

# The interpretation of qur'an from early- 16th century



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The paper "Different Interpretations of the Quran" is an outstanding example of a term paper on religion and theology. There have always been claims regarding the interpretations of the Koran. Some of these have been politically motivated (Elmasry); this being the case in the twenty-first century as well as the centuries preceding the seventeenth. This paper shall look at the different interpretations that have been made of the Quran during this period and the reasons thereof.

Following the compilation of the Quran, the compilation of the hadiths was done. These were the sayings of Prophet Mohammed. These two texts were separate as insisted upon by the prophet himself (Godlas). The presence of two texts, however, cause misunderstandings and is seen as one of the reasons for the emergence of different readings of the Quran following the establishment of the religion. The rearrangement of the chapters of the Quran by Uthman ibn Affan, a companion of the prophet, was another reason for the changing interpretations of the Quran in the Muslim world following the death of the prophet (Davidmann).

The division of the Muslims into Shias and Sunnis was also a reason for the different interpretations of the Quran. The difference, initiated by a difference in political viewpoints between two groups escalated into differences in the way the very religion and its basic text was viewed and this led to changes in the way prayer and other rituals were conducted. How these rituals are to be done is a part of the Quran; however, the different interpretations cause them to be done with variations (Shuster).

There was a period following this when there was no animosity between the Christians and the Muslims and thus, interpretations of the controversial <https://assignbuster.com/the-interpretation-of-quran-from-early-16th-century/>

clause of jihad remained the same as it was in earlier times. During this period, the similarity in certain teachings of the Quran and the Bible were accepted without any enmity and there was mutual trust as a result of this (Muslim-Christian Relations, The Good, the Bad).

Later on, however, with an increase in the amount of contact with Christian and other religious ideologies, the interpretations of the Quran underwent changes. This was a result of mostly western thought upon these interpretations. Apart from this, there was the influence of the thought of the east as well. The spread of Islam to different parts of the world like the Indian subcontinent meant that it could not be free from the interpretations that were affected by these schools of thought. The rise of the Sufi schools of thought was based upon an interpretation of the Quran that sought unity with other religions in general and Hinduism in particular. The rise of Sufism was paralleled by the rise of the Bhakti Movement in Hinduism and this led to many convergences in the interpretations of Islam and religions of the Indian subcontinent. This can be seen even today, where people of various religions and sects visit the tombs of the Sufi saints in India and other parts of the Indian subcontinent.

During the crusades, there were many Islamic philosophers who were influenced by Christian thought. This led to various differences in the interpretations of the original text. This would later turn into a point of conflict between the liberals and hardliners of that period. Ibn Taymiyya's interpretations of the Quran were based on earlier principles and sought to take Islam into an earlier form which he considered to be purer. He thought that the influences of "the philosophers, the mutakallimun, the Sufis and the Shi'ites" were external and corrupted the true nature of Islam (Syafuruddin).  
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He lived during the thirteenth century and his beliefs are in a certain way, representative of the beliefs that were held during this age when the enmity between Muslims and other religious groups was at its highest.

The concept of jihad changed, later on, to take on a colonial face. This was the effect of political ambitions in the Indian subcontinent for the Mughal dynasty and also in other parts of South-East Asia. Parts of South-East Asia were converted extensively and this led to massive changes in their societies which in turn influenced the interpretations of Islam as it was held in earlier times. The wealth of the Indian subcontinent was a great incentive for Muslim rulers of central Asia as they attacked India to loot and plunder. These raids were often accompanied by conversions, sanctioned by changing interpretations of the Quran (Islam's jihad against India 7th-16th century).