not only questions but at the same time elaborates the examples that Mingana claims as variant. He explains all the four words that are provided as variants by Mingana one by one. For instance; how and why the word الله cannot be the meaningless word اللکم as written in the MS. or in the other example, he explains how the word شيئاً in the Qur’an could be transformed into هکما in the MS. and how it is incoherence in the verse.²⁷⁵

Interpolations

In this part, Mingana gives three words as interpolations in the Qur’an, and Sadr-ud-Din criticizes his perspective towards the interpolations. Mingana considers the MS. that he has as authentic, thus he claims the standard text of the Qur’an that

²⁷¹ Mingana, **Leaves from Three Ancient Kurans**, pp. xxxviii-xxxviii.

²⁷² Sadr-ud-Din, “Leaves From Three Ancient Qur’ans,” p. 222.

²⁷³ Ibid.

²⁷⁴ Ibid., p. 224.

²⁷⁵ Ibid., p. 224-225

we have today has interpolations, instead of seeing the missing words in the MS. that he has.²⁷⁶

Omission

In this part again Sadr-ud-Din criticizes Mingana's objectiveness, underlines the fact that in the introductory part of *Leaves*, Mingana mentions "omissions" in the Qur'an, but however he only gives one example to explain this issue.²⁷⁷ Again Mingana considers the MS. that he has as authentic source and judges the standard text of the Qur'an that we have today based on it and claims the word الله is missing in Surah Nahl verse 95. But Sadr-ud-Din refutes the idea of omission in the verse and explains why there is no need for the word الله grammatically.²⁷⁸

Other than these issues, Sadr-ud-Din's addresses Mingana as, the "great doctor of learning,"²⁷⁹ "the revered doctor,"²⁸⁰ "the sharp-eyed doctor"²⁸¹ and "the learned doctor"²⁸² in different places of the refutations. And lastly he concludes his arguments by stating:

"Dr. Mingana, by an ingenious handling of the spelling and calligraphy mistakes, and by an imposing although biased and irrelevant Introduction, has tried his best to attach an uncommon value to those leaves."²⁸³

3.2.1.2. Al-Qidwai

Al-Qidwai's position towards the *Leaves* is not negative at all. He thinks that those leaves are not significant as claimed by Mingana, because of the ten reasons that he states:²⁸⁴

1. The age of the palimpsest is unknown and "no facsimile or photograph of all the leaves"²⁸⁵ are provided.

²⁷⁶ Ibid., p. 230.

²⁷⁷ Ibid., p. 231.

²⁷⁸ Ibid., p. 232.

²⁷⁹ Ibid., p. 219.

²⁸⁰ Ibid., p. 220.

²⁸¹ Ibid., p. 225.

²⁸² Ibid., p. 226.

²⁸³ Ibid., p. 233.

²⁸⁴ Al-Qidwai, "A Glance at the Quranic Palimpsest", **Islamic Review and Muslim India**, vol. III, May 1915, pp. 234-236.

²⁸⁵ Ibid., p. 234.

2. Based on Mingana's writings and a rough photo, it can be said that those leaves cannot be pre-Uthmanic, because diacritical marks were not invented before Uthman's period but were found in the photo and Mingana's writings. Also, Mingana mentions about Kufi- Naskhi letters, but those letters emerged after Uthman's time. Further more, the style of the writing in the photo is not pre-Uthmanic as well.
3. "*The reasons given by Dr. Lewis for believing them to be pre-Uthmanic are based on ignorance.*"²⁸⁶ No Muslim of that time disobeyed the verse that states "*Do not touch it unless you are clean*"²⁸⁷ and sell the Qur'anic leaves to unclean hands of non-believers.
4. The palimpsest was acquired from an antiquarian, so it is suspicious and cannot have authorized value.
5. Erasing the Qur'an writings and writing Christian homilies upon it is "*a sufficient proof that the palimpsest fell into very bigoted non-Muslim hands.*"²⁸⁸
6. Neither the name or the age of the scribe is known, even if he is a Muslim man, mistakes show that he is not a professional in differentiating plural and singular words.
7. Either the so-called variants might be clerical mistakes, doubtful reading, erasing process of the Qur'anic text, or upper writings on the Qur'an.
8. The so-called variants do not *affect the faith, the law, the history and the rituals of the Muslims.*²⁸⁹
9. Dr. Lewis chose the wrong person to work on the Qur'an leaves. Mingana may have many good characteristics; however his work shows that he is not knowledgeable in Islamic history, classical Arabic language and paleography.
10. His writings obviously show that he is bias in his ideas towards the Qur'an, Islam and the Prophet.²⁹⁰

Based on these ten reasons, al-Qidwai refutes the arguments of Mingana and considers his work as worthless.

²⁸⁶ Ibid.

²⁸⁷ Ibid., see al-Qur'an, 56:79.

²⁸⁸ Ibid., p. 235.

²⁸⁹ Ibid.

²⁹⁰ Ibid., p. 236.

3.2.1.3. Henri M. Leon

Henri M. Leon's review in the journal was the last paper on the **Leaves from Three Ancient Qurans possibly pre-Othmanic**. He would have liked to investigate the original manuscript. However, the original copy was sent to Leipzig for an exhibition. So he is writing his review on the *Leaves* based on the published version.²⁹¹

Different from the others, Leon evaluates the text from juristic point of view. He states that the objective of the Mingana and Dr. Lewis was “*to attack the authenticity of the text of the Qur'an*”²⁹² and that is why he tests the work based on law principles that would be conducted in English law system.²⁹³ He states;

“In pounding a document in a law court whereby and whereunder you seek to impeach a deed, hitherto considered and to be of “unique and unchallenged authority,” the claimant must satisfactorily prove:-

- From whence such document was derived
- By whose authority it was uttered.
- The authority of the utterer to so utter the same.
- In whose custody such document has been from the specific time of its utterance until its presentation to the court, so as to clearly demonstrate, beyond the possibility of a doubt, that it has never been tampered with.

All this lies upon the claimant, (i.e the propounder of the document) to prove, and if he fails in one single point, his case fails in its entirety.”²⁹⁴

Based on the above conditions, Leon criticizes the text. At first, he questions where this document came from, how Dr. Lewis acquired it and how reliable a “commercial antiquary” can be under the light of Dr. Lewis's statements in the introductory part of the work. Not only this, but also the lack of the details relating to the author, date of the MS., or the place where in the documents were preserved make the MS. skeptical, Leon goes further and states; “*is sought to be impugned!*”²⁹⁵ to propound and challenge the unique position of the Qur'an with a skeptical document.²⁹⁶

²⁹¹ Henri M. Leon, “Review: Leaves from Three Ancient Qurans possibly pre-Othmanic”, **Islamic Review and Muslim India**, vol. III, May 1915, p. 240.

²⁹² Ibid.

²⁹³ Ibid.

²⁹⁴ Ibid., pp. 240-241.

²⁹⁵ Ibid., p. 243.

²⁹⁶ Ibid.

Regarding the arguments of Dr. Lewis and Mingana on the possibility of the Qur'an leaves to be pre-Uthmanic, Leon claims they have "*scanty knowledge of early Muslim history and still less of Islamic feeling and customs.*"²⁹⁷ After giving examples on the love and obedience of early Muslims towards the Prophet, he questions the possibility of the idea of disobedience towards the Caliph (Uthman), and also the selling of the Qur'an leaves to non-believers since having a portion of the Qur'an was a privilege for Muslims especially at that time. Then he adds, "*these people were prepared to, and often sacrificed their lives for faith.*"²⁹⁸ He also mentions the command of Islam on handling the Qur'an by clean hands as a sound argument.²⁹⁹

On the aspect of calligraphy and mistakes on the Qur'an leaves, Henri compares the unknown scribe of the Qur'anic text with Shakespeare. He questions; Shakespeare "*is said to have signed his name in six different modes of spelling,*"³⁰⁰ why was he not "*stigmatized with a heinous crime*"³⁰¹ as is the case of the unknown scribe centuries ago? Regarding the rubbing process of the Qur'anic text, Leon thinks there's a the possibility of the Christian monks to accomplish this task as "*a Christian duty*"³⁰²

As for the issue of "variants", Leon again questions the objectivity and honesty of Mingana in providing such examples as variants.³⁰³

As a result Henri acquits Dr. Lewis from the criticisms, but he sharply criticizes Mingana and states *his fanatical zeal against Islam (over and over again pointedly manifested in the "Introduction" penned by him) to have over-run his discretion,*³⁰⁴ and he regards the book as time, energy and money wasting for the reader.³⁰⁵

²⁹⁷ Ibid., p. 244.

²⁹⁸ Ibid., p. 245.

²⁹⁹ Ibid.

³⁰⁰ Ibid., p. 246.

³⁰¹ Ibid.

³⁰² Ibid., p. 247.

³⁰³ Ibid., pp. 247-249.

³⁰⁴ Ibid. p. 250.

³⁰⁵ Ibid.

3.2.2. Maulana Muhammad Ali and His Introductory Note in His Translation and Commentary of the Holy Qur'an

Maulana Muhammad Ali has written the English translation and the Commentary of the Holy Qur'an and the first edition was published in 1917 where he gives a brief response and refutation on the Mingana and Lewis' study; **Leaves from Three Ancient Qur'an probably pre-Othmanic**. He writes his refutation at the end of the introduction part, entitled with *Dr. Mingana's Leaves*.

Muhammad Ali states that none of these Qur'an leaves are a complete copy of the codex or part of a codex. Who has written them and when these leaves have been written is questionable. So he states that “*all statements to the effect that they are pre-Uthmanic, or copies made from pre-Uthmanic manuscripts, are simply conjectures, boldly put forward as “facts”*”.³⁰⁶ The aim of the paper according to Muhammad Ali is to portray Uthman as the one who changed the text of the Qur'an based on his own desires that is why there are differences between the text we have today and the *Leaves*. Here Muhammad Ali even goes further and states that these leaves are “*additional proof that the text of the Holy Qur'an is one and the same and has always remained same*”³⁰⁷ he denies all the omissions and variants and the change in the order of the chapters or surahs. Even this is a proof that the text of the Qur'an has not been changed at all.

While Muhammad Ali cannot find those serious changes in the *Leaves* as claimed by Mingana he also adds “*it is clear that the very few mistakes discovered in the Leaves are the mistakes of transcription by inexperienced hands*”³⁰⁸ then he gives the examples in the text with the explanations. And lastly he concludes his argument as;

“the alleged variation... are partly due to a slip writing of the pen of the scribe, partly to the rubbing-off of the vellum for a second writing... and perhaps partly to doubtful reading on the part of Dr. Mingana.”³⁰⁹

³⁰⁶ Maulana Muhammad Ali, **The Translation and the Commentary of the Holy Qur'an**, Ohio, Ahmadiyah Anjuman Isha'at Islam Lahore, Inc., 1995, p. xlix.

³⁰⁷ Ibid.

³⁰⁸ Ibid.

³⁰⁹ Ibid.

3.2.3. Muhammad al- Azami’s Refutations

Muhammad al- Azami devotes one chapter in his book, called *the History of the Qur’anic Text*, to the orientalist and their studies on the Qur’an. He criticizes Mingana’s work under the title; *Deliberate Distortion of the Qur’an*. But before moving that at the beginning of the chapter he states why orientalist were in need for the idea of distortions in the Qur’an. According to al-Azami;

“As is apparent from the previous chapter, countless variations flood the passages of the Bible... Taken together they weaken core issues of theology and raise many concerns about spurious episodes interpolated into the text through populist influences. While the urgency of providing a similar outcome for the Qur’an has gained fresh momentum in the last few years because of the Middle East’s shifting political landscape, efforts in this field have largely predated these concerns. Among the historical works are: (1) A. Mingana and A. Smith (eds.), *Leaves from Three Ancient Qurans, Possibly Pre-Othmanic with a list of Variants, ...*”³¹⁰

So, based on the reason as al-Azami claims there are enormous efforts to find variants, omissions or interpolations in the Qur’an. One of these efforts according to al-Azami is Mingana’s *Leaves* and his claims on the issue. Al-Azami blames Mingana to be unreliably dishonest in his work³¹¹ and provides four examples to show his deliberate distortion. In the first instance al-Azami quotes Mingana’s first group of variants in the *Leaves* and states; “*so much linguistic gymnastic*”³¹² in the words and he also claims them to be “*scribal error*”³¹³ rather than variants. In the second example al-Azami makes a table to show how Mingana adds a letter to the word in the Qur’an. An example that Mingana provides and shows as variant include:

In the Qur’an (as stated by Mingana)	باركنا حوله
In Mingana’s MS.	بركنا حوله ³¹⁴

As for the third and the fourth examples al-Azami shows in the table how Mingana changes the places of the letters in his writings and explains the case with

³¹⁰ Muhammad Mustafa al-Azami, **The History of The Qur’anic Text, From Revelation to Compilation**, Leicester, UK Islamic Academy, n.d., p. 303.

³¹¹ Ibid.

³¹² al-Azami, **The History of The Qur’anic Text**, p. 312.

³¹³ Ibid.

³¹⁴ Ibid., p. 313, also Mingana, **Leaves from Three Ancient Qurans**, p. xxxviii.

an example from two English words; “*this is analogous to taking the phrase ‘tigers hunting’ and converting it to ‘tiger shunting’.*”³¹⁵ Also for the fourth example, not only the place of the letter changes but also there are extra dots.

3rd example:

In the Qur’an (as stated by Mingana)

لا يهدى القوم

In Mingana’s MS.

لا يهدا لقوم³¹⁶

4th example:

In the Qur’an (as stated by Mingana)

فلم يك ينفعهم ايمانهم

In Mingana’s MS.

فلم يكن نفعهم ايمانهم³¹⁷

Al-Azami does not give any other explanation regarding Mingana’s work in the chapter. However, in the conclusion part he states that “*all orientalist must, to varying extents, practice dishonesty if they are to successfully distort the Qur’an.*”³¹⁸ Also, regarding Mingana’s ideas on Arabic language and alphabet, al-Azami refutes his arguments by providing two images of Prophet’s letters and an image of an “*early Islamic inscription on Jabal Sala’.*”³¹⁹

³¹⁵ Ibid., p. 313.

³¹⁶ Ibid., p. 313, also Mingana, **Leaves from Three Ancient Qurans**, p. xxxix.

³¹⁷ Ibid.

³¹⁸ Al-Azami, **The History of the Qur’anic Text**, p. 318.

³¹⁹ Ibid., p. 123-124.

CONCLUSION

This thesis considers itself as the first comprehensive study on Mingana in Turkish academia as stated in the introduction. So all his works are collected, and deeply analyzed. To classify his approaches the study has quoted his works directly and then the qualitative data analysis have been applied to his writings. In order to gain better understanding of Mingana's approaches, there was a need for information on his life, education and works. That is why the first chapter is devoted to Mingana's biography and works. His life in Iraq, his works, education, also accusations towards his two works and reflections of these accusations on his career are mentioned in the first part of the chapter. In the second part; his life in Britain, his expeditions to get MSS. from Middle East countries, his academic correspondences with contemporary scholars are all elaborated. As well known, Mingana is recognized with his catalogues, so there was a need for brief information on the content of these catalogues regarding Islamic collection. Even though Mingana is more famous with his Syriac and Christian studies, he has plenty of works on Islam and the Qur'an. I need to admit that finding his works on Islam was very tough at the beginning. That is why the chronological list of his works is given as guideline for further studies at the end of the chapter.

While we examine Mingana's works on the Qur'an, his approaches toward the Qur'an and Islam have been discussed and classified under the second chapter. So in this chapter the answer of "What are Mingana's methodology and approaches toward the Qur'anic text?" has been found out. Mingana admits the impact of Prof. Casanova on the emergence of his perspective towards the Qur'an. As a result of that he insists on the role of Hajjaj in the standardizing process of the codex. So the second chapter covered the methodological approaches of Mingana. Based on the readings and analysis, it can be said that Mingana has three main approaches in his criticisms towards the Qur'an. The first one is historical critical approach. Mingana criticized the origins of the Qur'an, the formation of the Qur'anic text, the documentation and compilation of the Qur'an based on Islamic and Christian sources. As a result, Mingana criticizes the authority of Islamic sources, while the historical data is mainly from hadiths collections, Mingana especially questions the authority of *Sahih al-Bukhari* as source for all studies relating to Islam and the

origin of the Qur'an. That is why he challenges Islamic sources and prefers to form the writing, compilation and documentation process of the Qur'an through Christian sources. By doing so, Mingana seems to distinguish himself from the other scholars in the field, particularly from Theodor Nöldeke who use, authenticate and rely on Islamic classical sources.

In the second part of the second chapter, it is discovered that Mingana uses linguistic and textual critical approach towards the text of the Qur'an. In this part it is analyzed under two sub-titles; the lexicography and the grammar. According to Mingana, the study found that the language of the Qur'an is totally influenced by Syriac language more than any other foreign languages. It can be said that Christoph Luxenberg was influenced by Mingana's linguistic and textual critical approach more than any other scholars. Luxenberg also claims the influence of Syriac in the Qur'an as Mingana did. Minagan's manipulative and polemical approach and biased ideas on the Prophet Muhammad (p.b.u.h.), *hadiths*, Islam and the Qur'an which obviously seen in almost every works are also presented in the third part of the chapter.

The third chapter of the thesis has been devoted Mingana's impacts in Qur'anic Studies. The study found out that his influence on the Western academia is divided into two sub-divisions. The first division of Mingana's influence was on the classical orientalist tradition. So based on this analysis, *his place in the British Orientalist* tradition can be seen. Besides that Mingana criticized some classical orientalist ideas particularly Nöldeke's ideas about the Qur'an in three main points. The first one is that Nöldeke accepts the Qur'an as wholly authentic, the second one is Nöldeke's acceptance of *hadiths* collections as reliable sources, lastly the issue of foreign language in the Qur'an and Nöldeke's preference of the link between Nabatean language and Arabic language. Other than that in this part the scholarly relationship of Mingana with Arthur Jeffery and Prof. David Samuel Margoliouth has also been mentioned. In the second part of the chapter Mingana's influence on the contemporary scholar such as Ibn Warraq, Christoph Luxenberg, Patricia Crone and Michael Cook is mentioned. Last but not least, Mingana received refutations on his ideas from the Islamic world. So these responses are placed at the end of the third chapter. As a result of this chapter, the last research question of this paper is also answered: "*How did his works get reactions from Islamic and western world? and to what extent did his academic works influence Muslim and Western world?*"

So based on the investigations, the earliest responses came through the journal of **Islamic Review and Muslim India**. There are three different refutations towards the Mingana and Dr. Lewis' works **Leaves from Three Ancient Qur'ans**. One of the author's name is Henri M. Leon, that is unknown either he is Muslim or not, but because of his contributions and criticisms -in line with others- his review towards Mingana's work is also placed under this part. Again, another early response came from Maulana Muhammad Ali in his translation of the Qur'an called **Translation and Commentary of the Holy Qur'an**. Later on, among the contemporary Muslim scholars, al- Azami's refutations of Mingana's arguments on the Qur'an in his book **History of the Qur'an** became influential in the Qur'an studies.

There was a lack of studies on the approach and impact of Mingana in the academic world. Thus, this thesis aimed to fill the gap. That is why this study is believed to answer the questions mentioned above. So as a result of objective reading of all his works -sentence by sentence- on Islam and the Qur'an, it can be said that his biased attitude towards Islam is obvious. So, how objective his works and the knowledge given by Mingana is questionable.

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