

## **The Impact of the French Orientalist Regis Blachere on the Qur'anic Studies of Muhammad Abed Al-Jabri**

**Ruqaya Haider Taher<sup>1a</sup> Al-Qadi and Star Jaber Al-Araji<sup>2b</sup>**

<sup>1a</sup> Researcher at the University of Kufa, College of Political Science, Najaf, Iraq

<sup>2a</sup> Researcher at the University of Kufa, Faculty of Jurisprudence, Najaf, Iraq

### **Abstract:**

Before talking about Al-Jabri's vision of the Qur'an and what is related to it, it would be better for us to show first that Al-Jabri had a project that he announced through his writings on the critique of the Arab mindset. In those writings, he explained what he sees of issues that need to be addressed, that is the connection of the Arab mindset and its close relationship with the heritage. This project can be divided into three phases:

The first stage: It was expressed in his book *Contemporary Arab Discourse*, and it was like diagnosing the defects and showing the gaps that the Arab mind suffers from. The second stage: the search focused on the intellectual origins that affected the way of thinking and analysis of the Arab mind, by looking at the history of Islamic culture. The third stage is the step in which he searched for the sacred text around which the Islamic heritage revolves, which is the Holy Qur'an.

The second part: In his book, which consists of three parts: *Understanding the Holy Qur'an: The Clear Interpretation according to the order of revelation*, and these three stages lead to each other, and the latecomer took precedence over the early one. Knowing the introductions in his writings shows the researcher his intellectual origins from which he proceeds and his foundation upon which he builds.

Whoever contemplates Al-Jabri's book, his legal foundations and his understanding of the texts will clearly see his deviance from understanding the principles of Sharia and its axioms, as well as accurate sayings in different references. Some of those sayings are manuscripts that are not made by the hands of a specialist, and specialization. Most of what is transmitted is a repetition of what the Orientalists produced.

This study will mention some examples that illustrate the plagiarism that Al-Jabri followed in following the procedures of the Orientalists.

Where Al-Jabri says: I do not deny that I got used a lot from the writings of the Orientalists, and this happened especially when I was a student, and also in the early stages of my university work<sup>1</sup>.

Al-Jabri says again, acknowledging his influence on the Orientalists: I confirm today, as I confirmed yesterday when I was asked about the extent of the presence of Orientalist thought in what I wrote,

I affirm that I do my best when I start writing on a topic, forgetting all the books on the subject<sup>2</sup>.

And if we wanted to review some of Al-Jabri's sayings about the Orientalists, especially for a long time

And if we wanted to review some of Al-Jabri's sayings about the Orientalists in particular, we would have been taking a long time. Tracing most of what Al-Jabri wrote in the field of Qur'anic studies, the research found that one of the most influential orientalists present in Al-Jabri's

views in Qur'anic studies was the French orientalist Regis Blecher in his book *The Qur'an*. He took the main points from that book describing them in his book *An introduction to Quran*.<sup>3</sup>

### **Section one : Al-Jabri, his biography and intellectual project:**

Muhammad Abed Al-Jabri is considered one of the great thinkers of the twentieth century as well as the twenty-first century. Al-Jabri spoke about his autobiography in his book (*Excavations in the ancient Memory*)<sup>4</sup> in which he dealt with his memories, which extend from early childhood to his involvement in the corps of men at the age of twenty.

Muhammad Abed al-Jabri was born in (1935 AD) in the city of Fiquik, in the castle of Aznaka, in Sidi Hassan in southeastern Morocco found on the border line established by the French between Morocco and Algeria. He was raised by his maternal uncles due to the separation of his mother from his father by divorce, but this did not prevent him from receiving a great attention by his father<sup>5</sup>.

He completed his Master's degree in 1967 AD. In 1970 AD, he obtained his PhD. Faculty of Arts at Mohammed V University in Rabat. His thesis was entitled: "fanaticalness and the State: Milestones of Khaldunian Theory in Arab and Islamic History." Then he practiced teaching in the same college. He died in 2010.<sup>6</sup>

In 1970 AD, he obtained a state doctorate in philosophy, and the debate committee was a double-nationality one "Moroccan and French" as well.

In the following year, Al-Jabri was appointed as a professor of higher education, and his first book, his doctoral dissertation, appeared in the name of *Fanaticalness and the State: Milestones of Khaldunian Theory in Islamic History*<sup>7</sup>.

After Dr. Muhammad Abid Al-Jabri finished his project on the criticism of the Arab mind, he moved on to re-reading *Understanding the Holy Qur'an*. His recent most important works were: *An Introduction to the Holy Qur'an*; *Understanding the Wise Qur'an*; and *The Clear Interpretation According to the Order of Revelation* (in three volumes).

Among the important problems raised by Al-Jabri is his claim of his absence of interest in the concept of mindset of Islam in general and among the Shiites in particular. Thus, it becomes clear that Al-Jabri is completely ignorant of Shiism, the various Shiite groups and their beliefs so that this would destabilize his position as a prominent investigator, since the false claims that he had prove that he does not possess any reliable and deep information about Shiite knowledge, and that everything he mentions in this regard is taken primarily from secondary and non-authentic sources. In addition, the analyzes and interpretations that he received from the orientalist Regis Blecher and his opinions, had a great influence on the crystallization of Dr. Muhammad Abed Al-Jabri's vision on Shiism<sup>8</sup>

In addition, his analyzes and interpretations that he learned from the orientalist Regis Blacherer, and his views had a great impact on the crystallization of Dr. Muhammad Abed Al-Jabri's vision on Shiism.<sup>9</sup>

Dr. Al-Jabri (because of his ignorance of the Imami Shiite heritage that extends over fifteen centuries of inferential and logical rationality,<sup>10</sup> from the era of the infallible imams until now. And it had a great advantage over all other types of rationality in the Islamic world, whether at the level of style and methodology or content and content)) accused Shiaa of lacking rationality, while the Shiite narratives prove otherwise, as they took their bases from Imam Jaafar al-Sadiq, who said:

The cornerstone of an issue that is considered its principle, its strength, and its bases, is the only advantageous part that is to say the mind, which God made an adornment for man creatures and an enlightenment for them. With the mind, worshippers knew their Creator.

They knew that they were created, that He is the ruler for them, that they are ruled, that He is the immortal and they are the mortals. And they inferred with their minds and by what they saw of His creation like heavens and earth, and sun and moon, and night and day. So they knew that he is the Creator and Director who is Everlasting . By him , the discriminate between the good and the ugly, the darkness in ignorance, and that the light in knowledge. This is what reason has shown to them.<sup>11</sup>

It is worth noting that Al-Jabri's methodology in understanding the Holy Qur'an according to the order of its revelation was preceded by the French orientalist Regis Blecher in his two books, *The Qur'an: His Revelation, Its Recording*<sup>12</sup>, as well as his books on the biography of the Prophet entitled "Muhammad's Dilemma"<sup>13</sup>.

Al-Jabri's transmission and plagiarism of these suspicions and the problems raised by Orientalist books and sources are clear. In the next paragraph of this research, we will discuss the Orientalist suspicions that Al-Jabri mentioned about the Qur'anic text. In particular, we will search and trace the extent to which the French orientalist Regis Blecher was influenced by Al-Jabri's opinions about the Qur'anic text, especially in his two books "Introduction to the Qur'an"<sup>14</sup> and his other book: "Understanding the Wise Qur'an, the Clear Interpretation According to the Order of Revelation"<sup>15</sup>.

### **The second topic: the impact of the views of the French orientalist, Regis Blacherer, on the Qur'anic studies of "Muhammad Abed Al-Jabri".**

Al-Jabri's obsession lies in placing the text of the Qur'an in the historical horizon of the text (the date of revelation) and the contemporary horizon. Al-Jabri goes on to believe that our contemporary understanding of the Qur'an without taking the historical conditions of the era of revelation will not be possible. In order to place the Qur'an in its temporal and historical period, we must first follow the order of the revelation of the Qur'anic verses and work on interpreting each verse of the Qur'an on the basis of the events of the era of its revelation and people's understanding of it at that stage<sup>16</sup>.

Upon examining Blacherer's sayings, we find that he also went to that when he said that when we want to understand the Qur'anic text accurately, we must resort to the reasons for revelation and know the circumstances, events and facts that were surrounding each verse and interpret them according to the data of that era.

At the same time, through the method of presenting and presenting contemporary intellectual questions and issues, the Holy Qur'an must be placed in the current intellectual horizon. As this would remove our separation from the interpretation of the Noble Qur'an, which is the separation that we feel when reading an old interpretation such as the interpretation of Al-Fakhr Al-Razi or Al-Tabari."<sup>17</sup>

Al-Jabri sought in some resources on the basis of this vision, after understanding the verses in the light of the information of the Arabs in the era of revelation, to explain and clarify the verses on the basis of new data.<sup>18</sup>

He also seeks to extract some messages and concepts from the Holy Qur'an, and he said in one statement of these concepts:

"Because what has been clarified in the Qur'an contains characteristics; accordingly, the characteristics of each resource must be separated .The exceptions and details in it need to be explained, and there should be an access to its original and comprehensive message.Thus, the Holy Qur'an is a comprehensive message that is valid for every time and place."<sup>19</sup>

In order to obtain a contemporary picture - of course - Al-Jabri goes on to say that there is diligence in understanding the Qur'an and he said in this regard:

We and the applicants have one construction material in front of us, but each one of us builds his house in proportion to his style and the way of his era.”<sup>20</sup>.

Aljabiri's article published in Al-Ittihad, an UAE newspaper, caused a great outcry. It is an article within a series of articles excerpted from his book "Introduction to the Holy Qur'an." The Moroccan weekly Al-Ayyam newspaper conducted an interview with him about this book, which he published as part of one of the episodes of the "Mawafiq" series entitled "About Introduction to the Qur'an."<sup>21</sup>

The author explained at the beginning that the rise of the Iranian revolution and the Islamic awakening, and then the Islamic movements in the eighties and nineties, distracted him from another project he was thinking about, which is the criticism of the European mind to the topic of *An Introduction To The Qur'an*.

*"The Qur'an is a historical book, and dealing with it requires a historical thought that follows the development of Arab culture, especially the rhetorical and religiously jurisprudential aspects".*<sup>22</sup>

Concerning the meaning of his saying: "The Qur'an is a historical book", does the author mean that its source is Arab history in that period, or does he mean that it is built in a historical manner?! Or is it a historical result of what preceded it and paved the way for it of cultural and religious movements in the Arabian Peninsula?! Actually, Al-Jabri did not clarify that.

It seems that al-Jabri's analyses tend to this last proposition, and thus he thought that the way to know the Qur'an is to deal with it on the basis of the order of revelation of its chapters, depending on and following the orientalist Blacherer who says about the reading of Muslims - and interpreters - of the Qur'an that it is an inverted reading. He says, "We read the Qur'an inverted way."<sup>23</sup>

#### **Al-Jabri's position on the collection and codification of the Holy Qur'an:**

Al-Jabri says in this regard: "If it is indeed possible that there are verses that have been lost, then they are composed of the Mekian Qur'an, because Islam during the Meccan period lived ten years in persecution that led to the migration of the Messenger and Muslims towards Medina in difficult circumstances, and these circumstances must have imposed great difficulties in "smuggling" the sheets of the Qur'an towards Medina. Therefore, if there are things that were lost, then they must be from the Meccan Qur'an. In the era of the state, the era of stability logically should be the opposite."<sup>24</sup>

Al-Jabri believes that the Prophet knew how to read and write, and he bases here on this claim the possibility that he himself took over writing down the Qur'an.

He said: "And if we do not know exactly when the Qur'an began to be written, then it was not thought of within Islamic thought - throughout its long history - that the Prophet himself was in charge of writing it, although he knew how to read and write as we explained before."<sup>25</sup>

And he added: "In this sense, they cite the saying of Zaid bin Thabit Al-Ansari, the most famous book of revelation: "We used to, with the Messenger of God, compose the Qur'an from parchments," that is, they arranged the verses inside the chapters, and yet it is not far-fetched that one or more verses, written on a piece of paper or bone, or not written but preserved in the chest of this or that companion, would remain outside this composition".<sup>26</sup>

He also said: "And that is because some of the book of revelation followed the order of the chapters of the Qur'an in chronological order, meaning that they arranged the chapters of the Qur'an according to the date of their revelation. This is done by Ali ibn Abi Talib did in what he narrates, while others arranged what they gathered from the Qur'an according to this consideration or that, or according to what was agreed upon. Thus, each of them became a copy of the Qur'an in a special arrangement, such as the copy of Ubayy ibn Ka'b, and the copy

of Abd ibn Masoud, and from here before the arrangement. The surahs in the Mushaf are arranged by my own reasoning, and this is what is said to be the solution of those who researched this matter among the ancients.<sup>27</sup>

It is these suspicions that Blacherer raised in his book *The Qur'an: Its Translation, Its Revelation, Its Codification*, "where he says: There is evidence in the way the Qur'an was written and compiled that something was omitted from it, and that what we have today is not what Muhammad claimed it was revealed to him"<sup>28</sup>.

And he went to say "that many of his verses were not preserved except by the Companions, and some of them had been killed in the raids and the wars during the time of the Prophet and the first successors, and what they had memorized. Abu Bakr instructed Zaid bin Thabit to collect it before it would vanish with them, and therefore Zaid could not collect except what was memorized by the living Companions, and that what was written of it on the bones and other things, it was written on it without order or control, and some of it was lost. This is what led the scholars to claim that there were verses that were copied by letters, not by judgment, and it is strange to claim., and the truth of the matter is that it has fallen because of the loss of the bone on which it was written, and nothing remains of it except the meaning preserved in their hearts.

Al-Jabri also went to: (And it is certain that what was available to this or that companion of the Qur'an, written or preserved, was different from what was with others in terms of quantity and arrangement, and it is possible that mistakes occurred when he compiled it at the time of Othman or before that.

"Indeed, We have sent down the Remembrance (i.e. Quran), and indeed we will preserve it." (Al-Hijr: 9)

The Qur'an itself stipulates the possibility of forgetting, altering, deleting, and copying)<sup>29</sup>

And this talk from Al-Jabri about the occurrence of deletion, change and alteration in the Holy Qur'an during its collection, which was preceded by Blacherer in his saying: "A decisive step took place after twenty years, when they embarked, during the reign of Othman bin Affan (644-656), to compile a new text that was established on a broader basis, and from what is more comprehensive exclusively.

A decisive step was taken after twenty years, when, during the reign of Othman bin Affan (644-656), they began to compile a new text that was established on a broader basis, and from the point of view of what is more comprehensive and exclusive, however, that this desire to replace a fixed text appeared with a measure that was almost a predicate for sacred things: which is the destruction of all the Qur'ans on which the pious recorded the revelations that were collected from the tongue of Muhammad himself and in his life, and yet the Qur'an of Uthman remained incomplete in many aspects of it. Pronunciation and morphological differences continued to appear in the local dialects "<sup>30</sup>.

As for the Qur'an compiled by Uthman, Blacherer says: "This is how it became acceptable for us to talk about a legal text for the Qur'an that was developed and finally approved in the middle of the tenth century, and this legal text was clearly Ottoman, but this legal text did not impose itself without resistance, and this resistance had an individual character in the life of Uthman. It took a more effective appearance during the reign of Ali and the early days of the Umayyad rule because of the religious upheaval in Iraq, and the Shiites and Kharijites exploited this opposition for their own interests. The hypothesis of distortion, corruption, and even omission began to appear little by little and searched for itself for arguments and justification. The tendencies resulting from these oppositions came to take on a strange face" <sup>31</sup>

As for the claim of distortion in the Holy Qur'an at Al-Jabri, he mentioned that there is distortion, addition, and omission in the Qur'an, and there are surahs and verses that were not included in its text."<sup>32</sup>

And he said: There are 13 narrations that reveal the occurrence of an "imperfection" in the Book of God, and many commentators have admitted that.<sup>33</sup>

And the answer is :

Al-Jabri went to consider it a fact that the Shiites say the Holy Qur'an has been distorted, and he did not mention the cited sources depending on which he claimed and reported that.

It came in the book "Imamic Beliefs" written by the late Mujtahid Mujtahid Sheikh Muhammad Reda Al-Muzaffar as follows: "Our belief in the Holy Qur'an: We believe that the Qur'an is the divine revelation sent down by God Almighty through the tongue of His Most Noble Prophet, in which everything is clarified, and it is His immortal miracle that humans were unable to match with it in rhetoric and eloquence, and in what it contains of facts and sublime knowledge that is not subject to alteration, alteration, or distortion. And this Quran that we have in our hands that we recite is the same Qur'an that was revealed to the Prophet, and whoever claims otherwise in it is fabricating, misleading, or suspect, and all of them are without guidance, for it is the word of God, which (falsehood does not approach it from before it or from behind it).

He is fabricated, deceived, or suspected, and all of them are without guidance, for it is the word of God, which (falsehood does not approach it from before it or from behind it). (Surah Fussilat 41/42)

Part of the indications of his miraculousness is that the more time progresses and the sciences and arts advance, it remains fresh and sweet, his lofty intentions and ideas do not appear as an error in a fixed scientific theory and it does not tolerate the refutation of a certain philosophical truth, unlike the books of scientists and the greatest philosophers, no matter how high they are in their scientific status and intellectual ranks, some of them seem at least insignificant or wrong, whenever scientific research progresses and science advances with new theories, even such as the greatest Greek philosophers Socrates, Plato and Aristotle, who were recognized by all those who came after them with scientific paternity and intellectual superiority.

We also believe that the Holy Qur'an must be respected and glorified by word and deed, so it is not permissible to defile its words, even a single word that is considered part of it in a way that is intended to be part of it, just as it is not permissible for someone who is in a state of impurity to touch its words or letters (only the purified ones touch it).(Surat Al-Waqi'ah, 79/56).

Similarly, it is not permissible to burn it, nor is it permissible to disfigure it, such as throwing it away or placing it in a place of deplorability. Likewise, it is not permissible to burn it, nor is it permissible to degrade it, such as throwing it away or placing it in a despised place.<sup>34</sup>

#### **Al-Jabri's position regarding the arrangement of Surahs and Quranic verses:**

Al-Jabri proceeds to say that : "Looking at the Qur'an on the basis of the order of revelation, although it represents a useful and effective approach, but it also involves some problems at the same time.

Among these problems is the absence of definitive texts in accurately defining the Meccan or the city of the surahs and the verses, which leads to unsettlement in points of views about the historical order of the revelation of the suras and the Qur'anic verses and about their place or their city.<sup>35</sup>

He also believes that the interpretation of the Qur'an according to the order of revelation is possible because he believes that the narrations of the order of revelation mentioned by Al-

Suyuti from several paths have slight differences, and it is possible that they all originate from the narration of Ibn Abbas).<sup>36</sup>

On the basis of these premises, Al-Jabri reached results in the order of revelation and presenting new divisions about the stages of the call of the Noble Prophet, peace be upon him, and the revelation of the Noble Qur'an in the holly Makkah:

A- The secret call from the beginning of the revelation to Surat Al-Rahman, which lasted for three years B The beginning of exposure to idols and the outbreak of conflict with Quraysh, by reading Surat Al-Najm next to the Kaaba in the fifth year of the mission.<sup>37</sup>

C- The stage of exposure to idols and Quraysh's persecution of Muslims, from the fifth year to the seventh year of the mission. At this stage, the Quraish encouraged and threatened the Noble Prophet, and Abu Talib stood up to them and announced his support for the Noble Prophet. After the polytheists were persecuted, a group of Muslims were forced to migrate to Abyssinia.

D- The stage of the siege of the Prophet and his family in Sha`b Abi Talib, from the sixth or seventh year to the ninth or tenth year of the mission).

E - The stage of breaking the siege and the Prophet presenting himself to the tribes after breaking the siege, and this resulted in the first pledge of allegiance to Aqaba, and the pledge of allegiance to Aqaba second, which paved the way for migration towards Medina).<sup>38</sup>

And he replies:

It is no secret to any researcher and knowledgeable in Qur'anic studies that the order of the chapters as stated in the Holy Qur'an is multiple rhetorical and substantive provisions, and for its sake the organic unity from the first word in the Qur'an to the last word and the proportionality and numerical miraculousness are consistent from the first word to the last word in it as well. This and other provisions indicate a conclusive evidence that such an arrangement is actually suspensive, and therefore it is not permissible to violate it. <sup>39</sup>

Thus, the position of the verse of the surah is if it places a purpose for a meaning that the author knows, and whoever seems to him that it is permissible to change this position because he does not know its wisdom. It is like one who does not understand the wisdom of placing the eye in the front of the head, so he thought that it was more appropriate to place one of them in the face and the other in the nape so that the person can see with them both in front of him and his creation.

If he tried to achieve this idea scientifically, reflecting the nature, and he corrupted the situation, and if the truth had followed their desires, the heavens and the earth and those in them would have been corrupted (Surat Al-Mu'minun, verse: 23)

But if he has mastered the issues of the Qur'an, one by one, and has come to grips with the secret of arranging the verses in their chapters, verse by verse, and after that he wants to know the face in the arrangement of the chapters, then let him know that there are paths of consideration, some of which are deeper and more sophisticated than others.<sup>40</sup>

And from those paths: a kind of harmony that we can correctly and figuratively call the system of stairs, and the method of the traveling state, in which the meaning that ends with a specific surah is the same as the meaning that the next surah opens with.

When Al-Jabri did not understand the wisdom in placing Al-Fatihah at the beginning of the Qur'an and putting some short surahs at the end, he did not draw his attention to the fact that each of the beginning and the end had fallen into its sober position, and placed in its solid decision, and that the authors to this day are still drawing in the readings of their books and their passages this ideal approach of the Qur'an.

The site of Surat Al-Fatihah in the Qur'an has an index site that briefly presents the contents of the book before entering into its details. Everything in the Qur'an from divinities, prophecies,

resurrection, deeds, morals and throughout history has placed its keys in these few words in a manner that does not appear to be the character of counting and narration. Rather, it is like the water of life that flows through its streams as nutrition for the minds and souls, so one would not get bored since it not created on frequent repetition.

Then, behind its position in the Qur'an, this surah has a special position in relation to the surah that follows it, as it is the mother of the book and its opening that shows the need for education that follows it, because it depicted the believers with their hands outstretched. And hence, the order of revelation is not possible for a human being."<sup>41</sup>

At the conclusion of our research in this part, it must be noted that it must be aware that the results of studying the topics of the Qur'an according to the order of revelation are not scientific results as long as this arrangement is speculative. In addition, the arrangement adopted by Al-Jabri is an "orientalist-speculation" arrangement in which he followed the line that Blacherer drew for him step by step.

Anyone who carefully examines the book "The Qur'an" by the French orientalist Regis Blacherer finds that the book "Introduction to the Qur'an" by Al-Jabri is only a miniature version of it, but with the character and charm of its "Arab Muslim" author.

Although Al-Jabri noticed the shortcomings and inadequacy of the arrangement of Blacherer's, which he himself "relied on", nevertheless, he relied on the idea and essence of this Orientalist approach, as he explained by saying, "The Orientalists have been interested in arranging the chapters of the Qur'an according to revelation, since the mid-nineteenth century, in a special way."

Their goal in this field was to build an "objective" perception of the development of the Muhammadan revelation and to identify the spiritual aspect of the Prophet's biography. They refrained from adopting the regulations of the "order of revelation" that were set by the Muslim narrators, due to the discrepancies in them that affect almost all surahs.

On the basis of this, the German orientalist Theodore Noldeke put an arrangement of the Qur'an in order of revelation, and the French orientalist Regis Blecher adopted it in the first edition, with his translation of the meanings of the Qur'an, with minor modifications.

We noticed that Al-Jabri did not deviate from the purposes envisioned by Noldeke and Blacherer, and if he mentioned other criteria, then he deviated from the approved order of revelation, as did these two orientalists, and in this regard he says: "If there are results that serve the purpose and do not contradict the principles - foremost of which is the arrangement of the verses within the one surah, which is a definite arrangement - then it will be an acceptable and reasonable behavior. and others" except where there is a saying or sayings that justify changing its position in the arrangement

As for the goal behind all this modification, and the adoption of the "hypothetical" order of revelation for the most part, the purpose of it, as Al-Jabri says: "To identify the formative path of the Qur'anic text by adopting its conformity with the path of the Muhammadan call, the role of logic or diligence must be focused primarily on matching between the two paths: the path of the Prophet's biography, and the formative path of the Qur'an"<sup>42</sup>

And the disorder of this approach is indicated by his saying after that: "It must be recognized here that if we can sometimes judge that the location of a particular surah in the list of the approved order of descent is not consistent with other data provided to us by the tradition, which may necessitate moving it from its location, then it is very difficult to specify another location suitable for that Surah to be transferred to within the same list as long as the proposed arrangement is based only on changing some sites and not on creating a completely new arrangement, which will not be justified, and in any case it must be based on a basis. Such



cases will be considered appropriate with this or that stage in the path of the Muhammadan mission).<sup>43</sup>

Also, arranging the chapters of the Qur'an according to revelation is considered an attempt that is marred by failure. Indeed, some of the orientalist themselves considered that this arrangement is not possible.<sup>44</sup>

The opinion of Blacherer, which Al-Jabri relies on, is his arrangement of the Qur'an according to revelation, with certain modifications. And the orientalist Noldeke says: "It is impossible to set an accurate chronology for the ancient surahs, let alone for the entire Meccan surah."<sup>45</sup>

He also says, indicating the impossibility of chronological arrangement of the surahs: "For this reason, we will be very careful, not paying attention when dealing with the surahs of different stages except to their internal development, disregarding history, which is uncertain."<sup>46</sup>

Noldeke also talks about the impossibility of chronological arrangement of the chapters of the Holy Qur'an, criticizing Muir's attempt: "As for his main mistake in this division is that he seeks to arrange the chapters one by one in chronological order, and he is humble to the point of admitting that he has not completely achieved his goal, but this goal is actually impossible to achieve."<sup>47</sup>

Based on all of the foregoing, the approach that Al-Jabri took in arranging the surahs according to revelation is an orientalist approach - Blacherery - "if the approach is is disturbed, the results will also be disturbed . Whoever advances or delays the surahs has corrupted the arrangement of the Qur'an.

And Al-Jabri says in this regard, an attempt was difficult for him to do so: "As for the distribution of the surahs in these stages, arranged according to the date of revelation, it is very difficult." Then, what is the benefit of being indulged in discussing such issue?<sup>48</sup>

#### **Al-Jabri's position on the Qur'anic stories**

Al-Jabri benefited with regard to the narration of the stories in Qur'anic verses in terms of reality from the origins of modern isolation. Like Sheikh Muhammad Abduh, Al-Jabri goes to believe that the Qur'anic stories are only for consideration and exhortation, and it is not necessary to refer to the books of the Jews and the Israeli narratives to complement the stories of the Noble Qur'an.<sup>49</sup>

Al-Jabri was skeptical about Ahmed Khalafullah's approach in his research and study of the Holy Qur'an, and he saw that the problem lies in his literary vision of the Qur'an, a vision that prompted Khalafullah to compare the Holy Qur'an with the Torah, because he believes that it is preaching and guidance that represents the truth of the Qur'anic stories.<sup>50</sup>

On this basis, Al-Jabri's vision of the stories of the Qur'an is based on the fact that these stories are for admonition and consideration, and this is sufficient to lead us to the desired goal. Al-Jabri does not provide an answer to the question: Did these stories have a historical truth? And he does not see the need to delve into this question, because the Qur'anic stories - from his point of view are like proverbs that are given for the consideration and admonition of the listener and the addressee only.

Blacherer says about the Qur'anic stories: "There is no doubt that the Judeo-Christian traditions appear in the Qur'anic stories about Moses, Abraham and Jesus, validating the topics that were known to the new converts, and in the many reminders that relate to the Arab prophets such as Salih from Thamud or Hud who returned from the South Arabian Peninsula." Local data remain more ambiguous and easily allow the personality of Muhammad to be placed in a slightly higher position <sup>51</sup>

Thus, we note that Al-Jabri's approach to interpreting the Holy Qur'an and dealing with it was not unprecedented, but was preceded by the French orientalist Regis Blecher.

The response to this is :

Through the previous two sayings, it becomes clear to us Al-Jabri's opinion about the story, that it is just fantasies that do not require historical truth and realism from him, and that it is intended to be affected and achieve the goal of the lesson and sermon regardless of its agreement with reality and its truthfulness. It is necessary for him to say that that God never sent a prophet before our Prophet, and that the stories of the prophets mentioned in the Qur'an are just fantasies that did not happen in history, and it includes denying the sending of prophets before the Prophet, and that nearly a third of the Qur'an is just fictional events and they are no more than artistic stories like the stories presented in the media. The media is intended for the listener to be affected and excited, and it will not arouse interest in the question about the truth or falsity of this story.

What denial is worse than the denial of the sending of all the prophets whose stories God told us, and it is enough to imagine the implications of this misguided saying than the denial of God Almighty.<sup>52</sup>

Accusing the Qur'an of presenting imaginary stories is an outrageous completion that the word of God - may He be glorified and exalted - proclaims.

And what is the difference between their saying this and the polytheists' accusation of the Qur'an that it is myths of the ancients? Indeed, the clear and frequent Qur'anic verses indicate that this claim is false."<sup>53</sup>

And if we make a comparison between the sayings of the modernists like Al-Jabri and the sayings of the infidels of Quraysh, it would appear that the infidels of Quraysh attributed lies in the Qur'an to the Prophet, and they directly attributed it to God Almighty. Exalted is God above what they say.

I do not know how the proponents of this theory respond to the reasons that came about in citing some stories, such as asking the polytheists and the Jews and the like, which the Qur'an clearly stated was a question.

In fact, we are astonished by the popularity of these deviant, abnormal sayings that indicate ignorance of history, biographies, interpretation and its origins, and disregard for the heritage of the predecessors and a major methodological defect in receiving and rooting in the sources, and had it not been for the recurrence of such suspicions, we would have turned away from them, but they are repeated in the books of contemporary readers according to the orientalist.

The article published by the author in the Emirati newspaper, Al-Ittihad, caused a great outcry. It is part of a series of articles excerpted from his book "Introduction to the Holy Qur'an." The Moroccan weekly newspaper, Al-Ayyam, conducted an interview with him about this book, which he published as part of one of the episodes of the "Situations" series entitled "About Introduction to the Qur'an."<sup>54</sup>

The author explained at the outset that the rise of the Iranian revolution and the Islamic awakening, and then the Islamic movements in the eighties and nineties, distracted him from another project he was thinking about, which is the critique of the European mind to the topic of an introduction to the Qur'an.

And he says: "For the majority of Muslims today, even the intellectuals and memorizers of the Qur'an, etc., we can consider their understanding of Islam is, as it was said in the past, of the kind of "faith of the old people," that is, faith without research, and the result is that anything outside the inherited is considered outside Islam.

In the end, the "belief s of old men" is the oath of ignorance of the Qur'an, what is in it, its circumstances, etc., and it is an acceptable belief from a religious point of view, but from an intellectual point of view it is not complete."<sup>55</sup>

Are the intellectuals - or the majority of them, and here we mean the specialized scholars - and is the majority of memorizers of the Qur'an ignorant of the Qur'an?!! Then, who is aware of it if

not its readers and scholars?!! The author wants this to shake the consensus of the Muslims and what their scholars depend on like the established rules of Islamic scientific research and on the understanding of the righteous as well as respectable predecessors. With these words and others, Al-Jabri tried to direct and communicate an orientalist thought camouflaged with an Islamic formulation, so that its impact would be less effective on the Muslim reader.

In conclusion, what Al-Jabri mentioned in his books "The Introduction" and "The Understanding of the Qur'an" was nothing but an attempt by him to destroy the correct scientific structure, and to promote the suspicions that he raised under the cover of scientific research that, in his view, lacks what he called the "faith" of the "old men."<sup>56</sup>

His secular approach and his materialistic thought prevent him from realizing the "faith of the elderly" or the received ideas "-as he put it. Thus, he thought that the way to know the Qur'an is to deal with it on the basis of the order of revelation of its chapters, depending on and following the orientalist Blacherer, who says about the reading of the Qur'an by Muslims - and interpreters - that it is an inverted reading. He says, "We read the Qur'an upside down."<sup>57</sup>

### **Al-Jabri's Standpoint on the abrogator and the abrogated .**

The subject of the abrogated and the abrogator, which Al-Jabri dealt with in his book "Introduction to the Holy Qur'an" in which he said: "This makes the mujtahid, the jurist, the interpreter, or the theologian in the face of verses decided in one thing more than one religious jurisdiction, the thing in which no one decides - as they say - except the knowledge of the abrogator and the abrogated in the Qur'an altogether."<sup>58</sup>

He also says in this regard: "There is, in this field, justification for objecting to much of what was written and said on the subject of abrogation, on top of which comes the exaggeration in using this saying to the point of affectation, then there is confusion between this saying of abrogation and other categories such as the general, the specific, the absolute, the restricted, the clear, the vague, and the specific."<sup>59</sup>

In an article titled: "Classifications and Branches: They are Falsehoods" he said:

That is because those who believe in the existence of abrogation in the Qur'an have gone to a far-reaching doctrine in working with it, so they put classifications that are empty logical templates, and then started searching for them for what they did, which made them delve into investigation and slip with useless assumptions behind them other than fabricating situations and calamities that weighed down and burdened Islamic jurisprudence.<sup>60</sup>

Then he mentioned the types of abrogation in the Qur'an, in his saying: "The first part is what they expressed by saying: "Its recitation and its ruling were not abrogated together." This has no consequence other than proving the emptiness in the Mushaf text and content, because how can there be a Qur'an for recitation only, when it carries a clear and understandable meaning?<sup>61</sup>

Then he said: «As for the second section of their classification of abrogation in the Qur'an, it is what they called "what abrogated its jurisdiction without reciting it, and it is a solution to which the meaning of abrogation goes to them because there are verses that decide it in their view, and we will examine this claim later, so that we will now suffice with the warning that saying that there is something from the Qur'an abrogated its jurisdiction without reciting it." A saying that may contradict an unresolved one".<sup>62</sup>

As for the third section of copies, he says in it: "Whatever its recitation was abrogated without its jurisdiction is not from the Qur'an. We have shown that it is not permissible to consider it from the Qur'an, because when we talk about the Qur'an, we are talking about the Qur'an as it is in the Qur'an since it was compiled in the time of Uthman."<sup>63</sup>

the response to that is :

The proof of abrogation in the Holy Qur'an is clear and one of the established things in the Holy Qur'an and the Sunnah of the Prophet, as evidenced by the Almighty's saying: {We do not abrogate or forget a verse. A Powerful Thing} (Surah Al-Baqarah: Verse 106). But Al-Jabri had another opinion on this issue. To fit with developments<sup>64</sup>

What is certain is the weakness of the saying that Al-Jabri went to regarding the abrogation and its being contrary to the legal texts, the sayings of the scholars and their consensus, and that Al-Jabri assigned what he had no knowledge of.

He also says: "The science of the sequence of the events of the biography is based on data from the hadith that are very subject to objection in their ability to lead us to correct and conclusive results."<sup>65</sup>

He also says in this regard: "The possible events in the Meccan and Medinan circles remained more solid and stronger in the field of bringing out the various schools of thought.

These texts, as we can see, have led the jurist to introduce the principle of abrogating and abrogated<sup>66</sup>

This indicates a major methodological defect in the legal principles, and that many of his ideas that he repeats are a reformulation of what the Bleachian Orientalist approach mentioned about the Holy Qur'an and its history.

This indicates a major methodological defect in the legal principles, and that many of his ideas that he repeats are a reformulation of what was mentioned by the Blacherian Orientalist approach about the Holy Qur'an and its history.

## Notes

<sup>1</sup> Al-Jabri, Muhammad Abed, Excavations in Memory from afar, Center for Arab Unity Studies, first edition, Beirut - 1997 AD, p. 265.

<sup>2</sup> Al-Jabri, Excavations in Memory, p. 266.

<sup>3</sup> Al-Jabri, Muhammad Abed, An Introduction to the Holy Qur'an, Center for Arab Unity Studies, Beirut, 2006 AD, p. 44.

<sup>4</sup> Al-Jabri, Muhammad Abed, Excavations in Memory from afar, Center for Arab Unity Studies, first edition, Beirut - 1997 AD

<sup>5</sup> Muhammad Abed Al-Jabri, Excavations in Memory from afar, 1st edition, (Beirut Lebanon, Center for Arab Unity Studies, 1997 AD), pp. 21, 22, 23.

<sup>6</sup> Muhammad Abed Al-Jabri Project, Al-Kalima Magazine, Issue: 39 Muhammad Abed Al-Jabri, Historian of the Arab-Islamic Mind, pp. 15-33.

<sup>7</sup> Muhammad al-Sheikh Muhammad Abed al-Jabri, Paths of an Arab Thinker, TA (Beirut, Lebanon, Center for Arab Unity Studies 2011 AD), p. 8.

<sup>8</sup> ibid

<sup>9</sup> - Of course, Dr. Muhammad Abid Al-Jabri has admitted in more than one place that he does not have sufficient knowledge about the sources related to this matter, especially with regard to Iranian culture, and this somewhat contradicts his categorical ruling on the resource of this system, and this proves that the rulings issued by the research of Shiites, Ibn Sina and others are not based on an acceptable basis.

<sup>10</sup> Hussein Al-Idrisi Muhammad Abed Al-Jabri and the Criticism of the Arab Mind Project, 1st edition, Beirut, the Civilization Center for the Development of Thought Al-Islami, 2010 AD, pp. 253 and 254.

<sup>11</sup> Al-Kulayni, Muhammad bin Yaquub Usul Al-Kafi, 3rd edition, Beirut, Dar Al-Adwaa, 1985 AD. Book of Reason and Ignorance, Part 1, p. 29.

<sup>12</sup> - Regis Blacher, The Qur'an, its revelation, its codification, its translation, its influence. Translated by: Reda Saadeh (Beirut - 1974 AD).

<sup>13</sup> Blachère, Regis Le problème de Mahomet ed., Presses Universitaires de France 1952.

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- <sup>14</sup> Al-Jabri, Muhammad Abed, *An Introduction to the Holy Qur'an*, Center for Arab Unity Studies (Beirut 2006 AD).
- <sup>15</sup> Al-Jabri, Muhammad Abed, *Understanding the Noble Qur'an, the clear interpretation according to the causes of revelation*, Center for Arab Unity Studies, first edition, (Beirut - 2008 AD).
- <sup>16</sup> Al-Jabri Muhammad Abed, *Understanding the Wise Qur'an, the Clear Interpretation according to the order of revelation*, MS, Part 1, p. 13.
- <sup>17</sup> *ibid* p. 192
- <sup>18</sup> *-ibid* p-19
- <sup>19</sup> *ibid* part 1, pg. 26-27.
- <sup>20</sup> Al-Jabri Muhammad Abid, *Understanding the Wise Qur'an, the Clear Interpretation According to the Order of Revelation*, 191.
- <sup>21</sup> *ibid*, p. 13
- <sup>22</sup> *ibid*,p.19
- <sup>23</sup> Regis Blacher, *The Qur'an, its translation, its revelation, its codification*, text: Reda Saadeh, p. 60.
- <sup>24</sup> *Introduction to the Holy Qur'an*, p. 214.
- <sup>25</sup> *ibid* , p. 115.
- <sup>26</sup> *ibid* p. 216.
- <sup>27</sup> *Introduction to the Holy Qur'an*, pp. 215-216.
- <sup>28</sup> Abd al-Rahman Badawi satiated this topic in his book "Defending the Qur'an Against Its Critics", p.
- <sup>29</sup> Al-Jabri, *Introduction to the Holy Qur'an*, p. 232.
- <sup>30</sup> Blacher, *The Qur'an*. p. 33
- <sup>31</sup> Blacher, *The Qur'an*, p. 30
- <sup>32</sup> According to his article published by "Al-Masry Al-Youm" newspaper in issue No. 837 dated 9/28/2006, quoting Al-Arabiya.net, which in turn quoted it from the Emirati newspaper "Al-Ittihad". Al-Masry Al-Youm newspaper published this article under the title: *The Holy Qur'an is "distorted"*, in which it says: The subject of additions and omissions in the Qur'an is a topic about which there is a lot of gossip. Sunni and Shiite sources have spoken of distortion in the Qur'an. We will mention here a summary of what was mentioned in the first one, provided that we devote the article to what was mentioned in the Shiite sources. End.
- <sup>33</sup> Al-Jabri, *Introduction to the Holy Qur'an*, p. 217.
- <sup>34</sup> *The Imami Doctrines*, Sheikh Muhammad Reda Al-Muzaffar, presented to him by Dr. Hamid Hanafi Daoud, published by Dar Al-Numan, Cairo, 1381/1961, p. 59
- <sup>35</sup> Al-Jabri, Muhammad Abed, *Understanding the Wise Qur'an, the Clear Interpretation According to the Order of Revelation*, M.S., Part 1, p. 12.
- <sup>36</sup> Al-Jabri Muhammad Abed, *An Introduction to the Holy Qur'an*, M.S., p. 239
- <sup>37</sup> *ibid* , p. 240.
- <sup>38</sup> Al-Jabri Muhammad Abed, *An Introduction to the Holy Qur'an*, M.S., p. 244.
- <sup>39</sup> Al-Jabri, Muhammad Abed *Understanding the Wise Quran: The Clear Interpretation. According to the order of descent*, 1st edition, Beirut, Center for Arab Unity Studies, 2008 AD, Part 1, p. 10.
- <sup>40</sup> *ibid*,p.12.
- <sup>41</sup> Al-Jabri, Muhammad Abed, *An Introduction to the Holy Qur'an*, M.S., p. 420
- <sup>42</sup> *ibid*.
- <sup>43</sup> *ibid*, p.162.
- <sup>44</sup> *Defending the Qur'an*, Abd al-Rahman Badawi, Dar Al-Alamiya for Books and Publishing, p. 127.
- <sup>45</sup> *The History of the Qur'an*, Theodore Noldeke, edited by Farid Rish Shefali, translating it into Arabic by Dr. George Tamer, Al-Jamal Publications, p. 57.
- <sup>46</sup> *ibid*,p.65.
- <sup>47</sup> *ibid*,p.66.

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- <sup>48</sup> Al-Jabri, Introduction to the Holy Qur'an, p. 254.  
<sup>49</sup> Al-Jabri Muhammad Abed, An Introduction to the Holy Qur'an, p. 243  
<sup>50</sup> Al-Jabri, Muhammad Abed, An Introduction to the Holy Qur'an, M.S., p. 250 254  
<sup>51</sup> Blacher, The Qur'an, p. 136.  
<sup>52</sup> Al-Jabri, Muhammad Abed, An Introduction to the Holy Qur'an, M.S., pp. 252 and 253.  
<sup>53</sup> ibid pp. 248 and 249.  
<sup>54</sup> Muhammad Abed Al-Jabri's Project, Al-Kalima Magazine, Issue 39, Muhammad Abed Al-Jabri, Historian of the Arab-Islamic Mind, 20 -  
<sup>55</sup> ibid , p. 251.  
<sup>56</sup> ibid ,p.142.  
<sup>57</sup> Al-Jabri, Muhammad Abed, An Introduction to the Holy Qur'an, M.S., p. 430  
<sup>58</sup> Al-Jabri, Muhammad Abed, An Introduction to the Holy Qur'an, M.S., p. 430  
<sup>59</sup> Al-Jabri Muhammad Abed, An Introduction to the Holy Qur'an, M.S., p. 254  
<sup>60</sup> Al-Jabri Muhammad Abed, An Introduction to the Holy Qur'an, M.S., p. 244  
<sup>61</sup> ibid., , p. 243  
<sup>62</sup> ibid.  
<sup>63</sup> ibid.  
<sup>64</sup> Al-Jabri, Understanding the Holy Qur'an, Part 3, p. 109.  
<sup>65</sup> Blacher, The Qur'an, pp. 134-135.  
<sup>66</sup> Regis Blacher, The Qur'an, p.134-135.

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