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ISLAMIC STUDIES AND ORIENTALISM

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UNIT 1: Islam and Its major Characteristics

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

Islam is a monotheistic religion which means total submission to the will of Allah and obedience to His commandments. The main issues to be examined, which would help to introduce the learner to this unit are the following: The meaning of Islam; Brief history of Islam; Concept of Islam and; Characteristic of a true Muslim.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

It is hoped that by the end of this unit, the learner should be able to:-

- ❖ Give an overview of the meaning of Islam;
- ❖ Summarize Islamic history
- ❖ Highlight the Muslim Creed.
- ❖ Enumerate the characteristics of a Muslim with quotation from the Qur'an and *Sunnah*.

3.0 MAIN CONTENTS

These are as follows;

3.1 An Overview of the Meaning of Islam

Islam is an Arabic word derived from trilateral word “**SLM**”, which means joining, completion, bonding, and voluntary or compulsory submission among others.

Islam is an Arabic word coined from “**SALĀM**”, which has multiple meanings including submission and surrender to the will of Allah. It also means peace, obedience,

and purity among others. Islam in etymology has distinct connotation in the Qur'an and prophetic traditions depending on the occurrences. These among others are the textual verses and the hadiths which relate to the etymological meaning of Islam as follows:-

1. *Ad-Dīn* (Religion)

And I have chosen for you Islam as your religion (Q5:3). The Prophet (Peace be upon him) said -: Whoever Allah wishes good for, He makes him understand { *Ad-Dīn* } Islam (Q6:126);

2. Internal conflicts -: Whosoever will be guided, He expands his bosom unto Islam;

3. Act of returning to Allah -: which supersedes verbal decoration -: You believe not only, rather we say we submit Q48: 14.

4. Action of returning to Allah completely-: O you who believe, come to submission {unto Him} and follow not the foot- steps of the devils, surely he is an open enemy for you.

Technically, Islam means *Īmān* {faith}, *Ihsān* {good deed}, *'Ibādah* (act of worship), and *Sharī'ah* {Islamic jurisprudence}.

In a wider sense-: Islam is the total submission to the will of Allah and obedience to His commandments (Law). In the universe, every phenomenon is in the state of Islam for being obedient to Allah and submissive willingly to His divine law. Qur'an 41 Verse 11 says -:

Then he turned to the heaven when it was smoky and said to it and to the earth, come and be obedient, willingly or not, they said we would be obedient.

Man is the only mortal that is singled out from compulsory submission (to the will of Allah) for possessing quality of intelligence and liberty of choice. Qur'an 56 Verse 3 says: 'Surely We have shown him the way, whether he is grateful or disbelieving'.

Acceptance of man's invitation to Allah by submitting to His will and be obedient to His commandments makes him a true Muslim. Therefore, Submission to Allah's will is the highest spiritual state for a mortal being and the strongest way to achieve peace and lasting purity, as well as safe-guarding harmony in every society. A Muslim plays some roles, which are beneficial to him in his lifetime. These roles could be explained as making peace with every element of nature that goes in accordance with the will of Allah as well as to himself.

3.1 Self Assessment Exercise

Give an overview of the various definitions of Islam?

3.2 Brief History of Islam

Islam is a monotheistic religion revealed to Muhammad (P.B.U.H.), which explains the total submission to the Will of Allah and (to be) obedient to His laws and commandments. Its link to monotheistic nature was traced and confirmed to other Prophets and Messengers before Muhammad (P.B.U.H.) because of the uniqueness in their message of monotheism. It is a religion that was revealed many times, since the inception of Adam (the first human on earth) and his descendants including Abraham, Moses, Jesus and lastly Muhammad among others.

The origin of Islam through Muhammad (P.B.U.H.) commenced as far back as 632 A.D with his first revelation in the cave of Hira by Angel Jibril (Gabriel). He gained a few followers that later outnumbered the expected population of the infidels. The adherents of the new faith encountered series of problems from the disbelievers of Mecca till the situation became unbearable. They were permitted to migrate from Mecca to Abyssinia (Ethiopia) and later to Medina in the Hejaz province of the Arabian peninsular.

The positive impact on the political scene, economic growth and military strengths (for self defense of the course of Allah) spread the religion in the world, notably in the whole Arabian peninsular where its root originates. Barely three centuries after Muhammad's death, the religion of Islam extended from the Atlantic Ocean in the West to Central Asia in the East. Among the distinguished impacts of Islam were the subsequent Islamic empires that emerged. This included the Umayyad, the Abbasid, the Fatimid and the Ottoman Empire amongst others. The Empires left political systems as legacies and rise of civilization and paved way for the establishment of various centers for Islamic culture and science, which produced notable scientist like Ibn Sina (Anglicized Avicenna), philosophers and physicians like Al-Kindi and Ibn Rushd (Anglicized Averroes). Islam as a religion is said to be a fast growing religion today with over 1.62 billion adherents.

3.2 Self Assessment Exercise

Give a brief history of Islam.

3.3 The Muslim Creed.

These include:

(1) Belief in the oneness of Allah

(2) Belief in the *Malak* (the Angels). The heavenly body creatures that are exempted from physical desire and material need whatsoever. According to a *Ḥadīth*, their nature of splendid and spiritual level require no nutrition of any kind as they cannot be described as either male or female or having free will of decision. They are regarded as servants of Allah who serve their Lord relentlessly both in the day and night. Their exact number is confined only to Allah's knowledge.

Allah (Himself) bears witness that there is no God except Him. And the angles also bear witness, maintaining proper justice in His creation, and testifying that there is no God except Him, the Mighty, the Wise.

(Qur'ān 74 verse 131).

(3) Belief in the Scriptures revealed to the Messengers which contain the guiding light for various people at various particular times. The scriptures promulgated the law of Allah to forbid them from following their fancies and heart desires that may lead them to everlasting torments in the here after. Although, it is obligatory for the Muslims to believe in the books which pre-date Muhammad's message, but those are not in existence these days due to certain reasons such as concealment of the truth, corruption and so on. The only option left for the Muslims is to believe in the principle of such books.

(4) Belief in the Prophets and Messengers of Allah without any element of discrimination.

(5) Belief in the Day of Resurrection (*Yawmu l-Qiyāmah*), which could also be referred to as the Day of Judgment (*Yawmul-Ḥisāb*). The Day in which all the entire humanity will rise up from their graves to stand in front of the Creator (Allah) for the assessment of all their actions and deeds during their worldly life. Yusuf Ali in his commentary of the Holy Qur'an called it as a Day of Testimony. It is regarded as a Day when testimony will surface from every angle. Also, the real truth will emerge and will be presented before the Superior King on that day from various parts of our body such as the skin, hand and leg.

This day, We shall seal up their mouths, and their hands will speak to Us, and their legs will bear witness as to what they used to earn. (Q.36:65).

In a nutshell, this Day is the final settlement of account of every human, for they will be compensated fully, with what is equivalent to their good deeds or punished equally for otherwise and as such the disbelievers or the wrongdoers will abide in the hell.

(6) Belief in *Qadar* (predestination): It is the decree of Allah for mankind at the time of his creation. Despite the liberty of human being to free will, actions which will erupt from him had been known to Allah and nothing can escape his permission, because Allah has the absolute authority and power to execute his Will and Plan on human being. However, it should be noted, that man will be responsible for his misdeeds committed with his free will and he will be questioned on his deeds. In this regard, predestination has no cause or effect on influencing man's free choices.

Say, you will not be asked of what we committed nor shall we be asked of what you did. Say, Our Lord will bring us together, and then He will judge between us with truth, He is the All-Knowing Judge. **Qur'an 34 verses 25 – 26.**

3.3 SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

List and explain the concept of Islam?

3.4 Characteristics of a true Muslim within the mirror of the Qur'an and Sunnah

(1) It is incumbent on every Muslim to believe that there is no acceptable religion in the sight of Allah other than Islam. Therefore, verbal declaration of Islam without observing its required characteristics is equivalent to mere formalities. It makes the person almost an unbeliever or dormant believer.

(2) A Muslim must entrust his entire life to Allah, depending on Him completely without any iota of doubt. He should be aware that he (Allah) is in complete control of human affairs. This is the exemplary life-style of the early Muslims. They depended solely on Allah as the only provider when they are in need of anything including a common commodity like salt. This does not imply that one should be negligent in his daily duties and activities in the name of *tawakkul* (trust in God).

“Allah, There is no God but him, and only in Allah should the believers put their trust”

It was narrated in an *Hadīth* that a man came to the Prophet (P.B.U.H.), making an enquiry about the safety and guarantee of his camel from been lost, “the man asked that should he

allow the camel to be roaming about freely, putting his trust and its safety to (Allah) or hold it? The reply of the Prophet (P.B.U.H.) to the man was that he should hold the Camel and entrust its (safety) to Allah”.

(3) Another pre-requisite of a Muslim is making use of the wealth bestowed on him by Allah to assist the less-privileged. Our daily livelihood has been classified into different groups; some individuals are privileged in terms of living while others are raised in ranks. Hence, the gift varies in various forms. Some are related to worldly materials ranging from wealth, property and health. The others are gifted in terms of knowledge, experiences, skills and influences among others. A Muslim should regard himself as a mere custodian of the gifts. Spending the excess of what we acquired as charity is acceptable charity in sight of Allah while withholding the excess is requesting the wrath of Allah. **Q.34:39**

Anything you spend will be replaced by Him”. Whatever good you give away is to your own benefit. Whatever good you give away will be repaid to you in full. You will not be wronged for the good that you have done.

The Prophet (P.B.U.H), warned the Muslims against withholding excess needs as related in the *Hadīth* of Abu Umamah Said bn Ajlan that “O Son of Adam, It is better for you to spend what is in excess of your needs and it is worse for you to keep it”. Also, Asmah bint Abubakr Aş-Şiddīq said that the Messenger of Allah (P.B.U.H.) said “Do not withhold your wealth or it will one day be withheld from you” (Agreed upon).

(4) A Muslim should always enjoin what is good and try every available means to shun and combat what is evil without showing off eloquence and ability in the process. Qur’an 9 v 71 says:-

And the believing men and women are protecting friend from one another, they enjoin the right and forbid the wrong, they established worship and pay the poor Due (*Zakāt*), with obedience to Allah and His Messenger. As for these kinds of Category of Muslims, Allah will have mercy on them. Surely Allah is Mighty, All Wise”.

Qur’an 3: verse 110 says:-

You are the best of generation, who have been selected for mankind,

this is because you enjoin what is good, and prevent people from forbidden things and you have sincere faith in Allah.

Qur'an 41 verse 32 expatiates this further

And whose words can be better, than a person, who calls (people) to the part of Allah, performs good deeds and says: "I am among those who submit (to Allah)".

It was narrated by Abu Saïd al-Khudry that the Messenger of Allah said:

Whoever sees anything that is wrong, he should correct it by the use of his hand or tongue as the case may be and if he cannot do this, he should hate it with his heart, and hating it with the heart shows a very low level of one's faith.

(5). Recognizing the rights of fellow human beings irrespective of nationality, social status, religion or colour among other things; and giving equal treatment to them as ordained in the Qur'an and *Sunnah*. There is no compulsion in religion as the Prophet made allegiance with the Jewish tribes of Madina known in Islamic history as *Mithāq Al- Madīnah* which gave all the people in the City full autonomy and liberty.

3.4 SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

What are the characteristics of a true Muslim?

4.0 Conclusion

From our discussion so far in this unit, we arrived to our conclusion that Islam is a religion which based its creed on monotheism with special characteristics which must be fulfilled to be accepted as a true adherent of the religion

5.0 SUMMARY

In this unit so far, we dealt with the meaning of Islam and its characteristics from the following perspectives: Meaning of Islam, a brief history of Islam, concept of Islam and characteristics of a Muslim

6.0 TUTOR MARKED ASSIGNMENTS

1. Give a brief history of Islam

2 what are the characteristics of a true Muslim?

3 what is the Islamic view on disbursement of property?

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UNIT 2: THE CONCEPT OF ORIENTALISM

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3.2 Pioneer non-Muslim Critics of Islam and the Prophet Muhammad

3.3 Emergence of Orientalism as An Academic Pursuit

4.0 Conclusion

5.0 Summary

6.0 Tutor marked Assignment

7.0 References and Further Reading

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Orientalism is the study of the East in relation to their culture and religion. The main issues examined in this unit are the following: meaning and history of Orientalism.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

By the end of this unit learner should be able to

- Define Orientalism.
- Identify the roles played by Pioneer non-Muslim Critics of Islam and Prophet Muhammad
- Discuss the emergence of Orientalism as an academic pursuit

3.0 MAIN CONTENTS

3.1 Definition of Orientalism

One may define the term Orientalism both in general and specific senses. In its general sense the word Orientalism may be described as the branch of scholarship that uses traditional western methods as a means of understanding and gathering knowledge pertaining to the orient. In other words Orientalism is the "scientific discipline" that deals with the material and spiritual culture of the East, as well as the history and languages of the region. Thus, the 'Orientalist' is a person who practices the science of studying the East. In this sense it means that Orientalist's main concern is the understanding of the Eastern people in relation to their culture, philosophy and religious life. This includes the study of Islam as part of the orient.

In its Islamic context the Orientalists can be described as a group of non-Muslim authors, particularly from the West using the traditional western ideology to study Islam. From the approach of this group to Islamic studies arises several misconceptions about Islam, Prophet Muhammad, Islamic principles and civilization, Arabic language and literature which consequently impacted negatively upon western conscience and even the conscience of some western trained Muslim renowned scholars e.g. Taha Husayn in his work *al-'Aṣr al-Jāhilī* on the history of the *Jahiliyyah* period Arabic literature and Muhammad Amīn in his History of Islamic culture and civilization series: *Fajrul-Islam, Duḥāl-Islam and Ṭuḥr al-Islām*.

Self Assessment Exercise

Define Orientalism.

3.2 Pioneer non-Muslim Critics of Islam and the Prophet Muhammad

Well before the emergence of Orientalism as an academic discipline, none Muslims had been interested in the emergence of Islam as a civilization and its history, as well as the life of the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh). However, this interest had in general stemmed, with few exceptions, from polemical purposes rather than being scientific research or an attempt at a search for the truth. Orientalist academics would later use these early sources, and approached Islamic history and religion, including in particular the Qur'an and the *Hadīth*, by drawing upon these polemical works. For this reason, it would be useful to first look at these earlier developments in Orientalism.

Since the very beginning biased views about Islam and its Prophet were initially produced and disseminated by the religious establishments and rulers in the Judeo- Christian world, who had lost their power to a large extent due to the expansion of Islam, in response to the conversion of large numbers of people into the nascent Islam. The main purpose of their endeavor was to mislead people into staying away from Islam by creating a false image of the religion and Prophet Muhammad. Thus, such denigrated images of the Prophet as being "mentally ill", a "liar", a "fake prophet" and an "anti- Christ", none of which had any factual historical basis, were produced and re-produced throughout the centuries in the West.

(i) Yahya Dimashqī (*d. 750 CE.*)

One of the leading figures who initiated such campaign of defamation against Prophet Muhammad was Yahya Dimashqī (John of Damascus d. 750 CE) a Christian priest. In the last sections of his book, *De Haerasibus*, just as did many non Muslim authors his time on Islam and those who followed him throughout the entire Middle Ages, John discusses Prophet Muhammad and sees him, as a "heretic" or a "fake prophet" who deceived the people around him by using Christian sources with the help of an Arian priest, rather than the prophet of a new religion. Moreover, Prophet Muhammad's marriages and the wars he fought are discussed in this book in a biased way; these baseless criticisms later became the (sole) basis of other later Orientalists who for the most part simply repeated what John had said before them. In fact, this still continues today.

(ii) Priests of the Byzantine Empire

Priests who lived in the Byzantine Empire also concerned themselves with the biography of the Prophet of Islam in their writings. Some of the important sources from this era include *Refutation of Mohammed* or *Refutation du Confutation Alcorani*, written by Nicetas Byzantium in the 9th century, and the *Chronographia*, which was written by Theophanes the Confessor (c. 758 – 816 C.E.).

(iii) Christian and Jews Priests of Andalus

The Christians and Jewish priests inhabited Andalus (Spain) during the era of Islamic glory and were tutored by Muslim Scholars in various sciences, philosophy, medicine, mathematics etc. Having received training in its schools they translated the Qur'an and Arabic books into their languages. The pioneers of such trend were Jerbert, a French priest who eventually became Roman Catholic Pope in the year 999 CE on the completion of his studies in the Andalusian Institutes and his return to his country of origin. Others that could be mentioned in this regard are Peter André (1092 – 1156) and Gerald de Germane (1114 – 1187).

On the return of those priests to their countries they spread the Arab culture and the writings of prominent Arab scholars. Institutes were established for the study of Arabic works translated into Latin which was then the language of knowledge in all European countries. Western Universities remained dependent on Arab books and took them as primary sources for researches for almost six centuries.

Despite the fact that these groups had access to correct information about the Prophet and the truth about Islam, as they had lived under the administration of Muslims, they created a literature full of lies, denigration and false stories, possibly due to their enmity against their Muslim administrators.

(iv) The Crusaders

The Crusaders priests and authors were an important group that contributed to the dissemination of misconceptions about Islam and Prophet Muhammad in the West. Within this framework, the studies of the Bishop of Cluny also known as Peter the venerable (d. 1156) aimed to provide a foundation for many previously written refutations against Islam; these are now known as the "Toledo-Cluny collection". Vincent de Beauvais (d. 1264), too, drew on this pamphlet in his compilation, *Speculum Historiale* (Vol. XXIII, Chapters XXIV - LXVIII), where he brought together different stories regarding Prophet Muhammad that were found in various monastic chronicles and transmitted across generations -a compilation which had great influence on later generations in the West. The important pamphlet was later published in English as *The Apology of al Kindî* by a leading Orientalist, Sir William Muir (London 1882).

The very long poem (consisting of thousands of lines) written by the Priest Conrad in the middle of the 12th Century, known in Europe as the *Song of Roland*, is a very important work in terms of the cultural history of Europe. This long poem contains a lot of negative -and untrue- stories about Muslims, among which is the particularly interesting claim that Muslims worshipped three major idols the name of one of which was Muhammad. Similarly, the famous Italian writer Dante, in his work, *La Divina Commedia*, (*The Divine Comedy*) which he wrote in **1306 - 1321**, painted Prophet Muhammad black along with Ali.

(v) European Renaissance Literature

In the European renaissance literature, Islam is defined as the religion of the Turks, and Prophet Muhammad is also discussed in this context. Martin Luther, the founder of Protestantism, wrote many books and delivered a number of sermons about the Turks and 'their' beliefs. In his works he sees the Turks as "worshippers of Satan" and a curse sent by God to punish the Pope. In many other works written in this period, Prophet Muhammad is described as the prophet of the Turks and the author of the *Qur'ān*.

The 17th and the 18th centuries witnessed a rapid increase in the number of books on Prophet Muhammad and Islam in Europe. However, these books were mostly a repetition of earlier works written by previous generations, which were full of calumnies and lies about Islam and its prophet.

Self-Assessment Exercise

- Identify the roles played by Pioneer non-Muslim Critics of Islam and the Prophet Muhammad

3.3 Emergence of Orientalism as An Academic Pursuit

With the emergence of orientalism as a "scientific" field in the 19th century and its development as such in the 20th century, many of the classical works on the history of Islam, including books on *Sīrah* (traditional Muslim biographies of Prophet Muhammad) and *Maghāzī*, (an aspect of prophetic biography dealing with early battles in defence of Islam), which were written by such leading figures as Ibn Hishām, Waqidī, Ibn Sa'd, and al-Ṭabarī, were translated into Western languages. Despite the fact that the early Orientalists had access to these classics, which they made extensive use of in early studies, they did not hesitate to twist the truth by distorting many important topics and facts about Islam and Prophet Muhammad. The Islamic classics in *sīrah*, *Ḥadīth*, *tafsīr* (the interpretation of the Qur'an) and others were interpreted freely and in a manner that was not accurate or consistent with reality by these Orientalists in the name of scholarly writings or 'critical studies'. A leading example of this attitude is the fact that they assumed that it was the Prophet who had written the Qur'an; as a result, they often reduced the latter to an autobiographical account of Prophet Muhammad. Similarly, these Orientalists assumed -and even explicitly argued- that the *Ḥadīth* did not belong to Prophet Muhammad, but were "fabricated" later on by different groups and individuals.

Self – Assessment Exercise

- Discuss the emergence of Orientalism as an academic pursuit

4.0 CONCLUSIONS

The following conclusions can be derived from the foregoing:

In its Islamic context the Orientalists can be described as a group of non-Muslim authors, particularly from the West, using the traditional western ideology to study Islam.

The underlisted can be identified as pioneer Orientalists:

- (i) Yahya Dimashqī (d. 750 CE.)
- (ii) Priests of the Byzantine Empire
- (iii) Christian and Jewish Priests of Andalus
- (iv) The Crusaders

European Renaissance Literature ascribes some derogatory speeches on Islam to the founder of Protestantism.

The 17th and the 18th centuries witnessed a rapid increase in repetition of earlier works on criticism of Islam, its Prophet and people.

Orientalism emerged and developed as a scientific field in the 19th and 20th centuries respectively.

5.0 SUMMARY

This Unit defines Orientalism and identifies its non-Muslim early pioneers. It highlights characteristics of the contribution of each of the pioneers to the dissemination of misleading impressions about Islam and its Prophet. Report on rapid increase in repetition of the views

of earlier writers in the 17th and 18th centuries, and the emergence and development of Orientalism as scientific field constitutes the last segments of the Unit.

6.0 TUTOR MARKED ASSIGNMENT

Identify the pioneer non-Muslims whose interests were Islam and Prophet Muhammad; assess the role played by each of them.

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UNIT 3: SELECTED BIASED AND UNBIASED ORIENTALISM ACADEMICS

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3.0 Main Contents

3.1 Select Orientalists who are biased in their studies on Islam

3.2 Select Orientalists who are unbiased in their studies on Islam

4.0 Conclusion

5.0 Summary

6.0 Tutor – Marked Assignment

7.0 References/Further Reading

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Going through the various extant works of the Orientalists whose concern was Islam and Prophet Muhammad they can be classified into two groups, i.e., the biased and the unbiased. In this Unit you will study briefly Bonn Abraham Geiger (d. 1833), Alois Sprenger and William Muir as representatives of the biased Orientalist authors; while Henry Stubbe, Johann W. von Goethe and Thomas Carlyle will be studied as representatives of the unbiased ones.

3.0 OBJECTIVE

After a thorough digest of this Unit, you should be able to

- Present some opinions of select Orientalists who are biased in their study of Islam.
- Discuss the point of views of select Orientalists who are unbiased in their writings on Islam

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 Selected Orientalists who are biased in their studies on Islam

(i) Bonn Abraham Geiger (1833)

First of all, in Orientalist studies it was assumed (and argued) that what Prophet Muhammad had brought was not original; rather he 'composed' this religion as a collage of Judaism, Christianity, and even Mandaeanism, receiving different ideas from each of these older religions.

In his book, *What has Muhammad Received from Judaism? (Was hat Mohammed aus dem Judenthume aufgenommen?)*, Bonn Abraham Geiger (1833) claims that Prophet Muhammad copied many things from Judaism, including different concepts, beliefs and stories, and tries to prove this by comparing the Qur'ān with different Judaic texts.

(ii) Alois Sprenger (1813-1893)

Alois Sprenger polemically discusses the Prophet's name, claiming that the name "Muhammad" had not been given to him when he was born, but that he later adopted it after the migration. He also speculates about the early years of the prophethood, and

claims that Prophet Muhammad learnt many things about God and religions which he later synthesized into the Qur'an. He explains the moments of trembling that the Prophet sometimes experienced when receiving revelation -like many other Orientalists, as a symptom of epilepsy, and even goes so far as to claim that they were an indication of his "religious madness". Finally, Sprenger interpreted the account of Archangel Gabriel, who disguised himself as a man and brought the revelation to the Prophet, as a person who was deceiving and exploiting Muhammad.

Sprenger also claimed that when he was in his forties Prophet Muhammad emulated the Christian priests by withdrawing into solitude; that when he "wrote" the 35th verse of the *Suratun-Nūr* (the Light) he was inspired by the lights of the churches he had seen during his travels in southern Arabia. Moreover, Sprenger asserted that in his later years Prophet Muhammad "inserted" the stories of Prophet Moses and the Pharaoh into the Qur'an after he learnt the details; however, according to Sprenger, he did not completely understand this story!

(iii) Sir William Muir (1819-1905)

On the other hand, Sir William Muir, the author of a four-volume biography of Prophet Muhammad which has been influential within Orientalist literature since the middle of the 19th century, is one of those Orientalists who practiced Orientalism as "Rivalry Studies". A diplomat and missionary working as an officer in the British colonial administration in India, Muir's primary purpose was to convert Muslims to Christianity. He even founded a city called "Muirabad", inspired by the city "Allahabad" in India. In his book on Prophet Muhammad, *The Life of Mahomet* (I-IV, London 1858-1861), which he wrote drawing on classical Islamic biographies of the Prophet, he simply repeated the lies and allegations that had been attributed to the Prophet by earlier Orientalists. Despite the fact that he does mention in the book some positive aspects of the Prophet, which were unavoidable, such as his trustworthiness, his sense of justice, and his struggle against pagan values in the Arabian Peninsula, he directs serious accusations against the Prophet during the post-prophethood period, since his essential aim is to 'prove' that Prophet Muhammad was not a real prophet, but a liar. For example, he repeats the insults and denigrations about Prophet Muhammad, claiming that he used to talk to himself and that he often experienced epileptic seizures etc. Towards the end of the second volume, he discusses, entirely on the basis of speculation, the possible sources of the information that Prophet Muhammad -whom he sees as the author of the Qur'an- had gathered about Christianity. When it comes to the Medinan period in particular, Muir intensifies his speculations and allegations about the Prophet in order to insult him further.

However, it should also be noted that the ideas that Sprenger and Muir put forward about Islam and its Prophet are not entirely negative. At the beginning of his work, Sprenger emphasizes the significance of studying Islam in terms of the fact that Islam is the only universal religion whose emergence phase is known by historians. For this reason, he says, the emergence of Islam as a universal religion should concern all those who would like to know how a religion first emerges. He also notes that Muslims have made great contributions to the universal culture of mankind via their valuable studies and the cultural products of their civilization. Likewise, Muir acknowledges the fact that

there is

no doubt about the authenticity of the transmission of the Qur'an (i.e. it has never been changed since the beginning); he even disproves, through a discussion of several examples, those who express doubts about the authenticity of the Qur'an.

(iv) Montgomery Watt (1909-2006)

Montgomery Watt, a leading Orientalist himself, says that among all the greatest men in history, no one has been denigrated as much as Prophet Muhammad. In this sense, the history of what has been said and written about Prophet Muhammad is fascinating if one examines it as a history of calumnies, slander and misunderstanding. For example, Muslims were said to be pagans with "Mahomet" being one of the idols that they worship. This is one of the few examples of the widespread and deep misconceptions about Islam and its Prophet.

As Edward W. Sa'īd, the greatest critic of Orientalism remarked, Orientalism emerged in the service of colonialism. In fact, the founders of Orientalism themselves made it clear that in its emergence it was based on the mentality of "helping the friends, harming the enemies". This was stated by the famous German statesman Bismarck when opening the department of Orientalische Sprachen (Eastern Languages) in 1887. In the post-war period, the center of Orientalism moved to the United States where it did not take on a more humane direction; rather it came more and more under the influence of political projects and different ideologies. The best example of this situation today is the Orientalist and historian Bernard Lewis, who is one of the ideologues of what is known as the neo-conservative movement (neo-cons).

Self -Assessment Exercise

Give a very brief critical account of the opinions of the under-listed Orientalists who are biased in their study of Islam.

- (i) Bonn Abraham Geiger (1833)
- (ii) Alois Sprenger (1813-1893)
- (iii) Sir William Muir (1819-1905)
- (iv) Montgomery Watt (1909-2006)

3. 2 Selected Orientalists who are Unbiased in their studies on Islam

(i) Henry Stubbes (1632-1676)

Meanwhile, there are some unbiased studies about Prophet Muhammad in the West as well. The first work known in the West that contained a positive interpretation and positive arguments about Prophet Muhammad is Henry Stubbe's *An Account of the Rise and Progress of Mahometanism with the Life of Mahomet and a Vindication of Him and His Religion from the Calumnies of the Christians*, (ed. by Hafiz Mahmud Khan, London 1911, references below are to the Lahore 1954 edition of the book). A close friend of the famous philosopher Thomas Hobbes, Stubbe wrote his book in 1671, shortly after the 30-year wars (in which Europeans fiercely fought against each other), but could not publish it when he was alive for a variety reasons. Therefore, a book that was written to defend Islam and Prophet Muhammad against the false accusations of the Christians was not available to the reader for many years. In the first two chapters of the book, Stubbe gives general information about the first centuries of Christianity and Judaism; then in

the third chapter, he presents a description of the history and geography of the Arabian Peninsula, as well as giving some information about the Saracens (Muslims). In the rest of the book, other chapters (4 - 10) include the following titles: "Developments after the Birth of Muhammad", "Migration to Medina", "The Wars", "Muhammad's Farewell Pilgrimage and his Death", "Muhammad's Character and the Accusations of the Christians", "The Quran and Muhammad's Miracles", and "The Justice of the Wars of Muslims".

In the book, Stubbe says that Prophet Muhammad was an extraordinary individual; he also presents a description of the physical features of the Prophet based on the classical, authentic sources of Islam (p. 149 ff). He also notes that the Prophet had a superior talent and capacity in the art of both war and peace, not in line with descriptions found in Christian accounts. Furthermore, he gives information about the genealogy of the Prophet and indicates to some misunderstandings that arose from the misreading of his name by some Orientalists (p. 151). Stubbe also argues that the teachings of Prophet Muhammad are entirely consistent with the laws of nature, just like the original Christian and Jewish teachings in their earlier phases (p. 183). Moreover, he says that the claim that Prophet Muhammad disseminated his teachings by the sword is a calumny; the wars he fought were aimed at re-storing the old, original religion, rather than instituting a new one (p. 192). According to Stubbe, Prophet Muhammad's teachings were centered on the idea that paganism should be eliminated all over the world, that God is one and has no partners. Again, according to Stubbe, when Muhammad sought to end paganism, he never forced anyone to enter Islam; in fact, Muhammad himself wrote some letters that sanctioned the protection of Christians and Jews in the Arabian Peninsula (p. 193).

(ii) Johann Wolfgang Von Goethe (1749-1832)

The second important figure who discussed Prophet Muhammad in a positive manner is the great German poet Johann Wolfgang Von Goethe. Author of the West - East Dīwān (West - Östliche Diwan), Goethe expresses his positive feelings and interpretation of Islam and its Prophet in poetic form. In his poem entitled Muhammad's Song (Muhammeds Gesang), which he wrote in 1773, he praises the Prophet; he also uses the phrase "Muhammad, the best of the mankind" (Oberhaupt der Geschöpfe - Mohammed). **GOETHE** also started to write a book on Prophet Muhammad, but was not able to finish it before he died. Due to the very positive view of Islam and the Prophet in this work, some have argued that Goethe had converted to Islam before he died.

(iii) Thomas Carlyle (1795-1881)

Another figure who was able to stay away from the denigration campaign and calumnies against the Prophet Muhammad in his studies was the British historian and author Thomas Carlyle, who, though much younger than Goethe, corresponded with the latter and translated his work into English. In his book, entitled On Heroes and Hero Worship and the Heroic in History, which he wrote in the 1840s, he analyzes Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) within the category of the great leaders who changed the history of the world. Carlyle argues that none of the allegations put forward against the Prophet of Islam up until that time were true, for his incredible achievements in creating a great civilization, as well as the fact that there were many wise men with a great characters who were followers of Prophet Muhammad, is enough to disprove the negative allegations against

him. He also notes that accusing the Prophet of being a 'fake prophet' creates more problems than it solves.

In the 20th century there was an abundance of publications on Prophet Muhammad. Those accounts that tried to be "fair and objective" also inherited the general argument and the essential (negative) view of the Orientalists about the Prophet and Islam, although it is also a fact that these more academic studies, particularly in the second half of the 20th century, contain fewer of the denigrating allegations that were so common in earlier works. However, the reason why there was a decrease in the negative accounts of Islam and Prophet Muhammad in the West has more to do with the Cold War, which took up the entire second half of the last century, than with 'academic honesty'. The fact that in the post-Cold War period there was a great increase in the number (and circulation) of publications and media images that reflected the classical negative view on the basis that Muslims were the enemy of the West attests to this fact. This is particularly true for Anglo-American Orientalism in the aftermath of the September 11th tragedy that had nothing to do with Islam or Prophet Muhammad.

Self Assessment Exercise

Discuss the point of views of under-listed Orientalists who are unbiased in their writings on Islam.

- (i) Henry Stubbes (1632-1676)
- (ii) Johann Wolfgang Von Goethe (1749-1832)
- (iii) Thomas Carlyle (1795-1881)

4.0 CONCLUSION

(1) The selected authors under-listed below represents Orientalists who are biased in their writings on the Religion of Islam and Prophet Muhammad (pbuh).

- (i) Bonn Abraham Geiger (1833)
- (ii) Alois Sprenger (1813-1893)
- (iii) Sir William Muir (1819-1905)
- (iv) Montgomery Watt (1909-2006)

(2) The selected authors under-listed below represents Orientalists who are unbiased in their writings on the religion of Islam and Prophet Muhammad (pbuh).

- (i) Henry Stubbes (1632-1676)
- (ii) Johann Wolfgang Von Goethe (1749-1832)
- (iii) Thomas Carlyle (1795-1881)

5.0 SUMMARY

The main content of the first section of this Unit provides an overview of the contribution of selected Orientalist authors who were biased in their works on the studies of Islam. Second section of the main content of the Unit focused on contribution of selected Orientalists who were unbiased in their works on their studies on Islam and the Muslims.

6.0 TUTOR – MARKED ASSIGNMENT

Write a critical note on the contributions of each of the following Orientalists.

- (i) Sir William Muir (1819-1905)
- (ii) Thomas Carlyle (1795-1881)

7.0 REFERENCES / FURTHER READING

1. Henry Stubbe's (1911). *An Account of the Rise and Progress of Mahometanism with the Life of Mahomet and a Vindication of Him and His Religion from the Calumnies of the Christians*, ed. by Hafiz Mahmud Khan, London 1911
2. Sir William Muir (1912). *Life of Muhammed*; Edinburgh, U.K.
3. Thomas Carlyle (1864) *Heroes and Heroe Worship*
4. A`s-Sibā`ī, Mustafa (1399 AH / 1979). *Al-Istishrāq wa `l-Mustashriqūn* (Orientalism and the Orientalists). 2nd edition.
5. Edward W. Said (1978). *Orientalism*, USA, Vintage Books.
6. Hilal Gorgun, The Orientalist View of Prophet Muhammad, <http://www.nusrah.com/en/articles/criticism/refutation>. retrieved March 2013

UNIT 4: SIR WILLIAM MUIR AND DAVID SAMUEL MARGOLIOUTH

1.0 Introduction

2.0 Objective

3.0 Main content

3.1 Biography of Sir William Muir

3.2 Biography of David Samuel Margoliouth

3.3 Evaluation of their works

4.0 Conclusion

5.0 Summary

6.0 Tutor marked Assignments

7.0 Reference / further readings

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Selected Orientalists and their works dealt with some Orientalists whose academic study of Islam was often motivated and co-operated with the main aim of imperialistic purpose of colonization. Some aspect of their works (*Wahy* / Divine inspiration) is evaluated like “Mahomet” by Sir William Muir, “Mohammed and the rise of Islam” by David Samuel Margoliouth.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

It is hoped that by the end of this Unit, the learner should be able to:

- State the Biography of Sir William Muir
- State the Biography of David Samuel Margoliouth
- Evaluate selected part of their works

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 Biography of Sir William Muir 1. Sir William Muir 1819-1905 was a Scottish and British soldier in 19th Centuries i.e. he was one of famous if not the most popular Orientalists in his era, he specialized in the History of the Prophet (P.B.U.H) and the early Caliphate

His Books and Publication

- 1 The life of Muhammad and History of Islam to the Era of Higraph Volume 1-2 published in 1858, volumes 3 and 4 were published by Smith, Elder, & co.
- 2 The life of Muhammad from original sources 1878.
- 3 The Mameluke or slave dynasty of Egypt 1260-1517 A.D, till the end of the Caliphate.
- 4 The caliphate, its rise decline and fall.
- 5 The apology of al-Kindī and of the early Caliphate.
- 6 The sources of Islam, among others.

Self -Assessment Exercise

Give a brief history of Sir William Muir and enumerate his publication?

3.2 Biography David Samuel Margoliouth

David Samuel Margoliouth (1858-1940) was another Christian Orientalist who served the colonial power. He was born in London (England), and briefly acted as a priest in the Church of England. He became a Scholar of Arabic at the University of Oxford 1889-1937. He was brought up from a religious background; his father converted from Judaism to Anglicanism

Awards

He was awarded with triennial gold medal in 1929 as the president of the council of the Royal Asiatic society which he has been a member from 1905 onwards. Ahmad Shawqī an Egyptian poet and pioneer of modern literacy was said to have dedicated his famous poem “The Nile” to Margoliouth.

His Books

- 1 Muhammad and rise of Islam, 1905.
- 2 Ummayyads and Abbasids, 1907
- 3 The early development of Mohammedanism 1912
- 4 The Qur’an, Translated with a critical re-arrangement of the *Surahs* in 2 volumes, Edinburgh University press 1937- 1939.
- 5 The origin of Islam in its Christian environment., Edinburgh University press, 1925
- 6 Introduction to the Qur’an Islamic surveys, Series 8; Edinburgh University Press, 1958, the book was revised by W. Montgomery Watt 1970 among others.

Self Assessment Exercise

Give brief history of David Samuel Margoliouth and enumerate his Publication?

3.3 Evaluation of Muir's and Margoliouth's works on divine revelation

Muir in his book "Mahomet" i.e. Muhammad proceeded directly to his criticism of *wahy* (Divine Revelation) with his Christian bias as some of his contemporary reviewer puts it. He asserted unequivocally that the Prophet authored the *wahy* due to debasement of the Quraish whose life was filled with ignorance, idolatry and other vices. The situation prompts him to seek for relief and urgent meditation in the cave of *Hira*.

It was in this state that the Prophet started to develop his fraudulent ideas as being inspired, like the monotheistic nature of God, resurrection, judgment, recompense of every deeds and action, paradise and hell, which are all fundamental root of the Prophetic mission. In Muir's word "Muhammad develop "impressive and susceptible mind" that was "brought up to the highest pitch of excitement"

Secondly Muir asserted that the Prophet was seeking for the truth to convince his people that he was indeed really a Prophet of God sent to them, thus he (the Prophet) beguiled them by using wild language furnished with incoherent Oaths and sweet melodious poetry which had unrejectable impact upon peoples mind. The Prophet in his bid to realized his objectives as Muir put it "Inwardly struggled after the truth" with rhapsodical language enforced often with incoherent oaths, "fragment of poetry" soliloquy full of melancholy reflection upon the state of mankind" that is, the Prophet in his Prophetic play was saying what was in his mind. Nevertheless Muir agreed that the verses were beautiful and resemble Oracle, citing the following Q.100:1 to the end of Q.103, Q.1 and Q. 95.

Thirdly Muir argued that the Prophet only attained the conviction of being inspired latter than expected, after he suffered or experienced mental throes, which made him to protest to his Oracle, that was his reference. In his word "After a protracted period of mental throes, the situation made the Prophet resorted indirectly to the Arab and Jewish legends for the composition of his message citing Qur'an 104, 89, 105 and 106.

Muir continues that the ambition of the Prophet to become a member of Prophethood was thus achieved for gaining some followers, that include his wife Khadijah Waraqah Ali and Abubakr among others. Thus, the Prophet was then posing to the less privileged as a messenger of God as they listen to him clarifying there needs to a Prophet like the past nations of the Jews and Christians to live meaningful life.

“And they swore by Allah with their most binding Oath, that if a warner came to them, they will be more tractable than any of the nations, yet when a warner came unto them it aroused in them naught save repugnance Q 35:42

This according to Muir is a verse searched by the Prophet heart to deceive his people of being inspired. This is what he meant in his worlds “The follower of burning thought, the spontaneous burst of eloquence and the heavenly speech” resulted to “supernatural call a divine mission” (2)

In the state of looking and searching for followers and converts, which will come as expected according to the Prophet’s grievous mental distraction and deep depression as Muir put it, the Prophet never gave up, but sought from his God re-assurance and “Your Lord has not forsaken you nor did he hate you” and Q: 94. Surely with hardship goes ease.”

This situation prompt the Prophet several times to intend suicide attempts many times by trying to throw himself head log from one of the cliffs, but hold back by an invisible power which Muir tends to present as the Prophets thought as weather it’s divine message or disabled message and this is what is called the Qur’an today.

A well-versed person in tactics and planning will never agree with Muir’s assumption. In every mission or project, there must be full preparation before executions. Therefore, if the Prophet was really ambitious, he would have made adequate preparation for this playing role of Prophethood to level of success. Muir also agreed that the Prophet was searching for the truth, in other word; the Prophet after all was not an impostor, because in the science of monotheism, “Prophethood cannot be attained by striving or by intervention of an intermediary.

Another contradictory theory of Muir is in two folds:-

1. He believed that the Prophet reversed his prior plans and preparation for playing Prophetic role after what he called a definite shape that appeared before him “Took clear definite shape before him”.

2 Secondly he assumed that the Prophet’s feeling that the necessity for appearing as Prophet only comes to his mind after some of his listeners especially the lower class in his community said that they will lead a purer and meaningful life if a Prophet was sent to them. What Muir tried to assert is that the Prophet had made some plan prior to his acclaimed Prophethood that resulted to meditation and contemplation.

The Prophet’s meditation and engagement in solitary prayer and reflection is undeniable. If it was the Prophet’s expectation and preparations for the mission surely, the entire situation is extra ordinary and he never expects it. Thus, the matter of his preparation for the Prophethood had no evidence and the Prophet was not ambitious to attain that post. The first revelation and others which follow isn’t his compositions or his thinking and reflection. The coming of the first revelation made the Prophet prepare for more of it and its stoppage time didn’t last for several years as acclaimed by Muir.

Another absurdity from Muir against the Prophet on divine inspiration is that he wants us to believe that the conviction of being inspired by the Prophet only came after a protracted period of mental throes and that the Prophet only assume “the office of a divine teacher” after several years, Muhammad Moharaty asked several questions on this assumption of Muir.

1. Is it conceivable that a person who is not yet sure neither of his own position nor about the nature of his message would at the same time come out in openly to seek converts to his teaching and face insults and opposition in consequence?

2. Can a man suffering from mental disorder compose irresistible fragment of poetry and incoherent rhapsodies and then called his people to accept his message?

With this assumed mentality, Muir confessed that a group of people became his converts like his wife, Khadijah, Waraqah, Ali among others. Are they suffering from mental throes?

As earlier stated, Muir said the Prophet was inconsistent and depressed by the debasement of his people. If this is true, why did the opposition from the generality of the Quraysh mocked him? Why should they mock a man that tried to change them from the state of debasement? The convincing truth is that, substantial parts of the Quraish were against his preaching because they detected his seriousness and valuable message brought to them which will change their life style.

Muir also argued the authenticity of the revelation as inconsistency because the Prophet exposed his inspiration which began with read “in the name of the Lord” after several years of hesitation and searching for the truth, he further in his argument that sometimes the imagine Oracle addressed in form of “We” or “Me” and to the Prophet “You”. Therefore, in Muir’s view, there is difference between the initial revelation and the latter one.

3.3 Self Assessment Exercise

Explain in summary, William Muir’s views on divine revelation?

D.S Margoliouth’s Views on divine Revelation

Margoliouth was the predecessor of Muir as the bird of the same feather; He treated the subject matter like Muir who based the inception of the Prophet on the religion stage on ambition and design. Although, he tried to avoid some inconsistency of Muir but that couldn’t help him from falling in to a new inconsistencies as well as fresh absurdities.

His assumptions in his book “Muhammad and the rise of Islam 1905 that the Prophet was being ambitious to amalgamate with the Prophetic line and carefully design his playing role as summarized below:

Margoliouth assumed that-

1. The Prophet used tricky method and imposture as earlier planned. Therefore he acted as a “Medium”. That is a person who serves as a connecting link between him and the spiritual world. Modern Western scholars like Tor Andrea and maxim Radisson shared the same view.

2. The Prophet used to fall in to a violent agitation nervously with turning face, a strange behavior to trick his followers in which after he will cover himself with blanket.

3. He also assumed that the Prophet suffers from epileptic fit; an experience that has been with him for sometime which he displays when necessary to play his role as a Prophet. He added that the Prophet artificially produce this attitude even if he wasn't prepared for it. In his word "without (slightest preparation)"

4. The epileptic fit according to Margoliouth is always accompanied with snoring and reddening of the Prophets face, but at this point, Margoliouth couldn't hide the truth, he admitted that this form was "recognized as normal form of inspiration" to his followers.

5. Margoliouth assumed that the Prophet has mastered the manner that "he always receive a divine communication and an immediate answer to a question addressed to him while he was eating and after delivering it in this fashion, proceed to finish the morsel, which he held in his hand when he was interrupted, or a revelation would come in answer to question addressed him as he stood in the pulpit.

6. He accuses the Prophet of plagiarism, from the preceding books of the Jews and Christian scriptures. To him, substantial part of the Qur'anic contents is from the Judeo / Christian scriptures. He rebuked the Prophets saying that he claimed to be acquainted with the contents of the past scriptures, though he never read them. He further assumed that imitating the style of the usual Arabian oratory that is naturally understood is another characteristics of the Prophet.

7. Margoliouth also assumed that the transmission of the divine communication to the Prophet was done by Jibril who appear to be God himself in the Qur'an but a message carrier in the New Testament. According to Margoliouth due to the development of the Prophet's theology and Angel Jibil was his substitute.

The allegation of ambition against the Prophet has been dealt with in our previous discussion on Muir's view, yet the view of Bernard Lewis, a modern historian refuting

the common opinion of Western medieval view about the Prophet as a self seeking imposter is commendable he states that-

The modern Historian will not readily believe that so great and significant a movement started by a self-seeking imposter. Nor will he be satisfied with a purely super natural explanation, whether it postulates aid of divine or diabolical origin, rather like Gibbon will he seek from becoming submissive, to ask not indeed what were the first, but what were the secondary causes of the rapid growth of the new faith” Bernard Lewis. *The Arab in history*, pp. 45-46

The allegation of seizure or epileptic fit against the Prophet by Margoliouth is due to his imperfect understanding of divine communication, he described the steps and stages the Prophet passed through like falling in to trance, red of face, covered with blanket etc. as epileptic fits which came to be recognized as the normal form of inspiration, here Margoliouth cited some examples and instances accorded to the description and manner in which the revelation occurred like the Prophet receiving the revelation all alone in the valley without any witness, when the Prophet is taking his meal or when standing on the pulpit.

Firstly, Margoliouth contradicts himself by admitting the receiving of revelation by the prophet all alone without any other man with him except angel Jibril. He couldn't prove his acclaimed seizure or epileptic fit against the Prophet in this instance.

Other example cited was the recipient mood of the Prophet, the revelation while taking meal or standing on the pulpit or snoring, reddening of face, falling in to trance that has no reliable evidence as been occurred in the report.

We have already explained in the previous unit that the first attribution of epileptic seizure to the Prophet was the idea of the 8th century by Byzantine historian Theophanes.

Another Western scholar of Islamic studies, Wele argued that it remains uncertain whether Muhammad [P.B.U.H.] had such experiences before he began to see himself as Prophet and if so (he concluded) how long did he have such experiences Maxima Robison and Tor Andrea shared almost the same view on this. Robison has this opinion that probably the Prophet condition of receiving

divine revelation was basically of the same kind as that of mysticism rather than epilepsy in the word of Andrae “if epilepsy is to denote only those severe attacks which involve serious consequence for the physical and mental health, then the statement that Muhammad suffered from epilepsy must be emphatically rejected. Also in the entire life of the Prophet in Mecca with the unbelievers of Quraish and in Medina with the Jews with vigorous enmity within their mist, none of them ever attributed epilepsy to the prophet. If it was, the Society would have definitely identified it.

W.M. Watt also refuted the epilepsy diagnosis. He explain that “There is no real ground for such a view” He gave the clear picture of his view saying that “Epilepsy leads to physical and mental digression, and there are no signs of that in Muhammad”- To assert his view completely, he states that the prophet was generally psychologically sound saying “he the “Prophet was clearly in fully possession of his faculties to the very end of his life. He explains this clearly in his conclusion that:-

”It is incredible that a person subject to epilepsy, or hysteria, or ungovernable fits or emotion could have been active leader of military expeditions, or the cool far – seeing guide of a city – state and growing religious community, but all this we know Muhammad to have seen”.

In Margoliouth word, he said that the Prophet order his “Confederates to act the part of Gabriel. The question now is that can this deceit convince the on-lookers about the extraordinary and supernatural origin of the divine communication? A sophisticated people like those in Mecca and Madina would have identified definitely this person and they will never let him go for deceiving such a great nation like that of Arabs”

Margoliouth also alleged that the Prophet had practiced idolatry worship in his solitary prayer in the cave prior to his call, a situation he assumed to be a transitioned method between the old life and the new one. According to him “Tahanuth” is a form of paganism practice by the Quraish in Ramadan. Thus in his conclusion, the Prophet had worshipped gods and goddesses of Mecca. He didn’t relent from his biased and aggressive method of depicting the Prophet, Margoliouth also accused the Prophet to have worshiped Al-Lat and Al-Uzza with his family. From which source did he arrived to allthese atrocities?

Another inconsistency of Margoliouth is his claim that the Prophet followed same method when plagiarizing from the Jew / Christian scriptures. Firstly the 87 chapters in the Qur'an that was revealed in Mecca is a source to refute this allegation. Where was Christianity cited then?

Dr. Nabih Angel as quoted to have said that:

The big difference between Christianity and Judaism is that Christianity unlike Judaism didn't have any base in Hijaz. Christianity was an external source of enlightenment echoed in Hijaz either by missionary activities from Ethiopia, Syria and Iraq or from Al-Heerahs Christian centers, Clair Hind Al-Kubra or from the scattered Churches in Bahrain Al- Yamamah and Yemen.

3.3 Self Assessment Exercise

Evaluate David Samuel Margoliouth's works on divine revelation?

4.0 CONCLUSION

After the evaluation of Sir William Muir and that of David Samuel Margoliouth on divine revelation, we arrived to our conclusion that their works ere permeated by bias notions and skeptical views on Islam.

5.0 SUMMARY

In this unit so far, we have examined the topic of some selected Orientalists and their works from the following perspectives: Biography of Sir William Muir, Biography of David Samuel Margoliouth and evaluation of their works on divine revelation.

6.0 TUTOR MARKED ASSIGNMENTS

1. Give a brief history of Sir William Muir and enumerate his publication.
2. Assess David Samuel Margoliouth's work on divine revelation?

7.0 REFERENCES/ FURTHER READING

1. Muir The life of Muhammad 3rd edition,
2. D.S Margoliouth Muhammad and the rise of Islam
3. Bernard Lewis History of Arabs.
4. Frank R freeman, A Differential Diagnosis of the inspirational Spell of
5. Jeffery Arthur (2000).The Quest for the Historical Muhammad, Prometheus Books.

MODULE 2 THE PROPHET AND HIS MISSION

Unit 1: Biography of Muhammad

Unit 2: Muhammad's Marriages

Unit 3: Criticism of Polygamous Practice of Muhammad

UNIT 1: BIOGRAPHY OF MUHAMMAD

CONTENTS

1.0 Introduction

2.0 Objective

3.0 Main content

3.1 Who is Muhammad?

3.2 Jewish criticism of Muhammad

3.3 Christian criticism of Muhammad

3.5 The Skeptic's views of Muhammad

4.0 Conclusion

5.0 Summary

6.0 Tutor Marked Assignments

7.0 Reference / Further Readings

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The criticism of Muhammad's Prophethood has existed since his inception as the last Prophet and Messenger of God in the Prophetic line. He experienced series of objection from his kinsfolk and decried immensely by his contemporary Arabs for preaching monotheism, a strange and infamous creed in the Arabian peninsular. Muhammad (PBUH) succeeded in his mission, hence, Islam spread to almost nook and cranny of Arabian and beyond. Not until the Middle Ages, the European whose main religion is Christianity and other warlike i.e. atheist and the polemics see Muhammad (P.B.U.H.) as Christian heretic that plagiarized the Judeo-Christian books.

Muhammad, the Prophet of Islam and his message is often criticized by the Orientalists from different perspectives. Some of the criticisms are examined as

follows: Who is Muhammad? Jewish criticism of Muhammad, Christian criticism of Muhammad and the Skeptics views about Muhammad.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

It is hoped that by the end of this unit the learner should be able to:

- ❖ Give a brief history of Muhammad.
- ❖ Briefly describe the Jewish criticism of Muhammad.
- ❖ Give a brief explanation of the Christian criticism of Muhammad.
- ❖ State the Skeptics's views on Muhammad.

3.0 MAIN CONTENTS

3.1 (A) Who is Muhammad (P.B.O H)

He was Muhammad son of Abdullah son of Abdul Muttalib, the grand chief of Mecca, born 12th Rabi-u-al-awal in Mecca. His father died before his birth, at age six he lost his mother. Muhammad, an orphan started his energetic carrier as a shepherd at the age of twelve, working for some people for a living to prepare himself for the rigorous task ahead, a norm of every Messenger sent by Allah. He joined the caravan of Khadijah, the wealthiest woman in Mecca as the manager of that group whose trade route was sham now (Syria, Palestine and Lebanon) he was privileged meeting and came in contact with divergent nationalities and faith, including the people of the book (Christian Monks / Jewish Rabbis) among others, he was nicknamed *Al-Amīn* that is a trusty worth because of his virtues of truthfulness.

(B) His Marriage with Khadijah.

Khadijah, his master and a business tycoon proposed willingly to marry Muhammad when he was twenty five years of age while Khadijah was 40 years old. But due to special character and qualities she found in him, she presented herself to a trust worthy man. Islamic History tells us that many noble men in Mecca have proposed marriage to Khadijah, which she rejected. Their marriage was blessed with three sons Abdullah, Qasim and Ibrahim and four daughters, Fatimah, Ruqayyah Umul-Khalthum and Zainab. For a period of twenty-four years Muhammad took no other wives besides Khadijah

(C) His Prophethood

Muhammad rejected all the social vices in his community where idolatry was at its peak. He endured the barbaric norm of his people with heavy heart for over thirty years as a citizen of Mecca. He started visiting the cave Hirā in seclusion seeking guidance from God (Allah) for true monotheistic religion; he was visited by angel Gabriel (Jibril) and the first revelation took place. The Islamic history stated that the Angel recited Q.96:1-5 by saying (READ) in some Orientalists writing they claimed that the word *Iqra' a* means proclaim, an excuse to justify their assertion that Muhammad was proclaiming Prophethood. All these false assertions will be defended in its appropriate units.

(D) His Message

The Arabian Peninsula was in total state of ignorance with barbaric cultures. Mecca, the fountain source and pride of the Quraish was in adverse darkness of inhumanity, polytheism, materialism and immorality were the norm of the day. Muhammad called his tribe men to revert to true monotheistic religion (Islam) of their ancestor (Ibrahim) but was met with heavy resistance and persecution from the Quraish, for his mission is a treat to their way of life economically and socially. He endured the challenges and gained forty followers Khadijah his wife inclusive. When the persecution became unbearable, some of the Muslims fled to Abyssinia and were accommodated by the Christian King Negus and latter to Al-Madina where he established the Islamic *Ummah* that flourished and spread to humanity at large till this time. Thus, he asserts himself as true Prophet of God, an able theocratic politician and a Statesman.

Houston Smith reaffirms this when he said that:

Exercising superb statecraft, he wielded the five heterogeneous and conflicting tribes of the city, three which were Jewish (Banu Nadir, Banu Qaunanu and Banu Qurayza), into an orderly confederation ... his reputation spread and people began to flock from every part of Arabia to see the man who had wrought this miracle.

3.1 SELF ASSESMENT EXERCISE

Narrate briefly the history of Muhammad (PBOH) with regards to the following:

- (a) His birth (b) His message (c) His prophet-hood

Jewish Criticism

Before we proceed to our discussion, we would like to quote the assertion of Montgomery Watt, an erudite Scholar of orientalism about the enmity of the Prophet (P.B.O.H). Watt wrote that- **“Of all the great men of the world, no one had as many detractors as Muhammad**

The Jewish criticism of the Prophet by the Jewish writers in the middle ages sound a bit different from their predecessors, none of them ever called Muhammad (P.B.O.H) as ha-meshuggah “The mad man” Stillman says that it’s a “term of contempt frequently used in the Bible for those who believe themselves to be Prophet”

3.1 SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

Briefly explain the Jewish criticism of Muhammad?

3.3 Christian Criticism

It was claimed by the early Christian of the middle age that Bahira was a heretical monk whose errant view inspired the Qur’an.

A German Monk Martin Luther, priest and professor of theology biasedly referred the Prophet as devil and first born of Satan.

Muhammad was also labeled with epileptic, a theory authenticates as false innovation in his biography by Theophenas, a Byzantine historian in 8th century who wrote that the Prophet’s wife “was very much grieved that, she being a noble and decent person, was tied to such a man who was not only poor but epileptic as well”.

Other statements used to depict the prophet are: Drunkard, Madman, Murderer with unmerciful but cherished Rapist and Terrorist that satisfy is lust for power, money, and sex.

3.5 The Sceptics’s views on Muhammad

Masserman a Jew unbiasedly analyzed the great contributions which some great men of the world impacted in human history like Louis Pasteur, Salk, Gandhi and Confucius. Others are Alexander the Great, Caesar, Hitler, Buddha and Jesus among others and concluded that:

“Perhaps the greatest leader of all times was Muhammad, who combined all three

functions (and) to a lesser degree, Moses, did the same.

Thomas Carlyle, a Scottish lawyer and Anglican couldn't withhold the truth about the true picture of Prophet Muhammad he was quoted to have said that he intends showing the skeptics and cynic which the people of his era demonstrated against Islamic World of the good part of the Prophet

According to Ahmad Deedat "He paid our hero many ardent and enthusiastic tributes and defended him from false charges and calumnies of his enemies, exactly; as the Prophet has done in case of Jesus (P.B.OH) and his mother.

There are other admirers of the Prophet (P.B.OH), sole competition on the religion playing ground like a Hindu scholar named Diwan Chand Sharma who gives his reason for choosing the Prophet P.B.OH which is kindness and ever-lasting remembrance by his followers. He says-

1. Muhammad was the soul of kindness,
And his influence was felt and never
Forgotten by those people around him

A poet praising Muhammad (PBOH) says:
The entire humanity attested to his fame even his foe.
And the most (real) fame is foe's attestation.

George Bernard Shaw studied the Prophet and arrived to conclusion thus:

I have studied him. The wonderful
Man-And in my opinion far from
Being an Anti-Christ of humanity

Let us sum up the outsiders' views on Prophet Muhammad (P.B.OH) with a short but rich in content from the Encyclopedia Britannica it says. "Muhammad was the most successful of all religious personalities"

4.0 CONCLUSIONS

In this unit so far, we arrived to our conclusion that Muhammad was a decent man with honour that is clean from all irregularities and indecency attributed to him by some biased skeptics in orientalism field

5.0 SUMMARY

We have examined the criticism of Muhammad from the following perspective: Who is Muhammad? Jewish Criticism, Christian Criticism, Academician Orientalist criticism and the Sceptics's views on Muhammad

6.0 Tutor marked Assignments

1. Give brief explanation and description of the Christian / Jewish criticism of Muhammad?
2. Elaborate the biography of two notable Orientalists and their publication?
3. Explain briefly the Orientalist methodology of criticism of Muhammad (PBOH)?

7.0 References / further Readings

1. Norman. A. Stillman, (1979) The Jew of Arabs land a history and Source, Jewish Publication P. 236
2. Montgomery Watt, (1961). Muhammad Prophet and Statesman, Oxford.
3. Frank A Freeman (1976) A Differential Diagnosis of the inspirational spells of Muhammad the prophet of Islam, Journal of Epilepsia, vol.
4. Ahmad Deedat, quoting Masserman, The Choice Islam and Christianity, 1994. Vol.1
5. George Bernard Shaw, "The Genuine Islam", Volume 1 No 8. 1966
6. Encyclopedia of Islam 11th edition

UNIT MUHAMMAD'S MARRIAGES

1.0 Introduction

2.0 Objective

3.0 Main contents

3.1 Prophet Muhammad's wives, How many are they?

3.2 Sawdat bint Zam'a, Aisha bnt Abi-Bakr and Hafsa bint Umar

3.3 Zainab Bint khusayma, Umuh Salmah, Hind Bint Abu Umayyah

3.4 Juwairiyah Bint Al-Harith

3.5 other wives of the prophet

4.0 Conclusion

5.0 Summary

6.0 Tutor marked Assignments

7.0 References / further Readings

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Polygamy as practiced by Muhammad (PBOH) was a strongly debated topic in the history of Orientalism. The Orientalists accused him of innovation of polygamous practice in history of humanity as well as man of over-sexuality.

The issues examined in this unit are: Prophet Muhammad's wives, How many are they?

2.0 OBJECTIVES

It is hoped that by the end of the unit, the learner should be able to:

- ❖ State the Prophet's wives, how many are they?
- ❖ Enumerate the Blasphemous statement about the polygamous as practiced by the Prophet
- ❖ Analyze the Polygamous practice of the Prophet
- ❖ Explain the reasons behind the polygamous marriages of the Prophet.

Preambles

The polygamous marriage of the Prophet have been subjected to criticism by the Orientalists. The Western Orientalists accused him as a man of excessive sexual urge with uncontrolled instinct. With all the accusations they couldn't state accurately the

number of his wives. Some said eleven while other says fifteen; some even go beyond this as they added what they termed as concubines to the existing ones. To clear doubt on their accusations against the Prophet, it is necessary to state the number of his wives and the reason / motives behind their marriages.

3.0 Main contents

3.1 Prophet Muhammad's wives, How many are they?

The actual numbers of wives under the Prophet's custody were nine as some died in his life time. The number of mothers of the faithful are highlighted below:-

1. Khadijah bint Khuwaylid

She was the first wife of the Prophet, twice a widow, of Abu – Aalat Hind bn Al Nabash and Atiq Ainz bn Aabid Al – Makhazumi. After her widowhood in the previous marriages, many successful men proposed to her for marriage, However Khadijah declined to marry any one of them. She personally proposed to the Prophet after observing the prophet's good characters and understood his good behavior. The Prophet was then twenty five while she was forty. The Prophet took no other wife beside her until her death before the migration (*Hijrah*) and *Isra'* (ascending of the Prophet to heaven).

2. Sawdat bint Zam'a

Sawdat was the second wife of the Prophet whom he married after Khadijah. She was previously married to her cousin named As-Sakran bin Amru. Both she and her husband migrated to Abyssinia due to unbearable persecution from the polytheist. On their way back to Mecca her husband felt ill and died. She became helpless till her marriage with the Prophet and kept her in his custody. Due to her patience and forbearance, God consoled her and replaced her lost with the noblest man ever known in human history.

3. Aisha bnt Abi-Bakr

She was the only virgin woman among the Prophet's wives; he married her after the death of his uncle Abu-Talib, his protector and asylum provider. The Prophet married her to cement the bond and relation between her father and the Prophet. The influential position of Abu-Bakr among the Quraish is to the advantage of the

Prophetic mission of Muhammad. The Prophet engaged with her when she was 6/7 years and consummated with her when she was nine. This marriage of Aisha to the Prophet was hotly debated among the 20th century and contemporary Orientalists. Our response to their respective statement about the marriage will be discussed later.

4. Hafsa bin Umar

Hafsa was the daughter of Umar bn Khatab and a full sister to Abdullah bn Umar, one of the greatest Companions of the Prophet, she was married to Khunais bn Hudhaifah, and they both embraced Islam with good intention and they practised the religion as dictated. Khunais died martyred in the battle of Badr. Her father offered her in marriage to Abu-Bakr and Uthman in which both declined for they were aware of the Prophet's intention to marry her. The Prophet thus married another widow to strengthen his ties with another powerful Quraishite for religious purpose.

SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

Give the biography of the above wives of the Prophet and the reasons behind their marriage with him.

5. Zainab bint Khusayma

The mother of the faithful was also a widow; she had married twice before that of the Prophet. Her first marriage was with Al-Tafeed bn Al-Harith bn Al-Mutalib and divorced her, she latter remarried to Al-Tafeed brother named Ubaidah bn Al-Harith, who died in the battle of Badr, later to the Prophet who shoulder her responsibilities and relived her loneliness. A good reward for her kindness toward the poor and the destitute as she was nicknamed mother of the poor. Her marriage to the Prophet cemented and improved the relationship and bond between the Prophet and her clan of Christian family. She died barely eight months after her marriage with the Prophet.

6. Umuh Salmah Hind Bin Abu Umayyah

She was married to Abi Salamah, the first migrant to Abyssinia. He died as a martyr in the battle of Uhud as a result of sustained injuries. Most of the Muslims tried to console her and relieve her plight by proposing to her which she refused. The Prophet then

proposed to her because of her devotion to Islam. She also felt reluctant to accept the Prophet's proposal because of the huge responsibility on her which she did not want to place on the Prophet, mostly the catering of her young children. The Prophet married her and raised her children in his household.

7. Zainab Bin Jahash

Zainab was the Prophet's cousin from Umaymat bint Abdul-Mutalib. She was married to Zaid bn Harith which was arranged by the Prophet. She rejected but reluctantly accepted to his request through divine intervention. Their matrimonial home experiences no peace or harmony which made Zaid divorced her and the Prophet was mandated to marry her through another divine intervention to break the normative of adoption as Zaid was formally adopted by the Prophet. This is another area hotly debated criticism of the Prophet. We shall unfold the reasons behind the marriage.

SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

Give the biography of the above wives of the Prophet and the reasons behind their marriages with him.

8. Juwairiyah Bin Al-Harith

She was one of the captive of Banu-Mustalaq, a tribe that attempted to launch an attack on the Muslims in Madinah; but were defeated, and as such most of her tribe were killed include her ex-husband bn Safwan. She fell to the portion of war booty apportioned to Thabit bn Qays Al-Shimas, who wrote a deal in written for her emancipation, which she could not afford. She then requested the Prophet's assistance for her redemption, The Prophet proposed to her for marriage after the settlement of Thabit's account which she accepted. Her acceptance was a great blessing for her tribe, for most of the Companions also manumitted their prisoners from her tribe as they were considered as the relatives of the Prophet. Over one hundred of her tribesmen/women were freed. Because of the Prophet's virtuous and kindness, her tribe reverted to Islam. Muhammad used his wisdom and intelligent in this marriage to convert her tribe to Islam.

9. Raihanat bint Zaid

She was enslaved after a battle between the Muslim of Medina and Banu. Qurayza tribe in which the latter were defeated. The Prophet gave her freedom of choice as per her Jewish creed or Islam. She gave preference to Islam and thus the Prophet married her after her redemption. She loved the Prophet so much that when he proposed to divorce her she cried bitterly. Her marriage improved to some length the relationship between her Jewish tribe and the Muslims. She died after the Prophet returned from the fear well pilgrimage.

10. Ummu Habibah Bin Aby Sufyan

She was daughter of Abu Sufyan bn Harb Humary the Quraish arch enemy of the Prophet. She migrated with her ex-husband Ubaydullah bn Jahash to Abyssinia in the second migration. Her husband died in Abyssinia and the Prophet married her with the king of Abyssinia as an intermediary to relieve her plight as well as improving his relation. Her father, Abu Sufyan was extremely happy when he received the good news. The motive behind her marriage with the Prophet is not obscured to every open minded person.

11 Safiyyah bint Huayh bin Akhatab

She was ex-wife of Salam bn Muskam Al-Qurazh, a Poet. After her divorce from the previous marriage she married Kinanah Al-Rabih who died in the battle of Khaibar. Thus she became a slave to the Muslims. Dahyah Al-alibi first requested the Prophet to give him Safiyah, but the Companions were against this as they complained her status and nobility, being the daughter of the Jewish chief of Qurayzah, the Prophet was in position to fill her empty vacuum thus the Prophet married her to preserve her nobility.

3.1 SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

Mention three other wives of the Prophet and reasons which led to their marriage?

4.0 CONCLUSION

After elaborating the biography of the wives of the Prophet, we arrived to conclusion that his polygamous practice is based on the religious purpose.

5.0 SUMMARY

In this Unit, we have examined the topic from the following perspectives: Sawdat bin Zam'a, Aisha bin Abi-Bakr and Hafsa bin Umar, Zainab Bin khusayma, Umuh Salmah Hind Bin Abi Umayyah, Juwairiyah Bin Al-Harith and other wives of the Prophet

6.0 Tutor Marked Assignments

Write on the biography of the following wives the Prophet:

- 1 Sawdat bin Zam'a
- 2 Zainab Bin khusayma
- 3 Juwairiyah Bin Al-Harith

7.0 References / further Readings

1. Dr Abdul Jalil Shalaby, 1982 Radu Muftariyatn ala-l- Islam, Darul al Kalam. Kuwait. P.5 onward
2. Dr. Zaair "Wa^ad" Alam^cn (Ma' Al-Ma -Mufassirin wal Al-Mushtashrikin fi Zawaaj. Al-Nabbiy bi Zainab bin Jahash.

Unit 3: Criticism of Polygamous practice of Muhammad

1.0 Introduction

2.0 Objective

3.0 Main contents

3.1 Blasphemous statements about the polygamous marriage of the Prophet

3.1 Reasons behind the polygamy practice of the Prophet

4.0 Conclusion

5.0 Summary

6.0 Tutor marked Assignments

7.0 References / further readings

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Muhammad and Polygamy is a hotly debated topic in the history of Orientalism as the Orientalists accuse him of innovation of polygamous practice in history of humanity as well as man of over sexuality. The issues examined in the unit are: Blasphemous statement about the polygamous marriage of the Prophet, polygamous marriages and the reasons behind the polygamy practice of the Prophet

2.0 OBJECTIVES

It is hoped that by the end of the unit the Learner should be able to:

- ❖ State the Prophet's wives and how many they are.
- ❖ Enumerate the Blasphemous statement about the Polygamous marriage of the Prophet
- ❖ Analyze the polygamous practice of the Prophet
- ❖ Explain the reasons behind the polygamous marriages of the Prophet.

3.2 Blasphemous statement about the polygamous marriage of the Prophet.

Hindus blasphemous statement

Devis Sharma in 1927 wrote that Muhammad fell to a victim of many evils, all his marriages were extra ordinary and improper and he suffered from epilepsy. The Prophet was symbolized by his many wives therefore he could never be a messenger of God as it contradicts the life long celibacy of Hindu Saints but on the contrary, the Hindu law of India does not restrict polygamous practice.

Our question for the Christian writers on the blasphemous statement against the Prophet in regards to the issue on ground is Where in biblical scripture that God ordained single wife to a man? We read in their scripture that Jacob (Prophet Yah'qoob) married two sisters at a time. Is it because of his sexual instinct, that he loved both of them and married them for sexual urge?

A prophet / king (of Israelite), Soloman was said to have a thousand of women as related in the Bible seven hundred wives and three hundred concubines and his father David was accused of murdering his commander Urhayah to take his wife for himself and added it to his ninety wives because of his sexual instinct

Other women included among the wives of the Prophet are Khaolat bin Hakeem and Ummu Shareek. Khaolat bin Hakeem bn Ummayyah was a widow of Usman bn Mazhoon. She gave herself in marriage to the Prophet, despite her nobility and quality of beauty, the Prophet rejected her offer.

Another woman named Ghaziyah bin Jabir of Dosiyyah or Assadiyah clan also gave herself to the Prophet in marriage, she was formally married to a man, named Aby- A-l-ankr, she was persecuted severely by some members of her clan because of her role in converting substantial percentage of her clan to Islam. The Prophet declined the marriage despite its approval as declared in the Qur'an 33 v 50

There is no where in the authentic Islamic history that confirmed her marriage with the Prophet.

Many of such woman gave themselves in marriage to the Prophet, had he being a man of instinct and lustfulness (for women) he could have married a hundred (of women) as Prophet Dawood / David or a thousand like Suleiman / Solomon (as acclaimed in the Biblical scripture).

It seems that the Prophet's, wife Aisha had fore-knowledge of the blasphemous statements against the Prophet when she acquitted him of it. Aisha said: 'None of the Companions can be compared with the Prophet in terms of abstinences and self control when it came to matter of woman (sexual urge).

3.2 SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

State and defend the blasphemous statements against the prophet's polygamous practice by various groups in the Orientalism field.

3.3 Motives behind the Prophet's Marriage with Zainab

1. Adoption generally was a norm and practice in the ancient Arabian world with no distinct between a genetic / biological child as we also seen how the Prophet (S.A.W) practiced it for he declared Zaid bin Harith as his son who had equal right with his genetic children. Islam encouraged raising non-genetic child especially if the child is an orphan. Orphanage is allowed in Islam with awaiting bounty reward from God nevertheless, the child should never become a real child that has no distinct with the biological child of the adoptive parents, so as to protect and prevent things that are not forbidden as forbidden in Islam.

2. Abolition of barbaric classification of tribes and clans that was very common in the *Jahiliyyah* period. The Arabs are nation which believed and loved preservation of unfounded dignity and pride, as the common norm among the Arabs. When one was once a soldier is always a soldier, that is, if a man had been a slave in his life, his depiction as a slave shall continue to elude his pride and progress, he will be forever labeled a slave that has lower statue (to a free man). Islam therefore comes to rescue this barbaric and inhuman treatment of those people in that class as well as liberating humanity in general. To the Arabs, being a Muslim free slave was insignificant, though the Qur'an keeps on

emphasizing that men are created from a single soul, but made into clans and nations so that they may know and appreciate the differences between them. God made it practicable through the order given to His Prophet to abolish this inhuman practice. The (inhuman) practice reflected when the Prophet (S.A.W) came to ask Zainab's hand for Zaid, the family received the most shocking approach in their life as they thought the Prophet (S.A.W.) came to ask for Zainab's hand for himself.

3. God ordained the Prophet to marry Zainab to unfold and forbid the creed and believe that what is good for the goose is good for the gander. I.e. an adopted child has no distinct with biological child when it comes to forbidden and lawful matters, for it is an abomination for a biological father to marry his daughter in-law. Islam came to the rescue of the self created creed that has nothing to do with the divine ordinances. A daughter in-law of adopted son is neither forbidden nor an abomination for the adoptive father to marry her as Qur'an cleared and declared in Qur'an 33 v 4 that "..... Nor has he made your adopted sons your (biological) son to the upgrading them to your distinct son (so that they may share equal rights with them). Qur'an 33 v 36 that:-

"It is not fitting for a believer, man or woman, when a matter has been decided by Allah and his Messenger to have any option about their decision".

On hearing this, Zainab and her family resort to God's decision and the marriage was conducted. Islam thus considers piety as a yardstick for human dignity and not position or class distinction.

The Stages of Abolition of Adoption Practice

1. The first stage is Qur'anic revelation banning the prevailing adoption system in pre-Islamic era: As earlier inferred, adoption was a common norm in the pre-Islamic Arabian world without distinction between the adopted and adoptive parent Qur'an 33 v 3 says:-

"Nor had he made those whom you claim (to be your sons) your sons. But Allah says the truth and He shows the (rightful) way:- Proclaim their real parentage, that will be more equitable in the sight of Allah. And if you know not their fathers, then (they are) your brethren in the faith and your clients)".

Abu Hudhaifa a pious companion set an exemplary life as he married his former adopted son Salim to his niece Hind bint al-Walīd bint. Utbah. Salim was a free slave of an *Anṣārī* Woman. Thus the Qur'an verse is the first step and first stage to the abolition of adoption in Islam.

Ibn Umar once asserted that they used to call Zaid as Zaid bn Muhammad, until the above verse was revealed. The Prophet then called the Muslim saying "O you Muslims! Verily, Zaid son of Muhammad from today onward should be called Zaid son of Harith. Thus his former name becomes rejected by this divine injunction of the Glorious Qur'an to the last day.

2. The practical stage: - Abolition of ignorant culture which elevates adopted child to the level of biological child in the pre-Islamic era. Such culture includes prohibition of marriage between the adopted child and parent. The Prophet made it practicable as ordained in the Qur'an. After the divorce of Zainab from Zaid and the completion of her waiting period, Allah ordained the Prophet to marry her to destroy the self-made utopian law ever known in the pre-Islamic era; and made it obvious that, there is no barrier which prohibits such marriages.

We have seen the reaction of the hypocrites as they added the event to their offensive tool to disrupt the prophetic mission saying "***Muhammad married his son's spouse***. Allah silenced those people with the Qur'an verse 40 of the same chapter. "Muhammad is not the

father of any man among you, but he is the Messenger of Allah and the seal of the Prophets”. Thus, these accusations of the Orientalists against the Prophet are nothing but mouthpiece of blaspheming due to spite and insolence.

Qur’an again listed the prohibited women in Islam to nullify the critics assumptions on this issue as it emphatically mentioned the spouse of a biological female child as being prohibited for the biological father to remove the erroneous mix up between the two. Qur’an 4:23 says:-

“Forbidden unto you are your mothers, and your daughter and your sisters, and your father’s sisters, and your mother sister’s and your brother’s daughters, and your sister’s daughter and your foster’s mothers and your foster’s sisters, and your mothers in-law, and your step – daughters who are under your protection. (The born) of your women unto whom you have gone in.... *and the wives of your sons, who (spring) from your own loins.*

Thus the last phrase of the verse and its context clearly made the adoptive son’s wife as unprohibited for the adopting parent.

Self Assessment Exercise

What are the motives behind the Prophet’s marriage with Zainab?

3.4 The Prophet’s marriage with Aisha

Aishah was the daughter of the Prophet’s best friend and the first pious Caliph, Abu – Bakr. Prophet married her at the age of six and cohabitated with her at the age of nine. The criticism of the Prophet’s marriage with her erupted from the 20th century as the religion competitors and other Orientalists (the Christian clerics and Monks) added this marriage to their offensive tool against the Prophet.

From the incidence, some Christian clerics like Jerry Vines denounced the Prophet accusing him of cohabitation with a nine year old child like Aishah and labeled Muhammad as pedophile.

We have few questions in line for these biased writers and commentators which go thus:

1. Do they ever studied and assimilated the history of traditional marriage in the ancient Arabian world?
2. Is Abu-Bakr, the father of the bride a fool to the extent of approving such marriage?
3. Despite the bitter enmity between the Jews and Islam, have they ever read any Jewish condemnations of such marriage?
4. Have they read in the medical history about the youngest mothers ever known in human history?

Answers to these questions will be helpful to correct the wrong notions of the critics and their biased mind against this blessed marriage.

We are sure and certain that they read and studied the traditional marriage in the ancient world of the Arabs. God created man from a single soul (Adam) and countless men and women then scattered on earth. They were made into nations, tribes and races, so that they may know certain differences in their languages as well as their culture. As earlier stated Islam did not recognize any utopian law or culture that is against its divine legislation. Cultural conflicts have no adverse effect on the Islamic legislation; therefore, early marriage is very common among the ancient world including the Middle East, an environment in which the Prophet was born.

Professor Colin Turner States that, “Since such marriages between an older man and a young girl were customary among the Bedouins, (as well as those who lived in the city) Muhammad would not have been considered improper by his contemporaries.

We should also be aware that this type of consummation had existed among the Americans until the late nineteenth century as Jeremiah Bowden put it that “majority of American agreed on ten years as the minimum age of consent, for sexual relations, only one year older than the age of Aisha when her marriage to Muhammad was consummated”.

The Jews who were contemporaries of the Prophet were his arc enemy and most hostile to his Prophethood. They will have used the marriage as offensive tool against him in their hostility toward Islam. Such early marriage was a prevailing norm among their clan such example is apparent in his marriage with a Jewish lady named Safiyyah bint Huayh bin Akhatab. She had married twice before Prophet married her and she was yet to be seventeen years then. How old was she at her first marriage?

We read in the medical history quiet numbers of youngest mothers in the world history. A Peruvian girl (Lina Medina) as she was called carried her pregnancy when she was four and delivered the child at five years by caesarean due to her small pelvis may be. The doctor who gave the detailed history of her case said that her menarche had occurred at eight months and she had prominent breast development, finally she displayed pelvic widening and advanced bone maturation at five. The doctor also confirmed that her pregnancy occurred in usual way (through normal cohabitation). Therefore, precocious puberty as the medical terms it, is not new. If a girl of four years old can carried her pregnancy successfully at that age in the nineteenth century, what prevent an older young girl with the same precocious development over a thousand years ago to do so?. It was also recorded that the youngest parent in the world history ever known were 8 and 9 respectively and lived in China in 1910 therefore cultural conflict should not be an offensive tool in the hand of the critics.

SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

To what extent will you agreed with the Orientalists that the Prophet was a pedophile?

3.6 Reasons behind the polygamous practice of the Prophet

The Prophet remained monogamous with his beloved wife Khadijah for twenty five years. Had he being a womanizer or pro-adultery as acclaimed by his detractors; he could have more than enough among the virgins in Mecca because of his nobility. The Prophet had been shouldering the needs of the orphans, destitute, and widows in the pre-Islamic and early era of his message because the aforementioned people were neglected in the ancient Arabia.

We have affirmed the polygamous practice of the previous Prophets before Muhammad, and the polygamous practice of the Prophet also had political and social motives. The social motives had been earlier explained.

1. The political motives include cementing political alliances and religious feud between his enemies. Hence the marriage of Ummu Habibah bin Abu-Sufyan bn Harb is apparent

example. Abu Sufyan was very glad when he heard that the Prophet had married his widowed daughter. He is quoted to have said that. “This will diminish my hatred and enmity against him.”

2. Arabian world is a society which emphasizes and valued virgin marriages. Hence remarriage was difficult in those days because of the poor economic condition. Zainab bint Khusayma first declined the Prophet’s proposal because of the biting economic situation of the Prophet, as she had four children to cater for, she latter accepted the proposal.

3. The Prophet polygamous marriage had religious purpose of which necessarily needed for (*Da’wah*) purposes. Hence the Prophet cannot be explaining every hideous things and occurrences which needs woman explanation. A woman once came to the Prophet seeking Islamic verdict on her monthly period; the Prophet gave her the verdicts that she takes a clean cotton wool to purify herself. She demanded more explicit explanation from the Prophet which made the intervention of Aisha necessary; she gave the woman female to female answer. Quite a number of such situations had occurred at different times, and the Prophet’s wives were there for ready made answer.

John Espistol also added that the Semitic (people who lived in the ancient middle east) culture permitted polygamy. He added it was particularly common practice among the Arabs especially among nobles and leaders.

4.0 CONCLUSION

It has been explained that the Prophet’s practice of polygamy is not an innovation but a prevailing culture among people of the world including the Oriental countries from time immemorial.

5.0 SUMMARY

We examined the polygamous marriage of the Prophet from the following perspectives: the number of Prophet Muhammad’s wives, the blasphemous statements by some biased Orientalists concerning the polygamous marriage of the Prophet and reasons behind the marriages.

6.0 TUTOR MARKED ASSIGNMENT

- 1 To what level will you agree that the Prophet was a pedophile as acclaimed by some Orientalists?
2. Debunk the biased criticisms leveled against the polygamous marriages of the Prophet?
3. Mention three wives of the Prophet and what led to their marriages with the Prophet?

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MODULE 3 THE ISLAMIC SCRIPTURES

Unit 1: The Holy Qur'ān

Unit 2: Criticism of the Qur'an

Unit 3: The *Ḥadīth* / *Sunnah*

Unit 4: Criticism of *Ḥadīth*

UNIT 1: THE HOLY QUR'ĀN

1.0 Introduction

2.0 Objective

3.0 Main contents

3.1 Definition of the Qur'an

3.2 Revelation of the Qur'an

3.3 The place of Qur'an in Islamic legislations

3.4 Qur'an revelation and science

4.0 Conclusion

5.0 Summary

6.0 Tutor marked Assignments

7.0 References / Further Readings

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The Qur'ān is the book of Allah revealed to Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) as guidance for mankind. Issues examined in this unit are:

- Definition of the Qur'ān
- Revelation of the Qur'ān
- The place of Qur'ān in Islamic legislations
- Qur'ān and science.

2.0 Objectives

It is hoped that by the end of this unit the learner should able to:

- ❖ Define the Qur'an
- ❖ Explain Revelation of the Qur'an
- ❖ Elucidate the place of Qur'an in Islamic legislations
- ❖ Expatriate on the Qur'ān and science

3.1 Definition of the Qur'an

Qur'an is the book of Allah revealed to Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) to redirect humanity to true monotheism and a standing challenge to every acclaimed miracle maker.

Allah in his boundless knowledge assigned the Qur'an as guidance to mankind to guide them to the straight path in all their affairs. He provides the book as an interrupted light to rekindle their ways of darkness. It's a book with overwhelming wisdom to nourish those who seek for it. Qur'an is a reminder for those that have forgotten the purpose of their creation, a criterion which separates the truth from falsehood and remedy for every ailment spiritually or otherwise. These made it a standing challenge to all books that ever existed.

SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

What is the meaning of the Qur'an?

3.2 Revelation of the Qur'an

Qur'an was revealed verbatim gradually from Allah through the intermediary of Angel Jibril to Muhammad (PBUH) to solve the waiting occurrences as the case may be, within lasting period of approximately twenty three years i.e. twenty-two years, two months and twenty days. It began with the first revelation is Qur'an 96 verses 1 – 5 on the 15th of *Ramaḍān* and the last verse is Qur'an 5 verse 3 which reads thus:

'This day I have perfected your religion for you and completed my favour on you and have chosen Islam for you as religion. " According to some commentators the last verse revealed is Qur'an 2 verse 281 "And guard yourselves against a day in which you will be brought back to Allah, then every soul will be paid in full what he has earned and they will not be wronged. The former was revealed during the last pilgrimage of the Prophet while the latter was revealed eight days to the Prophet's death.

Qur'an is the first fundamental source of Islamic law underneath of which the remaining sources lie. The injunction permits no interferences of any one even by the Prophet whom it was given.

SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

What is the position of the Qur'an in the Islamic legislation?

3.3 Qur'anic revelation and Science

In this aspect of our discussion, we will briefly elaborate the revelation in the Qur'an in regards to various scientific discoveries :-

1. **Creation of Man**

Qur'an 23 verses 12-14 explains the origin of man as a constituent of earth an inorganic material which becomes organic or living materials, a murky created substance that develop from the mud to a flesh. The developmental stages of man commenced in the mother's womb which later metamorphosed to full grown mortal. This had been made known through Quranic revelation given to Muhammad (pbuh) in the 7th century.

In his words, Keith more, an emeritus professor remarks about the Quran:

“At first I was astonished by the accuracy of the statements that were recorded in the 7th century A.D before the science of embryology was established. He concluded that “I knew nothing about the religious facts and beliefs contained in the Qur'an and *Sunnah*”.

In another statement, the distinguish embryologist and author of several medical textbooks could not withhold the truth. He astonishingly stated “It is clear to me that these statements must have come to Muhammad (pbuh) from God or Allah”. He further said “This proved to me that Muhammad must have been a Messenger of Allah”.

Another Professor in the same field, E. Marshall Johnson who once refused to accept the existence of such verses in the Qur'an and *Hadith*, but who later developed interest in the subject matter researched in the internal and external development of the foetus says:

“The Qur'an describes not only the development of external form, but emphasizes also the internal stages, the stages inside the embryo, of its creation and development emphasizing major events recognized by contemporary science. The revelation confirms that in studying the embryology, the physical part of the substance could be researched but the internal part is beyond the comprehension of human being. Therefore he concludes: “ I see no reason to refute the concept that this individual Muhammad had to be developing this information from some somewhere. So I see nothing than that divine intervention was involved in what he was able to write”.

Let us now examine the statements of some super power of (our) modern time. Astronomy is the leading field in modern sciences for its exploitation of the space which is beyond human comprehension. A leading figure in the field, Neil Armstrong who had been to the space and had witnessed its component commented when he was asked about his opinion about the verses of the Qur'an relating to his field of study as an eye-witness. He said:

“I am impressed at how remarkably some of the ancient writings (i.e. the Qur’an) seem to correspond to modern and recent astronomy. He declared “..... What we have seen is remarkable, it may not be admitted to scientific explanation, there may well have to be something beyond what we understand as ordinary human experience to account for the writings we have seen”. Praise be to Allah as He gave you (human being) nothing of knowledge but a little.

A religion competitor Rev. R. Bosworth Smith in his book “Mohammad and Mohammedanism stated that: (Qur’an) is “A miracle of purity of style of wisdom of truth” . J. Shilly. D.D in “The lord Jesus in the Koran” 1913 p. 111 also chants his eulogies when he said that “The Koran is the Mohammedan Bible. And is more referenced than any other sacred book, more than the Jewish Old Testament or the Christian New Testament”. Another comment from a non-Muslim and translator of the Qur’an A.J Arberry gave his unbiased and ungrudging tributes he says that.

“Whenever I hear the Qur’an chanted, it is as though I am listening to music underneath the flowing melody. There is sounding all the time the instant beat of a drum; it is like the beating of my heart”.

SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

Explain the Quranic views on the creation of man.

4.0 CONCLUSION

We conclude the discussion in this Unit by saying that Qur’an is the word of God revealed to his Prophet, Muhammad and the book contains undeniable facts as the last Testament to mankind.

5.0 SUMMARY

In this unit so far, we examined the Qur’an from the following perspectives: definition of the Qur’an, Revelation of the Qur’an, The place of Qur’an in Islamic legislations and Qur’anic revelation and Science.

6.0 TUTOR MARKED ASSIGNMENTS

- 1- Define the Qur'an and explain its contents?
- 2- Give brief history of the revelation of the Qur'an?
- 3- Qur'an states various things on science explain three of them?

7.0 REFERENCES/ FURTHER READINGS

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UNIT 2: CRITICISM OF THE QUR'AN

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objective
- 3.0 Main contents
 - 3.1 The Criticism of Grammatical Aspect of the of Qur'an
 - 3.2 The Criticism of Scientific Aspect of the Qur'an
 - 3.3 Criticism of Historical Aspect of the Qur'an
 - 3.4 Criticism of Qur'anic Jurisprudence
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor marked Assignments
- 7.0 References / further Readings

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The criticism of the Qur'an is another point against the Prophet of Islam and his mission by the Orientalists to undermine and reject his prophethood. Issues examined in this unit are the following: The Criticism of Qur'an, Series of allegation against the Qur'an, Criticism of historical aspect errors of the Qur'an, Criticism of Qur'anic Jurisprudence and Qur'anic revelation and science.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

It is hoped that by the end of this unit the learner should be able to:

- ❖ Defend the intents in the rhetorical aspect of the Qur'an.
- ❖ Relate the Series of allegation against the Qur'an
- ❖ State and defend the Criticism leveled against the historical aspects of the Qur'an.
- ❖ Identify and refute Criticism of Qur'an Jurisprudence

3.0 MAIN CONTENTS

3.1 The Criticism of Qur'an has started long ago since the inception of the Orientalism and the competitors on the religion stage. Some of these criticisms are highlighted below:

Grammatical order: This refers to stylistic shifts which are sometimes come-by in the divine expression in the Qur'an. While Arabic paragon linguistics regard them as high level of rhetorical expression, some Orientalists criticized them as useless rhetoric; and according to them they are linguistic defects. An example of this is what is called "*Uslūb al-Iltifāt*" as found in Q.108:1-2:

We have given you Abundance, so pray to your Lord and sacrifice.

Their imperfect understanding of Arabic language suggests that it should be "pray to us" instead of pray to your Lord.

A further explanation on this misinterpretation and misconception is given and explained as an aspect of Arabic systematic ways of addressing listeners to refresh their interest in listening and prevent boredom.

Gullaime refuted the biased notion of the Orientalist's criticism and writes:

"Since the beginning of the Nineteenth Century there has been a constant recourse to Arabic for the explanation of rare words and forms in Hebrew, for Arabic though more than thousand years Junior as a literary language, is the senior philosophically by countless Centuries. Perplexing phenomenon, in Hebrew, whose precise sense had been lost in Jewish tradition can often be explained as solitary and archaic survivals of the form which are frequent and cognate in Arabic words and idioms receive a ready and convincing explanation from the same source. In deed no serious student of the Old Testament can afford to dispense with a first-hand knowledge in Arabic. The pages of any critical commentary on the Old Testament will illustrate the debt of the Biblical exegesis owes to Arabic".

Despite the bitter enmity between Jews and Muslims, some unbiased Jewish scholars assert the great influence the Arabic language had in developing the understanding of the Jewish Hebrew Bible. They develop their understanding and analysis of the Hebrew Bible from the work of Arab grammarians who played a vital role in analyzing the Qur'an through linguistic and contextual interpretation. Simeon and Schuster state:

"Jewish scholars in Arab land for the first time in history acquired the tools for proper contextual study of the scriptures. Islam has spread the tenets of rationalism mediating in part the philosophical teaching of classical Greece.

In addition, Arab grammarians had developed a systematic method for analyzing the style and the structure of classical Arabic, the language of the Koran. This enables them not

only to interpret the Koran but also to compose new works in the strict standards of the classical Idiom.

Let us read again and see how the Jews exploited the Arabic language of the Qur'an to their advantage

“Jews who studied Arabic language and literature as well as other subjects desired to exploit it in their exegesis of the Bible and the analysis of Hebrew grammar. Only those who knew Arabic grammar (developed from linguistic and contextual interpretation of the Qur'an) developed the proper understanding of the Hebrew verbs as the stem built upon three consonants Jewish exegetes, such as those in France, who did not read Arabic, failed to comprehend that the trio consonantal bases of the Hebrew verb stem, as a result, they confused certain stems and misinterpreted them.

More of their criticisms are highlighted below and their incorrectness in the issues are made to surface

(A) Criticism of the scientific aspects of the Qur'an

1. Erroneous interpretation of the scientific hints in the Qur'an. For example the Qur'an mentioned the standing firm of mountain on the earth to peg the earth down lest it should shake under the footing of the inhabitants. Qur'an says: “He sets on the earth, mountains standing firm, lest it should shake with you”. They erroneously misinterpret the context of the verse by citing the scientific proof of the earth has been revolving round itself 24 hours daily, but in their own view the Qur'an erred according to the above verse, as it proves its static and not dynamism.

The exact intents of the Qur'an here is that, God cast on the earth, firm hills and mountains for the inhabitants to stand firmly on it in order to facilitate their day to day activities like farming, eating and sleeping amongst other things. If the earth always quacks, confusion would be on it. In the word of Yusuf Ali :“The earth is spoken of a spacious carpet beneath our feet and the hills as a steadying agent to keep the carpet from rolling or shaking about”.

Qur'an 36 V 38- 40 beautifully explained the dynamic revolving of the sun followed by the other complements like the moon, earth and star. The verses described the beauty of

rounded course of the planets and its heavenly body in verse 40 which confirmed its dynamicity “Each **swims** along (it’s own) orbit with perfectly smooth motion.” In the word of William Shakespeare: “in his motion like an angle sings, still quiring to the young eyed cherubim”. Thus the Qur’an reaffirmed the dynamicity of these planets.

(B) Criticism of historical aspect of the Qur’an

The criticisms of historical aspect of the Qur’an are so numerous that we can only cite few examples and defend them.

The historical events of some pious men of God and his prophets:

They claimed that the Qur’an erred in the intellectual aspect of its stories. An example cited on this is the expedition story of Dhul-Qarnain (the two horned one) as contained in the Q.18:87 where Almighty Allah says: “Until when he reached the setting of the sun, he found a people. It set in a spring of murky water”

The biased Orientalists translated the intent in the context “murky water” as a “well”, therefore argued that a well is sizeable and the sun size could not be quantified. Secondly, they erroneously cited the view and comment of Imam al-Baiḍāwī in his commentary on this verse saying “al-Baiḍāwī said that:

‘Alexander the great saw it (the sun) and saw the mud and its water’ and people around it were standing nakedly’.

Abdu ‘l-Jalīl Shalaby refutes this writing as Baiḍāwī’s view. He said: ‘if al-Baiḍāwī was seriously beaten with a strong whip he will never write such a statement’.

The word Dhul-Qarnain means the “two horned one” or the king with two horns or the Lord of the two epochs.

The commentators cannot reach a consensus about who was he, in what age and where he lived. The answers to these questions have never been given in detailed in the Qur’an, the Qur’an only treats the story in parable. There are only two suggestions as to who he might be. The popular views and opinion among commentators ascribed Dhul-Qarnain as Alexandra the great while others said that he was an ancient Persia King or historic Himyarite king.

The misinterpretation of the Orientalist in the first episode of his three expedition in regards to his sighting the sun setting in well is not the Qur’anic view. According to them,

they thought and interpreted the reading ‘the setting of the sun’ as coming to the extreme end of the west on the earth as well as seeing the sun setting in a well. According to Yusuf Ali West and East are relative terms. “It means a Western expedition termination by a spring of murky water”. This (he continues) has puzzled the commentators, and they understood this to mean the dark, Tempestus Sea”.

To give a clearer picture on this view we have two options. If Dhul-Qarnain is Alexandra the great his mission to West is extended beyond Egypt but, therefore the sea Mediterranean Sea is where he saw the sun setting in the murky water. The murky water might also be Lychnitis (ochrida) in the West of Mercedonis because the region entirely fell to underground spring in a lime stone region, and the water there was never clear.

Translating the murky water into well has no solid ground of evidence; this is the disadvantage of imperfect understanding of Arabic language.

In Arabic language half nakedness is as complete nakedness. The primitive people that Dhul-Qarnayn met were in this situation of peace and tranquility which he bordered not to interfere with, since they were contented with their primitiveness. They were half naked because of their climatic condition which needed no interferences. The views of the commentators that ascribed Dhul-Qarnain to Alexandra the great is unacceptable because Allah provided him with provision needed for his expedition. Secondly, Alexandra the great was a Greek emperor and idolater.

2. The Orientalists criticized the Qur’an about survival of Pharaoh when the water overwhelmed him and his host. The Orientalist opined that there are contradictory statements in the Quran over this incident.

A drowned person must have died; why should the Qur’an say that he was saved in Q.10:92?

For a clearer explanation, Qur’anic says: “This day We save you in your body that you may be a sign (potent) to those who come after you”.

The Quran is a book that falsehood can never penetrate into from any angle; for it is a book of absolute uniqueness when dealing with any matter.

In translating any verse of the book, one is required to be versed in the linguistics aspect of Arabic language which many Orientalists like Monk Thomas was lacking, may be as

a

Christian monk' he needs to be a little skeptical in proving superiority of his religion to Islam.

The Qur'anic statement: "We save you in your body" implies saving the Pharaoh's corps from decay so as to serve as deterrent for tyrant leaders that may precept his habits because the content of the verse did not stipulate "save you only".

Secondly, Q.16:103 emphatically confirmed that the Egyptians with him were all drown "but we did drown him and who were with him" other verses which reaffirmed the above statement are as follows:-

Q 2:50: And when We brought you through the sea and rescued you (Israelites) and drowned the folk of Pharaoh in your sight.

Q 51:40 : "So We seized him and his forces and flung them in the sea, for he was reprobate"

The French Doctor Maurice Bucaille has this to say about the authenticity of the historical aspect of the Qur'an: "The Quranic Revelation has a history which is fundamentally different from the other two (The old and new Testament of the Bible). It spanned a period of some twenty years and, as soon as it was transmitted to Muhammad by Archangel Gabriel, Believers learned it by heart. It was also written down during Muhammad's life. The last recession of the Qur'an were effected under caliph Uthman starting some twelve years after the Prophet's death and finishing twenty-four years. They had the advantage of being checked by people who already knew the text by heart, for they learned it at the time of the revelation itself and had subsequently recited it constantly. Since then, we know that the text has been scrupulously preserved. It does not give rise to any problem of authenticity".

(C) Criticism of Qur'anic Jurisprudence

Most of the Orientalists argued that the Quran erred in some aspect of its jurisprudence. An example is the law of inheritance where it awarded twice of a property to male while a female is awarded half of that of a male which means the quantum share between the male child and the female is unjust.

Their imperfect understanding of the contextual meaning of the Qur'an in regards to its jurisdictions and the wisdom behind it blinds them to swim in the river of ignorance. Prior to Islam, the system of inheritance which operated within the Arabia only accorded and confined inheritance to male agnate relatives. It is Islamic law of inheritance that advocated and liberated the female inheritors from this insolence and spite practices of the Arabs.

Along this, the female child has the privileged to marry in which she would be catered for in her matrimonial home, and in case of any misunderstanding or breach that may lead to separation the male child shall shoulder her responsibilities. Countless numbers of such incidents are widespread in the third world.

Professor and Barrister at law, Almatic Rumsey is a non-Muslim who appreciated the Islamic law of inheritance after studying the subject matter, he declared that the Muslim law of inheritance "comprises beyond question the most refined and elaborate system of rules for the devolution of Property that is known to the civilized world".

SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

What is the Orientalist's view on Islamic law of inheritance?

4.0 CONCLUSION

We hereby conclude that the Qur'an is divinely revealed from God as the last Testament. Its distortion and rejection from its detractors is based only on spite and insolence.

5.0 SUMMARY

This unit examined the criticism of the Qur'an from the following perspectives: The rhetoric aspect of the Qur'an, the historical aspect of the Qur'an and criticism of Qur'anic Jurisprudence by the Orientalists.

6.0 Tutor Marked Assignments

- 1 Examine the Orientalists' misunderstanding of the rhetoric method of the Qur'an?
- 2 State and defend two allegations of the Orientalists against the Qur'an?

3 Does the Qur'an err in the aspect of the history of Pharaoh discussed in this Unit.

7.0 References / further readings

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UNIT 3: *ḤADĪTH / SUNNAH*

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objective
- 3.0 Main contents
 - 3.1 Meaning of *Ḥadīth*
 - 3.2 Position of *Ḥadīth* in Islamic Jurisprudence
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor marked Assignments
- 7.0 Reference / further readings

1.0 Introduction

Ḥadīth is every associated activities to the Prophet of Islam ranging from his saying, deeds and tactical approval which some biased Orientalists vehemently criticized. Issues examined in the unit are: Position of *Ḥadīth* in Islamic Jurisprudence, Orientalists and the preservation of *Ḥadīth*, and *Ḥadīth* in historical documentation and preservation.

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2.0 Objectives

It is hoped that by the end of this unit, the Learner should be able to:

- ❖ Define *Ḥadīth* literally and widely.
- ❖ Establish the Position of *Ḥadīth* in Islamic Jurisprudence
- ❖ Differentiate between *Ḥadīth* and *Sunnah*

3.0 Main contents

3.1 Meaning of *Ḥadīth*

Ḥadīth is an Arabic word with multiple meanings which includes communication, story and conversion among others. It also denotes “A piece of information conveyed either in small quantity or large”

Ḥadīth in wider sense is: what was transmitted on the authority of Prophet, his deeds, saying and tactics approval.

Sunnah literally means: A way, course, rule mode or manner of acting or conduct of life among others, but in the Islamic legal authority it means the model life of the Prophet which includes his deeds, actions etc.

Some of the Islamic jurists differentiate between *Ḥadīth* and *Sunnah* for they restrict *Sunnah* to mode of life of the Prophet while *Ḥadīth* is confined to the saying of the Prophet only.

In the Islamic Jurisprudence, they are two words technically used as synonyms to remove confusions, therefore, *Ḥadīth* and *Sunnah* are synonyms apposite to the Prophet like his saying, actions and deeds of his Companions in his present or what he heard about and silently approved.

SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

Define *Ḥadīth* literally and within Islamic legal authority?

3.2 Position of *Ḥadīth* in the Islamic Jurisprudence

Ḥadīth / Sunnah is the second fundamental primary source of Islamic jurisprudence; it is an indispensable supplement of understanding the Qur'an, the first fundamental of all sources of Islamic law and a key of interpretation of Islamic religious law.

Qur'an 31 Says:

“And verily in the Messenger of Allah you have a good example for him who desired unto Allah and the last day and remember Allah (very) much.

The position of the Prophet in Islam will resurface the importance of *Ḥadīth*, for none can claimed perfect understanding wholesome of the Qur'an especially in legislatives issues that the Qur'an did not expound the vivid meaning, or where the Qur'an is silent on those issues.

Let us now reposition the Prophet and the Message that he was sent with i.e. the Qur'an. One of the greatest missions of the Prophet is the recitation and expounding of the Qur'an to all nations in regards of their colour, status, ranks among other things as well as expounding the reveal verses in the Qur'an to them.

1- Establishment of *Ṣalāt* is perfect example which the verses of its ordinance are quite numerous in the Qur'an as an obligatory ritual, but the methodology in regards to its performance is not prescribed including the *raka'at*. It was the Prophet that explained in detail the methodology of its performance i.e. how and when *Ṣalāt* should be performed which the Prophet practically demonstrated. *Zakāt* is another example. The Qur'an ordains its obligatory with no detail, the Prophet gave its explanation on how and when it should be given.

2- The Prophet's task is to teach the Qur'anic content / context, mainly the wisdom as well as the legislative verses to instruct humanity at large to be obedient to the sovereignty of Allah, therefore, the Prophet has being bestowed with legislative authority. Owing to this position, he was privileged to initiate certain ritualistic worship like call to prayer that is later mentioned in the Qur'an.

3- The Prophet is also obliged to cleanse and purified the society from all sought of illicit acts and despise behaviors that characterized the society prior to his Prophethood.

The above assertions are entirely summed up in the following verses.

Qur'an 62 V 2 Says:-

“It is he who has sent among the unlettered a Messenger among themselves to recite to them his verses and to purify them and to teach them the book and wisdom; although they had been before, in manifest error”. The word wisdom means the *Ḥadīth* (*Sunnah* of the Prophet). Concerning expounding of the Qur'an, Qur'an 16 V 44 says: “We have revealed unto you the remembrance (the Qur'an) that you may explain to mankind that which has been revealed for them”.

Qur'an 7 verse 157 says in regard to the Prophet's legislative authority has been sectioned by God “He will make lawful for them all good things and prohibits for them only the foul, and will relieve them of their burden and the fetters that were upon them”.

After the demise of the Prophet, varieties of cases which required Islamic legislative decision, but could not be found in the Qur'an arose as it keeps silent over them. The only supplement is the *Hadīth*, an undisputable source for Islamic law to prevail. Few of such cases are given below:

Fatima the only surviving child of the Prophet once claimed her right to inheritance. She said that she is entitled to inherit piece of land left by her father, although according to the Qur'an she is entitled to inheritance, but Abu-Bakar quickly intervene as he narrated what he heard from the Prophet on the issue on ground that he heard the Prophet saying:

“We the Prophets do not inherit nor leave an estate for an inheritance, whatever we leave is a charity” Thus, her case was different; being a daughter of a Prophet excludes her from such right.

Caliph Umar couldn't find the prescribed amount for annual tax of the *Ṣāb'iūn* (the communities whose believe falls in between the believe of the Zoroastrians, Jews and the Christian), Abdul Rahaman bn Awf replied him that he heard from the Prophet of Allah saying: “Treat them in the same as the people of the book” i.e the Jews and the Christians.

4 We have reaffirmed the authority of the Prophet as a binding factor on Muslims at large; therefore, the Qur'anic referenced the Prophet as a model in behavior which includes his verbal command, deeds his teachings and approval among other things is an inevitable conclusion that the Prophet's *Hadīth* is essential supplement for the Islamic religious law. In a nutshell, tracking the model of the Prophet with obedience to his instruction is indispensable request from all Muslim to receive ever-lasting mercy in our short life.

Qur'an 33 v 21 Says

“Verily in the Messenger of Allah you have a good example for he who looks unto Allah and the last day, and remember Allah very much.

Qur'an 3 v 132 says

And obey Allah and the Messenger, that you may have Mercy.

Qur'an 59 v 7

Also made undisputable conclusion on this issue when it says "And whatever the Messenger brought you accept it. And what so ever he forbids you, abstain from it.

SELF ASSESMENT EXERCISE

What is the position of the Prophet in regards to *Ḥadīth*?

4.0 Conclusion

We arrived to conclusion that *Ḥadīth* is the saying of the Prophet and *Sunnah* is his practical deed and both are supplements in the Islamic religious law and both used interchangeably by the Islamic Jurists.

5.0 Summary

We examined *Ḥadīth/Sunnah* from the following perspectives: Meaning of *Ḥadīth*, the main differences between *Ḥadīth* and *Sunnah* has well as Position of *Hadith* in Islamic Jurisprudence

6.0 Tutor marked Assignments

- 1 Define *Ḥadīth* both literally and in the Islamic terminology?
- 2 Explain the main difference between *Ḥadīth* and *Sunnah*?
- 3 Where can *Ḥadīth* be a supplement for the Qur'an?

7.0 References/ further Readings

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Unit 4: CRITICISM OF ḤADĪTH

- 4.0 Introduction
- 5.0 Objective
- 6.0 Main contents
 - 3.1 Orientalists and the Preservation of *Ḥadīth*
 - 3.2 *Ḥadīth* in Historical Documentation and Preservation
 - 3.3 The misconception *Aḥādīth* on Prohibition of ***Ḥadīth* Documentation**
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor marked Assignments
- 7.0 Reference / further readings

1.0 Introduction

The topic deals with the Orientalists criticism of *Ḥadīth* from the following perspectives: Orientalists and the preservation of *Ḥadīth*, *Ḥadīth* in the historical documentation, preservation and misconception *Ḥadīth* for prohibition

2.0 Objectives

It is hoped by the end of this unit that the Learner should be able to:

- ❖ Know the position of the Orientalists in regards to preservation of *Ḥadīth*
- ❖ Established the assertion that *Ḥadīth* was actually preserved and documented
- ❖ Defend the misconception *Ḥadīth* on Prohibition of *Ḥadīth* Documentation

3.0 Main contents

3.1 Orientalists and the preservation of *Ḥadīth*

In this aspect of our discussion, we are not obliged to study the science of *Ḥadīth* in detailed, rather our focus / aim is to clear the abhorrent of Orientalists' criticisms of the subject matter i.e. their doubts and certainties in the authenticity of the Prophetic tradition.

The interest of the Orientalists in the study of Islam reached its peak in the 20th century as Western Scholars made serious attempt in translating, commentating and scrutinizing greater variety of Islamic texts subjected to agnostic view. *Ḥadīth/Sunnah* is the main priority in that era. Among the critics of the subject matter are Ignaz Goldziher and some modern critics like Professor Joseph Schacht. They questioned seriously the historicity and authenticity of the *Ḥadīth* opined that substantial parts of the Prophetic tradition were written actually much more latter after the Prophets.

Goldziher critically criticized the issues of *Isnād* and ascribed it to equip imposture in his word.

“It is not surprising that among the hotly debated controversy issues of Islam, whether, political or doctrinal, they are unable to cite a number of traditions all equipped with imposing *Isnād*”.

SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

Give a brief history of the Orientalists interest in the study of *Ḥadīth*?

3.2 *Ḥadīth* in Historical Documentation and Preservation

Most of the Orientalists argued the documentation of *Ḥadīth*, in the word of Joseph Schacht. “The *Sunnah* of the Prophet is not the words and deed of the Prophet but apocrypha material” which implied refuting the documentation and preservation of the *Ḥadīth*. Goldziher also has the same notion, according to him, it was after a hundred years that the saying of the Prophet were attributed to him.

In our earlier explanation, we asserts that, majority of the Western Scholars of Islam always produce their works from imperfect understanding of Islam, which include reliability on unreliable sources of Islamic jurisprudence. Others depend on their erred conclusion in any matter pertaining to Islam.

From the above views of Professor Schacht and Goldziher, we can now refute as well as condemn it as fabricated idea.

It was undeniably truth that the Prophet dissuaded some of his Companions from documenting his sayings and utterances at the initial stage of the revelation of the Qur’an to avoid the dilution of the textual revelation of the Qur’an with his utterances, but

the Prophet also permitted some of his Companions to document his sayings and
utterances who

are able to store it in their hearts as they are insured against mixture of both texts (Qur'an and *Ḥadīth*).

Here are some evidences of permission given to some of the Companions that they actually documented the sayings of the Prophet during his life time.

1. The Prophet mandated the preservation of *Sunnah* on his Companions which they in turned passed it to the following generation where ever they are.

Ibn Mas'ud narrated that "I heard the Messenger of Allah saying may Allah blessed a man who heard something from us (the Prophet) and conveyed it (to others) exactly as he heard it from us (As related by Muslim). Ibn Abbas also related that the Messenger of Allah said "O Allah blessed my *khulafā'* (successors), we said O Messenger of Allah who are your successors, he said" Those who related my sayings and teaches it to humanity" (at Large).

Most of the Orientalists also opined that *Ḥadīth* was not recorded during the lifetime of the Prophet as the Prophet prohibited his Companions from such recording. Secondly they went as far as saying that the Arabs were acquainted and bestowed with strong memory, hence, they were not in need of writing and documenting the *hadith*. Another opinion is that the *Sunnah* of the Prophet does not comply with what is in the Qur'an therefore; the *Ḥadīth* of the Prophet is a fabricated sources of Islamic legal jurisdiction.

Their argument here is due to their shortsightedness about *Ḥadīth* sciences as their skeptical views barred them from seen the approval given by the Prophet for the documentation of his utterances.

We have at our hand series of *Aḥādīth*, which negates the Orientalists view. Also from the historical perspectives, evidences of written and documentation of the sayings of the Prophet in letter sent to different parts of the world, treaties made with various tribes and clan by the Prophet's among others.

Abdullah bn Amr Al Aas personally requested the Prophet's permission to document his utterance He said: "I said O Prophet of Allah! we always hear some of your sayings and

could not digest it into our memories, should we document it? He (the Prophet) said, ‘yes document it’. Imam added, I said: ‘when you are pleased or in anger state? He said, ‘yes, I will never say anything (in any circumstance) except that which is true’.

The Prophet also gave his approval to document his sayings to some of the Companions on request. It was narrated by Abu Hurairah in a long *Ḥadīth* based on the incident in Mecca in the year of Conquest when the clan of khuzāh killed a man in the Bani Laithu clan in retaliation to the existing feuds between them. The Prophet made a long speech in which he declared the city of Mecca as a sacred place. In the end of the *Ḥadīth*, a Yemenite came to the Prophet and said that the Prophet should document that speech for him. The Prophet gave his approval and said write it for Abi Fulani (As related by Al-Tirmidhi and others).

Other Pious and close Companions of the Prophet like Abu- Bakr and Umar used the document piece of the Prophet’s words on *Ṣadaqah* that he promised a companion and the Prophet workers on *Ṣadaqah* were inopportune to fulfill this promise until after his (the Prophet) demise. Abu Bakr then brought the written document and execute its content. Likewise Uthman did the same based on written document of the *Ḥadīth* that was documented. This *Ḥadīth* was related by Al-Tirmidhi, Ahmad, Hakim, Ibn Majah and others.

Imam Al-Bukhārī also related a *Ḥadīth* narrated by Abu Hurairah that “None of the Companions of the Prophet superseded me in prophetic tradition except Abudullah Ibn Umar, for he always documents (the *Ḥadīth*) while I could not”

Their unfounded claim that the Arabs are bestowed with perfect strong memory and assimilation has no root in their argument, as there is no clan or race in the entire history of humanity that is totally bestowed with such mercy. There must be some people with imperfect assimilation and such people needs special ways of learning through other means like revisions through written materials.

Abu Dāwud related through the grandfather of Muslim bn Al-Harith in a long *Ḥadīth*. He was able to convert the entire clan of Al-Hayy bin Zinin. The Prophet gave him the glad tidings of his reward on each member of the clan. A Companion named Abdul Rahaman

said to the Prophet that he had forgotten the reward. The Prophet then told Abdul Rahaman that “I will write for you a will (that will be executed after me) Abdul Rahaman said that He (the Prophet) wrote it, stamped it and then gave it to me”.

Besides these evidences, we have seen in the Islamic history quite a few instances where the Prophet documented series of his saying in form of letters and agreements among others. Such circumstances are highlighted below:

Prior to the Prophet’s migration to Madinah, he permitted some of the early Muslims that are being persecuted to migrate to Abyssinia with a letter of recommendation to the Abyssinia King Negus, He also ordered Mus’ab bin Umayr and Sarakah bin Malik through his letter with orders to write the Aqabah agreement.

The Prophet also made a written declaration about the administration of the new State in Madinah known in Islamic history as *Ṣaḥīfah Al-Madinah* and made it a promulgated law binding on every inhabitant of the city. Series of letters were written by the Prophet in Madinah to many great rulers of that time notable ones among others are the Emperors of Persia and Byzantine and the king of Egypt to mention but a few.

Ali bin Abu Talib was also ordered to write proclamation of the city of Mecca after its conquest.

SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

What are the evidences that assert the documentation and preservation of *Ḥadīth*?

3.3 The misconception *Aḥādīth* on Prohibition of *Ḥadīth* Documentation

It is an undeniable fact that the Prophet once prohibited some of his Companions from written his utterances, which the biased Orientalists radically used as offensive weapon to criticize the *Ḥadīth*. The *Aḥādīth* prohibiting the documentation of *Ḥadīth* by the Prophet are quoted below followed by the reasons surrounding the prohibition:

The three reports from which the Orientalists presented their source for prohibition of *Ḥadīth* are: The *Ḥadīth* of Abu Hurairah, Abu Said al-khudry and that of Zaid bin al-Thabit.

(1) Imam Ahmad and others related from Abu Hurairah that “The Messenger of Allah came out (to us) while we were documenting *Aḥādīth* (plural of *Ḥadīth*) and he said, ‘what’s this that you are documenting?’ We said: “your utterances we heard from you’ he said: “A book beside the book of Allah? Did you know (that) the preceded nations before you went astray because of their documentation of (other books) with Allah’s book the Most High?

(2) Imam Muslim and others, relate similar things in the narration of Abu Sa‘īd Al-Khudrī who said that:- The Prophet said, ‘do not document anything (saying) from me except the Qur’an, whoever did so should (immediately) erase it’.

(3) Abu Dāwud also related a similitude of the *Ḥadīth* but with weak chain from Zaid bn al-Thabit which goes thus: Zaid bn al-Thabit enters unto Muawiyah, who asked him about a tradition (regarding legislation), he ordered someone to document it then said: “Verily the Messenger of Allah (PBOH) ordered us not to document anything (in regards) his utterances beside the Quran”.

The prohibition was made by the Prophet because of the following reasons.

1. The Prophet feared for the mixing of the textual origin of the Qur’an with *Ḥadīth* at earlier stage, but permitted it after such fear was no more.

2. The order for prohibition was directed to the new converts into Islamic fold so as to prevent them from grievous mistake of mixing both texts (Qur’an and *Ḥadīth*). Some Companions that were very versed in both writing and reading like Abudullah bn Umar were exempted from such prohibition.

3. We may also argue that the prohibition was meant to avoid documentation of *Ḥadīth* and the Qur’an on the same written materials.

Documentation of the prophetic *Ḥadīth* continued in the period of Companions, whose number during the last pilgrimage of the Prophet (*Ḥajatul al wadā'*) reached 90,000 or more according to some writers. The Companions tried immensely to preserve the *Sunnah* of the Prophet through transmission of whatever they heard from the Prophet among themselves and pass it to the next generation. An undisputable fact on this point is the *Ṣaḥīfah* of a disciple of that great Companion, Abu-Hurairah named Hamman bn Munabih who documented what he heard and collected from his master and then compiled it into some *Ṣaḥīfah* (pages).

The period of *Ṣaḥābah* (Companions) of the Prophet came to an end with the death of Abu Tufail “Amir bin Wathilah al-Laithi” in the year 100, thus the period of the *Tābiūn* emerged with the Caliph Umar bin Abdul Azeez, He instructed Imam Ibn Shahaby al-Zuhrī (51 – 124 A.H) and the then governor of Madinah, Abu-Bakr Muhammad bin Amir bin Hazm to collect *Aḥādīth* from Umrah but could not live longer enough to witness the given instruction ; Other collectors of *Ḥadīth* worthy of mentioning are Abu Qahafa (died 107 A.H), Makhūl (died 116 A.H) and Imam Malik bn Anas (93 – 179 A.H) among others. Our discussion will be incomplete without mentioning the intelligent that great Imam of *Ḥadīth* Al-Bukhārī Muhammad bn Ismail (194 -256 A.H) who critically examined the *Isnād* (chain of narrators) in science of *Ḥadīth*.

Some contemporary Western Scholars of *Ḥadīth* with un-skeptical minds like Herbert Berg, Fred M. Donner and Wilferd Madelung among others who immersed themselves in *Ḥadīth* literature establishes the authenticity of *Ḥadīth*.

Willferd Madelung has this to say after he made his evolution of some selection of prophetic tradition to some length:-

“Work with the narrative source, both those that have been available to historians for a long time and others which have been published recently, made it plain that their wholesale rejection as late fiction is unjustified and that with (not without) a judicious use of them, a much more reliable and an accurate portrait of the period can be drawn than has been realized so far”.

Another scholar of Islam Harald Motzki also agreed with the research and findings of Scholars of *Ḥadīth* who distinguished the authentic from the fabricated ones, as he concluded that “The mere fact that (some) *Aḥādīth* and *asānīd* were forged must not lead us to

conclude that all of them are fictitious or that the genuine and the spurious cannot be distinguished with some degree of certainty”.

SELF ASSESMENT EXERCISE

State and defend the misconception *Aḥādīth* in regards to documentation of *Ḥadīth* of the Prophet?

4.0 Conclusion

After scrutiny of the above topic, we come to conclusion that *Ḥadīth* is an authentic and indispensable source of Islamic legislation which was preserved and documented earlier in the Prophet’s era.

5.0 Summary

In this unit so far, we have dealt with the topic, criticism of *Ḥadīth* from the following perspectives: Orientalists and the preservation of *Ḥadīth*, *Ḥadīth* in historical documentation and preservation and Orientalists and the misconception *Aḥādīth* on prohibition of *Ḥadīth* documentation.

6.0 Tutor Marked Assignments

- 1 Explain the Orientalists method of criticism of *Ḥadīth*?
- 2 What are the evidences that *Ḥadīth* was actually preserved?
- 3 What are the views of the Orientalists in regards to documentation of hadith?

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MODULE4: THE *SHARĪ'AH*

Unit 1: Islam and Polygamy

Unit 2: Aspect of Islamic Penal Code

UNIT 1: ISLAM AND POLYGAMY

CONTENTS

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objective
- 3.0 Main content
 - 3.1 Meaning of polygamy
 - 3.2 Virtues of polygamy
 - 3.3 Position of women in Islam
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor marked Assignments
- 7.0 References / further readings

1.0 Introduction

Polygamy means plurality of wives. It is another hotly debated issue by the Orientalists as Islam is accused for its assertion, issues examined in the unit are: Meaning of polygamy, Virtues of polygamy and Position of women in Islam.

2.0 Objective

It is hoped that by the end of this unit, the Learner should be able to:

- ❖ Explain the meaning of polygamy
- ❖ List the Virtues of polygamy
- ❖ State the position of women in Islam

3.0 MAIN CONTENTS

3.1 Meaning of polygamy

Polygamy is marrying more than one wife. In other words plurality of wives, a social phenomenon predated Islamic era and was not a new in the entire human history as to

the unfounded claims against the Prophet as the initiator. It has been in existence among the ancient world, like the Babylonians, Medians, Abyssinia and other Asian world including the Persian and the Arabs amongst others. The ancient Greeks legalized polygamous marriage and it is a common practice among the Jewish and Christian religions as most of the Jewish Prophets practiced the system according to the Talmud Law as Musa (Moses) allowed and authenticated the practice among the Israelites.

The Arabs used to marry a large number of wives in the pre Islamic era till its regulation (by Islam).

John Esposito, an American historian summarized polygamy practice under the Semitic cultures. According to him, the culture generally permitted polygamy as it is said that it can be found in Biblical and post Biblical Judaism. He further expatiated on the practice as a common practice among them, especially the nobles and leaders.

SELF ASSESMENT EXERCISE

Explain the Islamic views on polygamy?

3.2 Virtues of polygamy

Islam and its divine guidance are complete way of life that recognizes no utopian laws, for God has perfected the religion. Polygamous practice and the conditions which surround it is not a mere joke, but an important factor which deals with continuity of mankind.

There are circumstances which may bind a man to have more than a wife among these are:-

If a wife is suffering from incurable disease like leprosy and cancer, barrenness, old age among others. Also when a wife becomes disobedient or being affected with unsound mind which may affect the children's future and other circumstances related to the aforementioned conditions.

The most common existing factor that necessitates polygamy is war. In this circumstance the women bear the most terrible consequences as many men lost their life which left many women without husband.

Another circumstance similar to the above (example) is increase in population. Despite the population control of the western world, millions of women are still left without marriage

either by widowhood or inability to get husband. The only option left is polygamous practice to abate devilish way of living

SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

What are the virtues of polygamous practice in Islamic concepts?

Women and Islam

The Westerners generally and the Orientalists in specific accused Islam and complained bitterly against unfair treatment of women, as they accused it of reduction of her dignity, undermining her statue as well as minimizing her to sexual device and producer of siblings. Let us now examine the status of women in Europe in the pre-Islamic era and see how truthful their claim is:

Women in the ancient world were disregarded, maltreated and neglected as they were reduced to mere objects that have no right or provision, except that which can preserve her life to their advantage. The ancient scholars as well as philosophers of that era hotly debated her statue as to whether she had a soul or not if she does, is it (the soul) a human or that of an animal?

If we consensually agreed that she is that of human, does her statue equivalent to that of man, or that of a slave or a bit higher? These are some of the unreasonable questions put forward to humanity for answer from our so called civilized nations as regards the status of women.

The industrial crusade of the World War I also added to the diminishing status of women as they are given unlimited liberty to work and fend for themselves which destabilized many cognate families. On the other hand, war had passive significant on women diminishing status as millions of men lost their life or became handicapped that couldn't fend for themselves, women therefore became sexual device in community to make a living as well as protecting herself against any impulsive and inductive manner that may arise from intruders.

On the other hand, Islam position in regards to human relations is always passively accepted to those who really seek for the truth. Islamic position in regard to women's affairs is continuously active for Islam regards women as human beings with a soul equitable to that of man. She is a man in term of creation, she has the same right when

talking about legislation and ordinances of Allah, her blood is sacred except in retaliation for the same, her property, body and dignity are highly regarded as a must to be protected Quran 4 V 1 emphasizes on this that:

“O mankind! Be careful of (your duty) to your Lord Who created you from a single soul and from it created its wife and from them He spread abroad multiple of men and women’.

The European ancient world classified woman as animal; thereby ridiculed and derided her statue which Islam vehemently condemned. Qur’an 4 V 11

(O you who believe, let not a folk deride a folk who may be better than they (are), nor let women (deride) women who may be better than they are, neither defame one another, nor insult one another by nick names’.

In another chapter Islam repositioned the statue of humanity at large as one that has no preference over other except with piety as Qur’an 49 V 13 says:-

‘O mankind, surely we have created you male and female and have made you nations and tribes that you may recognize one and other. Surely, the most honourable among you in the sight of Allah, is the most righteous’.

Prophet Muhammad is accused by some Christian Clerics of invention and innovation of polygamy in the world history to satisfy his sexual desire and lustfulness as acclaimed. How blind they are to even see that Muhammad was born in a polygamous family as well as in the society that practices the system. They failed to realize how the Prophet through divine guidance restricted its unlimited practice and make it not only more organized but civilized.

Will Durant, the author of “History of Civilization” refuted and condemned the biased notion of this view.

SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

Muhammad (PBUH) innovated polygamous practice in human history, discuss?

4.0 CONCLUSION

After scrutiny of the topic, Islam and polygamy, we concluded that Muhammad wasn’t the innovator of the system as claimed by the biased Orientalists but (it’s) a prevailing norm in the ancient World that was practiced by the preceding Prophets before him and his polygamous practice was due to undeniable reasons.

5.0 SUMMARY

In this unit so far we examined the topic, Islam and polygamy from the following perspectives: Meaning of polygamy, Virtues of polygamy and women in the religion of Islam

6.0 TUTOR - MARKED ASSIGNMENTS

- 1 Muhammad is the Innovator of polygamy in human history, discuss?
- 2 Polygamous practice is one of the remedies to women's over-population, expatiate?
- 3 State and explain the virtues of polygamous practice.

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UNIT 2: ASPECTS OF ISLAMIC PENAL CODE

CONTENTS

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main contents
 - 3.1 Islamic penal code and theft
 - 3.2 Islam and Capital Punishment
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor marked assignment
- 7.0 References / Further readings

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The Islamic penal code is the rules or penalty given in Islam for various criminal offences to serve as deterrent to the community. Issues examined in this unit are: Islamic penal code and theft, Capital Punishment and Spread of Islam by Sword.

Preambles

Here we are again in defense of another wrong notion about the Islamic penal code. Most of these propagandas against the Islamic penal code by the Western Scholars and their likes always present to paint Islam black. The biting teeth is their claim of understanding the *fiqh* i.e. Islamic jurisprudence, but in reality, most topic treated in their discussion are always out of Islamic context, for their research in this field always been discussed briefly with no detail. The sources of Islamic (fundamental of jurisprudence) *Uşūl-l fiqh* and other subjects which are essentially needed for proper studies are taken for granted when the subjects are been quoted as a source for their argument. Brief example of their statements about Islamic penal code are highlighted below, the required and suitable answers to their erroneous views and notions is given accordingly. It is therefore necessary to explore their views and notions about the Islamic penal code which they based on prejudices and lack of proper knowledge.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

It is hoped that by the end of this unit the learner should be able to:

- ❖ Explain the meaning of Islamic penal code
- ❖ Defend the amputation in Islamic law
- ❖ Defend the Orientalists criticisms of the killings in Islam

3.0 MAIN CONTENTS

3.1. Islamic penal code on theft.

Islam puts forward the success of the *Ummah* (Islamic society) in preference to that of individual through its dos and don'ts in the Qur'an as law of Allah is the sole guidance of the Islamic society, therefore, any attempt to disrupt the peace and tranquility of the society will be encounter with absolute and appropriate retaliations from the divine law as such attempt is tantamount to crime against Allah, the Creator of that society. In the Muslim society, five basic things formed the backbone and needed to be perfected. These are protection of soul, property, body, consanguinity and religion. No society ever lived successfully without the protection of the aforementioned things. Stealing other people's properties due to slackness and laziness is unacceptable in Islam.

The Orientalists says that the Islamic penal code is barbaric as it legalizes cutting the hand of a thief, therefore making the culprit a handicapped that can no longer provide for his family's needs.

Basic Conditions for Amputation

Islamic penal code generally is not legislated for ulterior motive, rather, to maintain peace and tranquility in all existing facets in the society. Although, amputating the hand of a thief may look barbaric and inhuman in their views and notions, Islam always guide the unforgivable mistakes, therefore, it commands and orders thorough investigation before the punishment is implemented. For example, the presiding judge should follow the required procedures for amputation, these are:-

1 The living condition of the thief, if he lives in hardship without provisions from the required people like the Government and well to do in his neighborhood he would be spared because his condition forced him into the crime.

- 2 If he said: “I have sought for jobs and none is ready to provide my neediness, he would be spared.
3. If the economy depression of his society instigates his theft he would be spared.
4. If he is a victim of oppression as in the *Hadith* of Umar (about to be quoted) he will be spared.
5. During the time of war and famine the culprit will be spare as that is the practice of Umar.

These are some basic conditions in which a thief is liable to cutting (of his hand) but the Orientalist failed to scan the Islamic penal code due to their insolence and spite against Islam. The entire above situation fell into doubtful pit in which the Prophet ordained the prevention of the penal punishment because they are in doubtful conditions.

The Prophets says:- “prevent the application of *Hadd* (penal code) punishment as you can whenever any doubt”.

Other conditions that must be fulfilled before amputation take place are highlighted below:-

- 1 The stolen property must have been taken by stealing. If the property is taken by force like snatching or in a public place, where people are around the amputation should be prevented. We have seen in Nigeria especially in Lagos where some snatchers of a wristwatch were set ablaze and the culprit died a most tormented and painful death.
- 2 The stolen property must be a permissible things and worthy. Prohibited items in Islam, such as pigs, idols amongst others things if stolen the culprit is not liable to amputation
- 3 It must be something valuable in which the value has certain limit and that is a quarter of dinar, gold or its equivalent in other denomination of currencies.
- 4 It should be kept in a saver known to all people as a saving place, if the property is kept in unsafe place; the culprit is free from amputation.
- 5 The crime should be proven by the confession of the thief or two reliable witnesses.

6 The owner of the property must request his stolen property. If not the culprit should be acquitted from the crime.

It was related that:-

Two boys who were servants of Ibn Hatib bn Aby Baitaat stole a camel from a man of Mazinah, they were both brought to Umar and the boys confessed and admitted their crime. Umar ordered Kasser bn Al-Salt to amputate their hands. Umar discovered that the master of the slaves used to starving them and said: - “By Allah had it that I am aware that you always made them work and you starve them to the extent that if one of them ate a forbidden (things) it would be permissible for him. I would surely cut their hand” Then he turn to Ibn Hahib bn Aby Baltaat and said “By Allah if I did not do that, I will surely fine you a recompensation that will be heavy on you”. Then (Umar) said to Mazny (the camel owner) How much will you take for your (stolen) camel he said Four Hundred “Umar said to Ibn Hatim go and pay him Eight Hundred (dirham) as related by Bukhārī.

This is the justice of Islam Umar gave a legislation which acquitted the servants from amputation because they are been starved and oppressed

Islam arguably admitted the harshness of the punishment as claimed, as the culprit hand is amputated, thereby deforming is physical appearance as well as making him a man - made handicap, but they made it forgotten that Islam gave him his life to reshape and reconstruct his living-hood so as to earn himself decent and honour in the society to maintain peace and facilitate security in the society. In most of the Western countries where theft has become norm of the day, the culprit always ends up losing his life. The Islamic aim is now apparent; the hand that committed the crime is given the deserved punishment, rather than the whole body that was very common for punishment in the West. Implementation of the so called harsh-punishment has curtailed every minded person from stealing and perfect peace and tranquility as well as security is guaranteed in that Islamic country. Unlike when the region is been governed by the Ottoman-empire with application of the French-inspired penal code, many travelers within the country especially the pilgrims cannot travel peacefully without heavy security and strong escort because of the fears of highway robbers from that time (after implementing the Islamic law by the Saudi

government) till today, one could journey to every Nook and Cranny of the country without a single escort, money is been transferred from one place to another without fear or panic. Unlike most of the country with secular regimes penal code, stealing and robbing takes place even openly in the day light. Numerous of such incidents could be read in the newspapers and wide spread in the western media. The entire unfounded claim against Islamic legislation is a sort of propaganda by the Orientalists deceit to depict Islam to create certain hatred in the minds of people seeking for the truth and authenticity of Islamic creeds.

We have also seen it written in the book of Matthew as well as other books saying that: if your right eyes make you sin cast that eyes for it is better for you to lose a part of your body than losing your whole body.

We have also seen it written in the Bible that: ‘Whoever kidnap a person and sell it, he should be killed, and whoever beat his father or mother he should be killed. Why should they argued the perfect ordnances of God in the Islamic penal code on amputation whereas there are even harsher penal code in their book?

SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

What are the stipulated basic conditions before amputation in the Islamic penal code?

3.2 Islam and Capital Punishment

The Prophet and Islam were often criticized by the Orientalists for what they refer to as **merciless killings** and pioneers of unworthy wars as they came to their conclusion that Islam is intolerant religion that was spread by war and force.

Sharpe Warren B quoting one of the popular propagandas that: “Infact (Prophet Muhammad) was a terrorist, criminal and murderer whose entire life was based on victimizing innocents and indulging in mindless violence carnage and massacre”.

The writer of the above unfounded claim is referring to series of wars that was fought during the Prophet’s life in defense of the Muslims and Islam. Referring the Prophet as murderer may be referred to killings of the 600 men of rebellious Jewish tribes of Banu

Qurayza that broke the alliance of truce between the tribe and the Prophet for they engaged in treasonous agreements with the enemies in the Battle of Khandaq.

Some of the Qur'an verses are highlighted below:-

Qur'an 2 verse 193

“And fight them until persecution is no more, and religion is for Allah. But if they desist, then there be no hostility except against wrong doers 194”.

“The forbidden month is for the forbidden month and forbidden things in retaliation. And one who attacks you, attack him in the like manner as he attacked you. Observe your duty to Allah, and know that is with those who ward off evil”

The above two verses 190 of the same chapter declare that war is permissible in defense of the Muslims when oppressed or persecuted but with defined limits. Whenever the situation warranted the course, fighting in defense is allowed when all other means of settlement has failed to restore peace, tranquility and freedom of religion. .

Qur'an 216 also states that war is also allowed in defense of the Islamic *Ummah*, internal rebellion and external aggression.

“War is ordained for you; though it is hateful unto you, but it may happen that you hate a thing which is good for you, and it may happen that you love a thing which is bad for you. Allah knows and you know not”.

We have seen the exemplary attitude in the mercy and leniency of the Prophet in the battle of *Badr*, the first battle fought by the early Muslims against the infidels, the Prophet counseled some Companions in regards to the fate of the prisoners (of the war). Most of the Companions were of the view that they should kill in retaliation for the persecuted Muslims that lost their lives in Mecca and during the war but the Prophet set them free on ransom paid by the infidels.

If Muhammad (PBOH) was a merciless killer as acclaimed (by the Orientalists, he would order for their massacre mercilessly..

On the mass killing of the Banu Qurazah, the Jewish tribe that engaged in treasonous agreement with the infidels besieging Medina in the battle of Khandaq, the biased Orientals echoed the incident with unwarranted over-reaction as they delude the World by hibernating the extreme danger, risk and possible vanquish which the treasonous tribe put the Muslims in. Such killing had taken place in ancient world from time immemorial. Norman Stillman subdued the unwarranted claim he said that the incident (mass killing of the Banu Qurayza) cannot be judged by present day he referred to as moral standard he added that slaughtering of adult males and enslavement of women and children was common practice throughout the ancient world. He cites some biblical references in Deut 20:13-14.

Some of the victims who were killed in the incident confessed their crime openly and admitted there treasonous agreement with the enemy. Uhayy bn Akhatab said to the Prophet when he was about to be executed “I did not regret for making enmity with you” other Jewish tribe like the Banu Nadir made no bitter complain against the Islamic judgment as they know the penal code in the Taorah (old Testament) for treasonous indulgent with the enemy.

4.0 CONCLUSION

After our discussion in this unit, we come to our conclusion that Islamic penal code is not barbaric as claimed by the Orientalists and that war initiated in Islam is for self-defense of Muslim community.

5.0 SUMMARY

In this unit so far we have discussed the Islamic penal code in relation with the Islamic penal code on theft, its conditions, Islam and killings.

6.0 TUTOR MARKED ASSNGHMENT

- 1 Explain the motives behind the injunction of Islamic penal code?
- 2 Islamic law of amputation is barbaric discuss?
- 3 Islam permits indiscriminate killings, discuss?

7.0 REFERENCES / FURTHER READING

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