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A CRITICAL READING OF MARTIN LINGS'

MUHAMMAD ﷺ: HIS LIFE BASED ON THE EARLIEST SOURCES

Foreword to the first Swedish translation

wenty-three years after its first publication in 1983, *Muhammad ﷺ: his life based on the earliest sources* by the late Ab%

Bakr SirYj al-DĪn (Martin Lings, d. 2004) continues its lead as the best-written work of Prophetic biography in English

and has now been translated into a dozen languages. The readers' blurbs from distinguished writers on the back cover call it

“superb... scrupulous... exhaustive... mesmerising... easy and absorbing... enthralling... engrossing... majestic... gripping...

fascinat[ing].” Indeed, Lings' lofty English, his knowledge of genealogy, his reflexive and worshipful narrative style, and his

excellent adab with the Prophet ﷺ all deserve such glowing praise.

Knowledge of Genealogy

Lings' keen sense of the family tree and tribal kinships of the Prophet, upon him and them blessings and peace, makes for a

rich intertext of Prophetic Shamʿil and Khaḷiḷ, Ahl al-Bayt and Companion lore, and general Sīra historiography inside

his Sīra itself. Note how much of those arts he packs into this brief paragraph in Chapter XIII (“The Household”):

Muʿammad’s eldest uncle, ʿAḥrith [ibn ʿAbd al-Muʿallib], who was now dead, had left many children,

and one of the sons, his cousin Abū Sufyān, was also his foster-brother, having been nursed by ʿalīmah

amongst the Banī Saʿd a few years after himself. People would say that Abū Sufyān was of those who bore

the closest family likeness to Muʿammad; and amongst the characteristics they had in common was

eloquence. But Abu Sufyān was a gifted poet – perhaps more gifted than his uncles Zubayr and Abū ʿAḥlib

- whereas Muʿammad had never shown any inclination to compose a poem, though he was unsurpassed

in his mastery of Arabic, and in the beauty of his speech.

High English

Lings’ lofty style evokes the beauty of the language of the Quran and Hadith, as in these renditions of the meanings of the

Blessed Quran:

(Chapter XVI, page 45, paragraph 5) By the morning brightness, and by the night when it is still, thy Lord hath

not forsaken thee nor doth He hate thee, and the last shall be better for thee than the first, and thy Lord shall

give and give unto thee, and thou shalt be satisfied...

(XVI, 48, 3) Verily We shall load thee with a word of heavy weight.

(XXIII, 67, 3) Verily those who say: "Our Lord is God", and who then follow straight His path, on them

descend the Angels saying: "Fear not nor grieve, but hearken to good tidings of the Paradise which ye are

promised. We are your protecting friends in this lower life, and in the Hereafter wherein ye shall be given that

which your souls long for, that which ye pray for, in bounty from Him who is All-Forgiving, All-Merciful."

And the meanings of the Noble ʾadīth:

(XXXI, 99, 1) "I take refuge in the Light of Thy Countenance whereby all darkneses are illuminated and the

things of this world and the next are rightly ordered, lest Thou make descend Thine anger upon me, or lest

Thy wrath beset me. Yet it is Thine to reproach until Thou art well pleased. There is no power and no might

except through Thee.”

(LIV, 193, 4) Unlike most of the dead [of U[^]ud], the man of Muzaynah who had fought so valiantly had none

of his people present, for his nephew had also fought to the death. So the Prophet went to him and stood

beside him saying: “May God be pleased with thee, even as I am pleased with thee.”

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Islamic Manner of Mentioning the Prophet ﷺ

Lings does not mention the Holy Prophet ﷺ by name from the time he became Prophet but only by his Prophetic titles –

except when citing the disbelievers through free indirect speech. This courtesy reflects the ethics of the Quran and those of

his Companions, upon him and them blessings and peace.

Rare Reports

Lings relies much on al-W[^]qidī's Magh[^]zī and mentions a couple of rare, moving reports exclusively found in this book:

1. The pilgrims, stopping to camp at ʿudaybiya, find themselves short of water, whereupon the Holy Prophet ﷺ (as he did

on many other occasions related in the two ʾa[^]ṣ) turned the dregs of a dried-up hollow into a gushing spring. This miracle was soon followed by

another one, namely, the Prophet's disclosure of his knowledge of what the ever-obdurate

Abd Allāh ibn Ubayy ibn Salām had commented in denial of the first miracle without being informed of it by a human witness:

(LXVI, 249, 2) One or two of the hypocrites were amongst the pilgrims, including Ibn Ubayy; and, as he sat

drinking his fill, one of his fellow clansmen addressed him saying: "Out upon thee, O father of Rūbāb, hath

not the time now come for thee to see how thou art placed? What more than this can there be?" "I have seen

the like of this before," said Ibn Ubayy, whereupon the other man remonstrated with him so threateningly that

Ibn Ubayy went with his son to the Prophet to forestall trouble and to say that he had been misunderstood. But

before he had time to speak the Prophet said to him: "Where hast thou seen the like of that which thou hast

seen this day?" He answered: "I have never seen the like of it." "Then why," said the Prophet, "didst say what

thous saidst?" "I ask forgiveness of God," said Ibn Ubayy. "O Messenger of God," said his son, "ask forgiveness

for him," and the Prophet did so. [Waqidi 2:589]

2. (LXXIV, 296, 2) During the march on one of these days the Prophet saw a

bitch lying by the side of the road with a

litter of recently born pups which she was feeding, and he was afraid that she might be molested by one or another of the

men. So he told Juḥayl [ibn SurṬqah] of Ṭamrah to stand on guard beside her until every contingent had passed. [WṬqidī

2:804]

ImṬm Aḥmad said that Muḥammad ibn ḥUmar ibn WṬqid al-Aslamī al-WṬqidī (d. 207) was an “expert in the battles and

campaigns” but “haphazard in assigning his chains of transmission.” His rank as a ḥadīth narrator varies from “very weak”

(Ṭāīf jiddan) and “discarded (matr%k) to “fair” (ḥasan). Ibn Taymiyya asserts, “No two people differ over the fact that alWṬqidī is among the most knowledgeable of authorities in the details of military campaigns and among the best experts in

all that pertains to them” while al-Dhahabī said, “There is no disagreement over the fact that he is weak, but he is honest

and very valuable” and he is declared reliable by Ibn Sayyid al-NṬs, al-ḥAynī, Ibn al-ḥArabī, Ibn Daqīq al-ḥ-d, Ibn alHumṬm, and others as documented by Ab% Ghudda in his ThalṬth RasṬil fī ḥIlm Mu|~alaḥ al-ḥadīth (p. 124-125 n.) and

Ibn Taymiyya in al-ḤṬrim al-Masl%l ḥalṬ ShṬtim al-Ras%l œ (p. 97). A junior contemporary of Ibn IsḥṬq, al-WṬqidī is the

principal source of ImṬm al-ḥabarī (d. 310) in the latter’s ṬṬrīkh and his

student and scribe Mu[^]ammad ibn Sa^çd (d. 230)

relied heavily on him in his >abaq[¥]t.

Analytical Dimension

At times Lings writes not only to narrate but to reflect – a Fiqh al-S^ĩra of sorts before al-Ghaz[¥]ĩ and al-B[%]~ĩ – and makes

keen observations, particularly in analysis of the attitude of the Jews toward the revelation: “[G]enerally speaking, whereas

the Arabs were in favour of the man but against the message, the Jews were in favour of the message but against the man”

(XIX, 57, 1) and the entire paragraph that begins “Many of the Jews welcomed at first what seemed to be the end of all

danger of a further outbreak of civil war in the oasis” (XXXIX, 127, 2). Of the arch-hypocrite of Mad^ĩna, ^çAbd All[¥]h ibn

Ubay ibn Sal[%]l, he says “it was his policy to be as non-committal as possible, but he sometimes betrayed his feelings despite

himself” (XXXIX, 128, 5). Lings is at his most brilliant in the Ban[%] Quray’a chapter (LXI) and in the last four chapters of

the book, particularly his superb contextualization of the [^]ad^ĩth of Ghad^ĩr Khumm (LXXXIII, 338, 2-3) which the

sectarians have misused so much to wreak havoc on the Umma’s unity. To All[¥]h is our return!

With the possible exception of Shaykh Mu^ammad Saçİd al-B%~İ's superior Sİra entitled Jurisprudence of the Prophetic

Biography (now available in English translation at DŸr al-Fikr), even among Arabic books, in all these respects I cannot

think of a single contemporary work that gathers all those accomplishments under a single roof. Allah have mercy on Ab%

Bakr SirŸj al-Dİn Lings and reward him abundantly!

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ith great pleasure and thanks to AllŸh, therefore, I am honored to present the first Swedish translation of Lings' Sİra

to the public. Ann-Catrin Nilsson, the author of this translation, completed it in the lifetime of the author and with

his authorization. Her translation was proofread by Muhammed Knut Bernström, the author of the standard Swedish

interpretation of the Quran. I trust that those who read Swedish will judge her work to be of the highest standard.

Genesis of This Critical Reading

It is also true that there are many problems with Lings' book. The subtle modifications inserted by Lings into the reprints of

his Prophetic biography over the years, in the form of footnotes (possibly also

in the text itself), show some acknowledgment of the need for amendments. This was not enough. Accordingly, Ms. Nilsson took the right approach in presenting

Dr. Lings, two years ago, with five specific queries she thought “would need elucidation from an Islamic point of view.”

She told me she wrote Lings the following:

"There are ... some topics that I, having consulted well-informed muslims, think would need

elucidation from an islamic point of view. I list them here:

"Chapter I:

Can I add a note explaining that Hagar and Sarah, according to islamic tradition, were friends and

wives on equal terms and that it was not, as in the biblical version, the anger of Sarah that drove Hagar

out in the desert but the voice and will of God?

"Chapter VI:

Is there a note to be added about the source of the statement (on p. 17): “Moreover one Christian had

been allowed and even encouraged to paint an icon of the Virgin Mary and the child Christ on an

inside wall of the Ka'bah, where it sharply contrasted with all the other paintings.”?

"Chapter XI:

Would you mind a note about what is meant by "average height and average strenght" when applied

to the Prophet (SAS)?

"Chapter LIV:

Here also a note seems appropriate since the interpretation: "...for God created Adam in His image"

might lead the mind in the direction of trying to visualize God as having a face. I have been told that

the arabic language is equally open to the following interpretation, which should be the one more in

conformity with the general islamic view: God created man in Adams (AS) image.

"Chapter LVIII:

Should a note be added to stress that the marriage of Zainab and the Prophet (SAS) first and foremost

came about, as the Quran says: "so that it should not be difficult for true believers to wed the wives of

their adopted sons if they divorced them." (Q. 33: 37)?

"If you don't mind notes being added on the points given above I will insh'Allâh consult a qualified

person to formulate them and this being done let you know the result as soon as possible."

These queries are a representative sample of the honest questions any informed Muslim reader may ask herself about Lings'

Sîra. My own recent re-reading of the book, as the critical notes below show, conjured up the same issues, among other

cruxes which definitely need to be addressed. Ms. Nilsson offered that any answers Dr. Lings might forward be inserted as

footnotes to the Swedish text. When he turned down that offer in a subsequent telephone conversation he had with her and

"forbade any notes whatsoever beyond his own," she turned to me to provide what she considered a necessary commentary.

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Run from Muslim Publishers!

ings' refusal that anyone but himself "clarify" his text is justified. One look at the cannibalizing of two classic texts in

recent years by purportedly Islamic publishing houses, Muhammad Marmaduke Pickthall's *The Meaning of the*

Glorious Koran and Abdullah Yusuf Ali's *The Holy Quran*; English translation & commentary is deterrent enough from

ever trusting a da'wa-toting publisher again. Malaysia's Islamic Book Trust had the gall to preface their act with a protestation of "their sacred duty as Muslims" to alter Pickthall's original text because of the "285 mistakes" they and their friends

decided, in their wisdom, stood in their way of what the text should read. No critical appendix or preface, no commentary,

no footnotes, no list of those so-called mistakes; just ta'^rĭf in broad daylight. Others brazenly plagiarize the cover type,

design, background color, and even the title, as London's Ta-Ha Publishers did with their 1988 *Life of Muhammad r : his*

life based on the earliest sources by a certain Tahia Al-Ismail, a copie conforme of Lings' bestselling title!

Literary quality and trust, sadly, are no longer part of the moral landscape of

Muslims involved in the publishing sector. It

has become a heart-rending experience to browse in an Islamic bookstore. For every one Reliance of the Traveller you will

see ninety-nine potboilers from the Khan-Hilali ﺍﻟﻤﺎﺩﻳﻨﻪ Layl School of Defacement of the Quran and Sunna; Mawd ﺍﺭﻭﺩ fare,

bowdlerized (Renewal and Reform in Isl ﺍﻡ); a Harun Yahya cornucopia for those who favor pictures over text; lots of

soulless, wordy books about sufism, jurisprudence, intellectual history, and politics which all shirk the standard set by the

Reliance and do not rise higher than the paper they are written on; and the ubiquitous Pork: Reasons for Its Prohibition in

Isl ﺍﻡ . More than ninety-nine percent of all those editions, translations, thoughts and philosophies are unfit for publication

(although Pork: Reasons for Its Prohibition in Isl ﺍﻡ may be ideal for da ﺀ wa by porcuphobes to porcuphiles).

Whence the boom? As Lings noted in his Ancient Beliefs and Modern Superstitions there is nothing new to say. However,

as the Holy Prophet, upon him blessings and peace, predicted: “Yafsh ﺍﻟﻘﻠﻢ al-qalam,” “The pen shall proliferate.” To make

things worse, the natural logorrhea of “the modern mind” is exponentially boosted by the immoral sub-standards of our

authors, publishers, and distributors. “This knowledge used to be a noble

affair,” al-Awzayrī said, “until book-writing

brought into it those that have no share in it.” That was thirteen hundred years ago. Now, the Tower of Babel is complete.

Everyone is a writer, including the businessbrothers who package bad, semi-bad, and almost not bad products with

assembly-line diligence for consumption and propaganda and their accomplices on the distribution end. The day I saw fresh

glossy prints of Albayrī’s The Prophet’s Prayer being promoted in a bookstore owned by a polyglot former student of Shaykh

Muhammad ibn al-Alawī al-Malikī I lost the remainder of my *ʿusn al-ʿann*. When a graduate of the greatest Sunni educator

of the last quarter-century loses his bearings on what is and what is not acceptable teaching of the first pillar of the Dīn after

the Shahīda, there is no more denying the reality of “Nothing shall remain of Islām except its name, nothing of Religion

except its image.”

“And We shall turn unto the work they did and make it scattered motes.” It is understandable that a conscious writer and

bibliophile such as Lings would want no part in this corruption. Nevertheless, our directive is naḥīʾa – to stand for truth –

and our firm belief is that he would, no doubt, have taken well-founded advice to heart and acted upon it. Now that he is

gone, his book has entered a new phase. We might see it slashed and hacked in one, ten, or seventy-five years by the

kinglets of print. They may even employ these very notes to hone their editorial axes but Allāh is our witness we are

innocent of their crimes. Our intention is only to set the record straight on some facts of doctrine, Quran and Sunna

commentary, Prophetic biography, and the Prophetic Attributes – not at the expense of Lings' text, but only as this

prefatory study, in a text separate from his. I believe he was a noble man who would have been pleased with this. Ibn Kathīr

relates that when the great Imām al-Ḥakīm al-Naysābūrī was informed that the Ḥadīth master ʿAbd al-Ghanī ibn Saʿīd alMiṣrī had written a corrective critique entitled Al-Ḥakīm's Mistakes, he took to reading from the latter in his public

gatherings and would supplicate on behalf of ʿAbd al-Ghanī and thank him. May Allāh Most High instil this critical reading

with the same spirit of justice and with the respect due to His truthful authors and their work.

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his critique falls under various topical headings, some of which I address in the next six sections, leaving the rest for a

systematic passage-by-passage review in column format. These six headings – poetic license, dubious Quran and

Hadith commentary, misreferencing, urge for pulchritude, Catholic paraphernalia, and “Perennialism” – are not necessarily

the more important ones but they came to mind first. The remaining material was arranged mostly in the order in which it

appeared in the book.

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Poetic License

Poetic license marks off Muhammad æ: his life based on the earliest sources from all other serious Prophetic biographies. It

it is fair to say Lings often has more imagination than knowledge of what he describes and never takes to heart the absolute

prohibition of fiction in Islȳm with regard to the Prophet æ. Consequently, his constant embroidery detracts from the

reliability of his book and, much as it is meant to enhance reading, brings it down to the romance level from which its titlepage homage to “the earliest sources” had promised to exempt it.

It is also possible that Lings spent little time in Muslim lands (although he kept company with René Gu  non in Cairo for a

while), where he normally would have absorbed some of the sensibilities of Muslims and might have avoided or at least

suppressed, after the fact, the two or three more momentous misinterpretations in Mu[^]ammad: his life based on the earliest

sources. He defended them in reprint after reprint by beefing up his footnotes with references he thought provided enough

justification. Instead, surely, he should have done away altogether with those passages. One of them is the “lightly clad”

Zaynab scene – in his defense an error of taste that predates him; but an error, nevertheless, that “betokens ignorance of the

immense rights and merits of the Prophet œ” according to QaYĪ Ab%o Mu[^]ammad al-QushayrĪ al-MYlikĪ as cited by QYĪĪ

øIyY¥ in al-Shif¥. (How greatly would Lings and many other biographers of the Prophet œ have profited from reading that

book before they set to their task!) Another such misinterpretation is the “Kaçba icon” episode (more below).

Dubious Quran and Hadith Commentary

Lings is at his weakest in one of his final chapters entitled “The Degrees” (LXXXI), which is replete with incautious

interpretations or misreporting of Quran and Hadith. Inherent in the reality of degrees and levels in the Religion is the

notion of the elite of humankind, the Believers, and the elite of the Believers, the Friends of God. However, Lings turns

this notion into a skewed elitism which characterizes the massive majority of people as blind (LXXXI, 329, 3): “Degrees of

superiority are also implied by the Revelation in its mention of the heart. In speaking of the majority, it says: Not blind are

the eyes, but blind are the hearts within the breasts.” The commentaries are clear that it is not “the majority” at all who are

meant but the disbelievers in general, and the disbelievers of Mecca at the time of the Prophet ﷺ in particular.

Lings’ thoroughly confused attempt at forcing those of the right, the righteous, the slaves of God and the foremost into his

own special concept of a spiritual hierarchy (LXXXI, 329, 2) stems from a similar penchant for speculative originality in

disregard of qualified sources. In the same chapter (LXXXI, 329, 3) Lings claims that al-Ḥakīm al-Tirmidhī in Nawādir al-Uḥūd reported “that of Abū Bakr the Prophet said: ‘He surpasseth you not through much fasting and prayer but he

surpasseth you in virtue of something that is fixed in his heart.’” However, al-Ḥakīm only narrated this statement (in Aḥl

220) as a saying of the great Ṭaybiḥī Bakr ibn ʿAbd Allāh al-Muzanī, not a Prophetic ḥadīth.

Predictably, Lings also misinterprets (LXXXI, 330, 1) the famous saying of

Abū Hurayra, “I have treasured in my memory

two stores of knowledge which I had from the Messenger of God. One of them have I divulged; but if I divulged the other

you would cut [my] throat” along the same lines of special-hidden-knowledge-for-the-elite-only. It is simply “I have retained

two stores” (ʿafi tu) and the undisseminated knowledge is nothing more esoteric than the identities of strife-mongers, specifically Banū Umayya, which Abū Hurayra elaborates in other ʿadīths in which he decries the governor of Madīna Marwān

ibn al-ʿAakam, warns of a disaster about to befall the Arabs, and prays for death before the year 60, the year Yazīd ibn

Muḥʿwiya came to power. Some deny all this and cling to their uninformed misrepresentation of Abū Hurayra as referring to

spiritual realities when it is not he but rather Abū Bakr and ʿAlī, Allāh be well-pleased with all of them, who are established

as the conveyors of such realities in the ʿadīth and famous as such in Sufi literature and chains of transmission as well.

Misreferencing

(XXXII, 102, 1) Lings references the narration “I was a Prophet when Adam was yet between water and clay” to “Tir.

XLVI, 1; A.H. IV, 66.” This is false sourcing and the narration itself is a forgery which neither al-Tirmidhī nor Aʿmad ibn

anbal narrate. What they do narrate is: “I was a Prophet when Adam was yet between spirit and body.”

(LXVIII, 258, 2) Of the $\beta a^{\wedge} \forall b \ddot{I}$ $Ab\%o$ $Ba | \ddot{I}r$, Lings states that “his companions prayed over him and buried him, and made a

mosque at the place of his burial; then they went to join the Prophet in Medina.” He references this to “ $W \forall qid \ddot{I}$ 624-9;

$Bukh \forall r \ddot{I}$ LIV; Ibn $Is^{\wedge} \forall q$ 751-3.” This is nowhere to be found in al- $Bukh \forall r \ddot{I}$ but is found in the $S \ddot{I}ra$ books. It is interesting

that the “Salaf \ddot{I} ” censor al- $Mu \phi allim \ddot{I}$ overlooked it in his $\phi Im \forall rat$ al- $Qub\%or$. If authentic it probably ante-dated the curse of

those who build mosques over the graves of the pious unless what is meant in the $Ab\%o$ $Ba | \ddot{I}r$ report is proximity, not superposition or using a grave for qibla.

In his “Key to References” (p. 352) at the end of the book Lings misattributes the $Mishk \forall t$ al- $Ma | \forall b \ddot{I}^{\wedge}$ to $Im \forall m$ $\varpi usayn$ ibn

$Mas \phi \%od$ al- $Farr \forall'$ al- $Baghaw \ddot{I}$ (d. 516) who actually compiled the work on which the $Mishk \forall t$ is based, $Ma | \forall b \ddot{I}^{\wedge}$ al-Sunna,

while the $Mishk \forall t$ itself is its expansion and was compiled two centuries and a quarter later by $Wal \ddot{I}$ al- $D \ddot{I}n$ $Mu^{\wedge} ammad$ ibn

ϕAbd $All \forall h$ al- $Kha \sim \ddot{I}b$ al- $Tibr \ddot{I}z \ddot{I}$. Lings also incorrectly identifies al- $Baghaw \ddot{I}$ as “ $\varpi usayn$ ibn $Ma^{\wedge} m \%od$.” 6

Urge for Pulchritude

Among the oddest leitmotifs of the book are Lings' preoccupation with and free dramatizing of physical beauty. Khadlġah

"knew that she herself was still beautiful" (XII, 35, 1); Zaynab bint Ja^{sh} was "a girl of outstanding beauty" (XIII, 40, 1);

"Ruqayyah was the most beautiful of their daughters and one of the most beautiful women of her generation" (XXIV, 70,

1); Hind bint ʿAbd al-Mu^{alib} "was a woman of great beauty" (XXIV, 72, 1); on one and the same page: "most of them

[the emigrants to Abyssinia] were young, and in many of them their piety of demeanour was enhanced by a great natural

beauty"; "a Christian dignitary..., a man so exceptionally handsome as to arouse general admiration"; "the beautiful Umm

Salamah" (XXVII, 82, 2); "She [ʿR^{isha}] was then only nine years old, a child of remarkable beauty, as might have been

expected from her parentage" (XL, 132, 3); "ʿaf^{ah} was both beautiful and accomplished" (XLVII, 164, 3); "the young and

beautiful ʾafiyyah" (LXX, 270, 2); Ray^{nah} "was a woman of great beauty" (LXI, 233, 2); "The girls were sisters,

M^{riyah} and S^{irġn}, and both were beautiful, but M^{riyah} was exceptionally so"; and so on and so forth.

Catholic Paraphernalia

Certain readers grumbled about the masonic imagery they said they found in

the book. If true, this surely pales next to its

inept mentions of the doctrines of baptism (XXVII, 82, 2), the Eucharist (ibid.), the bodily translation of the Virgin Mary

(known as “Assumption”) to the heaven at her death (XXXII, 101, 4), its comparison to the Miṣrāḳ of the Prophet ʿ

(ibid.), the incarnation of the Deity in the flesh of Jesus (XXIII, 68, 4), and “the Holy Rood” i.e. the supposed wood of the

cross of the Crucifixion (LXXIX, 319, 1). Note that the doctrine of the Assumption was unheard of in the early Christian

Church but was formulated after Islām by John of Damascus in the eighth century after Christ and, in the West, became

Catholic dogma only in 1950. As for the “Holy Rood” – also known to Catholics as the “True Cross” – its sole claim to

authenticity is a fifth-century narration (by Socrates Scholasticus in his Ecclesiastical History) of its supposed discovery, a full

century earlier, by Emperor Constantine’s (280-337) aged mother Helena (248?-329?) in Jerusalem. Eusebius of Caesarea

(264?-340) made no such mention in his Life of Constantine although he would have hardly omitted it if it had really taken

place. The Persians captured the artifact in 614 then Heraclius seized it back from them and restored it to Jerusalem in 628

until Balʿā al-Dīn had it removed after the victory of ʿi~īn in 1187,

never to be found again although, by then,

medieval relic manufacturers and merchants had already filled Europe with the pseudo-fragments of the pseudo-Cross.

“Perennialism”

Lings advocates applying the title of Furqʿn not only to the Qurʿn but to “every revealed Scripture” (XXV, 76, 1). This is

arguable if he means the word furqʿn in a metaphorical generic sense of separating truth from error. However, it is fair to

say he means it literally so as to deny the exclusivity of the Quran as an universal Message among all revealed Scriptures and

also the exclusivity of its abrogating status of all other Scriptures for all time, since he actually grants neither superiority nor

abrogating-status to the Prophet Muʿammad œ over all other Prophets and Messengers (LVIII, 212, 1). These are wellknown “Perennialist” deviations in flat contradiction of Qurʿn, Sunna, and Consensus.

Lings’ “Kaʿba icons” episode is a notorious element of the Catholico-perennialist persona of his book. First he writes: (VI,

17, 2) “One Christian had been allowed and even encouraged to paint an icon of the Virgin Mary and the child Christ on

an inside wall of the Kaʿbah, where it sharply contrasted with all the other paintings.” That the image was an “icon” in the

ritual Christian Orthodox sense or, if not, that its painter was even a

Christian; that he was actually “encouraged to paint” it;

or that it “contrasted with all the other paintings” is all sourceless speculation and pure Lingsian poetic license. Then he

writes in the chapter entitled “The Conquest of Mecca” (LXXV, 302, 4):
“Apart from the icon of the Virgin Mary and the

child Jesus, and a painting of an old man, said to be Abraham, the walls inside
had been covered with pictures of pagan

deities. Placing his hand protectively over the icon, the Prophet
told ʿUthmān to see that all the other paintings, except that

of Abraham, were effaced.” The footnote continues: “Waqidi’s Maghāzī p.
834 and Azraqī’s Akhbār Makka I, 107. But

other accounts say ‘all’ without mention of these two exceptions.” In reality
all accounts say “all”:

- Even these versions do not except the image of the Virgin Mary but only
that of Ibrāhīm †. Lings adds the word “other”

from his own head in the clause “to see that all the other paintings, except
that of Abraham, were effaced.”

- Al-Waqidi does not mention “pictures of pagan deities” but rather “imagery
of angels and others.”

- The Prophet æ nowhere is said to be “placing his hand protectively over the
icon” but rather: “Then he caught sight of

the image of Maryam and immediately placed his hand over it (thumma

ra'¥ |%orata Maryam fa-wa¥aça yadahu çalayh¥). Then

he said (thumma q¥l): ‘Erase every single image in it except the image of Ibr¥hĭm!’” If authentic, the meaning is – and All¥h

knows best – that out of his magnificent sense of modesty and adab the Prophet œ would not have anyone even glance at

the image of the most pure Virgin Maryam before it was washed away at once – by himself – and her chastity protected.

- As for his excepting the image of Ibr¥hĭm, it only meant – and All¥h knows best – he was leaving it for last since it was

Quranically the least offensive of all in comparison to Maryam and the angels, although its offensiveness is established from

the fact he curses its painters: “All¥h destroy them! They made him an old man casting arrows for divination!”

- He does not address çUthman but çUmar; and on the same page actually tells him to erase the image of Ibr¥hĭm at last. 7

he pagination is from the Islamic Text Society’s 2004 fifth reprint of their 1991 edition, itself based on the 1986 and

1988 reprints of the George Allen & Unwin original edition of 1983.

I, 2, 2

VI, 15, 1

I, 3, 1

IV, 10, 1

IV, 11, 1

VII, 21, 2

XI, 31, 1

[Referring to Abraham's two Temples, one in

Jerusalem and one in Mecca:] Two spiritual

streams, two religions, two worlds for God;

two circles, therefore two centres.

They [Quraysh] knew that they lived at the

centre of the world...

Its name, Kaçbah, is in virtue of its shape which

is approximately cubic...

Adjoining the north-west side of the Kaʿbah

there is a small precinct surrounded by a low

semicircular wall.... many pilgrims make wide

their circle at this point and include the precinct within their orbit.... The space within it is

named ḥijr Ismāʿīl, because the tombs of Ishmael

and Hagar lie beneath the stones which pave it.

From there he [ʿAbd al-Muḥḥalib] began the

rite of the rounds, going past the door to the

Iraqi Corner, across the ḥijr to the west

corner...

After that day Quraysh were called by the

Arabs “the people of God”, and they were held

in even greater respect than before, because

God had answered their prayers and saved the

Kaʿbah from destruction.

Muḥammad was of average height...

... and average strength.

The one Centre is the Kaʿba (Q 3:96); through it

God upholds the universes (Q 5:97) and it is called

“the navel of the earth” in Arab poetry cf. alA|fahʿnĪ, A~bʿq al-Dhahab (Maqʿla 99) as Lings himself acknowledges (VI, 15, 1). God calls “religion,”

especially for followers of the Prophet Abraham †,

only the submission taught by the Prophet Muʿammad

ﷺ (Q 7:156-157, 3:19, 3:85) abrogating all past

Scriptures (Q 5:48).

Anachronism. The cubic shape occurred later, in the

Jʿhiliyya. The Prophet ﷺ stated that Abraham built

it rectangular and thus did Ibn al-Zubayr rebuild it

in his caliphate cf. BaʿĪʿayn and Sunan.

False etiology and bad fiqh. Not “many” but all

pilgrims must “make wide” their circumambulation

which otherwise is invalid, as the semicircular precinct

is part of the Kaʿba. The ʿijr was thus named because

Quraysh left stones (ʿajar) from the debris (ʿaṣm,

another name for it) of the original Kaʿba after rebuilding it, to mark off the spot. Beneath it is related

to be the grave of Hagar alone cf. Yāqūt, Muʿjam al-Buldān. The appellation “ḥijr Ismāʿīl” is very late and

not found in the early sources but Allāh knows best.

False reconstruction of the ritual. Not “across the

ḥijr” but around it; see previous comment.

False etymology. As narrated by Zubayr ibn Bakkr the

people did call Quraysh by that title after the Day of

the Elephant, however, it had not emerged at that

time but long before; Quraysh called themselves “the

people of God” in justification of their refraining

from going to ʿArafa with non-Qurayshites during

pilgrimage for fear of detracting from the prestige of

their sanctuary; hence the Divine command directed

at them in Q 2:199 and the Prophetic reminder that

“Pilgrimage is ʿArafa” in the Sunan and Musnad – as
 Lings himself acknowledges (LXXXIII, 336, 4).
 Dubious translation of Anas’ ʿadīth in Muslim that
 he ʿ was “neither too tall nor short” better Englished as “of proportionate
 height”; another states he
 was never seen with others but seemed taller. He ʿ
 wrestled down Rukayna the strongman thrice and
 heaved a boulder over Ibn Maʿḥūn’s grave when
 others gave up (both in Abū Dāwūd).

T 8

XII, 34, 6 [f.n.]

XII, 35, 1

XII, 35, 2

XIII, 39, 3

XIII, 40, 4

XV, 44, 2

XVI, 46, 2

According to Islamic tradition Mu[^]ammad is none other than the mysterious Shiloh, to whom would be transferred, “in the latter days”, the spiritual authority which until then had remained the prerogative of the Jews, Jesus himself having been the last Prophet of the line of Judah.

The prophecy in question was made by Jacob immediately before his death: And Jacob called unto his sons and said, Gather yourselves together, that I may tell you that which shall befall you in the last days... The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto him shall the gatherings of the people be. (Gen. 49: I, 10).

In most of the earliest descriptions his [œ] eyes are said to have been black, but according to one or two of these they were brown, or even light brown.

[S]he [Khadīja] consulted a woman friend of

hers named Nufaysah...

Mu[^]ammad [œ] preferred to ask for the help
of ʕAbbʔs, who could well afford it, being a
successful merchant, and who was close to him
because they had been brought up together.

Equally close, or even closer, was ʕAbbʔs's wife,
Umm al-Faʔl, who loved him dearly and who
always made him welcome at their house.

It was about this time that Umm Ayman became once more a member of the
household. It

is not recorded whether she returned as a
widow, or whether her husband had divorced
her. But she had no doubt that her place was

there, and for his part Mu[^]ammad would sometimes address her as
“mother”, and would say

to others: “She is all that is left me of the people of my house.” Ibn Saʕd VIII,
162.

Then he [Waraqal] leaned towards him [the

Prophet   and kissed his forehead...

The word  ra^  m, an intensive form of  r  im,

merciful, was current in the sense of very merciful or boundlessly merciful.

The still more intensive  ra^m  n, for lack of any concept to fit it,

had fallen into disuse. The Revelation revived

it in accordance with the new religion's basic

need to dwell on the heights of Transcendence.

Doctrinally false notions of "transfer" and "prerogative." If by "spiritual authority" is meant Prophethood then this was shared among 124,000 Prophets

as revealed by the Prophet   in the  ad  th of Ab  

Dharr   in the Musnad and Ibn  ibb  n's  a^  ^,

precluding any prerogative. If by authority is meant

mandate, then the Seal of Prophets   alone had an

universal mandate as opposed to the local mandates

of all previous Prophets including the line of Judah.

If knowledge, then the gentile al-Kha  ir † teaching

Moses † (Q 18:65-82) is a case in point. All this is

true regardless of the possibility that Jacob † may

well have predicted the advent of the Seal of Prophets æ in that verse (if authentic), or elsewhere.

Undependable assertion. The narrations of the Prophetic attributes state he was adçaj al-çaynayn which

means “of large, jet-black pupils,” some commentators adding that it also means “and very white iris.”

Mistransliteration of Nafīsa bint Umayya cf. Ibn

çajar, I | ¥ba.

Speculative. True, Umm al-Fa¥l Lub¥ba bint al-ç¥rith

al-Hil¥liyya was the Prophet’s æ sister-in-law as his

wife Maym%ona’s sister, as well as his milk-daughter

since she nursed al-çusayn after F¥~ima gave birth to

him. Nevertheless, there is no comparison to the

bond between him and his paternal uncle al-çAbb¥s

æ who was present with the An | ¥r at al-çAqaba,

served as his eyes and ears in Mecca until its conquest, was only two years older, and whom the

Prophet   openly consulted and praised.

Misreading of source, misunderstanding of mawl 

(emancipée) status, and unwarranted poetic license. Ibn

S  d does say Umm Ayman’s first husband was killed

at  unayn then she married Zayd. As the Prophet’s

  mawl t (as stated by Ibn S  d) she never ceased to

be part of his household whether married or widowed, per her legal status from the time he freed her

(like Salm n and Thawb n); lastly, the Prophet  

habitually called her “mother” – not “sometimes.”

Mistranslation. He kissed the top of his head or fontanel (y f  khuh) cf. Q m  s and other dictionaries.

Fanciful etiology. The Arabs considered ra^ m an

Arabic word and ra^m n Hebrew cf. al-Qur  b  , al-Asn  f  Shar^ Asm ’ All h al- usn  (1:64-65). “Certain simpletons claim that the Arabs did not know

the name Ra^m n because they denied it (Q 25:60),

as if they necessarily denied only what they did not

know!” Al- abar , Tafs r (1:57). 9

XVI, 49, 3

XVII, 50, 1

XVII, 51, 1

XVIII, 54, 2

XXII, 65, 1

XXIII, 68, 4

XXIV, 70, 2

XXVI, 78, 3

XXVII, 82, 2

XXIX, 89, 4

... to which the answer is “And on you be

Peace!”, the plural being used to include the

two guardian Angels of the person greeted.

Ab% Lahab showed plainly his conviction that

his nephew was self-deceived, if not a deceiver.

The Prophet laid his hand on the back of [the

thirteen-year old] ċAlĳ's neck and said: "This is my brother, mine executor and my successor among you. Harken unto him and obey him."

Another encounter with the Prophet had the result of bringing Islam to the Bani Daws, who were also, like GhifŸr, an outlying Western tribe.

"... And as for thee, Ab%o Jahl, a calamity shall come upon thee. Little shalt thou laugh, and much shalt thou weep." >abarĳ 1203, 3.

According to the Koran, Jesus is both Messenger of God and also His Word which He cast

unto Mary, and a Spirit from Him (Q 4:171);

and as it had been with the Word-made-flesh,

so now analogously, it was through the Divine

Presence in this world of the Word-made-book

that Islam was a religion in the true sense...

“I [ḡulayb] beg thee [Arwʿ] to go and greet
him and say thou believest in him and testify
that There is no god but God.” She did what
he had said...

Dhu l-Qarnayn, he of the two horns... to make
a barrier that would protect them from Gog
and Magog and other jinn...

[The Abyssinians] looked down on them [the
Meccans] as heathens.... They themselves were
Christians, many of them devout; they had been
baptised, they worshipped the One God, and
they carried in their flesh the sacrament of the
Eucharist. As such they were sensitive to the
difference between the sacred and the profane.

The eye of the heart, though closed in fallen
man, is able to take in a glimmering of light

and this is faith.

Doctrinally misleading. The “two guardian angels” is

a Christian notion while the Quran and Sunna teach

that for each person there are up to twenty angels

recording deeds, implementing destiny, mentoring,

etc. cf. al-Suyūṭī, al-Ṭabṣīk fī Akhbār al-Malʿik.

Excessive poetic license. They said “seer,” “poet,”

“sorcerer.” Where did they say “self-deceived”?

This report comes only through the Kufan Rāfiʿī

Abū Maryam ṣAbd al-Ghaffār ibn al-Qāsim ibn Qays

al-Najjārī whom Ibn al-Madīnī accused of forgery cf.

al-Burhān al-Ṭalabī, al-Kashf al-Ṭathīth.

Wrong geography. Daws were a tribe of the ʿUdthān

clan centered at Tharṯāq south of the peninsula while

Ghifār were centered between Mecca and Madīna

by the wells of Badr cf. Shurrāb, al-Maṣʿūlim alAthīra fīl-Sunnati wal-Sīra.

Mistranslation. Al-ʿabarī has “And as for thee, Abū Jahl, by God, before very long, little shalt thou laugh, and much shalt thou weep.”

Doctrinally heretical. The verse has innamā, stating that Jesus was only A Messenger, not The Message also. The word cast on Mary was “Be” (3:47, 3:59).

“Be” never becomes flesh but is the Divine Speech by which creation is created, including Jesus. The spirit is the (created) soul of Jesus himself or the (created) angel who brought it (19:17), not a Divine element. There is no “Be” with the Book because the Quran is not created, hence it is never a “Wordmade-book” and the analogy is an enormity. Lings’ errors come straight from Frithjof Schuon’s 1961 book Understanding Islam.

Incomplete translation. Ibn Saʿd’s two versions both add, “and Muḥammad is the Messenger of God.”

Mistranslation of the of the two horizons and misidentification of Gog and Magog as jinn when all the

commentaries relate they are human beings.

Doctrinally abhorrent and rhetorically tasteless. They

say they worship the One God then say “three” (Q

4:171). While reveling in free indirect speech Lings

misses the irony that in the Muslim context such sacrament as eating the flesh and drinking the blood of

a slain-then-resurrected god incarnate is the profanest

Bacchic mystery paganism imaginable.

A doctrinally false mix of post-lapsarianism and T.

Lobsang Rampa. A Muslim might say: The heart,

unless blinded by sin, is able to discern the light of

faith and this is remembrance of God. 10

XXX, 93-94

XXXII, 102, 1

XXXIII, 106, 1

XXXVI, 116, 2

XXXVII, 119,

1-3

“Lo, everything save God is naught.” “Thou
hast spoken true,” said ƿUthmƿn. Labİd went
on: “And all delights away shall vanish.” “Thou
liest,” exclaimed ƿUthmƿn. “The delight of Paradise shall never vanish.” ...
[The Prophet’s œ]

only recorded comment was: “The truest word
that poet ever spake is: ‘Lo, everything save
God is naught.’” He did not blame Labİd for
the words which immediately followed. The
poet could be credited with meaning that “all
earthly delights away shall vanish”; and on the
other hand, all Paradises and Delights which are
eternal can be thought of as included in God....

[H]e again mounted Burƿq, who moved his

wings in upward flight.... as they passed through
the seven heavens....

Everything he now saw, he saw with the eye of
the Spirit (in the Mi^{cr}Yj)

Ab% Bakr had promised her [ç®'isha] to Mu~çim
for his son Jubayr.

After a long discussion, when various suggestions had been made and
rejected, they agreed

- some of them with reluctance – to the plan put
forward by Ab% Jahl as being the only effective

solution to their problem. Every clan was to nominate a strong, reliable and
well-connected

young man, and at a given moment all these

chosen men together should fall upon

Mu^ammad, each striking him a mortal blow...

[T]here were still some hours to go before

sunset, although in fact there was strangely little

light in the cave for the time of day they

supposed it to be.... There, in front of it, almost covering the entrance, was an acacia tree, about the height of a man, which had not been there that morning.... [T]hey gently drew aside the web that had been their safeguard, and taking care not to disturb the dove, they went...

False speculation and misreading. Labīd undoubtedly meant the words in the usual pagan Arab sense of “There is nothing but our life of the world” (Q 45:24). Together with affirming the existence of God they denied the hereafter. ʿUthmān understood this on the spot as did the Prophet   and everyone else. Hence, the Prophet’s   statement in praise of Labīd’s first line was an implicit dispraise of the second in confirmation of both ʿUthmān’s reactions. Inauthentic. Ibn Is  q and the sources are clear that

the Burʿq remained in Jerusalem while the Prophet
ascended on the literal miḥrāb or ladder. The only
source that mentions its wings is Ibn Saʿd from his
teacher al-Waqidi cf. Ibn ʿAjar, Fatḥ al-Bayrūt.

Doctrinally false. There is Consensus the miḥrāb was
body and soul and the Quran mentions sight literally.

Flimsy. Ibn Saʿd's report of this has an extremely weak
chain through Hishām ibn Muʿammad ibn al-Sayib,
from his father Abū al-Naʿr al-Kaʿbī from Abū Bāliʿ,
from Ibn ʿAbbās. Hishām and his father are both

“discarded” (matrūk) and considered liars while the
latter actually admitted to Sufyān al-Thawrī, “All I

have narrated to you from Abū Bāliʿ is a lie” cf. al-Dhahabī, Mīzān; Ibn
al-Jawzī, Ṭuḥafʿ wal-Matrūkīn.

Inexplicable omission. The sources concur that the
assassination plot was moderated by Iblīs in disguise.

Asked who he was, he answered “An old man from

Najd.” The reports go on to refer to him as “The Old Man from Najd” (al-shaykh al-najdī). Ibn Hishām (3:6-8); >abarī, Tafsīr (9:227-228), Tārīkh (1:566-567); Baghawī, Tafsīr (2:244); Jaḥīz, Aḥkām alQurʾān (5:84), Abū Nuḥaym, Dalʿil al-Nubuwwa (p. 202); Ibn al-Jawzī, Muntaḥam (3:46-47); Kilābī, Iktifāʾ (1:334-335); Suhaylī, Rawḥ al-Unuf (2:307); Sīra ṣalabiyya (2:190); Ibn Kathīr, Tafsīr (“al-ʿaḥī” 2:302-303 on v. 8:30) and Bidʿya (3:176); Lubāb alNuqūl (1:109); Suyūṭī, Durr al-Manthūr (4:51-52 v. 8:30), Shawkānī, Fatḥ al-Qadīr (2:304), etc.

Poetic license overkill. There is no mention of “little light,” the fact that the tree was acacia, its height, or solicitude for the cobweb and dove nest in the sources. Allāh knows best. 11

XXXIX, 125, 6

XL, 132, 2

XL, 133, 1

XL, 133, 2

XLI, 137, 6

XLV, 155, 1

XLVI, 162, 2

XLVII, 165, 4

XLVIII, 167-68

LIX, 218, 1

XLVIII, 168, 1

[T]he Prophet now made a covenant of mutual

obligation between his followers and the Jews

of the oasis, forming them into a single community of believers....

The Prophet now decided that in addition to

Umm Ayman Zayd should have a second wife,

one nearer his own age, and he asked his cousin

Abd Allāh, the son of Jaʿsh, for the hand of his

beautiful sister Zaynab.

At first Zaynab was unwilling, and she had
reason to be so, as events were to disclose. The
reason she gave, namely that she was a woman
of Quraysh, was not convincing. Her mother,
Umaymah, of pure Quraysh stock on both sides,
had married a man of Asad; and quite apart
from Zayd's adoption into Quraysh, it could not
be said that the tribes of his parents, the Bani
Kalb and the Bani ʿAyy, were inferior to the
Bani Asad.

He seemed, moreover, ageless, like an immortal.

I [ʿĀ'ishah] was playing on a see-saw and my
long streaming hair was dishevelled.

From that day Muslims have turned in the direction of the Kaʿbah for the
performance of the
ritual prayer, and by extension for other rites.

Sawdah... was astonished on her return to see

her cousin and brother-in-law Suhayl, the chief
of her clan, sitting in a corner of the room with
his hands tied to his neck. The sight aroused
long-forgotten sentiments and made her forget
for the moment all that had replaced them. “O
Ab% YazĪd,” she expostulated, “all too readily
didst thou surrender. Thou shouldst have died a
noble death.” “Sawdah!” exclaimed the Prophet, whose presence she had not
noticed. The
reproof in his voice immediately brought her
back, not without a sense of shame, from her
pre-Islamic past to her Islamic present.

The Prophet’s face grew dark with anger.

He hath given you hearing and sight and heartknowledge that ye may be
thankful (Q XVI, 78).

The People of the Bench. [Ahl al-Ṣuffa]

He none the less discouraged them in general
from eating food that was overflavoured with

garlic or onions, especially before going to the Mosque.

Historically and doctrinally false. Article 10 of the covenant states, “The Jews of the tribe of Banī al-Awaf shall be considered a separate nation alongside that of the believers.” Bīr, Jurisprudence of the Prophetic Biography (p. 302) from Ibn Isḥāq and Aḥmad.

Misinterpretation. Both Umm Ayman and Zayd were former slaves; rather than matching age the second

marriage showed that, contrary to the prevalent preIslamic custom, the Sunna allowed a free Qurayshī

woman to marry a pious former slave.

Wrong teleology and gainsaying of Zaynab’s motivations. She was unwilling because of a sense of selfpride she truthfully disclosed and of which Zayd, her

“mere mawlā” husband, was later to complain repeatedly, asking permission to divorce her not once but

several times cf. al-Bīr, Kubrī al-Yaqīniyyat alKawniyya (p. 210-212). She in fact gave the most

predictable – and convincing – reason imaginable so
that the didactic purpose of the Prophet ﷺ became
more probative.

Inappropriate conceit, more dithyramb than Sīra.

Mistranslation of “and I had shoulder-length hair”

(wa-lī jumayma / wa-anṣ mujammama).

What other rites?

Inappropriate interpretation and surmising of Sawda’s

mind. Ibn Isḥāq simply has: “I could not, by Allāh,

contain myself when I saw Abū Yazīd in that state....

Suddenly I heard the Prophet ﷺ say from inside the

house, ‘Sawda! Are you rousing up aggression against

Allāh and His Prophet?’ I said, ‘Messenger of Allāh,

by Him Who sent you with the truth, I could not

contain myself when I saw Abū Yazīd with his hands

tied to his neck.”

Inappropriate mistranslation of “he was angered to

the point they saw an awning (ulalan) over his face”

or “until they saw his face overshadowed.”

Over-interpretive translation of “hearts” as “heartknowledge.”

Mistranslation of the “People of the Shelter” (| uffa).

Mistranslation on three counts: He did not “discourage” them but actually prohibited them from eating

garlic and onion themselves, and so not “especially,”

but only before going to the Mosque. 12

LIV, 191, 1

LIV, 192, 1

LV, 197, 1

LVI, 202, 2

LVII, 203, 1

LVIII, 212, 1

LVIII, 212-213

LX, 222, 3

[A]s regards the fighting itself, he told them to

respect the human face as being the most godlike part of the body: “When one of you striketh a blow, let him avoid striking the face... for God created Adam in His image.”

... a man of theirs named Usayrim...

[He] meant that they would enter Mecca and kiss Black Stone. (sic)

[T]he Prophet insisted that blood-wite should be paid.... to help him pay the blood-wite.

The Jew complained to the Prophet, whose face was full of anger when he rebuked the aggressor.

[T]he Prophet added: “Say not that I am better than Moses.” He also said, perhaps referring to another example of misplaced zeal: “Let none of you say that I am better than Jonah.” The Revelation had already given them the words,

as part of the Islamic creed: We make no distinction between any of His messengers. (2:285).

Zayd was out, and Zaynab, not expecting any visitors at that time, was lightly clad. But when she was told that the Prophet had come, she was so eager to greet him that she leaped to her feet and ran to the door, to invite him to stay until Zayd returned. "He is not here, O Messenger of God", she said, "but come thou in, my father and my mother be thy ransom." As she stood in the doorway, a radiant figure of joyous welcome, the Prophet was amazed at her beauty. Deeply moved, he turned aside, and murmured something which she could not grasp.

All she heard clearly were his words of wonderment as he walked away: "Glory be to God the

Infinite! Glory be to Him Who disposeth men's hearts!"

“O Messenger of God,” he [ʿUmar] said, “I have been told that Bani Qurayʿah have broken their treaty and are at war with us.” The Prophet was visibly troubled.

Doctrinally false misinterpretation. There are three possible meanings, none of them what Lings claims.

(1) Allāh created ʾĀdam directly in ʾĀdam’s final form

without growth. (2) “Allāh created ʾĀdam in the image of the Merciful” in that He shared with him aspects of His Attributes such as life, hearing, sight, and

knowledge. The predication of image to the Merciful

therefore signifies possession, dignity, and bestowal as

in the attribute of possession in the verse [the shecamel of Allāh] (90:13), not body part or appearance..

(3) When one of you fights, let him avoid [striking]

the face [of the enemy], for Allāh created ʾĀdam in

his [that man’s] likeness.

Mispelling of Uḥayrīm (with a ḥayr nor sīn).

Doctrinally dubious grammar. Our liege-lord  Umar

said the  ajar al-aswad is a stone. None of the early

Muslims, Ulema, and pious Friends of All h personalized it. It should be called the Black Stone.

Some English dictionaries do not have “blood-wite”

but do have “wergeld.” (Both mean blood-money.)

Inappropriate translation. The Prophet became angry

until anger was visible on his face, no more and no less.

Wrong doctrine. There is Consensus the Prophet

Mu ammad   is the Best of Messengers (Q 2:253).

The “Do not say” reports addressed the nationalistic

sense some tribal-minded followers indulge or are

abrogated. Verse 2:285 excoriates the Christians who

accept Moses and Jesus yet reject Mu ammad, and

the Jews who reject the latter two.

Mistranslation and tendentious exaggerations. The original states, “He came to his house asking for him

but did not find him so Zaynab bint Ja[^]sh, his wife,
 welcomed him instead. The Messenger of God turned
 away from her. She said, 'He is not here, Messenger
 of God, but do come in, may my father and mother
 be ransomed for you!' But he refused to come in.
 Zaynab had not covered herself in her haste upon
 being told the Messenger of God was at the door, so
 she had jumped to it in a rush. She caused the wonderment of the Messenger
 of God and he went away
 murmuring something she could not grasp, etc." So
 the Prophet – who had known his cousin from childhood and had seen her
 again and again before the
[^]ij[¥]b became law – shows full reserve and the scene
 is muted. The original (broken-chained) report shows
 decorum but Lings primps it into a bodice-ripper.
 Inappropriate mistranslation. "Visibly troubled" usually means physically or
 mentally disturbed or agitated in a conspicuous way while the original (in
 alW[¥]qid^İ exclusively) simply states: "Fa-(i)shtadda
 dh[¥]lika ^çal[¥] Ras[%]lill[¥]h – this bore heavily upon him."

And there is no mention of its being conspicuous;

the narrator might know this without it being visible

to anyone but the like of Ab% Bakr and ¢Umar. 13

LXI, 233, 2

LXV, 243-244

LXV, 244-245

LXVI, 247, 2

LXVIII, 257, 2

LXVIII, 261, 2

LXIX, 268, 4

LXIX, 269, 3

She [Ray^Yna] was a woman of great beauty

and she remained the Prophet's slave until she

died some five years later.

It was generally thought that but for ¢®ishah

Zaynab would have been the Prophet's favourite wife...

[I]t was not enough that he [the Prophet œ] should himself believe ¢®'ishah and ßafw¥n to be innocent. The situation was a grave one, and it was imperative to have evidence which would convince the whole community. To this end ¢®' ishah herself had proved the least helpful of all concerned. It was now time that her silence should be broken. Not that anything that she said could be enough to resolve the crisis. But the Koran promised that questions asked during the period of its revelation would be answered. In the present case the Prophet had filled the air with questions – the same question, reiterated to different persons – but for the promised answer to be given by Heaven, it was perhaps necessary that the question should already have been put to the person most closely involved.

The Prophet was bareheaded and had already
donned the age-old traditional pilgrim's dress of
two pieces of unstitched cloth...

[Of the Companion Ab% Ba | Ĩr] "Alas for his
mother!"* said the Prophet. "What a fine firebrand for war, had he but other
men with
him!" *Footnote: An often used ellipsis meaning: "The man is such a hothead
that his
mother will soon have to mourn his death."

In every generation of the Jews in Arabia there
could be found one or two adepts in the science
of magic; and one of these was amongst the
Jews still living in Medina, Labĭd by name, an
expert sorcerer who had also instructed his
daughters in the subtle art lest his own knowledge should die with him.

When the Prophet took a mouthful of lamb,
Bishr did the same and swallowed it, but the
Prophet spat out what was in his mouth, saying

to the others: “Hold off your hands! This

shoulder proclaimeth unto me that it is

poisoned.” He sent for the woman.... [Bishr]

died shortly afterwards. But the Prophet nonetheless pardoned the woman.

Ibn al-Akwaḥ, the Aslamite who had sung to

them on their northward march, had been

killed at Khaybar during the attack upon the

Citadel. His own sword had somehow turned

against him and given him a mortal wound...

False. Ibn Saʿd (8:220) relates from al-Waqidi that

there is consensus the Prophet ʿ freed and married

Rayḥana cf. al-Dimyṣī, Nisṣ Rasūl Allāh ʿ.

Inappropriate generalization and interpretation of

ʿishah’s observation that Zaynab “was the one

among the wives who vied to surpass me (tasmaʿnī).”

Dismally inappropriate in substance and wording.

There are some incisive observations, however, it is one thing to evaluate and psychologically conjecture the situation as a whole and another to train one's laboratory lens on the behavior of the Mother of the Believers and the Holy Prophet, upon him and her blessings and peace! These typically modernist gaffes could easily have been avoided with basic Muslim sensibility. There is no power nor might except in All¥h the Most High and Almighty!

False etiology. Pre-Islamic pilgrims would either wear new clothes or, if they could not afford them, circumambulate the Kaçba naked.

Misinterpretation of idiomatic Arabic expletives and curses which, in certain contexts, are metaphorical expressions of wonder, approval, endearment, or encouragement such as "May your hands cleave to dust," "May your age not grow," "May your stomach not be sated," "May your

mother lose you,” etc.

Inappropriate glamorization of what is considered, in

Islam, a filthy skill. Even Aristotle in his Ethics mentioned as a truism that an evil knowledge is not considered knowledge at all. Such language is not from

the earliest sources but from Lings’ own dhawq.

Incorrect. The Prophet pardoned the women for

trying to kill him then Bishr died and she was executed for his murder.

Needlessly mysterious. All the reports are clear it was

an accidentally self-inflicted mortal wound. 14

LXX, 271, 3

LXX, 271, 4

LXXI, 275, 4

LXXI, 276, 4

LXXI, 277, 1

LXXI, 277, 2

LXXII, 285, 5

LXXIII, 289, 3

LXXX, 327, 2

LXXXIV, 343,4

LXXXIV,344, 1

Umar' ishah was at that time in her sixteenth year,

old for her age in some respects but not in

others. Her feelings were always clear from her

face, and nearly always from her tongue.

The Revelation had said of him: Verily of an immense magnitude is thy nature. It was as if he

were a whole world in himself, comparable to

the outer world and in some ways mysteriously

one with it.

[W]hen Umar's voice was heard asking permission to enter there was a sudden total silence

and the women hid themselves behind the curtain with such speed that he entered to find the

Prophet speechless with laughter.

[T]here could be no doubt that all was not well

in the Prophet's household.

[T]he ruler of Egypt sent... as the crown of the

gift, two Coptic Christian slave girls escorted

by an elderly eunuch. "The girls were sisters,

Mÿriyah and Sĭrĭn, and both were beautiful, but

Mÿriyah was exceptionally so," and the Prophet marveled at her beauty.

[T]he Koran itself expressly allowed a master to

take his bondmaid as concubine on condition

of her free consent.

[T]he Prophet took off an undergarment he

was wearing, and told them to wrap her [his

daughter Zaynab] in it before they shrouded

her.

[After Zayd's death at Mu'ta] Zayd's little daughter came out into the street in tears, and seeing

him [the Prophet œ] she ran into his arms. He

now wept unrestrainedly, and as he clasped the

child to him his body shook with sobs.

As the child [Ibrāhīm] breathed his last.... The

Prophet continued to weep, and when he

could find his voice he said....

[T]he Prophet's fever abated, and although he

was exceedingly weak the call to prayer decided him to go to the Mosque....
he made his

way forward, helped by Faṭl and by Thawbān,

one of his freedmen.... The Prophet returned

to ʿAṣṣah's apartment helped by Faṭl and

Thawbān.

Apart from the usual lapse into fiction and speculation of what one cannot possibly know, an air of inappropriateness mars all such observations and makes

the reader wish them to go away.

More paganization of the person of the Holy Prophet

œ (in a style reminiscent of the high-flown theologizing about Christ in the Greek and Latin Patrologiae), which the Prophet œ vigorously forbade.

False translation due to ignorance of the Prophetic

attributes. “Speechless with laughter” suggests cachinnation but the Companions said “His laughter was

silent” and “consisted in smiling.” He warned against

uncontrolled laughter as causing the death of the heart.

Inappropriate literary drama obscuring the wisdom of

the Prophetic paradigm; his household was Paradise

on earth and, at the same time, mercifully similar to

a normal household with its tensions.

Dubious report and the usual ultra-sensual emphases.

Ibn Saʿd claims this Mubarrak was their elderly brother

while everyone else states he was a young kinsman

(ghulam) in charge of guarding them during the trip.

The reports detail his agility and the incident of his

later being suspected of adultery before it was discovered he was an eunuch.

As for beauty only Mubarrak

is thus described, literally as “lustrous” (wajih),

“white” (bayṣṣ), “curly-haired” (jaḥḍṣ), “beautiful” (jamīla), and the Prophet ﷺ liked her (uḥjiba biḥṣ).

Unconditionally (Q 23:6, 33:50, 70:30). A bondmaid is not asked as she does not own herself cf. al-Shayḥī, Umm (5:17) and Suḥayb, Mudawwana (2:140).

Mistranslation. The original text states fa’aḥṣnahu aqwah, “he gave us his loin-wrap,” aqw being synonymous with izḥr, with the definite possessive adjective, not an indefinite article, and without explicit mention of his wearing it though it is implied.

Inappropriate embroidery. The original simply says:

“Zayd’s daughter ran in tears to the Messenger of Allḥ ﷺ and the latter wept until he was out of breath (fa-bakḥ ḥattahu intaḥaba).” Blessings and peace on him and them now and always.

The original simply states that the Prophet ﷺ spoke normally, without suggestion of his being overwhelmed by emotions.

The sound reports mention not Thawb n here but

only  Al , his cousin al-Fa l, and the latter's father

al- Abb s, All h be well-pleased with them, as helping the Holy Prophet  
in his last walk to the

Mosque – and All h knows best. 15

LXXX, 324, 1

LXXXV, 347, 3

The traditional accounts differ as to the state of

soul in which he [ Abd All h ibn Ubay ibn

Sal  l] died, but all are unanimous that the

Prophet led the funeral prayer for him.

According to one tradition, when the Prophet

had already taken his stance for the prayer,  Umar

went to him and protested against the bestowal

of such grace upon a hypocrite, but the Prophet

answered him, saying with a smile: "Stand thou

behind me,  Umar. I have been given the choice,

and I have chosen. It hath been said unto me:

Ask forgiveness of them, or ask it not, though
thou ask forgiveness for them seventy times, yet
will not God forgive them (Q 9:80). And did I
know that God would forgive him if I prayed
more than seventy times, I would increase the
number of my supplications.”

Not long afterwards the verse was revealed, with
reference to the hypocrites: And never pray the
funeral prayer over one of them who dieth, nor
stand beside his grave, for verily they disbelieved
in God and His Messenger, and died in their
iniquity (Q 9:84). But according to other traditions* this verse had been
already revealed as
part of the Revelation which came immediately
after the return from Tabuk.

*Footnote: Mirkhond, Rawzat al-Baf, II, vol.

2, pp. 671-2, citing earlier sources. See also

B[ukhārī] XXIII, 76.

Nor was it any longer applicable to Ibn Ubayy,
for the Prophet visited him in his illness and
found that the imminence of death had changed
him. He asked the Prophet to give him a garment
of his own in which he could be shrouded, and
to accompany his body to the grave, which the
Prophet agreed to do. Then again he spoke,
saying: "O Messenger of God, I hope that thou
wilt pray beside my bier, and ask forgiveness of
God for my sins." Again the Prophet assented,
and after his death he did as he had promised.
Even after one day, the Prophet's body seemed
to be sunken merely in sleep, except there was
no breathing and no pulse and no warmth.

There is consensus in all the accounts that he died in

the same state of diplomatic rejection as he had lived.

One should seek refuge in Allāh from the perils and foolishness of misguided interpretation.

Not only “one tradition” but all the traditions in the books of Sīra on which Lings based his work as well as al-Bukhārī, Muslim, the Sunan, Aʿmad, and the early books of Qurʾān commentary including al-Ṭabarī as well as his history cf. Abū Nuʿaym’s Ḍurūʿ al-ʿadlīth ʿalā Nabī ʾaḥ al-ʿalay Ibn Ubay. This does not mean the Prophet ʾaḥ thought Ibn Ubay was other than a hypocrite but only that he ʾaḥ wished to preserve the honor of Ibn Ubay’s Muslim son as well as win over Ibn Ubay’s Khazrajī tribesmen if they saw his kind treatment of him, since there was no explicit Divine prohibition yet against showing such good will in the first place.

This is false both historically and hermeneutically. In

addition, it is not “other traditions” but a single tradition in al-Ṭabarī that states that after the verse was

revealed, some of those who had stayed behind during the campaign of Tabūk repented upon hearing

the verse and confessed to their hypocrisy, whereupon the verses of repentance were revealed (9:101-

104) and the Prophet ﷺ accepted their alms.

There is nothing in al-Bukhārī but the opposite of

what Lings forwards. As for his main source, it is a

9

th

-century AH book of history written in Persian by

the Afghan Muḥammad ibn Khwārizmī Mīrkhwand

(836-903)! It would be unthinkable that a serious biographer of Jesus and the Disciples who bases himself on “the earliest sources” suddenly jump down

several centuries and into a completely different linguistic and geographical region, using a quotation

from, say, Einhard’s 9

th

-century CE biography of

Charlemagne in order to contradict something agreed

upon in the Four Gospels and the Epistles!

Everything Ibn Ubayy did and said on his deathbed

in this (broken-chained) report was orchestrated for

his son to save face after him while everything the

Prophet ﷺ said and did with Ibn Ubayy was meant

as a summon of goodwill to those the latter left behind as is clear from Ibn Ubayy's gibe which is studiously omitted: "I did not call for you to come and

admonish me but to ask forgiveness for me" and as

elaborated by Ibn ʿAjjār in *Fatḥ al-Bayrūtī* and others.

That "the imminence of death had changed him" is

not found in the original and is therefore Lingsian

license and speculation.

More of the same. And Allāh Most High knows best

and to Him is our return. Blessings and peace on the

Prophet, his Family, and all his Companions.

Glorified be thy Lord, the Lord of majesty, from what they attribute unto Him, and peace be unto those sent to warn, and

praise be to Allah, Lord of the Worlds!

Mount Qasyoun, Damascus

パネエ内職のサイトです。

皆様、こんにちは。内職をお探しでしょうか？

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