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Muslim view on Tahrif

The accepted view of Muslims about the Qur'an is that it is free from all profanities and tampering. They firmly believe that the Book existing among them has the complete text of what was revealed to the great Prophet (‘s). Many scholars of repute have supported this view, among them is Muhammad ibn Babawayh, popularly known as Sheikh Saduq, who has included this view in the principle tenets of Shia Ithna-Asheri sect. Sheikh al Taifah Abu Ja'far Muhammad b. al-Hasan al-Tusi has dwelt on this subject in his commentary *al Tibyan* and in support of this view, has quoted his master Alamul Huda Sayyid Murtadha, relating his extensive arguments. The great commentator, al Tabrasi, has lent credence to this view in the preface to his famous work *Majma-ul-Bayan,* and so has Shaikh Ja'far in his chapter on the Qur'an, from his book *Kashful Ghita;* wherein he claims a consensus on this view. Allamah Shahshahani in his book *Al Urwatul Wuthqa* says that the majority of mujtahids concur that there has been no Interpolation in the Qur'an; and Mulla Muhsin Kashani in his two worlds, *al-Wafi* and *Ilm-ul-Yaqin* reiterates the same view. We find this repeated by the great scholar Sheikh Muhammad Jawad al-Balaghi in the foreword to his *Tafsir Ala-ur-Rahman.*

Besides, many great scholars like Sheikh Mufid, Shaikh Bahai and Muhaqqiq Qadhi Nurullah are known to have been partisans of the view that there has been no tampering in the Qur'an. Even those great Shi'a scholars who wrote on the subject of Imamat, criticizing the factions which arose to usurp the rights of *Ahl ul-Bayt* (‘a), have not ascribed *Tahrif* to them. This is a very pertinent point, because had they subscribed to the view that the Qur'an had been profaned, they would have mentioned it with more candour than merely grieving about the burning up of the copies of the Qur'an or other similar matters.

To sum up, the general belief of Shi'a *Ulama'* has been that the Qur'an is intact and pristine. Of course, there has been a small group of traditionalists, both among Shi'as and Sunnis, who held that the Qur'an has been tampered with. al-Rafai says: "A group of theologians used to hypothetical presumptions have subscribed to the view of *Tahrif;* those who have a habit of resorting to various methods of disputations in every word and in every law, have found it probable that something from the Qur'an may have been lost because of the way its collection has been described"[1]. In *Majma ul Bayan,* Tabrasi has ascribed this view to the group of *Hashawiyyah* among Sunnis.

It will soon be evident from what follows that to confirm that the recitation of certain parts of the Qur'an had been abrogated is tantamount to believing in *Tahrif.* Those *Ulama'* of Ahlu_s*Sunnah* who declare such an abrogation are in reality declaring that some tampering has occurred in the Qur'an.

1. Ijazul Qur'an, p.41

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