DEVELOPMENT OF MUSLIM EPISTEMOLOGY
FROM IBN ISHAQ TO AL-MASUDI

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MS History

Reg. # 62-FSS/MSHS/F14

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Acc # _TH21243_

MS
181.07
AFD

1. Islamic philosophy
2. Islamic literature
3. Sufism
4. Ibn 'A Al-Masudi

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Reg. # 62-FSS/MSHIS/F14

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the
Degree of MS in the discipline of History
with specialization in Muslim Historiography
at the faculty of Social Sciences,
International Islamic University
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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَٰنِ الرَّحِيمِ

To
Family and Teachers

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Title of Dissertation: "DEVELOPMENT OF MUSLIM EPISTEMOLOGY FROM IBN ISHAQ TO AL-MASUDI".
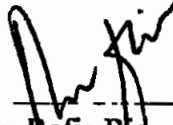
Name of Student: **AFSHEEN KIRAN**

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Accepted by the Department of History & Pakistan Studies, Faculty of Social Sciences, International Islamic University, Islamabad, in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of Master Studies (MS) in the Discipline of HISTORY
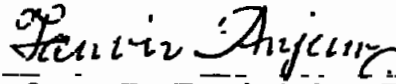
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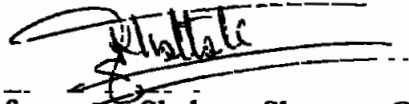Dean, FSS, International Islamic University, ISLAMABAD

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Dated: **July 18 , 2019**

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

ABSTRACT

Every society has an epistemology which reflects its worldview. This worldview is a reflection on the society's concept of man, the universe and the God. In this way it is the understanding of the relationship of the different components of the world. The concept of knowledge in the society plays a major role in shaping the nature of various disciplines and branches of knowledge Epistemology in Islamic perspective means is theory, action and thought The present study aims to identify the development of Muslim epistemology in the light of the studies of early Muslim Arab historians from Ibn Ishaq to Al-Masudi. Development of Muslim epistemology in early Muslim historians was the influence of inherited as well as the religious traditions of Islam. Muslim historians inherited various historical traditions in the form of Ayyam al-Arab, genealogy and poetry from pre-Islamic Arabs through oral transmission. The style and method of these traditions had a great influence on the style and method of Muslim historical writings which is a proof for the claim that Muslim historical consciousness was an indigenous phenomenon. While the concept of history and historical knowledge was the result of their religious teachings. Quran and Hadith are two most important religious traditions that inspired early Muslim historians to introduced history as a distinct branch of science. The present study will explore the role and influence of these traditions in the historical narratives of the early Muslim historians.

GLOSSARY

Adab	Literally meaning is Literature but in classical Arab Islam it refers to limited range of literally works
Ahl al-Kitab	The followers of scriptures professing religions that predate Islam
Akhbari	Reporter or transmitter of a historical report
Amsar	Garrison towns of Kufa and Basra
Ansab (plural of nasb)	Genealogies
Ashraf (pl. of Sharif)	Notables or the high class
Ayyam (pl. of yawm)	A branch of knowledge that deals with the battle-days of pre-Islamic Arabs
Diwan	Registers/ also collection of poetry
Futuh (pl. of fath)	Conquests
Ahadith (pl. of *hadith*	The sayings of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH)
Hijrah	Prophet Muhammad (PBUH)'s departure from Makkah to settled in Madinah (migration)
Huffaz (pl. of hafiz)	Those Muslims who learnt the Holy Quran by heart
Isnad	Authority of the chain of transmitters
Ilm al-kalam	A branch of knowledge that studies the basic doctrines of Islamic faith
Ilm al-rijal	A branch of knowledge deals with the study of men who transmitted *Hadith*

Muhajirin	The emigrants who migrated from Makkah to Madinah with Prophet Muhammad (PBUH)
Mawali	Literally meaning clients or freedmen. A term used in the early centuries of Islam for the non-Arab Muslims
Qiblah	Direction of the *Kabah* towards which all Muslims turn in prayer
Qisas (pl. of qissa)	Local tales or stories
Qurrah	Those who recite Quran with proper rules of citations
Rawi	A professional reciter of poetry/ also transmitter of *hadith*
Sahifah	An Arabic word which means a surface to write on. In Islamic history it was used to the written fragments of Quran and *Hadith*
Sirah	A record of the Life of Prophet Muhammad
Surah	A term used for the chapter of the Holy Quran
Ta'abis	Those Muslims who had seen and followed the companions of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH)
Tabaqat (pl. of tabaqah)	A biographical dictionary arranged in ranks, classes or generations
Tafsir	Exegesis of the Quran aimed at the explanation or interpretation of Quranic verses
Tarikh	Dates and eras in Islamic world- chronology/ also works on history

DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this thesis is the result of my individual research and that it has not been submitted concurrently to any other university for any other degree.

AFSHEEN KIRAN
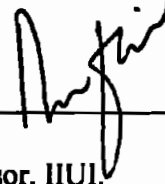
FORWARDING SHEET

This thesis entitled **Development of Muslim Epistemology from Ibn Ishaq to Al-Masudi** submitted by **Afsheen Kiran** in the partial fulfillment of **MS Degree** in History completed under my guidance and supervision. I am satisfied with the quality of student's research work and allow here to submit this thesis for further process of as per IIUI rules and regulations.

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Rafia Riaz
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INTRODUCTION

Statement of the Problem

The term 'epistemology' is a Greek word, composed of two Greek words *'episteme'* and *'logos'*. *Episteme* means 'knowledge' and *'logos'* means 'study'. It is commonly known as the 'theory of knowledge'. This theory of knowledge deals with the study of 'nature. origin. methods. scope and limitations of knowledge'. It is a branch of philosophy whose basic purpose is to answer two basic questions; firstly, it discusses what knowledge is and secondly, it tries to answer how to acquire that knowledge.

Every society has an epistemology which reflects its worldview. This is a reflection on the society's concept of man, the universe and the God. The understanding of this relationship between these three important components of the society influence the thought and actions of the members of the society As a result, each society has its own concept of knowledge or a theory of knowledge. This particular concept of knowledge in the society then shapes the production of various disciplines and branches of knowledge in that society.

In the early Muslim Arab society. the concept of knowledge was highly influenced by the worldview and principles of Islam. Islam emphasized on the importance of research and education and many Quranic verses and *ahadith* of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) developed an interest among the Muslims towards knowledge. With an Islamic perspective knowledge does not mean mere information but it covers theory. action and education. For the Muslims. acquisition of knowledge was part of their faith and it leads them towards Allah (SWT) They studied Islam as a religious duty and in the initial stages knowledge was confined to the religious studies Being influenced by the religious teachings Muslim scholars introduced many

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distinct branches of knowledge like *tafsir, ilm al-Kalam, Hadith, ilm al-rijal* etc. The discipline of history was one of the sciences which flourished under the influence of religious traditions. The Arabic word `tarikh` is used for history and it is derived from the the root `arkh` which is used in the meaning of time and date. Later on when Muslim historical writings emerged, *tarikh* was used for those historical works which contain dates and time. The historical events occurring on a certain period of time with specific causes were significant to record.

Before Islam the Arabs were not familiar with the concept of history as a branch of knowledge. They possessed some historical traditions which show that the Arabs were socially and culturally engaged in various historical activities These traditions included poetry, genealogy and *Ayyam al-Arab*. Despite historicity of the events in these traditions, they lack historical continuity, sequence and a sense of time and chronology which shows that their composers were not conscious of history. The idea of recording and dating events is related to the science of Hadith. The companions of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) and their subsequent successors show great interest in the preservation of the life and sayings of the Prophet (PBUH) for various religious purposes. This trend later on became reason for the development of the discipline of *sirah* The gradual expansion of the Muslim empire led them to the study of military life of the Prophet which became a reason for the development of the discipline of *maghazi*.

Early Muslim Arab historians were men of great intellectual abilities. They approached the discipline of history with utmost care They utilized the inherited traditions with that of the religious traditions in order to produce their own distinct historical narratives. These historians utilized the pre-Islamic Arabic traditions of poetry, genealogy and Ayyam al-Arab as inherited sciences with that of their own

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religious sciences of the Holy Quran and hadith to produce. Their greatness lies in the fact that these men wrote great histories at a time when there was no concept of historical writings at all. The present study is dedicated to the study of five prominent early Muslim historians from Ibn Ishaq to Al-Masudi. These selected five historians are Ibn Ishaq, Ibn Sa'ad, Al-Baladhuri, Al-Tabari and Al-Masudi.

The present study has explored the development of Muslim epistemology as it was reflected in the historical writings of these five selected historians. The study distinguished the influence of inherited and religious epistemology on the historical writings of these prominent historians.

Scope and Significance

The scope of the present study in terms of time is extended to two hundred years of Early Muslim history from 750 AD to 950 AD. While, scope of the study in terms of space it covers the Early Muslim historiography This particular study has an academic significance as a detailed study of the development of Muslim historical writings help in understanding the various trends of Muslim historiography. It also provides a new perspective to the already existing literature of diverse aspects Before this there is no academic work available that has discussed poetry, genealogy, *Ayyam al-Arab* as inherited traditions and the holy *Quran* and *Hadith* as religious traditions as the influencing factors for the development of the knowledge of historical writings among the early Muslim historians rather different literatures had discussed these epistemological traditions as characteristics of the early Muslim historiography.

Literature Review

There is a great amount of Literature and books available on the development of Muslim historical thought. None of these literary works look at this subject from an

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epistemological perspective. As a result, much of the literature become less successful in building the narrative that the idea of writing history among the Muslims was an indigenous phenomenon. The present study would be a building block to the already existing literature. Literature reviewed by the researcher exclusively for the present study included the following books

Franz Rosenthal, *A History of Muslim Historiography* (1968) is a very informative book with reference to the understanding of the history of Muslim historical writings This book is divided into three parts. Part one of this book provides us a good understanding about the origin of Muslim historical ideas, especially the social conditions which favoured the development of historical consciousness among the Muslim scholars. In this part the author has very clearly indicated the development of many new forms of historical writings among the early Arabs. This first part of the book is very useful in understanding the classification of the science of history in the medieval Muslim period. He has discussed various causes that played major role in the propagation of the science of history in different time periods. The scope of his discussion is quite extensive and he gives us a general review of all the possible reasons and causes for the establishment of history as a distinct branch of knowledge. He has not discussed in detail the role of pre-Islamic traditions and the Muslim traditions for shaping the historical narratives of the early Muslim historians The present study particularly discusses the role and influence of inherited traditions in the form of poetry, genealogy and *Ayyam* and the religious traditions of Quran and Sunnah in early Muslim historical narratives.

Tarif Khalidi, who is a professor of Arabic and Islamic studies in the American University of Beirut, wrote *Islamic Historiography The Histories of Masudi* (1975) It is an important literature that deals with the historiography of one

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of the important historians of early Islamic period. The author has a philosophical approach for analysing the work of Al-Masudi. In this book Khalidi has very clearly discussed almost every aspect of Al-Masudi's history It is a very useful source material for understanding the various historical aspects of Al-Masudi's history. The scope of this study is limited to Al-Masudi while the scope of the present study is extensive as it provides a comparative analysis of the works of five prominent historians of early Islamic period including Al-Masudi.

Abdul Aziz Duri's book *The Rise of Historical Writing Among the Arabs* (1983) traced the origin of Muslim historical writings particularly the early Arab historians. His major focus is the sources and methods of the Arabs historians and the various cultural factors that influenced the historical ideas of the Arabs Duri divided his book into three sections in which the first part is a general introduction of the development of history While in the subsequent sections he has identified Muslim historical writings as a result of the development of two distinct schools of historical writings. In the second part a detailed discussion of the first Islamic school of history established by the Hadith scholars of Madinah while the third part talks about the Iraqi school of Historical writings which was represented by the *akhbaris* particularly influenced by the *Ayyam al-Arab* His book is very informative to understand the nature and sources of the many early Muslim historical narratives. In this book Duri approached all the inherited traditions as the characteristics of the Arab historiography. He has not discussed their influence on the style and method of Muslim historians while the present study discusses their influence in structuring the Muslim historical narratives. They adopted the structure of inherited traditions to construct the past by experimenting many new ideas in it. This study highlights the personal contribution of the concerned historians.

One of the most relevant books to this study is written by Tarif Khalidi. The title of his book is *Arabic Historical Thought in the Classical Period* (1994). In this book Tarif Khalidi has examined the tradition of historical thought and its articulation by the early Muslim historians during eighth and fifteenth century. Tarif Khalidi in his approach is more interpretative and put historians and their works under four epistemic canopies and then analysed the influence of these epistemic canopies on the historians and the development of their historical thought. This book of Tarif Khalidi is very informative on many grounds; It provides an in-depth study of the intellectual context of the early Muslim historical writings and the frequent quotations from the works of Arab historians made it more valuable as it reflects the true nature of early Muslim historian's thoughts and approaches while writings histories. The author of the book has discussed in detail the development of historical consciousness among the Arabs and the role of various other parallel disciplines in shaping the historical ideas of many of the early Muslim historians This book is more inclined towards the influence of different disciplines on Muslim historical thinking and the development of history while the present study is more focused on the role of the inherited and religious traditions in developing historical consciousness as well as the shaping of style and methods of Muslim historical writings.

Research Objectives

The present study has the following objectives which it has tried to achieve;

1. To explore the influence of inherited traditions on the development of Muslim epistemology.

2 To examine the influence of religious traditions on the development of Muslim epistemology.

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Research Questions

The present study tries to find out answers of the following questions;

1. How did the inherited traditions in the form of poetry, genealogy and *Ayaym al-Arab* influenced the historical writings of Ibn Ishaq, Ibn Sa'ad, Al-Baladhuri, Al-Tabari and Al-Masudi?

2. What was the influence of the Holy Quran and *Hadith* as religious traditions on the development of Muslim epistemology in the writings of these five selected historians?

Research Methodology

A historical method has been used for the present study with an exploratory and descriptive approach for the analysis and interpretation of relevant data. Relevant content of inherited and religious Epistemology is extracted from the primary sources of the five selected historians The study in terms of sources relied on the primary as well as secondary sources. The primary sources are the major preferences in order to understand the influences of poetry, genealogy. *maghazi* and Quran and *Hadith*. Primary sources include the translated English version of Ibn Ishaq's *Sirat Rasul Allah* or *The Life of Muhammad*, translated by Guilaume. *Tabaqat al-Kabir* of Ibn Sa'ad, an Urdu translated version, *Futuh al-Buldan* of Al-Baladhuri in its Urdu version published by Nafees Academy and the English translations *Origins of the Islamic State, Vol I & II Tarikh al-Rusul wa al-Muluk* of Al-Tabari in Urdu and *History of Al-Tabari* in its English version and English and Urdu version of Al-Masudi's *Muruj al-Dhahab wa Ma'adin al-Jawahir*

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These primary and secondary sources are available in the central library of international Islamic University, Islamabd, Dr. Hamidullah Library, Islamic Research Institute, Faisal Mosque Campus, Dawah Library, National *Sirah* Library Islamabad.

Organization of the Study

This thesis is divided into five chapters. The first chapter deals with the influence of poetry in Muslim historical writings This chapter provides a detailed discussion on the importance of poetry as a cultural element in Arabian society before and after Islam. It discusses the importance of poetry and poets in the lives of the pre-Islamic Arabs, it also highlights its transmission to the Islamic period. In the light of the teachings of Quran and *Hadith* it was continued as a cultural component and later on when the historical writings began it becomes a great source of information for the construction of pre-Islamic Arab society. The chapter explore the influence of poetry on the mode of the writings of Muslim historians from Ibn Ishaq to Al-Masudi. It discusses the causes of the variation in use of poetry as time proceeds in Muslim historical writings.

Chapter two deals with genealogy as genealogy was one of the cultural traditions of Arab society which had a strong bearing on the development of *diwan* system in the period of pious caliphs, particularly of Umar Ibn al-Khattab. These tribal registers later on helped Muslim historians to compile the *tabaqat* studies as well as to draw information about the various tribes and individuals in the history of Islam. The chapter elaborate a detail analysis of the gradual development of genealogical studies in Muslim Arab and its influence on the Muslim historical writings. Chapter three is about the influence of *Ayyam ul-Arab* as an inherited tradition and its influence on the development of Muslim historical writings. These

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narratives play an important in the development of *maghazi* literature and the development of Muslim historical consciousness among early Muslim historians. It highlights the basic difference between *maghazi* and *Ayyam* literature Chapter four is about the role of the Holy Quran for the development of historical writings among the early Muslim historians. This chapter discusses influence of the Quran on the development of their historical studies. It talks about the importance of the texts, its compilation in various periods of Islamic period and the influence of this compilation process on the development of writings among early Muslims. The fifth chapter is dedicated to the study of *Hadith* literature, its development, and its compilation in different periods and its role in the development of Muslim historical writings · Finally, a brief conclusion of the whole study is followed by a detailed bibliography.

CHAPTER 1
POETRY AS AN INHERITED TRADITION AND ITS INFLUENCE ON MUSLIM EPISTEMOLOGY

Poetry was one of the very important literally expressions of pre-Islamic society. The poetry of this period was oral in nature and the credit goes to the Muslims particularly in the period of Umayyad Caliphate when the oral poetry was preserved in written form. Poetry had a great significance in pre-Islamic Arabia as the poets were historians and story tellers too. They played a major role in boasting the social status of their tribe. The words they produced in praise of his tribe and to defame the opposite tribe were some of his great contribution towards his own tribe. The poems they produced contain specific form and style like each poem was composed of various verses and each poet had a transmitter who memorized the poem and presented it with explanations on behalf of the poet on various occasions. As a result, the poems transferred to the later generations. This poetry was a great source of entertainment in a harsh and rigid environment where the inhabitants were in a state of war and military struggle. They used poetry for entertainment too, and therefore, the tradition allowed the transmission of poetry for posterity.

Poetry had a great influence on the development of literary traditions in early Islamic period. It was transmitted to the Islamic period through conversion of many of the pre-Islamic poets Their poetical works had many dimensions. It contains strong vocabulary, philosophical ideas and rich historical material which made it an element of great interest for the Muslim scholars, particularly the philologists (a person engaged in philology or historical linguistics), who approached these poems for their rich vocabulary and literally forms Apart from that it helped the Muslims to understand the meanings of various verses of the Quran. From the historical point of

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view, it was a great source of information for the social, cultural and economic and political condition of the pre-Islamic Arabia. In other words, they were serving as the primary source for the history pre-Islamic Arabia.

The present chapter looks at poetry as an inherited tradition as early Muslim scholars of history approached it as an important source of history for pre-Islamic period. The form and style of this poetry was adopted for the historical writings when there was no formal concept of historical writings among the Arabs The present chapter is divided into two sections. The first section highlights the development of poetry from pre-Islamic Arabs to the Islamic period and its influence on the development of Muslim historical writings The second section of the present study revolves around the influence of poetry on the Muslim historians and their historical narratives. This section analyses the usage of poetry by the first five significant Muslim historians The analysis is based on the usage, nature and quantity of the poetry by Ibn Ishaq in his *Sirat Rasul Allah*, Ibn Sa'ad in his *Tabaqat al-Kabir*, Al-Baladhuri in his *Futuh al-Buldan*, Tabari in his *Tarikh al-Rusul wa al-Muluk* and Al-Masudi in his *Muruj al-Dhahab wa Ma'adin al-Jawahir* Each historian utilized poetry differently which is directly responsible for the time and space where they live. Moreover, in this section the causes of the development of their different styles are also examined

1.1. Poetry as an Inherited Tradition

Epistemology is a branch of philosophy which deals with the philosophical study of knowledge. It deals with the nature, origin and sources of knowledge. Epistemology is a Greek term which is composed of two words 'episteme' and 'logos'.[1] Episteme

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[1] Paul Gerard Horrigan, *Epistemology An Introduction to the Philosophy of Knowledge*, (Lincoln iUniverse, 2007), vii.

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means 'knowledge' while 'logos' means 'study'. So it is often called as 'theory or study of knowledge' [2]

The term 'inherited tradition' in this study is used in the meaning of the various knowledge traditions that existed among the pre-Islamic Arabs in the form of poetry, genealogy and *Ayyam* literature. These traditions had a great significance in the development of Muslim historical knowledge among the early Muslim historians who used them as basic sources as well as the form and method of these historical traditions was adopted for the construction of their historical writings.

Before discussing the importance of poetry in pre-Islamic period, it is important to know a brief background of Arabs in order to understand background of Arabic poetry. Genealogically, the inhabitants of the Arabian Peninsula were descendants of Adnan and Qahtan.[3] They both were settled in tribes in different regions. Descendants of Qahtans were settled in the most fertile region of Yemen (part of southern Arabia) while Adnanis were settled in the Northern parts of Arabian Penninsula.[4] The southern part of Arabia was more civilized and culturally developed than the Northern part until sixth century A.D. There were settled societies in Southern part. Their archaeological remains show the existence of four kingdoms that ruled till the sixth century AD[5] During sixth century AD, the centuries old domination of the south was superseded by the Northern Arabia. It became a centre of attraction for its economic, political and religious domination. It soon covered many religious and commercial regions of north-eastern, western Arabia and parts of

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[2] Ibid

[3] Mehmood al-Hassan, *Arbon May Tarikhnigari ka Aghaz aur Irtiqa* (Delhi: Maktabah Jamai Limited. 1975). 9

[4] Ibid, 10

[5] A A Duri. *The Rise of Historical Writing Among the Arabs* Edited and Translated by Lawrence I (New Jersey· Princeton University Press. 1983). 14.

southern Syria and Southern Iraq. This resulted in the development of Northern Arabic dialect and Script which soon dominated the entire Arabian Peninsula.[6] This script helped them to develop their traditions and culture.

Inhabitants of the North were turbulent, militant and tribal in nature. Their harsh and challenging environment engaged them in continuous warfare. Powerful nomadic tribal confederacies controlled the important trade and commercial routes.[7] Each tribe was independent whose power lies in members of tribe. Towns were not only prominent for its commercial activities but claimed superiority over their local idols. Every tribe had its own idol god They developed their own cultural traditions of local inspiration. Their turbulent nature compelled them to introduce the arts of war.[8]

This section has highlighted the historical development of poetry from pre-Islamic Arabs to the Islamic period and its influence on the development of Muslim historical writings. In the first part of this section, there is a detailed discussion of the poetry among the pre-Islamic Arabia It is a description of the importance of poetry in pre-Islamic Arabia and its role in the lives of the pagans. This part explains the status of poetry as an important knowledge tradition among the Arabs. It also discusses the status of poets and their poetry which served as the custodians of their cultural values and historical norms. In the second part of this section, there is a detailed discussion on the transmission of pagan poetry into Islamic period as poetry was transferred into Islamic period by the poets of pre-Islamic Arab origin

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[6] Tarif Khalidi, *Arabic Historical Thought in the Classical Period* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 1.

[7] Ibid., 2.

[8] Ibid

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1.1.1: Importance of Poetry in Pre-Islamic Arabia

There is a beautiful statement that shows the intellectual abilities of the pre-Islamic

Arab people "Poetry was the greatest mental activity of the Arabs and submit of their

artistic attainments."[9] Poetry was one of the prominent traditions of the Northern

Arabia which was used as art of war. They used it as a strong weapon against their

opposite tribes.[10] Poetry had a great importance for them not only as an art of war but

as an element of entertainment too. In the harsh environment of dessert, it provides

them great pleasure and company. It had a significant role in developing their dignity,

unity, and pride It was a common practice among the Arab tribes to arrange

celebrations when there emerged a skilful poet in their tribe. He was expected to serve

the tribe in a more defensive way through his gifted talents [11] As a result, every tribe

had a large number of singers and poets who composed poems in favour of their

respective tribes and the bravery of their ancestors Poetry was their asset and a poet

was expected to be the best representative and defender of the tribe. Whenever there

emerged a competent and skilful poet in a tribe, they brought him to the annual fare of

ukaz.[12] It was part of their culture to celebrate the emergence of a poet as an

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[9] A. F L. Beeston, T.M Johnstone. R.B Serjeant and G.R Smith, *Arabic Literature to the End of the Umayyad Period*, edt (Cambridge The Press Syndicate, 1983), 27

[10] Suad Abdullah Sowayan, *Nabati Poetry The Oral Poetry of Arabia* (London University of California Press), 193

[11] Ibid , 312

[12] It was a marketplace where capital, commodities and cultural traditions were exchanged. Poets used to recite their poetical compositions and merchants from all around Arabia came there and they not only brought different news to Arabia but take important information related to Arabia when they were back. Overall it was a centre where many economic and cultural activities were carried out

important occasion, where all their well-wishers attend their home to congratulate the family.[13]

The earliest poetry that was recorded belongs to the beginning of the sixth century A.D.[14] This poetry was related to the poems composed by poets of two large tribes called Banu Bakr and Banu TaghliIbn[15] A prominent and long war known as battle of Basus was fought just on the issue of slaying of a she-camel.[16] It continued between the two tribes for more than forty years.[17] It produced many prominent poets of both sides. Muhalhil was the chief of Taghlib whose poetry on war of Basus remained as the most ancient poetry of pre-Islamic Arabs.[18] On the other hand, Muraqish, a representative poet of Banu Bakr was probably a contemporary of Muhalhil. Muraqish composed several verses on battle of Basus; these verses were preserved in *Mufaddaliyat*[19] by the early Muslim scholar, al-Mufaddal Ibn Muhammad IbnYalah. Another great discovery of the Muslims was the collection of

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[13] Reynold Alleyne Nicholson, *A Literally History of the Arabs* (Cambridge: The University Press, 1969), 71

[14] Reynold A. Nicholson, *Translations of Eastern Poetry and Prose*, edt , and trans (Cambridge Cambridge University Press, 2013), 1

[15] Philip K Hitti. *History of the Arabs From the Earliest Times to the Present* (New York Palgrave Macmillan, 2002) 89.

[16] Suzanne Pinckney Stetkevych, *The Mute Immortals Speak Pre-Islamic Poetry and the Poetics of Ritual* (London: Cornell University Press, 2010), 207.

[17] Ihid .

[18] D S Margoliouth. "The Origins of Arabic Poetry" *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland,* no 3 (1925). 421. Also, in *History of the Arabs* by P K Hitti, 93.

[19] It means collections of al-Mufaddal. The pre-Islamic poems compiled by al-Mufaddal between 762 to 784.

muallaqat. the seven long poems hanged on the Ka'ba composed by the ancient Arab poets [20]

The pre-Islamic Arabia was almost illiterate. Exclusively in an oral culture reading and writing were rare abilities among people and sources reveal that at the time of the emergence of Islam, there were just 15 to 20 literate people in Makkah.[21] Poetry was the most significant aspect of high culture having strong sense of history in it because it was not only used as a tool of entertainment in the harsh life of the desert but it demonstrated the culture and traditions of the tribe. It provides the moral and spiritual basis for a society which lacked any code of law.[22] The recitation of poetry was the most important feature of the annual festival at *ukaz* [23] Poets of various tribes were encouraged to demonstrate their poetical talents and the winning verses were hanged up on the walls of Ka'ba in Makkah written with golden ink as a token of appreciation for the poet and his tribe till the next year when it was replaced by the new piece of winning poetry.[24] There are seven of these poems that had been hanged on the walls of Kaaba, named as *muallaqat* [25] *Muallaqat* were important source of information for the Bedouin life of pre-Islamic Arabia. Important themes which were particularly used by the poets include the attributes of the tribe, the victories and

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[20] Literally meaning of the word is those which were hanged up or the suspended odes These were long Ancient Arabic poems which were seven in number hung up on the walls of Ka'ba

[21] N K Singh, and A. Samiuddin, *Encyclopedic Historiography of the Muslim World* (Delhi Global Vision Publication House, 2003).

[22] Khalidi, *Arabic Historical*, 4

[23] Hitti, *History of the Arabs*, 93

[24] Ibid.

[25] Ibid

bravery of the tribal heroes, beauty of women and nature, genealogy of the tribe, and admirations and prayers to the Creator (God).

The status of a poet was higher than anyone. He was considered to be a divinely inspired person who was perceived as the most learned and wise man. Every decision making was possible after the approval of the poet. He was a fortune-teller, soothsayer and a propagandist. Wars were fought on his advice and other decisions were made with his prior consultation [26] He was inspired by *jinn* who guided him to draw conclusions and made him able to predict things. The poet used to guide his tribe and its members when to move or set up a military camp, suggest the right time and place him measured best. On his advice wars were made, and the booty was equally divided among the participants of the war and his part was also held in reserve as the share of the bravest.[27] In this sense, poets were much feared among the pre-Islamic Arabs because the arrows flew from their mouth had far reaching effect on the opponent tribe than the arrows of soldiers during war.[28] The poets were the most knowledgeable people who know the culture and traditions of their tribes and they had the privilege to use all their knowledge and skills for the honour of their tribe and people.

A poet was accompanied by a *rawi* [29] *Rawi* (reciter of poetry/ also used for a narrator of hadith) basically was a reciter of the poetry in pre-Islamic Arabia, who

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[26] Ahmed Hassan Zayat, *Tarikh Adab-i Arabi*, trans. Muhammad Naeem Siddiqui (Lahore: Sheikh Muhammad Bashir and sons, n p). 72.

[27] Clement Huart *A History of Arabic Literature* (New York Appleton and Company, 1903), 8

[28] Abdullah Ibn Muslim Ibn Qutaybah, *The Excellence of the Arabs*, edt, und trans, (New York New York University Press2017), 189.

[29] Amnon Shiloah, *Music in the World of Islam A Socio-Cultural Study* (Michigan: Wayne State University Press, 1995), 21

used to learn these poems and recite them and interpret them with much exaggeration. Each poet trained a reciter for the promotion of his poetry. The *rawi* not only memorized and transmitted the poems but described the circumstances of those particular poems [30] Thus, the poems transferred through generations with a chain of famous poets and reciters. The preferable among poetry was *qasida* (the epic poem or poem of praise), *ghazal* (a poetic form of rhyming couplets or erotic lyric) and *rubai* (a form of poetry used for satire). Indecency and vulgarity in selection of the words and in theme was common Prominent among the pre-Islamic poets who received much fame were Imru'u'l-Qais, Tarafa, Zuhair, Labid, 'Amr IbnKulthum, Antara, and Al-Harith Ibn Hilliza, Nabigha and Al-Asha.[31]

1.1.2. Transmission of Poetry to the Islamic period

The advent of Islam was a major historical development in Arabia. A society based on tribal prejudice, ethnic differences and material superiority was declared as 'age of ignorance'[32] by the holy Quran.[33] Islam brought a revolutionary change in the Arabian society. It introduced new themes and concepts of virtues The pagan virtues of bravery in battles, patience in misfortune, loyalty to their tribesmen, and generosity to the poor, tribal rivalries, and persistence in revenge were highly criticized by the new religion of Islam.[34] It introduced its own virtues of oneness of God, complete submission to him, kindness, generosity, equality, rejection of the concept of

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[30] Ibid

[31] Kister, M J "The Seven Odes: Some Notes on the Compilation of the *Mu'allaqāt*." *Rivista Degli Studi Orientali* 44, no. 1 (1969). 29 http //www.jstor.org.

[32] In Arabic *"jahiliyya"* is used for ignorance. It was an age of darkness and tribalism particularly a period about one century before the advent of Islam.

[33] This term *"jahiliyya"* in the meaning of ignorance is mentioned four times in the holy Quran. See The Holy Quran. 33:33, 48. 26, 5·50, 3·154

[34] Zayat, *Tarikh Idab-i Arabi*. 125.

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superiority on the basis of material possession and power, and practice of patience [35] It clearly defined the criteria of superiority as piousness.[36] Apart from that Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) too gave importance to the concept of equality among the creation of God. This led to the reduction of all the regional and tribal prejudices prevailing among the Arabs Those poets whose poetry was a mixture of all this were equally inspired by the teachings of Quran and actions of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). In the new religion of Islam, the scope and significance of their poetry become much narrowed [37] Islam totally rejected the element of impracticality in pre-Islamic poetry due to its ignorant nature. One reason highlighted by Ahmed Hassan Zayat. He says that the pre-Islamic poetry was posing a threat to the unity and mutual affection of the Muslims due to the various elements in it.[38] Quran says:

> And We have not taught him (The Prophet) to compose verses and nor it is befitting to his dignity. It is not but admonition and luminous Quran.[39]

The prominent Muslim poets, who had a pagan origin, included Hazrat Hassan Ibn Sabith, Hazrat Kaab Ibn Malik, Abdullah Ibn Rawaha.and Ka'ab Ibn Zuhayr.[40] These poets played major role in defending the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) and Islam against the allegations posed by the Quraysh through their poetical compositions. They used poetical verses to ridicule the genealogy and leadership of the Quraysh.

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[35] Ibid

[36] The Holy Quran.49 13

[37] Zayat. *Tarikh-i Adab*. 125.

[38] Ibid. 146

[39] The Holy Quran, 36 69

[40] Each of the poets has his own distinct history in Islam They all converted to Islam during the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) s time period and served Islam under the supervision of the Prophet of Islam

Even there is a tradition that Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) himself asked Hassan Ibn Sabith to compose satirical verses in response to the verses of Quraysh against him.[41] He was sent to Abu Bakr to collect information about the weaknesses of the Quraysh and their genealogy in order to defame them.[42] Abu Bakr was well informed about the genealogy and history of the Quraysh and the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) asked them to consult Abu Bakr in order to know about the correct genealogy and weakness of Quraysh leadership [43] It was an important development for the production of poetry particularly satiric poetry in early Muslim society. The poets composed many satirical poems in defence of Islam and Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) approved it

For the development and expansion of pre-Islamic poetry, the Umayyad period has a significant role. It was during the Umayyad period that pre-Islamic poetry was collected and composed in written form for various political purposes, chief among which was to legitimize their own rule and to control the growing internal conflicts of the empire against the administration. The Umayyad caliphs made special arrangements for the preservation of this poetry Under state patronage poetry of different tribes was collected from the representative poets of various tribes in the empire. It was in the Umayyad period that two of the famous poetry collections of pre-Islamic period called *Muallaqat* and *Mufaddaliyat* were compiled by Muslim scholars, Hammad al-Rawiya and Mufaddal al-Dhabbi.[44] Al-Farazdaq was one of the

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[41] Ibn Qutaybah, *The Excellence of the Arabs*, 189.

Essad Bey. *Mohammed A Biography*, trans. Helmutl L. Ripperger (Germany· Bridges Publishing. 2018), 207.

[42] Abdullah Ali Yhya Al-Udhari. "Jahili Poetry Before Imru' Al-Qais" PhD Dissertation (London University of London, School of Oriental and African Studies 1991). 22.

[43] Resit Haylamaz, *Abu Bakr The Pinnacle of Truthfulness* (New Jersey, Tughra Books, 2013). n.p

[44] Julie Scott Meisami, and Paul Starkey, edt., *Encyclopedia of Arabic Literature*. Vol 1 (Abingdon Routledge, 2003). 100

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representative official poets of the Umayyad court. He was an expert in the poetry of pre-Islamic poets, Imru al-Qais and many more.[45] Dhul Rumma is another important and controversial poet of Umayyad Empire to whom a great amount of preserved poetry was credited [46]

The process of collection and recording of ancient poetry continued during the Abbasid period too During the ninth century of Islam, there saw a rapid progress in the preservation of the literally traditions of Arabia. The basic reason was the competitive environment that developed in the Abbasid Empire. The Abbasid court was a centre of diverse literally activities. It was occupied by Greek and Persian scholars, secretaries and writers who were the converts belong to non-Arab origin. They achieved high intellectual successes as a result in the early days of Abbasids, they occupied and begin to influence many important administrative positions.[47] The Arabs felt threatened by the activities of these scholars as they were introducing new themes and ideas into Arab culture. In such a situation the Arab philologists, grammarians, genealogists and historians increased their services in order to preserve the glorious traditions of Arabs. This included the poetry, genealogy and *Ayyam* literature of the pre-Islamic Arabia because of its rich and vast literature. Philologists begin to compile the archives of Arabic literature. This is called *diwan*[48] collections.

Poetry is considered to be *diwan* or register of Arabs as it was a great source of information on the history, language and literature of the Arab nation It was a

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[45] al-Udhari, "Jahili Poetry Before Imru' Al-Qais," 21

[46] Ibid , 6

[47] Particularly the Barmakids They were intellectuals belong to Iranian family who hold a strong control on Abbasid court and princes

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[48] Literally meaning of the term '*diwan*' is list or a register It is a Persian word used for the collection of poems in the Abassid period by Armenian Philologists of Persian origin

general opinion of the scholars that the poetry of the pre-Islamic Arabia was many times large than that of the one collected by Muslim scholars of eighth century.[49] This poetry was made part of the overall educational system of the empire.[50] Poetry soon served as an important source of history in early accounts of *sirah* historians. They included poetry in their *sirah* of Muhammad because there was vast information related to events of the life of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). This poetry comprised of those poets who were contemporary to the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). This including poetry of Hassan Ibn Sabith, Ka'ab Ibn Zubyr, Ka'ab Ibn Malik, Ali Ibn Talib, Abu Talib and many more [51] The poems they composed were providing much important information about diverse subjects. They used this poetry to interpret different events of the life of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) and events prior to the advent of Islam. For example. it was the poetry of pre-Islamic Arabia that helps us to understand the actual situation of Arabia before and at the dawn of Islam.

Poetry has a great proportion in narratives of early Muslim historians. There were no strict rules to define historical writings during the early years of Muslim historiography. Historians were free to experiment while writing of historical narratives. *Sirah* historians of classical Islam experimented with all the existing literature of the period because till that knowledge was only confined to the religious sciences, Quran and *Hadith* Taking advantage of the situation our first *sirah* historian, Ibn Ishaq, conducted experiments for the first time in order to compose a

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[49] Khalidi, *Arabic Historical Thought*, 5

[50] Al-Udhari, *Jahili Poetry*, 7.

[51] The poems composed by the companions of the Prophet served the primary source for many historical events of early Islam Ibn Ishaq has mentioned poetry on the authority of Abu Bakr Siddique, Abi Ibn Abi Talib and amny more companions of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). See, Ibn Ishaq, *Life of Muhammad*, 121

detailed narrative history on the life of the Prophet. His age was very favourable for the practice of poetry.

1.2. Influence of Poetry on Muslim Historians

Poetry has a significant role and influence on the histories produced by early Muslim historians from Ibn Ishaq to Al-Masudi. Each historian not only used it as a source of historical knowledge but the style and form of their historical narratives were equally influenced by the method and form of pre-Islamic Arabic poetry. Muslim historians like Ibn Ishaq, Ibn Sa'ad, Al-Baladhuri, Al-Tabari and Al-Masudi, quoted poetical verses throughout their historical narratives. These citation ranges from the insertion of long poems of historical nature to short fragments of verse, subject to the time and space of each historian The form and style of poetry was adopted for writing of history as there were no set rules or methods defined for the historical writings.

The present section explores and analyses the influence of poetry on the writings of early Muslim historians. It explores the usage of poetry in different periods of time as each Muslim historical narrative contained poetry differently in terms of nature, quantity and theme Historians of the initial centuries used poetry in abundance While in the subsequent centuries, there appeared a major shift in the usage of poetry in historical narratives. Historians began to reduce the proportion of poetry in their historical narratives The present chapter talks about certain reasons responsible for this change and highlight the usage of poetry in the works of Al-Baladhuri, Al-Tabari and Al-Masudi.

1.2.1. Influence of Poetry on Ibn Ishaq

Ibn Ishaq used poetry throughout *sirah* Poetry is used as a source and evidence for almost every important historical event. Poetry has a great proportion in *sirah* of Ibn Ishaq. Ibn Hisham in his editorial work of *sirah* excluded much of this poetry as he found it spurious and untrue but still there a large amount of poetical verses preserved regarding the events of the life of the Holy Prophet[52] Doubts and misgivings in poetry of the *sirah* are often highlighted in Muslim scholarship.[53] But the role it played cannot be denied because on the one hand it provides vitality and dynamism to the historical narrative and on the other hand it serves as a source of historical knowledge.

Poetry was an important cultural tradition of Arabia. It was carried through generations by oral transmission. In the new environment of Islam, for various political and literally needs of the empire, its value and importance was soon realized and written down by scholars under state patronage This written and oral form of poetry was fully utilized by the early Muslim historians in their historical writings. When the early Muslim historians begin to write biography of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), they found a large number of Islamic poetry that was composed for the Prophet. Poetry, apart from Quran and *Hadith*, is an important source of information for *sirah* and history of early years of Islam. Sir William Muir has declared verses of the contemporary poets of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) as a valuable source of information on events of the life of the Prophet. Their value lies in their role of providing conformity to various historical incidents [54]

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[52] W 'Arafat. "Early Critics of the Authenticity of the Poetry of the 'Siia'." *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies,* University of London 21, no. 1/3 (1958) 455 http://www jstor.org/stable

[53] Ibid

[54] William Muir. *Life of Mahomet and History of Islam to the Era of Hejira,* Vol 1 (London. Smith, Elder and Co 1858). xxxvi.

Ibn Ishaq used some of the original poetry composed during the early periods of Islam under Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). Some of the prominent poets who survived in the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH)'s time were Hassan Ibn Sabith, Ka'ab Ibn Malik, Abu Talib, al-Asha'a, Ka'ab Ibn Zubayr, Abdullah Ibn Rawaha, Abbas b Mardas, and Abdullah Ibn Zubyr.[55] These poets were present in Prophet Muhammad (PBUH)'s own time so the poetry they composed served as primary source for the *sirah*. Attribution of poetical verses to almost every companion of the Prophet (PUH); Abu Bakr, Umar Ibn al-Khattab, Uthman Ibn Affan and Ali Ibn Abi Talib, shows that companions of the Prophet (PBUH) too were interested in this field of study [56] Also, there is poetry in *sirah* that is attributed to the family members of the Prophet like Hazrat Fatima, Abbas Ibn Abdul Muttalib, Safia Ibn Haris Ibn Abdul Muttalib and many more is an indication of the fact that poetry was highly practiced and acknowledged during the time of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH).[57]

a. Poetry of Abu Talib

Abu Talib was the uncle of the Prophet who is considered to be the first to compose poetry in praise of the Prophet. Ibn Ishaq has mentioned the poems he composed. The theme of the poem is the glorification of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) and his tribe Banu Hashim. Seven verse of this poem were quoted in *sirah* by Ibn Ishaq. In these verses, Abu Talib said:

> If one day Quraish gathered together to boast, Abdu Manaf would be their heart and soul;
> And if the nobles of Abdu Manaf were reckoned, amongst Hashim would be their noblest and chief,
> If they boast one day, then Muhammad would be the chosen noble and honourable one.

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[55] Anwer Mehmood Kalid, *Urdu Nasr Mein Sirat-i Rusool* (Lahore: Himayat-i Islam press, 1989), 181

[56] Ibid.

[57] Ibid.

> Quraish summoned everyone against us; they were not successful and they were beside themselves.
>
> Of old we have never tolerate injustice, when people turned away their faces in pride we made them face us
>
> We protected their sanctuary whenever danger threatened and drove the assailant from its buildings
>
> I hrough us the dry wood becomes green, under our protection its roots expand and grow [58]

Apart from that, another long poem consisted of 95 verses is attributed to Abu Talib which he composed as a response to the growing enmity of various tribes of the Quraysh against the preaching of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) and his companions.[59] Through this poetry he was giving a clear message to the leaders of Quraysh that none of their strategies were going to be successful and he would support Prophet in his mission.[60]

b. Ka'ab bin Zubyr and his Poem for the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH)

Ka'ab IbnZubayr is one of those early poets of Islam who served the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) through their poetical skills. He was the composer of one of the most prominent and highly celebrated poems in praise of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). Ka'ab IbnZubyr composed this poem in praise of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) when he accepted Islam. There is a tradition that after listening to this poem, Prophet gave his mantle which he had worn at that time, as a token of appreciation to Ka'aIbn[61] For that this poem is known as 'Qasida Burdah'.[62] This led to the tradition

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[58] Ibn Ishaq, *Sirat Rasul Allah (The Life of Muhammad)*, ed. and trans. A Guillaume (Oxford: Oxford University Press. 1987), 121

[59] Ibid

[60] Ibid., 122-127

[61] Osman Nuri Topbas, *The Prophet Muhammad Mustafa Medina Period* (Istanbul. Erkam Publications. 2010), 452.

[62] Ibid

of composing verses in praise of Muhammad begin in Muslim poets of the period.[63]

Ibn Ishaq had quoted 51 verses of this poem and IbnHisham added seven more to the

number in his edited *sirah* of Ibn Ishaq [64]

c. Ka'ab bin Malik- An Eyewitness of Second Pledge of Aqaba

Another important and contemporary poet in the period of Prophet Muhammad

(PBUH) was Ka'ab bin Malik. He was one of those companions of the Prophet

Muhammad (PBUH) who was addressed in the Quran in these words:

> They swear to you so that you might be satisfied with them But if you should be satisfied
> with them-indeed, Allah is not satisfied with a defiantly disobedient people.[65]

Being an immediate companion of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), he had an

important place in Muslim history In *Sirat Rasul Allah*, Ibn Ishaq has mentioned

most of the information about the history and happenings of second pledge of Aqaba

on the authority of Ka'ab bin Malik[66] who was present on the occasion and Prophet

Muhammad (PBUH) recognized him as a poet.[67] His poetry too served as an

important source for *Sirah* of Ibn Ishaq. Many of his poems on the occasion of battle

of Badr shows his poetical skills and his eloquence when he depicts a beautiful picture

of the event.[68] An elegy he composed on the death of Ubayda shows his artistic skills

as a poet. He said.

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[63] Almujalli Hussan, "The Importance of Ka'b Ibn Zuhayi's Buidah to Classical and Modern Islamic Poetry". Masteis' Thesis (Waltham: Brandeis University (2014), 3

[64] Ibn Ishaq, *Life of Muhammad*. 598-601

[65] The Holy Quran. 9 96

[66] Ibn Ishaq, *Life of Muhammad*. 202- 204

[67] Ibid . 344

[68] Ibid., 344.

O eye, be generous, not niggardly, with thy true tears, spare them not

For a man whose death appalled us, noble in deed and descent.

Bold in attack with sharpened sword, of noble repute and goodly descent.

Ubayda had passed away, we cannot hope for good and evil from him,

On the eve of battle he used to protect our rearguard with his sword.[69]

d. Hassan bin Sabith- The Official Poet of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH)

Hassan bin Sabith has a special status when we talk about poetry of *sirah*. There is a

considerable amount of historical information about the characteristics of the Prophet

Muhammad (PBUH) and the early Islam delivered through poetry of Hassan Ibn

Sabith. He was the official poet of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH).[70] He was the first

Muslim poet of Islam who defended Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) against the

Quraysh through his poetry.[71] W. Arafat's study on poetry of *sirah* reveals that there

were seventy-eight poems that have been attributed to Hassan bin Sabith, out of which

fifteen are of spurious nature.[72] Although throughout *sirah* his poems have been

quoted but in *maghazi* portion of *sirah* Ibn Ishaq they are quoted very frequently to

glorify Islam and elegies for the martyrs. One of the major characteristics of his

poetry was attack on genealogy of the opposition,[73] and the praising verses about the

Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) and religion of Islam. One particular example of this is

his poem he said on the occasion of Badr, satirizing Banu Jumah, he said:

Banu Jumah rushed headlong to disaster because of their unlucky star

They were conquered and slain at Badr,

They deserted in all directions,

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[69] Ibid , 350.

[70] al-Udhuri "Jahili Poetry Before Imru' Al-Qais". 28.

[71] Ibid

[72] Arafat 'Early Critics of the Authenticity of the Poetry of the 'Sira ', 453-63

[73] Mehmood Kalid, *Urdu Nasr Mein Sirat-i Rasool*, 183

They rejected the scripture and called Muhammad liar.

But God makes the religion of every apostle victorious

God curse Abu Khuzayma and his sons,

The two Khalids and Said Ibn Aqil.[74]

Apart from this, his role as the representative of Ansar as distinct religious faction of Islam and their contribution in the service of Islam is well depicted through his poetry. One of the poems with this theme is quoted by Ibn Ishaq in support of the story of Umayr Ibn Wahb's, leader of the Quraysh- who distresses Muhammad and his companions, conversion to Islam in Madinah after a thorough argumentation with the Prophet. Hassan bin Sabith said:

My people it was who sheltered their Prophet and believed in him when all the world were unbelievers,

Except a chosen few who were forerunners to the righteous, helpers with the helpers.

Rejoicing in God's portion, saying when he came to them, noble of race, chosen

Welcome in safety and comfort, goodly the Prophet the portion and the guest

They gave him a home in which a guest of theirs need have no fear-an (ideal) home.

They shared their wealth when the refugees came while the share of the stubborn opponent is hell.

To Badr we went-they to their death Have they known what they should have known they would not have gone;

The devil deluded and then betrayed them Thus does the evil one deceive his friends.

He said I am your protector and brought them to an evil pass wherein is shame and disgrace.

Then when we fought them they deserted their leaders, some fleeing to high ground others to the plain [75]

In short he composed a short but comprehensive poem providing important information about the role of people of Madinah at the time of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH)'s migration to this region along with his followers. According to Hugh Kennedy the inclusion of poetry during these early years of Islamic scholarship was

[74] Ibn Ishaq, *Life of Muhammad*, 349

[75] Ibid., 330.

an intentional one,[76] scholars used poetry intentionally to effect interpretation of a particular event.[77] Even Guillaume is of the opinion that majority of the poetry in *sirah* was in favour of Ansar of Madinah and their claim of prominence in Islam.[78] The idea was taken from the *Ayyam* narratives where poets used poetry as a medium of expression when they had to promote their tribal agenda.

1.2.2. Influence of Poetry on Ibn Sa'ad

Towards the end of second century A.H, the influence of poetry in historical writings started to decrease and the reason for this was the growing categorization of scholarly activities in Muslim empire.[79] Philologists, who had a great role in collection and preservation of pre-Islamic poetry declared ancient poetry as genuine and precious than the poetry composed by the later poets. They had their own motives. Bonebakker identified two motives of these philologists- one was the idea of preservation of Arab heritage and second motive was to justify their own work and discipline as it was pre-Islamic poetry that philologists, grammarians and lexicographers used in order to form their studies.[80]

During the third century A H., as Hugh Kennedy pointed out, a problematic relationship between history and poetry developed which resulted in decrease of the role of poetry into Muslim historical narratives.[81] There emerged a community of poet

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[76] Kennedy, *Warfare and Poetry in the Middle East*, 122.

[77] Ibid

[78] Ibn Ishaq, *Life of Muhammad*, xxvii

[79] Kennedy, *Warfare and Poetry*, 123.

[80] S A Bonebakker, *Viator Medieval and Renaissance Studies*, Vol 1 (London: University of California Press, 1970), 82.

[81] Kennedy, *Warfare and Poetry*, 123

scholars and grammarians who developed organized methodologies for the scrutiny of poetical corpus [82] On the other hand, in the field of history too, emergence of systemized styles of writing, influenced the shrunken of poetry in historical narratives [83] Specialized poet scholar often criticizes the poetical verses of historical writings. It was in this background that Ibn Sallam al-Jumahi, a renowned collector and critic of poetry criticized Ibn Ishaq in these words.

> Muhammad Ibn Ishaq was one of those who did harm to poetry and corrupted it and passed on all sorts of rubbish. He was one of those learned men in the biography of the Prophet and people quoted poems on his authority He used to excuse himself by saying that he knew nothing about poetry and that he merely wrote down in the *Sira* poems ascribed to men who had never uttered a line of verse and of women too [84]

The words of Hugh Kennedy are·

> Poetic corpus was taken out of the hands of the *akhbari* historian' narrators, and systemized by a developing community of poetry scholars and grammarians who assumed the primary responsibility for poetry narration. The field of *akhbar* was developing more systemized styles of *tarikh* and the role of poetry in this new discipline progressively narrowed [85]

The defining line between poetry and history as two distinct branches of knowledge was soon realized that narrowed the presence of poetry in the historical narratives of third century and afterwards. Thus there is no significant portion of poetry found in Ibn-Sa'ad.

1.2.3. Influence of Poetry on Al-Baladhuri

Al-Baladhuri was a historian of third century A.H. whose work is equally influenced by the controversy of poetry and history. It was in this third century that poetry was

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[82] Ibid

[83] Ibid.

[84] Ibn Ishaq. *Life of Muhammad* introduction, xxv

[85] Kennedy. *Warfare and Poetry*, 123.

declared as compendium of Arab history.[86] It was this poetry through which historians could derive information about the social, political, religious and historical life of the Arabs. Historians like Al-Baladhuri showed a careful approach for the citation of poetical verses in his historical narrative. He was not very crazy like his predecessors in use of poetry. He gives numerous poetical verses in *Futuh al-Buldan* with a shrunken quantity of poetical lines. The tradition of long poems and sometimes a substitute to the narrative history was now restricted to a few lines of verses. These verses run through two to five lines and there was an exceptional case when historians mentioned long poems of classical nature The only condition for the insertion of long poem was the condition that the poem should be contemporary and without doubt. It was a new development in historical writing

Al-Baladhuri used poetical verses for the explanation and clarification of a historical report. As his book was dealing with the conquests and wars thus the stories he mentioned were often supported with poetry. This practice was an indication of the influence of *maghazi* and *Ayyam* traditions where battle-day stories were embedded with poetical insertions. According to Rosenthal, due to the element of poetical verses *Ayyam* stories were preserved by the philologists. Those battle-day stories which lacked verses were not preserved for posterity and the events lost their historicity.[87]

Although Al-Baladhuri quoted poetry but what made him distinguished from his predecessors is his careful approach towards the selection of his sources including poetry. Being a poet himself he did not exceed in usage of poetry in his historical narrative like that of his predecessor Ibn Ishaq. He used short verses most relevant to the historical event in question. His basic aim seems to present a more accurate and

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[86] Ibid

[87] Rosenthal, *A History of Muslim Historiography* (Leiden: E J Brill, 1952), 20.

reasonable narrative rather than a dramatized version. Apart from that his age was not allowing him like that of Ibn Ishaq to add genuine as well as fabricated poetry in order to increase the interest and entertainment of the reader.

1.2.4. Influence of Poetry on Al-Tabari

Tabari is another important historian of third century whose work is equally influenced by the problematic relationship of Poetry and history. He used poetry in his *Tarikh al-Rusul* to make his work more attractive and interesting. The reason for this practice was that the audience of his age was much familiar with poetry and demands for poetry in any literally form. Verses gave vitality to the event in discussion as when added to the prose narrative the whole story becomes prominent. Al-Tabari soon realizes that poetry is a strong medium of expression and had a strong bearing on the reader. For example· while discussing the historical event of third civil war between Amin and Ma'amun Al-Tabari mentioned a large sum of poetry.

Like Al-Baladhuri, Al-Tabari is careful in quotation of poetry in his work. He mentions short lines of verses and at times he mentions long poems as well. These poems were produced by some of the most famous poets whose reliability was undoubtedly accepted in the society. One of the examples of it, is the poems composed by al-Farazdaq. Al-Farazdaq, who name was Hammam Ibn Gahlib, was an official poet of the Umayyad empire. He was famous for his satiric form of poetry.[88] Tabari quoted long poems on the authority of al-Farazdaq. Like his predecessors, al-Tabari too has inserted verses throughout his history with various purposes. Some of the purposes include: to clarify a certain event, to emphasize a detail and to show the role of a particular individual in course of history These poems are mostly short but

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[88] Abd al-Wahhab Ansari. *An Anthology of Arabic Poetry* (Seattle· Academy of Languages, 2010). 144

sometimes it becomes a substitute of a narrative. For example, Al-Tabari has used short poetical verses consisted to two to eight lines and there are 314 verses in the *sirah* section. These verses are quoted in reference to the history of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH)'s career in Madinah.[89] While in description of Siege of Baghdad there is much poetry, this shows the careful approach of the historian

He used poetry as a source of history. The elegies, epic and satiric poems composed on the occasions of various battles and wars provide a great source of historical information about the historical incident. Al-Tabari quoted thirty-five poems in a long account of battle of Siffin. These poems are short citations of eighty-four lines in total. Only two poems were more than five lines and the longest one comprised of eight lines. One was the poem composed by al-Walid bin Uqba against Amir Muawiya, who approached all the opponents of Ali to join him in his war against Ali And the second poem was composed by Abdullah bin Khalifah. Abdullah's poem was composed in the context of his exile.[90] Al-Tabari mentioned both of the poems in *Tarikh al-Rusul wa al-Muluk* as part of the narrative, the verses composed by Walid bin Uqba says:

> Indeed, tell Muawiya Ibn Harb You are held to shame by a man of trust.
>
> You have wasted time like the stallion camel of arousal, confined and bellowing in Damascus but unable to move
>
> You and your writing to Ali are like a woman tanning a hid that has become worm-eaten and useless.
>
> Each hand of riders for the emaciated camels of Iraq, tripping along, excites in you the desire for the rule.
>
> But he who seeks revenge does not hang back but seeks it relentlessly

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[89] Nisar Ahmed Faruqi. *Early Muslim Historiography A study of Early Transmitters of Arab History from the Rise of Islam up to the End of Umayyad period (612-750 A D)* (Delhi: Idarah-i Adabiyat-i Delli, 1979). 39

[90] Al-Tabari. *The History of Tabari The First Civil War*, Vol 17, trans. G R Hawting (Albany State University of New York Press, 1996), 28.

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> If you were the slain one, and he (Uthman) were alive, he would have drawn his sword, not turning aside, unflagging,
>
> And not shirking from seeking vengeance until he had slain in retaliation for it, not weary or sticking in one place.
>
> Your family in Medina is wiped out, cast down like chaff [91]

This shows the very careful approach of the historians of third century of Islam who realized the relationship of poetry with that of history and the status of poetry in their time.[92] They only mentioned selected poems which were part of historical narrative and commonly known. Al-Tabari did not mention poetry in the Prophetic period even in the *sirah* section. There is only one poem with reference to the historical event of the sacrifice of Ishmael in his volume on 'Prophets and Patriarchs' on the authority of Umayyah Ibn Abi al-Salt.[93] This poem consisted of nine lines, which says:

> Abraham, the one who carries out the vow
>
> To satisfaction, and the bearer of easy-burning firewood
>
> For his firstborn, could not desist from him
>
> Or see himself in a company of enemies
>
> "O my son! I have consecrated you to God
>
> as a slaughtered kid, but be steadfast, a ransom for you is ready.
>
> Bind the fetters; I shall not turn from the knife
>
> the head of the manacled captive "
>
> For he has a knife which is quick in the flesh
>
> A cutting edge curved like a crescent moon
>
> While he was taking his garments from him
>
> his Lord ransomed him with the best of rams.
>
> "So take and release your son, verily I
>
> do not dislike what you two have done "
>
> A God-fearing father and the other, his offspring,
>
> they fled from him on hearing. "Do it!"

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[91] Ibid. 3-4

[92] Kennedy, *Warfare and Poetry*, 123.

[93] Umayyah Ibn Abi Salt was a poet of Banu Thaqif of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH)'s time period

People often are unhappy about a thing

which brings relief, like the untying of bonds.[94]

1.2.5. Influence of Poetry on Al-Masudi

Al-Masudi too has used poetry for different purposes. He had inherited the love of inserting poetry in historical narrative from his predecessors. The insertion of poetry on various occasions has different purposes Chief among them were to provide information with evidence like poetry had a great significance when there is a need to describe the manners, customs and beliefs of a particular nation. The basic purpose of citing poetry by Al-Masudi seems to provide reference for the historical facts and to give a literally touch to his historical narrative. It was a common custom of his time that people cite poetry as a literally device.

Al-Masudi has used poetry when there is a need to elaborate the historical account and to prove an argument. One of the examples of this is verses of poetry in support of an interested account of the incident of the audience hall happened to caliph al-Mansur when he was shot by an arrow. It was an audience hall built in the city of Mansur called *Madinat al-Mansur*, surrounded by four gates. First were Khurasan Gate then Damascus Gate, Kufa Gate and Basra Gate. He was sitting near the Khurasan Gate when an arrow was shot, and landed on his feet. Mansur saw there was a written piece of verses on the four vanes of this arrow Beside one vane, he read these lines as·

Do you expect to live till Judgement Day?

Do you imagine there will be no Final Reckonning?

You will be asked to answer for your sins-

And then questioned on the state of the Believers [95]

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[94] Al-Tabari, *History of Tabari: Prophets and Patriarchs*. Vol II. trans, William M Brinner (Albany. State University of New York. 1987). 96

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On the second it stated;

> Destiny takes its course. so be patient,
> For nothing lasts
> One day, Fortune lifts
> A poor wretch to the skies,
> the next, the mighty fall [96]

He became terrified and picked it up and saw a prescription 'Hamadan- a man from this town is held unjustly in your prisons.' Caliph al-Mansur immediately inquired his officers about it who searched and found him from him as an old man in the cell. On inquiring by the Caliph this old man told them that he belonged to a noble class and was sentenced to jail by the governor of the caliph on personal rivalry. He was highly granted by the caliph and was released from imprisonment. Al-Masudi mentioned verses of the old man on this occasion, when he said:

> A man cannot trust Fate for a day,
> For a fate is both sweet and bitter,
> However long their good luck lasts,
> All creatures are at all ends cut down [97]

Al-Masudi has mentioned many verses and related accounts which shows the popularity and love of Arabs toward the pre Islamic poetry. These include the opinions of caliphs and general public. Al-Masudi has mentioned an account of caliph Yazid Ibn Abdul Malik's love for pre-Islamic poetry. It was the poetry of pre Islamic poet al-*Find al-Zimmani* that inspired the caliph so much. He loved this poetry to

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[95] al-Masudi, *The Meadows of Gold The Abbasid* trans., and edt , Paul Lunde and Caroline Stone (London Kegan Paul. 1989), 30-31

[96] Ibid , 29-30

[97] Ibid , 30-31

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such an extent that shows his desire to recite the whole poem for him. The caliph was told that an expert was there in Makkah who could recite this poetry. The caliph made special arrangements through the governor of Makkah to bring this man to his palace in order to make sure that the whole poem could be read for him. Al-Masudi mentioned this poem in his *Muruj*.[98] Abbasid caliphs were very interested and supportive to the art of poetry. Al-Masudi related a similar incident from the reign of Mutawakkil. Mahbuba, was a slave, received by Caliph al-Mutawakkil as a gift from Abdullah Ibn Tahir.[99] She was a very capable and trained singer and poetess. She composed poetry on the order of Caliph al-Mutawakkil and she was highly praised for it. Al-Masudi mentioned two important poems of Mahbuba. First one reads as:

> I swear by she who has written 'Jafar' on her cheek with musk
> That I would give my soul for the place that she has written on.
> Just as she has marked her cheeks with letters of musk.
> So she has written a line of passion on my heart.
> See how the master obeys the slave, in public and in private!
> See those eyes which have looked upon a man like Jafar!
> May God shower blessings upon him![100]

Poetry was an inherited tradition that the Muslim historians learned from their predecessors of pre-Islamic Arabia. They made it one of the major characteristics of their historical narratives. Apart from poetry there was another historical tradition that the early Muslims inherited from pagan Arabs, known as genealogy. Genealogy was basically the inherited family history about the individuals and their tribes. It was great source of historical knowledge and information having a strong sense of history

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[98] Al-Masudi, *Tarikh-i al-Masudi*, Vol. III, (Karachi: Nafees Academy, 1985), 244.

[99] Ibid., Vol IV, 637

[100] al-Masudi. *The Meadows of Gold*, 264.

CHAPTER 2

GENEALOGY AS AN INHERITED TRADITION AND ITS INFLUENCE ON MUSLIM EPISTEMOLOGY

Genealogy was one of those pre-Islamic traditions which have great contribution in development of historical consciousness among the early Muslim scholarship. Pre-Islamic Arabic society was tribal in nature and each tribe had a genealogist who used to trace history of its tribe, the various families and their ancestors. Genealogy had great importance in tribal culture from very ancient times. It was considered to be a major source of pride and identity. Pre-Islamic Arabs gave much importance to the practice of genealogy and they felt proud on the purity of blood and nobility [101] This tradition of genealogy was transmitted to the Islamic period through oral transmission as part of general culture by the pre-Islamic Arabs.

The present chapter discusses genealogy as an inherited tradition which contributed to the development of historical writings among the Arabs In the first section of this chapter there is historical background of the practice of genealogy among the ancient Arabs. It talks about the importance of genealogy in the lives of the pre-Islamic Arabs as a basic determinant of the social status of an individual and a tribe. It further discusses the transmission of this genealogical tradition to the Islamic period when it was transferred to Muslim culture through the early converts and the various factors that played a crucial role in each Islamic period for the gradual development of genealogical studies as part of the general knowledge tradition. These factors included the various socio-political movements as well as the regional factors like tribal alliances, production of dubious genealogies and inheritance purposes. In

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[101] Faruqi, *Muslim Historiography*, 49

this section the transmission of genealogy in different Islamic periods have been analysed in order to understand the various purposes for which it had been used.

2.1. Importance and Role of Genealogy in Pre-Islamic Arabia

In addition to poetry, genealogy had great practicality and importance in pre-Islamic Arabs. Arabs had a strong affiliation with this branch of knowledge. They always felt very proud on their genealogies and made special arrangements for its preservation. This interest in genealogy resulted in the collection of many family histories. Later on, Muslim scholars found it very useful as it was providing them a bulk of information about various tribes of Arabia.[102] Genealogy had a great importance for the pagan Arabs as it determined their individual as well as collective status in society.[103] Tribe was the basic political unit of the society and genealogy was an important component. It was a source of pride and dominance. It was the bond which united them against opposite tribes. The feelings of oneness on the basis of this genealogical relationship helped them to solve many individual as well as collective, and social issues.

In order to gain sense of superiority over the rival tribe and opponents, it was necessary for them to be aware of their ancestors, lineage of their tribes and the tribal chiefs. A tribe with a strong genealogy enjoyed more power and prestige in the society.[104] Every tribe was concerned about genealogy of its tribe and made special arrangements for the preservation of its tribal lineage. This resulted in the appearance of many experts and dedicated genealogists almost in all tribes of Arabia. They were

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[102] Ibid., 50-51.

[103] Khalidi, *Arabic Historical Thought* 5

[104] Bernard Lewis. *Historians of the Middle East*, Introduction (London Oxford University Press. 1962), 26

responsible for the production and preservation of their tribal lineages. They tried to link their association with some noble ancestor They began to compose genealogical trees and narratives of the achievements and noble deeds of their tribal chiefs. As writing was not common among them so genealogies were preserved in memories and were transferred orally from one generation to the other

Genealogy had a great impact on their social, political, economic and religious perspectives. It was genealogy that determined their social and political status in society. Genealogy was not only practiced for individuals or tribes but the genealogy of the animals was equally important at that time, particularly genealogy of the horses.[105] Rather every existing creature was expected to have had a lineage to a noble ancestor As per Tarif Khalidi "An Arab without *nasab* was either above humanity or below it."[106]

2.2. Transfer of Genealogy to the Islamic period

Genealogy was transferred into the Islamic period by the pre-Islamic Arabs. Islam in the initial stages strictly discouraged the practice of genealogy for different reasons. These were social, political and religious causes. Islam and its basic teachings discouraged the concept of superiority on the basic of genealogy. Quran declared it nonsense when it addressed genealogy in these words:

> O mankind! Indeed. We have created you from male and female and made you peoples and tribes that you may know one another Indeed, the most noble of you in the sight of Allah is the most righteous of you Indeed, Allah is Knowing and Aquainted.[107]

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[105] Ibn Ishaq., *Life of Muhammad*, 741

[106] Khalidi, *Arabic Historical Thought*, 5.

[107] The Holy Quran, 49·13.

Islam strictly emphasized on the practice of equality and Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) through his actions tried to curb down its influence on the Muslim society in which he partially succeeded. During the life time of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), there was no significant progress in this field. The companions of the Prophet always remained on the forefront in propagation of the Islamic principle of equality and brotherhood.

On the other hand, the Quranic declaration of genealogy as a source of knowledge generates an interest of the Muslims in this branch of knowledge during the early days of Islam Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) himself approached his close companion Abu Bakr, who was a skilled genealogist, for making tribal alliances soon after the Prophet's migration to Madinah. In this regard Hazrat Abu Bakr was the first genealogist of Islam as he used to guide the Prophet in formation of tribal alliances through his vast knowledge of genealogy.[108] Abu Bakr had a wide range of information about the genealogies of Quraysh, Mudar, and other prominent tribes of Arabia. According to Montgomery Watt, his genealogical knowledge had great contribution in military and political successes of the Prophet PBUH.[109] Apart from him, other companions of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) who were experts in genealogy included Jubair Ibn Mutim, Abdullah Ibn Abass, Makhrama Ibn Naufal, and Aqil Ibn Abi Talib[110] The existence of such genealogists in the close circle of the Prophet of Islam shows the importance of genealogy as a component of social activities. In the new milieu of Islam, practice of genealogy continued with some new

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[108] Khalidi, *Arabic Historical Thought*. 5.

[109] Montgomery Watt, "The Material Used by Ibn Ishaq," in Bernard Lewis and P H Holt, edt *Historical Writing on the Peoples of Asia Historians of the Middle East*, edt. (London: Oxford University Press, 1962), 26.

[110] Faruqi. *Early Muslim Historiography*. 50.

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changed purposes. In the light of the teachings of the Holy Quran and *Sunnah* of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), it was made part of Muslim society.

2.2.1. Practice and Status of Genealogy in Pious Caliphate Era

During the caliphate period, Abu Bakr continued his role as an expert and representative of the pre-Islamic genealogists. He had a considerable amount of knowledge on genealogy of different tribes of Arabia. He taught this genealogy to many of his contemporaries. Jubair Ibn Mutim obtained genealogy from Abu Bakr and then transferred it to Said Ibn al-Musayyab.[111] In early Muslims era genealogists never used this knowledge for their own personal interests But the growing social conditions of the progressive empire once again boasted up the importance of genealogical studies in Muslims.[112] It was during the reign of the second caliph of Islam, Umar Ibn al-Khattab, that *Diwan al jund* was established to reorganize the Muslim army. Details about the individuals and their families and tribes were preserved in these registers for various administrative purposes. In addition to the detailed information of the individuals, information about their tribes, ancestors and their contribution in wars was recorded in order to declare their due share in state revenue. Registers were maintained where genealogies of the subjects were preserved

There appeared many forged and dubious genealogies as in order to receive state favour, every individual tried to show his lineage to a noble tribe and ancestors. This was a serious problem and state had to introduce a mechanism for the resolution of such issues. Expert genealogists were approached to contribute in order to produce genuine and accurate *diwans*. Muslim scholars began to pay attention towards this issue and soon genealogy was recognized as an important branch of knowledge.

[111] Faruqi, *Early Muslim Historiography,* 50.

[112] Ibid, 51

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Makhrama Ibn Naufal was one of the prime genealogists whose suggestions played important role in the establishment of *diwan* of Umar.[113]

2.2.2. Practice and Status of Genealogy in Umayyad Period

During Umayyad period, due to the personal, administrative and political motives of the emperors, the trend of pride and glory was refreshed. The prime motive of the Umayyad caliphs was to increase the social status of the Arabs as compared to the growing influence of the non-Arabs in the empire in order to prove their own purity of blood and race [114]

Genealogy received a state patronage when the first Umayyad Caliph Muawiya Ibn Abi Sufyan encouraged genealogists like Abid Ibn Sharya al-Jurhumi to compose genealogies of the Arabs. Al-Jurhumi was an expert on genealogy and history of Yemen, specifically he knew histories of Ghasanid and Lakhmid kings.[115] Later on Walid II's orders for the preservation of genealogies of those who were settled in *amsar*[116] further augmented the interest in genealogies. Such measures of the rulers initiated a controversy of Arabs and non-Arabs which further resulted in introduction many movements. One of them was the *Shu'ubiyya* movement that was based on the growing differences of the Arabs and non-Arabs in the empire. In reaction to the claims of *Shu'ubiyya* movement, Arabs scholars began to compile the

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[113] Ibid , 52

[114] Mehmood al-Hassan, *Arbon May Tarikhnigari ka Aghaz*, 139

[115] Carl, Brokelman, trans . *History of the Arabic Written Tradition Supplement*, Vol. 1, (Leiden E.I Brill, 2016), 100

[116] The term refers to the garrison towns established during thefirst centuries of Islam by caliph Umar IbnKhattab in order to settle the Bedouins. The purpose of their settlement in these cities was to prevent the Bedouins from raiding, from destructing the productive agricultural lands and to separate the Arab people from the conquered people See in Ira Lapidus: *A History of Islamic Societies*, 43

past and present achievements of their nation. This automatically turned their interest towards the achievements of their forefathers. As a result, a large sum of genealogical data was collected and genealogy was soon realized as a distinct branch of knowledge [117] Genealogies in this period were circulated orally in different tribes and these were compiled in book form during the Umayyad period.[118]

One reason for such serious attitude of Umayyad caliphs towards science of genealogy was to control the growing hostility of various political and religious factions towards the central government.[119] There developed a complete division among the Arabs into northern and southern Arabs particularly in Qays and Yeminis; each one claimed its own legitimacy for rule and government. During the Abbasid period, these divisions further expanded into a larger grouping in the light of the *Shu'ubiyya* movement. It was initiated by Muslim intellectuals of non-Arab origin. They begin to write and debate about the discriminatory attitude of the Arab rulers towards its non-Arab subjects. This resulted in the expansion of the political factions of Umayyad period into larger grouping in the shape of Arab and non-Arabs. Each one tried to prove their own claims. The scholars of *Shu'ubiyya* background used the polemic poetry to expose the weaker side of the Arabs. One of the major examples was Abu Ubaida Mamar Ibn al-Muthana. He was a philologist by profession in the second century A.H., who derived most of the information from classical Arabic poetry.[120]

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[117] Mahmood al-Hassan, *Arbon Mein Tarikhnigari*, 140.

[118] Lewis, *Historians of the Middle East*, 26.

[119] Faruqi, *Early Muslim Historiography*, 50.

[120] Ibid., 43

The Second factor was the fall of the Arab tribal aristocracy in terms of its military and political status. Capital was transferred from Damascus to Baghdad which was populated mostly by Persians, Muslims of non-Arab origin. They soon achieved authority over administration and they began to influence the cultural life of the empire to a larger extent.[121] Bernard Lewis described it in these words·

> —transfer of centre of the Empire to the East was the most shocking incident when Arab aristocratic monopoly of high office was replaced by the power of the Bermakids Persian influences became stronger. Sasanid Persian models were followed in the court ceremonials and the government administration. Persian model of standing army reduced the dependence of the dynasty on the Arab tribal levies and Arab influence in the capital.[122]

Most of the administrative positions were occupied by the Muslims of non-Arab origin. It was in this background that Muslim scholars particularly genealogists began to compile organized genealogies and soon there produced a vast genealogical literature[123]

Genealogical literature contributed in the historical studies in two folds. On the one hand they were providing genealogies and on the other hand the historical information about the persons involved. In order to coup the growing tribal conflicts due to *Shu'ubiyya* and the growing range of *mawali*, the genealogists expanded their scope of studies and begin to emphasize more on the Arab cultural history.[124] Tarif Khalidi is of the opinion that great genealogical works appeared at a time when the Muslim empire was ruled by those other than Arab aristocrats The reason could be to glorify and produce a text in honour of their noble Arab ancestors of both pre-Islamic

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[121] Faruqi, *Early Muslim Historiography*, 56

[122] Bernard Lewis, *The Middle East A Brief History of the Last 2000 Years* (New York· Scribner. 1995), 78

[123] Faruqi, *Early Muslim Historiography*, 56-57.

[124] Duri, *Rise of Historical Writings*, 146.

as well Islamic periods.[125] Genealogists began to collect genealogical details from the battle-day narratives, poetry and genealogies of the pre-Islamic period.[126]

In the second century of Islam, genealogists like Muhammad Ibn Saib al-Kalbi and Abu Aqzan al-Nassaba collected data from the works of genealogists of various tribes and the poetry containing polemic verses.[127] Because polemic verses were rich in genealogical information as poets were more prone to attack on genealogy of the opponent tribes and glorifying their own tribe. Thus in this sense it was providing information about both sides Importance of poetry as a source of Arabic grammar and language attracted many philologists and grammarians towards collection of poetry, who collected it from tribal books and from the transmitters of poetry called *riwats* Hisham Ibn Saib al-Kalbi was one of the most prominent grammarians of second century who broadened his studies and added history of the Arabs in it. He used both Islamic as well as non-Islamic sources.[128] For the history of prophets, he relied on the reports of *Ahl-al Kitab*,[129] registers of al-Hira, and for the history of Arab and Persian tribes his source of information was the *qisas* For the Islamic period, he relied on the reports of elders of Kufa, Abu Mikhnaf and Awanna Ibn al-Hakam.[130] The primary objective of IbnHisham was to present the idea of cultural continuity of Arab history and its relativity to the contemporary issues like claims of Arab tribal

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[125] Khalidi, *Arabic Historical Thought*, 50.

[126] Duri, *Rise of Historical Writing*, 146

[127] Ibid, 146

[128] Faruqi, *Early Muslim Historiography*, 68.

[129] The literally meaning of this term is 'people of the Book' In Islamic thought it is referred to those religious groups who possess divine books The religious groups who possess revealed books include Jews, Christians, Zoroastrians and the Sabians too. Their revealed books are Torah, Gospel and Avesta.

[130] Duri, *Rise of Historical Writing*, 147.

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aristocracy, relationship of Quraysh with other tribes, and attitude of the Arabs towards *mawali*.[131] In order to understand such complicated questions, he had to study history of those before Islam particularly the Arabs and Persians.

According to Nisar Ahmed Faruqui, the credit for the idea of compilation of genealogical data goes to the Muslim traditionalists and early *sirah* writers who compiled for the first time genealogical data of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). During this process they automatically inclined towards preservation of accounts of the tribe of Muhammad, Quraysh, and many other tribes of Arabia.[132]

2.3. Influence of Genealogy on Early Muslim Historical Writings

Genealogy had a great influence on the writings of early Muslim historians. It not only provided early Muslim history a vast content, but it influenced the style of the historical narratives. As mentioned earlier, genealogists begin to contribute in the historical studies by providing genealogies as well as historical information related to the individuals involved in it [133] Early Muslim historians begin to collect genealogies of various tribes and the data collected was then used to compile family histories They utilized different genealogies for the construction of the *sirah* of Muhammad and history of early Muslim community. There emerged a class of genealogists who devoted their lives to the study of lineages.

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[131] *Mawali* were basically the non-Arab Muslim population who were captured during the expansion of Islam throughout the Near East and parts of the Byzantine Empire who as a result converted to Islam. The Arab tribes accepted them as newcomers and the old clan system of clientage was once again revived. In pre-Islamic period a client was the inferior associate of a particular Arab clan The *mawla* was member of the clan whose protection and security was the responsibility of the clan.

[132] Faruqi. *Early Muslim Historiography*, 51

[133] Duri. *Rise of Historical Writing*, 146.

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There were many factors that influenced early Muslim scholarship to develop an interest in this field of studies. Among all the other factors, *Sh'uubiyya* movement played a major role in development of genealogical studies. Genealogy was the only element that was best serving their objective. The intellectuals of non-Arab origin revolted against the discriminatory attitude of Arab rulers and almost every branch of knowledge was equally influenced, Historical writings were one of them. The last sermon of the Prophet at *Hajjat al-Wada*[134] addressed the Muslims in these words·

> No Arab is superior to a non-Arab neither a non-Arab is superior to an Arab and neither a white is ever superior to neither a black nor a black to a white. The only condition for superiority is piety and religiosity. All of you descend from Adam and Adam was created of clay and dust. Verily the most honorable among you is he who is the most pious.

This *Hadith* had a great significance for those historians of *sirah* who belong to *Shu'ubiyya* while propagation of this *Hadith* was a threat for the Abbasids who were claiming their illegibility to rule on purity of blood. Therefore, the historians like Ibn Ishaq, Ibn Sa'ad and Al-Tabari do not mention these words of the Prophet in their *sirah* sections The simple reason was their intentions and clear objectives of restraining any literature that was threatening the unity of the community and cause of the Abbasid rulers

2.3.1. Use of Genealogy by Ibn Ishaq and Ibn Sa'ad

Ibn Ishaq has compiled genealogy of the Prophet and his tribe in order to show the status of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) on purity of blood and noble origin. Apart from that. his intentions of glorifying the *Ansar* are visible from quoting stories and

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[134] It is a combination of two Arabic words *Hajjat* and *Wada* Which means the farewell pilgrimage or Hajj.In Muslim history it is used for the final pilgrimage of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) that occured in 632.It was the very first and the last pilgrimage of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) which he performed a few months before his death In the Shi'ie beliefs, this hajj has a significant importance. According to their belief, on his return from hajj Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) stopped at Ghadir Khum and announced his son in law, Ali Ibn Abi Talib as his successor and future imam of the believers as per orders of Allah.

accounts of southern kings and the poetry attributed to them. A large quantity of poetry on the authority of Hassan Ibn Sabith is one of it. Hassan Ibn Sabith, an important poet of Madinah accepted Islam in the hands of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) on his arrival in medina; through his poetry tried to glorify the *Ansar* of Madinah [135] Ibn Ishaq himself was a Madinite whose grand-father, Yasar was a prisoner of war of Khalid Ibn Walid. He then sent Yasar to Abu Bakr in Madinah In Madinah he got patronage of Qays Ibn Makhrama Ibn al-Mutallib Ibn Abdu Manaf as a slave. Ibn Ishaq was born in Madinah and had a strong affiliation for this region. It was a professional jealousy/conflict that he developed with Malik Ibn Anas[136] that forced him to leave Madinah and settled in Baghdad. In *sirah* Ibn Ishaq fully supported the *Ansar* and their history. They were not only declared as the great supporters of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) but their genealogy was traced through various prominent kings in order to show their status as the descendants of kings. Links had often been made through genealogy of *Ansar* to the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) with historical accounts, poetry and traditions of Muhammad. One example of this is a tradition that Ibn Ishaq has mentioned on the authority of Asim Ibn Umar Ibn al-Qatada al-Ansari that during the initial days of Muhammad at Madinah, one of his close companion Abu Umama Asad Ibn Zurara died. After his death Banu Najjar came to the apostle and asked him to appoint someone from them in place of Abu Umama as the leader. Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) replied in these words: "you are

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[135] Guillaume, *Life of Muhammad*. Introduction, xxviii-xxix.

[136] Malik Ibn Anas and Ibn Ishaq both were the students of Zuhri with high caliber. Popularity of Ibn Ishaq soon reached every corner of Madinah. He was accepted as an authority on traditions of the Prophet even his teacher Zuhri declared him a man of high wisdom It was Malik Ibn Anas who criticized work of Ibn Ishaq and considered him a liar. His objection was based on Ibn Ishaq's use of weak and collective isnad and mentioning of Jewish and Christian sources for writing history. Mazhar Yasin Siddiqui, *Khutbat-e Sirat Masadir-e Sirat ka Tajziati Mutaliyu*, (Islamabd Idara-e Tehqiqat-e Islami, 2017), 4

my maternal uncles, and we belong together so I will be your leader".[137] The people of Najjar thereafter considered themselves as the most honourable for the reason that the Prophet of Allah (PBUH) was their leader.

Ibn Ishaq was the first Muslim historian of *sirah*, he paid little attention to genealogies as indicated by Khalidi.[138] The reason for such an attitude might be the tension between northerner and southerners. Model presented by Ibn Ishaq in his *sirah* for the genealogy of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) is based on the concept of kinship. His *sirah* begins with the genealogy of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) as follows, Muhammad son of Abdullah, whose father was Abdul Muttalib, son of Hashim and their ancestry goes back to Ishmael, son of Prophet Ibrahim.[139] Ibn Ishaq is very keen in presenting the genealogy of every individual he mentions either as a source or subject. Lengthy genealogies are cited for all the honorable personalities. Like the immediate companions of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) like Abu Bakr,[140] Uthman Ibn Affan,[141] and other prominent personalities of Islam: participants of battles of Badr,[142] a detailed genealogy of Khadija,[143] the first wife of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) and his foster-mother, Halima.[144]

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[137] Ibn Ishaq, *Life of Muhammad*. 235

[138] Khalidi, *Arabic Historical Thought*, 51

[139] Ibn Ishaq, *Life of Muhammad*. 3

[140] Ibid., 115.

[141] Ibid

[142] Ibid.. 327-30

[143] Ibid., 82.

[144] Ibid.. 70.

Ibn Sa'ad has used genealogical information of Hisham al-Kalbi as an important authority for genealogies of different tribes and individuals.[145] Ibn Sa'ad is very critical about the genealogies, while discussing genealogy of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) and the relation between Ma'adh Ibn Adnan and Ismail, he relied on the information of Hisham al Kalbi as authority.[146] Hisham al-Kalbi was the first genealogist who linked genealogy of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) to that of Ishmael Apart from that his father Muhammad Ibn Saib al-Kalbi is a great source for genealogical information of *Tabaqat*.[147] Ibn Sa'ad's stated,

> I found no difference among the genealogists that Ma'ad was a descendant of Qaidai Ibnlsmail. But the difference in lines of descent indicates that the true lineage was not preserved but was taken over from the people of the book who translated it for them. Differences therefore arose If this line had been correctly established, the Prophet would have been the most cognizant of it Therefore, our common view is to stop at Ma'ad Ibn Adnan and to suspend discussion of any lineage beyond him back to Ismael.[148]

These kinds of statements show a very careful and critical attitude of the Muslim historians towards the genealogical information. It was an important characteristic of majority of the early Muslim historians that they often criticize and crosscheck their sources which helped them to justify their own knowledge and presented the most authentic and reliable information for the reader.

Ibn Sa'ad has given a detailed genealogy of the female ancestors of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). The genealogy of the Prophet's mother is mentioned as;

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[145] Ibn Sa'ad, *Tabaqat Ibn Sa'ad*. Vol I, trans , Allama Abdullah al-Imaadi (Karachi: Nafees Academy, n d.), 72.

[146] Ibid , 64, 87, 94, 105

[147] Ibid , 73, 80, 86,112.

[148] Ibid , 66.

The mother of the Apostle of Allah, (may Allah bless him) was 'Amina bt Wahb Ibn Abd Manaf Ibn Zuhrah Ibn Kilab Ibn Murrah; her mother was Barrah bt. Abd al-Uza Ibn Uthman Ibn Abd al-Dar Ibn Qussay Ibn Kilab: her mother was Barrah bt. Awf Ibn Abid Ibn Awij Ibn Adi Ibn Ka'ab Ibn Luway; her mother was Qilabah bt Harith Ibn Malik Ibn Hubashah Ibn Ghanm Ibn Lihyan Ibn Adiya Ibn Sa'sa'h Ibn Ka'ab Ibn Hind Ibn Tabikha Ibn Lihyan Ibn Hudayl Ibn Mudhika Ibn al-Yas Ibn Mudar, her mother was Umaymah bt. Malik Ibn Ghanm Ibn Lihyan Ibn Adiya Ibn Sa'sa'h, her mother was Dubb bt Thalabah Ibn al-Harith Ibn Tamim Ibn Sa'ad Ibn Hudayl Ibn Mudrika, her mother was Atika bt Ghadira Ibn Hutayt Ibn Jashim Ibn Thaqif, and his name was Qasi Ibn Munabba Ibn Bakr Ibn Hawazin Ibn Mansur Ibn Ikrima Ibn Kbasafa Ibn Qays Ibn Aylan, and his name was al-Yas Ibn Mudar, her mother was Layla bt. Awf Ibn Qasi, that is Thaqif [149]

The detailed genealogical information of the female ancestors of the Prophet is an important addition to the family history of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) on the authority of Hisham Ibn Muhammad Ibn Saib al-Kalbi. [150] Ibn Sa'ad has mentioned an important point while mentioning the female ancestry of the Prophet He said; "Muhammad Ibn Saib al-Kalbi said; I penned down (the names of) five hundred female ancestors of the Prophet, but I did not find any one to have been an adulteress or having indulged in what was in vogue of the age of ignorance." [151]

2.3.2. Use of Genealogy by Al-Baladhuri

Al-Baladhuri was the successor of Ibn Sa'ad, who wrote a complete book on genealogy and named it "Ansab al-Ashraf" It was a history written where genealogy, biography, general history, activities of different sects and various political groups, Hadith, adab and many more genres were mixed together [152] He introduced a new trend in genealogical studies by combining different elements like maghazi, biography, conquests and the science of genealogy. Mahmood ul-Hassan has well concluded Ansab al-Ashraf of Al-Baladhuri in these words;

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[149] Ibid., 68.

[150] Ibid

[151] Ibid , 69

[152] Jack Drake Rollins, A History of Sawahili Prose From Earliest Times to the End of the Nineteenth Century, Part 1 (Leiden. E.J. Brill, 1983). 36.

Ansab al-Ashraf is a first general history of the Arabs It has combined the characteristics of Tabaqat book and of AnsaIbn Al-Baladhuri delineated the biography of every Caliph which preceds the happenings occurred in his period. The activities of the political parties have been narrated under the sub topics Historical continuity is observed throughout with few exceptions. For instance Yazid is dealt with before Uthman."[153]

Al-Baladhuri formed a biographical work written in genealogical order of the Arab aristocracy, as it ranges from Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) and his companions to the Umayyad and then the Abbasid caliphs. A general description of the life events or biographies of the individual leaders was followed by the important historical events of their reign and the political movements, including activities of various sects, were separately mentioned as sub-sections.[154] Structurally the book starts with the genealogical description of the Arabs descending form Ismail, from Noah to the ancestral tribes of Quraysh[155] and continues with the biography of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH),[156] his contemporaries,[157] historical accounts of the Banu Hashim[158]. It then proceeds to the details of Banu Umayyah[159] and other tribes of Quraysh.[160] Biographies of Abu Bakr,[161] Umar al-Khattab, Ali Ibn Abi Talib[162] and other prominent Muslims personalities occupied a considerable attention of al-

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[153] Mahmood al-Hassan, *Ibn al-Athir An Arab Historian A Criticle Analysis of his Tarikh-al-Kamil and Tarikh-al-Atabeca* (New Delhi Northern Book Centre, 2005), 30

[154] Ibid.

[155] Al-Baladhuri, *Ansab al-Ashraf*, Vol. I (n.p al-mostaafa, 2017), 2-3.

[156] Ibid . Vol 1, 56

[157] Ibid., 79- 123

[158] Ibid., 922

[159] Ibid., 1080

[160] Ibid . 126-

[161] Ibid . 329

[162] Ibid , 473

Baldhuri.[163] A separate and lengthy chapter is devoted to the biography of Hajjaj bin Yousuf.[164] His book ends with the histories of sub-groups of Mudar tribes˙ i-e Qays, Fazara, Salim and Thaqif In his genealogical work, Baladhuri tried to maintain a chronological order for the historical events but at times he goes beyond it. One of the examples is the order of history of Yazid [165] which he described before history of Usman Ibn Affan, the third caliph of Islam [166]

Al-Baldhuri was a critical historian who never accepted his information blindly. After a careful scrutiny of many versions he chose the one which was more reasonable and acceptable for him. For the genealogical information his primary and prominent source is Zubayr Ibn Bakkar[167] and Hisham al-Kalbi.[168] Other sources particularly for the history of Abdul Malik Ibn Marwan he consulted information provided by Madaini,[169] Awanah Ibn al-Hakam and al-Waqidi.[170] He was critical and neutral in his approach towards the historical facts. The reason was the growing trend of continuous historical narratives. The trend of second century A.H., of writing on single topics like *sirah akhbar* and genealogy was now replaced by historical studies confined to the recording of the collective experiences of the *ummah*.[171] Al-Baladhuri

[163] Khalidi *Arabic Historical Thought*, 59.

[164] Baladhuri. *Ansab al-Ashraf*, Vol. VI, 1552.

[165] Al-Baladhuri, *Ansab al-Ashraf*, Vol I. 1082.

[166] Ibid., 1204.

[167] Ibid

[168] from the very beginning till the end of his work, for the genealogies particularly Al-Baladhuri relied heavily on Muhammad Ibn Hisham Ibn Saib al-Kalbi

[169] Al-Baladhuri. *Ansab al-Ashraf*. Vol II, 1481

[170] Ibid , 1508

[171] Duri. *Rise of Historical Writing*. 149

was the pioneer of this new trend who utilized *sirah, akhbar* and genealogical studies after a careful scrutiny of the sources to form a single account It was the result of his intentions to promote the concept of Muslim *ummah* that despite his affiliation to the Abbasids he did not show any biasness towards any of the group. Genealogies were dealt with due care and attention unlike Ibn Ishaq who was not very careful about genealogies

2.3.3. Use of Genealogy by Al-Tabari

Genealogy has a considerable proportion in Tabari's *Tarikh al-Rusul wa al-Muluk.* Tabari has fully utilized the genealogical studies of the prominent Muslim genealogists particularly those of Muhammad Ibn Saib al-Kalbi and his son, Hisham al-Kalbi. For the reconstruction of the world history and creation of the world, Tabari heavily relied on the genealogical information of al-Kalbi, he hardly made his own opinion. It was he who paid special attention to even the minute details of family histories of the previous Prophets such as Prophet Noah, Prophet Ibrahim, Prophet Mosa, Lot etc. Al-Kalbi served as an important authority on the genealogical information of *Tarikh al-Rusul wa al-Muluk*

Tabari relied heavily on the knowledge of Saib al-Kalbi for the genealogical informational related to the previous Prophets and their family histories. He had quoted Muhammad Ibn Saib al-Kalbi more than sixteen times in his history.[172] Tabari in his volume on the creation of the world gave details of the periods of different Prophets. Tabari quoted detailed history of the various prophets including and also mentions the total time period between them, which was an important addition to his *Tarikh* According to Tabari, there were 1900 years between Prophet Mosa and

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[172] Faruqi, *Early Muslim Historiography,* 61.

Prophet Isa, from Isa to Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), there were 443 years. From the genesis of the world till the birth of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) consisted of 5500 years in total. This whole information was taken as it is from Muhammad Ibn Saib al-Kalbi.[173] Tabari's heavy reliance on al-Kalbi shows the status of al-Kalbi as a great authority on history and genealogy The information al-Kalbi provides for Adnan was received from al-Najjar Ibn Aus al-Adwani and information about the Kinda tribe was received from Abu al-Kannas al-Kindi. Tabari was very keen in his intellectual pursuit and discussed in detail the genealogies of particular tribes. On the authority of Muhammad Ibn Saib al-Kalbi, he has traced the detailed genealogy of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) to Adnan, his descendants and marked their lineage to Ibrahim.[174] Tabari also tells us about the number of wives of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) with their own complete genealogies and distinct stories.[175] According to Tabari, among the wives of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), there was Maymunah bt. Al-Harith Ibn Hazn al-Hilali. She married twice before Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). She was the last to die in the year 681 AD during the reign of Yazid Ibn Muawiya. She was 80 years old when she died[176] Complete genealogical details and their past history were observed on the authority of various sources

Al-Tabari is very careful in dealing with the genealogies, one reason for this might be the fact that in his time genealogy was a well flourished branch of science. There were primary as well as secondary sources available to him on genealogy. Here

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[173] Ibid, 60

[174] Faruqi. *Early Muslim Historiography*. 61.

[175] Tabari. *History of Al-Tabari*. Vol. 39, trans.. Ella Landau- Tasseron (Albany: State University of New York Press. 1998). 163-191

[176] Tabari. *History of Al-Tabari* Vol 39. 186.

too he relied on the genealogical information provided by Hisham al-Kalbi. He informed Tabari that Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) married Khawla who was daughter of al-Hudhyl Ibn Hubayra Ibn Qabisa Ibn al-Harith Ibn Habib Ibn Hurqa Ibn Thalaba Ibn Bakr Ibn Hubayb Ibn Amr Ibn Ghanm Ibn Taghlib Her father was a distinguished leader of Iraq during pre-Islamic times. Her mother was the daughter of Khalifa Ibn Farwa Ibn Fadala Ibn Zayd Ibn Imra al-Qays Ibn Khazraj al-Kalbi and sister of Dihya Ibn Khalifa. It is Hisham on whose authority Tabari narrated that Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) married Khawlah bt. Hudhayl, who died on her way, before reaching the Prophet (PBUH).[177]

2.3.4. Use of genealogy in Al-Masudi

Al-Masudi is very much interested in giving diverse genealogies of different nations. The genealogical details about the people of Persia and the Persian are one of the best examples for the justification of this statement. He has traced genealogy of the Persians to the Sam Ibn Nuh. The basic purpose of Al-Masudi seems to show the link and significance of various ancient nations and their relation to Islam.[178] In order to show historicity of these ancient nations, he has linked many non-Biblical nations to biblical genealogy which raised many problems in terms of interpretation.[179] He has mentioned detailed descriptions on genealogies of these nations and traced their lineage to three sons of Noah. These genealogies Al-Masudi traced differed very much from other Muslim sources. According to him all human beings were descendants of Sam, Ham and Yafith. These three sons of Noah dispersed all around

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[177] Ibid , 166.

[178] Tarif Khalidi, *Islamic Historiography: The Histories of Masudi* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1975), 84.

[179] Ibid, 84

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the earth as a result of the destruction of Babylon. According to Tarif Khalidi, Al-Masudi got this controversial idea from biblical theory which suggested that all mankind were descendants of three sons of Noah.[180]There appeared a major problem to the historicity of those nations who claimed to descent from a figure of pre-Noah period [181]

Another indication of the huge influence of genealogy on Al-Masudi was his dealings with Persian history. Here genealogy plays significant roles when Al-Masudi gave full fledge genealogical details of different races, their rulers or kings, dynasties, and their religions they practiced. His approach towards the Persian history particularly their genealogy shows his intention of making a bridge between the Persians and the prophetic history. He traced history of the Persians to Isac, son of Prophet Ibrahim. Wirak was the person whom Al-Masudi recognized as the same person known as Isac (son of Ibrahim), from whom he traced history of the Persians as his descendants. He mentions poetical verses that referred to Isac as Wirak. Sara Sawant had mentioned these verses in here discussion on Al-Masudi's dealings with genealogies and ethno genesis.[182]

> Our father is Wirak, and by him I vie for glory
>> When the boaster [my opponent] boasts of his birth
> Our father, Wirak, was a servant and a messenger [of God]'
>> Ennobled by the nobility of [his] message and generosity to pilgrims.
> So if the tribes' lords boast, who is like me
>> When my house is like the necklace's most precious charm?'[183]

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[180] Ibid., 88.

[181] Ibid, 85

[182] Sara Bowan Sawant and Helena de Felipe, *Genealogies and Knowledge in Muslim Societies Understanding the Past*, edt (Edinburgh Edinburgh University Press Ltd., 2014), 115.

[183] Masudi, *Tarikh-i al-Masudi*, 200.

Sara Sawant has indicated various reasons for such a treatment of Al-Masudi of

Persian history. In her own words:

> ...he may have been alarmed by the possibility that Iranians could disconnect themselves from the wider community It is likely that he felt a need to stabilize the genealogical record in such a way as to support ideas that linked the Persians to prophetic history. And so, far from conducting a neutral survey, Al-Masudi dug up rare and curious genealogies that cast doubt on the Iranians' self- image as autochthons [184]

Al-Masudi has adopted a different approach to the Sassanian period. He traced their

genealogy to Ardashir, the first Sassanid emperor of Persia. Their genealogy begins

with Ardashir. His genealogy is mentioned as.

> Ardashir Ibn Babak Ibn Sasan al-Asghar Ibn Babak Ibn Sasan Ibn Babak Ibn Mehmas Ibn Sasan Ibn Bahman Ibn Isfandiyar Ibn Bistaf Ibn Luhraf. OR. Ardashii Ibn Babak Ibn Ssan al-Asghar Ibn Babak Ibn Sasan Ibn Bbak Ibn Mihramas Ibn Ssan Ibn Bahman Ibn Isfandiyar Ibn Bistasf Ibn Luhraf.[185]

Sarah Sawant has concluded Al-Masudi's treatment of Sassanid genealogy in the

following words. she says:

> Al-Masudi's approach to genealogy reflects a negotiation. He passes on much of Sassanian-era historiography surviving in his day but adds a separate treatment of genealogy and comments on the Sassanian-era materials [186]

Overall genealogy was an important component of early Muslim historiography. it

was an important source of historical knowledge so early Muslim historians utilized

the information. The concentrated studies of various genealogists provide a good

amount of historical information. *Diwan* system of Umar al-Khattab was equally

credited for the development of genealogical studies in Islamic scholarship Then the

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[184] Suru Bowan Sawant, *Genealogy and Knowledge*, 125-26

[185] Al-Masudi. *Tarikh-i al-Masudi*. 204

[186] Ibid, 126

political and personal interests of the Umayyad period further increased the growth of genealogies. The state patronage under various Umayyad caliphs particularly Walid II resulted in an increased number of genealogical details of not only different tribes but also genealogies of individuals began to emerge. The reason for such an increased interest in genealogy was the result of the development of different factions that begin to emerge in the empire. While in the Abbasid period interest in genealogy and researches in this field of knowledge enhanced the number of genealogical data

Along with genealogy there was a tradition of storytelling in pre-Islamic Arabs known as *Ayyam al-Arab* which played a significant role in developing a concept of military histories among the early Muslim scholarship. The style, method and theme of these *Ayyam* narratives influenced the early Muslim historians to introduced *maghazi* studies as a distinct branch of Historical studies.

CHAPTER 3

INFLUENCE OF *AYYAM AL-ARAB* ON EARLY MUSLIM HISTORIANS

Ayyam, in Arabic means days and it refers to the days of Arabs or *Ayyam al-Arab* known as the battle-days of Arabs. Muslim historians inherited a cultural tradition which the pre-Islamic Arabs celebrated as their collective heritage. They had no historical value at all as the storytellers narrate them for the purpose of entertainment and for the preservation of tribal pride and glory. Their militant nature and harsh environment never allow them to even think objectively and systematically. These *Ayyam* narratives were full of exaggeration and tribal prejudices.[187] The members of the tribes remember their glories in war and often narrate their war achievements through these narratives. Society was oral and writing was a rare practice, thus these historical stories were circulated orally The members of the tribe feel proud on military strength of their tribes and propagate their achievements through these *Ayyam* stories.[188]

These *Ayyam* narratives served as inherited epistemology for the early Muslim historians as it influenced them to initiate war histories in Muslim literature. Muslim historians not only adopted the method and form of these *Ayyam* narratives for the writing of *maghazi* but the various drawbacks in these *Ayyam* narratives compelled them to think about the systematic organization of different historical events. As a result, there appeared more acceptable and systematic historical narratives among the

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[187] Faruqi, *Early Muslim Historiography*, 42.

[188] Duri, *Rise of historical Writing*, 8-9.

Muslims. They experimented many new ideas with these inherited traditions and produced some remarkable literature

The present chapter looks at these *Ayyam* narratives as inherited tradition which influenced early Muslim historical writings to a great extent. Early Muslim historians inherited the concept of *maghazi* writings from these *Ayyam* narratives. The form and technique of *Ayyam* stories was adopted for the writings of the *maghazi* histories and it had a deep impact on Muslim *maghazi* and *Futuh* literature. The present chapter is divided into two sections. In the first section there is a description of the historical significance of *Ayyam* stories in pre-Islamic Arabs It also talks about the transmission of this tradition to the Islamic period through oral transmission by the pre-Islamic Arabs In the second section there is a detailed analysis of the proportion of the influence of the *Ayyam* literature in Muslim historical scholarship.

3.1. Importance of *Ayyam al-Arab* in Pre-Islamic Arabia

These *Ayyam* stories had great importance in the lives of pre-Islamic Arabs They consider these narratives as collective property of their tribes. They circulate them among the members of their tribes.[189] It gives them a sense of unity and brotherhood. The legendary material and elements of pride in these stories played important role in the development of strong affiliations toward the tribes and its members. They feel proud of their tribal affiliation and great achievements in wars. These war stories were a source of confidence and loyalty among the members towards their tribe. People were fond of these narratives and passed on to future generations through oral transmission. Tribe being the only political institute was responsible for the social

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[189] Ibid., 19.

security of its members because power of the tribe was confined to the bravery and loyalty of its people.

These stories were of great importance for the pagan Arabs with social and political perspectives They played a major role for the tribal unity and a source of entertainment as well The aim of the narrators was to entertain and preserve its glorious tribal deeds including courage, charity and hospitability. These stories served as an important asset of the evening gatherings where members of the tribe sit together and enjoy the company of their tribesmen.[190] It was necessary for each member of the tribe to know these tribal narratives in order to be aware of the noble deeds and personal qualities of their past tribal chiefs.[191] The presence of poetry in the stories made it more interesting and entertaining for the people. Poetry provides vitality and authenticity to the story and it either appeared in the whole story or at the end. Rosenthal is of the opinion that the existence of poetry made it an element of interest for the philologists who preserved this material for posterity.[192]

Being a tribal society, the tribes were in continuous war over the issues of honour, pasture lands, water or land and women [193] The members of the tribes felt proud on the achievements of their tribes and past noble deeds of their warriors and heroes depicted in these *Ayyam* stories. As a result, these stories were circulated among the tribes by oral narrations. The extensive duration of some of these battle-day narratives show the militant and extremist nature of the inhabitants of Arabian

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[190] Ibid.

[191] Abu Bakkar Siddique and Mobarak Hussain, "Pre-Islamic Arabic Prose Literature and Its Growth." *International Education and Research Journal*, Vol. 2, No 4 (2016.) 103

[192] Rosenthal. *History of Muslim Historiography*. 20

[193] John Shoup. *Culture and Customs of Jordon* (London: Greenwood Press. 2007). 46.

Peninsula. The enmity between the opposing tribes remained for centuries. Some of the examples of battle-day narratives include stories of war of Basus, fought between Banu Taghlib and Banu Bakr that lasted for forty years[194] , war of Dahis,[195] al-Ghabra, and Dhiqar etc.

Each tribe had its own battle day narratives that dealt with description of the tribes' military success and achievements. The theme of the battle-days was "war", fought by the concerned tribes. These tales contained stories of their deities, accounts of their social and political activities and great achievements of their tribal leaders and ancestors.[196] The emphasis was on the achievements and bravery of the tribal heroes, their strategies and fighting tactics. Their genealogy was narrated in detail to show the purity of blood and praising their forefathers who transferred the noble qualities to them [197] The stories were often embedded with poetical insertions as poet was the representative of the tribe and it was his duty to narrate the true picture of his tribe and its success. Thus these battle-day narratives were a mixture of prose and poetry.[198] The element of richness in genealogical information and poetical verses made them lively and attractive for the members of the concerned tribe who played a vital role in preservation of these accounts for centuries through oral transmission.

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[194] S Akbar Ahmed and Tamara Sonn, edt., *The Sage Book of Islamic Studies* (London: Sage Publications Ltd, 2010), 175.

[195] Philip K. Hitti, *History of the Arabs From the Earliest Times to the Present* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002), 90

[196] Ibid. 18

[197] Faruqi. *Early Muslim Historiography*, 4

[198] Kennedy, *Warfare and Poetry*, 122

The basic structure of these *Ayyam* narratives was composed of prose and poetry. Poetry was most celebrated medium of expression so in *Ayyam* poetry too had a significant contribution. Each tribe had its own poet who served as a guarantor of the historical happenings. The verses he composed on the occasion often contain some explanatory notes in the form of prose. The poems were usually those that were spoken on that particular historical event in discussion. Sometimes the battle scene ends up on a simple song describing the bravery and achievements of the warriors and participants of the war.[199] In this sense poetical verses were important part of these narratives and they had a significant role in preservation and circulation of these *Ayyam* stories because poetry was easy to learn and interesting to practice. These *Ayyam* narratives circulated for centuries among the inhabitants of different tribes.

These stories had no historical consciousness in the sense that they lack proper sequence and continuity. The basic reason was the fact that its composers were not for the purpose of history making or preservation of their historical events rather to show their superiority over their opponent tribes and to boast the morale of their tribesmen. That's why these stories presented only one-sided perception of the composers which make their work less worthy and true. Their lack of chronology further makes them weak in terms of authenticity.

The *Ayyam* stories circulated in Arabia in the form of oral transmission among the tribes, as writing was a rare case. According to sources there were only seventeen people who could read and write on the eve of Islam. It was during the second and third centuries of Islam that Muslims scholars collected and compiled them in a written form for various purposes. The basic purpose of preserving this material in the

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[199] Rosenthal, *History of Muslim Historiography*, 19.

earliest stages was the presence of literally forms it contained but not as a historical material. Philologists, grammarians take special interest in preservation of this material. In order to know the culture of pagan Arab and to understand meanings of various Quranic verses Muslim scholars began to consult these *Ayyam* narratives as it threw light on the various socio-cultural, political and economic aspects of the pre-Islamic Arabs. It became a great source of information about the history of the pre-Islamic Arabia. Before that this material had no significant value in world history.

3.2. Compilation of *Ayyam* Narratives in Islamic period

Caliph Muawiya Ibn Abi Sufyan, was known to have develop an interest in the *Ayyam* tales and the stories of the various ancient rulers.[200] He invited Abid Ibn Sharya from Raqqa to tell him about the history of pre-Islamic period. Abid IBN Sharya was familiar with history of the Ghassanids and Lakhmids.[201] It was during Umayyad period that professional *rawis* began to emerge who used it as historical source for reconstruction of pre-Islamic Arabia.[202] This tradition continued to the Abbasid period when some of the prominent early Muslim scholars who dedicated themselves for vast researches in this field of knowledge. Abu Ubayda Mammar IbnMuthanna and Al-Asmai were two most acknowledged scholars who showed great interest in *Ayyam* literature and composed books on them. Abu Ubayda wrote two books that contained *Ayyam* stories. The first one was *Kitab al-Ayyam al-Kabir* that contained 1200 *Ayyam* tales while the second one was *Kitab al-Ayyam al-Saghir* which consisted of 75 *Ayyam* stories.[203] Both of the scholars were philologists by profession but their

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[200] Khalidi, *Arabic Historical Thought*, 84

[201] Brokelmann, *History of the Arabic Written Tradition*, 100

[202] Faruqi, *Early Muslim Historiography*, 40

[203] Ibid., 41

multidisciplinary approach helped them to write in various fields of knowledge including history.

Although, *Ayyam* narratives had no serious influence on the development of Muslim historians in terms of historical consciousness because Muslim historiography was totally different from that of historical stories of pagan Arabs. However, the theme and style of these narratives influenced the writings of early Muslim historians. There was no concept of continuity and sequence in these tribal war stories. These narrations were not arranged in a systematic way or order and there was no chronology in them at all. This made them less valuable for early Muslim historians. According to Rosenthal, "the early Muslim historians restricted themselves to brief references to the battle-days."[204] There was historical sequence in the events. Tribal prejudice, personal biasness and elements of exaggeration were among its major characteristics.[205] Even professor Duri declared that there is no concept of history in *Ayyam* literature at all.[206] While for Rosenthal these narratives belong to literature in the narrow sense than to history.[207] The reason was the fact that pre-Islamic Arabs were not conscious of history and historical knowledge.

The only thing that made them important was its richness in the existence of various historical facts and material relating to the various tribes and socio-political events of the society. These narratives were not composed with the intention and purpose of preserving historical knowledge rather than it was part of a cultural

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[204] Rosenthal. *History of Muslim Historiography*, 20.

[205] Duri, *Rise of Historical Writing*, 19

[206] Ibid.

[207] Rosenthal, *History of Muslim historiography*. 20

activity The stories show only one sided opinion. The confused chronology of these narratives shows that the composers had no historical consciousness.[208] Despite these entire shortcomings one cannot deny the fact they provided important information about the history of the pre-Islamic Arabs.[209] These battle-day narratives provided information about the religious, cultural, political and social conditions of Arabia prevailing before advent of Islam. It is through these stories one can understand the background of the Quranic epithet that it gave to pre-Islamic Arabs as an "Age of Ignorance." *Ayyam* narratives had a great role in development of *maghazi* literature of Islam. Mehmood al-Hassan says that the style and form of *Ayyam* literature influenced the form and character of Muslim historiography.[210]

3.3. Influence of *Ayyam* Narratives on Early Muslim Historical Writings

Being inspired by the style and form of these battle-day narratives, early Muslim historians used it with an amalgamation of new methods they introduced as a result of their religious teachings. The main theme of *Ayyam* was an incident or description of a certain war with much exaggeration in a fanciful manner. This has a particular influence on *maghazi* and *Futuh* literature of Islam.[211] *maghazi* literature was basically historical narrative on the military campaigns of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH).

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[208] Abu Bakkar and Mobarak Hussain. 'Pre Islamic Arabic Prose Literature and its Growth," 103

[209] Faruqi. *History of Muslim Historiography,* 40.

[210] Mehmood ul-Hassan, *Ibn al-Athir An Arab Historian A Critical Analysis of his Tarikh al-Kamil and Tarikh al-Atabeca* (New Delhi: Northern Book Centre 2005), 6

[211] Faruqi, *Early Muslim Historiography,* 41-42

Ibn Ishaq, the first Muslim historian adopted the style of *Ayyam* for the writing of *maghazi* of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) He divided his *Sirah* into three sections. First part was given the name *Mubtada*, deals with the creation of the world till birth and early life of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), second was the Makkahn life of the Prophet including his preaching of Islam to the Makkahns, and third section was confined to the military history of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH).[212] This third part was written on the method of *Ayyam* narratives. Being a historian free from any institutional restrictions for the writing of historical narrative, he conducted experiments in history. The *maghazi* portion of Ibn Ishaq's *Sirat Rasul Allah* is a blend of prose and abundant poetry, a form similar to that of *Ayyam* tale. Ibn Ishaq included the minute details of the battles and the element of exaggeration in elaboration of historical war event was a continuation of the *Ayyam* narrative.

Apart from that there were some original contributions of Muslim historians in the field of *maghazi* *maghazi* material was collected from authentic sources and the primary source of information was the Holy Quran and the companions of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) whose reliability was an established fact unlike the sources of *Ayyam*, whose transmitters were nonentities. Second characteristic feature of the *maghazi* literature was the systematic arrangement of the historical events. The introduction of the fixed calendar system by the second pious caliph Umar al-Khattab helped the Muslim historians to maintain chronology for the battles fought by the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) in his life. There was no concept of fixed dating system or calendar among the pagan Arabs although they were concerned about the fixation of dates. They named their important historical events with some specific incidents

[212] Yasin Mazher Siddiqui, *Khutbat-i Sirat Masadar-i Sirat ka Tajziyati Mutalia* (Islamabad Idara-i Tehqiqat Islami, 2017), 15.

and places. *Yawm al-Kulab, Yam al-Basus, Yawm al-Dalis, Yawm al-Ukaz, Ashaba al-fil* etc are some of the most important events through which they determined time.[213]

Prose was blended with poetry which was a significant structure of *Ayyam* narratives. This characteristic of *Ayyam* had a great impact on Ibn Ishaq Presence of abundant poetry in the *maghazi* section of *Sirat Rasul Allah* of Ibn Ishaq shows the influence of *Ayyam*. The *maghazi* section of his *Sirah* is full poetical insertions. Poetry not only gives a lively image to the historical event but also show authenticity of the report like an *Ayyam* narrative where poetry was the guarantor of the authenticity of historical event. Ibn Ishaq too, mentioned large amount of poetry composed by the participants of these battles and Muslim poets. Poetry of *Ayyam* presented only one-sided opinion of its own tribe while in *maghazi* of Muslim historians, especially, Ibn Ishaq quoted poetry of the both parties, Muslims as well as their opponents. This makes *maghazi* more attractive and valuable for historical knowledge than that of an *Ayyam* narrative. In the story of battle of Badr, battle of Uhud, and battle of trench etc., Ibn Ishaq dedicated a separate section for the poetry composed by both parties, is mentioned by Ibn Ishaq. For example: on the occasion of battle of Uhud, Hubayra Ibn Abu Wahb, Abdullah Ibn Zibara, Dirar Ibn Khatab Ibn al-Fihri, and Hind d. Utba are some of the opponents of Muslims whose poetry Ibn Ishaq has mentioned.[214] This shows his careful approach to present opinions of both the parties of historical incidents. Likewise, all the succeeding historians followed his

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[213] Humera Naz, "The Early Muslim (The Arab) contribution to the development of Historiographical Traditions and Methods: A Critical Appraisal." *Journal of Social Sciences and Humanities,* Vol 21, Numb 1, Spring 2013. 110.

[214] Ibn Ishaq, *Life of Muhammad,* 404-424

footsteps. The histories of Al-Baladhuri, Al-Tabari and Al-Masudi equally contained a good portion of poetry in prose.

Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) fought many battles in his life including Battle of Badr, Battle of Uhud, Battle of Ditch, and Battle of Hunayn. Poetry being the cultural component of the society still existed in the Prophetic period. Participants as well as the official poets used to compose verses related to a particular battle. Ibn Ishaq used poetry as a major source of military campaigns of Muhammad and his followers. He dedicated a considerable amount of poetry to these military campaigns. Poetry served as an evidence of the incidents. Poetry is often put into the mouth of the individual involved. These poems not only contain historical material but also show the emotional feelings of the participants of the battle. These poems contain both sided opinions: Muslims and their opponents unlike the pagan Arabs tribal stories. For example: Hind d. Utba, wife of Abu Sufyan, was very angry and devastated over loss of her father, brother and son in battle of Badr. She was so angry that she mutilated the companions of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) on the occasion of *Uhud* She cut out liver of Hamza, uncle of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) in order to show her aggression and hatred. Ibn Ishaq related poems to her in which she says.

> We have paid you back for Badr and a war that follows a war is always violent.
>
> I could not bear the loss of Utba nor my brother and his uncle and my first born
>
> I have slaked my vengeance and fulfilled my vow. You, O Wahshi[215], have assuaged the burning in my breast.
>
> I shall thank Wahshi as long as I live until my bones rot in the grave.[216]

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[215] He was a slave of Juhayr Ibn Mutim. Wahshi was with her during her cruel act of mutilation.

[216] Ibn Ishaq, *Life of Muhammad.* 385.

He not only quoted poetry throughout the narrative but at the end of description of various battles he has dedicated a separate section for the poetry These poems are a major source for the description of the war, characteristics and bravery of the Muslims and the emotional sentiments of the participants and their supporters Ibn Ishaq mentioned a whole collection of poetry composed by various poets at the end of the accounts of the battle of Badr, thirty-eight long poems,[217] for the battle of Uhud there are thirty-three long poems,[218] for the battle of Trench there are twenty-two long poems,[219] these separate poems are cited at the end of the prose narrative.[220]

Another significant characteristic of *maghazi* literature was the element of exaggeration and dramatization of the events. This too was the influence of the *Ayyam* narrative when members of the concerned tribe present their own perspective with much exaggeration in order to show their own bravery, power and strength. They used to praise the warriors and their fight with extreme dominance. In *maghazi* portion of Al-Tabari, who derived his material from Ibn Ishaq, mentioned numerous historical accounts with exaggeration. One example of this is the descriptions of story of Banu Qurayza. They were the combatants of the Jewish tribe of Qurayza. They deceived Muslims during the battle of Trench Ibn Ishaq and Al-Tabari exaggerated the event to a greater extent. Ibn Ishaq states that all the combatants of Banu Qurayza who were 600 to 900 in number were killed and dug them in special trenches.[221] They were

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[217] Ibid . 340-360.

[218] Ibid . 404- 426

[219] Ibid . 471-482.

[220] The numbers mention here are just for those poems that have been quoted at the end of battle narrate Ibn Ishaq separately mentioned these poems with the title: "poetry there upon" Apart fiom this there are frequent quotations of verses in middle, beginning and end of each report

[221] Ibn Ishaq *Life of Muhammad*. 464.

executed by Ali and Zubayr Ibn Awwam. Ibn Ishaq presented this story with much exaggeration because to execute such a large of combatant by just two persons seems unreliable. A detailed discussion on the exaggeration of Ibn Ishaq on this story is conducted by Muhammad Munir.[222]

Mehmood ul-Hassan considered Al-Tabari a biased historian who totally ignored the *Ayyam* stories in his *Tarikh al-Rusul wa al-Muluk*[223] *Ayyam* is an important aspect of Arab history and surprisingly Al-Tabari did not bother to provide even a brief introduction of it in his *Tarikh al-Rusul*, as part of the Arab history. The reason for this was just for the basic fact that he belonged to Persia. In his time period the division between the Arabs and non-Arabs was an important question. Historians produced histories with the intentions of creating their own histories as the most legitimate and glorious ones. Al-Tabari and Al-Masudi has not openly criticized the Persian history.[224]

Although *Ayyam* narratives had an impact on the *maghazi* literature yet there are many original contributions of the early Muslim historians in the field of *maghazi* that made this discipline distinct from that of the *Ayyam* narratives. Muslim historians arranged their historical material in chronological order and there was a historical sequence among them. While the *Ayyam* narratives lack historical sequence and there was no concept of date or chronology in them. This made *maghazi* literature more appealing and authentic then that of the *Ayyam* literature

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[222] "Some Reflections on the Story of Banu Quiayzah: A Re-evaluation of Ibn Ishaq's Account," Islamabad Law Review. *Quarterly Research Journal of Faculty of Shariah and Law*, Islamabad, Vol 1, Number 2. April-June 2016 25-28

[223] Mehmood ul-Hassan, *Ibn al-Athir*, 76

[224] Ibid

Muslim historians were very critical in their approach towards the authenticity of material in hand. They adopted the critical method of *Hadith* for the scrutiny of their historical sources. They articulated every event on the authority of some chain of transmitters, who were the companions of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) and their biographical details were available and whose authenticity was beyond doubt. On the other hand, authorities of *Ayyam* narratives were unknown. For example: when Ibn Ishaq was writing *Sirat Rasul Allah*, he combined the style of *Hadith* scholars with that of the storytellers The method of *isnad* was adopted as a defining tool for the authenticity of many of the reports as the authenticity of the report was dependent on the continuity of the chain of transmission.

Al-Baladhuri too used *isnad* for the authenticity of each report in *Futuh al-Buldan* and *Ansab al-Ashraf*. He used detailed as well as collective *isnad* and in some places when the *isnad* becomes too long he gives only few names and then wrap up with the term "others. "When the *isnad* is not known to him he used phrases like "some traditionists say", certain men learned in traditions", "many people of learning related to me", etc. etc. in the opening sentencing of *Futuh al-Buldan* he says· "I have been informed by certain men learned in tradition, biography and the conquest of the lands whose narratives I have transmitted, abridged and pieced together into one whole."[225] Abdul Kader Tayob analyzed Baladhuri's method of collective *isnad* in these words, "This was done primarily to produce a smooth narrative out of a number of disjointed reports. In this way, the first move was made to develop a continuous story. However, the more stringent method of verification was still upheld as an

[225] P.K. Hitti. *Al-Baladhuri Futuh al-Buldan*. Vol.1 (New York. Columbia University Press, 1916), 15.

ideal."[226] This is an indication towards a basic fact that Al-Baladhuri travelled to many areas in order to collect and verify the *isnad* of various reports.

Al-Tabari and Al-Masudi were historians of Persian origin. They were more inclined towards the inclusion of Persian history than ancient Arab history. They both ignored the *Ayyam* narratives in their histories. But the form and technique of Ayyam has equally influenced the histories of Al-Tabari and Al-Masudi. The blend of poetry and prose in description of the various historical wars or battles in Tabari show that that has adopted this idea from *Ayyam* stories. Influence of *Ayyam* method is also visible in Al-Masudi's *Muruj al-Dhahab wa Ma'adin al-Jawahir*. Firstly, he used poetry in support of his historical argument throughout his work and secondly, the use of exaggeration in explanation of particular events of a historical event. One of the examples of this is his description of the Caliph al-Mahdi on his hunting mission.[227] Al-Masudi not only exaggerates the event but also give minute details of the incidents. Another example is in the comparison of al-Kufa and al-Basra.[228]

Ayyam al-Arab was an important tradition inherited by the Muslims from their predecessors- the pre-Islamic Arabs. The structure and characteristics of *Ayyam* narratives had a great impact on early Muslim historians understanding for the *maghazi* writings. It was the *Ayyam* literature that compelled them to follow a distinct form in order to make the narratives of Ibn Ishaq, Ibn Sa'ad, Al-Baladhuri, Al-Tabari and Al-Masudi. Muslim historians not only followed the same pattern of these *Ayyam* narratives but they performed various experiments in it. The Muslim calendar system

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[226] Abdul Kader al-Tayob, "The Transformation of a Historical Tradition: From *Khabar* to *Tarikh*," *The American Journal of Social Sciences*, Vol.5, No. 2, 1988, 233.

[227] Al-Masudi, *Tarikh-i al-Masudi*, 375-6

[228] Ibid., 191-2

helped them to introduce a chronological order and sequence to the historical events as the *Ayyam* narratives lack sequence in historical events. Apart from that the transmitters of *Ayyam* narratives were non-entities while the informants of *maghazi* literature were the companions of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH).

Beside these cultural traditions that the early Muslim Arab historians inherited from their pre-Islamic Arab predecessors, the influence of the Holy Quran as a religious tradition was much higher and it played a significant role in the historical writings of the Arab historians.

CHAPTER 4

THE HOLY QURAN AND ITS INFLUENCE ON MUSLIM EPISTEMOLOGY

Muslim epistemology had a religious beginning where the religious traditions of Islam influenced the worldview of Muslim historians. The term 'Religious Tradition' here denotes the religious background or the environment which inspired the early Muslim historians for historical consciousness. Muslim historians got inspiration for the study of historical knowledge from the Holy Quran and *Hadith*. These two important religious traditions had a strong bearing on the development of Muslim epistemology in the sense that it not only shaped their worldview but served as prime motive and source for the history of Islam and life of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH).

The Holy Quran and *Hadith* had a great role in the historical consciousness among the early Muslims. The Holy Quran emphasized on the moralistic aspect of history It found the causes of many historical changes in human actions. The study of these actions helped them in understanding of various divine plans in course of history. It helped early Muslim historians for presenting a moralistic interpretation of history. Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) served as a historical figure and his life and military achievements were important events of history of Islam. Muslims now developed a strong interest in the study of his life and actions. Muslim historical writings were basically originated from the study of *maghazi* literature as part of *Hadith*.

The present chapter discusses the Holy Quran as an important religious tradition for the development of historical awareness among the Muslims. The early

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compilation of the Holy Quran was the prime factor for the idea of writing of historical information among the early Arabs. In the first section of this chapter, there is a historical background and status of the Holy Quran as a religious tradition. A chronological sequence is followed in order to show the gradual development of the compilation of the Holy Quran in different time periods. In the second part of this section, there is a thorough discussion on the importance and role of the Holy Quran in developing the historical consciousness among the early Muslim historians The second section of this chapter deals with the influence of the Holy Quran on early Muslim historians. It analyses the effects of the Quranic teachings on the histories of early Muslim historians from Ibn Ishaq to Al-Masudi.

4.1. Advent of Islam and its Concept of History

With the emergence of Islam, Arabs· become familiar with a new history and developed a new and purposeful concept of history. It was neither the inherited traditions nor the traditions of their neighbouring regions which were responsible for the inspiration of Muslims towards history. It was the result of their religious traditions that the oral tradition of the Arab society was transformed into a written narration. The historical concepts in the Holy Quran compelled early Muslims to consider it as an important branch of knowledge. Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) along with his faithful companions reconstructed the old traditions of the society according to the divine revolution.

The Holy Quran has a great importance in the lives of the Muslims as it contains lessons and guidance for them to learn. It influenced their social, cultural, political, economic and intellectual life. God through the stories of various past nations warned the Muslims of the consequences of their actions from past history.

These stories include descriptions of the people of *Ad* and *Thamud*, Noah, people of

Prophet Lot at Sodom and Gomorrah, stories of *Bani Israel* etc. The basic purpose of

these stories was to aware the Muslims about the consequences of early nations who

got a fatal end due to their misdeeds and rejection of divine command. The Holy

Quran clearly states the fact in its various chapters. On one of the occasions, it clearly

declares the historical remains of the past nations as true sources of knowledge. The

Quran says in *Surah* Rum: "Say, [O Muhammad!], Travel through the land and

observe how the end of those before was. Most of them were associators, [of others

with Allah]."[229]

For the early Muslim historians, the Holy Quran was the first and foremost

source of history. The Quran played a significant role in development of historical

consciousness among the Muslims. According to Robinson, the Quran was the first

internal factor that is responsible for the rise of historical consciousness among the

Muslim historians. He stated this in these words;

> .. Quran locates man within a universal sequence of events (creation, a series of prophets,
> Muhammad's revelation, the Day of Judgement), knows of several historical events (including
> a battle between the Persians and Byzantines), distinguishes between the true signs and
> promise of god and 'the [mere] fables of the ancients'. and even teaches that 'men of
> understanding can derive lessons from past. The revelation impressed a vision of history upon
> early Muslims [230]

Arabs could not develop the sense of history from the pre-Islamic traditions of Poetry,

Genealogy and *Ayyam* due to lack of historical continuity and objectivity in historical

events. It was the Holy Quran that helped Arab Muslims to understand the basic

concept of gradual development of humankind and the role of history in this process.

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[229] The Holy Quran. 30 42

[230] Chase F. Robinson. *Islamic Historiography* (Cmbridge. Cambridge University Press 2003). 43

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History was the basic instrument which helped the community to draw moral lessons by paying attention to the experiences of the bygone nations. For the Muslim historians it was not just the study of a tribe, kings or kingdoms but for them, it was a study of the actions and consequences of bygone nations and communities. It was the Holy Quran that broadened the limited tribal concept of history in Arabs into a universal or world history. It selected a theme of Prophecy for the study and understanding of past. Its basic purpose was to describe the characteristics and deeds of different nations and their reaction to the teachings of the prophets sent to them in different time periods. Historical changes are often related to these missions of the prophets. The rise and fall of these nations are subject to their attitude towards prophetic call. The study of history and historiography in its beginning was meant to get the pleasure of Allah (SWT). This led them to consult the holy Quran and *Sunnah* to write history. The stories of the prophets and their nations illustrate the moralistic aspects of history. The lessons it contained were of great significance for the present as well as the future history of the society. The Holy Quran stressed on study of the past when it says that:

> Have they not travelled in the land and seen the nature of consequence for those who were before them? They were strong than these in power, and they dug the earth and built upon it more than these have built [231]

On another occasion it says:

> And: We sent not before you except men to whom We revealed from among the people of cities Have they not travelled through the earth and observed how the end of those before them was? And the home of the Hereafter is best for those who fear Allah; then will you not reason?[232]

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[231] The Holy Quran; 30: 9.

[232] Ibid , 12:109

Allah (SWT) sent various prophets to these nations in different periods of time in order to guide them. Those who disobey His prophets and their messages, experienced heavy consequences in the form of natural calamities and disasters and those who still don't repent on their actions were put to fatal death. Allah (SWT) sent human beings as their opponents to destroy them.[233] So, the rise and fall of different nations of past show the divine plan in history and it was the Quran and Prophetic tradition that served as the primary sources.

For the Quran, the causes of any historical change lies in a constant struggle between the good and evil forces. It gave references of past in order to justify this idea. It says: "Indeed, Allah is with those who fear Him and those who are doers of good."[234] This fear of God means fear of the divine laws which control the process of history. Those nations and communities who did not obey the divine laws were subject to destruction while those who fear God and did good acts got salvation and succeed.[235] This helped early Muslim intellectuals to focus on history as an important branch of knowledge. The Holy Quran was the basic source that influenced early Muslim historians to develop a new worldview.[236]

It is a common belief among the Muslims that the Holy Quran was revealed to Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) through the arch-angel, Gabriel. The verses were revealed to Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) in piece-meal consisted of more or less five to ten verses at a time. This process took thirty years when the Holy Quran was

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[233] Syed Ali Ashraf, *The Quranic Concept of History* (Leicester: The Islamic Foundation, 1980), 7-8

[234] The Holy Quran 16 128

[235] Mazheruddin Siddiqui, *The Quranic Concept of History* (Islamabad. Islamic Research Institute, 2008). 1

[236] Ibid, 12

completed.[237] Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) received his first revelation in Makkah at Hira, a cave located at Mount *Jabal al-Noor*. Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) was an illiterate person who was unable to read and write. The very first verse of the Quran was related to reading when Allah (SWT) says:

> Read! In the name of your Lord- Who has created Created man from a clinging substance Read' And your Lord is the Most Generous-Who taught man by the pen He taught man which he knew not[238].

The illustration of pen is an indication towards importance of preservation of knowledge or writing. Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) used to recite the verses of the Quran before his companions to avoid the risk of forgetting any portion of it before dictation Address by God himself when he says:

> We will make you recite, [O Muhammad], and you will not forget, except what Allah should will. Indeed, He knows what is declared and what is hidden.[239]

Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) used to recite the revealed verses in the assembly of men and then in the assembly of women.[240] Prophet then ordered his companions to recite it twice a day during the hours of prayer.[241] Later on it was committed to writing by some of the companions of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) with the consent of the Prophet. The passages of the Holy Quran were preserved on palm-leaves, leather, stones, etc.[242] According to Muhammad Hamidullah, it was the

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[237] Muhammad Hamidullah. *Khutbat-e Bahawalpur* (Islamabad: Islamic Research Institute, 2003) 9

[238] The Holy Quran; 96: 1-5

[239] Ibid. 87: 6-7.

[240] Hamidullah. *Khutbaat-e Bahawalpur*. 10.

[241] Ibid , 9-10

[242] Muir, William. *The Life of Mahomet With Introductory Chapters on the Original Sources for the Biography of Mohamet, and on the Pre-Islamite History of Arabia*, Vol 1, London: Smith, Elder and Co., 1861) iii.

beginning of the compilation of the Quran, when Prophet personally examined the written passages of the Quran in order to check the possible mistakes committed by the writer.[243]

Every year in the month of Ramadan, companions of the Prophet came with their recorded verses; Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) personally checked these recorded verses to ensure that all the verses were correct and placed in a proper order.[244] In this way the Holy Quran was codified under the guidance of the Prophet in his own time on different materials. The conversion of Umar Ibn Abdul Aziz after the recitation of the manuscript of 'Ta Ha' which he found in his sister's house is a proof for the presence of written Quran in early days of Islam. Khabbab Ibn al-Arat was the man who used to read Quran for Fatima, sister of Umar al-Khattab. It is said that the verses were written on paper.[245] There is a tradition that Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) used to repeat the verses of Quran in the month of Ramadan for Gabriel which was revealed to him throughout that year.[246] In the year of his death, Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) read the whole Quran twice for the Muslims in order to tackle any mistakes that the Muslims commit in writing of Quran. The fact was that before his demise Gabriel recited Quran twice for the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH).[247] According to Ibn Sa'ad, the six companions of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) in his

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[243] Hamnidullah, *khuthat-i Bahuwalpuri*. 12

[244] Ibid . 16

[245] Ibn Ishaq, *Life of Muhamamd*. 156

[246] Sahih al-Bukhari 4986, Book 66, *Hadith* 19, Vol 6.

[247] Ibid.

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lifetime were; Ubay Ibn Ka'ab, Ma'adh Ibn Jabal, Abu al-Rada, Zayd Ibn Thabit, Sa'ad and Abu Zayd.[248] They all were the helpers/*ansar* [249]

After the death of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), people with in the community started to revolt and even some of them claimed for Prophecy. Muslimah Kazzab was strong tribal leader who proclaimed Prophethood. Abu Bakr sent a Muslim expedition against him and the battle took place in 632 A.D in Yamamah.[250] Muslims although get success in this battle but hundreds of them were martyred, of whom majority were the specialized hafiz of Quran. Umar Ibn Khattab was very concerned about the loss of *huffaz* and he asked Abu Bakr to take immediate steps for the preservation of Quran. Zayd bin Thabit narrated a tradition of Umar, who said: "I am afraid that more heavy causalities may take place among the *qurrah*' on other battlefields, whereby a large part of the Quran may be lost."[251] Abu Bakr was reluctant as he said he could not do that because the Prophet did not practice it in his life.[252] Somehow, he agreed and approached Zayd bin Thabit, who was one of the scribes of the Prophetic time, to collect and compile the whole Quran.[253] Zayd found it a difficult task and stated 'task was more difficult than to shift a mountain'.[254] He agreed and began to collect all the written verses from stones, camel bones, palm-

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[248] Muhammad Ibn Sa'ad. *Tabaqat al-Kabir*, trans. Allama Abdullah al-Imadi, *Tabaqat-i Ibn Sa'ad Akhbar un-Nabi*. Vol. II (Karachi: Nafees Academy, 1982), 395.

[249] Ibid.

[250] Hamidullah. *Khutbat-i Bahawalpur*, 16

[251] Sahih al-Bukhari 4986, Book 66, *Hadith* 8, Vol 6.

[252] Hamidullah, *Khutbat-i Bahawalpur*, 17

[253] Ibid .

[254] Ibid, 17.

leaves and from the reciters who read it orally.[255] These reciters were both men and women; Umme Warqa was one of those who were consulted by Zayd bin Thabit for the verses of Quran.[256] After a very careful collection of the verses, he crosschecks them and compiled it into a single book. Zayd bin Thabit narrated·

> . .I started looking for the Quran and collecting it from palm stalks, thin white stones and also from the men who knew it by heart, till I found the last verse of Surat at-Tauba with Abi Khuzaima al-Ansari, and I did not find it with anybody other than him . .... Then the complete manuscripts of the Quran remained with Abu Bakr till he died, then with Umar until the end of his life, and then with Hafsa, the daughter of Umar.[257]

During the time period of Uthman Ibn Affan, Muslim empire expanded to different regions and subjugated many regions and tribes who were not speaking and understanding Arabia This resulted in the difference of pronunciation and recitation of Quran. When Uthman bin Affan was informed about these developments, he showed great concern about the possibility of conflicts among the Muslims. He took an immediate action and approached Hafsah, one of the wives of the Holy Prophet who had the original volume of Quran and made copies of it.[258] A committee was formed under the supervision of Zayd bin Thabit who was the compiler of the first Quran, to make copies of the Quran.[259] The members of the committee included Abdullah bin Zubayr, Said bin al-As and Abdur Rahman bin Harith.[260] The caliph Uthman instructed them to follow the dialect of Quraysh in case of any disagreement

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[255] Ibid., 18

[256] Ibid.

[257] Ibid.

[258] Ibid.

[259] Ihid , 18.

[260] Ihid

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of the members, on any point of Quran, with Zaid bin Thabit.[261] They made a standard

copy of the original Quran and returned the original one to Hafsah. Uthman sent it to

all the provinces of the empire and ordered their rulers to burn all the other copies and

replaced them by original one. Dr. Hamidullah is of the opinion that the purpose of

Uthman was to unite the Muslim community on a single Quran, for which he is often

called as the *"jamai al-Quran* or the collector of the Quran "[262] This was a remarkable

achievement for the Muslims in historical context as they become the possessors of a

unified written literature served as the basic and primary source of information.

4.2. Importance and Role of Quran in the Development of Historical Consciousness of the Muslims

The emergence of Islam had a great impact on the historical consciousness of Islam. It

was a religion with a complete sense of history.[263] Quran has a great importance in

Muslim life throughout the course of history. It influences almost every sphere of

their life. Allah (SWT) warned people to learn lessons [264] The characteristic qualities

of the Quran as the actual word of Allah (SWT), its direct revelation to the Prophet

Muhammad (PBUH), preservation of the Holy Quran in the very early stage of its

revelation, and recitation of the Holy Quran by the Prophet and his companions five

times a day were all very helpful in the development of Muslim historiography as

there was a good amount of historical facts as a result of all these developments Early

Muslim biographers and historians accepted the purity and authenticity of the text of

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[261] Sahih al-Bukhari 4986, Book 66, *Hadith* 9, Vol 6

[262] Hamidullah, *Khutbat-i Bahawalpur*, 22

[263] Bernard Lewis, *Historians of the Middle East*, Introduction (London Oxford University Press, 1962), 3

[264] Ibid

the Holy Quran and used it as primary source and reference for the life of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), as the Quran is the mirror of the character of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). The tradition of Ayesha, wife of the Prophet, confirms this fact when she was inquired by Sa'ad bin Hisham about the character of the Prophet. Her words were: "Do you not recite the Quran? The character of Messenger of Allah (PBUH) was the Quran."[265]

Quran provides reference for all the major events of the life of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) and early history of Islam. There is an abundant amount of historical information about the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH)'s Makkan and Madinan life in Quran. These verses are description of the life history of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) like his birth, early days, life in Makkah, his sufferings in the hands of Quraysh and other opponents and his military life too There are many *suras* in Quran that talk about the dignity, value, character, responsibilities etc of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), chief among them are *Surah Al-e Imran,*[266] *An-Nissa,*[267] *al-Ahzab,*[268] *al-Hijr,*[269] *Al-Isra,*[270] *al-Ankabut,*[271] *al-Qalam,*[272] *al-Shiqaq,*[273] *al-Kahf,*[274]

[265] Sunan Abi Dawud 1342, Book 5, *Hadith* 1337

[266] The Holy Quran: 3:32, 84, 164.

[267] Ibid., 4· 136

[268] Ibid., 33 6, 21, 56, 40, 45.

[269] Ibid., 15 72

[270] Ibid , 17:79.

[271] Ibid , 29:48

[272] Ibid , 68·3, 41.

[273] Ibid , 94·4

[274] Ibid., 17: 110.

al-Anbrya,[275], *al-Anaam,*[276] *al-Qasas.*[277] *al-Muminun,*[278] *an-Najm,*[279] *an-Naziyat,*[280] and many more.

4.3. Influence of Quran on early Muslim Historical Works

Early Muslim *sirah* writers and subsequent early Muslim historian consulted Quran for the reconstruction of life of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) as there is significant number of *surahs* featuring the life of the Prophet. Out of 114 chapters, 40 are named after Prophet Muhammad (PBUH).[281] It was the Quran that first motivated Muslims to pay attention towards the articulation of the life of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) in the shape of compilation of *Hadith* material. Quran says: "There has certainly been for you in the Messenger of Allah an excellent pattern for everyone whose hope is in Allah and the Last Day and who remembers Allah often."[282] This process later on developed the trend of writing *sirah* of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). According to Samee-Ullah Bhat, Muslim historiography has a religious beginning as they approached this branch of knowledge with the aim of obtaining the pleasure of Allah.[283]

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[275] Ibid , 21. 34, 107

[276] Ibid , 6· 58, 109, 110.

[277] Ibid.. 28 56

[278] Ibid , 23. 72

[279] Ibid., 53: 3.4.

[280] Ibid., 79 42, 43

[281] Muhammad Emin Yildirim, "Siyei The Essential Source of Sira- Quran, 'Al-Sira an-Nabawiyya' Quran into the Life", *Quarterly Magazine on Science, History and Culture* 1, (2017), 11

[282] The Holy Quran, 33: 21.

[283] Samee-Ullah Bhat, "Towards Understanding the Muslim Historiography and Muslim Historians," *Journal of Islamic Thought and Civilization,* Volume 4. Issue 1, Spring 2014, 4.

Quran played a major role in the historical consciousness of early Muslim historians. Being influenced by the teachings of Quran, Muslim historians approached it with great care and sincerity. They considered themselves as the custodians and reporters of true knowledge where their source of knowledge was Quran. There begun an enthusiasm among them to write about the past for which they followed a very strict rule of writings for the accuracy, soundness and scientific arrangement of the historical material.

4.3.1. Ibn Ishaq's *Sirat Rasul Allah*

Ibn Ishaq being the first most comprehensive *sirah* historian of Islam has not only used Quranic verses as source but used the verses as witness for the authenticity of many historical reports of the life of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) and general history of Islam He not only mentioned the verses of Quran in support of the statement, but he also mentioned the time and circumstances of various verses. Therefore, sometimes his work gives a glimpse of a *tafsir* studies rather than a historical work. Quranic verses are used in reference to the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH)'s public preaching in Makkah and how Allah (SWT) commanded him to public his religion. In this regard he quoted *Surah al-Hijr* verse 94 where Allah (SWT) says: "Proclaim what you have been ordered and turn aside from polytheists".[284] "Say I am the one who warns plainly".[285] In the same discussion he quoted verses of *Surah Ash-Shua'ra* when Allah (SWT) says. "Warn, [O Muhammad], your family, your nearest relations, and lower your wing to the followers who follow you".[286]

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[284] Ibn Ishaq, *Life of Muhammad*, 117.

[285] Ibid.

[286] Ibid

The Holy Quran is one of the most authentic proofs of the Prophethood of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). While discussing this important event of the Muslim history, Ibn Ishaq quoted multiple evidences from the verses of Quran when Quraysh of Makkah demanded Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) to show the authenticity of his Prophethood and his position as a chosen one..[287] With reference to the incident of the three questions that the leader of Quraysh asked the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) while doubting his Prophethood. In reference to this incident, Ibn Ishaq mentioned *Surah al-Kahf* which is eighteenth Chapter of the Quran.[288] A detailed explanation of this chapter shows him an exegist rather than a historian. Because commentators of Quran usually discussed verses of Quran in detail in which they not only explain the meaning of particular verses but also the causes and circumstances of those verses too.

Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) always used to ask Allah (SWT) for guidance and support in response to the various allegations and doubt from the unbelievers. It was the Quranic revelations that God address his concerns. So, Quran was one of the major sources of knowledge for many events of the life of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) and Ibn Ishaq built his narrative on the Quranic text. While, in reference to the various allegations and doubt of the unbelievers is addressed in great proportion by the Holy Quran. Ibn Ishaq utilized almost each of it to make his narrative more accurate and authentic. One of the examples is the mentioning of *Surah al-Kauthar*[289] in reference to the words of Al-As Ibn Wail al-Sahmi who said, "let him alone for he

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[287] Ibid., 133-142.

[288] Ibid., 137.

[289] Ibid., 180.

is only a childless man with no offspring. If he were to die, his memory would perish and you would have rest from him".[290]

4.3.2. Ibn Sa'ad's *Tabaqat al-Kabir*

Ibn Sa'ad wrote the very first detailed biographical dictionary in the history of Islam. His work was different from those of the previous works like Ibn Ishaq and al-Waqidi. He was one of those who introduced some new elements to the discipline of history in early periods. His *Tabaqat al-Kabir* was a new addition to the Muslim historical writings. He experimented with the existing information and interpreted it in a new perspective of dividing history in *tabaqat* or layers. Being influenced by an Islamic world view Ibn Sa'ad was bound to interpret historical information in a religious perspective with that of his own personal observations and experiences. So, it was customary for him to use the Holy Quran as inspiration and source for the writing of history.

Ibn Sa'ad, has quoted the Quranic text on many occasions. Ibn Sa'ad on the authority of Muhammad Ibn Saib al-Kalbi quoted the verses of *Surah al-Shu'ara*, which say; "And warn, [O Muhammad], your closest kindred" in the account of Abd Manaf.[291] Ibn Sa'ad narrated that it was in the light of this Quranic text that Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) confined his preaching to the descendants of Abd Manaf.[292] While in the same continued account he mentioned a detailed tradition from Ibn Abbas, who narrated a whole story of the calling of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) to the descendants of Fihr, Luway Ibn Ghalib, Ka'ab Ibn Luwayy, Murra Ibn Kaa'b,

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[290] Ibid

[291] Muhammad Ibn Sa'ad. *Tabaqat Ibn Sa'ad*. Vol 1, 86

[292] Ibid

Kilab Ibn Murra, Qussay and descendants of Abd Manaf All the tribes retired one by one except the descendants of Abd Manaf for which the Prophet stated that Allah (SWT) has commanded me to warn my nearest kindred and you are nearer to me than the Quraysh."[293] In response to the words of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) Abu Lahab get angry and said: "May you perish! Did you invite us for this?[294] Ibn Sa'ad mentioned the verses of *Surah al-Masad* verse no. 1 where Allah (SWT) says; "May the hands of Abu Lahab be ruined and ruined is he."[295]

Ibn Sa'ad is not particular about mentioning the Quranic text to the significant events discussed in the Holy Quran beside the fact that he built his narrations on the basis of the information provided by the Holy Quran. One of the examples is the account of Abraha and his fatal consequences while the whole story was reconstructed on the basis of *Sural al-Fil*.[296] Later on in reference to the story of Abu Talib's death, Ibn Sa'ad has quoted verses of *Surah at- Tawba, Surah al-Qasas,* and *Surah al-An'am*. There are different opinions among the sunni school of thought with that about the death of When Abu Talib was on his deathbed Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) came to him and said; 'O uncle: say. there is no god but Allah, of which Abu Jahl and Abdullah Ibn Umayya who keep on saying that "Will you now leave the religion of Abd al-Muttalib?"[297] Abu Talib died and his last words were "I am on the religion of Abd al-Muttalib"[298] Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) was so upset for this incident that

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[293] Ibid., 86

[294] Ibid

[295] Ibid , 87

[296] Ibid., 112

[297] Ibid.. 139.

[298] Ibid.. 140.

he kept on seeking forgiveness for his uncle and stated; "O Abu Talib! O uncle! I shall ask for your forgiveness for him until I am prohibited."[299] According to Ibn Sa'ad, Allah (SWT) revealed these verses of *Surah at-Tawba*, which say; "It is not for the Prophet, and those who believe, to pray for the forgiveness of polytheists, even though they be their relatives, after it is explained to them that they are bound for the hellfire."[300] In the same account Ibn Sa'ad has mentioned various other traditions regarding the same incident. Like he has mentioned on the authority of Muhammad Ibn Umar that the verses of *Sura al-Qasas*, "Verily! You (O Muhammad) guide not whom you like, but Allah guides whom he wills" and the verse of *Surah al-An'am*; "And they prevent [others] from him and are [themselves] remote from him."[301] Ibn Sa'ad mentioned interpretation of al-Abbas for this verse who said that this verse was revealed relating to Abu Talib as he forbade other peoples to harm the Prophet but he himself avoided embracing Islam throughout his life.[302]

In the account of life of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) in Makkah, Ibn Sa'ad quoted Quranic verse "And it is a Quran that We have divided, that you may recite it unto mankind at intervals and We have revealed it by successive revelations"[303] He mentioned it on the authority of Abu Rija who heard it from Hassan Ibn Ali.[304] While discussing the very first *Surah* that was revealed to the

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[299] Ibid.

[300] Ibid.

[301] Ibid.. 141.

[302] Ibid, 141.

[303] The Holy Quran

[304] Ibid, 232.

Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), he has a consensus with the other historians and mentioned the verses of *Surah Alaq* [305]

In reference to the account of the mosque of *Quba*, Ibn Sa'ad quoted the verses of *Surah at-Taubah* While in description of the account of change of *qiblah* from Bayt al-Muqaddas to Kabah,[306] the verses of Holy Quran served as an important evidence for the authenticity of the report. According to Ibn Sa'ad, Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) prayed for sixteen months towards Bayt al-Muqaddas and often he wished for the change of *qiblah* towards Kabah in his heart.[307] Allah (SWT) listened to his heart and addressed it through revelation Ibn Sa'ad has quoted the verses of *Surah al-Baqarah* in which Allah (SWT) says; "We have seen the turning of your face, [O Muhammad], towards the heaven, and We will surely turn you to a *qiblah* with which is dear to you".[308]

The account of the departure of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH)'s to Madinah along with Abu Bakr is an interesting one.[309] When the unbelievers planned for an attack on Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), Gabriel came to the Prophet and informed him about this plan and asked him not to stay at home. The infidels were waiting at the door of the Prophet with an intention to attack on him. Prophet

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[305] Ibid., 210.

[306] During the initial days of Prophethood, Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) offered his prayers towards Bayt al-Muqaddas which is known as the earliest *qiblah* of the Muslims. Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) continued praying towards it even after his migration to Madinah. In those days it was a common *qibla* for the Jews and Muslims. The Jews too offered prayers towards Bayt al-Muqaddas. The Jews were not happy with this common *qibla* and used to ridicule Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) and Islam by different means Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) was not happy with all this and often look up to the sky for Allah (SWT)'s guidance.

[307] Muhammad Ibn Sa'ad, *Tabaqat Ibn Sa'ad*, 15.

[308] Ibid.

[309] Ibid., 235.

Muhammad (PBUH) successfully came out and sprinkling a hand full of dust by reciting the verses of the Holy Quran. These were the verses of the Holy Quran from *Surah Yaseen* Ibn Sa'ad mentioned this historical event and quoted the verses of the Quran;

> Yaseen By the wise Quran Indeed, you [O Muhammad] are from among the messengers, on a right path This is a revelation of the Exalted in Might, the Merciful, that you may warn people whose forefathers are not warned, so they are unaware. Already the word has come into effect upon most of them. so they do not believe. Indeed, we have put shackles on their necks, and they are to their chins, so they are with heads aloft And We have put before them a barrier and behind them a barrier and covered them, so they do not see And it is all the same for them whether you warn them or do not warn the- they will not believe [310]

The completion of the mission of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) in this world was an important event of the history of Islam. Allah (SWT) addressed the completion and perfection of the religion of Islam in the last chapter of the Quran. It was a formal announcement of the end of the divine revelation as well as the finality of the Prophethood. According to the Holy Quran, Islam was perfected and completed with Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) and after him the Prophethood ceased to continue. Ibn Sa'ad has particularly mentioned the last verses of Holy Quran that Allah (SWT) revealed at a time when Prophethood of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) comes to an end.

4.3.3. Al-Baladhuri's *Futuh al-Buldan*

Al-Baladhuri, wrote *Futuh al-Buldan* being inspired by the *maghazi* literature. The Muslim historians in the early period were very keen to experiment something new and appealing. Al-Baladhuri's *Futuh al-Buldan* was one of the examples of it Before him the *maghazi* literature got great appreciation and the basic reason for the study of *maghazi* in this era revolves around a desire to narrate the exploits of different tribes

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[310] Ibid

and to educate the masses about the natural expansion of conquests as part of the promise of Allah to Prophet Muhammad (PBUH).[311] Historians and the historical writings were basically carried out with these intentions. In the third century, a new intention was detected as a desire to record the accurate account of these conquests in order to fulfil some official requirements.[312] Historians like Al-Baladhuri were officially bureaucrats who applied intentionally or unintentionally their bureaucratic methodology and attitude to the historical narratives[313] The histories produced by these bureaucrats were considered to be more accurate and reliable as their authors had access to many important official documents. Al-Baladhuri has used many official letters and documents in reference to various historical accounts. Some of the examples of these letters included the official letter of caliph al-Mamun regarding Fidak[314], many of the historical letters of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) to various individuals are made part of *Futuh al-Buldan* as original sources. in description of the accounts of Bahrain, Al-Baladhuri mentioned four historical letters that Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) wrote to; al-Mundhir Ibn Sawa and Sabukht,[315] to the people of Bahrain,[316] letter to the people of Hajar,[317] and a letter written to Mundhir Sawa[318]. Likewise, almost in every chapter there is an official original letter written by the

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[311] Khalidi, *Arabic Historical Thought*, 65

[312] Ibid.

[313] Ibid , 68

[314] Al-Baladhuri, *Futuh al-Buldan*, 60.

[315] Ibid . 127.

[316] Ibid.. 128.

[317] Ibid . 129

[318] Ibid . 130

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concerned authorities. Particularly in the first part of *Futuh al-Buldan* there are many letters of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) which gave more vitality and accuracy to the *sirah* portion of Al-Baladhuri's work.

Apart from the official letters, Al-Baladhuri used the Quranic verses as the most important primary sources of history. The citation of the Quranic verses is in high proportion in the *sirah* part of *Futuhul-Buldan*. A general technique of his writing is the description of the historical event is followed by the citation of the Quranic verse. The very first the Quran verses appeared in Al-Baladhuri's *Futuh al-Buladn* are the verses of *Surah Tawba*. He used them in the description of the first mosque of Islam in Madinah, Mosque of *Quba*, after the Prophet's migration to Madinah. Al-Baladhuri's discussed in detail the historicity of the mosque of *Quba* in the light of various traditions prevailing among the Muslims. The verses of *Surah at-Tawba*, and whole discussion based on different traditions has covered the topic.

The very first the Quranic text that he has mentioned is the verse no. 108 of *Surah at-Tawbah*, narrated by the people of *Quba* in order to justify the historical value of the mosque of *Quba*. The verses say; "There is a mosque founded from its first day in piety. More worthy that thou enter therein."[319] Al-Baladhuri has mentioned verse no 107 of the same Surah with an explanatory note of Affan Ibn Muslim al-Saffar from Urwa. The verses say; "There are some who have built a mosque for mischief and for infidelity, and to disunite the 'Believers,' and in expectation of him who, in time past, warred against Allah and His messenger". The explanatory note on the text of the Quran provides important insight into the meaning and contexts of the various verses. Like, after relating verses of the Quran in reference

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[319] Al-Baladhuri, *The Origins of the Islamic State*, Vol. I, trans., P.K. Hitti (New York: Cosimo. Inc, 2011). 16.

to the discussion of mosque of *Quba*, he says; "Amr Ibn Muhammad from Ibn Umar:-The " mosque founded in piety" is the mosque of the Prophet."[320] For this verse he mentioned statements of different individuals.[321]

In the account of the "possessions of Banu Nadir," Al-Baladhuri has mentioned verses from *Surah al-Hashr*.[322] texts from the Holy Quran at five times. The very first text of Quran he mentioned was verse from Quran; "All that is in the heavens and all that is on the earth praise Allah! And He is the mighty, the wise! He it is who caused the unbelievers among the people of the book", etc., to "put the wicked to shame."[323] Right after the insertion of this text Al-Baladhuri mentioned various traditions from different authorities who relate these verses as to be revealed by Allah in reference to Banu Nadir.[324] The whole account of the Banu Nadir is mentioned on the account of *Surah al-Hashr*.[325] Later on in the discussion of the capitulation of Najran there are three occasions when Al-Baladhuri quoted Quranic text in reference to different historical events The first one is verses from *Surah Al-i Imran* with reference to the discussion of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) and two monks of Najran. The verses say: "These signs and this wise warning do we rehearse to thee. Verily, Jesus is as Adam in the sight of Allah (SWT) He created him of dust· He then said to

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[320] Ibid., 18.

[321] Ibid .

[322] This is the fiftyninth[th] chapter of the Holy Quran in which the account of the invasion of Banu Nadir is related This chapter is a description of the banishment of the Jewish tribe Banu Nadir, expelled from Madinah after their planning for assassination of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH).

[323] Al-Baladhuri, *The Origins of the Islamic State*. Vol. 1, 35.

[324] Ihid

[325] Ibid . 35, 36, 38.

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him, "Be'-and he was," etc. to "on those who lie."[326] These verses according to Al-Baladhuri on the authority of al-Hussain Ibn al-Aswad from al-Hassan were revealed by Allah (SWT) in response to the claims of the monks of Najran about 'Allah as the father of Isa'.[327] The two other citations are the verses of *Surah al-Baqara* and *Surah al-An'am* against the infidels among the Quraysh and the Arabs,[328] on the authority of two distinct individuals: Abu Masud and Amr an-Nakid from al-Zuhri.[329]

1.3.4. Al-Tabari's *Tarikh al-Rusul wa al-Muluk* and Al-Masudi's *Muruj al-Dhahab wa Ma'adin al-Jawahir*

Muslim historians used Quranic references throughout their historical narratives. Al-Tabari used the method of *Hadith* literature for the construction of his narrative. The Quranic verses are used as an important source and evidence for the soundness of various reports. In case of the contradiction he found any of the prophetic *Hadith*, he immediately compared them to the Quranic verses which helped him to interpret his preferred version. One of the examples of such practice was in the case of the story of Ibrahim's sacrifice of his son. Al-Tabari narrated many contradictory reports regarding the son of Ibrahim who he intended to sacrifice. He mentioned all the available reports with their complete *isnad*. Prophet Ibrahim had two sons- Issac Ibn Ibrahim and Ismail Ibn Ibrahim from two different wives. There were different opinions regarding the sacrifice. Some considered Issac Ibn Ibrahim, who was son from his first wife Sarah while others declared Ismail, son of Ibrahim from his second wife Hajar, as presented by Prophet Ibrahim for sacrifice. Al-Tabari being bound by

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[326] Ibid.. 99

[327] Ibid.

[328] Ibid . 105

[329] Ibid

his set methodology of not weighing authenticity of any of the historical report over the other report has referred it to the verses of Quran. In the words of Tabari; "if the both groups of statements were equally sound, then –since they both come from the Prophet –only the Quran could serve as proof that the account naming Issac is clearly the more truthful of the two."[330] He related a tradition of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) in a conversation on the authority of Abu Kurayb from Zayd Ibn al-Hubab from al-Hasan Ibn Dina from Ali Ibn Zayd Ibn Judan from al-Hasan al-Ahnaf Ibn Qays from al-Abbas Ibn Abdul Muttalilbn Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) mentioned verses of *Surah al-Saffat* which naming Issac: "Then we ransomed him with a tremendous victim."[331] After quoting these verses Tabari says, "And he also said,, "He is Issac."[332] So, Quran was not only a source of history for the history he produced but he used the Quranic verses for the authenticity and conclusion of various contradictory reports.

When it comes to the Al-Masudi, the influence of Quran as a source and evidence for the reconstruction of historical knowledge played a significant role. For the discussion of the creation of the universe Al-Masudi's important source is Quran.[333] According to Al-Masudi the very first thing that God created was the water and it was a fish on which He, the Almighty, created earth.[334] In this regard Al-Masudi mentioned verses of *Surah Nun*, which says; "by the reed (pen) and what they

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[330] Al-Tabari, *History of Tabari*, Vol. II, 82.

[331] The Holy Quran; 37:107

[332] Al-Tabari, *History of al-Tabari* Vol. II, 83.

[333] al-Masudi, *El-Masudi's Historical Encyclopedia*, 43-54

[334] Ibid, 44

write, and by the FISH."[335] God then rests the water on a smooth rock which was mentioned in the Quran. In support of his statement he had mentioned the words of Luqman, mentioned in the Holy Quran which says: "O my Son, if the weight of one mustard-seed pushes on the rock, or on the heavens, or on the earth, or whatever it may be, God is aware of it, for God is clear-sighted and omniscient."[336] In the same discussion, while discussing the earthquake he mentioned verses of Quran; "He has thrown upon the Earth Mountains firmly rooted, lest it should move with you."[337] Al-Masudi has mentioned the story of the discussion between Allah (SWT) and the angels about Adam (first man) as his representative on the earth. The whole concept was taken from the Holy Quran. Al-Masudi related verses from the second chapter of the Holy Quran and even the whole story was drawn in the light of Quran. Al-Masudi mentioned verse from *Surah al-Baqara* which says;

> I shall put a lieutenant on earth;" they answered, "Who will be this lieutenant? God answered, "He will have children who will degenerate in earth, and envy and kill each other." They said, "O our Lord, though placest a being who will spread corruption, and shed blood, and we sing thy praise, and glorify thee!" He answered " I know what you do not know.[338]

The story of the creation of Adam and history of later eras was constructed in the light of the information and theme provided in the second Surah of the Holy Quran.[339]

Quran served as an important source of evidence and information for many important historical events in the history of Islam. Each of the selected historians used the same verses of Quran for the explanation of various historical accounts. Insertion

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[335] Ibid.

[336] Ibid.

[337] Ibid

[338] Ibid 47

[339] Ibid., 102-107.

of Quranic verses made their work more reliable and objective. Apart from Quran, another important religious tradition that influenced historical writings among the early Muslims was *Hadith* tradition

CHAPTER 5

RELIGIOUS TRADITION OF *HADITH* AND ITS INFLUENCE ON MUSLIM EPISTEMOLOGY

Apart from Quran, *Hadith* is the second most important source of knowledge for the Arab historians to understand the meanings of Quran. The traditions of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) served as an important source of Muslim historiography. Muslim historical writings emerged from the science of *Hadith*.[340] The sayings and doings of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) were preserved from the very beginning by his immediate companions but the practice was mostly oral. As Urwa Ibn Zubyr and Shihab al-Zuhri were scholars of *Hadith* who paid special attention towards the preservation of the events of the life of Prophet and adopted the same method and style of *Hadith* in writing of *sirah* and *maghazi* They initiated historical writings among Arabs and produced capable students like Ibn Ishaq.

Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) in his outlook was purely historical as Franz Rosenthal stated: "Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) himself planted the seeds from which a wider interest in history was to rise."[341] The traditions of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) motivated early Muslim historians to study the life of the Prophet. As a result, there developed an idea of preserving the past for the posterity. The emergence of *sirah* and *maghazi* writings among the Muslims was actually the beginning of the historical writings among the Muslims in proper historical sense. *Sirah* is the study of the life and actions of the Prophet and his times while *maghazi* is particularly focused

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[340] Muhammad Ghulam Rasul. *The Origin and Development of Muslim Historiography* (Lahore Sh Muhammad Ashraf, 1976), 3.

[341] Rosenthal, *History of Muslim Historiography*, 30.

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on the military campaigns or military history of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). These two genres were purely historical as the sense of preservation of the general and military life of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) was aimed at providing a guideline not only for the political purposes but for the social reforms too. Shihab al-Zuhri was the very first confined Muslim scholar who is credited to initiate *sirah* writings with a historical perspective while his student Ibn Ishaq strengthened its foundation and wrote the very first detailed and comprehensive life history of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH)

5.1: Compilation of *Hadith* Literature During Prophetic Period

According to early sources there was a concept of reading and writing prevailed among the Arabs prior to the advent of Islam but this practice was very limited. According to sources reveal that there were seventeen to twenty individuals in the tribe of Quraysh who could read and write in Arabia before Islam.[342] Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) later on used their skills for the writing of Quran and now the oral tradition of Arabs was transformed into a written tradition. As the verses of Quran were revealed to Muhammad, he asked his companions to write it down. Ubay Ibn Ka'ab was the first man who used to write the verses of Quran on the order of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), in case of his absence, Prophet approached Zayd Ibn Sabith to write the verses.[343] Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) was well aware of the importance of writing as an important medium of expression and preservation of k

nowledge. He made important arrangements throughout his life to make the Muslims literate In Battle of Badr Prophet asked each of the prisoners to teach ten Muslims the art of writing. It was the basic condition to make them free from the imprisonment.

[342] Singh. and A Samiuddin. *Encyclopedic Historiography*. 314

[343] Faruqi, *Early Muslim Historiography*. 173.

This act of the Prophet was an important development in the intellectual life of the Muslims. There emerged an urge among the Muslims to learn reading and writing. Those who excelled in reading and writing were given different responsibilities. There emerged a tradition of written directives in the society. Holy Prophet used written directives for various administrative policies. Various war and peace treaties, communication through letters and written agreements strengthened the foreign relations of the Muslims with the rest of the world. The truce of *Hudaybiyyah* and many other written documents of the Prophetic times show the scale and trend of writing among the early Arabs.[344]

In the time period of pious caliphate, *Hadith* was preserved in memory of the companions of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). The four pious caliphs Abu Bakr, Umar al-Khattab, Uthman Ibn Affan and Ali Ibn Abu Talib were the practical examples of the sayings and doing of the Prophet. apart from these four caliphs there were many immediate companions of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) who served the purpose and often play their role for the various information related to the administrative as well as religious problems. People come to them and inquire about the *sirah* of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH).

In the history, the need for the compilation of *Hadith* was realized at a time when a large number of the companions of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) begin to die. Because a large number of *Hadith* was preserved in the memory of these companions and death of whose means a loss of this asset. Compilation of *Hadith* from the oral tradition becomes a necessity. *Hadith* was a source of legal, religious, social and cultural ideas of Islam. Muslim *Hadith* scholars in the initial stages faced

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[344] Ibid, 175.

many difficulties of the collection and authentication of the traditions. They began to collect traditions from the companions of the Prophet, later on from the followers of these companions and then followers of the followers of the companions. As the process proceeded there appeared a serious issue of the fabricated traditions related to the Prophet. Early traditionists paid little attention to the internal criticism for which some sound *Hadith* scholars had to introduce a proper mechanism and methodology.[345] This resulted in the introduction of science of *isnad*.[346]

The science of *Hadith* had great impact on the development of Muslim historical writings. Early Muslim historians were basically the scholars of *Hadith* who initiated historical studies in the form of *sirah* and *maghazi* as branches of *Hadith*. Soon there emerged distinct schools of history in two different regions of the Muslim empire. Professor Duri identified two schools of historical writings in the classical period of Islam. First was the Muslim historical school of Madinah represented by two great *Hadith* scholars, Urwa Ibn Zubayr and Shihab al-Zuhri, each one of whom contributed to a greater extent for the growth and development of this school.[347] A Madinah School of Historical study was more inclined towards the Islamic perspective of historical studies.[348] While the second was the Iraqi school of historical writings, centred in Kufa and Basra, two garrison cities, was influenced by the tribal

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[345] Montgomery Watt, *The Material Used by Ibn Ishaq*, in Bernard Lewis and Holt, edt, *Historians of the Middle East* (London Oxford University Press, 1962), 31.

[346] *Isnad* is basically a method of evaluation of the sources through chain of authorities.

[347] Duri, *Rise of Historical Writing*, 76

[348] Ibid.. 22.

perspective.[349]Histories produced from this second school of history had taken great influence from the *Ayyam* narratives.[350]

The Madinah School of history had scholars of *Hadith* who used *Hadith* as the primary source for the historical writings. *Hadith* had a great significance for them on many grounds. It was the second most important source of knowledge and tool to understand the meanings of various verses of Quran and the history of Islam. Quran clearly states that, "And We revealed to you the message that you may make clear it to the people what was sent down to them and they might give thought."[351] Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) was given the task of explaining and demonstrating the meanings of the noble Quran. Thus, the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) in his lifetime not only explained it verbally but practically too. On another occasion the Quran said;

> It is not fitting for a believing man or woman, when Allah and His messenger have decided a matter, that they should [thereafter] have any choice but their affair And whoever disobeys Allah and His Messenger has certainly strayed into clear error [352]

This is a clear indication towards the importance of *Hadith* as source in case of no instructions about an issue in Quran *Hadith* literature provides important information related to the religion of Islam, its origin, expansion and its fundamental teachings. It is *Hadith* literature that is the basic source of information for the life of the Prophet of Islam. The credit goes to the companions of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) who preserved it in memory and recorded from the very beginning and later on it became an important branch of knowledge.

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[349] Ibid., 137.

[350] Ibid.

[351] The Holy Quran, 16.44

[352] Ibid , 33·36

Hadith in its initial stages was an oral practice as discussed earlier. However, the concept of reading and writing was present among the Arabs prior to the advent of Islam, although that practice was somehow very limited. Sources reveal that before the advent of Islam there were only 17 individuals in the tribe of Quraysh who could read and write including women.[353] They learnt writing form the people of Hira who learnt it from the people of Himyarite, but it couldn't develop a common art among the Arabs. Those who could read and write at the time of the origin of Islam included: Umar Ibn Khattab, Ali, Uthman, Abu Ubayda, Talha, Yazid, Ibn Abu Sufyan, Abu Huzayfa Ibn Utba, Rabia, Khatib Ibn Amr, Abu Salama Ibn Abdul Asad al-Makhzumi, Aban Ibn Said Ibn Abi Sara al-Amiri, Khuwaytib Ibn Abdl Uzza al-Amiri, Abu Sufyan Ibn Harb, Muawiya Ibn Abi Sufyan, Juhaim Ibn Abi al-Salt.[354] Some women like Hafsa, Umme Kulsum, Shifa bt. Abdullah were able to write while Aisha bt Abu Bakr and Umme Salam were only capable of reading.[355] According to Ibn Sa'ad as indicated by Nisar Ahmed Faruqi, some of the companions of the Prophet too were capable of writing before the advent of Islam. These companions were Ubay Ibn Ka'ab, Sa'ad Ibn al-Rabi, Abdullah Ibn Rawaha, Bashir Ibn Sa'ad, Abdullah Ibn Zaid, Aus Ibn Khawali, al-Mundhir Ibn Amr etc.[356]

Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) later on used their skills for the writing of Quran and now the oral tradition of Arabs was transformed into a written tradition. Ubay Ibn Ka'ab was the first man who used to write the verses of Quran on the order of Prophet

[353] Singh, and A Samiuddin. Encyclopedic Historiography. 314.

[354] Faruqi. Early Muslim Historiography, 172

[355] Ibid.

[356] Ibid.

Muhammad (PBUH).[357] in case of his absence Prophet approached Zayd Ibn Sabith to write the verses [358] Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) was well aware of the importance of the art of writing as a medium of expression and preservation of knowledge. He made important arrangements throughout his life to make the Muslims literate. The incident of Battle of Badr when the Prophet asked each of the prisoners to teach ten Muslims the art of writing was one of the initiatives of this arrangement. He made it a basic condition for each of the prisoner of war to teach at least ten Muslims to read and write. As a result, there emerged an urge among the Muslims to learn reading and writing. One of the chief scribers of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) was Zayd Ibn Sabith who was one of the beneficiaries of this arrangement [359] There emerged a tradition of written directives in the society. Holy Prophet used to send written directives for various administrative centres. Various war and peace treaties, communication through letters and written agreements strengthened the foreign relations of the Muslims with rest of the world The truce of *Hudaybiyyah* and many other written documents of the Prophetic times show the scale and trend of writing among the early Arabs.[360]

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[357] Ibid., 173.

[358] Ibid.

[359] Muhammad Shibli Naumani, *Sirat-un-Nabi The Life of the Prophet*, Vol III. trans., M Tayyib Bakhsh Badayuni (Lahore: Kazi Publications, 1979), 59

[360] Faruqi, *Early Muslim Historiography*, 175

5.2: Compilation of *Hadith* by the companions of the Prophet (PBUH)

Ahmed Khan Bahador totally rejected the notion that the compilation of traditions was carried out in the time of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) and his immediate companions. In his words:

> *Hadeeses* of the Prophet were never committed to writing during the time of the Prophet and of his associates and not even in that of the contemporaries of such of the Prophet's associates [361]

However, there are sufficient primary sources which indicate that the task of compilation of the *Hadith* literature started during the lifetime of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). Sources reveal that Ali Ibn Abu Talib, compiled a short book of the traditions of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH).[362] Abdullah Ibn Amr Ibn al-As with the permission of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) wrote a book containing traditions and called it *al-Sahifah al-Sadiqah* [363] Amr Ibn al-Hazm collected and compiled various letters that Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) had sent as an invitation to the new faith to the neighbouring rulers.[364]

During the period of the pious caliphs there was no significant development in the field of writing and compilation of *Hadith* because the righteous caliphs were reluctant to write down the traditions. The basic reason for their reluctance lied in the fact that there was no such need and demand from the society for the compilation or written literature. The reason was that majority of the companions of the Prophet

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[361] Bahador. *Essays on the Life of Muhammad,* 178

[362] Faruqi, *Early Muslim Historiography,* 179.

[363] Ibid

[364] Ibid

Muhammad (PBUH) were alive and were serving as an important source of Prophetic traditions. Apart from that oral transmission of the Prophetic *Hadith* was popular practice in those days and it became responsible for the stagnation of the process of compilation of *Hadith* literature in those days.[365] On the other hand, early caliphs soon realized the importance of the preservation of Prophetic traditions to keep the teachings of Islam alive. They preserved traditions of Prophet with an intention of conveying their knowledge to those who did not see or hear Muhammad in their lives. There is a tradition that Abu Bakr collected almost five-hundred Hadiths but later on burnt it as he feared of any forged *Hadith* to add them.[366]

During the reign of the second caliph of Islam, Umar al-Khattab, the establishment of *hijrah* calendar provided an opportunity for the companions of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) to preserve *sirah* and *maghazi* literature chronologically. His *diwan* system also served as an important contribution for the scrutiny of the authenticity and reliability of many of the transmitters of *Hadith*. The records of the individuals were available in registers on the basis of their seniority in Islam. These later on helped historians like Ibn Sa'ad to write *Tabaqat al-Kabir*. The registers maintained during this time period were also important for the historians in terms of the information it contained about various tribes, clans and families. Also it had a contribution for the development of genealogical studies in Islam. In the same period, companions of the Prophet like Abdullah Ibn al-Abbas, Ali Ibn Abi Talib,Jabir Ibn Abdullah, Abu Hurayra, Abu Musa al-Ashari, Anas Ibn Malik and

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[365] Ibid , 180

[366] Ali Nasiri. *An Introduction to Hadith History and Sources*, trans , Mansoor Limba (London: MIU Press, 2013), 83.

Abdullah Ibn Masud compiled *Sahifas*.[367] As they were the immediate companions of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) so there was no doubt about the traditions they narrated. Thus, the process of the preservation of Prophetic traditions was continued among the Muslims in this era.

5.3: Compilation of *Hadith* in the Later Eras

The tradition of preservation of prophetic Hadith was then carried out by the followers of the companions of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) in the coming generations. They were called *ta'abis* means followers. These *ta'abis* carried the task very enthusiastically and many of them learnt Hadith from the renowned companions. The *ta'abis* used to perform long distant journeys in search of a single Hadith and learnt Hadith from as many teachers as possible. Some of the *ta'abis* who were experts in *maghazi* of Prophet devoted their lives for the literally pursuit and wrote books on the *maghazi* literature of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). One of them was Aban Ibn Uthman, who got knowledge of *Hadith* from his father Usman Ibn Affan. Aban Ibn Usman was interested in *maghazi* studies and there is a tradition that one of his students compiled a *maghazi* book on the authority of his teacher, Aban. It was regarded as part of *Hadith* literature not of *magahzi* by later authorities.[368] Another important *Ta'abi* was Urwa Ibn Zubayr, who is considered to be the architect of *maghazi* studies as he was the first who composed a book on *maghazi* and initiated the first school of historical writings in Madinah [369] His book did not survive in its complete form but reference of this work were preserved by later historians like , Ibn

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[367] Jonathan A.C. Brown, *Hadith Muhammad's Legacy in the Medieval and Modern World* (London: Oneworld Publications, 2011), n.d.

[368] Duri, *Rise of Historical Writings*, 24.

[369] Ibid., 25

Ishaq, al-Waqidi, Tabari, IbnKathir etc. Three of Urwa's students excelled in the field of *maghazi*; these included Abdullah Ibn Abu Bakr Ibn Hazm, Asim Ibn Umer Ibn Qatada and Muhammad Ibn Shihab al-Zuhri.[370] He was one of those students who directly received the knowledge of *maghazi* from Urwa and following on the steps of Urwa, he provided a strong ground for the first school of historical writings in Madinah.[371]

This school later on produced some capable scholars and historians who made remarkable contributions in the field of *maghazi*.[372] Ibn Ishaq, al-Waqidi, Ibn Sa'ad were some of those who produced remarkable *sirah* and *maghazi* literature in their own periods. These scholars were well informed in the science of *Hadith*. They first initiated the biographies of the prophet which was an impetus for the growth of Muslim historical writings among the Arabs.[373]

The traditions of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) included the saying and doings of the Prophet and his companions. It served as an important source of Muslim historiography. *Sirah* is the study of the life and actions of the Prophet and his times while *maghazi* is particularly focused on the military campaigns or military history of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). Together, it provides a bulk of historical material about the life of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). Muslim historians consulted *Hadith* literature as an important source of knowledge, as *Hadith* material contains important information on the life of Muhammad and the early days of Islam.

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[370] Ibid.

[371] Ibid.

[372] Ibn Ishaq and Imam Malik both were the students of Shihab al-Zuhari. Both of them were dedicated scholars who earned great fame and reputation in their own respective fields

[373] Rasul. *Origin and Development of Muslim Historiography.* 5.

5.4: Influence of *Hadith* on Early Muslim Historians

Historical writings of Islam emerged from the *Hadith* literature as Hadith has a close relation with history like many other branches of knowledge in early Islam.[374] The style and method of *Hadith* was adopted for the writings of historical narratives *Hadith* consisted of *isnad* and *matn* that is content and its transmitters. The method of collection of *Hadith* and its scrutiny by chain of authorities developed a critical attitude among Muslim historians.[375] Their method of free-inquiry and critical examination of historical reports was directly influenced by the method of *Hadith*. Fazlur Rehman said;

> The function of Hadith was not so much history writing but history making and that contemporary phenomenon weie projected back in the form of Hadith in order to succeed in moulding the community on certain spiritual, political and social patterns. The very greatness of the Prophet lies in the fact that, having a unique insight into the forces of history, he passed them into service of a divinely-inspired moral pattern [376]

The teachings and message provided by the prophetic *Hadith* played important role in shaping world view of early Muslim historians There begun a moralistic interpretation for the historical events. The Prophethood of Muhammad was constructed in the light of the idea of continuation of past history and the rise and fall of nations was associated with human actions and the idea of day of judgement was applied for the evaluation of these actions as every believer was subject to the final day of judgement. They soon realized the importance of human actions responsible for historical changes and felt importance for its recording. In every time period there appeared spiritual guides who saved the societies and Muhammad (PBUH) was the

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[374] Khalidi. *Arabic Historical Thought*, 17

[375] Rasul, *Origin and Development of Muslim Historiography*, 5

[376] Fazlur- Rehman, *Islamic Methodology in History* (Islamabad: Islamic Research Institute, 1965), 47.

continuation of this. His life and actions were of great importance for the growth of society as well as for individuals. The Muslims felt proud on their religion and for them the momentous event in their life becomes the life of the Prophet. The spiritual life and the military campaigns and achievements of the Prophet became a subject of greater interest to discuss. This interest in *maghazi* later on becomes the basis for the development of historical studies and writings among the early Muslim Arab historians.[377]

It was during the Umayyad period that *Hadith* scholars began to compile *sirah* and *maghazi* literature as part of *Hadith* literature which covers different aspects of the life of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) Umayyad caliphs used to inquire the *Hadith* scholars on various issues they faced in their administration. They got oral as well as written replies. The written replies of Urwa, used to guide Umayyad Caliph Abdul Malik Ibn Marwan on religious matters through letters. His source of information was *Hadith* accompanied with *isnad*.[378] The information and method it used later on served as source of history. His work was carried on by his students Abdullah Ibn Abi Bakr IbnHazm, Asim Ibn Umar IbnQatada and Muhammad IbnShihab al-Zuhri.[379] Their works provide a framework for the subsequent historians of *maghazi*.

Muhammad Ibn Ishaq was the first Muslim historian who used their works in order to construct his own widely acknowledged *sirah* of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). He was a favourite student of Shihab al-Zuhri, who himself is considered to be the first true historian to conduct a large scale research for the collection and

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[377] Duri, *Rise of Historical Writing*, 22

[378] Ibid., 25.

[379] Ibid, 27.

compilation of *Hadith* rests in different parts of Madinah. Ibn Ishaq inherited the idea of synthesis from his teacher. He not only adopted the methodology of his teacher but conducted some experiments on the basis of his own intellect. Like Zuhri, Ibn Ishaq took most of his information from *Hadith*. He combined the elements of folklore *qisas* to the *Hadith* material and used to exaggerate a historical event which shows a new trend in Muslim historical writings. Ibn Ishaq divided his work into three portions. First was called *Mubtada*, second was *Maba'ath*, and the third was named *maghazi*. Ibn Ishaq has used many sources for the construction of *Sirat un-Nabi*, these sources included; *Hadith*, Quranic verses, poetry, genealogy, and folklore *qisas* to information from *Israiliyat*. For the first part of his *sirah*, information was drawn from newly converts, like his major source for the first section is Wahb Ibn Munabbah, *ahl-al-kitab*, information from non-Arabs and stories and tales of Yemen. While for the Makkan life of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), he relied on the accounts of Zuhri, Urwa, and Asim ibn. Qatada and Abdullah Ibn Hazm. Zuhri is an important source of information for Ibn Ishaq used *Hadith* as an important source for the construction of his narrative in the second part of his work. Information is arranged in a chronological order In this section he is not very concerned about the *isnad* and most of the accounts are without *isnad* Many of the important historical events have been narrated without any authority. For example: Prophet Muhammad (PBUH)'s marriage to Khadija and her proposal to the Prophet, an important event in the life of the Prophet are narrated without an authority.[380] Likewise, there is no chain of authority for the names of the participants of the second pledge of Aqaba.[381] For the Madinan

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[380] Ibid., 82-83.

[381] Ibid., 198-99

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period of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH)'s life he is very careful in citing the proper
isnad

Historical writings in third century experienced a new trend. The historians of this period were more careful and specialized in their intellectual pursuit. They performed long distance journeys for the search of knowledge particularly *Hadith*. In this period authenticity of majority of the *Hadith* was challenged As a result, researches produced in this time period were methodologically more organized and systemized. Historical accounts were equally influenced by these developments.[382] Al-Baladhuri was one of the representatives of this century who was a historian by profession. He travelled to far areas to make sure the reliability of much of his historical reports and its authenticity. He did not confine himself just to the study of Islamic conquests or *maghazi* but in his history he provides a comprehensive literature about the various aspects of Islamic history. For example, his history covered religious, political, economic, social and cultural aspects of the conquests. His method was a compilation of different reports or historical facts to produce a cohesive account. The citation of detailed *isnad* shows his approach towards the importance of evidences for a historical account. For example. "al-Hussain Ibn ali al-Aswad al-Ijli from Yahya Ibn Adam from Abu- Muawiya from ash- Shailami from Muhammad Ibn Abdullah al-Thaqafi"[383] And "Bakr Ibn al-Haytham related to me, that Abdullah Ibn Slih related to him, on the authority of al-Laith Ibn Sa'ad, on the authority of Yunus Ibn Ziyad al-Ali, on the authority of al-Zuhri, who said. ."[384]

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[382] Ibid. 61.

[383] Al-Baladhuri, *Futuh al-Buldan*, Vol II, trans., Francis C Murgotten (New York· Columbia University. 1924), 67

[384] Al-Baladhuri, *Origins of the Islamic State*, Vol I, 3

Al-Baladhuri was very careful about the *isnad* and he not only mention the transmitter's name but mentions his family connections and status, with that of the profession of the transmitters. This made transmitted report more authentic and reliable. For example "Azdah, wife of Utba. Abbas Ibn Hisham from his father from Awannah "[385] In accounts of the conquests of Tigris, he provided a report on al-Furat for which his *isnad* is like "al-Walid Ibn Salih from Marhum, the perfumer, from his father from Shuwais al-Adawi".[386] also "al-Madaini Ibn Mujahid from Asim, the squint-eyed, from Abu Uthman an- Nahdi."[387] Despite the fact that Baladhuri is concerned about the *isnad*, he sometimes used collective *isnad* too and his citations like "they said", "they told me" etc are some of the example which shows that he lacked proper *isnad* for which he had to use such terms in order to give his story a complete and smooth ending

The growth of *Hadith* literature ultimately broadened the scope of Muslim historiography. He studied of the science of *Hadith* had a strong bearing on the style and form of the history of Tabari. He was a prominent jurist, *muhadith*, grammarian, exegete, and historian of his time. He was among those traditionists who started learning *Hadith* from the very young age and sources reveal that he begun to study the traditions of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) at the age of nine.[388] He was engaged in this field of knowledge from the very young and fresh age. He was among those lucky children who belonged to well established families Tabari's father was a merchant

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[385] Al-Baladhuri, *Origins of the Islamic State*, Vol. II, 55.

[386] Ibid, 53

[387] Ibid, 21

[388] Al-Tabari, *The History of Al-Tabari*, Vol. 1, 15.

who used to travel different region for the business purposes.[389] Tabari accompanied him in most of these journeys and learnt traditions from the prominent scholars of those particular areas where he travelled with his father.

Tabari was also part of the movement "travel in search of knowledge"; he started travel to seek knowledge at the age of twelve[390] and visited places like Baghdad, Kufa, Syria, Egypt, and Lebanon where he studied under many prominent scholars of his time. Ibn Humayd, Ahmed Ibn Hammad al-Dawlabi, and al-Muthana Ibn Ibrahim were some of the most learned and prominent scholars who taught Tabari science of traditions.[391] Among these teachers, Ibn Humayd was one of those scholars who were welcomed by Ibn Hanbal and transmitted traditions to him.[392] Ibn Jarir al-Tabari mentioned him as an important authority. For example; the important historical event of Battle of Trench in Tabari's history is presented on the authority of Ibn Humayd. It was on whose authority Tabari indicated the immediate cause of the battle of trench and told that it was the expulsion of the al-Nadir tribe from their settlements by the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) [393] He mentioned a detailed *isnad* in this way;

> According to Ibn Humayd- Salamah- Muhamamd Ibn Ishaq- Yazid Ibn Ruman (a mawla of the family of al-Zubyr)- Urwah Ibn al-Zubayr, and [according to] someone whom I do not doubt- ubaydullah Ibn Ka'ab Ibn Malik, al-Zuhri, Asim Ibn Umar Ibn Qatadah, Abdullah Ibn Abi Bakr Ibn Muhammad Ibn Ami Ibn Hazm, Muhammad Ibn Ka'ab al-Qurazi and others of our learned men [394]

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[389] Ibid.

[390] Ibid., 34.

[391] Ibid., 17.

[392] Ibid

[393] Tabari, *History of Il-Tabari*, Vol. VIII. 6.

[394] Ibid

Apart from this in the story of Prophet Ibrahim majority of the reports were mentioned on the authority of Ibn Humayd. It is Ibn Humayd on the authority of which Tabari relates the famous tradition of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) on the people of Egypt. The words of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) are; "When you conquer Egypt, treat its people well, for they are kin to you and deserve protection."[395] Tabari studied with Ibn Hanbal's son, Abdullah.[396] Tabari moved to Baghdad with an intention of studying *Hadith* under IbnHanbal but before his arrival Imam Hanbal passed away for which he showed great regret.[397] Later on he studied *Hadith* in Kufa and Basra. In Kufa his teachers were Ismail Ibn Musa al-Farazi and Abu Kurayb[398] while in Basra he studied under Bishar Ibn Muadh, Muhammad Ibn Abdullah al-Sani, Muhammad Ibn Musa al-Harashi, Abu al-Ashath Ahmed al-Miqdam and Muhammad Ibn Bashashar.[399]

In Syria, Hims[400] got prominence for the study of *Hadith* Tabari mentioned many traditions on the authority of the scholars of this region.[401] Chief among them were Abu al-Jamahir Muhammad Ibn Abdullah al-Rehman, Imran Ibn Bakkar al-Kalai, Abu Shurabil, Sulayman Ibn Muhammad Ibn Madikarib al-Ruayni, Muhammad Ibn Hafs al-Wassabi, Saiid Ibn Uthman al-Tanukhi, Himsi Baqiya Ibn al-

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[395] Al-Tabari, *The History of Al- Tabari*, Vol. II, 65

[396] Rosenthal, *The History of Al-Tabari*, Vol. I, 17

[397] Ibid., 19

[398] Ibid., 30.

[399] Ibid., 20

[400] It was a place in Syria prominent for the study of the science of *Hadith*. Many scholars were deeply engaged in *Hadith* studies. Tabari equally benefited from the scholars of this area who had a wide range of knowledge about the transmission of *Hadith*

[401] Rosenthal, *The History of Al-Tabari* Vol. I, 24-25.

Walid, Said Ibn Amr al-Sakuni and Muhammad Ibn Auf al-Tai[402] and others. Franz Rosenthal well concluded;

> The individuals mentioned, numerous as they are, do not exhaust the list of those who were Tabari's informants during his stay in Syria and Palestine. In many cases, we know quite little about them, but they all enjoyed great esteem as scholars in their time [403]

Al-Tabari wrote a general Muslim history called *Tarikh al-Rusul wa al-Muluk* which covers the important historical events from the creation of the world to his own time 915AD. *Hadith* served as an important source for this work. For *Hadith* he mentioned proper *isnad* and when Tabari mentions *Hadith* on the authority of various scholars, he mentioned proper *isnad* supporting their information. Tabari adopted the strict method of *Hadith* to his historiography with that of his own experimentation where he arranged the *Hadith* in chronological order to produce an annalistic history. This made his work more authentic and valuable than that of his other contemporaries. Rosenthal states in History;

> Al-Tabari's world history was incomparably more important than al-Yaqubi who soon was all but forgotten. Tabari brought to his work the scrupulousness and indefatigable long wideness of the theologian, the accuracy and love of order of the scholarly and the insight in to political, justice affairs of the practicing lawyer politician. All those were qualities which commended enduring and ever-increasing respect in the intellectual circles of Islam It was therefore, only natural that his historical work never ceased to exercise a tremendous influence upon future historians as model of how history should be written The story of Muhammad follows the sirah pattern [404]

The influence of *Hadith* on Al-Masudi's *Muruj al-Dhahab wa Ma'adin al-Jawahir* was not that much prominent in terms of style and method that it had on his predecessors It had two basic reasons; firstly, during the ninth and tenth centuries

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[402] Muhammad Ibn Auf al-Tai was one of the most outstanding scholar and representative of the *Hadith* school of Syria.

[403] Rosenthal, *History of Al-Tabari* Introduction. Vol 1 26

[404] Rosenthal, *A History of Muslim Historiography*, 134-35.

there emerged a new trend of continuous historical narratives under the influence of *adab*[405]. As a result, the form, content and perspective of historical writings began to change. The old method of *Hadith* and chain of narrators was not applicable to the works of historians like Al-Masudi. Secondly, the scope of Al-Masudi's work did not allow him to rely on the method and content of *Hadith*. He was dealing with a wide range of reports related to different and diverse areas and subjects so relying on *Hadith* could not serve his objectives.

The methodology of *Hadith* was not applicable for the content of Al-Masudi's *Muruj al-Dhahab*, as it deals with the history of the world. He was not in a position to provide complete chain of authorities for those reports which deals with the foreign nations. He preferred to provide a continuous narrative with a collective *isnad*. Phrases like, 'Others say,'[406] 'The strictly orthodox say,'[407] 'the historians'[408] etc. is used as authority. Al-Masudi used *Hadith* and *isnad* for the Islamic portion of his work. In these sections he sometimes gave complete *isnad* as evidence. For example; in the account of the creation of Adam, he gave an explanatory discussion on the status of Alids as the chosen ones. He says; "Then the light was transferred to the distinguished men amongst us (the Alids), and became resplendent in our Imams. We are the lights of the heavens, and the lights of the earth."[409] The *isnad* he mentions for it is in this way;

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[405] '*Adab*' in its initial stages was confined to education, a special kind of education, aimed at a moral and intellectual curriculum for a particular urban class which reflects its needs and aspirations.

[406] Al-Masudi, *al-Masudi's Encyclopedia*, 275.

[407] Ibid, 276.

[408] Ibid, 31, 77.

[409] Ibid, 57.

> This tradition is from Abu Abdullah Jafer Ben Mohammed, who received from his father,
> Mohammed Ben Ali, who had it from his father, Ali Ben el-Hosain, to him it was related by
> his parent el-Hosain Ben Ali, and he had received it from the Commander of the faithful, Ali
> Ben Abi Taleb.[410]

In his *Muruj* Al-Masudi has used *Hadith* as an important source of knowledge for many historical narratives of the Islamic and Pre-Islamic period Like; he has mentioned *Hadith* of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) in reference to Qauth Ibn Saidah of Banu Iyad Ibn Nizar Ibn Ma'ad as the wise man of all Arabs. The *Hadith* is;

> It is as if I saw him in the fair of *Okaz*, he was sitting on a red camel, and said,
> 'O people! Assemble, hear, and cry, who lives dies, and who dies flie: and
> what is growing devours what is going. But then, the heaven gives us
> information, and the earth calls us to contemplation: the seas raise waves, and
> the stars set: the roof (of the heavens) is raised, and the ground (of the earth) is
> firmly placed. Koss swore by God: 'There is a faith which is more acceptable
> to the Lord than your religion What may be the reason is that men pass away,
> and do not return? Do they like to be there? Or have they ended, and do they
> sleep? They all go the same way, although their actions are different.' He said
> (continued the Prophet) some verses, which I have forgotten."[411]

Hadith literature had a great influence on the form and method of early Muslim historical writings. *Isnad* being its primary part played major role in the production of more accurate and reliable historical accounts. Early Muslim historians from Ibn Ishaq to Al-Tabari followed the method of *Hadith* for their narratives while in Al-Masudi the method and form of historical narrative become changed. Al-Masudi introduced a new style of writings history and it was history in The basic form of a *Hadith* literature was consisted of a chain of narration followed by a narration. Muslim historians adopted the same method of *Hadith* for the writing of a historical account. It was Al-Masudi who broke the traditional style of *Hadith* for the construction of a historical narration and introduced a new style of writing

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[410] Ibid

[411] Ibid., 138-39

CONCLUSION

Every society has its own epistemology and it can be reflected in its literature. Early Muslim Arab society developed an epistemology based on its religious teachings. The early Muslim historian from Ibn Ishaq to Al-Masudi reflected this Muslim epistemology in their historical writings. The histories they produced were influenced by the religious concept of history and historiography.

Before Islam, Arab society was almost illiterate as there were about seventeen to twenty individuals who could read and write However, pre-Islamic Arabs produced various historical traditions that served as inherited traditions among early Arab Muslims for the historical writings. The existence of these historical traditions in pre-Islamic Arabia show various historical activities in which the Arabs were involved. These traditions were present in the form of poetry, genealogy and *Ayyam al-Arab* All these three prominent historical traditions contained bulk of historical material in the form of verse and prose. These traditions had their own particular roles. Like, poetry was serving as an important vehicle of verbal expression; genealogy was the asset of the various tribes and its members, while *Ayyam al-Arab* was the battle-day narratives which reflect the valour and bravery of the particular tribes. Pre-Islamic Arabs practiced all these three historical traditions as part of their socio-cultural life. Therefore, these traditions reflect the culture and society of the pre-Islamic Arabs and served as the basic source of their history.

As per these traditions, pre-Islamic Arab society was militant in nature whose basic source of pride was its superiority over genealogy and great fights, both in the form of oral compositions and physical fight. Tribe was the only central unit whose prime responsibility was to provide protection for its members. Each member of the

tribe was expected to know the noble genealogy of the tribe, its leaders and their achievements. Being militant in nature, the Arabs were in continuous warfare. They felt pride on their own achievements and noble deeds. For this purpose, poetry was used as tool. Each tribe had its own representative poet who used to glorify his tribe and its achievements in verses. These poems were full of exaggerated elements along with detailed genealogies. Apart from that battle-day narratives were circulated in tribal evening gatherings. Members of the tribes sit in a particular place and one of the chief members of the tribe used to narrate the achievements of its members and leaders during the battles they fought with the rival tribes

The pre-Islamic Arabs were not familiar with the concept of history. Therefore, their historic literary traditions lacked coherence, historical continuity, proper time and spacing and historical objectivity. Their traditions present only one sided story of the events and the information it contains is based on subjective approach of its composers. These traditions show that the inhabitants of Arabia before Islam were not history conscious in its true sense

With the emergence of Islam, the Arabs got new concept of history. Their worldview changed and their approach to life became purposeful. Quran gave them a prospectus of life It invited them to look upon various historical changes and it causes and consequences in order to better understand the purpose of history. The purpose of man's creation was defined as vicegerent of Allah (SWT) on earth. Universe is full of Allah's signs, which demands research and critical thinking for the understanding of Allah's plans on earth. Those who think and observe the signs of Allah (SWT) and various historical events are more prone to succeed than those who never pay attention to various historical changes in the course of history. With this new and proper vision of life. Muslims got an inspiration for the study of several

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disciplines. Quran was the basic source of knowledge for various aspects of life. The historical accounts of Quran helped them to relate their present to past in order to draw conclusions. In this way, there emerged an interest among the Muslims to study past as an important branch of knowledge.

They approached religious as well as the inherited traditions for the reconstruction of the past. Religious traditions served them as basic inspiration for the historical narratives and inherited traditions provided them a concept of form and method for these compositions. The present study is focused on the influence of these traditions as epistemology on the writings of some of the prominent early Muslim historians from Ibn Ishaq to Al-Masudi.

Poetry is one of the most acknowledged literally achievements of the Arab society for its pre-Islamic origin. Poetry was one of the very first Arab traditions that the early Muslim historians inherited from their predecessors. It had a great influence on the development of early Muslim historical writings in terms of the form and style that early Muslim Arab historians opted for their historical narratives. A pre-Islamic poem was structurally composed of different verses revolving around a central theme. Likewise, the first historians from Ibn Ishaq to Al-Masudi adopted this structure of the Arab poems to form a historical narrative. Their historical narratives were based on *isnad* and *matn* Each historical account was accompanied by chain of narrators who served as guarantor of the narration. In pre-Islamic poem, a poet was often represented by a *rawi* whose basic task was to present the composed poem on behalf of the concerned poet as guarantor of the accuracy of the poem. These poems contained genealogical information related to the individuals involved in the historical event. The early Muslim historians too made sure to mention genealogies of the individuals discussed in their histories.

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Genealogy was the second most prominent tradition of pre-Islamic Arabs having a concept and knowledge of past. It had a great influence in terms of the development of family histories and *sirah* studies. Early Muslim historians used the genealogical information for the writing of detailed and continued histories. These genealogies provide them historical information related to the individuals as well as nations. Ibn Ishaq, Ibn Sa'ad, Al-Baladhuri, Al-Tabari and Al-Masudi used the genealogies of different nations and tried to connect the historical relationships of various past nations to the history of Islam. . Ibn Sa'ad's *Tabaqat al-Kabir* was a biographical dictionary based on the genealogical information of the prominent Muslim individuals in the history of Islam. Al-Baladhuri wrote a genealogical history and named it *Ansab al-Ashraf* or *Genealogies of the Notables* While Al-Tabari and Al-Masudi were historians of Persian origin. These historians tried to link the Persian history through genealogical tables and information to trace the history of Persians to that of Islam.

Ayyam al-Arab or the battle-day narratives were one of the most composite and comprehensive historical narratives of various battle scenes of the pre-Islamic Arabs. These stories had a significant impact on the style, form and attitude of the early Muslim historians. The *Ayyam* or days of the Arabs played a significant role in the development of *maghazi* literature among the early Muslim scholars. It was the theme of these *Ayyam* narratives that inspired the Muslims to write about the battle-day history of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) which later on become an inspiration for the writings of *Futuh* literature. The presence of poetry, elements of exaggeration and the detailed account of the battlefield or battle scene in the *maghazi* and *Futuh* literature is an indication of the direct influence of these *Ayyam* narratives on the Muslim historians. Apart from all this these *Ayyam* narratives had an influence in

terms of the development of critical thinking among the Muslim historians. The various methodological flaws in these narratives includes the lack of historical sequence in an account, lack of proper transmitter, lack of historical objectivity and the historical causation are all that which was absent in these *Ayyam* narratives. Muslim historians made it sure to remove all these flaws in order to present a more accurate and reliable historical narrative. Each of the five historians from Ibn Ishaq to Al-Masudi followed the style of *Ayyam* narratives by blending prose and poetry to form a complete narrative Element of exaggeration is particularly prominent in the work of Ibn Ishaq for various historical accounts. Al-Baladhuri in *Futuh al-Buldan* too seems to be influenced by the *Ayyam* literature when he is particular about providing diverse aspects of each era including social, political, cultural, economic and administrative

As discussed earlier, with the emergence of Islam the whole worldview of the Arabs transformed. Having a distinct and organized religion Muslims were now in a better position to assume that they were possessors of great history. The old age Arab oral society was transformed into a written one with the revelation of Quran. Muslims were possessors of a written culture as Quran was preserved in the form of written book during the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH)'s own time. The influence of Quran was remarkable on the development of historical consciousness among the early Muslim historians. Early Muslim Arab historians were scholars of *Hadith* and *tafsir* so the training they got during all this has influenced their way of thinking and work.

Early Muslim historians used Quran as the basic source and inspiration for the writing of history. Almost every historian from Ibn Ishaq to Al-Masudi has built his narration on the knowledge provided by the Quran. For the creation of the universe Ibn Ishaq, Ibn Sa'ad, Al-Baladhuri, Al-Tabari and Al-Masudi, all of them have used

verses of Quran in justification of their discussions. Quran is one of the main sources of *surah* of Muhammad. There is a thorough discussion on the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH)'s social and religious life both in Makkah and Madinah that Quran discussed. A great source of information about the military life and the battles he fought is discussed in detail in the Quran. Muslim historians based their narratives on the information provided by the Quran. Ibn Ishaq has discussed *Surah Anfal* in reference to the battle of Badr. A detailed discussion on *Surah Kahf* is given in reference to the account of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH)'s encounter with the unbelievers of Makkah. Likewise, Ibn Sa'ad, Al-Baladhuri, Al-Tabari too are very frequent in mentioning the verses of Quran as evidence for various historical accounts. Al-Masudi's idea of the creation of the universe is taken from the Quranic concept of the creation of the world and the man.

The last but not the least religious tradition that inspired the Muslim historical writings to larger extent was the science or literature of *Hadith* Ibn Ishaq, Ibn Sa'ad, Al-Tabari were the scholars of *Hadith*. They had knowledge and concept of *Hadith* studies which helped them incorporate their knowledge into historical narratives. Ibn Ishaq, Ibn Sa'ad, Al-Baladhuri and Al-Tabari were among those historians who considered history as the preservation of the religious as well as secular past experiences of the Muslim community. In their narratives they followed the method and style of *Hadith* literature. The influence of *Hadith* literature was so high that their focus was on the preservation of accurate account and historical fact based on the chain of narrators. It was Al-Masudi who belonged to such an age when *adab* heavily influenced all other sciences including history and historical writings while the previous concept of preserving a narrative based on the *Hadith* was now replaced by a narrative record of the human history where the focus was centred on the detection of

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the same patterns that different civilizations of the worlds followed in order to draw conclusions. Al-Masudi broadened his area of study and he wrote history of the world rather than a specific region.

Overall, Muslim epistemology was an Islamic concept of knowledge reflected in the works of the early Muslim historians belonging to different ages. The histories they produced were equally influenced by the epistemological patterns that they experienced in their respective ages. These patterns determined the nature of their knowledge production. The result was the utility and appreciation that early Muslim historians got for the histories they produced. Their historical narratives had a practical importance for their age. Through their historical narratives, Muslim historians contributed to the social cause as these narratives were based on Islamic world view which indicates the basic relationship between God, the universe and the man. The historical narratives were designed with an Islamic moralistic concept of history, according to which there is always a historical cause for a historical change and the world is in a continuous competition between the forces of good and bad. By relating to the past events and consequences of the bygone generations one can get salvation in the present. History and historical narratives play an important role in drawing conclusions for the betterment of present and future life.

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