‘A HISTORICAL CRITIQUE OF ISLAM’

Assessing the newest research on the historical Problems with **Islam’s Origins**

By Dr. Jay Smith

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4 areas we will investigate…

[1] THE PROBLEM WITH THE SOURCES

[2] THE PROBLEM WITH MECCA

[3] THE PROBLEM WITH EARLY ISLAM

[4] THE PROBLEM WITH THE QUR'AN

The Standard Islamic Narrative (SIN)

The Islamic Traditions for radicals – nominals – liberals

SIN's Traditional Claims

For the last 1400 years…

- **Muhammad** was the last and greatest prophet, who was born in **Mecca** in 570 AD, and died in Medina in 632 AD
  - He modeled 'Islam' for the world
  - He received the Qur'an
- **The Qur'an,** his revelation, was sent down only to him between 610 – 632 AD
  - It is the final, the greatest, and the only perfectly preserved revelation
  - It corrects all previous revelations
- **Islam** is the final religion, based on Muhammad's life and sayings (Sunnah), and on the Qur'an's teachings

CONCLUSION?

Thus, Islam is completely dependent on:

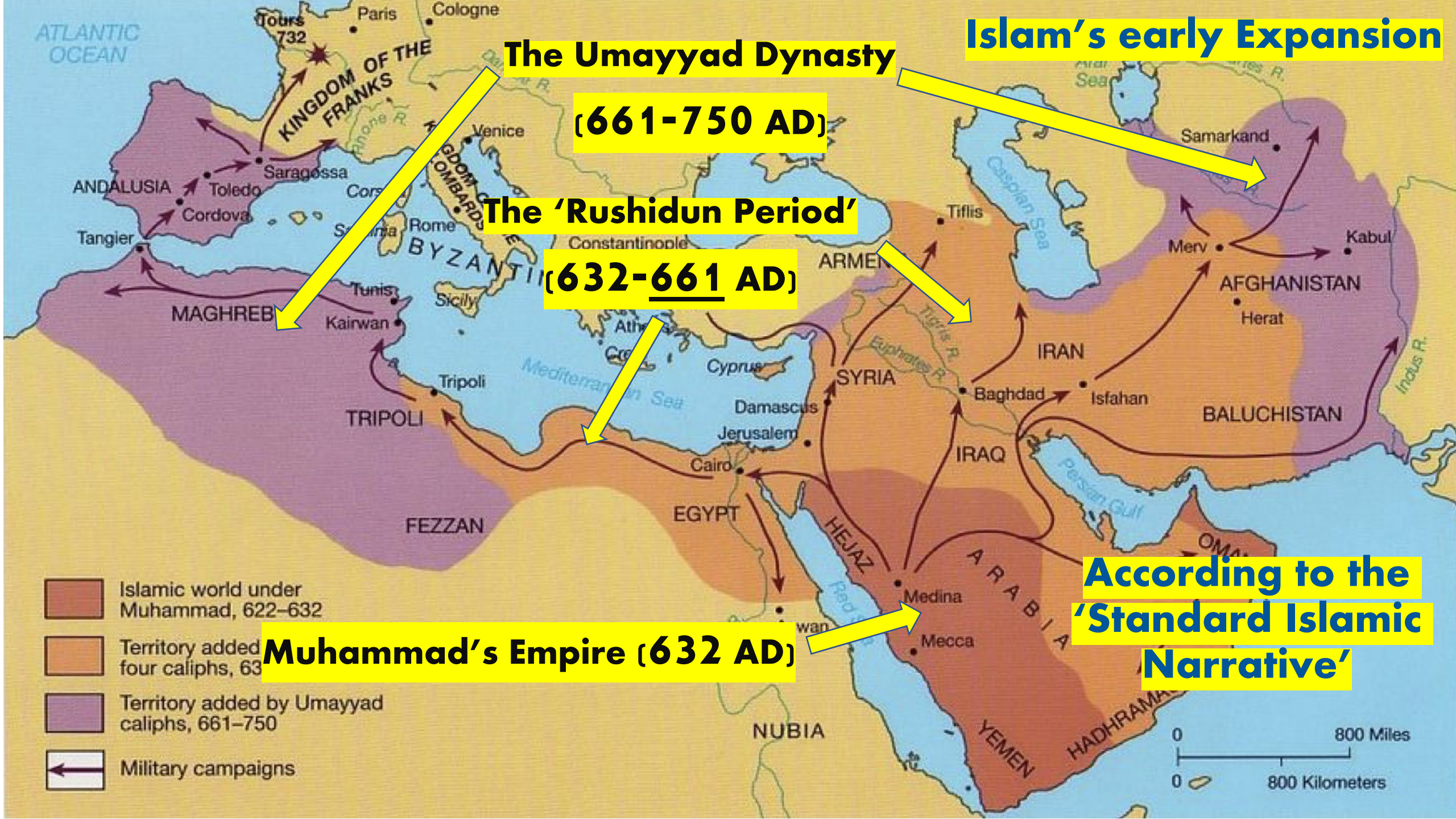
- **THE QUR'AN = 'The Book'**
- **MUHAMMAD = 'The Man'**
- **MECCA = 'The Place'**

- *Since these 3 areas are foundational to Islam, we should investigate them*
  - *At the time they all existed (i.e. the early 7th century)*
  - *In the place they existed (i.e. the Hijaz = Central Arabia)*
- *Let's start by looking at the problem of sources, and then move to Mecca…*



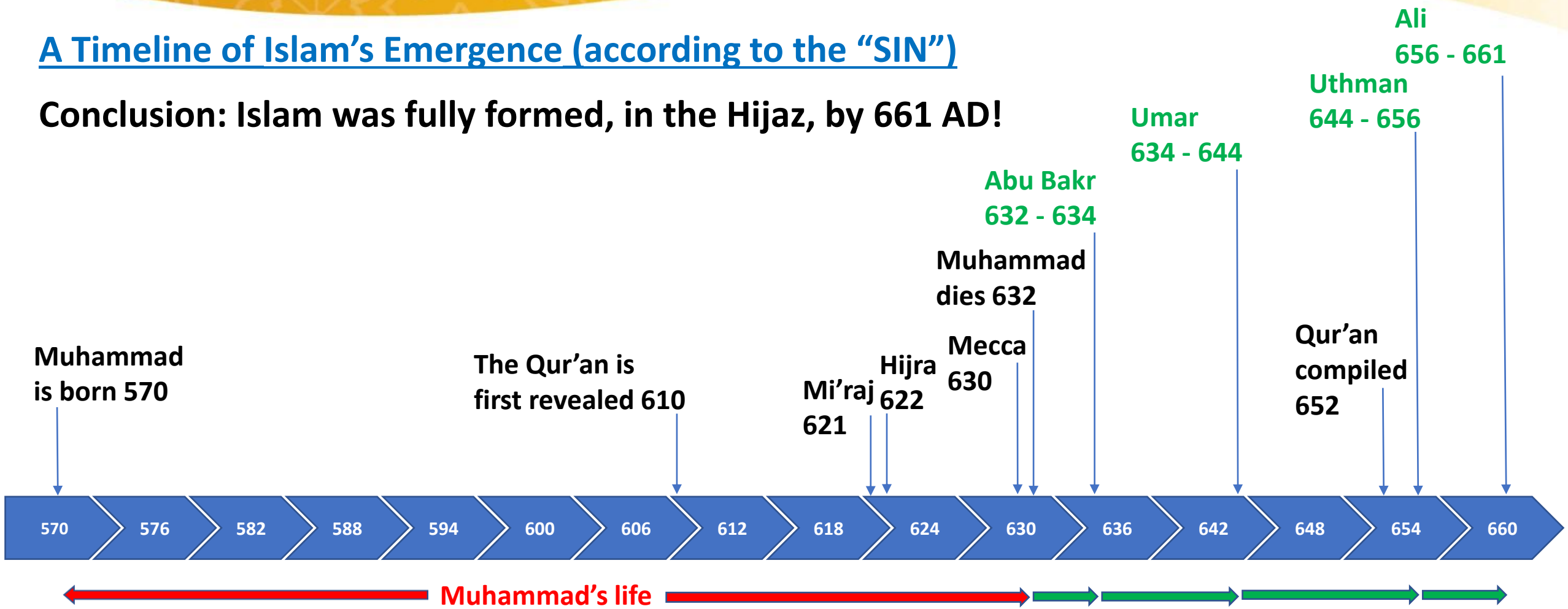
[1] PROBLEM WITH SOURCES

Where did it all come from?


Islam's early Expansion
The Umayyad Dynasty
(661-750 AD)
The 'Rushidun Period'
(632-661 AD)
Muhammad's Empire (632 AD)
According to the 'Standard Islamic Narrative'
ATLANTIC OCEAN
Tours 732
Paris
Cologne
KINGDOM OF THE FRANKS
Venice
Saragossa
ANDALUSIA
Toledo
Cordova
Tangier
Rome
BYZANTINE
Constantinople
Tiflis
ARMENIA
Samarkand
Merv
Kabul
AFGHANISTAN
Herat
Tunis
MAGHREB
Kairwan
Sicily
Cyprus
Tripoli
TRIPOLI
SYRIA
Damascus
Jerusalem
Baghdad
IRAN
Isfahan
BALUCHISTAN
IRAQ
Cairo
EGYPT
FEZZAN
HEJAZ
Medina
Mecca
ARABIA
NUBIA
YEMEN
HADHRAMAUT
Caspian Sea
Persian Gulf
Red Sea
Mediterranean Sea
Euphrates R.
Tigris R.
Indus R.
Islamic world under Muhammad, 622–632
Territory added by four caliphs, 63
Territory added by Umayyad caliphs, 661–750
Military campaigns
0
800 Miles
0
800 Kilometers

A Timeline of Islam's Emergence (according to the "SIN")

Conclusion: Islam was fully formed, in the Hijaz, by 661 AD!



Question: How do we know all of the above? Where does it come from?

Sources for the 'ISLAMIC TRADITIONS' (SIN)

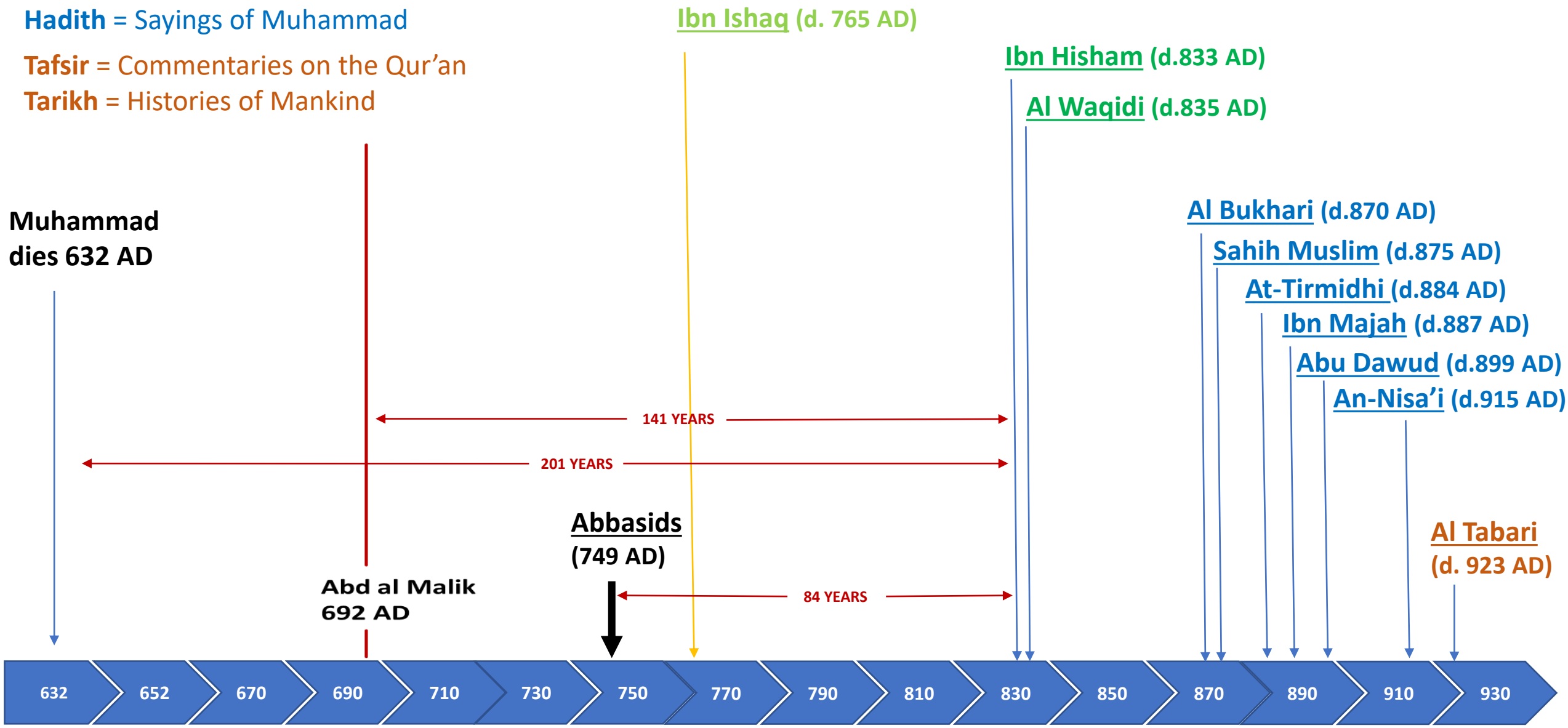
Pfander

Sira = Biography of Muhammad

Hadith = Sayings of Muhammad

Tafsir = Commentaries on the Qur'an

Tarikh = Histories of Mankind



The problem of Distance & Direction

The Islamic Traditions say everything happened in Mecca and Medina (in the Hejaz)

Yet, all of the writers of the Traditions worked in Baghdad, which is 1,200 mi. too far north

Ibn Hisham (The Sira) is from Basra
But he grew up in Cairo
Cairo – Mecca = 990 mi.
Basra – Mecca = 1,200 mi.

Al Bukhari (The Hadith) is from Bukhara
Bukhara – Mecca = 2,600 mi.

Al Tabari (The Tafsir & Takhrikh) is from Tabaristan
Tabaristan - Mecca = 1,700 mi.



632 | 652 | 670 | 690 | 710 | 730 | 750 | 770 | 790 | 810 | 830 | 850 | 870 | 890 | 910 | 930

Conclusion: None of the Traditional writers lived or worked in Mecca or Medina,
They were too far to the north of Mecca, and came from the West and East of Baghdad
NOTE: All of these northern areas are where the Abbasids originated from

Pfander

The problem of a Northern Hegemony

The Islamic Traditions say everything happened in Mecca and Medina (the Hejaz)

Yet, all of the writers of the Traditions worked in Baghdad, which is 1,120 mi. too far north

NOTE: All of these northern areas are where the Abbasids originated from

Furthermore, all of the writers of the Traditions worked in the 9th and 10th centuries

CONCLUSION: They all wrote their material hundreds of miles too far away, and hundreds of years too late!



632 652 670 690 710 730 750 770 790 810 830 850 870 890 910 930

201 YEARS

Muhammad dies 632 AD

Ibn Hisham (d.833 AD)

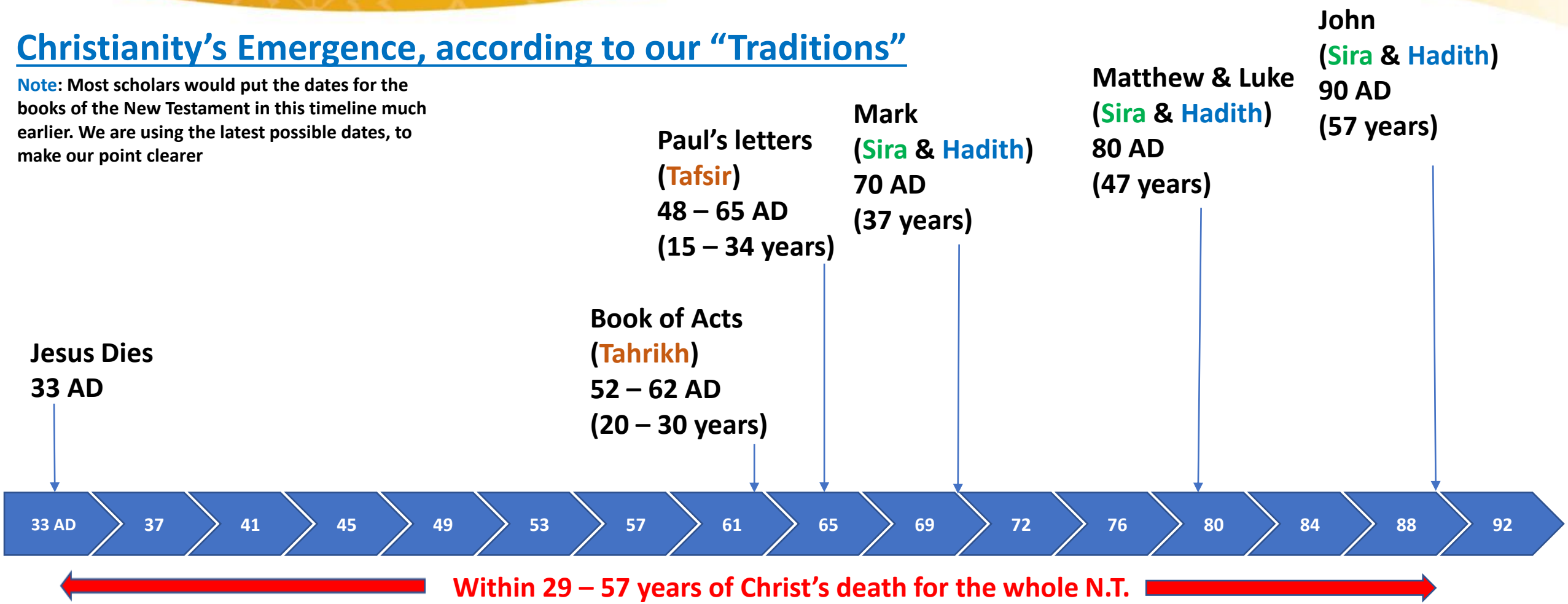
Al Bukhari (d.870 AD)

Al Tabari (d. 923 AD)

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Christianity's Emergence, according to our "Traditions"

Note: Most scholars would put the dates for the books of the New Testament in this timeline much earlier. We are using the latest possible dates, to make our point clearer



Note: All of the New Testament writers lived in the same place Jesus lived, and they either knew him personally, or they got their material from others who saw what he did, and heard what he said

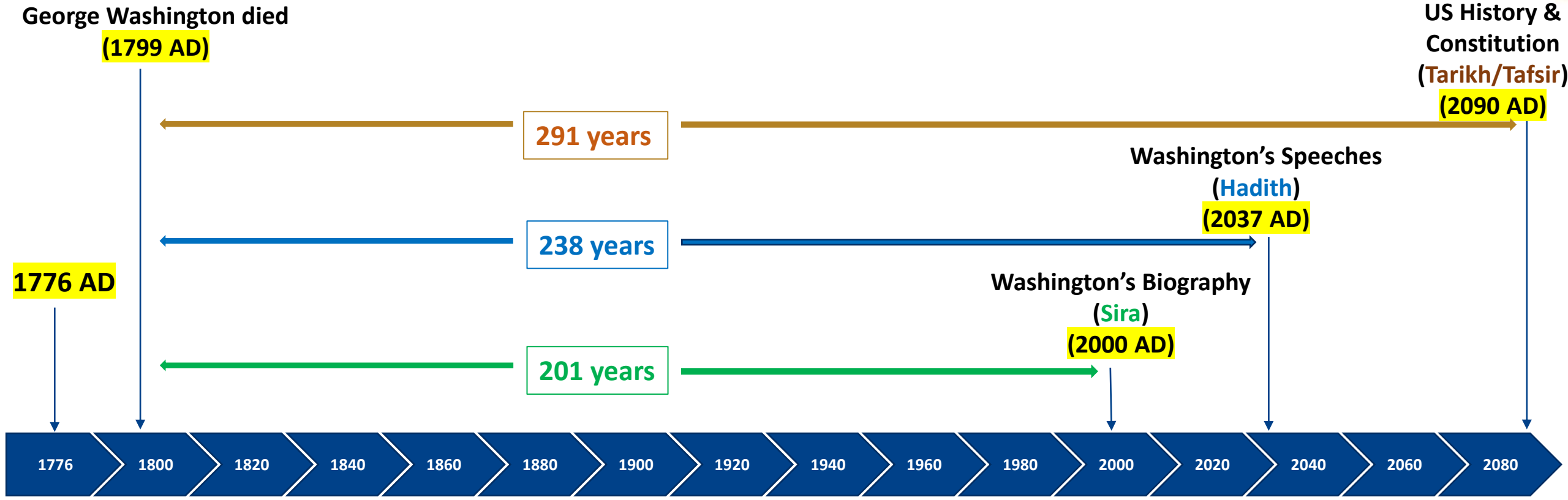
Comparing Christianity vs Islam

When were the earliest biographies and sayings for both faiths written?

- Christianity **15 – 60** years later, written by those from the same area
- Islam **200 – 300** years later, hundreds of miles too far north
- Which would you guess is more authoritative?

As a comparison: If we had to depend on sources for Jesus, comparable to what Muslims are dependent on for Muhammad, Jesus would not begin to appear until the **3rd century!**

A Modern USA Comparison



Note: Washington's biography would have been written and published just 20 years ago, while his speeches and the US Constitution won't be written for another 15 - 60 years!

Conclusion: How would we know what to base our laws on, or how the USA began?

21st Century Scholar's Conclusions

Concerning these late dates…

- "**Islam**, as we know it, **did not exist in the 7th century**, but evolved over a period of 200-300 years" (Humphreys 1991:71,83-89)

- "The Qur'an probably was not revealed to one man in 22 years, but likely **evolved over a period of 50-100 years**" (Rippin 1985:155;1990:3,25,60; Lester 99:44-45; Wansbrough 1977:160-163)

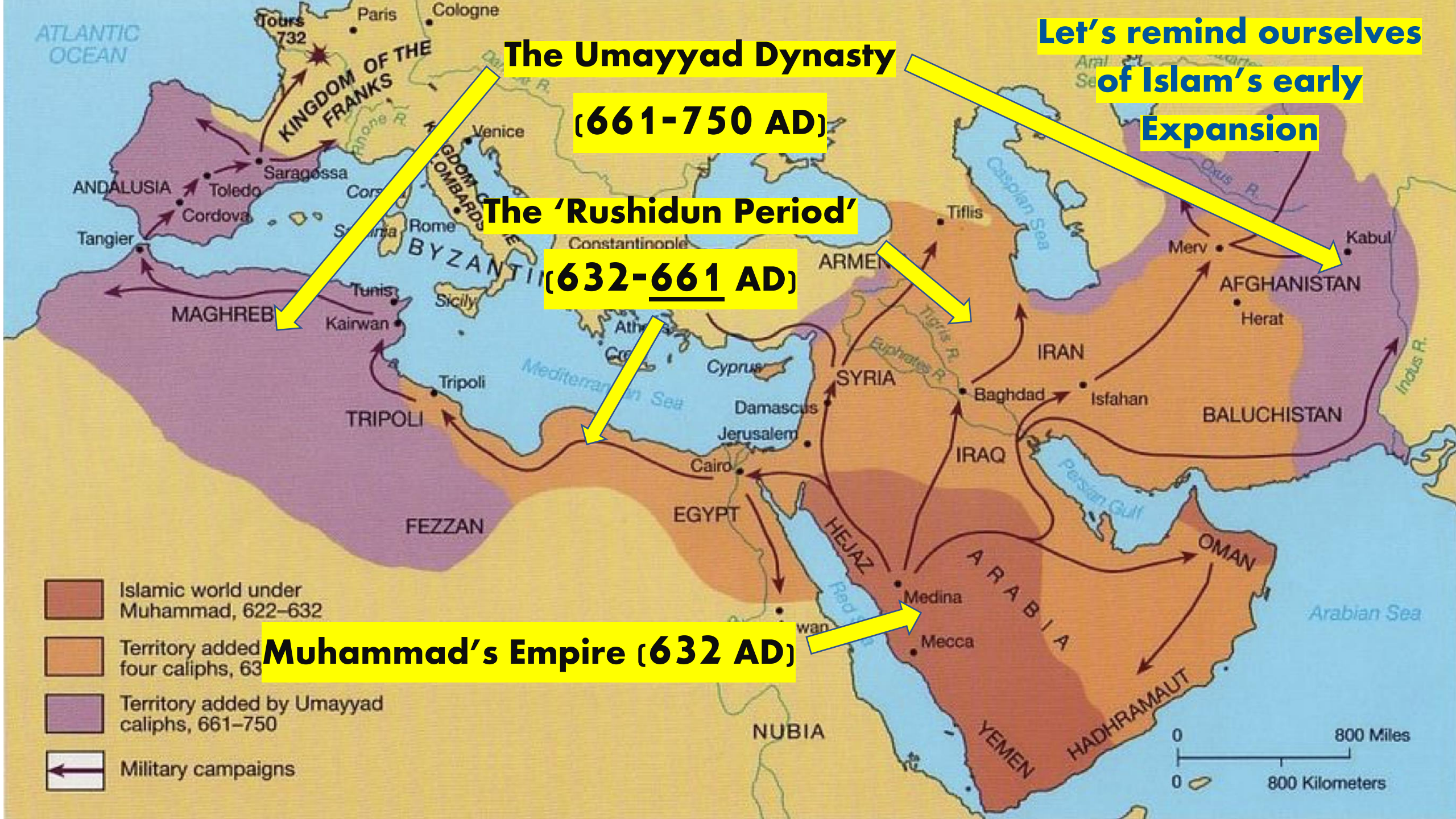
Conclusion: The history of Islam, at least from the time of the caliph Abd al-Malik (685-705 AD) and before, **is a later fabrication** (Cook 1983:65, Robinson 1996:47)

The Scholar's Concerns

If so much of Islam's history was created so late, then:

- Why did it take so long to write it all down?
- Were these people not literate?
  - They controlled Basra, Baghdad, Damascus, Jerusalem, Cairo by 642 AD (Umar's reign), and then from Spain to India by 685 AD (Abd al-Malik's reign).
- Where did the 9th - 10th c. Traditional compilers get their material from?
- Can it be trusted, if it is so late (200-300 years later)?
- Shouldn't we go to the period these events took place?
- Shouldn't we go to the 7th century, and see what we find?
- What then are they finding?
- That is what this talk is all about…

Note: we are only interested in the 7th – 8th centuries, not the 9th – 10th c.


Let's remind ourselves of Islam's early Expansion
The Umayyad Dynasty (661-750 AD)
The 'Rushidun Period' (632-661 AD)
Muhammad's Empire (632 AD)
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Cordova
Tangier
Rome
BYZANTII
Constantinople
Tiflis
ARMEN
Merv
Kabul
AFGHANISTAN
Herat
MAGHREB
Tunis
Kairwan
Sicily
Cyprus
SYRIA
IRAN
Baghdad
Isfahan
BALUCHISTAN
Tripoli
TRIPOLI
Damascus
Jerusalem
IRAQ
Cairo
EGYPT
FEZZAN
HEJAZ
Medina
Mecca
ARABIA
OMAN
NUBIA
YEMEN
HADHRAMAUT
Caspian Sea
Persian Gulf
Arabian Sea
Indus R.
Oxus R.
Tigris R.
Euphrates R.
Islamic world under Muhammad, 622–632
Territory added by four caliphs, 63
Territory added by Umayyad caliphs, 661–750
Military campaigns
0
800 Miles
0
800 Kilometers

2) THE PROBLEMS WITH MECCA

Mecca is all through the “SIN”!

Why Mecca?

- Mecca is where everything in Islam happened
- Therefore, the Book and the Man are absolutely dependent on Mecca
- If it didn't exist, then neither did the other two
- Once you get rid of Mecca in the 7th century, then you get rid of Muhammad and the Qur'an in the 7th century, at least the Muhammad and the Qur'an of Islam…

What Muslims Claim

MECCA is the oldest and best-known city in history

- **Mecca** is where **Adam and Eve** were thrown down to, from the Garden of Eden (Surah 7:24)
- **Mecca** is where **Abraham** lived when he destroyed the idols within the Ka'aba (Surah 21:51-71)
- **Mecca** is the center of **trade** North, South, East and West (Montgomery Watt's 'Trade Route Theory')

So, it should be one of the best known and best documented places in history!

Inferences to 'Mecca' in the Qur'an

Mecca is the **center of Islam**, and the **center of history**

(Note: none of the verses below use the word "Mecca". It's only implied)

- "The **first sanctuary** appointed for mankind was that at Bakkah (Mecca)"? (Sura 3:96)
- Mecca is the "**mother of all settlements**." (Sura 6:92 & 42:7)
- Mecca was where **Adam & Eve** were caste down to (Sura 7:24)
- Mecca was where **Abraham** lived in 1900 BC (Sura 21:51-71)
- Mecca was **where Muhammad** was **born** and lived until 622
- Mecca became the center for the **Qibla** **in 624** (Sura 2:149-150)

- The above imply people have lived there from the very beginning
- Yet, the **only reference** to 'Mecca' in the Qur'an is in **Sura 48:24**…Why, if it is so important?

It has much vegetation (thus water)!

According to the Qur'an and the Traditions:

Mecca is referred to as `**The Place of the Prophet'**

- In a valley, & parallel valley **(Ibn Hisham; Al Bukhari 2:645, 2:685, 3:891, 2:815, 2:820, 4:227)**
- With a stream **(Al Bukhari 2:685)**
- Outside is the ruins, and a pillar of 'salt' **(Surah 37:133-138)**
- With fields **(Al Bukhari 9:337)**
- Has Trees **(Sahih al-Tirmidhi 1535)**, Grass **(al Bukhari 9:337)**, fruit **(Al Bukhari 4:281)**, Clay and Loam **(Al Tabari VI 1079 p.6)**
- Has 'Olive Trees' **(Surah 6:141; Surah 16; Surah 80)**
- With Mountains overlooking the Kaa'ba **(Ibn Hisham; Al Bukhari 2:645, 2:685, 3:891, 2:815, 2:820, 4:227)**

Yet, Mecca is not in a valley, and has none of these listed above, because it is in a DESERT, so it's just too arid and dry to support any of the above!

Notice where the Qur'an positions its narrative

The Qur'an has just 65 Geographical references!

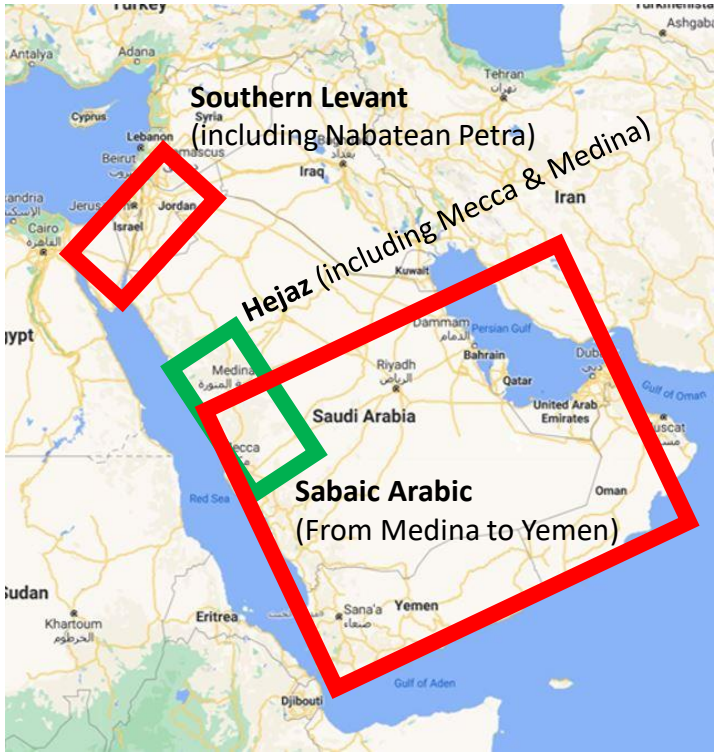
- Only 9 places named, mostly referring to people
  - **'Ad** (**23x**) (Biblical '**Uz**)
  - **Thamud** (**24x**) (**Nabateans**)
    - *Cut dwellings into mountains*
  - **Midian** (**7x**) (**Midianites**)
    - *They must be important*
    - *Yet, all 3 civilisations are located in Northern Arabia and <u>not</u> near* ***<u>MECCA!</u>***
- **600 miles <u>too far NORTH</u>!**



Qur'anic (Qureshi) Arabic – Is from the North, not the South

Note: The 4 Arabic grammatical borrowings are all from the north, around Jordan

- **i'rab:** 'Unstressed inflectional short final Vowels', marked with Diacritics, known as i'rab because they were characteristic of Bedouin dialects
- **Ta' Marbuta:** "The *addition of two superimposed dots…to give* ة *(ta' marbuta) …indicating that the letter ha' is to be pronounced as /t/"*
- **Alif Maqsurah:** "The *word-final dotless 'ya'"* (ى), placed at the end of the word, where an alif cannot occur, goes back to an earlier '-ay'
- **Definite Article 'al':** "*Introduced to following coronal consonants*"



Sabaic Arabic: South of Medina the script was **Sabaic**, originating in Yemen, from 600 BC, yet it contained all the vowels & consonants needed for the Qur'an

Conclusion: Qur'anic Arabic (**Nabataean Aramaic**) existed 600 miles further north, while the 7th c. Arabic of Mecca, in the Hejaz (**Sabaic**) would have accommodated the text of the Qur'an, had it been used, eradicating the Qira'at problems later on!

[Dr Mark Durie, 'The Qur'an and Its Biblical Reflexes, Investigations into the Genesis of a Religion', Lexington Books, 2018, pg. 15-17]
(Sabaic: taken from Dr Yehuda Nevo's 'Crossroads to Islam', and from Dr Ahmad al-Jalad in an on-line interview)

Note the Prophets who were buried in Mecca

- Adam and Eve
- Seth
- Ishmael
- Noah
- Hud (great-great grandson of Noah)
- Salih (grandfather of Hagar)
- Queen of Shebah
- Daniel
- 70 – 300 other prophets
- All lived or died, and were buried (kneeling) in Mecca, so why can't we find them?
- This would mean that almost all of the Bible would have to be re-written, and all of the stories be re-directed 600 miles further south
- Yet, there is so much evidence for the Biblical narrative historically, yet almost nothing for Islam's

Earliest literary reference to Mecca's existence: Apocalypse of Pseudo-Methodius Continuatio Byzantia Arabica

During the early reign of caliph Hisham

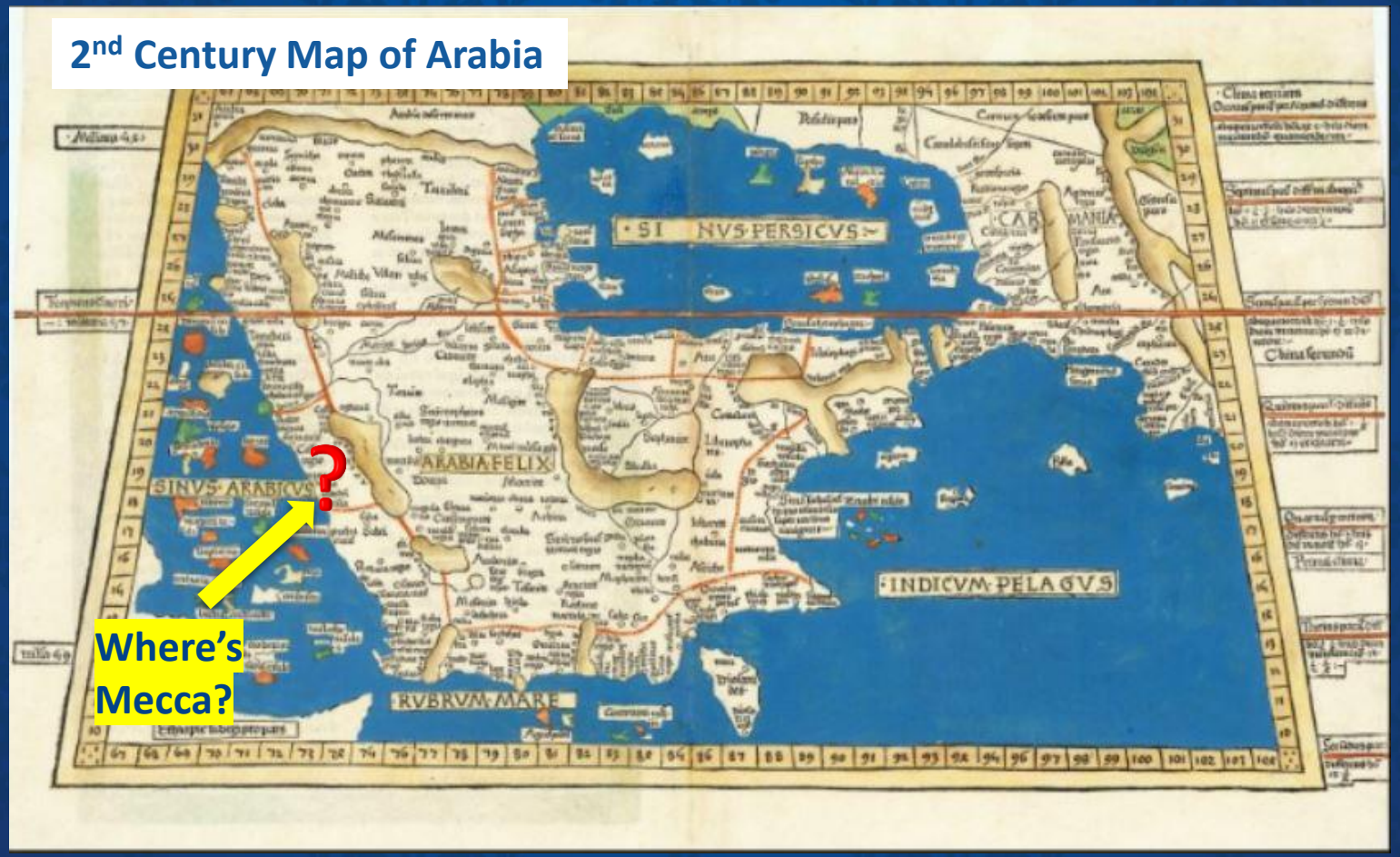
- **741 AD!**

- The earliest maps don't show MECCA until…. **900 AD!**
  - Cröne: Greek trading documents refer to the towns of Ta'if (South-East of Mecca), Yathrib (later Medina), Kaybar , but never Mecca!

Ptolemy's 2nd century References, mapped

(Created by Lienhart Holle - 1482)

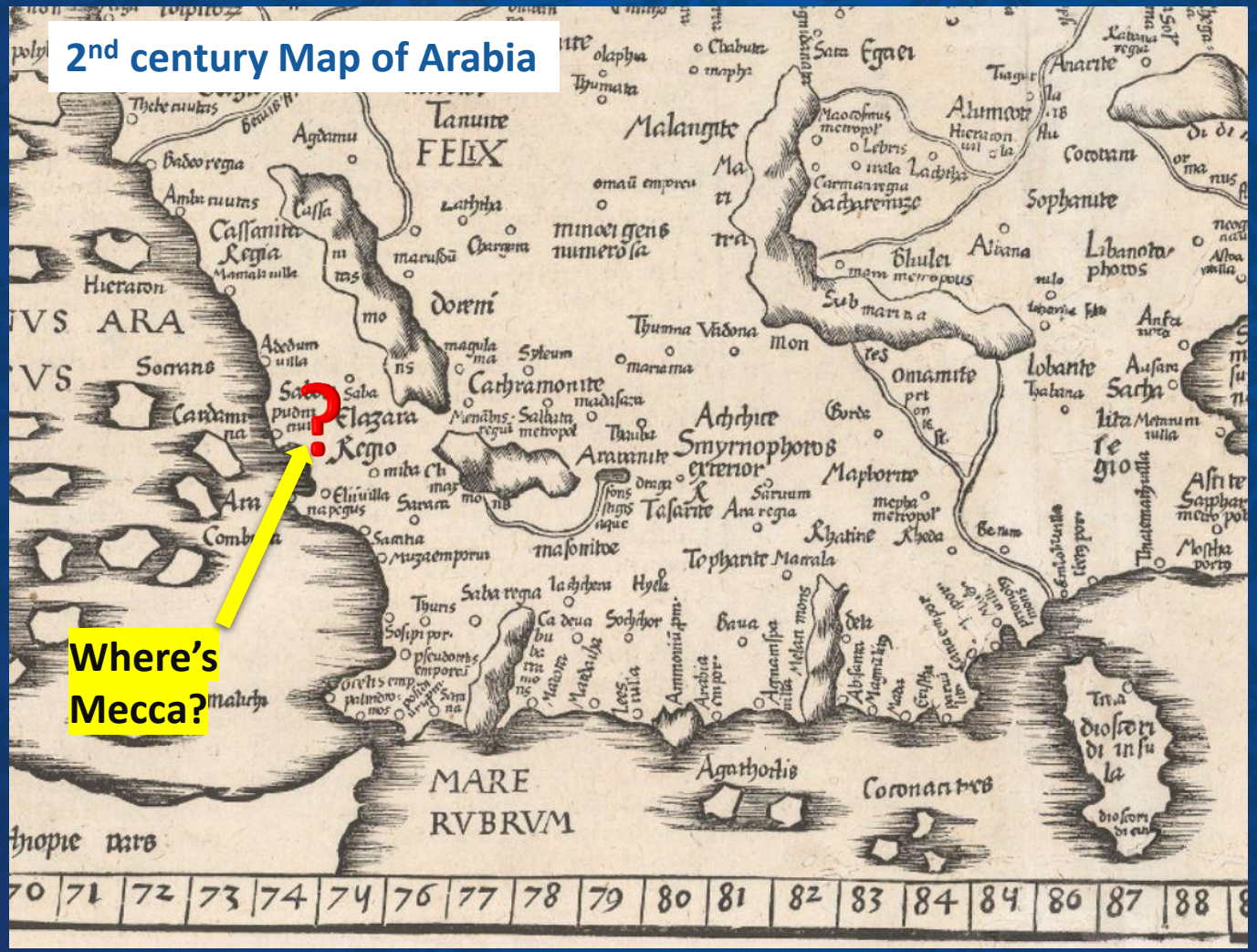
Mecca doesn't exist



Ptolemy's 2nd century References, mapped

(Created by Laurent Fries – 1541 AD)

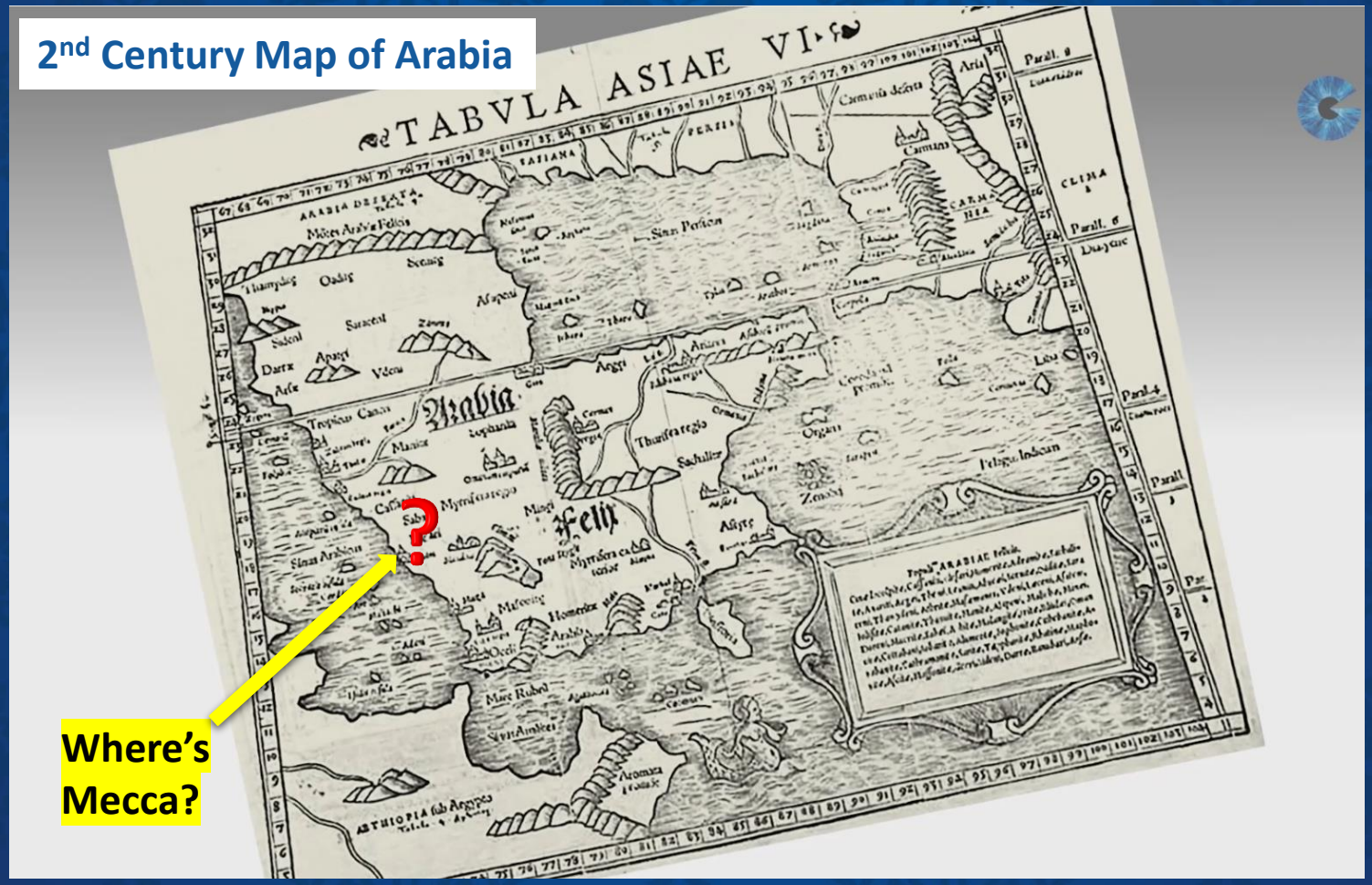
Mecca doesn't exist at all!!



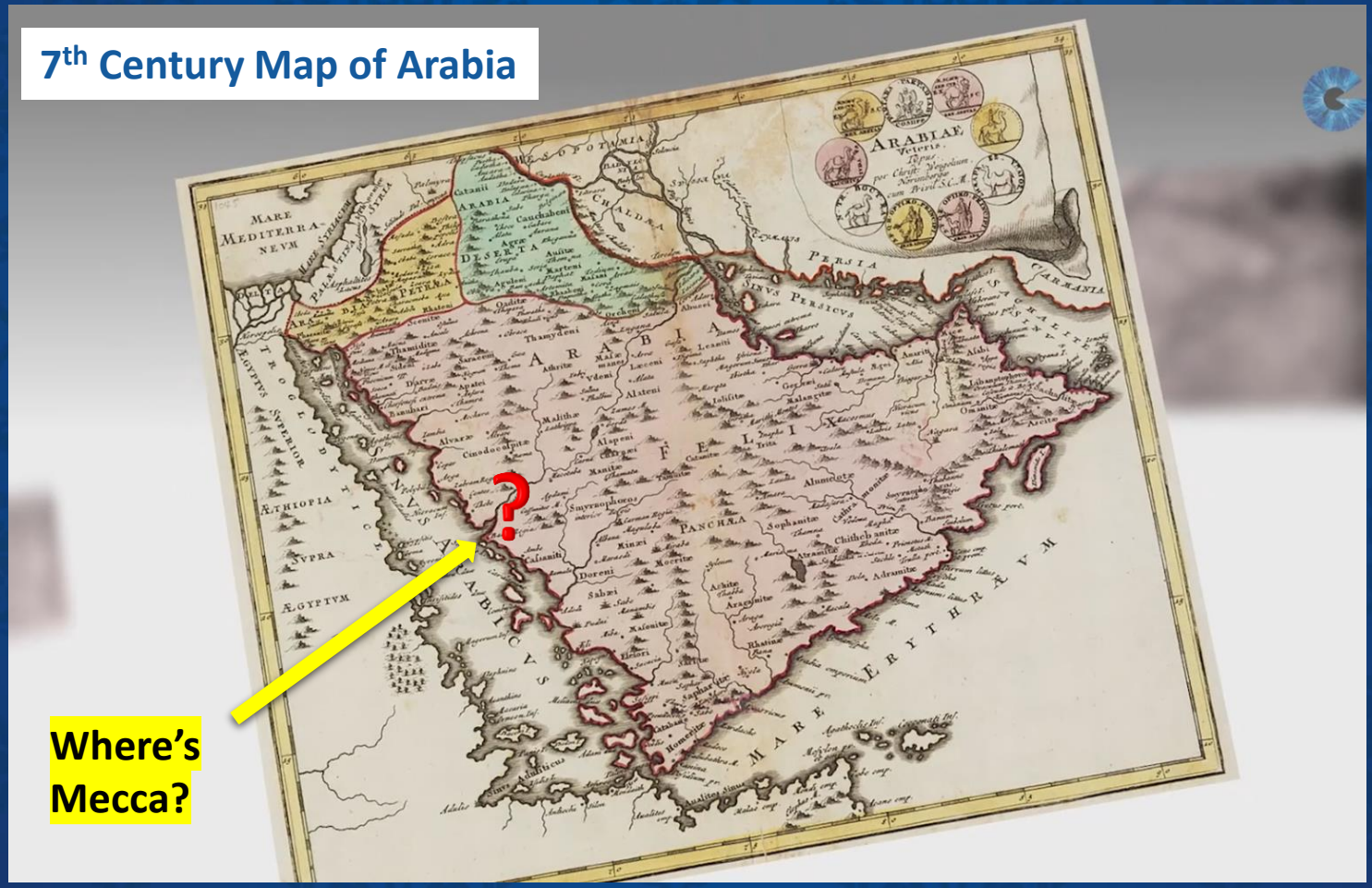
Ptolemy's 2nd century References, mapped

(Created by Sebastian Munster - 1571)

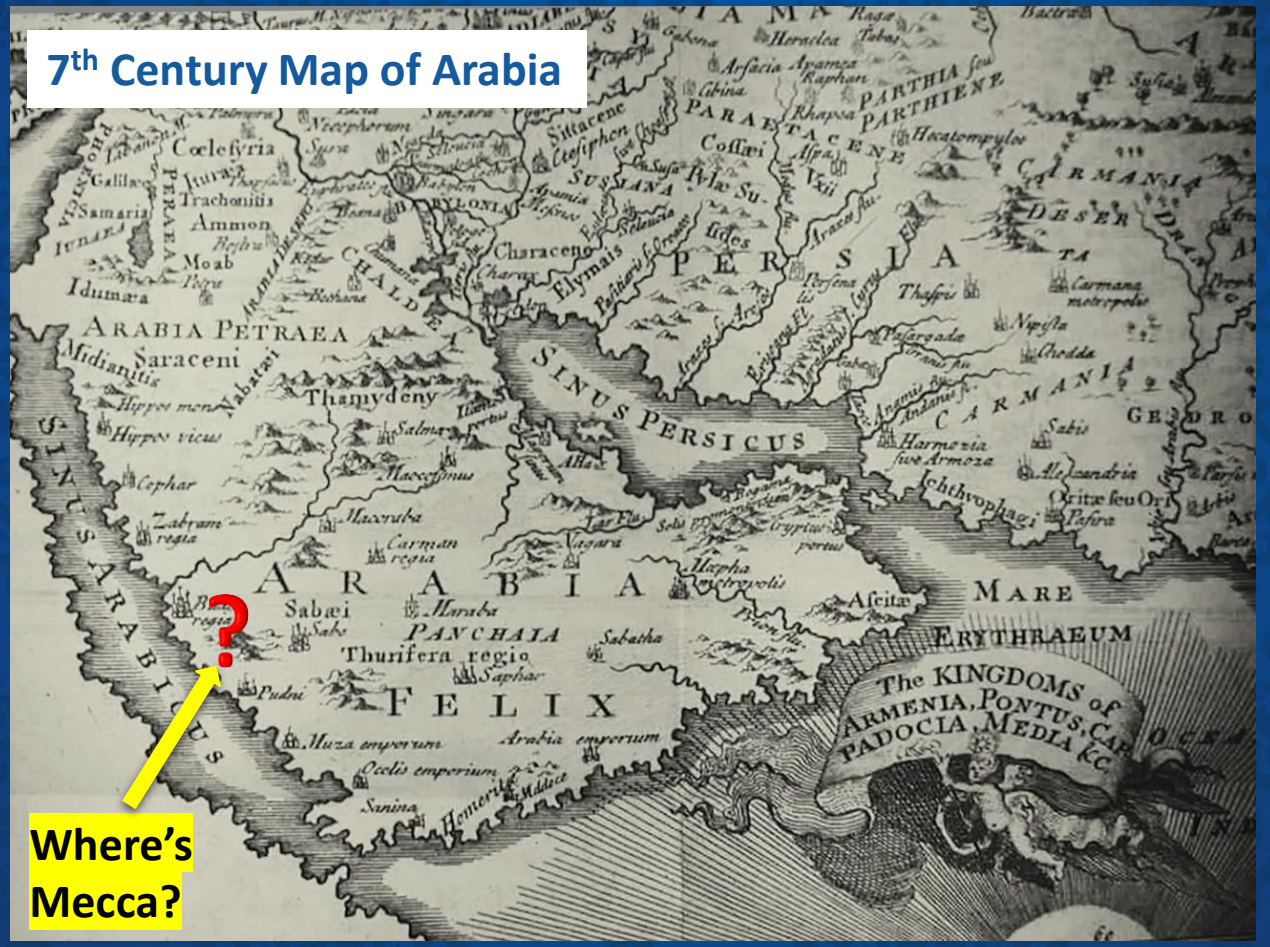
Mecca still doesn't exist



7th century Map (redacted) Mecca…missing again



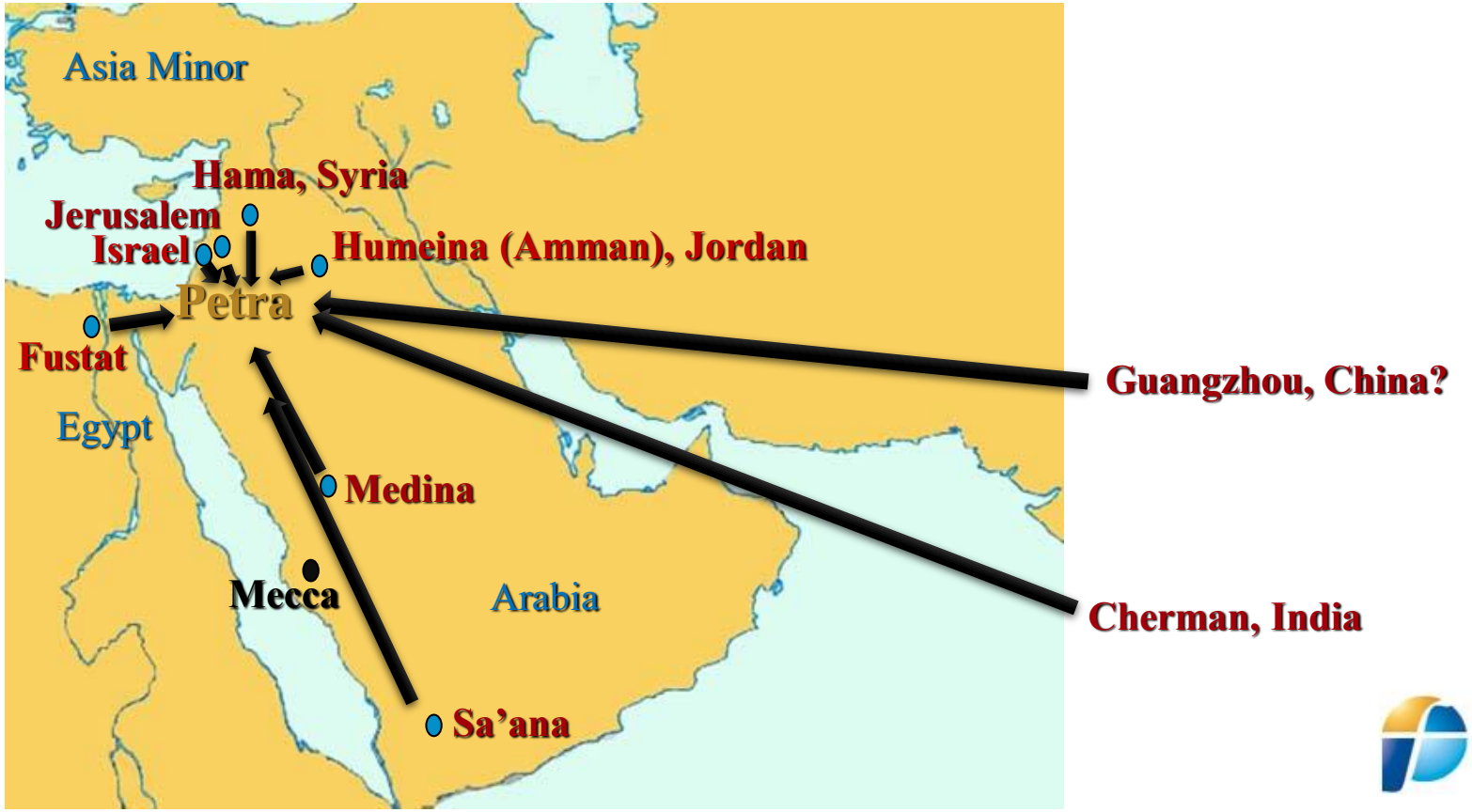
7th century Map (redacted)
Mecca…just non-existent!



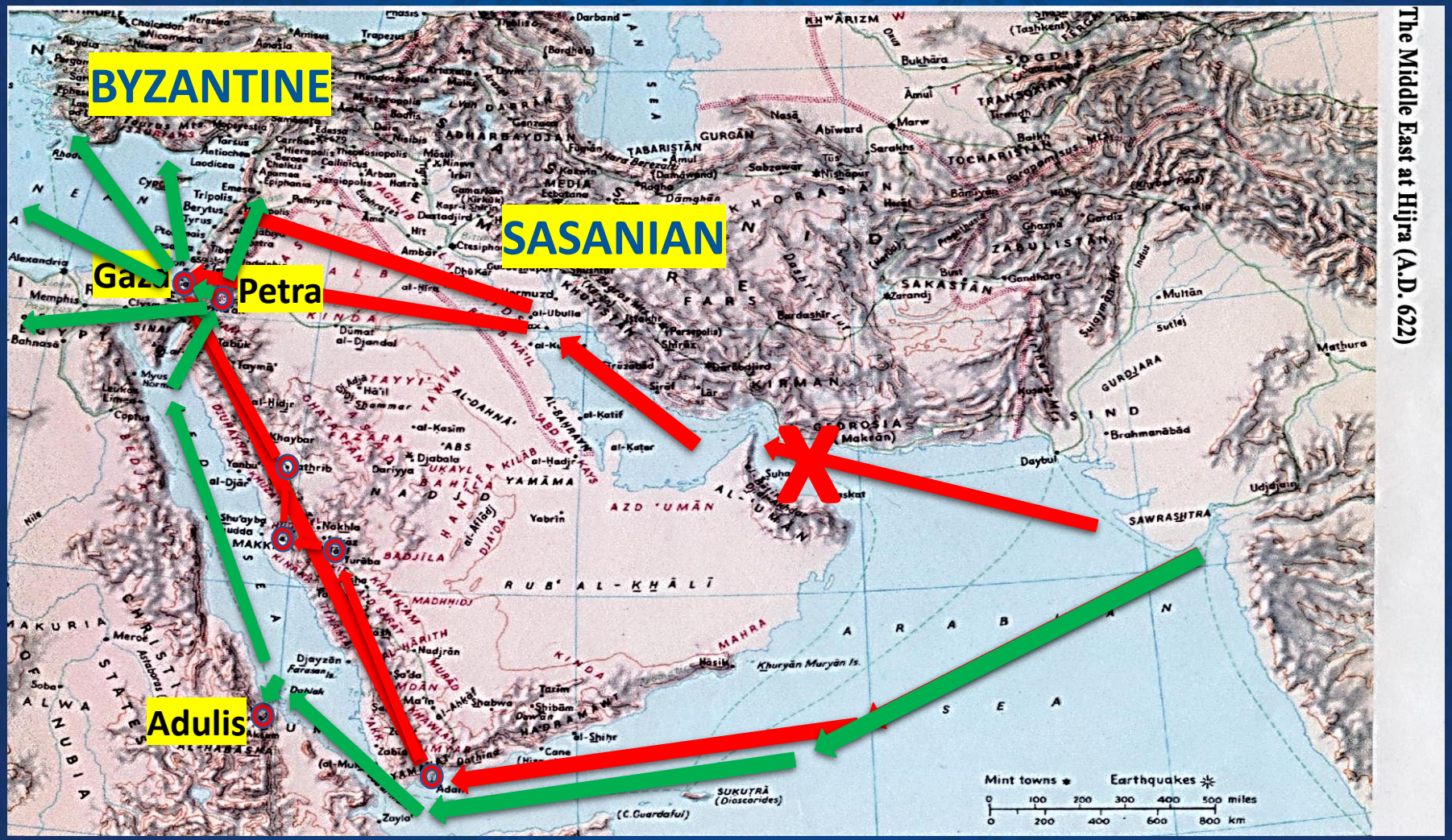
Why all Qiblas facing Petra, and not Mecca up to 706 AD?

- Medina – 626 AD
- Guangzhou, China – 627 AD
- Cherman, India - 629 AD
- Jami' Hama al'Kabir, Syria – 637 AD
- Fustat, Egypt – 642
- Dome of the Rock, Israel – 690 AD
- Humeina, Jordan – 699 AD
- Amman, Jordan – 701 AD
- Grand Sa'ana, Yemen – 705 AD
- Khirbat al Minya, Israel – 706 AD

Note: Every Qibla from 624 – 706 AD is facing Petra, and NONE are facing Mecca

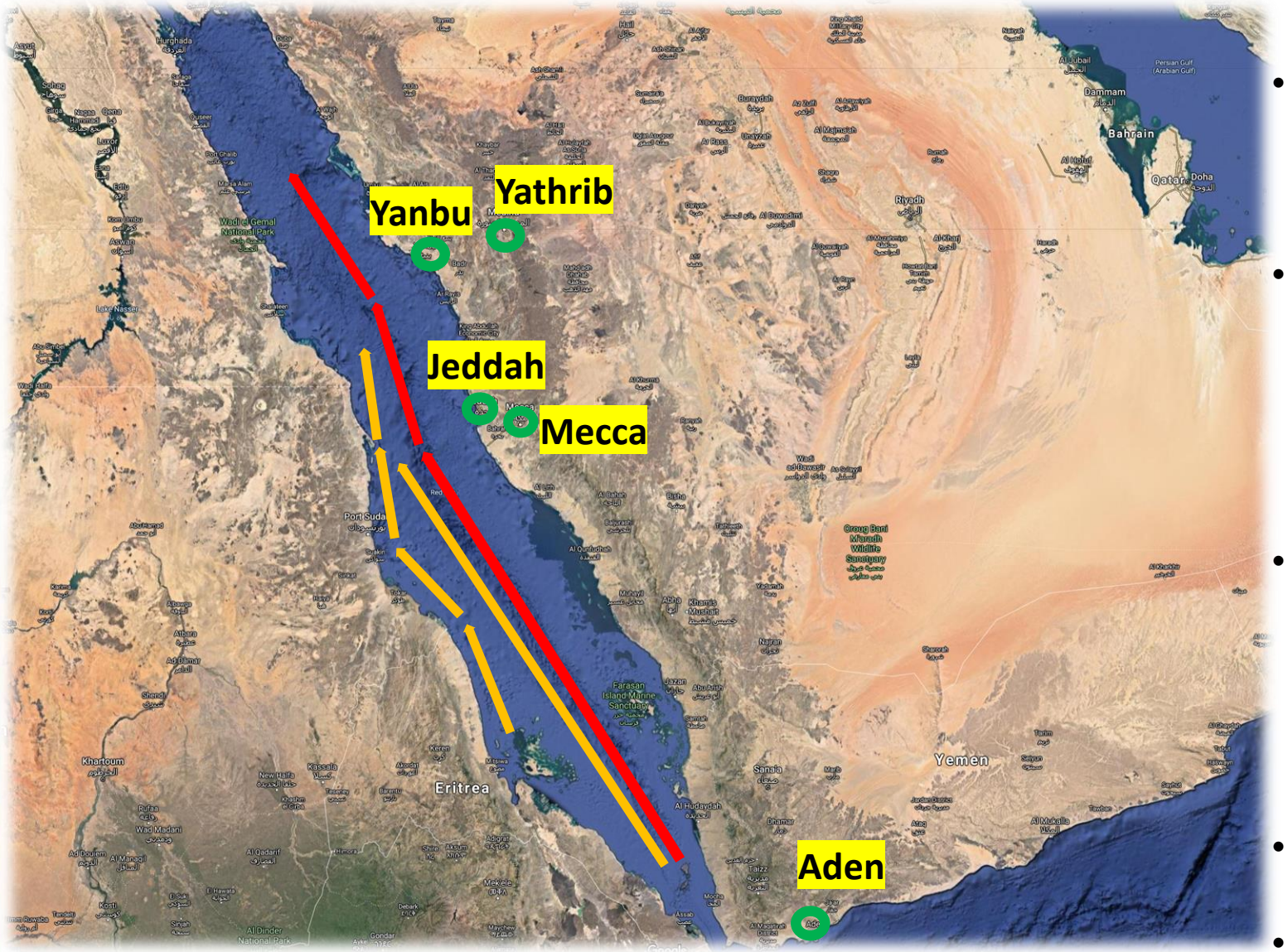


’Trade Route Theory’ (Montgomery Watt) (Debunked)



HOLD ON!! We’ve just learned something new concerning the Red Sea Trade Route!

The RED SEA via Mecca debunked!



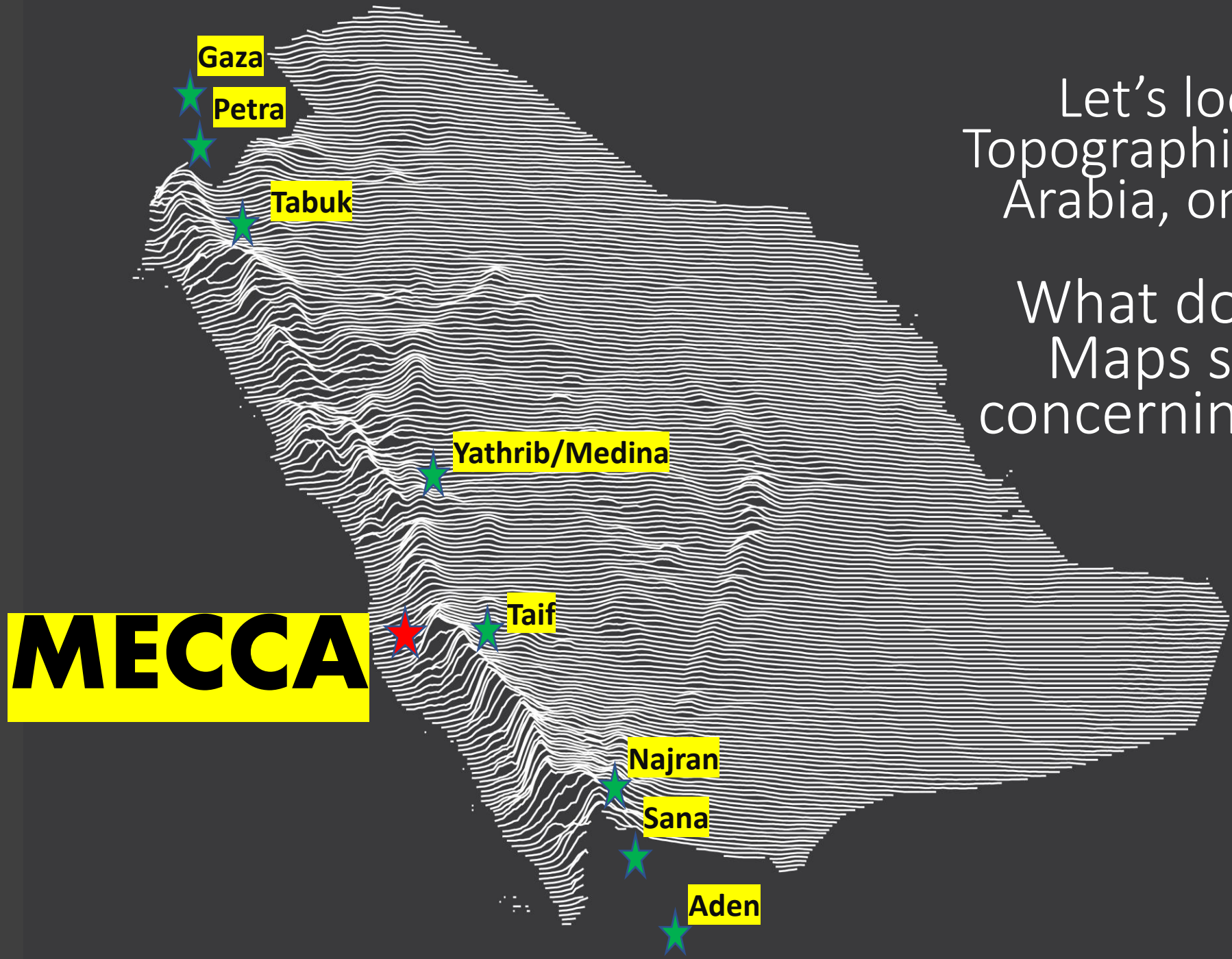
- To understand the problem, we must use a Topographical map, to see the Water ways in the Red Sea (Chiara Zazzaro - 2013)
- In the center of the Red Sea is a deep-water channel (**Red arrows**), which accommodates large modern ships today
- To the West of this central channel are two shallower water channels (**Golden arrows**), where smaller ships can go, and stay close to the Western shore, for provisions
- Unlike the Eastern Arabian shore which was arid, with no fresh water, and thus few people, the Western African shore had plenty of fresh water, and had larger populations
- What's more, the West coast had easily accessible ports!
- We know their names…

Ports along the WESTERN COAST of the RED SEA = AFRICA!



- The 5 coastal cities along the **Red Sea's Western coast**:
  - **Assab** Eritrea (246 BC)
  - **Adulis**, Eritrea (79 AD)
  - **Suaken**, Sudan (170 AD)
  - **Berenice**, Egypt (275 BC)
  - **Safaga**, Egypt (282 BC)
- Their dates all predate Islam
- All 5 are a day's distance
- On the **Red Sea's Eastern Arabian coast**, only **Yanbu** is known, as **Yathrib's** port city
- What about **Jeddah**, as a port for **Mecca**?
- We have no history for either Jeddah or Mecca until the 8th century AD
- Why? Because neither had water, nor a population large enough to accommodate early trade
- Without Mecca, what then happens to **7th c. Islam?**


Let's remind ourselves of where exactly Mecca is, in relation to the other known cities in Arabia...
Gaza
Petra
Tabuk
Yathrib/Medina
Taif
MECCA
Najran
Sana
Aden

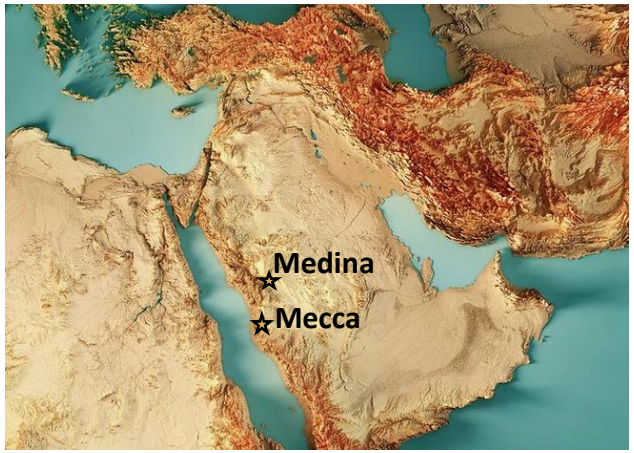


Let’s look at a Topographical map of Arabia, on a graph

What do ancient Maps show us concerning Mecca?


Mecca Unknown!
Roman Empire
Assyrians
Babylonians
Patriarchs
Central
Western
Arabia
Tayma
Persian Empire
Eastern
Arabia
Western Arabia
Mecca
Saba
Himyarites
Himyar
If Mecca was the oldest city in the history of mankind, then someone, somewhere in the areas surrounding it should have heard of it...right?
What about those empires which were in that area?
Not one of them had heard of Mecca!
Mediterranean Sea
Cyprus
Iran
Pakistan
Libya
Egypt
Saudi Arabia
Red Sea
Gulf of Aden
Persian Gulf
Gulf of Oman
Oman
Qatar
Eritrea
Djibouti
Alexandria
Cairo
Jerusalem
Riyadh
Dubai
Muscat
Karachi
Khartoum

History needs Civilizations, which need water…

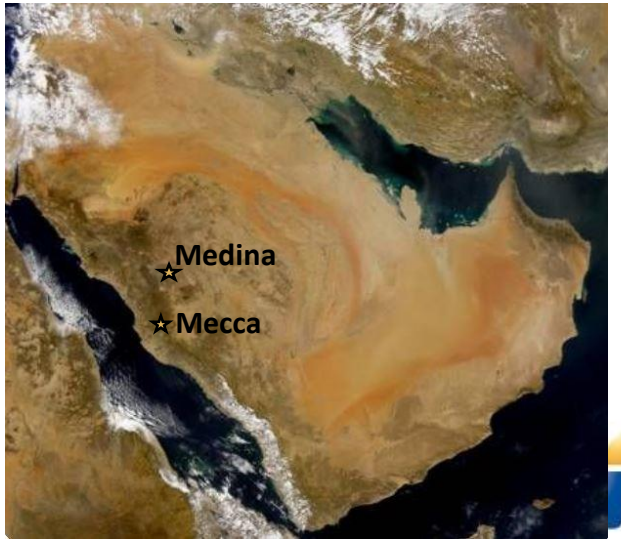




- What can you observe about these 4 Topographical Maps of Saudi Arabia?
- The Central part, with Medina and Mecca, is all a <u>DESERT</u>!

- Where there is a desert, there's no water
- Where there is no water, there's no food
- Where there is no food, there's no people
- Where there are no people, there's no towns
- Where there are no towns, there's no cities
- Where there are no cities, there's no civilization
- Where there is no civilization, **<u>there's no history</u>!**
- **Just, like Mars, without water, there is no point in ever going there…**
- **So, what about the Hajj in Mecca?**





The 5 Stages of the Hajj are all borrowed



The Ka’aba in Mecca



The Ka’aba in Petra



The Ka’aba (cube) in Jerusalem

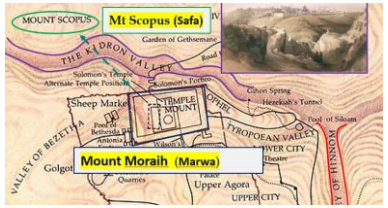




Saafa and Marwa in Mecca



Saafa and Marwa in Petra



Saafa and Marwa in Jerusalem



The Hill of Arafat in Mecca



The Hill of Arafat in Petra



The 3 Jamarats in Mecca



The 1 Jamarat in Petra



The ZamZam well in Mecca

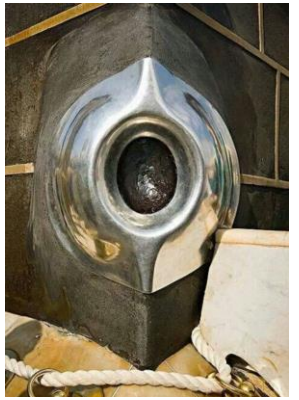


The ZamZam well in Petra



The Pool of Siloam

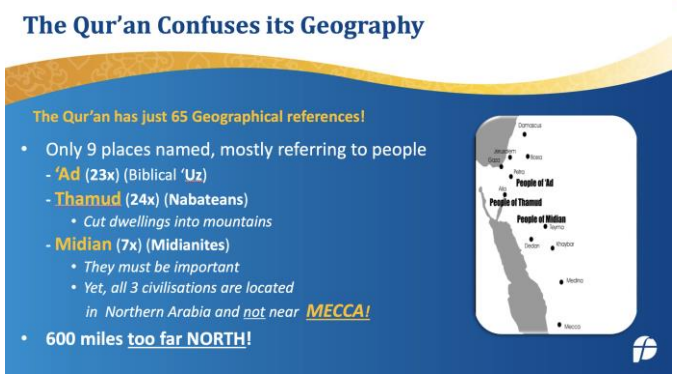
In Jerusalem



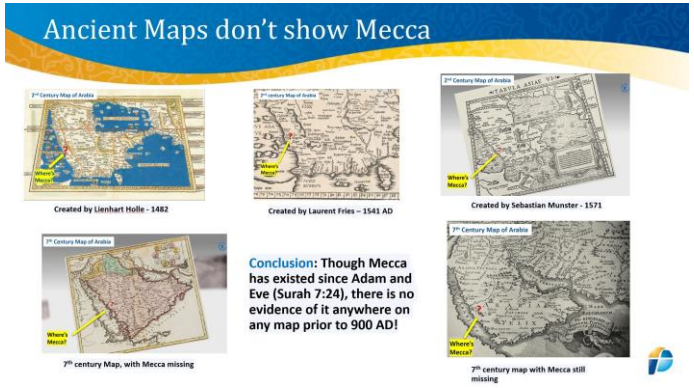


The ‘**Black Stone**’?

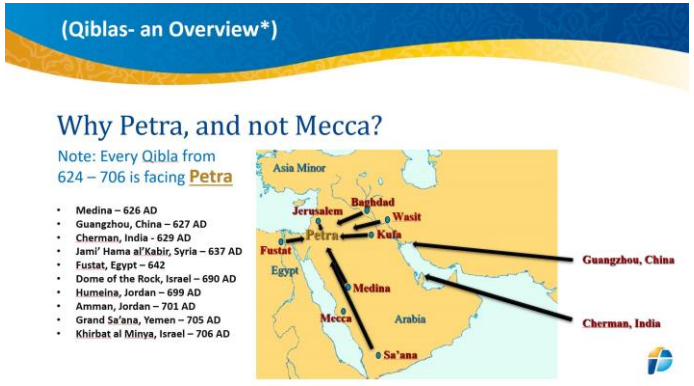
6 CONCLUSIONS CONCERNING MECCA'S HISTORICAL PROBLEMS



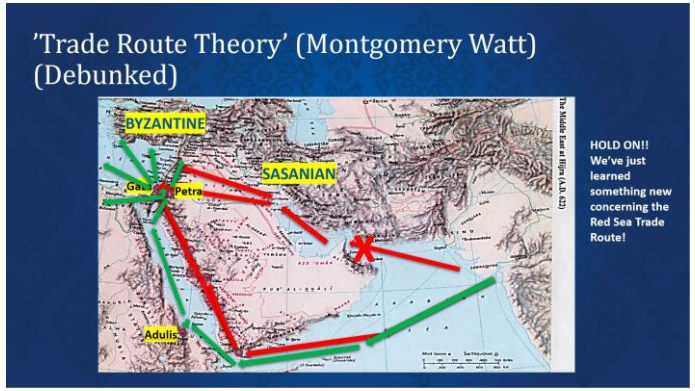
No-one could find Mecca placed in the Qur'an



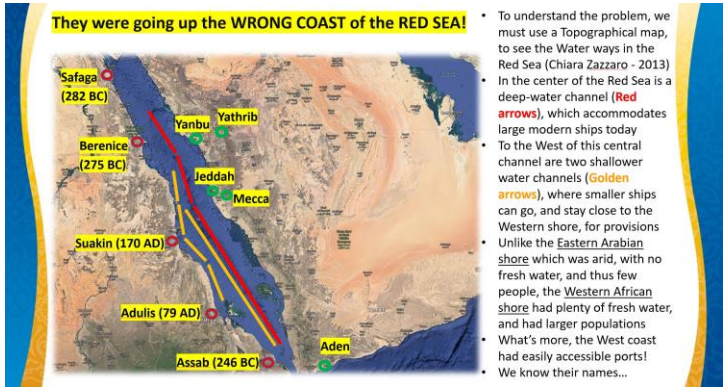
Crone couldn't find any Maps with Mecca until 900 AD



Gibson introduced all Qiblas facing Petra (2011-2017)



Crone Debunked the land-based trade via Mecca (1983)



We Debunked the sea-based trade via Mecca (2021)



Gibson debunked the 5 stages of the Hajj in Mecca

Conclusion: Though Mecca has existed since Adam and Eve (Surah 7:24), there is no evidence of it anywhere until 741 AD, and everything we now find in Mecca, we could previously find in Petra…and now, even earlier in Jerusalem!

Conclusions Concerning Mecca

- Mecca is foundational for both Muhammad and the Qur'an; so, without it, they both fall
- References to Mecca in the Qur'an/Traditions don't hold up historically (Center of History?), geographically (Ad, Thamud, Midian?), or linguistically (Qur'anic Arabic is Nabataean, not Sabaic)
- Neither the Prophets supposedly buried there, nor the ancient maps (Ptolemy's), nor the Qiblas(Gibson's research) support an early Mecca
- Neither the Land trade route (on the Western plateau), nor the Red Sea trade routes (African coast) supports an early Mecca
- Topographical Maps prove Mecca is off the Western Plateau, and in a desert, with no water, thus the reason no civilization (surrounding Arabia) has heard of Mecca, as people need water
- The 5 stages of the Haj (Kaaba, Safa & Marwah, Arafat, Jamarats, ZamZam, +black stone) support Jerusalem and not Mecca
- Someone, somewhere, at some time should have known about this city, yet no-one anywhere, nor at any time has, proving that it never existed at the time of Muhammad, nor during early Islam



3) THE PROBLEM WITH EARLY ISLAM

Just follow the evidence on the ground

Starting with coins, note where the 7th c. Mints are situated in relation to Mecca & Medina

The **Western Mints** were all situated in Modern day Syria, Lebanon, & Israel



The **Eastern Mints** were all situated in Modern day Iran

Note:
All of these mints would have been under the authority of any Arab leader, or Caliph in the 7th century, including any Muslim Caliph

Conclusion:
None of these mints were in the Hejaz. Instead, they were all situated too far North

USING A TIMELINE TELLS THE STORY – 7TH CENTURY NUMISMATICS



…632

Muhammad
Dies, but no ‘Islamic’ coins exist during his time, nor during the entire Rashidun period (624 – 661 AD)



651

Sassanian
Empire
Ceases, yet the Arab coins are Christian, up to 661 AD, and all the coins are minted too far north

661 - 680

Mu’awiyah
The first Caliph of the Umayyad Empire, mints coins with Christian crosses in the West, & Zoroastrian fire altars in the East, up to 680 AD, still nothing Islamic



692

Abd al-Malik
Mints (possibly) the 1st Islamic Coin! It includes the ‘Shahada’, and is widely used, though it causes a war



693

Abd al-Malik
Mints a coin with his image & a sword, & that he is the ‘servant of Allah’



696

Abd al-Malik
Mints a coin with no image, with references attacking Christianity

Coins in the 7th Century (an Overview*)

All early coins show a clear Christian identity on both sides of the coin in the West, & Zoroastrian in the East

- **624 – 660 AD:** Early Islamic coins just don't exist. Why, since they controlled so much land & mints in Syria & Iran (North)?
- **640 – 660 AD:** Some Arab Proxy states continue Christian imagery
- **661 – 680 AD:** **Mu'awiya** = Christian symbols (West), Zoroastrian (East), up to 680 AD, adds 'Allah's name, but not Muhammad's
- **692 – 693 AD:** **abd al-Malik (& Zubayr)** introduce Muhammad (Shahada) – the 1st Islamic coins (or **'blessed one'** as Messianic)?
- **693 – 696 AD:** Justinian II attacks abd al-Malik, who adds his image, with the Shahada, either to confront, or claim Messiah-ship
- **696 – 705 AD:** **Arab script:** Shahada with 'no associates', attacks Jesus' divinity, John 3:16, & Islam's superiority

- **While Allah's name is introduced early (it's Nabataean), Muhammad's is not (he's uniquely Islamic)**
- **Doesn't the numismatic evidence support the archaeological and documentary evidence?**
- **Doesn't this, therefore, suggest that Islam was not introduced by Muhammad, but possibly by Abd al Malik?**
- **These 7th c. Coins do confront the traditional 9th-10th c. Islamic Narrative, and provide us with a new narrative**









…632 | 651 | 661 - 680 | 692 | 693 | 696

Early Arabic Rock Inscriptions

Note where the 7th c. rock Inscriptions are found

- The 7th century inscriptions are all in the north, and the south
- A few begin to appear in the Hijaz in the 8th century, and later

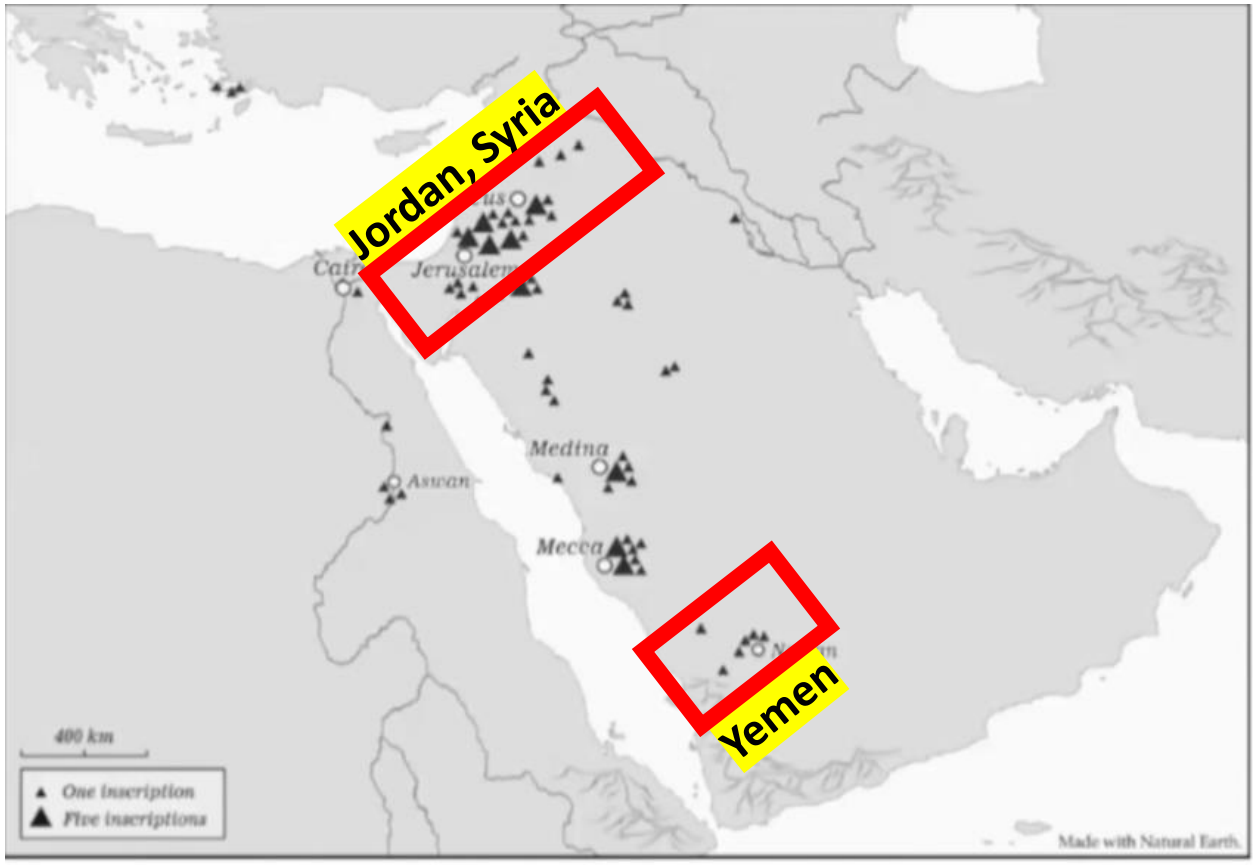
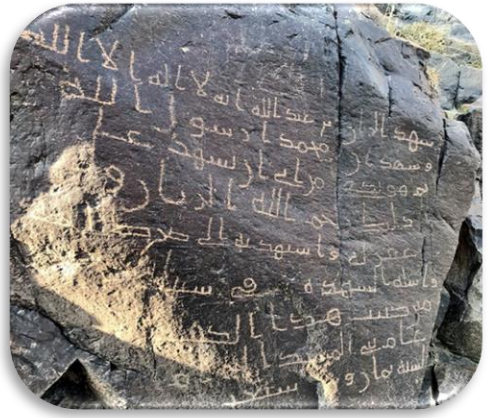


Fig. 1: The distribution of inscriptions contained in the Appendix.

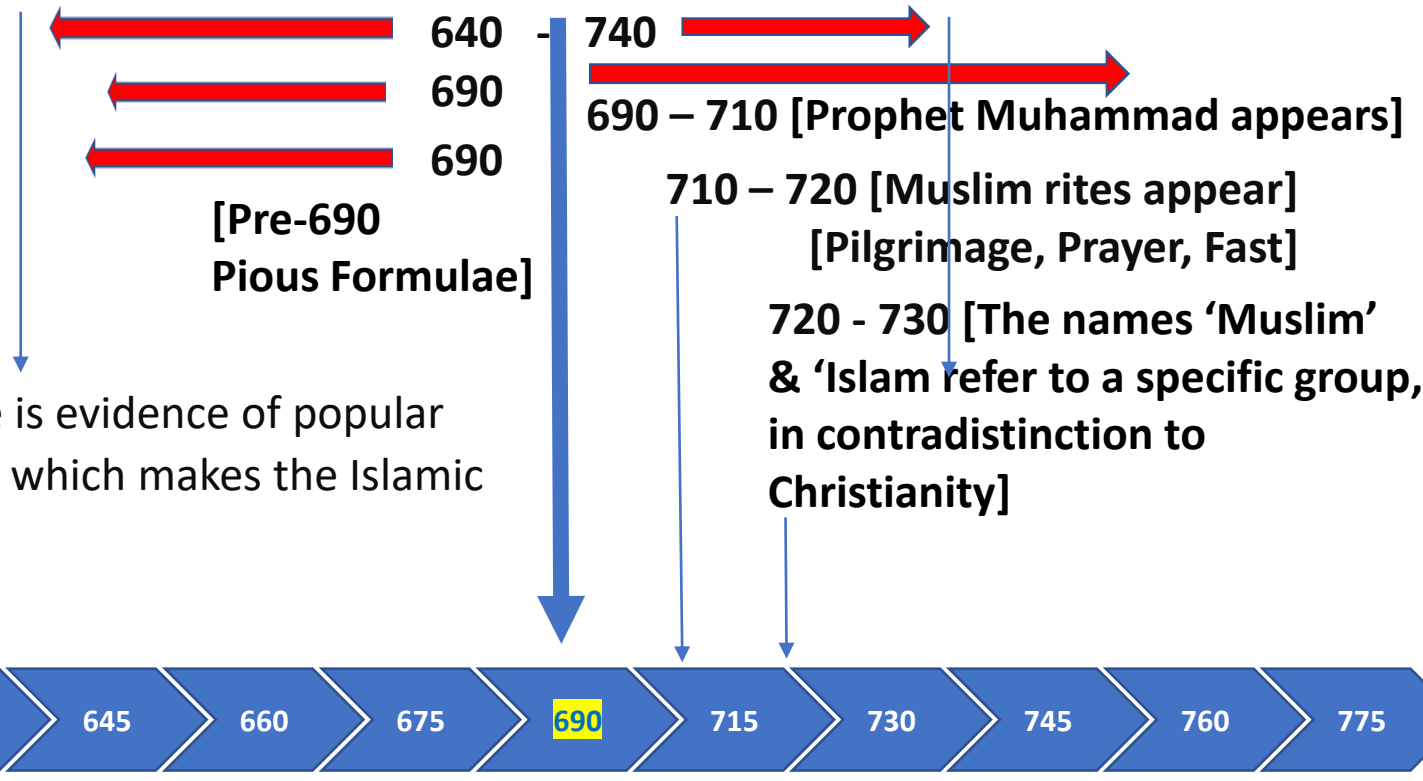




The Rock Inscriptions give us a timeline of Islam's Origins

Ilkka Lindstedt's 100 dated Rock Inscriptions

- **Lindstedt looked at 100 Rock Inscriptions from 640 – 740 AD**
- **Prior to 690 there was no evidence of anything Islamic on the Inscriptions**
- **Except for formulae, everything comes after 690**



Conclusion: It was only in the 730s onwards that there is evidence of popular devotion to Muhammad as a prophet and messenger, which makes the Islamic Traditions incredibly awkward.

Furthermore: There is a 100-year silence prior to this that indicates that Islam did not exist as a distinct religion until long after the time of Muhammad, which casts doubt on whether he had any part in starting Islam.

[Ilkka Lindstedt, "Who is in, who is out? Early Muslim Identity through Epigraphy and Theory", 2019]

Conclusions Concerning Early Islam

- There are no coins anywhere in central Arabia, and the Arabic coins which do exist are all further north, and are all Christian up to and including the reign of Muawiyah (up to 680 AD)
- It is only with the coins introduced by Abd al-Malik that we begin to possibly find Islamic coins, though they could still be referencing Jesus, or even the Caliph, though they are anti-Trinitarian
- The Rock Inscriptions are similar to the coins, with nothing Islamic prior to 690 AD; then references to Muhammad from 690-710, Muslim rites, the pilgrimage, prayer and fasts from 710-720; and finally the names ‘Muslim’ & ‘Islam’ referencing a group which isn’t Christian from 720-730
- This suggests that there was an internecine clash between different sects within Christianity, both Trinitarian vs anti-Trinitarian, which started to become its own religion at the end of the Umayyad dynasty, which then became the Islam of today during the initial 100 – 200 years of the Abbasid dynasty, in the 8^{th} – 10^{th} centuries

4) THE PROBLEMS WITH THE QUR'AN

What the Coins and Rock Inscriptions tell us

What Muslims claim about the Qur'an

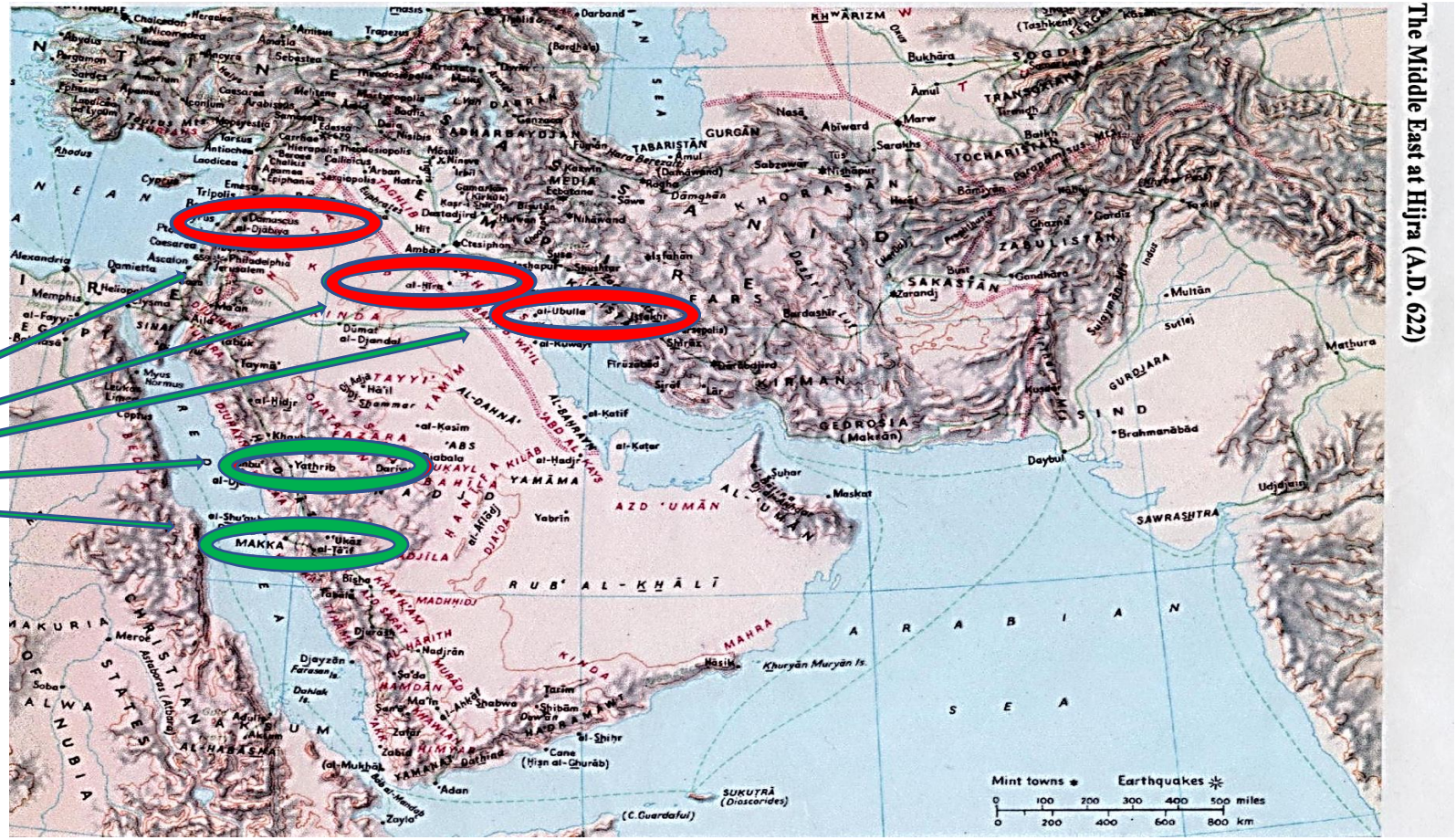
1) The Qur'an is **uncreated** and exists eternally on clay tablets in heaven (S.85:22)
2) The Qur'an was **sent down** to Muhammad between 610 – 632 AD
3) The Qur'an was **completed** by Uthman in 652 AD
4) The Qur'an is **unchanged** in the last 1400 years

My remit

- We can't critique 'uncreated' or 'sent down'
- But we can critique 'complete' and 'unchanged'
- Thus, we would want to find:
  - **1 Qur'anic manuscript**
  - Dated from the **mid 7th century** (652 AD)
  - **Complete** (i.e. all 114 Surahs)
  - **Unchanged** (exactly like the 1924 'Hafs' Qur'an used today)

7th Century QUR'ANS?

Note which cities, and which countries the earliest Qur'ans came from (according to the Islamic Traditions)?



Muhammad dies 632

5 copies, sent to 5 cities

Uthman's 'Quraishi' Qur'an 652

Ubai Ibn Ka'b = 116

Ibn Mas'ud = 110

Ibn Musa = 114

Zaid Ibn Thabit = 114

632 | 652 | 670 | 690 | 710 | 730 | 750 | 770 | 790 | 810 | 830 | 850 | 870 | 890 | 910 | 930

Note: There were at least 5 Qur'ans in the 7th century, from Medina, Mecca, Basra, Kufa (Iraq), Damascus (Syria).

Question: Do we have even one of them today? If Allah is able to preserve his Qur'an perfectly, then there should be at least 5 complete Qur'ans in existence in the Muslim world. So, where are they? Let's look…

Pfander

Topkapi (Turkey)



Samarkand (Uzbekistan)



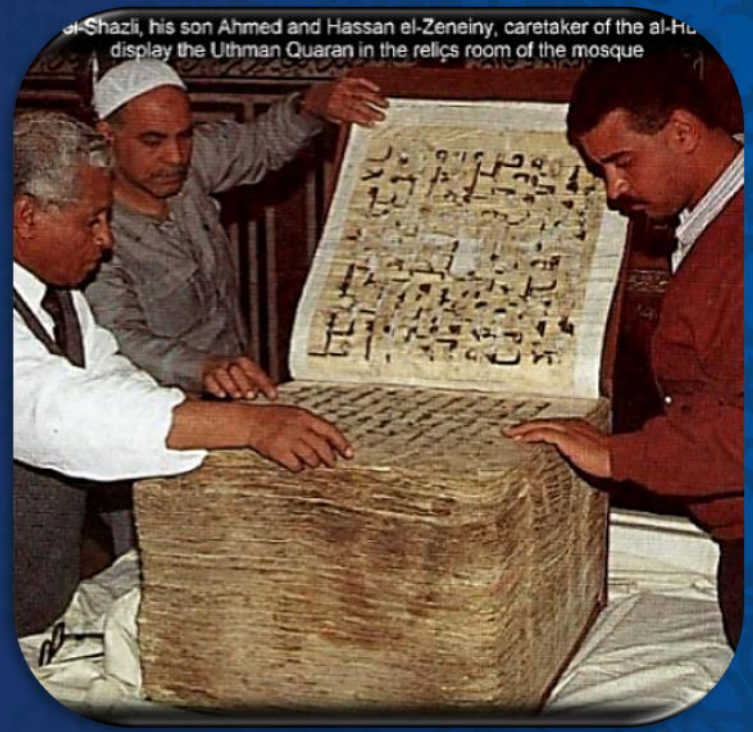
Ma’il
(London, England)



Petropolitanus
(Paris, France)



Al Husseini (Cairo, Egypt)



Sana’a (Yemen)



Summary of the findings

When we look at all 6 early Qur'anic manuscripts, we find that:

- None of them are from the 7th century
- None of them are complete
- None of them completely agree with each other
- None of them completely agree with the current 1924 'Hafs' text
- All of them have 100s and even 1000s of subsequent 'manuscript variants'
- So, when was there a complete Qur'an?

THE BIRMINGHAM FOLIOS (July 22, 2015)

“Oldest Qur’an fragments found in Birmingham”



Dr. David Thomas (right)
“*The writer of this manuscript could well have known the Prophet Muhammad. He would have seen him probably, he would maybe have heard him preach. He may have known him personally - and that really is quite a thought to conjure with*"





BIRMINGHAM FOLIOS (M157a) Dating: 568 - 645 AD

Includes: parts of S.18-20



- Only 33 verses, out of 6,236 in the Qur'an
- Only 33 verse, out of 343 verses in these 3 chapters
- It's, thus not a full Qur'an at all!

Surah 18:17-31 - The 7 sleepers of Ephesus
Syrian Bishop Jacob of Sarug (**512 AD**)

Surah 19:91-98 = Proto-Evangelium of James (**145 AD**) & The Pseudo Gospel of Matthew (**600 AD**)

Surah 20:1-40 = The story of Moses (**1400 BC**)

30 official Qira'ats & Transmitters (vs HAFS)

Readers	Transmitters	**93,263 differences!**
1) Nafi' al-Madani (Medina 689-785 AD)	Qalun (835 AD)	Warsh (812 AD)
2) Ibn Kathir al Makki (Mecca 666-738 AD)	Al-Bazzi (d. 864 AD)	Qunbul (d. 904 AD)
3) Abu 'Amr Ibn al-'Ala' (Basra 690-770 AD)	Al-Duri (d. 860 AD)	Al-Susi (d. 874 AD)
4) Ibn Amir ad-Dimashqi (Damascus d. 736 AD)	Hisham (d. 859 AD)	Ibn Dhakwan (d. 857 AD)
5) Aasim ibn Abi al-Najud (Kufa 700-745 AD)	Shu'bah (d. 809 AD)	**Hafs (d. 796 AD)**
6) Hamzah az-Zalyyat (Kufa 696-772 AD)	Khalaf (d. 844 AD)	Khallad (d. 835 AD)
7) Al-Kisa'i (Kufa 737-805 AD)	Al-Layth (d. 854 AD)	Al-Duri (d. 860 AD)
7 Chosen by Ibn Mujahid (d.936)	**14 Chosen by Al-Shatibi (d.1194)**	
8) Abu Ja'far (Medina - d. 748 AD)	'Isa ibn Wardan (d. 777 AD)	Ibn Jummaz (d. 787 AD)
9) Ya'qub al-Yamani (Basra - d. 821 AD)	Ruways (d. 853 AD)	Rawh (d. 849 AD)
10) Khalaf (Kufa - d. 844 AD)	Ishaq (d. 899 AD)	Idris (d. 905 AD)
9 Chosen by al-Jazari (d.1429)		

Hatun's 26 Qur'ans (now 37)



26 QUR'ANS AT SPEAKER'S CORNER - 2016



Holding up Hatun's 26 Qur'ans

Muslims trying to grab our hand-outs





Mohammed Hijab calling the Muslims to him, asking them not look at what we were showing, nor listen to what we were saying. It was obvious that he didn't know how to engage with us, and probably went through a 'Crisis of faith' on that day.

Mohammed Hijab & Dr Yasir Qadhi's Interview (June 8, 2020)

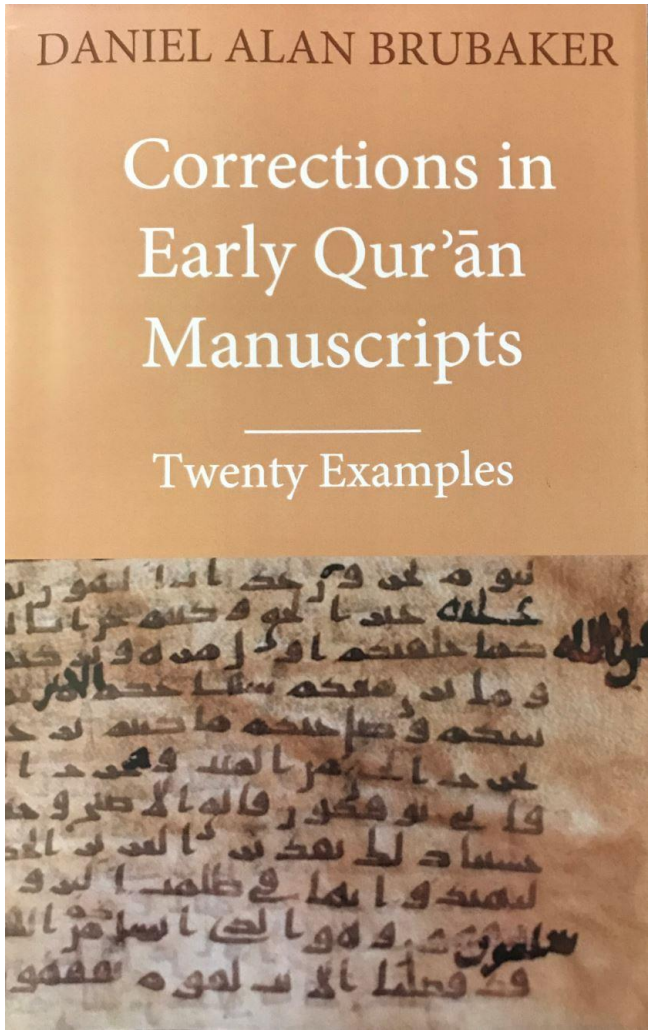


1) The "Qur'an's (Hafs) Preservation" is the most popular question amongst Muslims
2) The Ahruf & Qira'at are the most difficult topics for scholars in the last 1,000 years
3) You tell the new converts to just memorize it, the intermediates to regurgitate it, and the advanced to do a "Deep Dive"
4) Qadhi suggested he had a "Crisis of Knowledge" (at Yale in 1995), but he "Cannot doubt it, but listen to it, and recite it"
5) Muslims have a "respect" for the Qur'an, and put a 'red-line' beyond which they don't go; unlike the West, with no red lines
6) For the non-Western Muslims, their "Standard [Islamic] Narrative has Holes in it" – this became Qadhi's signature piece
7) Western academics have jumped 'leaps and bounds' on this issue, and look at Muslims like the 'emperor with no clothes'
8) Qira'ats should never be brought up in Public, but discussed behind closed doors, because others wouldn't understand it
9) In 25 years (since Yale in 1995) "I've never lectured on this subject, nor ever will, except in my class, so take my class"
10) Qadhi went into a Mantra: "The Qur'an is the uncreated speech of Allah, it's preserved, known, and Mutawatir"
11) When asked which Qira'at he should write on a blank sheet, Qadhi said "Don't ask me to say which"
12) So, in conclusion, when pushed by Hijab, Qadhi finally admitted that "They are ALL the Qur'an!"

Dan Brubaker's Research of the Early Consonantal Changes:

Highlighting just 22 out of a total of 4,000 he has now uncovered





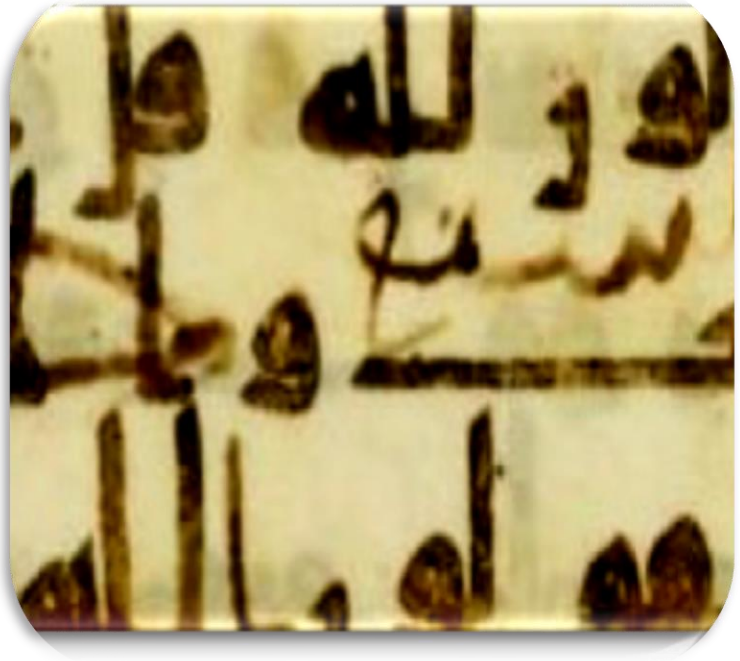
4 Types of Variants

- Insertions
- Erasures (some overwritten)
- Coverings (some overwritten)
- Tapings

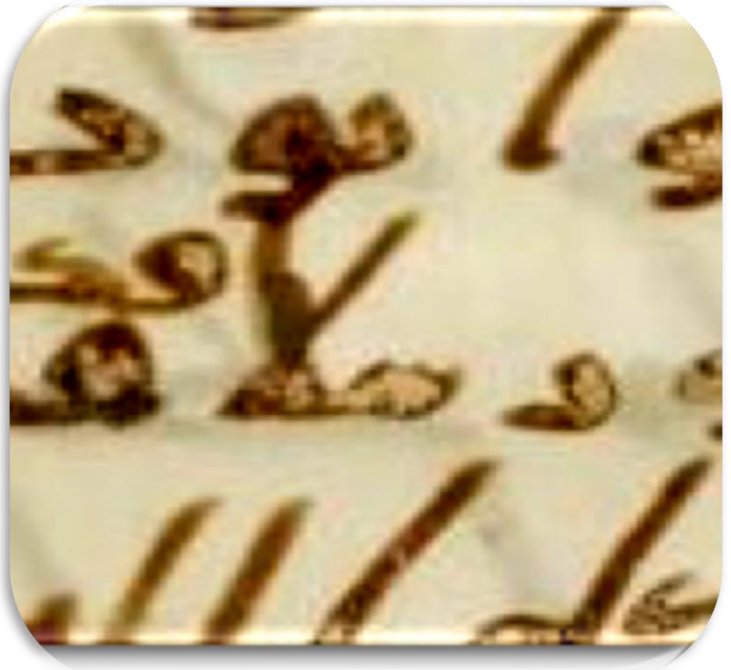
Insertions



Words added



A post-production addition



Erasures



Intentional removal of text



Removal and overwriting



An *alif* removed?

Erasures Overwritten







Different words written overtop

Letters added in new script & ink after the original

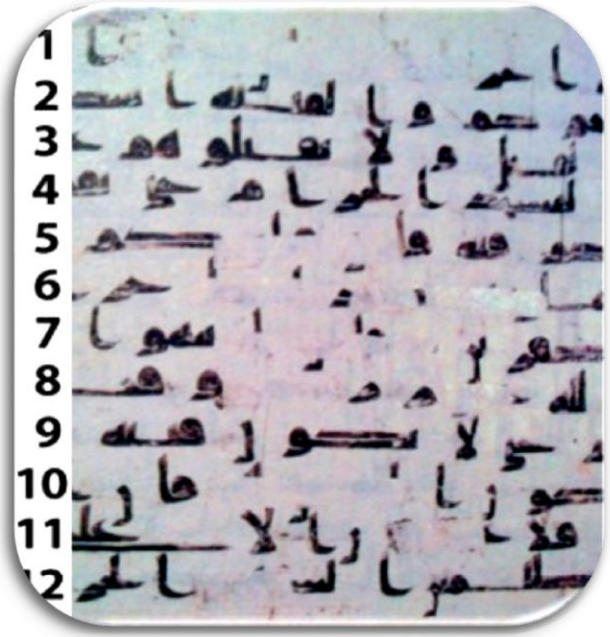
Overwriting without Erasures



Either to restore a portion of text that has faded with time, or change the text entirely

Selective Coverings

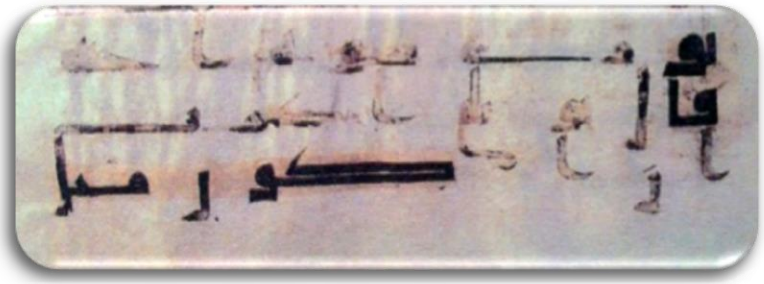






Intentional changes directly over portions of text

Selective Coverings Overwritten







Writing added into the text over the top of tape

Tapings







A patch appears to be serving some other purpose than the repair of the page

IS THERE A COMPLETE QUR'ANIC TEXTUAL TRADITION BACK TO UTHMAN?

Mansur Ahmed, during the debate on May 26th, 2019, at Speaker's Corner, claimed:
1) a **continual Textual Tradition of a complete Qur'anic Manuscript back to 652 AD**
2) but he could not name one manuscript from **652 AD**, nor from **699 AD**, nor even from before **721 AD**
3) He claimed that by **721 AD they had only 97% of the Qur'an.**

What did he mean by only **97%?**



They were 63 Fragments!

Of the **63 MSS** on the right, forwarded by IA as **<u>ALL</u> dated before 719 AD:**

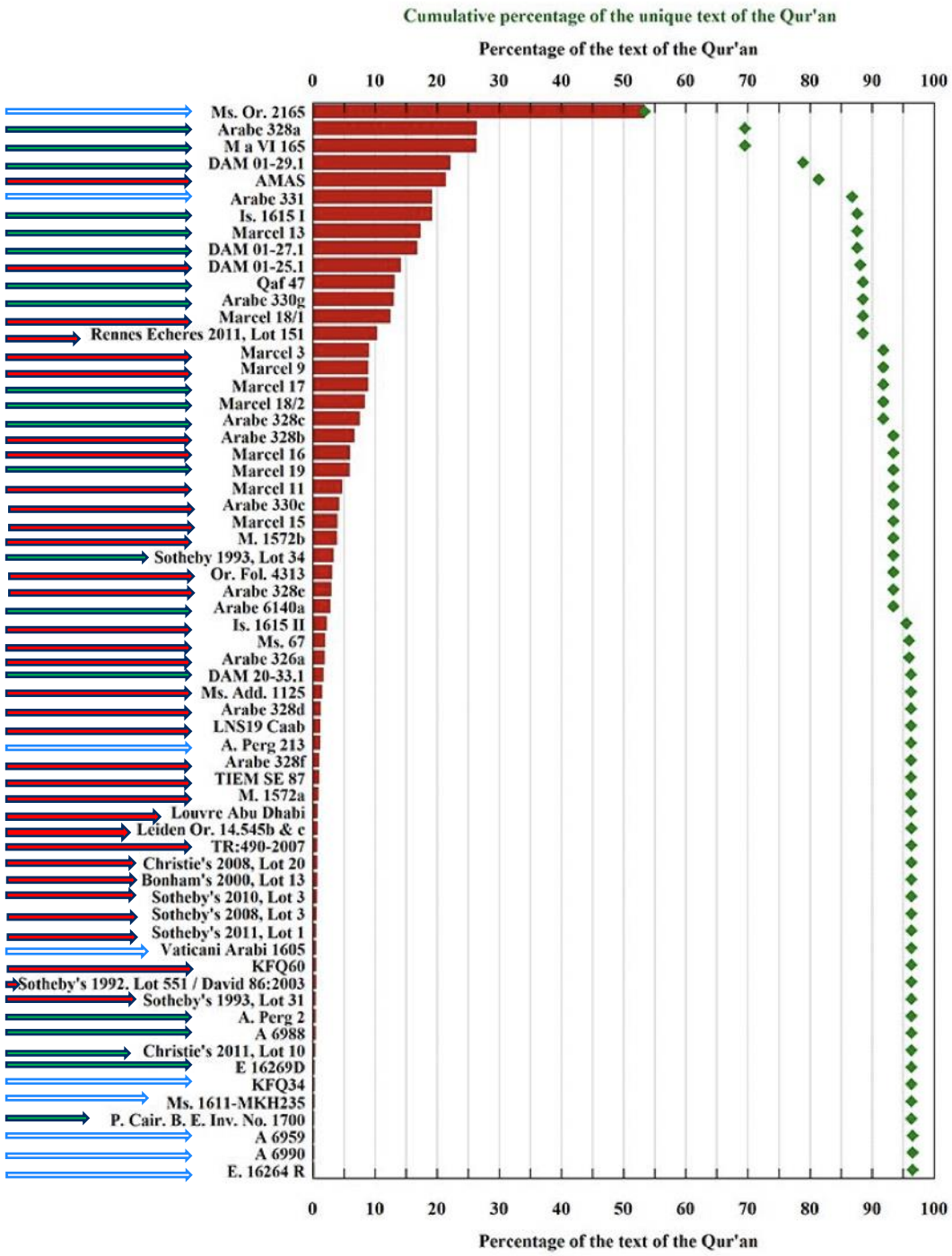
20 = are tentatively dated, with disagreements between scholars (green arrows)

9 = are dated after 719 AD (blue arrows)

34 = In other words, over half of them, we have no way of knowing…thus, it's pure speculation by the Muslims! (red arrows)

Thus, **none of them are really valid!**

Since **all** of them are either **later**, or **tentatively dated**, or have **no supporting evidence**



CONCLUSIONS

There are **no complete Qur'ans** for the first 100 years after Muhammad

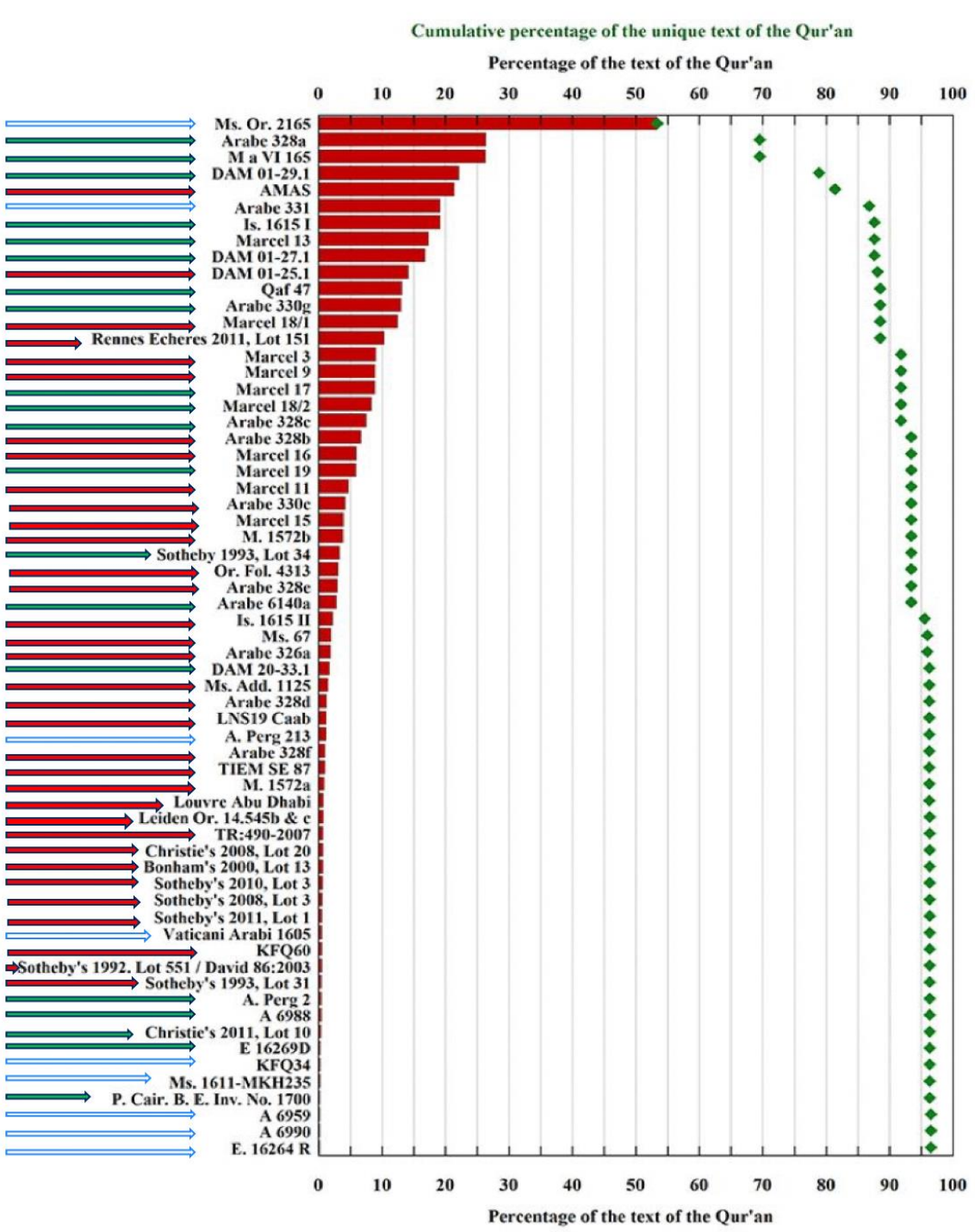
The Muslims have had to collect **63 fragments** of the Qur'an to find even **96% by 719AD**

Yet, almost all of them are **tentative**, or have **no supporting evidence** for early dates

Some of their dates even go into the **9th and 10th centuries**

They have **not studied** any of them to know if they **agree with the current 1924 'Hafs' text**

So, how did we get our **present Qur'an?** Let's find out…



1924 – CAIRO (98 years ago)

- In 1924, the department of Education in the city of Cairo, Egypt, were having problems with standardized tests, as they were getting conflicting answers with students who were quoting directly from the Qur'an, or rather 30 Qur'ans
- They went to Al Azhar University, and asked *Muhammad b. 'Ali al-Husayni al-Haddad* to choose just one of the 30 as the official Qur'an for their schools
- He chose the 796 AD 'Hafs' Qur'an for all the high schools, but just in **Cairo**
- All the other 29 'variant Qur'ans' they gathered together and threw them into the **Nile River**, and sank them…thinking that would get rid of them…
- Little did they know that you can still buy all of them, even today…

[Reynolds, Gabriel Said (Ed.), *The Qur'an in its historical context*, (London & New York: Routledge, 2008) pgs. Introduction, 2-3]
[Neuwirth, Angelika, & Sinai, Nicholas (Eds.), *The Qur'an in Context*: *Historical and Literary Investigations into the Qur'ānic Milieu,* Leiden/Boston: Brill, 2010, p. 1]

1936 – EGYPT (86 years ago)

- The government of **Egypt** realized how efficient the Cairene model was
- They decided to make the Hafs standard for all Qur'ans in Egyptian schools
- This was known as the **'Faruq Edition',** named after King Faruq, who came to power that year

[Reynolds, Gabriel Said (Ed.), *The Qur'an in its historical context*, (London & New York: Routledge, 2008) pgs. Introduction, 2-3]
[Neuwirth, Angelika, & Sinai, Nicholas (Eds.), *The Qur'an in Context*: *Historical and Literary Investigations into the Qur'ānic Milieu,* Leiden/Boston: Brill, 2010, p. 1]

1985 – SAUDI ARABIA (37 years ago!)

- The government of **Saudi Arabia** realized how efficient the Egyptian model was
- They decided to make the Hafs standard for all Qur'ans **world wide**
- This was known as the **'Fahd Edition'**, named after King Fahd, who came to power in 1982

[Reynolds, Gabriel Said (Ed.), *The Qur'an in its historical context*, (London & New York: Routledge, 2008) pgs. Introduction, 2-3]
[Neuwirth, Angelika, & Sinai, Nicholas (Eds.), *The Qur'an in Context*: *Historical and Literary Investigations into the Qur'ānic Milieu,* Leiden/Boston: Brill, 2010, p. 1]

The “Aramaic Proto-Qur’an”

With the Revisionist ‘Inarah’ group of scholars, mostly from Germany

Revisionism defined: “*The theory or practice of revising one's attitude to a previously accepted situation or point of view*”.

- Those of us who are questioning and confronting the ‘Standard Islamic Narrative’ are indebted to the ‘Revisionists’ of that narrative.
- It is on their shoulders that we stand.
- So, who exactly are they?

Gunther Luling (d.2014)



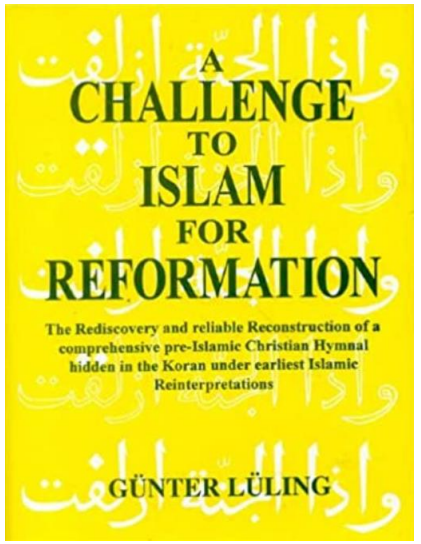
German Historian, Theologian, Philologist, Arabist

German Protestant theologian, philological scholar (Dr. in Arabistics and Islamics) and Pioneer in the study of early Islamic origins.

From 1962 to 1965 he was the Director of the German Goethe-Institut in Aleppo, Syria.

Research:

- Reconstructed a comprehensive pre-Islamic Christian Hymnal hidden in the Qur'an, taken from Syriac 5th-6th century Christian hymns
- His 1970 PhD thesis received '**Eximium Opus**' grade, the highest available in Germany, which should have promoted him to professorship anywhere
- Was kicked out of his University, but for no reason ('He was a crack-pot'), possibly because his research was just too new and explosive (much like tectonic research)
- With the English translation (on the right), his material has finally been rehabilitated

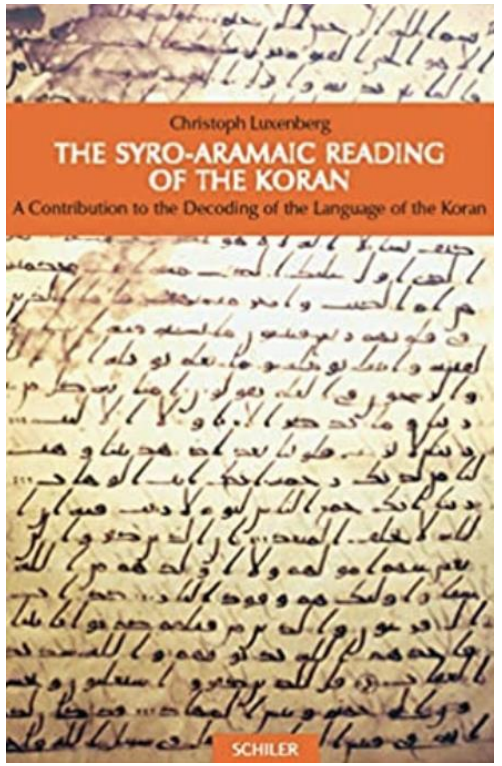


Christoph Luxenberg

X

Published under a Pseudonym

- An Arabist and Syriac scholar, who broke new ground on the Qur'an, discovering that much of it comes from previous Christian Lectionaries, Homilies, and Hymns, written in Syro-Aramiac, and then interposed into Arabic later on
- Like Luling, was ostracized by the German academic community, and so doesn't show himself publicly



Luxenberg's 7 layered Textual Analysis

1) Check **al Tabari's 10th century Tafsir** (commentary) for Arabic meaning for words
2) Check the **Lisān al-ʿArab** (Tongue of Arabs = Arabic Dictionary) **Ibn Manzur (1290)**
3) Look for **homonymous (synonymous) roots** in Aramaic with a different meaning
4) Try different **diacritics**
5) Check for an **Aramaic root** using **different diacritics**
6) **Re-translate Arabic words into Aramaic** with semantics of the Syro-Aramaic words
7) Try to find lost meanings of Arab words **using 10th century Syro-Aramaic lexicons**

What did Luxenberg find?

Once he took the Arab Qur'an back to its Aramaic roots:

- All the dark passages were Lectionaries, Homilies & Hymns
- Every Lectionary, Homily and Hymn was about **JESUS**!
- It had nothing to do with 'what they found', but 'who they found'

Conclusions Concerning The Qur'an

- None of the 5 Uthmanic Metropolitan Qur'ans exist today (Mecca, Medina, Basra, Kufa, Damascus)
- The 6 earliest are 8^{th}=10^{th} C. MSS aren't complete, nor the same, nor agree with the Hafs Qur'an
- The Birmingham Folios are only 33 verses, taken from 512 AD, 145 AD, & 1400 BC, so all borrowed
- The 30 Qira'at Qur'ans were created between 736-905 AD, & chosen by Ibn Mujahid (936), Al-Shatibi (1194), Al-Jazari (1429) with 93,000 differences, including 5,000 between Hafs & Warsh
- The June 8, 2020 Interview between Hijab & Qadhi proved the Qur'an wasn't perfectly preserved
- Dan Brubaker's 4,000 Consonantal Variants prove massive censorship during the Ottoman Dynasty
- The 63 fragments prove they were either late, tentatively dated, or had no supporting evidence
- The Hafs Qur'an chosen in 1924, was canonized in 1985 by King Fahd, and used by 93% of Muslims
- Luling and Luxenberg's Aramaic Qur'an suggests the Qur'an was taken from Christian Lectionaries, Hymns, and Homilies, suggesting the original Qur'an was all about JESUS. Let's bring them home!

CONCLUSIONS

When all is said and done…

4 areas we investigated…

[1] THE PROBLEM WITH THE SOURCES

[2] THE PROBLEM WITH MECCA

[3] THE PROBLEM WITH EARLY ISLAM

[4] THE PROBLEM WITH THE QUR'AN

CONCLUSIONS

- Our Remit was to investigate both the Mecca, Muhammad, and the Qur'an
- It is obvious that everything Muslims are dependent on for their 'book, man and place' are based on Traditions (SIN) which are 200 – 300 years too late, and 100s of miles too far north
- Mecca proves probably the biggest problem for Muslims
  - The SIN refers to a place with much vegetation, existing since Adam & Eve, & with 300 prophets buried
  - Yet, it's not referred to until 741 AD, and none of the early maps show Mecca at all
  - Patricia Crone debunked Watt's land based 'Trade-Route Theory' back in 1987
  - We debunked the Red Sea Trade via Arabia, proving it was all via Africa, because it had water
  - All of the 7th century Qiblas were facing Petra up to 706 AD, and not Mecca until 729 AD
  - None of the surrounding empires ever heard of the Mecca
  - All of the stages of the Hajj were simply borrowed from other places, mostly Jerusalem



CONCLUSIONS

- The coins prove that the area under “Islam” was either Christian or Zoroastrian until 692 AD
- The Rock inscriptions prove that Islam as we know it didn’t appear until around 730 AD
- The 6 earliest manuscripts prove that men created 6 different Qur’ans between the 7th – 9th centuries
- The Birmingham Folios prove that Muslims borrowed stories created long before the Qur’an
- The 30 Qira’ats which proliferated from the 8th-10th centuries proved the Qur’an was evolving everywhere
- Holding up the 26 Qira’ats in 2016 opened up a whole ‘can of worms’ for Muslim scholars
- The interview of June 8, 2020 created a platform for us to go public with the Qira’at Narrative
- The 29 Qira’at Variants dumped into the Nile in 1924 prove that when Muslims find problems with their Qur’an, they either **burn** them, **wash** them, **erase** them, **cover** them, or **sink** them to destroy the evidence!

CONCLUSIONS

- The 4,000 Consonantal Variants prove that Muslims have accreted, deleted and corrupted their text, before standardizing it in the last century
- The 63 fragments employed to find just 96% of the Qur'an proves they still cannot find a complete Qur'an for over 100 years, as their fragments are tentative, or have no sources
- The Aramaic proto-Qur'an proves that when we go back to the original text we will find Jesus!
- The 7th – 8th century Arabs in order to create their own distinct identity needed a 'book, a man, and a place', which they did with the Qur'an, Muhammad and Mecca, but it didn't take just 22 years as the SIN claims, but centuries, proving that Islam is as man-made as any other religion, unlike Christianity!
- We can use this material today to disprove the Preservation of the Qur'an, Muhammad and Mecca
- No longer are we 'arguing from silence', as it is now the Muslims who are arguing from silence
- These arguments hit at the very foundations of Islam, and yet are neutral and 'politically correct'

Yet, by Casting Doubt on Islam

Our Muslim Friends can Consider a Better Book, and a better Man…Jesus, and His Gospel.

So, let's "bring them home"!