# The History of the Qur’an

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VIII. The Collectors of the Quran During the Prophet’s Lifetime:

Some of the Sahabah (R) collected the Quran during the lifetime of the Prophet (S), and some of them had collected a part of it during his lifetime, completing the work after his death.  


Al-Bukhari, in one of the traditions which he has reported from Qatadah, has agreed on four names from among the above-mentioned. Qatadah says that he asked Anas ibn Malik as to who collected the Quran during the days of the Prophet (S). He said they were four individuals and all of them belonged to the Ansar (the Helpers): Ubayy ibn Ka‘b, Mu‘adh ibn Jabal, Zayd ibn Thabit and Abu Zayd. Elsewhere, instead of Ubayy ibn Ka‘b the name of Abu al-Darda’ has been reported.  

It has been reported in *al-‘Itqan* that Ibn Abi Dawud, in a hasan tradition, reports from Muhammad ibn Ka‘b al-Quradi that those who collected the Quran were five: Mu‘adh, ‘Ubadah ibn al-Samit, Ubayy ibn Ka‘b, Abu al-Darda’, and Abu Ayyub al-‘Ansari.  

Ibn Sirin reports that they were four individuals: Mu‘adh, Ubayy, Abu Zayd, Abu al-Dardil’ or ‘Uthman or ‘Uthman with Tamim al-Dari.  

Al-Bayhaqi and Ibn Abi Dawud narrate from al-Sha‘bi that they were six: Ubayy, Zayd ibn Thabit, Mu‘adh, Abu al-Darda’, Sa’d ibn ‘Ubayd, Abu Zayd, Majma‘ ibn Jariyah.  

In his *al-Munaqib*, al-Khwarizmi reports ‘Ali ibn Riyah to have said
that the Quran was collected during the Prophet’s time by ‘Ali ibn Abi Talib (A) and Ubayy ibn Ka`b. Some of the traditions reveal that Amir al-Mu’minin ‘Ali (A) wrote the Quran in the order of revelation of the verses and placed the abrogated verses before the abrogating ones.

Ibn Ashtah ‘has narrated from ibn Sirin in al-Masahif that ‘Ali (A) wrote the abrogating and abrogated verses in his mushaf of the Quran. Ibn Sirin says that he sent a letter to Madinah requesting for it (the mushaf) but he was not able to obtain it.

Ibn Ḥajar71 says that it is reported about Imam ‘Ali (A) that he collected the Quran according to the order of revelation of the verses. Ibn Abi Dawud also has narrated this riwayah.

In the exposition of al-Kafi; Mawla Salih al-Qazwini has quoted from the book of Sulaym ibn Qays al-Hilali that after the demise of the Prophet (S) ‘Ali (A) confined himself to his house and was busy in collecting and compiling the Quran; he did not leave the house until completing the work of collecting the Quran, writing the abrogating (nasikh) and the abrogated (mansukh), the clear (muhkam) and the ambiguous (mutashabih) verses in the order of their revelation.

Al-Shaykh al-‘Imam Muhammad ibn Muhammad ibn al-Nu’man al-Mufid72 writes in al-‘Irshad and al-Risalat al-Surwiyyah that ‘Ali (A) wrote the abrogated (mansukh) verses before the abrogating (nasikh) ones in his mushaf of the Quran and wrote the ta’wil and tafsir of some of the verses in detail.

In the introduction to his tafsir of the Quran, al-Shahristani writes: “The Companions of the Prophet (S) were unanimous in that the knowledge of the Quran was the especial province of the Ahl al-Bayt (the members of the Prophet’s Family) (A), for they used to ask ‘Ali (A) as to whether the Ahl al-Bayt had also another exclusive speciality besides the knowledge of the Quran.” This admission of the Companions of the Ahl al-Bayt’s prerogative with respect to the Quran proves that there was a consensus among them that the knowledge of the contents of the Quran and their exposition was the especial province of the Members of the Prophet’s Household (A).

IX: The Dating of the Surahs:

Here, I have relied on the Nazm al-durar wa tanasuq al-‘ayat wa al-suwar of Ibrahim ibn ‘Umar al-Biqa’i73 (Egypt), al-Fihrist of ibn al-Nadim (Egypt), and the work of Abu al-Qasim ‘Umar ibn Muhammad ibn ‘Abd al-Kafi as the base. As mentioned earlier, Professor Noldeke,74 in his book Geschichte des Qorans has quoted from ‘Abd al-Kafi’s book, stating that it was present in Warn Library (Cod Lugu 674).
### The Dates of the Revelation of Surahs:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S.No.</th>
<th>Makki Surahs</th>
<th>Madani Surahs</th>
<th>The Sequence of Revelation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Al-Hamd</td>
<td></td>
<td>It was revealed after al-Muddaththir (74)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Al-Baqarah, except verse 281, which was revealed at Mina at the time of Hijjat al-Wada (the Last Hajj)</td>
<td>Al-Ma'idah, except verse 3 which was revealed at 'Arafat at the time of Hijjat al-Wada</td>
<td>After Al-'Anfal (8)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Al 'Imran</td>
<td></td>
<td>After al-Mumtahanah (60)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Al-Nisa'</td>
<td></td>
<td>After al-Fath (48)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Al-M 'a' idah, except verse 3 which was revealed at 'Arafat at the time of Hijjat al-Wada</td>
<td></td>
<td>After al-Hijr (15)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Al-'An'am, except verses 20, 23, 91, 93, 114, 141, 151, 152 and 153, which were revealed at Madinah</td>
<td>Al-Anfal, except verses 30-36, which were revealed at Makkah</td>
<td>After Sad (38)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Al-'A'raf, except verses 163-170, which were revealed at Madinah</td>
<td>Al-Tawbah, except the last two verses that were revealed at Makkah</td>
<td>After Al-'Isra (17)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Yunus, except verses 40, 94, 95 and 96 which belong to the Madani period.</td>
<td></td>
<td>After Yunus (10)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Hud, except verses 12, 17 and 114 which were revealed at Madinah.</td>
<td></td>
<td>After Hud (11).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Yusuf, except verses 1, 2, 3 and 7 which were revealed at Madinah.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>11</td>
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<td>12</td>
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<td>13</td>
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<td>14</td>
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<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This is the first surah to be revealed at Madinah.
87 which was revealed at Madinah.

16 **Al-Nahl**, except the last three verses which were revealed at Madinah

17 **Al-‘Isra’**, except verses 26, 32, 33, 57 and 73-80 which were revealed at Madinah.

18 **Al-Kahf**, except verse 28 and verses 83-101 which were revealed at Madinah.

19 **Maryam**, except two verses 58 and 71 which were revealed at Madinah.

20 **Ta-Ha**, except two verses 130 and 131 which were revealed at Madinah.

21 **Al-Anbiya’**

22 **Al-Hajj**, except verses 52, 53, 54, and 55 which were revealed between Makkah and Madinah.

23 **Al-Mu’minun**

24 **Al-Furqan**, except verses 68, 69 and 70 which were revealed at Madinah.

25 **Al-Shu’ara’**, except verse 197 and verses from 224 till the end of the surah, which were revealed at Madinah.

26 **Al-Naml**

27 **Al-Qasas**, except verses 52-55 which were revealed at Madinah, and verse 85 which was revealed at Juhfah at the time of Hijrah.

28 **Al-‘Ankabut**, except verses 1-11 which were revealed at Madinah.

29 **Al-Rum**, except the verse 17 which was revealed at Madinah.

30 **Luqman**, except verses 27-29 which were
revealed at Madinah.

32 **Al-Sajdah**, except verses 16-20 which were revealed at Madinah.

33 **Al-Ahzab**

34 **Saba’**, except verse 6 which was revealed at Madinah.

35 **Fatir**

36 Ya-Sin, except verse 45 which was revealed at Madinah.

37 **Al-Saffat**

38 **Sad**

39 **Al-Zumar**, except verses 52, 53 and 54 which were revealed at Madinah.

40 **Al-Mu ‘min (al-Ghafir)**, except two verses 56 and 57, which were revealed at Madinah.

41 **Fussilat (Ha-Mim al-Sajdah)**.

42 **Al-Shura**, except verses 23, 24, 25 and 27 which were revealed at Madinah.

43 **Al-Zukhruf**, except verse 54 which was revealed at Madinah.

44 **Al-Dukhan**

45 **Al-Jathiyah**, except verse 14 which was revealed at Madinah.

46 **Al-‘Ahqaf**, except verses 10, 15, 35 revealed at Madinah.

47 **Muhammad**, except verse 13 which was revealed during the Prophet’s Hijrah (migration).

48 **Al-Fath** was revealed while returning from Hudaybiyyah

49 **Al-Hujurat**

50 **Qaf**, except verse 38 which was revealed at Madinah.

51 **Al-Dhariyat**

52 **Al-Tur**

53 **Al-Najm**, except verse

After **al-Mu ‘minun** (23).

After **Al ‘Imran** (3)

After **Luqman** (31).

After **al-Furqan** (25).

After **al-Jinn** (72).

After **al-‘An ‘am** (6).

After **al-Qamar** (54).

After **Saba’** (34)

After **al-Zumar** (39)

After **al-Mu‘min** or **al-Ghafir** (40)

After **Fussilat** (or **Ha-Mim al-Sajdah**) (41).

After **al-Shura** (42)

After **al-Zukhruf** (43)

After **al-Dukhan** (44)

After **al-Ja‘thiyah** (45).

After **al-Hadid** (57)

After **al-Jumu‘ah** (62)

After **al-Mujadalah** (58)

After **al-Mursalat** (77)

After **al-‘Ahqaf** (46).

After **al-Sajdah** (32)

After **al-‘Ikhlas** (112)
32 which was revealed at Madinah

54 Al-Qamar, except verses 44, 45 and 46 which were revealed at Madinah.

Al-Rahman

After al-Ra’id (13)

55 After al-Tariq (86)

56 Al-Waqi’ah, except two verses, 81 and 82 which were revealed at Madinah

Al-Hadid

After al-Zilzal (99)

Al-Mujadalah

After al-Munafiqun (63)

Al-Hashr

After al-Bayyina

Al-Muntahanah

After al-‘Ahzab (33)

Al-Saff

After al-Taghabun (64)

Al-Jumu’ah

After al-Saff (61)

Al-Munafiqun

After al-Hajj (22)

Al-Taghabun

After al-Tahrim (66)

Al-Talaq

After al-‘Insan (al-Dahr) (76)

Al-Tahrim

After al-Hujurat (49)

After al-Tūr (52)

After al-‘A’laq (90)

Al-Mulk

After al-Mulk (67)

Al-Qalqm, except verses 17-33 and 48-50, which were revealed at Madinah

Al-Haqqah

After al-Mulk (67)

Al-M’arij

After al-Haqqah (69)

Al-Jinn

After al-Nahl (16)

Al-Muzzammil, except verses 10, 11 and 20 which were revealed at Madinah

Al-‘Insan (al-Dahr)

After al-Nahl (16)

Al-Muddaththir

After al-‘A’raf (7)

Al-Haqqah

After al-Qalam (68)

Al-Mursalat, except verse 48 which was revealed at Madinah.

Al-Qiyamah

After al-Muzzammil (73)

Al-‘Insan (al-Dahr)

After al-Qari’ah (101)

Al-Uddaththir

After al-Rahman (55)

Al-Qiyamah

After al-Humazah (104)

Al-Mursalat

After al-Ma’arij (52)

Al-Inshiqaq

After al-Nujjārat (49)

Al-Buruj
Al-‘Alaq is the first surah of the Quran that was revealed to the Prophet (S).

This is the last surah that was revealed.

Al-Nasr, which was revealed at Mina on the occasion of Hijjat al-Wada’, is regarded as Madani surah.

X: The Order of Revelation of the Surahs of the Quran at Makkah and Madinah:

Here, we shall adopt the riwayah narrated by Ibn al-Nadim, through a chain of transmitters from Muhammad ibn Bashir, since it is...
an ancient and trustworthy document. Moreover, there is little difference between the order given in it and that given in the works of Ibrahim ibn ‘Umar al-Biqa’i and Abu al-Qasim ‘Umar ibn Muhammad ibn ‘Abd al-Kafi, as stated by Noldeke. The verses and surahs revealed to the Prophet (S) at Makkah are in the following order:

### The Order of Makkan Surahs:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Surah</th>
<th>Order</th>
<th>Last Verse</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Al-'Alaq (96)</td>
<td>verses 1-5</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>Al-M ala' ikah (35) [same as Fatir]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Al-Qalam (68)</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>Fatir (35)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Al-Muzzammil (73)</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>Maryam (19)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Al- Mudaffah (74)</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>Ta-Ha (20)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Al-Ma' atidh (74)</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>Al-Waqi'ah (56)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Al-Lahab (111)</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>Al-Shu'ara' (26)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Al-Fil (105)</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>Al-Naml (27)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Al-Saffat (102)</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>Al-Qasas (28)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Al-Fajar (89)</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>Bunt Isra’ il (17)</td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Al-Dhu'a (93)</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>Hud (11)</td>
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<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Al-Layl (92)</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>Yusef (12)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Al-Inshirah (94)</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>Yunus (10)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Al-'Imran (95)</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>Al-Hijr (15)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Al-Hashim (96)</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>Al-Saffat (37)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Al-Mulk (102)</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>Luqman (31): Its last part is assigned to Madinah.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Al-Murad (107)</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>Al-Mu'minun (23)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Al-Mumin (108)</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>Saba' (34)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Al-Qa'a (109)</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>Al-'Anbiya' (21)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>Al-An'am (110)</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>Al-Zumar (39)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>Al-Baqarah (111)</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>Al-Mu'min (40)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>Al-Nas (112)</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>Ha-M im al-Sajdah (Fussilat) (41)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>Al-Mu'min (113)</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>Al-Shura (42)</td>
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<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>Al-Hashim (114)</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>Al-Zukhruf (43)</td>
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<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>Al-Hashim (115)</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>Al-Dukhan (44)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>Al-Qura (116)</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>Al-Jathiyah (45)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td>Al-Haqqah (117)</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>Al-‘Aqiq (46): One of its verses was revealed at Medinah.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27</td>
<td>Al-Kahf (118)</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>Al-Dhariyat (51)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28</td>
<td>Al-Madad (119)</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>Al-Ghashiyah (88)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29</td>
<td>Al-Musafir (120)</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>Al-Kuhf (18): Its last part was revealed at Madinah.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30</td>
<td>Al-Nahl (121)</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>Al-'An'am (6): Some of its verses were revealed at Madinah.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31</td>
<td>Al-Ma' raj (122)</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>Al-Nahl (16)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32</td>
<td>Al-Mulk (123)</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>Nuh (71)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>33</td>
<td>Al-Mulk (124)</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>Ibrahim (14)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>34</td>
<td>Al-Baqarah (125)</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>Al-Sajdah (32)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>35</td>
<td>Al-Mulk (126)</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>Al-Tur (52)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36</td>
<td>Al-Mulk (127)</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>Al-Mulk (67)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>37</td>
<td>Al-Mulk (128)</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>Al-Hajj (69)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>38</td>
<td>Al-Mulk (129)</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>Al-Ma' arij (70)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>39</td>
<td>Al-Mulk (130)</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>Al-Naba' (78)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Al-Thawri reports from Faras, who reports from al-Sha'abi that he said that al-Nahl was revealed at Makkah, except its last three verses (126-128).

In Al-Fihrist, Ibn Jarih reports from ‘Ata’al-Khurasani, who reports Ibn ‘Abbas to have said that eighty-five surahs of the Quran were revealed at Makkah and twenty-eight at Madinah. The surahs revealed at Madinah are as follows:

The Order of Madani Surahs:

1. Al-Baqarah (2)
2. Al’A’raf (7)
3. Al-Infitar (82)
4. Al’Insiqq (84)
5. Al-Rum (30)
6. Al’Ankabut (29)
7. Al-Mutaffifin (83)
8. Al-Qamar (54)
9. Al-Tariq (86)
10. Al-Nahl (126-128)
11. Al-Baqarah (2) - Al’taqif (8)
12. Al’A’raf (7)
13. Al-Infitar (82)
14. Al’Insiqq (84)
15. Al-Rum (30)
16. Al’Ankabut (29)
17. Al-Mutaffifin (83)
18. Al-Qamar (54)
19. Al-Tariq (86)
20. Al-Nahl (126-128)

It is said that the Ma’udhatan were revealed at Madinah (al-Fihrist, p. 26).

Conclusion:

From what has been said above, it can be concluded that the Quran used to be written down on different kinds of material during the days of the Prophet (S), such as palm branches, scapulae and silk.

Al-Hakim al-Nishaburi reports on the authority of the Shaykhayn (Muslim and al-Bukhari) a tradition from Zayd ibn Thabit that he said: “We were in the presence of the Prophet (S) and arranged the Quran which was on stone tablets. This arrangement was in accordance with the order of the verses and according to the direction of the Prophet (S). But these written Suhuf were in a disjointed (mutafarriqah) state, therefore the Prophet (S) commanded ‘Ali ‘to collect them (‘bi jam ‘iha), for he was concerned about their loss (min tadyi’iha).

Also the riwayah narrated by ‘Ali ibn Ibrahim al-Qummi indicates
that the Quran was preserved in the bosoms of some men of the Sahabah exactly as they had heard it from the Prophet (S). In the episode of Battle of Bi‘r of Ma‘unah (Well of Ma‘unah) in the fourth year of the Hijrah a group of approximately seventy persons, called al-qurra’, were slain.

CHAPTER 2

1. The Quran in the Days of Abu Bakr and ‘Umar:

When the Prophet (S) left the world and his immaculate spirit acquired the blissful nearness of the All-Merciful, and Abu Bakr ibn Abi Quhafah took charge of the affairs of Muslims, Musaylamah, in Yama-mah, made claims of prophethood in the first year of Abu Bakr’s caliphate. Abu Bakr dispatched an army to fight with him, in which, along with others, were a group of qurra’ and huffaz of the Quran. The Muslims were victorious in this war; Musaylamah was killed and many of the qurra’ were also slain. At that time, ‘Umar ibn al-Khattab brought the need to collect and compile the Quran to the attention of the caliph. In al-‘Itqan, Ibn Abi Dawud narrates from al-Hasan that ‘Umar once inquired about a certain verse of the Quran; he was told that someone who was slain in the Battle of Yamamah remembered it. Thereupon he uttered the words of istirja’; then he commanded that the Quran be collected and compiled. He was the first to collect the Quran in a mushaf.

Al-Bukhari narrates from ‘Ubayd ibn al-Sibaq that Zayd ibn Thabit said: “After the Battle of Yamamah, Abu Bakr sent for me. When I went to him, ‘Umar ibn al-Khattab was also present there. Abu Bakr said to me, “‘Umar has brought to me the news that the Battle of Yamamah has played much havoc with the qurra’ of the Quran. He said: “I am afraid that if such bloody encounters should recur, much of the Quran would be lost. Verily, I see it advisable for you to order the Quran to be collected”. I said to ‘Umar: “How will you, (“How shall I ...“, according to the narration of Muhammad ibn Ishaq) do something which the Prophet (S) didn’t?” He said: “By God, this is a good thing”. He kept on coming back to me until God opened my breast to the matter and I saw ‘Umar’s point.”

Zayd ibn Thabit said: “Abu Bakr said to me: ‘You are a young and intelligent man, and I consider you free of any kind of blame, for you used to write the wahy for the Prophet (S). Search for the Quran and collect it.’ I said: ‘By God, if I had been ordered to carry a mountain from one place to another, it would not be harder upon me than this order which you give me to collect the Quran’. I said, ‘How do you do a thing which the Prophet of God didn’t?’ He said: ‘By God, this
(collecting of the Quran) is a good thing’. And he kept on pressing me, until God opened my heart to do that to which He had opened those of Abu Bakr and ‘Umar. Then I sought for the Quran, and collected it from pieces of palm branches, white stones (likhaf) and the breasts of men, till I found the last part of the Surat al-Tawbah with Abu Khuzaymah al-‘Ansari and with no other person, from:

\[
\text{فَقَدْ جَاءَ كُلٌّ رَسُولٌ مِّنَ الْمُسَاهِمِينَ}
\]

\[
\text{غَيْرُ عَلَيْهِ مَعَيْنَيتَينَ غَيْرُ عَلَيْهِ مُعَتَّلٍ}
\]

till the end of al-Bara'ah”...

This tradition apparently refers the initial refusal of Abu Bakr and Zayd to ‘collecting of the Quran’, though, according to other traditions and statements, which were mentioned previously, the Quran was collected during the lifetime of the Prophet (S). But some reflection, as well as some indications, show that the novelty of ‘Umar’s suggestion regarding the collecting of the Quran was concerning its collection in a codex....

According to al-’Itqan, it has been reported in al-Maghazi’ from Musa ibn ‘Uqbah from ibn Shihab that he said: “When the Muslims were faced with the episode of Yamamah, Abu Bakr was afraid lest some part of the Quran should be lost. Thence, the people brought whatever of the Quran they had with them until the Quran was collected on pages (fi al-waruq) during the time of Abu Bakr. Thus Abu Bakr was the first to collect and compile the Quran in a codex (mushaf). After that, ‘Umar made an announcement in Madinah that whosoever had acquired any part of the Quran from the Prophet (S) should bring it. Abu Bakr told ‘Umar and Zayd: ‘Sit at the door of the mosque and write down the verses of the Quran from anyone who brings two witnesses (to testify it)’.”

It is likely that the witnesses were called to testify that whatever was brought had been presented at the last presentation before the Prophet (S) in the year of his demise and was written in front of him (S). Hence the statement of Zayd ibn Thabit that he found the last part of the Surat al-Bara’ah with Abu Khuzaymah and with nobody else. Because, if the calling of witnesses had any other meaning, the ‘non-availability’ of the Surat al-Bara’ah for Zayd does not make any sense, as Zayd had collected and memorized the whole Quran, having learnt it from the Prophet (S). Zayd accepted Abu Khuzaymah’s word, since the Prophet (S) had considered his testimony to be equivalent to that of two witnesses. But the verse of al-rajm (stoning) brought by ‘Umar was not written by Zayd as he alone had brought it.

Moreover, according to some traditions, a collection of the Quran written on pieces of palm branches, silk and scapulae was preserved in the Prophet’s house. This later ‘collecting’ of the Quran involved the gathering together of the verses that were written previously on scapulae, on palm branches and white stone tablets and their copying on adim, i.e. sheets of tanned sheepskin. Ibn Hajar reports ‘Ammarah ibn
Ghaziyah to have stated that Zayd ibn Thabit said: “Abu Bakr ordered me to write the Quran on pieces of adim. These suhuf were with Abu Bakr until God caused him to die. After that they were with ‘Umar during his lifetime, and after that they remained with his daughter, Hafsah.

It is reported that ‘Umar said: “Our codices (masahif) should not be dictated except by the youths of Quraysh and Thaqif”, and ‘Uthman said: “Take those who dictate from the tribe of Hudhayl and the scribes from Thaqif.”

II. The Quran During the Reign of ‘Uthman:

It was mentioned earlier that some words of the Quran were read differently by the Sahabah; that is, they substituted different synonyms while reciting – like, imdi and isri, ‘ajjil and asri’, akhkhir and amhil, etc. ‘Umar read:  

\[\text{\textit{ان ناسسَة اللى}}\]  
\[\text{\textit{فاسقُوا إلى ذكر الله}}\]  
\[\text{\textit{وأصوب فيلا.}}\]  

Anas read:  

\[\text{\textit{أسلام في}}\]  
\[\text{\textit{وعينش فيلا.}}\]  

and this difference in reading did not change the meaning of the Quran in their view, and for this reason the Prophet (S) had also approved of their reading in spite of the change in words. After the Prophet (S), these differences increased during the days of Abu Bakr and assumed such serious dimensions during ‘Uthman’s reign that teachers and pupils quarrelled over them, and qurra’ and huffaz of the Quran, in Syria, Iraq, Yemen, Armenia and Azarbayjan differed from one another. These differences also increased as a result of various factors that caused linguistic changes, such as cohabitation of Arabs with non-Arab nations or with non-Mudari Arabs. This situation was a matter for concern and alarm. At that time, an eminent Companion, Hudhayfah ibn al-Yaman expressed his profound concern about its disastrous effects if allowed to continue. In those days, he was engaged with the Iraqis in war against the Syrians for the conquest of Armenia and Azarbayjan. Al-Bukhari has narrated (the author of al-Fihrist also confirms this narration) from Ibrahim, from ibn Shihab, that Anas ibn Malik told him that Hudhayfah ibn al-Yaman came to ‘Uthman (who according to al-Fihrist was in Iraq at that time) when he was fighting along with the people of Iraq against the Syrians for the conquest of Armenia and Azarbayjan. Hudhayfah was frightened at the differences in the people’s reciting of the Quran. He said to ‘Uthman: “Rise to the rescue of this Ummah before they fall into disagreements about the Scripture like the Jews and Christians”. ‘Uthman then sent someone to Hafsah asking her to send the copy that was with her, and it was to be returned to her later on. Hafsah sent it to ‘Uthman, who ordered Zayd ibn Thabit, ‘Abd Allah ibn al-Zubayr, Sa‘id ibn al-‘As and ‘Abd al-Rahman ibn al-Harith ibn Hisham to make several codices. ‘Uthman instructed the three Qurayshis that in case of any difference between Zayd ibn Thabit and themselves they should write it in the dialect of the Quraysh, since
the Quran had come down in their dialect. 80

According to some trustworthy narrations, when ʿUthman decided to prepare the codices of the Quran, he gathered twelve individuals from among the Quraysh and Ansar. Ibn Abi Dawud reports from Muhammad ibn Sirin, from Kathir ibn Aflah who said: “When ʿUthman decided on preparing standard codices of the Quran, he gathered twelve individuals from among the Quraysh and Ansar and sent for the chest that was kept in ʿUmar’s house. When it was brought, ʿUthman told them that if they could not settle upon a certain thing they should wait before taking decision about it.” Muhammad says that they would postpone something until they were sure that it was part of the previous presentation before the Prophet (S). In any case, they performed the work of writing according to ʿUthman’s advice.

Ibn Hajar says: “The Sahabah unanimously agreed upon it that whatever was presented in the last version presented to the Prophet (S) should be written and the rest should be left out.” 81

This statement of Ibn Hajar is borne out by a tradition reported by al-Bukhari from Kharijah ibn Zayd ibn Thabit that the latter said: “While preparing the codices of the Quran, one verse of the Surat al-ʿAhzab which I had heard from the Prophet (S) could not be found. When searched, we found it with Khuzaymah ibn Thabit al-ʿAnsari: من المُؤْسِسِينِ رَحَالًا صَدَّرًا مَا عَلَّمَنَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا. We included it in its surah in the musaf.” As can be gathered from this, it was their inquiry and quest that led them to discover the verse present in the final version recited before the Prophet (S) during his last days.

When the codices of the Quran were prepared, ʿUthman returned the original mushaf to Hafsah. Four codices were made, of which one remained with him. Of the three copies, one was sent to Basrah, one to Kufah, and another to Syria. He appointed Zayd ibn Thabit to teach the Quran to the people of Madinah from the Madani codex. ‘Amir ibn Qays 82 was sent to Basrah with the copy that was sent there; Abu ʿAbd al-Rahman al-Salami 83 was sent to Kufah with the codex sent to Kufah, and Mughirah ibn Shihab with the one that was sent to Syria.

Hence, the first collecting of the Quran was the recording of the verses as soon as they were revealed to the Prophet (S). They were recorded on materials that were customarily used by the Arabs for writing. This first collection was presented before the Prophet (S). The second ‘collecting’ of the Quran took place during the reign of Abu Bakr, when the collecting of the Quran involved its writing in a codex, on sheets of tanned leather. The third ‘collecting’ took place during the reign of ‘Uthman, which made the Muslims to come together upon one reading.

In his book Saʿd al-suʿud, ʿAli ibn Muhammad al-Tawus al-ʿAlawi al-Fatimi, while quoting from the book of Abu Jaʿfar Muhammad ibn Mansur the riwayah narrated by Muhammad ibn Zayd ibn
about variations in the copies (masahif) of the Quran, mentions that Zayd ibn Thabit collected the Quran during Abu Bakr’s reign. Zayd was opposed in this matter by Ubayy ibn Ka‘b, ‘Abd Allah ibn Mas‘ud, and Salim, the mawla of Abu Hudhayfah. Thereupon, ‘Uthman started it all over again and had the Quran compiled according to the advice and approval of ‘Ali ibn Abi Talib (A). ‘Uthman seized the copies of the Quran that were in possession of Ubayy, ‘Abd Allah ibn Mas‘ud and Salim, and had them washed clean.84 ‘Uthman had one codex of the Quran written for himself, one for the people of Madinah, one for the people of Basrah and one for the people of Syria. The Syrian codex was seen by Ibn Fadl Allah al-‘Umari in the middle of the 8th/14th century. Describing the Mosque of Damascus, he says: “To the left side is placed the ‘Uthmani codex in the handwriting of Amir al-Mu’minin ‘Uthman.”85 Most probably that mushaf is the same as the one that was present in the Leningrad library and was later transferred to England.

In Dhu al-Hijjah 1353, I saw a manuscript of the Quran in Kufic script in the ‘Alawi Library at al-Najaf, at the end of which was written: ...

The statement of Ibn Tawus in his book al-su‘ud that ‘Uthman started all over again and compiled the Quran with the approval of ‘Ali ibn Abi Talib (A) is confirmed by al-Shahristani in the introduction to his tafsir. There he cites a tradition from Suwayd ibn ‘Alqamah that he heard ‘Ali ibn Abi Talib (A) saying:

O people, for God’s sake, abstain from taking an extreme stand in the case of ‘Uthman and refrain from calling him ‘the burner of the masahif’ By God, he did not burn them except in the presence of the Companions of the Prophet (S), whom we had gathered. He asked: “What is your advice regarding this reading, on which people differ: one man meets another and tells him that his own reading is superior to his; this situation will lead them to apostasy”. We gave our opinion. He said: “I want to gather the people on one mushaf; because if you differ today, the difference will be severer among those who come after you.” We agreed with him. Then ‘Uthman sent for Zayd ibn Thabit and Sa‘id ibn al-‘As, asking one of them to write and the other to dictate. These two did not disagree regarding anything except for one letter in the Surat al-Baqarah; one of them said it should be و, while the other said that it ought to be ِ. Thereupon, the reading of Zayd ibn Thabit was adopted, as he had been a scribe of the wahy.
62. Abu ‘Ubaydah, in Kitab al-qira’at, says that some of them completed their work after the Prophet (S).
63. Sa’d ibn ‘Ubayd ibn al-Nu’man ibn Qays ibn ‘Amr ibn Zayd al-‘ Ansari al-Awsi. He died at the age of 64 in the year 15/636 at the Battle of Qadisiyyah.
64. Abu al-Darda’, ‘Uwaymir ibn Zayd. He was called the “Hakim of the Ummah”. He died in 32/652.
65. Mu‘adh ibn Jabal ibn ‘Amr ibn Aws. In a tradition, the Prophet is reported to have said: When the scholars will assemble before God, Mu‘adh will lead them, (standing) on a height.” Mu‘adh died of plague at Ghur at an age of about 35 in the year 18/639.
66. Abu Zayd Thabit ibn Zayd al-‘ Ansari. According to Ibn al-‘Athir ‘Izz al-Din Abu al-Hasan al-Jazari in Usud al-ghabah, al-‘Abbas al-Dawrf said: “I was listening when Yahya ibn Mu‘in was asked about the Abd Zayd said to have collected the Quran during the Prophet’s days. He said: Thabit ibn Zayd.” Abu ‘Umar said: “I know of no other.” It has also been said that it was Abu Zayd Sa’d ibn ‘Ubayd ibn al-Nu’man But the first name, which agrees with the statement of Ibn al-Nadim is more probable.
67. Other names have also been mentioned, such as ‘Ubayd ibn Mu‘adh and ‘Atik ibn Mu‘adh al-Jazari, as in Usud al-ghabah.
68. Ubayy ibn Ka‘b ibn Qays Abu al-Mundhir al-Khazraji al-‘ Ansari, who after ‘All (A) was the most learned of the Companions about the Quran and the leader of the qurra. He learnt the Quran from the Prophet (S) and was a man of knowledge and action. He died at Madtnah in 20/641.
69. ‘Ubaydah ibn al-Samit ibn Qays al-Khazraji al-‘ Ansari, who commanded the Muslim army in Egypt. He collected the Quran, and was sent to al-Sham by ‘Umar ibn al-Khattab to teach the Quran and Islamic law to the people there. He died at al-Ramlah or al-Bayt al-Muqaddas in 34/654.
70. Zayd ibn Thabit ibn Dahhak ibn Zayd ibn Lawzan. He was one of the scribes of the wahy. He memorized the Quran and learnt the law, in addition he learnt Syriac at the Prophet’s instance. According to a tradition from al-Wiqidi reported through a chain of transmitters on the authority of Yahya ibn Bukayr, he died in 45/665. He is also said to have died in 55/675 (al-Dhahabi, Tadhkirat al-huffaz).

Al-Tabarani, Al-Bayhaqi, and al-Hakim report from al-Sha’bi that once Zayd ibn Thabit had offered someone’s funeral prayers, a mule was brought for him to mount. Ibn ‘Abbas came and held the stirrup for him. Zayd said to him: “Leave it, O cousin of the Messenger of God.” Ibn ‘Abbas replied, “We have been commanded to act thus with scholars and elders.” Zayd ibn Thabit kissed his hands and said: “And thus we have been commanded to act with the Prophet’s family.” According to al-Hakim, the hadith is sahih al-insad ‘ala shart Muslim (Kitab al-‘ibda’, p. 99).
71. Al-Suyuti, al-‘Itqan.
72. Al-Shaykh al-Mufid, Muhammad ibn Muhammad ibn al-Nu’man al-Baghdadi al-Karkhi (336-413/948-1022), the great Imami faqih, mutakallim and muhaddith. He was the teacher of al-Sharef al-Radi and al-Sharif al-Murtada.

73. Ibrahim al-Biqa’i, Burhan al-Din Abu-Ishaq Ibrahim ibn ‘Umar al-Biqai al-Shafii (d.809/1406), among his books is Kitab sirr al-ruh.

74. T. Noldeke (1836-1931), German orientalist. A scholar of Eastern and Semitic languages, he made important contribution to Islamic and Eastern studies.

76. Ibn Abi Dawud narrates this riwayah from Hisham ibn ‘Urwah.
77. Al-Muzhir, vol. 1, p. 137.
78. His name is Hudhayfah ibn Hisl ibn Jabir; Hamadan, Ray and Dinawar were conquered under his command. Died in the year 36/656 forty days after ‘Uthman’s assassination.

79. The author of al-Fihrist, while quoting the tradition says, “Narrated by a thiqah (narrator);” see al-Fihrist (Egypt), p. 37.
80. This also indicates that “seven letters” (al-ahruf al-sab’ah) meant that the difference in the readings pertained to the use of different synonyms for a single meaning.

81. Apparently, that which was left out was something that was not in accord with the dialect of the Quraysh.

82. My investigation indicates that he is Abu Burdah ‘Amir ibn Qays al-‘Ashari, the brother of Abu Musa al-‘Ashari.
83. His name is ‘Abd Allah ibn Habib ibn Rabi’ah; he was one of the qurra’. See ibn Hajar, Tahdhib al-Tahdhib, vol. 5, p. 185.
84. In some accounts it is mentioned that he burnt them.
85. See Masalik al-‘absar (Egypt), vol. 1, p. 195.