

Chronology of the Qur'an According to Theodor Nöldeke and Sir William Muir (Analysis of the History of the Qur'an and Life of Mahomet)

Ahmad Syukron¹, Nikmatul Khairiyah²

^{1,2}Institut Ilmu Al-Qur'an (IIQ) Jakarta, Indonesia
ahmadSyukron@iiq.ac.id, ni'mah@mhs.iiq.ac.id

Abstract

This article talked about the analysis of the chronology of the Qur'an perspective by Theodor Nöldeke and Sir William Muir in their books *The History of the Qur'an and Life of Mahomet* using a descriptive-comparative method. The chronology of the Al-Qur'an that was initiated by Theodor Nöldeke by using the theory of four periods revelations (three periods of Makkah and one period of Medina) were assessed as the attempts to make it easy for Western orientalist on how to study the Qur'an. However, not a few of western scholars criticized Nöldeke's chronology because it had several weaknesses including the division of three periods of Mecca which did not have a solid foundation, the inconsistency of the application of the characteristics letters, the incongruity with historical reality that was visible in the calendar of the sura Al-Fâtihah, and a decrease in the quality of the language style of The Al-Qur'an, even Nöldeke's chronology, was only categorized as letters based on the same characteristics that were not in the chronological order of the Qur'an. As for Sir William Muir, who composed the chronology of the Qur'an into six periods of revelation (five periods of Mecca and one the Medina period) was considered to be too ideological and viewed as radical because he determined the date of the group of letters he was dating as he called it a rhapsody letter, before the Prophet received the first revelation.

Keywords

the chronology of the Qur'an;
Theodor Nöldeke; sir William
Muir



I. Introduction

The chronology of the Qur'an or commonly referred to as *tartīb nuzūl* Al-Qur'ân is a very urgent theme which is still full of controversy and conditions for speculation. It is called urgent because this theme is very much needed in order to understand the full message of the holy book. It is expressed by as-Suyūthî (849-911 H) that without being equipped with adequate chronological knowledge, one has no right to speak about the Qur'an. It is said to be controversial and a requirement for speculation, because the discussion on this topic continues to experience developments and changes, and the factual, authentic and comprehensive data related to the topic are incomplete.

In the first centuries of Islam, the efforts of Muslim scholars in determining the chronological order of the Qur'an rested on three things, *asbâb an-nuzūl* (causes of revelation), *nâsikh-mansûkh* (theory of revision of the Qur'an), and *makkî madanî* (verses that were revealed in the Mecca and Medina periods). However, the three traditional materials are considered to have weaknesses. *Asbâb an-nuzūl* for example, apart from not all verses of the Qur'an have a history that explains the reason for its revelation, most of the reasons for the revelation are events that are not so important and it is not known when it

occurred accurately. This makes the effort to compose the chronology of the Qur'an even more difficult to do.

The chronological arrangement of the letters of the Qur'an which has been widely used so far is the arrangement of the letters attributed to Ibn Abbas ra and widely accepted and sanctioned by orthodoxy. In this arrangement, the letters from the Mecca period are 85 letters and the Medina period 28 letters. With slight changes, the editors of the Egyptian edition of the Qur'an adopted the chronological arrangement of Ibn Abbas ra and determined that 86 surahs were from the pre-hijra period and the rest were classified as madaniyah surahs.

While the study of the chronology of the Qur'an in the East is at its weakest point, studies in the West show the opposite. This began in the mid-19th century. Gustav Weil (1808-1889) who is considered the pioneer of this study organized the chronology of the Qur'an into four calendar periods, followed by his fellow orientalists such as Theodor Nöldeke (1836-1930), Regis Blachère (1900-1973), Sir William Muir (1819-1905), and Hubert Grimme (1864-1942). The results of the study of the chronology of the Qur'an by these scholars were compiled using a letter approach. Entering the 20th century, Hartwig Hirschfeld (1854-1934) and Richard Bell (1876-1952) introduced a chronological arrangement that was arranged using a verse approach. What they did was a development in the study of the chronology of the Qur'an in the West. Apart from the various results of Western studies on the chronology of the Qur'an, in this paper, the author will only discuss and criticize the theory of the chronology of the Qur'an of two Western figures, namely Theodor Nöldeke and Sir William Muir through the assessment of scientists regarding the theory of chronology of the two by first briefly describing the biographies of Theodor Nöldeke and Sir William Muir.

II. Research Method

This research is qualitative research in the form of library research. The author analyzes the chronology of Theodor Nöldeke and Sir William Muir described in his works *The History of the Qur'an* and *The Life of Mahomet* by using comparative descriptive methods and philosophical approaches. The steps that the writer takes in this research are: first, collecting and selecting data, namely the literature related to the chronology of Theodor Nöldeke and Sir William Muir and the views of scholars regarding the chronology of the two; secondly, examine the data carefully and comprehensively; and compare the theory of chronology of the two with the theory of chronology initiated by western scientists and other Muslims.

III. Results and Discussion

3.1 Biography of Theodor Nöldeke and Sir William Muir

The name Theodor Nöldeke is a familiar name among academics who are active in the study of the Qur'an. Especially when talking about Orientalism and the History of the Qur'an, the title of pioneer will always be pinned on him. That's Theodor Nöldeke, a German orientalist who lived in the years 1836-1930, the era of European science was at the peak of its development.

Nöldeke was born in the City of Harburg (now Hamburg) on March 2, 1836. He received his basic education at one of the elementary schools in the city. When he was 13 years old (1849) his family moved to Lingen City. It was in this city that Nöldeke began to study various languages such as classical literature, Greek, and Latin under the guidance of

his father. In 1853, Nöldeke left his family for the city of Göttingen to continue his education at the university level by majoring in Semitic languages at the University of Göttingen.

Nöldeke earned his first bachelor's degree in 1856 by submitting a final project on the history of the Qur'an. He wrote this final project in Latin, the scientific language in Europe at the time, with the title *De Origine et Compositione Surarum Quranicarum Ipsiusque Qorani* (origin and composition of the Surah of the Qur'an). The following year, namely in 1857, his writings on the history of the Qur'an, he registered in a competition held by the Parisian Académie des Inscriptions et Belles Lettres. In that event, Nöldeke won *the best critical history of the text of the Qur'an* which made his name in the realm of *oriental studies* continue to soar. In addition, this competition also made Nöldeke make his choice of the Qur'an as the object of research. In 1860, with the help of his student Friedrich Schwally (1863-1919), Nöldeke's work was translated into German and published under the title *Geschichte des Qorans* (history of the Qur'an). This work later became the basis for all studies of the Qur'an in the West.

The Geschichte des Qorans is not Nöldeke's last work. There are 24 recorded works in the form of books that he wrote. These works are themed on Islam, adab and oriental culture, as well as the history of old testament literature including *Das Leben Mohammed's* (1863), *Beiträge zur Kenntnis der Poesie der alten Araber* (1864), *Die Alttestamentliche Literatur* (1868), and *Untersuchungen zur Kritik des Alten Testaments* (1869). Apart from books, Nöldeke also wrote many articles. There are more than 700 articles that he wrote. The articles are in the form of articles that have been published and those that are still in the form of notes.

The number of works that Nöldeke produced throughout his life could not be separated from the research he carried out on manuscripts found in several major European cities. After successfully graduating from the University of Göttingen in 1856, Nöldeke is indeed noted for making intellectual tours to various major European cities such as Vienna, Leiden, Goeta, and Berlin. In these cities, he studied various manuscripts stored in the city's library, one of which was the ancient Turkish manuscripts. Badawi in his *Encyclopedia of Orientalists* mentions that in addition to Austria, the Netherlands and Italy, Nöldeke has also visited England. However, there is no further information about this, what city he visited in England and the main purpose he visited the country. In addition, Badawi also made a comment about the absence of Arab countries to which Nöldeke's intellectual trip was intended. This is indeed quite surprising, considering that the focus of Nöldeke's research is the Middle East.

Sir William Muir is a Scottish orientalist who specializes in Islamic history. His name in the field emerged thanks to his phenomenal work *Life of Mahomet*. Not only this work, there are several other works that made him known as a reliable Islamic historian of the 19th century.

Muir was born in Glasgow on 27 April 1819. Unlike Nöldeke, Muir did not come from a family of academics. His father was a merchant in the City of Glasgow named William Muir (1783-1820) and his mother named Helen Macfie (1784-1866). However, he had a brother named John Muir (1810-1882) who was an academic and researcher in the field of Indian and Sanskrit culture.

Regarding his educational history, Muir attended high school at the Kilmarnock Academy. After graduating from the academy, Muir continued his education at the University of Edinburgh and the University of Glasgow. However, he did not manage to get a bachelor's degree from either university. Muir then enrolled as a member of the Indian Civil Service (ICS) and was educated at Haileybury College, a high school that

specializes in teaching ICS recruitment. He studied Oriental languages at school. Language is one of the most important things in the life of every human being (Purba, N. et al. (2020).

In 1837, Muir began his military career in India, where he remained until 1876. He first joined the Bengal army. A few years later he was appointed secretary to the governor of the North West Province of India. In addition, Muir has also held several important positions such as member of the Agra tax council, Minister of Foreign Affairs for the Indian government, and Lieutenant Governor of the North West Province of India.

During his stay in India, Muir was not only active in government, he was also active in academia. Evidently, Muir took part in the founding of Allahabad Central University. In addition, Muir is noted for publishing several books and actively writing articles in the well-known magazine in India at that time, the *Calcutta Review*. The books he had published included *Mizân al-Haq* which was the result of his collaboration with Carl Gottlieb Pfander (1803-1865) and *the Coran to the Jewish and Christian Scriptures*. As for Muir's writings in *Calcutta Review* magazine, they are the results of his research on several historical literatures of Islamic civilization such as *Târikh Ibn Hisham*, *Târikh ath-Thabarî*, and *Târikh Ibn Atsir*.

Upon his return from India, Muir intensified his studies in the field of Islamic history. As a result, he published several works that were well-known among Western researchers at that time. These works include *Life of Mahomet from Original Resources*, *The Coran: Its Composition and Teaching*, and *The Mohammedan Controversy* (1878), *Annals of The Early Caliphate* (1883), *The Caliphate: Its Rise, Decline and Fall* (1891) , and *The Mameluke Slave Dynasty of Egypt* (1896).

Sir William Muir died in Edinburgh on 11 July 1905 at the age of 86 years. He is buried in *Dean Cemetery*, a historic cemetery located west of Edinburgh city center.

3.2 Theodor Nöldeke and Sir William Muir

Through his work – *Geschichte des Qorâns* – Nöldeke offers a chronological order of the Qur'an. Following in the footsteps of his predecessor, Gustav Weil, Nöldeke developed a calendar system for the Qur'an which adhered to the principle that the letters were the original unit of revelation. The chronology of the Qur'an is also arranged using a modern literary criticism approach, namely by analyzing the language style of the Qur'an used in each letter. In addition, Nöldeke also relies on historical facts reported by the Qur'an, especially for the letters of the Medina period.

Nöldeke divides his chronological order into four calendar periods. Each of these periods is the early Mecca period, the middle Mecca period, the late Mecca period, and the Medina period. The letters forged in each calendar period have characteristics, language styles and discuss almost the same themes. The complete chronology of the Nöldeke Qur'an can be seen in detail in the following tables.

Table 1. Chronological Arrangement of the Letters of the First Makkah Period

| Chronological Order | Name & Number of Letters | No. Certificate | 74 |
|---------------------|--------------------------|-----------------|--------------------|
| 1 | Al-'Alaq (96) | 96 | Verse 9-11 later |
| 2 | Al-Muddatstsir (74) | Verse | 31-34, 41ff. later |
| 3 | Al-Lahâb (111) | 111 | - |
| 4 | Quraysh (106) | 106 | - |
| 5 | Al-Kautsar (108) | 108 | - |
| 6 | Al-Humazah (104) | 104 | - |

| | | | |
|----|-------------------|-----|-----------------------------|
| 7 | Al-Mâ'ûn (107) | 107 | - |
| 8 | At-Takâtsur (102) | 102 | - |
| 9 | Al-Fîl (105) | 105 | - |
| 10 | Al-Layl (92) | 92 | - |
| 11 | Al-Balâd (90) | 90 | - |
| 12 | Alam Nasyrah | 94 | - |
| 13 | Adh-Dhuḥâ | 93 | - |
| 14 | Al-Qadr | 97 | - |
| 15 | Ath-Thâriq | 86 | - |
| 16 | Ash-Shams | 91 | - |
| 17 | 'Abasa | 80 | - |
| 18 | Al-Qalam | 68 | Verse 17ff. later |
| 19 | Al-A'lâ | 87 | - |
| 20 | At-Tîn | 95 | Verse 6 Makkiyah end |
| 21 | Al-'Ashr | 103 | Verse 3 Makkiyah end |
| 22 | Al-Burûj | 85 | Verse 8-11 later |
| 23 | Al-Muzzammil | 73 | - |
| 24 | Al-Qâri'ah | 101 | - |
| 25 | Al-Zalzalah | 99 | - |
| 26 | Al-Infithar | 82 | - |
| 27 | At-Takwîr | 81 | - |
| 28 | An-Najm | 53 | Verse 23, 26-32 later |
| 29 | Al-Insyiqâq | 84 | Verse 25 Makkiyah end |
| 30 | Al-'Âdiyât | 100 | - |
| 31 | An -Nâzi'ât | 79 | Verses 27-46 later |
| 32 | Al-Mursalât | 77 | - |
| 33 | An-Naba' | 78 | Verse 37ff. Second Makkiyah |
| 34 | Al-Ghâsyiyah | 88 | - |
| 35 | Al-Fajr | 89 | - |
| 36 | Al-Qiyâmah | 75 | Verses 16-19? |
| 37 | Al-Muthaffifîn | 83 | - |
| 38 | Al-Hâqqah | 69 | - |
| 39 | Adz-Dzâriyât | 51 | Verse 24ff later |
| 40 | Ath-Thûr | 52 | Verse 21, 29ff. later |
| 41 | Al-Wâqi'ah | 56 | - |
| 42 | Al-Ma'ârij | 70 | Verse 34 later |
| 43 | Ar-Rahmân | 55 | Verse 8-9 later |
| 44 | Al-Ikhlash | 112 | - |
| 45 | Al-Kâfirûn | 109 | - |
| 46 | Al-Falaq | 113 | - |
| 47 | An-Nâs | 114 | - |
| 48 | Al-Fâtihah | 1 | - |

According to Nöldeke, the letters of the first Makkiyah period have some special characteristics. These characters have a poetic style, full of bold imagination and very beautiful diction. Letters in this period are also generally short. Of the 48 surahs, there are 23 surahs with less than 20 verses and 14 with less than 50 verses.

As for the letters in the second Makkiyah period, they tend not to have a definite character. Some of the letters are similar in character to the letters of the early Makkiyah period and some of them are similar in character to the letters of the late Makkiyah period. However, according to Nöldeke, there is one thing that is unique in the letters of this period, the mention of Allah as *ar-Rahman*. The name *ar-Rahman* which is used only once in the first Makkiyah period, is not mentioned at all in the late Makkiyah period apart from a few exceptions verses, and is used very little in the Medina period, is used very often in this second period. The letters in the second period also no longer convey the high enthusiasm seen in the letters of the first period.

Table 2. Chronological Arrangement of Letters for the Second Makkah Period

| Chronological Order | Name of Letter | No. Certificate | 37 |
|---------------------|----------------|-----------------|--------------------|
| 1 | Al-Qamar | 54 | - |
| 2 | Ash-Shaffât | - | 3 |
| Nû | h71 | - | 4 |
| Al | -Insân | 76 | - |
| 5 | Ad-Dukhan | 44 | - |
| 6 | Qaf | 50 | - |
| 7 | Thâhâ | 20 | - |
| 8 | Ash-Syu'arâ' | 26 | - |
| 9 | Al -YâsînHijr | 15 | - |
| 10 | Maryam | 19 | Verses 35-40 later |
| 11 | Shad | 38 | - |
| 12 | 36 | 43 | - |
| 13 | Az-Zukhruf | 14 | - |
| 15 | Jinn | 72 | - |
| 16 | Al-Mulk | 67 | -- |
| 17 | Al-Mu'minûn | 23 | - |
| - | Anbiyâ ' | 21 | - |
| 18 | Al-Furqan | 25 | Verse 64? |
| 19 | Al-Isrâ' | 17 | - |
| 20 | An-Naml | 27 | - |
| 21 | Al-Kahf | 18 | - |

The letters in the third period, according to Nöldeke, tend to be boring because the number of words used are almost identical to one another. The narrative is monotonous and the diction tends to be mediocre. The poetic form found in the letters of the first period is lost in this period. Plus, the verses in each surah tend to get longer. However, there is one uniqueness in the letters of this period, namely the greeting *yâ ayyuhan nâs* which is rarely used in the letters of the previous period.

Table 3. Chronological Arrangement of the Third Makkah Period Letter Chronological

| Order | Name of Letter | No. Certificate | Fushshilat |
|-------|----------------|-----------------|---|
| 1 | As-Sajdah | 32 | - |
| 2 | 41 | 3 | - |
| 4 | Al-Jâtsiyah | 45 | - |
| 16 | An-Nahl | 5 | Verse 41f., 110-124 Madaniyah |
| Ar | -Rûm | 30 | - |
| 6 | Hûd | 11 | - |
| 7 | Hebrew | 14 | Verse 38ff. Madaniyah |
| 8 | Yûsuf | 12 | - |
| 9 | Al-Mu'min | 40 | Verse 57ff. ? |
| 10 | Al-Qashash | 28 | - |
| 11 | Az-Zumar | 39 | - |
| 12 | Al-'Ankabût | 29 | Verses 1-11, 46, 69 Madaniyah |
| 13 | Luqmân | 31 | Verses 14f., 27-29 Madaniyah, 12f., 16-19 later |
| 14 | Ash-Syrâ | 42 | - |
| 15 | Yûnus | 10 | - |
| 16 | Saba' | 34 | - |
| 17 | Fâthir | 35 | - |
| 18 | Al-A'râf | 7 | Verses 156-158 Madaniyah |
| 19 | Al-Ahqâf | 46 | - |
| 20 | Al-An'âm | 6 | - |
| 21 | Al-Ra'd | 13 | - |

The letters that Nöldeke included in the Medina period have very different characteristics from those of the previous periods. This difference is due to the many different situations surrounding the Prophet Muhammad. after the hijrah compared to when he was still in Mecca. The letters of the Medina period no longer speak of faith or dogmatic matters as they did in the Meccan period. Discussions about leadership, government, and law are more familiar in the letters of this period. In addition, another characteristic of the surah in this period is the length of the verse.

Table 4. Chronological Arrangement of the Medina Period Letters

| Chronological Order | Name of Letter | No. Certificate | 64 |
|---------------------|----------------|-----------------|----|
| 1 | Al-Baqarah | 2 | - |
| 2 | Al-Bayyinah | 98 | - |
| 3 | At-Taghâbun | - | 4 |
| Al | -Jumu'ah | 62 | - |
| 5 | Al-Anfâl | 8 | - |
| 6 | Muhammad | 47 | - |
| 7 | Ali 'Imrân | 3 | - |
| 8 | Ash-Shaff | 61 | - |
| 9 | Al-Hadîd | 57 | - |
| 10 | An-Nisâ' | 4 | - |
| 11 | Ath-Thalaq | 65 | - |
| 12 | Al-Hasyr | 59 | - |

| | | | |
|----|---------------|-----|---|
| 13 | Al-Ahzâb | 33 | - |
| 14 | Al-Munâfiqûn | 63 | - |
| 15 | An-Nûr | 24 | - |
| 16 | Al-Mujâdilâh | 58 | - |
| 17 | Al-Hajj | 22 | - |
| 18 | Al-Fath | 48 | - |
| 19 | At-Tahrîm | 66 | - |
| 20 | Al-Mumtahanah | 60 | - |
| 21 | An-Nasr | 110 | - |
| 22 | Al-Hkataât | 49 | - |
| 23 | At -Taubah | 9 | - |
| 24 | Al-Mâ'idah | 5 | - |

As for Sir William Muir, through his book entitled *Life of Mahomet*, he attaches an essay on the biographical sources of Muhammad. which contains ideas about the chronology of the Qur'an. This essay was later elaborated on in his other works, *The Coran: Its Composition and Teaching, and Testimony it bears to the Holy Scripture*. In this work, Muir proposes a chronological arrangement of the letters of the Qur'an which he grouped into six periods, five Meccan periods and one Medina period. Muir's efforts in compiling the chronology rely a lot on the narrations that tell the life of Muhammad. by carefully examining the narrators and their historical sources and examining historical data. The following is a detailed chronology of the Qur'an compiled by Sir William Muir.

The first period of Muir's chronological theory consists of 18 short letters which he calls rhapsodic (joy) letters, namely QS. Al-'Asr (103), QS. Al-'Âdiyât (100), QS. Al-Zalzalah (99), QS. Ash-Shams (91), QS. Quraish (106), QS. Al-Fati hah(1), QS. Al-Qari'ah (101), QS. At-Tîn (95), QS. At-Takatsur (102), QS. Al-Humazah (104), QS. Al-Infithar (82), QS. Al-Layl (92), QS. Al-Fîl (105), QS. Al-Fajr (89), QS. Al-Balad (90), QS. Adh-Dhuhâ (93), QS. Al-Insyirah (94), and QS. Al-Kautsar (108). These letters were placed before the appointment of Muhammad. as the Prophet in chronological order. Muir also emphasized that none of the suras in this period were in the form of messages from God.

The second period in Muir's version of the chronology consists of four letters which he calls the opening of the prophetic task. The four letters are QS. Al-'Alaq (96), QS. Al-Ikhlash (112), QS. Al-Muddatstsir (74), and QS. Al-Lahab (111).

As for the third period, from the beginning of the prophetic task (about 613 AD) until the migration to Abyssinia (about 615 AD), it consists of 19 letters, namely QS. Al-A'lâ (87), QS. Al-Qadr (97), QS. Al-Ghâsyiyah (88), QS. 'Abasa (80), QS. At-Takwîr (81), QS. Al-Insyiqâq (84), QS. Ath-Tariq (86), QS. An-Nasr (110), QS. Al-Burûj (85), QS. Al-Muthaffifîn (83), QS. An-Naba' (78), QS. Al-Mursalat (77), QS. Al-Insan (76), QS. Al-Qiyamah (75), QS. Al-Ma'arij (70), QS. Al-Kâfirûn (109), QS. Al-Mâ'ûn (107), QS. Ar-Rahmân (55), and QS. Al-Wâqi'ah (56). The letters that Muir places in this period generally speak of resurrection, heaven and hell.

While the fourth period, the sixth year to the tenth year of the prophethood of Muhammad, consists of 22 letters that begin to describe stories originating from Jewish scriptures and ancient Arabic legends. The 22 letters are QS. Al-Mulk (67), QS. An-Najm(53), QS. As-Sajdah (32), QS. Az-Zumar (39), QS. Al-Muzzammil (73), QS. An-Nazi'ât (79), QS. Al-Qamar (54), QS. Saba' (34), QS. Luqman (31), QS. Al-Hâqqah (69), QS. Al-Qalam (68), QS. Fushshilat (41), QS. Nûh (71), QS. Ath-Thûr (52), QS. Qaf (50), QS. Al-Jâtsiyah (45), QS. Ad-Dukhan (44), QS. Ash-Shaffat (37), QS. Ar-Rûm (30), QS. Ash-Syu'arâ' (26), QS. Al-Hijr(15), and QS. Adz-Dzariyat (51).

The fifth period, from the tenth year after the prophethood to the hijra from Mecca, consists of 30 suras, namely QS. Al-Aḥqâf (46), QS. Al-Jinn (72), QS. Fathir (35), QS. Yâsn (36), QS. Maryam (19), QS. Al-Kahf (18), QS. An-Naml (27), QS. Ash-Syra (42), QS. Al-Mu'min (40), QS. Shad (38), QS. Al-Furqan (25), QS. Thaha (20), QS. Az-Zukhruf (43), QS. Yûsuf (12), QS. Hûd (11), QS. Yûnus (10), QS. Ibrahim (14), QS. Al-An'am (6), QS. At-Taghabun (64), QS. Al-Qashash (28), QS. Al-Mu'minûn (23), QS. Al-Ḥajj (22), QS. Al-Anbiya' (21), QS. Al-Isra' (17), QS. An-Nahl (16), QS. Ar-Ra'd (13), QS. Al-'Ankabût (29), QS. Al-A'raf (7), QS. Al-Falaq (113), and QS. An-Nâs (114). The suras of this period, according to Muir, contain several stories that are sourced from the Bible and clearly describe the calm of the resurrection day, heaven and hell. Surahs in this period also tend to be longer than the previous period. In addition, there are several letters containing messages similar to the revelations that were revealed in the Medina period. This can be seen, for example, in QS. Al-Ḥajj (22) verse 41 which is a sign of granting permission to fight against the Quraysh of Mecca, QS. Al-Isrâ' (17) verse 33, which contains the rules for administering justice, and QS. Al-Nahl (16) verse 110, which discusses the command for believers to leave their country and fight for their religion.

The sixth period is the suras that were revealed in Medina. In this period, Muir put 21 surah namely QS. Al-Bayyinah (98), QS. Al-Baqarah (2), QS. Ali 'Imran (3), QS. Al-Anfal (8), QS. Muhammad (47), QS. Al-Jumu'ah (62), QS. Al-Ma'idah (5), QS. Al-Ḥasr (59), QS. An-Nisa' (4), QS. Al-Mujâdilah (58), QS. Ath-Thalaq (65), QS. Al-Munâfiqûn (63), QS. An-Nûr (24), QS. Al-Ahzab (33), QS. Al-Ḥadîd (57), QS. Ash-Shaff (61), QS. Al-Fath (48), QS. Al-Mumtahanah (60), QS. At-Tahrîm (66), QS. Al-Ḥkataât (49), and QS. At-Taubah (9).

3.3 Theodor Nöldeke and Sir William Muir

Theodor Nöldeke's efforts in compiling the calendar of the Qur'anic letters have received various responses from scholars, both Muslim and Western. Not a few of these scholars who accept and give a positive assessment. However, there are also those who strongly criticize Nöldeke's efforts.

Marco Schöller's positive evaluation of the chronological order of Theodor Nöldeke was made by Marco Schöller. He praised the method used by Nöldeke. According to him, the method used by Nöldeke in chronologically compiling the letters of the Qur'an tends to be simple and practical, and not arbitrary on the one hand and not too sophisticated on the other. Thus, the results shown from these efforts are also very consistent.

Another figure who also gave a positive assessment was Regis Blachère (1900-1973). Blachère revealed that Nöldeke's chronological arrangement makes the readers of the Qur'an from the West feel a satisfying experience in understanding the sacred texts.

Not only giving a positive assessment, Blachère also adopted Nöldeke's theory in compiling the chronology of the Qur'an. The theory of the three Meccan periods which is the hallmark of Nöldeke's calendar system can also be seen in Blachère's chronology contained in his translation of the Qur'an, *Le Coran: Traduction Selon un Essai de Reclassement des Sourates*. Another similarity in the chronology of the two is the letters in the Medina period which have absolutely no difference in the number of letters entered in that period and in their order. It was the same in the third Meccan period. However, in the period there is a slight difference in which Blachère increases the number of letters of the third Meccan period of Nöldeke by including the letter Al-Isrâ'. Thus, the number of letters from the third period of Blachère is 22 letters, while in Nöldeke's chronology there are only 21 letters.

The order of letters in the second and first periods in the chronology of the two seems quite different. In the second period, although the number of letters remains the same, namely 21 letters, Blachère includes the letters Al-Qalam and Adz-Dzâriyât in this period while Nöldeke prefers to put them in the early Mecca period. In place of the two letters, Nöldeke put QS. Al-Insan and QS. Al-Isra'. As for the first period, the arrangement of the letters in the chronology of the two looks very different. However, Blachère still agrees with Nöldeke's opinion regarding the letter that was first revealed, namely QS. Al-'Alaq, as Muslim scholars also agree.

In addition to receiving a positive response, Theodor Nöldeke's chronological arrangement is also considered to have weaknesses by several scientists, both Western and Muslim. These weaknesses include several aspects in its chronological arrangement, namely the division of the three periods of Mecca, inconsistencies in the application of the characteristics of the surah, the dating of Surah Al-Fatihah, and the decline in the quality of the style of the Qur'anic language.

According to Jawad Iskandarlo, Nöldeke's opinion needs to be reviewed. The large number of uses of *tamtsîl* and *isti'ârah* which makes the editorial of the verses in this group of letters longer and tends to be boring compared to the previous period's letters, is something that is needed, not just decoration. It is undeniable that not all uses of *isti'ârah* aims to beautify *kalam* or speech.

Nöldeke's opinion about the declining quality of the language of the Qur'an cannot be justified because there is no clear evidence regarding this. The language of the Qur'an is a language full of *uslb*, placed according to need (*muqtadhâ alhâl*), precise, and in harmony, not just decoration or deliberately extended as Nöldeke thought.

As for the chronology of Sir William Muir's Qur'an, according to scientists, in general, it is not much different from the chronology of its predecessors, Gustav Weil and Nöldeke. Thus, the criticism of the chronology of the Qur'an of its predecessors can be fully applied to the chronology of the Qur'an of Muir. One example is the criticism of the division of the period of revelation. While the chronology of the Nöldeke Qur'an was criticized for not having a solid basis in its chronological division and not in accordance with the division of da'wah phases as is often found in Islamic historical literature, the same applies to the chronology of the Muir Qur'an. As seen in the chronological order, Muir divides the letters that were revealed in Mecca into five periods of revelation, the time of each period is as follows.

- a. The first period, given the calendar before the prophethood of Muhammad.
- b. The second period, the beginning of the prophethood of Muhammad.
- c. The third period, the start of da'wah openly until the migration to Abyssinia. Based on Islamic historical literature, the time of this third period begins in the 3rd year to the 5th year after the prophethood.
- d. The fourth period, from the 6th year to the 10th year after the prophethood of Muhammad.
- e. The fifth period, starting from the 10th year after the prophethood until the migration to Medina.

In addition to not having a strong foundation, there are several weaknesses related to the division of this period. First, the first period is dated before Muhammad's prophethood, but there is no exact date for Muhammad's writing of the letters of this period. as Muir believed. Second, if Muir divides the letters of the Mecca period with the aim of making it easier to divide the characters of the letters like Nöldeke, of course the same criteria will not be found in different periods as seen in the criteria for the third and fifth period letters

which have the same theme. resurrection day and heaven and hell. Each period certainly has different criteria from other periods.

The events that Muir described before the mention of An-Nasr's letter were actually events in the early days of the Prophet Muhammad's apostolate. based on authentic hadiths. There was consolation from Khadijah because of the fear experienced by the Prophet. After dealing directly with the angel Gabriel, it is explained in the hadith narrated by Aisyah which tells about the event of receiving the first revelation. According to the author, there was a discrepancy between the time that Muir set regarding the revelation of Surah An-Nasr and the information he mentioned at the time of the revelation of the letter, due to one of two things, an error he made accidentally in determining the date of this letter, or he was mistaken. in matching events that occur when this condition is revealed.

Apart from this, it also appears that there is a discrepancy in the theme of the chronology of Al-Qur'an Muir regarding the calendar time of Surah An-Nasr. Although it is not clearly stated, in determining the time of the revelation of the Surahs of the Qur'an, Muir also uses language analysis. This can be seen, for example, when Muir explains the letters he placed in the second Meccan period in chronological order. Thus, although not as assertive as Nöldeke, Muir also establishes certain themes regarding the letters that were revealed in each period. The group of letters from the third period of Mecca in the chronological order of Muir, generally has the theme of the day of resurrection (QS. Al-Ghâsyiyah, QS. 'Abasa, QS. At-Takwîr, QS. Al-Qiyâmah, and QS. Al-Wâqî'ah), heaven and hell (QS. Al-Insan, QS. Al-Ma'arij, QS. Ar-Rahmân, QS. Al-Mursalât, QS. An-Naba', QS. Al-Mâ'ûn) and information about the emergence of opposition from the Quraysh of Mecca (QS. Al-Insyiqâq, QS. Ath-Thâriq, QS. Al-A'lâ (87), QS. Al-Burûj, QS. Al-Muthaffifîn, and QS. Al-Kâfirûn). These themes are clearly not in accordance with the content of An-Nasr's letter with the theme of help and victory. So it seems that there is a discrepancy in the theme or inconsistency in the application of the theme when Muir decides to put this letter into the third group of letters of the Mecca period.

Regarding the timing of the revelation of QS. An-Nasr, two things appear to be weaknesses in Sir William Muir's Qur'an chronology. First, Muir was too influenced by his ideology in determining the date of the letter; second, there appears to be a discrepancy between the themes that he has set regarding the letters in the third period of Mecca with the letters that he put down in that period.

With so many criticisms from scholars, making the chronological arrangement of the Qur'an both cannot be used in its entirety in determining the time of the revelation of the Qur'an but can only be used as consideration for determining the date of a letter by having to check in advance whether there are errors or not. what the two figures do in determining the date of a letter.

IV. Conclusion

Theodor Nöldeke compiled the chronology of the Qur'an using the literary criticism method by determining the characteristics of the surah in each period through his *Geschichte des Qorâns*. He then divided the letters of the Qur'an into four revelation periods, three Meccan periods and one Medina period. As for Sir William Muir, applying the theory of six periods to the chronological arrangement of the Qur'an which he arranged based on the traditions and surah ar-Rasl which he described in his two works, *Life of Mahomet* and *The Quran Its Composition and Teaching; and the Testimony its Bears to the Holy Scriptures*.

The chronology of Theodor Nöldeke's Al-Qur'an is considered to provide convenience for Western scholars in studying the content of the Qur'an. In addition, there are several things that are lacking in the chronological arrangement of Theodor Nöldeke's Al-Qur'an, namely there is no strong basis in the division of the three Meccan periods, inconsistency in the application of the characteristics of the letter, incompatibility with historical reality as seen in the calendar of Surah Al-Fâtihah, the existence of the decline in the quality of the language style of the Qur'an, there is a significant difference between the chronology of the Nöldeke Qur'an and the chronology of the Egyptian Standard Edition of the Al-Qur'an Mushaf. The chronology of Sir William Muir's Qur'an is considered to have weaknesses in two aspects, namely the existence of a group of letters that are dated before the prophethood of Muhammad. and Muir put too much emphasis on his ideology and subjectivity in determining the date of a letter as when he set the time for the revelation of An-Nasr's letter.

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