term (ajal, q 40:67) as the irrevocable period of life assigned by God comes to an end at the moment of divine sanction. This appointed term of human life is fixed, it can neither be anticipated nor deferred. “No one has his life prolonged and no one has his life cut short except as [it is written] in a book [of God’s decrees]” (q 35:11; see heavenly book). The image-rich promise of the new human creation beyond time in paradise heightened the awareness that nothing escapes the grasp of God’s perpetual presence. From the kan of his creation to the ajal of his death, individual human existence falls under the incessant decrees of God, which occur instantaneously. God is the lord of the instant. What God has determined happens.

G. Böwering

Bibliography
Primary: Ibn Ishāq, Sīra; Ibn Ishāq-Guilbaume; Tabari, Tafsir.

Tiring see sleep; sabbath

Tithe see almsgiving

Today see time

Tolerance and Coercion

Accepting attitude towards a plurality of viewpoints and the use of force to influence behavior or beliefs. Qur’ānic vocabulary lacks a specific term to express the idea of tolerance but several verses explicitly state that religious coercion (ikrāh) is either unfeasible or forbidden; other verses may be interpreted as expressing the same notion. Pertinent Qur’ānic attitudes underwent substantial development during Muhammad’s prophetic career. The earliest reference to religious tolerance seems to be included in q 109, a sūra that recognizes the unbridgeable gap between Islam (q.v.) and the religion of the Meccans (see polytheism and atheism; south Arabia, religion in pre-Islamic) and concludes by saying: “To you your religion, and
to me mine” (q 109:6). This is best interpreted as a plea to the Meccans to refrain from practicing religious coercion against the Muslims of Mecca (q.v.) before the hijra (Zamakhshari, Kashshif, IV, 293; cf. q 2:139; see emigration), but since it does not demand any action to suppress Meccan polytheism, it has sometimes been understood as reflecting an attitude of religious tolerance on the part of the Muslims (cf. q 2:256, “There is no compulsion in religion . . .” (lā ikrāha fī l-dīni) has become tolerance and coercion.

Moving to the period immediately following the hijra, we should consider the famous document known as the Constitution of Medina (‘ahd al-umma) which included a clause recognizing the fact that the Jews have a distinct — and legitimate — religion of their own (see JEWS AND JUDAISM): “The Jews have their religion and the believers have theirs” (lil-yahid dinhum wa-lil-muminina dinhum; Abū ’Ubayd, Amwāl, 204). Rubin (The constitution, 16 and n. 45) has already referred to the affinity between this passage and q 109:6. Both accept the existence of religions other than Islam in the Arabian peninsula. It stands to reason that both passages reflect very early attitudes of nascent Islam, which had been willing, at that time, to tolerate the existence of other religions in the peninsula. This seems to have been the understanding of Abū ’Ubayd (d. 224/838-9) who thought that the ‘ahd al-umma clause originated at a time when “Islam was not yet dominant and strong, before the Prophet was commanded to take jizya (see poll tax) from the People of the Book” (q.v.; qabla an yazhara al-islām wa-yaqūwā wa-qabla an yu’mara bi-akhdh al-jizya min ahl al-kitāb; Abū ’Ubayd, Amwāl, 207).

q 2:256, “There is no compulsion in religion . . .” (lī ikrāha fī l-dīnī) has become
the *locus classicus* for discussions of religious tolerance in Islam. Surprisingly enough, according to the “circumstances of revelation” (*asbãb al-nuzûl*) literature (see *occasions of revelation*), it was revealed in connection with the expulsion of the Jewish tribe of Bãnû l-Naḍîr (q.v.) from Medina (q.v.) in 4/625 (cf. Friedmann, *Tolerance*, 100-1). In the earliest works of exegesis (see *exegesis of the Qur’ân: classical and medieval*), the verse is understood as an injunction (*amr*) to refrain from the forcible imposition of Islam, though there is no unanimity of opinion regarding the precise group of infidels to which the injunction had initially applied. Commentators who maintain that the verse was originally meant as applicable to all people consider it as abrogated (*mansûkh*) by Q 9:5, Q 9:29, or Q 9:73 (see *abrogation*). Viewing it in this way is necessary in order to avoid the glaring contradiction between the idea of tolerance and the policies of early Islam which did not allow the existence of polytheism — or any other religion — in a major part of the Arabian peninsula. Those who think that the verse was intended, from the very beginning, only for the People of the Book, need not consider it as abrogated: though Islam did not allow the existence of any religion other than Islam in most of the peninsula, the purpose of the jihãd (q.v.) against the People of the Book, according to Q 9:29, is their submission and humiliation rather than their forcible conversion to Islam. As is well known, Islam normally did not practice religious coercion against Jews and Christians (see *Christians and CHRISTIANITY*) outside the Arabian peninsula, though substantial limitations were placed in various periods on the public aspects of their worship.

Later commentators, some of whom are characterized by a pronounced theological bent of thought, treat the verse in a totally different manner. According to them, Q 2:256 is not a command at all. Rather it ought to be understood as a piece of information (*khâbâr*), or, to put it differently, a description of the human condition: it conveys the idea that embracing a religious faith (q.v.) can only be the result of empowerment and free choice (*tâmkin, ikhtiyâr*). It cannot be the outcome of constraint and coercion (*qass, ijbâr*). Phrased differently, belief “an action of the heart (q.v.)” in which no compulsion is likely to yield sound results (*li-anâma l-ikrâ‘ al-lâ l-imân lâ yasibhu li-anâhu ‘amal al-qalb*). Religious coercion would also create a theologically unacceptable situation: if people were coerced into true belief, their positive response to prophetic teaching would become devoid of value, the world would cease to be “an abode of trial” (*dâr al-ibtîlâ*); Râzî, *Taṣâbî‘*, vii, 13; Ibn al-Jawzî, *Zâd*, iv, 67; see *trust and patience; trial*) and, consequently, the moral basis for the idea of reward and punishment would be destroyed. This argumentation uses the verse in support of the idea of free will (see *freedom and predestination*).

These tolerant attitudes toward the non-Muslims of Arabia were not destined to last. After the Muslim victory in the battle of Badr (q.v.; 2/624), the Qur’ân started to promote the idea of religious uniformity in the Arabian peninsula. Q 8:39 enjoins the Muslims “to fight… till there is no temptation [to abandon Islam; *fitna*] and the religion is God’s entirely” (cf. Q 2:193). Once this development took place, the clauses in the ‘*ahd al-umma* bestowing legitimacy on the existence of the Jewish religion in Medina had to undergo substantial reinterpretation. The clause stipulating that “the Jews have their religion and the believers have theirs” was now taken to mean that the Jewish religion is worthless (*ammâ l-dîn fa-laysû minhu fi shay‘*; Rubin, *The constitution*, 19-20, quoting Abû
Similar was the fate of q 109:6, which was declared abrogated by q 9:5 (āyat al-sayf) or interpreted as a threat against the polytheists. This new attitude was also expressed in the prophetic tradition according to which “no two religions will coexist in the Arabian peninsula” (lā yajtami’u dinānī fī jażrat al-‘arab; Friedmann, Tolerance, 91-3).

Despite the apparent meaning of q 2:256, Islamic law allowed coercion of certain groups into Islam. Numerous traditions and jurisprudents (fuqahā‘) allow coercing female polytheists and Zoroastrians (see magians) who fall into captivity to become Muslims — otherwise sexual relations with them would not be permissible (cf. q 2:221; see sex and sexuality; marriage and divorce). Similarly, forcible conversion of non-Muslim children was also allowed by numerous jurists in certain circumstances, especially if the children were taken captive (see captives) or found without their parents or if one of their parents embraced Islam (Friedmann, Tolerance, 106-15). It was also the common practice to insist on the conversion of the Manichaeans, who were never awarded the status of ahl al-dhimma.

Another group against whom religious coercion may be practiced are apostates from Islam (see apostasy). As a rule, classical Muslim law demands that apostates be asked to repent and be put to death if they refuse (see repentance and penance; boundaries and precepts; chastisement and punishment). It has to be pointed out, however, that the Qur’ān does not include any reference to capital punishment for apostasy. The Qur’ān mentions people who abandoned Islam and reverted to their former faith; those of them who did this willingly are condemned in a harsh and vindictive tone. There is a sense of resentment at the idea that someone who had perceived the truth of Islam and joined it only a short time ago could be swayed into reverting to idolatry or another false religion (see idolatry and idolaters). The Qur’ān therefore asserts that the endeavors of the unrepentant apostates will fail, God will visit them with his wrath and will send valiant warriors against them; however, the main punishment of those who abandoned Islam will be inflicted upon them, according to the Qur’ān, in the hereafter (cf. q 2:217; 3:86, 90; 4:137; 5:54; 9:74; 47:25). But in the hadith and fiqh literature, the attitude toward the apostate became much harsher. It stands to reason that the Bedouin (q.v.) insurrection against the nascent Muslim state after the Prophet’s death was the background for this development. The new attitude, which effectively transfers the punishment for apostasy from the hereafter (see eschatology) to this world, is reflected in utterances repeatedly attributed to the Prophet in the earliest collections of tradition. The most frequently quoted of these reads: “Whoever changes his religion, kill him” (man baddala or man ghayyara dinahu fa-qtulhu or fa-āribu ‘unqahu; Malik, Muwatta’, ii, 736). In another formulation, taking into account the idea that a person forced to abandon Islam is not considered an apostate, the Prophet is reported to have said: “Whoever willingly disbelieves in God after he has believed, kill him” (man kafara bi-llāhi ba’da ‘imānihi ī‘an fa-qtulhu). Most jurists maintain that the apostate should be given the opportunity to repent; there is a great variety of views concerning the time allowed for this purpose (Friedmann, Tolerance, 121-59; see repentance and penance).

Hence, the ideas of tolerance and coercion have undergone substantial development in the Qur’ān and are characterized by a great deal of variety in the literature of tradition and jurisprudence. Yet whatever the original meaning of q 2:256 may
have been, it is more compatible with the idea of religious tolerance than with any other approach. Any Muslim who wanted to practice religious toleration throughout the centuries of Islamic history could use Qur'anic text (see Table 1) to defend his stance. On the other hand, Qur'an 9:5, 9:29 or Qur'an 9:73 may be interpreted as going a long way in the opposite direction.

Yohanan Friedmann

Bibliography


Tolerance and Compulsion see TOLERANCE AND COERCION

Tomb see BURIAL; DEATH AND THE DEAD

Tomorrow see TIME

Tongue see ARABIC LANGUAGE; SPEECH

Tools for the Scholarly Study of the Qur’an

The entire body of scholarship, both Muslim and non-Muslim, must be the foundation of any responsible scholarly study of the Qur’an. Certain tools, however, form key elements of any scholarly library.

The text of the Qur’an

The basic tool for the study of the Qur’an is, of course, the text itself. Unlike the situation in scholarly study of some other scriptures, decisions regarding the base text to be used for analysis do not face scholars from the outset. We have a text of the Qur’an before us, accepted by every Muslim. It is the text which is the well-known, well-established book, found between two covers in virtually every Muslim home, known for convenience as the ‘Uthmanic text’ (see CODGES OF THE QUR’AN; COLLECTION OF THE QUR’AN; ’UTHMĀN). That said, it must be admitted that this is a somewhat simplistic way of presenting the matter (see CONTEMPORARY CRITICAL PRACTICES AND THE QUR’AN).

It is common to speak of the Royal