

THE PROPHETHOOD OF MUḤAMMAD

(PEACE BE ON HIM)

SOME REFLECTIONS

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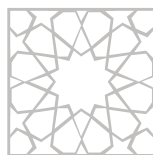
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A B S T R A C T

Prophet Muḥammad (peace be on him) had a profound, positive and sustained influence on human history more than any one else. Paradoxically, he had been and continues to be unjustly a victim of unprecedented malign, slander, prejudices and inaccurate characterizations. Perhaps the most common inaccuracy is to reject and dismiss his affirmation of being the final and universal Prophet and Messenger of Allah to humanity, because of its being current even among those authors who speak positively about him as a great and highly influential *leader* and *reformer*, but not a Prophet. This paper aiming at readers both from Muslim and other faith communities, focuses on this issue and presents an analysis of his claim of prophethood, to facilitate objective readers/researchers to reflect on the Muslim perspective regarding this vital issue.



SOCIAL PROBLEMS OF RUMOUR MONGERING SOME INSIGHTS IN THE LIGHT OF *SHARĪ'AH*^{*}

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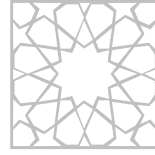
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A B S T R A C T

In our present day society rumour-mongering is rampant in every section of the society, leaders as well as commoners. However, in view of *Sharī'ah*, rumour-mongering is a serious crime which incurs the wrath of Allah not only in this world but also in the hereafter.

During the life time of the Prophet (peace be on him), rumour-mongering was the *modus operandi* of the *munāfiqīn* (hypocrites), who always were on the lookout to malign the nascent Muslim society. In view of the baneful effects of rumour-mongering and scandalization, *Sharī'ah* makes it incumbent on the citizens of an Islamic state to avoid spreading rumours and keep themselves on guard and be vigilant to forestall such elements who circulate false tidings for sinister motives. This paper seeks to look into the inroads that this heinous offence has made into our society, its baneful effects on the society, and then attempts to present some insights on the issue from the perspective of *Sharī'ah*.

^{*} This author is grateful to the anonymous referees and the editor *Insights* for their comments on an earlier version of this article.



THE QUR'ĀN ON ITS ORIGIN

KHALID ALAVI*

Introduction

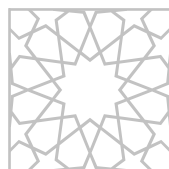
Muslim and non Muslim scholars have deliberated on various aspects of the Qur'ān. An important facet of these discussions is the issue of the authorship of the Qur'ān and the nature of the revelation it claims to contain. Was the Prophet (peace be on him) only the recipient of text or he received the meanings and the substance only and he himself coined the words and produced the text? If the Prophet (peace be on him) was only the recipient of the text then what was the format in which he received the text?

The Judeo-Christian tradition is said to be based on the concept of inspiration of the scripture/bible.¹ Though commonly according to the inspiration theory the meaning and substance have divine origin, the language is of human origin, where the inspired person receives the substance and then he communicates it in his own words, a wide variety of views exist among Christian scholars about the nature of biblical inspiration. Starting from the accounts of written revelation²

* Dr Khalid Alavi, Ex-Director General, Da'wah Academy, IIUI; Dean Faculty of Islamic Studies, WISH, Islamabad, breathed his last on Tuesday, November 18, 2008 between Ṣalāt 'l-Maghrib and 'Ishā'. *Innā li Allāh wa innā ilayh Rāji'un*. This article seems to be his last academic contribution. He submitted its draft on Tuesday, November 4, 2008, some fifteen days before his death. All references and translation of the meanings of the Qur'ānic āyāt are added by the editor *Insights* who solely bears its responsibility. May Allah Almighty make it a continuous source of reward for late Dr Alavi! Amin.

1. The Bible contains many passages in which the authors claim divine inspiration for their message, one such statement is: "All scripture is given by inspiration" (2 Tim. 3:16).

2. To support the idea of written revelation they refer to the accounts such as Moses (peace be on him) receiving the Ten Commandments.



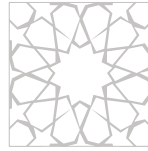
THE ZIONIST CLAIMS TO AL-HARAM AL-SHARĪF AND AL-AQṢĀ MOSQUE A BIBLICAL PERSPECTIVE¹

MICHEL EDDEH

Former Minister of Information and Education, Lebanon

With their bare hands and fresh blood, the Palestinians are continuing the struggle for their inalienable rights to their homeland. And as the Palestinian children, and old and young men and women sustain their intifada [intifāḍah] for al-Aqṣā Mosque and al-Quds al-Sharīf, they are not facing only the barbaric bullets, rockets, bulldozers, tanks and aircrafts of the Israeli occupation forces. They are, in fact, defying a myth that has been successfully inculcated in the minds of the westerners by the Zionist movement, with its potent influence on the media, its sturdy lobbies at the centres of political power, and alliance with the western colonial powers, old and new. They are also discrediting the main theses in this century-old myth. The myth rests on the assumption that a unified Jewish nation has maintained its presence since ancient history and lived in a Jewish state that emerged three thousand years ago. This imagined nation has since taken what the Jews call 'Yerushalaim' as its capital. The 'Temple' has since been the pivotal

1. This article presenting a variant reading of the historical events and the Biblical texts, was first published in *Islamic Studies*, vol. 40, no. 3-4 (2001), pp. 649-654, as *Viewpoint*, and is being reproduced with the kind permission of the editor, *Islamic Studies*. All information in the footnotes, however, is added by the editor *Insights*, who bears its responsibility.



THE GLOBAL ECONOMIC CRISIS AND ISLAMIC FINANCE

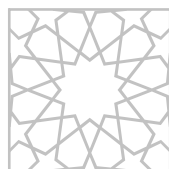
LORETTA NAPOLEONI*

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Introduction

The global financial crisis began in July 2007 with a liquidity crisis in the United States due to loss of confidence of investors in the value of securitized mortgages. TED spread, an indicator of perceived credit risk in the general economy, spiked up in July 2007, remained volatile for a year, then spiked even higher in September, 2008, deepening the crisis, as stock markets worldwide crashed and entered a period of high volatility, and a considerable number of banks, mortgage lenders and insurance companies failed, including the two United States Government sponsored enterprises (GSEs), Fannie Mae (Federal National Mortgage Association) and Freddie Mac (Federal Home Loan Mortgage Corporation), which were placed into conservator-ship run by FHFA. Beginning with bankruptcy of Lehman Brothers on September 14, 2008, the financial crisis entered an acute phase marked by failures of prominent American and European banks. Merrill Lynch was purchased by the Bank of America, the American International Group (AIG), a significant participant in the credit default

* Loretta Napoleoni is an economist, journalist, and author whose books include: *Modern Jihad: Tracing the Dollars Behind the Terror Networks* (London: Pluto, 2003); *Terror Incorporated: Tracing the Money Behind Global Terrorism* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 2004) and *Rogue Economics: Capitalism's New Reality* (New York: Seven Stories, 2008). She has served as a Fulbright scholar at Johns Hopkins University's Paul H. Nitze School of Advanced International Studies in Washington DC and a Rotary Scholar at the London School of Economics. An expert on financing of terrorism, she advises several governments on counter-terrorism. She is also a senior partner of G Risk, a London based risk agency.



MUSLIMS IN BELGIUM^{*}

Introduction

Belgium is one of the countries forming the Benelux, together with The Netherlands and Luxembourg, and is located in the Northwestern Europe. It borders to The Netherlands, France, Luxembourg, Germany and the Atlantic Ocean.

Belgium covers an area of 30,528 Km², and has a very dense population of about 10.7 million inhabitants. Belgium's two largest regions are the Dutch-speaking region of Flanders in the north, and the French-speaking southern region of Wallonia.

The climate is maritime temperate, with significant precipitation in all seasons. The average temperature is lowest in January at 3°C, and highest in July at 18°C.

Belgium is a founding member of the European Union and hosts its headquarters, as well as those of other major international organizations, including the NATO. Its official currency is the Euro since 2002 and the capital city is Brussels and holds 10% of the Belgian

^{*}This article is authored by a group of researchers associated with Euro-Islam. It was first published on the website: <<http://www.euro-islam.info/>>, on Saturday 1 March 2008; It was later updated on Thursday 5 June 2008. The updated version which is being produced here with kind permission of the administration of Euro-Islam is available at: <http://www.euro-islam.info/spip/article.php3?id_article=2168>. We have, however, added the introduction and edited the footnotes to conform the reference style of *Insights* for the convenience of our readers. Ed.



FULL CIRCLE

AN ICELANDER'S JOURNEY TO ISLAM

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I was born in Reykjavik, the capital of Iceland¹ more than 50 years ago. I was the oldest of 4 siblings; 2 brothers and 2 sisters. My father was a blacksmith, a very rough man and my mother was, and is a secretary, a very mild woman. In Iceland religion was all but dead at that time, few people practiced the Christian/Protestant faith of the country, most people were atheists, believed that there is no Creator of the World... the Universe is coming from nowhere and going nowhere, for no reason at all. Though many people would admit: "Yes there are things we don't know"... "Yes there is something" ... "Mother Nature"... "Universal Spirit"... "But these things we don't understand, and not used to think too much about it"... "let's enjoy life today, tomorrow we die... and all its over"...

But my mother was one of the few, the only one in our family, who,

1. Iceland is an island of almost 40,000 square miles, the same size as Ohio. Iceland has a population of 300,000 and more than half live in the Greater Reykjavik area. The official language is Icelandic but most Icelanders speak fluent English. In spite of its mid-Atlantic location, Iceland is on Greenwich Mean Time all year round. Icelanders enjoy one of the highest standards of living in the world. Situated on the Mid-Atlantic Ridge, Iceland is a hot spot of geothermal activity. Thirty volcanoes have erupted in the past two centuries, and natural hot water supplies much of the population with cheap, pollution-free heating. Iceland's highest peak, Hvannadalshnjukur, is 6,500 feet. Iceland has the largest glaciers in Europe - in fact, 11% of the country is covered by glaciers. The coastline is dotted with more than one hundred fjords and green, fertile valleys extend from many of them. Iceland also has more than 10,000 waterfalls and countless hot springs. A lot of the country is technically uninhabitable, with the moss-covered rocks of ancient lava flows and tall treeless mountains, but these moonscapes - the NASA astronauts actually trained in Iceland before the first moon landing - are perfect for exploring an otherworldly looking place. See, < <http://www.goiceland.org/page.php?49#101> >.



AROUND THE CAMPUS

A number of seminars, courses, and lectures were arranged for the benefit of the University students and various segments of the society at large at the International Islamic University Islamabad and its constituent units during the third and fourth quarters of the year 2008.

PERSUASION VS. PROPAGANDA: AN ETHICAL DILEMMA

International Islamic University, Islamabad (IIUI) held a lecture on “Persuasion Vs Propaganda: An Ethical Dilemma” on July 12, 2008. Dr. Robert Jensen, Professor School of Journalism, University of Texas, Austin was the guest speaker.

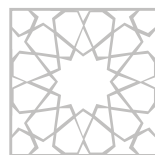
MEDIA LAW AND ETHICS: PRACTICES AND CHALLENGES

Center for Media and Communication Studies IIUI organized a seminar on “Media Law and Ethics: Practices and Challenges” on 17th July 2008. Ms. Misbah Saboohi pointed at the shortcomings of the PEMRA ordinance and stressed the need of a self regulatory body to frame a code of conduct for the private media channels. Dr Robert Jensen while giving international perspective on the issue of ethics in media industry stressed that state control on media means that there is no meaningful democracy in a country.

GLOBALIZATION AND THE STATE OF DEMOCRACY: GLOBAL PERSPECTIVES

Globalization has widened the gap between rich and poor countries. It was stated by Senator Mushahid H. Syed at a discussion “Globalization and the State of Democracy: Global Perspectives,” held by Iqbal International Institute for Research and Dialogue (IRD), IIUI.

Senator MH Syed said that democracy is not on the agenda of globalization & even economic dimensions of globalization are determined by the West’s geo-strategic interests and not by the principles of free trade which is often used as PR slogans. He added that the double standard of the West about democracy became abundantly clear when they denied the right of Hams to govern Palestine after it had won the elections fair and square. He observed that every country has “Holy Cows” and the holy cow of US is Israel. The Iraq war, he said, was waged on deceptions, lies and falsehood, without any significant support from the American people. This clearly shows that even in the US there is a wide gap between what the people want and what their government does. Dr. Manzoor Ahmad observed that due to its feudal and tribal nature Pakistani society has to go a long way in cultivating democratic values in its political culture. He added that democracy cannot be imported rather democratic values have to grow from within our own society & culture. Dr Jensen said that institutions of democracy must be based on effective and meaningful participation of citizens in policy making process



ASMA GULL HASAN
WHY I AM A MUSLIM: AN AMERICAN ODYSSEY

LONDON: ELEMENT, 2004. PAGES: 172. PAPERBACK.

ISBN 0-00717534-5. PRICE: US\$ 14.95.

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Why I Am a Muslim: An American Odyssey, is Asma Gull Hasan's daring and passionate narrative of self identification of being both Muslim and American at the same time. The book is a reminiscence of many other texts of the same title "Why I am" or "Why I am not" types. It may also be taken as a common Muslim's response to Ibn Warraq's "Why I am not a Muslim," a polemic critique of Islam & the Qur'ān.

The book is written against a backdrop of the tragic events of 9/11 in the United States of America. It questions the stereotypical attitudes of both the extremist Muslims, and the hostile and sceptic non-Muslim western audience. At a time of despair and insecurity when many Muslims were feeling ashamed for the acts of those few who allegedly committed awful acts in the name of their faith Asma gave a message of hope and reminded the Muslims about their glorious past and the rich contribution of Islam and Muslims to the development of human civilisation.

Asma was born in Chicago to Pakistani immigrant Parents. She was educated in Wellesley College and the New York University School of Law. Her family background and American cultural experience make her an audacious and open minded person as is evident from her work. In the Introduction Asma sets out the rationale behind writing of this book: "You don't know what it's like to be a Muslim



DR V. ABDUR RAHIM
EUROPE SPEAKS ARABIC

TORONTO: INSTITUTE OF THE LANGUAGE OF THE QURAN, 2008.
PAGES: XVIII+194. PAPERBACK. ISBN 978-81-7898-5. PRICE: NOT GIVEN.

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The author, a seasoned philologist with more than twenty books on his credit, begins this work by asserting that “Arabic gave Europe cotton to wear, candy to eat, coffee to drink, chess to play, magazine to read, sofa to recline on, mattress to sleep on, cipher to calculate with, cable to communicate with, racket to play tennis with, sugar to sweeten with, Cheque to draw money with, and a host of other words” (p. v). The *raison d'être* of the book under review is creating an interest and understanding of common human cultural heritage...in many cases Arabic provided the name and the raw material and Europe developed it into a highly sophisticated finished product (see, p. v).

The scholars of linguistics know that Arabic influenced the Spanish and Portuguese more than other European languages i.e. English, French, Italian, German, Dutch, Danish, Swedish, Russian, Macedonian, Serbo-Croatian and Polish. The author discusses the impact of Arabic primarily on English and then on other European languages through only a selected group of words pertaining to History, Mathematics, Astronomy, Amenities, Entertainment and Amusement, Trade, Clothing, Fruits and vegetables, Seasonings, sweets, Drinks, Science, Alchemy, Animal kingdom, Utensils and miscellaneous, spanning over seventeen chapters. Index of English Words (pp. 187-190) and Index of Arabic Words (pp. 191-194) reveal that only 236 Arabic and 255 English words have been dealt with. The Introduction (pp. ix-xvi) introduces the basic framework and the methodology.