

# CTH 013

# INTRODUCTION TO STUDY OF ISLAM

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**NATIONAL OPEN UNIVERSITY OF NIGERIA**

**COURSE  
GUIDE**

**CTH 013  
INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY OF ISLAM**

Course Developer	Dr. Fola T. Lateju Dept. Religious Studies Obafemi Awolowo University Ile-Ife.
Course Writer	Dr. Fola T. Lateju Dept. Religious Studies Obafemi Awolowo University Ile-Ife.
Course Editor	Revd. Dr. Jacob A. Owolabi National Open University Of Nigeria Lagos.
Course Co-ordinator	Revd. Dr. Jacob A. Owolabi National Open University Of Nigeria Lagos.



**NATIONAL OPEN UNIVERSITY OF NIGERIA**

National Open University of Nigeria  
Headquarters  
14/16 Ahmadu Bello Way  
Victoria Island  
Lagos

Abuja Annex  
245 Samuel Adesujo Ademulegun Street  
Central Business District  
Opposite Arewa Suites  
Abuja

e-mail: [centralinfo@nou.edu.ng](mailto:centralinfo@nou.edu.ng)

URL: [www.nou.edu.ng](http://www.nou.edu.ng)

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## **Introduction**

**CTH 013 Introduction to the Study of Islam** is a 2- credit unit, first year course. It is available for students in the Christian Theology programme.

The course consists of fourteen units which include; General introduction and definition of terms, Social, Political and Economic situation in Pre-Islamic Arabia; Origin and the beginnings of Islam; The development and contributions of Orthodox Caliphs and the Dynasties; Major schools of thought in Islam and Islam in Nigeria.

The Course Guide provides information on what the course is about, what you are expected to know in each unit, what course materials you will be using and how you can work your way through these materials. It also tells you about Assessment, and periodic tutorial classes that are available for the course.

## **What you will learn in this course**

The overall aim of CTH 013: Introduction to the study of Islam is to introduce you to the basic understanding of Islam. The origin, history theology, practices of Islam and its impact on the Nigerian Society. Your understanding in this course will prepare you to interact judiciously with Muslims. Specifically, the course will enable you to have a better understanding of Islam within the context of the Nigerian Society.

## **Course Aims**

The aim of the course can be summarized as follows: this course aims at introducing you to the history and the development of Islam in Arabia, the basic theology of Islam, Islamic practices and its impact in Nigerian Society.

## **Course Objectives**

To achieve the aims set above, there are set overall objectives. In addition each modules and units also has specific objectives. The modules and the unit objectives are at the beginning of every module and the unit, you should read them before you start working through the unit. You may want to refer to them during your study of the module and unit to check on your progress.

You should always look at the module and unit objectives after completing each section. In this way, you can be sure that you have done what was required of you by the module and unit.

Stated below are the wider objectives of this course as a whole. Definitely, by meeting these objectives you should therefore know that you have achieved the aims of the course as a whole.

On successful completion of the course, you should be able to:

- Define some Islamic concepts: Islam, Muslim, Quran, Hadith and Sharia;
- Describe the social, political, economic situation in which Islam arose in Arabia;
- Explain the historical origin and the beginnings of Islam;
- Highlight the development and contributions of the successors to the Prophet Muhammad;
- Identify the teachings of the major schools of thought in Islam and Islamic practices; and
- Describe how Islam spread to Nigeria and the impact of Islam on Nigerian Society.

### **Working through the Course**

To complete this course, you are expected to read the study units. Each unit under the modules contain some self-assessment exercises, and at points in the course, you are required to submit assignments for assessment purposes. At the end of this course is a final examination. Stated below are all the components of the course and what you have to do.

### **Course Materials**

Major components of the course are:

1. Course Guide
2. Study Unit
3. Textbooks
4. Assignment File
5. Presentation

In addition, you must obtain text materials. They are provided by the NOUN. You may contact your tutor if you have problems to obtaining the text materials.

## Study Units

There are thirteen study units in this course, broken into three modules. They are as follows:

### **Module 1    General Introduction of Islam and the Life of the Prophet Muhammad**

- Unit 1            General Introduction and Definition of Terms**
- Unit 2            Pre-Islamic Arabia**
- Unit 3            Religious Situation In Arabia**
- Unit 4            The Birth Of Muhammad**
- Unit 5            The Call And Mission Of Muhammad**

### **Module 2**

- Unit 1            The Orthodox Caliphs**
- Unit 2            The Unayyad Dynasty (661-750ad)**
- Unit 3            The Abbasid Dynasty (750-1254 Ad)**
- Unit 4            Major Schools Of Thought In Early Islam**
- Unit 5            Islamic Culture and Practices**

### **Module 3    Islam In Nigeria And Its Social, Economic, Political                    Impact**

- Unit 1            The Spread Of Islam To Nigeria**
- Unit 2            The 1804 Jihad Of Uthman Dan Fodio**
- Unit 3            The Impact Of Islam On Nigerian Society**

**Each unit contains a number of self-tests. In general term, these self-test questions on the materials you have just covered or require to cover are to be of help to you in your relationship to Muslims and it is also meant to help you to evaluate your progress and to reinforce your understanding of the materials. Alongside with your tutor-marked assignments, these**

**exercises will assist you in achieving the stated learning objectives of the individual units and of the course.**

### **Set Textbooks**

Kenny, Joseph O. P. (1997): Early Islam. Dominican Publicaiton.

Abdulati, Hammudah (1975). Islam in Focus. Diwan Press.

Nazir-Ali, Micheal and Stone(2002). Understanding my Muslim Neighbour. Canterbury Press.

Mawdudi, Abulala (1980). Towards Understanding Islam.The Islamic Foundation

### **Assignment File**

The assignment file will be posted to you in due course. In this file, you will find all the details of the work you must submit to your tutor for marketing. The marks you obtain for these assignments will count towards the final mark you obtain for this course. Further information on assignment will be found in the Assignment file, itself and later in this course guide in the section on assessment.

There are more than twenty assignments for this course. Each unit has one or two assignments, which are designed to cover every unit.

### **Assessment**

There are two aspects of assessment in this course, first, are the tutor-marked assignments, second there is a written examination. In tackling these assignments, every student is expected to apply information, knowledge and experience gathered during the course. The assignments must be submitted to your tutor for formal assessment in accordance with the deadlines stated in the Assignment file. The work each student will submit to the tutor for assessment will count for 30% of the total course mark.

At the end of the course, you will need to sit for a final written examination of three hours duration. This examination will also count for 70% of the total course work.

### **Tutor Marked Assignments (TMAs)**

There are fourteen tutor-marked assignments in this course. You need to submit all the assignments. The best four (i.e the highest four of the fourteen marks) will be counted. Each assignment counts 20 marks but on the average when the four assignments are put together, then each will now count 10% towards your total marks for the best four (4) assignments which would have been 100 marks will now be 30% of your total course mark.

Assignment questions for the units in this course are contained in the Assignment file. You will be able to complete your assignments from the information and materials contained in your set books, readings and study units. However, it is desirable in all degree level education to demonstrate that you have read and researched more widely than the required minimum. Using other references will give you a broad new point and may provide a deeper understanding of the subject. When each assignment is completed, send it, together with a TMA (tutor-marked assignment) form, to your tutor. Make sure that each assignment reaches your tutor on or before the deadline given in the Assignment File.

NB: If for any reason, you cannot complete your work on time, contact your tutor before the assignment is due to discuss the possibility of an extension. Extensions will not be granted after the due date unless there are exceptional circumstances.

## **Final Examination and Grading**

The final examination for CTH013 will be of three hour's duration and have a value of 70% of the total course grade. The examination will consist of questions which reflect the practice exercises, and tutor-marked problems you have previously encountered. All areas of the course will be assessed.

Use the time between finishing the last unit and sitting the examination to revise the entire course. You might find it useful to review your tutor marked assignments and comment to them before the examination.

The final examination covers information from all parts of the course.

## **Course Marking Scheme**

The following table shows how the actual course score is broken down.

Unit	Title of work	Weekly activity	Assessment (end of Unit)
	<b>Course Guide</b>		
1	General-Introduction and Definition	1	Assignment 1
2	Pre-Islamic Arabia	1	Assignment 2
3	Religious Situation in Arabia	1	Assignment 3
4	The Birth of Muhammad	1	Assignment 4
5	The Call and Mission of Muhammad	1	Assignment 5
6	The Orthodox Caliphs	1	Assignment 6
7	The Umayyad dynasty	1	Assignment 7
8	The Abbasid dynasty	1	Assignment 8
9	Major Schools of Thought in Islam	1	Assignment 9
10	The two Major divisions in Islam	1	Assignment 10
11	Islamic Practices and Culture	1	Assignment 11
12	The Spread of Islam in Nigeria	1	Assignment 12
13	The 1804 Jihad of Uthman Danfodio	1	Assignment 13
14	The Impact of Islam on Nigerian Society	1	Assignment 14
	Revision	1	
	Examination		
	Total	16	

**Table 1**  
**Course marking Scheme**

ASSESSMENT	MARKS
Assignment 1-4	Four assignments, best three marks of the four count at 30% of course marks.
Final Examination	70% of overall/course marks
Total	100% of course marks

## Course Overview

## How to get the most from this course

In distant learning, the study units replace the University lecturer. This is one of the great advantages of distant learning; you can read and work through specially designed study materials at your own pace, and at a time and place that suit you best. Think of it as reading the lecturer instead of listening to a lecturer. In the same way that a lecturer might set you some reading to do, the study units tell you when to read, your text materials or set books. You are provided exercises to do at appropriate points, just as a lecturer might give you an in-class exercise.

Each study unit follows a common format. The first item is an introduction to the subject matter of the unit and how a particular unit is integrated with the other units and the course as a whole. Next to this is a set of learning objectives. These objectives let you know what you should be able to do by the time you have completed the unit. These learning objectives are meant to guide your study. The moment a unit is finished, you must go back and check whether you have achieved the objectives. If this is made a habit, then you will significantly improve your chances of passing the course.

The main body of the unit guides you through the required reading from other sources. This will usually be either from your set books or from a Reading Section.

The following is a practical strategy for working through the course. If you run into any trouble, get in touch with your tutor. Remember that your tutor's job is to help you. When you need help, don't hesitate to call and ask your tutor to provide it.

1. Read this Course Guide Thoroughly.
2. Organize a Study Schedule. Refer to the "Course Overview" for more details.  
Note the time you are expected to spend on each unit and how the assignments relate to the units. Whatever method you choose to use, you should decide on and write in your own dates for each unit.
3. Once you have created your own study schedule, do everything you can to stick to it. The major reason that students fail is that they get behind with their course work. If you get into difficulties with your schedule, please let your tutor know before it is too late for help.
4. Turn to unit 1 the "Course Guide" and read the introduction and the objectives for the unit.

5. Assemble the study materials. Information about what you need for a unit is given in the ‘overview’ at the beginning of each unit. You will almost always need both the study unit you are working on and one of your set books on your desk at the same time.
6. Work through the unit. The content of the unit itself has been arranged to provide a sequence for you to follow as you work through the unit you will be instructed to read from your set books.
7. Complete your assignments in time. Keep in mind that you will learn a lot by doing the assignment carefully. They have been designed to help you meet the objectives of the course and, therefore, will help you pass the examination. Submit all assignments not later than the due date.
8. Review the objectives for each study unit to confirm that you have achieved them. If you feel unsure about any of the objectives, review the study materials or consult your tutor.
9. When you are confident that you have achieved a unit’s objectives, you can then start on the next unit. Proceed unit by unit through the course and try to pace your study so that you keep yourself on schedule.
10. When you have submitted an assignment to your tutor for marking, do not wait for its return before starting on the next unit. Keep to your schedule. When the assignment is returned, pay particular attention to your tutor’s comments, both on the tutor-marked assignment form and also written on the assignment. Consult your tutor as soon as possible if you have any questions or problems.
11. After completing the last unit, review the course and prepare yourself for the final examination. Check that you have achieved the unit objectives (listed at the beginning of each unit) and the course objectives (listed in this Course Guide)

## **Tutors and Tutorials**

There are 8 hours of tutorials provided in support of this course. You will be notified of the dates, times and location of these tutorials, together with the name and phone number of your tutor, as soon as you are allocated a tutorial group.

Your tutor will mark and comment on your assignments, keep a close watch on your progress and on any difficulties you might encounter and provide assistance to you during the course. You must mail your tutor-marked assignments to your tutor well before the due date (at least two working days are required). They will be marked by your tutor and returned to you as soon as possible.

Do not hesitate to contact your tutor by telephone, email, or discussion board. If you need help. The following might be circumstance in which you would find help necessary. Contact your tutor if.

- You do not understand any part of the study units or the assigned readings.
- You have difficulty within the exercises
- You have a question or problem with an assignment, with your tutor's comments an assignment or with the grading of an assignment.

You should try your best to attend the tutorials. This is the only chance to have face-to-face contact with your tutor and ask questions which are answered instantly. You can raise any problem encountered in the course of your study. To gain the maximum benefit from course tutorials, prepare a question list before attending them. You will learn a lot from participating in discussion actively.

**MAIN  
COURSE**

Course Code	CTH 013
Course Title	Introduction to the Study of Islam
Course Developer	Dr. Fola T. Lateju Dept. Religious Studies Obafemi Awolowo University Ile-Ife.
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**NATIONAL OPEN UNIVERSITY OF NIGERIA**

National Open University of Nigeria  
Headquarters  
14/16 Ahmadu Bello Way  
Victoria Island  
Lagos

Abuja Annex  
245 Samuel Adesujo Ademulegun Street  
Central Business District  
Opposite Arewa Street  
Abuja

e-mail: [centralinfo@nou.edu.ng](mailto:centralinfo@nou.edu.ng)  
URL: [www.nou.edu.ng](http://www.nou.edu.ng)

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## **MODULE 1      GENERAL INTRODUCTION OF ISLAM AND THE LIFE OF THE PROPHET MUHAMMAD**

Unit 1 General Introduction and Definition of Terms

Unit 2 Pre-Islamic Arabia

Unit 3 Religious Situation In Arabia

Unit 4 The Birth Of Muhammad

Unit 5 The Call And Mission Of Muhammad

### **UNIT 1      GENERAL INTRODUCTION AND DEFINITION OF TERMS**

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Body
  - 3.1 Definition of Terms
    - 3.1.1 Islam
    - 3.1.2 Muslim
    - 3.1.3 Quran
    - 3.1.4 Hadith
    - 3.1.5 Sharia-Islamic Law
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor Marked Assignment (TMA)
- 7.0 References/Further Readings

#### **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

The need to understand the origin, spread and development of Islam cannot be over emphasized. Nigeria, a multi-religious society calls for an understanding of the origin, teachings and practices of their faiths. The need for the understanding the faith of others enhances cooperation, development and peaceful coexistence. The Nigeria society is full of challenges of people trying to propagate or proclaim their faith. Many a times, when such is done without a clear understanding of the tenets of faith of other religions, things often degenerate to Chaos. But an understanding of Islam will help people to be more conscious of what they will say and do in the promotion of their individual faith. With the above stated scenario, the study of Islam becomes very necessary.

## 2.0 OBJECTIVES

It is expected that at the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- Define Islam from its etymological meaning
- Describe who a Muslim is in the context of Islam as a religion
- Explain Quran, its revelation collation and compilation.
- Explain what is meant by Hadith, its compilation into six canonical Hadith.
- Describe the Sharia as a legal system in Islam.

## 3.0 MAIN BODY

### 3.1 Definition of Terms

#### 3.1.1 Islam

Islam is an Arabic word and connotes submission, surrender and obedience. As a religion, Islam stands for complete submission and obedience to Allah. Another literal meaning of the word Islam is 'peace' and this signifies that one can achieve real peace of body and mind only through submission and obedience to Allah. Such a life of obedience brings with it inner peace and establishes real peace in society because Islam is an eternal religion bestowed upon mankind. It is only through submission to the will of God and by obedience to its Law can one achieve true peace and enjoy lasting purity.

#### 3.1.2 Muslim

The proper name of the religion propagated by Prophet Muhammad (PBH) is Islam and its followers are properly called Muslims. The name al-Muslim is derived from the word Islam which means submission to the will of God. A Muslim is one who has submitted to Allah. The will of God is defined by the Quran as good and compassionate, and His law as the most beneficent and equitable. Any human being who submits and obeys Allah is a Muslim, in a moral state of Islam. The word Muslim is not *exclusively* used for the followers of the teachings of Prophet Muhammad (PBH), it is also used for those who are monotheistic in their worship of God. It was in this vein that Abraham, Moses, Jesus and the rest of God's messengers are so regarded in Islamic tradition. The attestation of faith in the only one God, eternal creator of the universe, Lord of Lords, king of kings, the most compassionate the most merciful in Khalimatu Shahada makes a believer become a Muslim. Though it must be noted here that a Muslim must confess the oneness of God, the position of His Messenger

Muhammad, (PBH) and faith must be attested to all God's creation in al-Iman (confessional Statement).

### 3.1.3 Quran

Muslims believe that al-Quran is the greatest gifts of God to humanity and its wisdom is of a unique kinds. The Word Quran is related to words like *qeryana* in Christian Syriac, which means "reading" or "recitation". The word Quran relates to the original revelation to Muhammad (PBH) which started by the word Qaraa "read" or 'recite" in the name of the Lord" Q96:1-5.

The Quran in its present form consists of 114 Sura (chapters), apart of the opening Fatiha, which is a standard prayer for every occasion, the arrangement of the sura is not chronological, but proceeds roughly from the longest to the shortest.

The Quran is the primary source of the Islamic faith. It is believed to be dynamic, practical and moderate in its form and character. The Quran functions in three principal dimensions:

- (i) Inwardly, it penetrates into the innermost recess of the heart and reaches the farthest depths of the human mind.
- (ii) The outward function of the Quran embraces all walks of life and covers the principles of the entire field of human affairs from the most personal matters to the complex international relations.
- (iii) In its upward functions, the Quran focuses on the one supreme God. It opens before man new horizons of thought, guides him to exemplified standards of high morality, and acquaints him with the eternal source of peace and goodness. The Quran in summary calls for truth in thought and piety and piety in action, for unity in purpose and goodwill in Intent.

### 3.1.4 Hadith: The Tradition of the Prophet Muhammad (PBH) and His Immediate Companions

The other word that describes the practical application of hadith in its theoretical usage is sunna. The "established norms" or "set of examples" derived from the life, work and teachings of Prophet Muhammad (PBH) is a non-recital revelation. It serves as commentary to the al-Quran. The hadith is the written record of what Muhammad said and did. By the middle of the 9<sup>th</sup> century the Hadith had taken definite form, had established almost all its detailed content and had completely won the field reflecting the growing and conflicting mass of religious views and

opinions of the Muslims in the first two centuries. By the end of the 9<sup>th</sup> century and beginning of the 10<sup>th</sup> century, several collections had been produced, six of which have since then been regarded as being especially authoritative and are known as “The six genuine ones”. They include the Sahih (Genuine) of Muhammad Ibn Ismail al-Bukhari (810-70AD), the Sahih of Muslim Ibn al-Hajjaj (d.875), and the four remaining are the works of Abu Daud (d.888), al –Tirmidhi (d. 892), al-Nasai (d.916) and Ibn Maja (d. 886).

### **3.1.5 Sharia-Islamic Law**

Sharia is nothing other than the laws contained in the Quran and Hadith which are taken as divinely revealed. Legal Science in the sense of human interpretation of Sharia, is called fiqh. It applies Sharia to new cases through qiyas (solving new cases in the light of previous cases which have a common ground) and Ijma (consensus). Sharia covers all aspects of life. The Sharia stipulates the law of God and provides guidance for the regulation of life in the best interest of man. Its objective is to show the best way to man and provide him with the ways and means to fulfill his needs in the most successful and most beneficial way.

## **4.0 CONCLUSION**

Nigeria is a multi-religious country, therefore, the study of other faiths by scholars is very important. This will enable the society to avoid religious riots or chaos among adherents of various faiths in the country.

## **5.0 SUMMARY**

Islam is an eternal religion bestowed upon mankind by Allah.

Al-Quran is the greatest gifts of Allah to mankind. It was revealed directly to Prophet Mohammad by Allah as the guide for human behaviour.

## **6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT (TMA)**

1. How can religious chaos be checked among adherents of various religions in Nigeria?

## **7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READINGS**

Ginllaume, A (1955), The Life of Muhammad Oxford University Press

Kenny Joe Rev. Fr op (1997), Early Islam, Ibadan Dominican  
Publication

Watt W. Montgomery (1961), Muhammad Prophet and Statesman,  
London Oxford University Press.

## UNIT 2 PRE-ISLAMIC ARABIA

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Body
  - 3.1 The Byzantine Empire
  - 3.2 Egypt
  - 3.3 Syria, Palestine and Iraq
  - 3.4 The Persian Empire
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor Marked Assignments (TMA)
- 7.0 References/Further Readings

### 1.0 INTRODUCTION

Islam arose from Arabia an area with its culture, tradition and religious beliefs. In this section, the focus will be on the influence of already existing cultures before the advent of Islam in Byzantine, Egypt, Syria, Palestine, Iraq and the modern day Iran (Persian Empire).

### 2.0 OBJECTIVES

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

- Explain the activities of the Byzantine empire, their style of leadership and their religious practices;
- Provide an overview of Egypt with her multi-dimensional Christian view and influence;
- Describe religious and cultural situation in Syria, Palestine and Iraq; and
- Describe the religious situation in Persia before the advent of Islam.

### 3.0 MAIN BODY

#### 3.1 The Byzantine Empire

The Arabs knew the Byzantine Empire simply as Rum. Byzantine and Persia were two-world super-powers just before the rise of Islam. The Emperor Constantine founded its capital Constantinople, in 330 A.D, but was separated from the West only at the death of Theodosius in 395. Thereafter the East developed and prospered, while the West became prey to the invasion of the vandals, who even sacked Rome, and ushered in the “dark ages” of Europe.

The national basis of Byzantine was Greece, but the empire spread over parts of Eastern Europe, all of modern Turkey (not yet inhabited by Turks), Syria, Palestine, Iraq, Egypt and the north coast of Africa. The language of the empire was Greek, which had taken root in most of the Middle East from the time of Alexander's empire in 333B.C. Greek remained the market language during the period of Latin Roman domination (in the time of Christ), and was the sole imperial language after the Byzantine separation from the West.

The predominant religion since the time of Constantine was Orthodox Christianity. The East always had its own liturgical practices, different from the West, but was united with Rome until the Schism of 1009. The following areas were parts of the Byzantine Empire neighbouring Arabia, and were involved in the rise of Islam, Egypt, Syria, Palestine, Iraq and Persian Empire.

### **3.2 Egypt**

The Arabs knew Egypt as Misr (Hebrew: Misrayim), a word meaning a fortified city, and today used by the Egyptians as a name for the capital, Cairo, as well as for the country as a whole. Egypt was ruled by the Persians from 525-400B.C, then by the Greeks from the time of Alexander the Great. It passed to the Romans, in 30BC and was thus inherited by the Byzantines. The indigenous people are the Copts, and their language is called Coptic. It should be noted that the consonants g-p-t of Egypt are a variation of C-p-t of Copt, showing, according to the structure of Semitic words around 3 root consonants, that the two words are really the same transformed only by passage from one language to another. While Coptic was spoken at home, the language of the market and international communication was Greek.

Christianity was the predominant religion of the country, while there was a sizeable Jewish community and survivals of traditional pagan cults (which remain even to this day). The foundation of the Church is attributed to St. Mark. The Jews were the first to accept Christianity in the 1<sup>st</sup> century; then came the Greeks of Alexandria in the 2<sup>nd</sup> century, and finally, beginning in the 3<sup>rd</sup> century the mass of the Coptic people. The liturgical language was Coptic, with many Greek phrases. (Today, Arabic has replaced Coptic in most of the Liturgy because very few people understand Coptic any more).

At the advent of Islam, Egyptian Christianity had the weakness of being divided into two feuding Churches, the Orthodox comprising the Greeks who lived in Egypt, and the Coptic, which included the mass of the Coptic people. Although weakened by this division and persecution, the Coptic Church still had the strength, first, of a vernacular tradition so

that the people had a fair understanding of their faith, and secondly of the institution of monasticism. Communities of monks in the deserts were centres of prayer and learning which attracted people in spiritual need and provided some preachers and all the bishops of the Coptic Church. Because of these two strong points, the Coptic Church has been able to survive under Muslim rule until the present day, even though diminished from its former number.

### **3.3 Syria, Palestine and Iraq**

The Arabs knew the whole area as Sham (from “Shem”, cp “Semite”). It also had been a Greek cultural zone from the time of Alexander the Great. It was occupied by Rome in 63 B.C. and later inherited by the Byzantine Empire. The indigenous language was Syriac, which is the same as Aramaic. The Aramaic language has replaced local language in the region including Hebrew, by the time of the Jewish exile, and was the common language of the towns and cities of the fertile Crescent. Arabic, however, was the common language of the nomads of the desert. In addition, Greek was the international language of culture and marketing in the cities.

In the early centuries of the Christian era this area became mostly Christian. The Jews were the most significant group. At the same time and for the same reasons as Egypt, most of the dioceses of this area rejected the council of Chalcedon and were considered Monophysite heretics. Only Lebanon remained Orthodox. At the advent of Islam, Christian culture was at a high point. There were schools, especially in Iraq, which taught theology and all branches of philosophy, medicine, history and literature. Aramaic was the language of teaching, but Greek texts were freely used and translated.

### **3.4 The Persian Empire**

Persia was originally a small kingdom on the Persian Gulf. It became a great power under the Achaemenid dynasty, founded by Cyrus (559-529 BC) and continued by Darius (522-486 BC) and Xerxes (486-465 BC). It then covered the whole Middle East, including Egypt, Syria-Palestine, Turkey and Macedonia.

The Greek conquered this empire and Alexander the Great (336-323 BC) then divided it among his generals. Persia was left to Seleucus and his descendants, while Ptolemy ruled in the West. From 145 BC Roman pressure weakened the Seleucids, and Persia (what is now Iran and Mesopotamia) was taken over by the Persians. In 226 AD a Persian soldier, Ardashir, overthrew the Parthian Monarchy and founded the Sassanid dynasty, which he considered a restoration of the Persian

Achaemenid dynasty. This empire successfully resisted conquest by Rome.

In 610 AD Heraclius became emperor of Byzantium at a time when this empire was in shambles because of civil war. Taking advantage of the situation, Chosroes II of Persia conquered Syria Palestine in 613-14 and Egypt in 616. Heraclius mobilized his army and by passing the Persian force, marched straight on the Persian capital and took it in 624. Because of this debacle, the Persian nobles deposed Chosroes and made peace with Heraclius restoring the conquered territories to Byzantium in 629. Heraclius claimed the relics of the True Cross taken by Chosroes, and restored them to Jerusalem in a Solemn ceremony. An echo of the Persian-Byzantine conflict is found in Quran 30:1-3.

The religion of Persians was mainly Zoroastrian. This was founded by Zarathustra around 600 B.C, who left some scripture called the Avestas. Zoroastrians were also known as Magi (Majus of the Quran c. Mathew 2:1). Zoroastrianism was the religion of the Achaemenid dynasty and was made the state religion by the Sassanids in 226 A.D.

Zoroastrians believe in Ahura Mazda as supreme God and Creator. Later Zoroastrianism became dualistic with Ahura-Mazda the author of life and goodness, while Ahriman was the creator of evil and death. Zoroastrians were therefore not ascetical, because any negation of the body would be a concession to Ahriman. Their daily worship consisted of recitation of passages from the Avestas and keeping a perpetual fire going in their temples. Therefore corpses of the dead were placed on top of "towers of silence" for birds to eat. After the Arab conquest most Zoroastrians became Muslim, but some remain to this day, although they have abandoned some of their dualism.

Christianity also was established in Persia and had missions as far as Mongolia and China, but it was always a minority. One reason for its lack of success in the East was the fact that Christianity was adopted as the official religion of the Byzantine Empire. Christians in Persia were suspected of sympathy for the Byzantine enemy, and many Christians were put to death. The political reason why the Church of Persia adopted Nestorianism was to dissociate itself from the Byzantine Church and empire, and thus escape persecution at home.

Another important religion in Persia was Manichaeism, founded by Mani the 3<sup>rd</sup> century A.D. It was also dualist, and held that the soul was part of a divine light imprisoned in the body. Only by renouncing sin and strict asceticism could someone be saved and rise back to God. Mani and his successors gave their movement a firm hierarchic structure and a well organized missionary program, which was very influential.

#### **4.0 CONCLUSION**

The religion of Islam began in Arabia and spread to other parts of the world. Byzantine and Persia were two powerful nations in the pre-Islam period in the world. Around 395 the powerful nations of the world were over powered by the western world. They introduced Greek as the common language for the Islamic world. In 1009, Arabia, Egypt, Syria, Palestine, Iraq and Persian Empire were converted into the religion of Islam after the conquered of Byzantine and Persia.

#### **5.0 SUMMARY**

Zarathustra founded Zoroastrian in Persia around 600 BC. After the conquest of most Zoroastrians by Arab, most of them accepted Islam religion. Christianity religion also spread in the region to Mongolia and China at the same period. Mani founded Manichaeism religion around third century A.D in Persia.

#### **6.0 TUTOR MARKED ASSIGNMENTS (TMA)**

1. Discuss the role played by Mani in the religion called Manichaeism.
2. Account for the two major languages that were used in trading among the Arabs.

#### **7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READINGS**

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## **UNIT 3      RELIGIOUS SITUATION IN ARABIA**

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Body
  - 3.1 Arabia-Polytheism
  - 3.2 Orthodox Christianity/Jewish Christianity
  - 3.3 Judaeco-Christians
  - 3.4 Judaism
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor Marked Assignments (TMA)
- 7.0 References/Further Readings

### **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

The situation in which any religious movement emerges always have great influence on the belief and practices of such a religious movement. Judaism and Greco-Roman Culture and religion influenced the shaping of Christianity in the ancient Palestine and the Mediterranean regions where it started. In this unit therefore the exploration of the religious situation in Arabia becomes very necessary. Islam as a religion did not emerge just in a vacuum but it developed itself from already existing religions and culture.

### **2.0 OBJECTIVES**

It is expected that by the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- Describe the religious situation in Arabia with emphasis on the lifestyle, and polytheistic religious beliefs of the Arabs;
- Explain the place of orthodox Christianity in Arabian peninsula; and
- Describe the Judaeco- Christian tradition and how it had great influence on Islam.

### **3.0 MAIN BODY**

#### **3.1 Arabia-Polytheism**

The Arabian Peninsula is almost entirely desert or semi-desert. The Rub' al-Khali in the South and the Nufud in the north are particularly formidable. Farming is possible only in Yemen and part of the south coast where there is sufficient rainfall, and in isolated oases, which have ground water. Elsewhere rains are irregular and this provides grass for the animals herded by the nomads. The uncertainty of rains and draughts

disposes the people to attribute these to special intervention of God or some superior forces.

Before Islam there was no centralized government or state in Arabia. Only in the South, as in Yemen, the Arabs have leaders like kings. The nomads governed themselves by a clan or extended family structure. The clan system has authority also the towns or cities, except that Mecca, for example had a council of leading men for the general supervision of the town. Raiding and robbing was an endemic pastime of the Arabs, and protection could be found only in Solidarity with one's clan. If any killing occurred there would be a family feud, which could be settled by the payment of *diyya*, that is an indemnity which consisted either of the blood of the culprit or a compensation in money or goods. Courage against enemies, in other words bravery or manliness (*murū'a*) was thus a virtue the Arabs admired much. They also had great esteem for hospitality, or kindness to one's friends or to friendly strangers, and a man's reputation depended on how lavish he could be to his guests.

The traditional livelihood of the Arabs consisted in grazing animals and a little farming and horticulture particularly of date palms. Formerly, trade between India and China on the one hand, and Europe on the other passed through the old "silk route" from Asia through Persia and Syria. The Byzantine-Persian wars blocked this route and forced it to divert to the Indian Ocean. Goods were carried by ship as far as Yemen (The Red Sea was hard to navigate because of shallowness and lack of wind), then unloaded and sent by camel caravan up the Arabian Peninsula and across Egypt and beyond. This diversion put Mecca right in the path of an international trade route, and its merchants became wealthy independent middlemen in this trade. More nomads were attracted to settle in the cities, exacerbating the social problems. These were:

1. The lack of an authority to control feuding clans who were now living in close quarters instead of the vast expanse of the desert, and
2. A privatization of life, so that rich people exploited or did not take care of the poor of their clan, particularly in the case of orphans.

In the Arabian traditional religion people believed in an overall God called Allah (al-illah, corresponding to the Hebrew 'El-Plural Elohim), but turned mostly to lesser divinities or spirits for their needs. These had shrines in various places which were centres of an annual pilgrimage, *al-lat*, for instance, was worshipped in at-Taif. The Kaaba in Mecca was an even more important Shrine and Pilgrimage center because it was housing many of the local gods. It was surrounded by a demarcated sacred area in which various activities, such as hunting and fighting were prohibited. The Arabian Traditional Religion was weakening

before the time of Muhammad (PBH) because of foreign religious influence and because of the social changes resulting from urbanization.

Arab cultural life was dominated by oral literature. A primitive form of writing did exist, but was used mainly for monumental inscriptions, such as found on certain rocks, and for keeping business accounts, the Quran itself presupposes this kind of literacy when it preaches to the people about the Last Judgment in terms of paper listing each one's debits and credits. When it came to entertainment in the evenings or on the occasion of pilgrimages or trade fairs, however, oral literature held sway. Poets could go on at length about love and war and the exploits of their ancestors or tribal great men. A simpler form of entertainment was story-telling which included the telling of religious stories. The Arabs could not read the Bible (It was not translated into Arabic), but in their wide contacts they heard many Biblical and Apocryphal stories, which they told and retold, changing and adapting them to their audience every time. Many of these stories are retold in the Quran, again transformed and adapted to convey an Islamic message.

### **3.2 Orthodox Christianity/Jewish Christianity**

There were two orthodox Christianity at the advent of Islam: The Coptic Orthodox and the Greek Orthodox. They were two feuding Churches. The dispute between them was doctrinal and it was as a result of terminology. It was really a cover-up for the political struggle between Egypt and the imperial center of Constantinople. Since Church and State were so interlined in the Byzantine Empire, Egyptian nationalism would naturally express its opposition in the form of religious or theological differences.

- **Jewish Christianity**

The early inhabitants of Palestine were the Canaanites when the Jews under Joshua conquered the land after the Exodus, the Canaanites were not expelled but gradually assimilated. However, ethnically the Canaanites were the majority. During the Apostolic age of Christianity large numbers of Jews became Christians. At the time of the Jewish revolt against the Roman in 70 A.D. Jews had to flee to the desert, but later many came back and the Church grew. The second Jewish revolt of 132 AD brought about the destruction of the Temple and another temporary expulsion of Jews from Jerusalem. The Romans did not undertake a mass deportation of the Jews from the Holy land; the Diaspora of Jews throughout the Mediterranean world began centuries before as they took advantage of economic opportunities, for example in Tunisia, Morocco, Spain, Rome.

The reason why Jews became a small minority in the Holy land can be attributed to conversion as Eusebius (d. 340) says, “many thousands of the circumcision (Jews) came to believe in Christ”.

- **The Church in Palestine**

The Church in Palestine became predominantly a Greek speaking Church as shown by the lists of the early Bishops of Jerusalem, for two reasons: (1) Most Jewish or Aramaic speaking Christian Communities merged with the Judaeco-Christians who insisted on the Mosaic Law along with the acceptance of Christ, as is narrated in the Acts of the Apostles. The Judaeco-Christians were refuted theologically by St. Paul, and were politically outbalanced by the numerical superiority of the Gentile Christians (2) The Roman authorities were more tolerant of Greek speaking Christians at a time when the Jews were considered seditious rebels. The destruction between the Greek speaking Christians and the Jewish Christians communities is reflected in their names “In Antioch the followers of Jesus were first called Christians” (Acts 11:26). This became the common name in the Greek and Roman World. The older name retained by the Jewish Christians was “Nazarenes”, from the Aramaic word *Nasraya* derived from Jesus town of Nazareth (Aramaic: Nasrath); of Acts 24:5; 22:8; Jn. 19:19.

### 3.3 Judaeco-Christians

It must be noted here that Judaeco-Christianity did not disappear as a result of Paul’s condemnation, but continued to propagandize the legend that James was the head apostle, assisted by Peter who bitterly opposed the heretic Paul. The continued existence of Judaeco-Christianity is attested by references to various forms of it by Church fathers such as Justin (d. 165), Irenaeus (d. 380), and Jerome (d.419). Judaeco-Christian is a generic term, which included Ebionites (from Hebrew word for “poor”) and Elkasites (Mentioned by Hippolytus and Origen, most likely from the Semetic root *ghusl*, “to wash”, hence “Baptists” from the practice of daily ablution).

Judaeco-Christianity is hardly known, because it flourished on the margins of society, in remote desert settlements and among the nomads in the land beneath the fertile crescent (e.g. in present-day Jordan). The principal source about the Judaeco-Christian is the Pseudo-Clementine writings. It seems to have spread even into Arabian Peninsula, at least in a folkloric form, that is, people heard some Biblical stories and knew of some Christian customs without really understanding the faith. The importance of Judaeco-Christianity is that it was the form of Christianity

most closely known by the Arabs at the time of Muhammad. They hardly knew of Greek Christianity, whether in its orthodox or heretical forms. Evidence for this can be found in many parallels between Judaeco-Christianity and the form of “Christianity” adopted by the Quran as can be seen in the following points.

1. Epiphanius describes Judaeco-Christian as “neither Christians nor Jews nor Greek (pagans), but something in between”. A similar description is made of the ideal Muslim in the person of Abraham in Quran 3:67. “Abraham was not a Jew nor a Christian, but a *hanif*, submissive to God (Muslim) and not an idolater”. The word *Hanif* derives from the Syriac *Hanpe*, which was the Christian term for a pagan. It was also used of devotees for Greek philosophy and culture who were monotheistic. The Arabs borrowed the term with this meaning and the Quran gave it the meaning of “a primitive monotheist”.
2. The Quranic Word for Christians is *nasara*, deriving from the Aramaic word Nasraya indicating Arab contact with the Aramaic and probably Judaeco-Christian world, rather than Greek Christianity.
3. The Judaeco-Christian, like the Samaritans, accepted no prophets between Aaron and Christ. Though they sometimes referred to Isaiah, Jeremiah etc., they did not consider them inspired. These prophets are likewise unknown in the Quran. The Judaeco-Christians, however, probably accepted David, as did the Quran.
4. The Judaeco-Christian accepted as inspired scripture only the Torah (in part) and the Gospel according to Mathew in a revised Hebrew Translation. They also recognized the Psalms. Besides, they had, according to some, a heavenly book delivered by Jesus to their alleged founder Elxai. Similarly the Quran recognizes only the Torah, the Psalms and one Gospel revealed to Jesus.
5. In the books of the Old Testament that they accepted, they rejected some passages as false which contained anthropomorphic description of God or tales of immoral deeds of the Patriarchs. This was their answer to Marcion, who rejected the Old Testament in its entirety. Likewise, the Quran considers the Bible corrupt and tempered with.
6. As for the nature of Jesus, Judaeco-Christians did not say Jesus was divine, but some admitted that he pre-existed as an angelic creature and had the titles “the great king” and “son of God”. Irenaeus says they denied Jesus’ virgin birth from Mary but later

Jerome says they admitted this, Origen says they were divided on this question. According to the pseudo- Clementines, they held he was a son of God by adoption at his baptism, that he was the Prophet foretold by Moses (Deut 18:15-22) who fulfilled and reform the Law, eliminating sacrifice altogether, not even proposing the atoning sacrifice of his own death.

Similarly the Quran says that Jesus is not divine but was born of the virgin Mary, that he was not a saviour, that he did not die on the cross, and that he reformed the Mosaic Law.

7. The Holy Spirit was an angelic creature and, because ruh (spirit) in both Hebrew and Arabic is a feminine (as well as masculine) noun, they said he was the sister of Jesus. According to Epiphanius, the Holy Spirit was identified with Jesus. In the Quran the Holy Spirit appears at one point (Q 16:102) to be a creature of God (identified in Muslim tradition with Gabriel); elsewhere he is identified with Jesus (Q 4:171).
8. Judaeco-Christians, like Jews prayed facing Jerusalem. This also was the first qibla (direction to face at prayer) of the Muslims although direct Jewish contact could also explain this practice.
9. The Judaeco-Christians were devoted to daily ablutions to obtain cure from illnesses, deliverance from demon-possession, and forgiveness of sin. Islamic ablutions bear some resemblance to this practice although this practice and all the resemblances indicated above only point to an environmental inspiration in which Judaeco-Christianity was a chief factor, Islam transformed all these elements and gave them a new meaning consistent with the overall Islamic message.

### 3.4 Judaism

Judaism was another important religion established in Arabia, particularly in the Oases of Yathrib (medina) and Khaybar. These Jews were originally converts of Judaism, but became clans into themselves. Muhammad met three Jewish tribes in Medina upon his arrival there in 622 AD after the Hijira (Migration). They were found practicing Judaism which was strongly based on the worship of *Yahweh* and the strict observance of the Mosaic Law.

### 4.0 CONCLUSION

In Conclusion, Monasticism was another feature of Christianity in the deserts border of Arabia. Both Orthodox and other Christians took up

life in the desert as hermits or in small communities, dedicated to prayer and fasting in order to overcome the power of the devil. The people of the Middle East complained widely of possession or infestation by devils, as is seen in the Gospels. The deliverance they received through early Christian preachers was one of the major reasons for their conversion to Christianity. The dwellings of the monks also served as places of hospitality for travelers through the desert. Muhammad himself visited such monks on his trips to Syria.

## **5.0 SUMMARY**

In this section we have dealt with the general introduction and definition of terms, pre-Islamic Arabia, and religious situation in Arabia which are basic knowledge of the Arabian Peninsula in the pre-Islamic era.

## **6.0 TUTOR MARKED ASSIGNMENTS (TMA)**

1. Define the following words: Islam, Muslim, Quran, Hadith and Sharia.
2. Explain the leadership style of the Byzantine Empire and why other nations prefer Islamic rule than the Byzantine rule.
3. Explain the major differences in Orthodox Christianity and the Indaco-Christianity.

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## **UNIT 4 THE BIRTH OF MUHAMMAD**

### **CONTENTS**

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Body
  - 3.1 Family Tree
  - 3.2 Early Childhood of Prophet Muhammad
  - 3.3 Muhammad as a Youth/Adult
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor Marked Assignments
- 7.0 References/Further Readings

### **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

The need to understand the family tree and the birth of Muhammad cannot be under stressed. In order to comprehend the family into which Muhammad was born and the influence of his family members on his life from childhood to adulthood, it is necessary to examine his family tree.

### **2.0 OBJECTIVES**

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

- Explain the Birth of Muhammad with emphasis on his family tree and his early childhood
- Describe Muhammad's experience as a Youth and Adult

### **3.0 MAIN BODY**

#### **3.1 Family Tree**

Muhammad grandfather's name was Abu Muttalib, he had five children namely Abdullah, Al-Abass, Abu Talib, Hamza, Abu Lahab who had influence on Muhammad. His father's name is Abdullah and Amina was his mother. His father Abdullah belongs to the Hashimite family of the Quraysh tribe. His grandfather Abu Muttalib held the high office of the custodian of the Kaaba, which makes the Hashimites to be custodian of the Kaaba in Mecca. It was into the Hashmite family that Muhammad was born. For Muslims, Muhammad was a messenger of God the last and greatest prophet who brought to perfection the universal religion that will last until the end time. In Muslim belief, Muhammad was in one way a nobody, since Islam is said to be founded by God and

Muhammad was his mortal spokesman. On the other hand Muhammad was the greatest person in history, because no one could perform a greater role than to usher into the world God's definite guidance, the Quran. And so Muslims believe that no specimen of humanity could ever be as perfect and good as Muhammad. Consequently he is taken as the exemplar for all mankind, and all his words and actions are considered *sunna*, that is a model for all to follow.

### 3.2 Early Childhood of Prophet Muhammad

Muhammad was born in the "year of the Elephant", when the Ethiopian governor of Yemen used an elephant in an unsuccessful bid to capture Mecca (Q 105). That was around 570 A.D. One Legend tries to show that Muhammad is the light, which God created in the beginning of the world, which was put into Adam and passed on to Muhammad's father Abdallah:

Abdallah came into the house of another wife he had besides Amina, and he was stained with the clay he had been working in. He asked her to have sex, but she put him off because he was dirty. So he left her and bathed, washing away the clay that was on him. Then he went out intending to go to Amina. As he passed the other wife she invited him to come to her. He refused, since he wanted Amina. He went into her, has intercourse, and she conceived Muhammad. When he passed the other wife again he asked if she still wanted him. She said, "No. When you just passed me there was a shining white spot between your eyes and I invited you, but you refused me and went to Amina instead, and she has taken it away".

Muhammad's father died before Amina was delivered of Muhammad. After the death of Abdullah, the responsibility for Amina and her child then fell on Muhammad's grandfather Abu Muttalib. According to upper-class custom, Abu Muttalib then looked for Bedouin women to nurse the child in the reputedly healthy climate of the desert. The woman Halima, legend has it, was poor and had a hard time nursing her own baby, but she said, "when I put him (Muhammad) at my bosom, my breasts supplied him with all the milk he wanted to drink. His brother did likewise".

After two years Muhammad was returned to his mother, and not long afterwards another legendary incident occurred as Muhammad is reported to have narrated.

While I was with my brother behind our tents shepherding our lambs, two men came to us dressed in white with a basin filled with snow. They took hold of me, opened my chest, took out my heart and opened it up. They took of it a black drop and threw it away, then they washed my heart and chest with the snow until they were entirely clean. Then one of them said to the other, “weigh him against 10 of his people.” He did so and I outweighed them. So he said, “That is enough. By God if you weighed him against his entire people he would outweigh them.”

This incident is interpretation of Quran 94:1-3: “Did we not open your breast for you, and lift from you the burden which was weighing on your back?”

Muhammad’s mother Amina died when he was six years old, and two years later his grandfather Abu Muttalib. Responsibility for the Orphan then passed to his father’s brother Abu-Talib.

Muhammad is said to have accompanied his uncle Abu-Talib on a trading trip to Syria. It was during one of the trips that a legend said Muhammad met with a monk named Bahira who identified him as a person of great destiny. At that time Muhammad was a boy traveling with his uncle Abu Talib learning the act of trading

### **3.3 Muhammad as a Youth/Adult**

As a Youth, Muhammad is said to have experienced divine intervention as illustrated by a narrated report; a legendary.

I was with some Quraysh boys carrying stones that we use in our games, and each of us was named. We each had put out wrappers around our neck and carried the stones on top of that. I was going back and forth with them when suddenly someone invisible struck me with a painful blow and said, “Tie your wrapper around you” I did so myself alone wearing a wrapper around my waist and stones on my shoulder.

Though some Muslims disapproved the idea of the nakedness as he reported himself. Still another legend shows how God protected Muhammad from sinful action, as he himself tells:

I never gave a thought to what the pagan era used to do but twice, because God prevented me from following my desires. Afterwards I never thought of evil when God honoured me with apostleship. Once I said to a young

Quraysh boy who was shepherding with me on the hills of Mecca, ‘Please look after my animals for me while I go and spend the night in Mecca as young men do.’ He agreed and I went off with that intention, and when I came to the first house in Mecca I heard the sound of tambourines and flutes and asked what this was. I was told that a marriage had just taken place. I sat down to look at them when God struck my ear and I fell asleep until the sun waked me up. I came to my friend who asked me what I did. I said ‘Nothing’ and told him the story. Asked him another night to watch my animals and exactly the same thing occurred. Afterwards I never thought of evil until God honoured me with his apostleship.

As a young man Muhammad had the good fortune to be hired as a trading agent of Khadija, a wealthy Mecca Woman who was twice a widow. In this job he traveled more times to Syria. There, legend has it again that he met a Christian monk who acclaimed him a prophet. The factual basis of this story is that Muhammad probably came across Christian hermits in the desert as well as clergy in the cities of Syria. The city clergy are probably those referred to in Quran 9:34.

You who believe, many of the bishops (rabbis?) and monks consume the property of the people for no good, and direct them from the way of God. To those who treasure up gold and silver and do not expend it in the way of God tell them they will face a painful punishment.

A more favourable reference to monks is found in Quran 57:27. We gave Jesus the Gospel and put into the hearts of those that followed him compassion and mercy. As for monastic life, they invented it. We did not prescribe it for them—simply out of a desire to please God. Yet they did not manage it rightly.

Also referring to monks is Quran 27:36-7, which mentions:

Building which God allowed to be erected for the commemoration of his name, where he is glorified morning and evening by men whom trading and selling does not distract from commemorating God or from doing salat and giving zakat.

Later in Muhammad’s life of preaching some monks were sympathetic, and Quran 5:82-83 equivalently concludes that they accepted Islam:

As you will find the people friendliest to the believers are those who say, “we are Christians”. This is because among them are clergy and monks who are not proud. When they hear what was sent down to the Apostle to you see their eyes overflow with tears because of the truth they recognize in his message.

Here it may be concluded that Muhammad was strongly impressed by the life of Christian monks and clergy, but the information he absorbed about Christian teaching and the New Testament was very meager, if we judge from what appears in the Quran. Most of the Christians he met, including the monks were probably not well educated. Besides, Muhammad was likely not interested in studying Christianity as such, since that would make him appear as a client of the Byzantines. He wanted only those ideas that might prove relevant and helpful for his own life and for remedying the defects of the traditional religion of Mecca.

#### **4.0 CONCLUSION**

Muhammad’s life is not easy to know. The Quran makes many references to incidents in his life, but these are vague and impossible to piece together into a biography, unless we first know the progress of his life from some other source. The oldest written information about his life dates from 125 years after his death. That is the Sira or biography by Ibn-Ishaq, who died in 768 A.D. Yet the original of this biography is lost and we only know it through the amplified edition of Ibn-Hisham, who died in 833AD, two centuries after the death of Muhammad.

Most of the biographies written are taken from oral traditions passed on by the companions of Muhammad to the succeeding generations.

#### **5.0 SUMMARY**

Muslims believe that the coming of Muhammad into world history was evolutionary, illuminating complimentary, and transforming. His contribution to the worship of one God among the Arabs distinguished him as a reformer of great worth. These ideas are found in his humble birth, growth and development.

## **6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENTS (TMA)**

1. What similar or different approaches do Muslim and Christian have in studying the life of Muhammad?
2. How and why do the account's of Muhammad's birth and youth present him as more than an ordinary person?

## **7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READINGS**

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## UNIT 5 THE CALL AND MISSION OF MUHAMMAD

### CONTENTS

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Body
  - 3.1 His marriage and family life
  - 3.2 His call at the Cave of Hira (610 AD)
  - 3.3 His early Preaching Major Emphasis al-Tawhid
  - 3.4 His Persecution
  - 3.5 His Migration (Hijra) 622AD.
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor Marked Assignment (TMA)
- 7.0 References/Further Readings

### 1.0 INTRODUCTION

In this unit, we shall explore the family life of Muhammad, his call and mission as an apostle, his early preaching, his persecution and migration.

### 2.0 OBJECTIVE

It is hoped that by the end of this unit each student will be able to: explain the family life of Muhammad beginning with his marriage with Khadijah.

- Describe what led to his call at Mt. Hira;
- Explain his early preaching, which centered on al-tawhid; and
- Describe his persecution and migration.

### 3.0 MAIN BODY

#### 3.1 His marriage and family life

Muhammad's travel broadened his experience and no doubt set him thinking about many things, but his own personal future was also a concern. When Khadijah made a proposal of marriage to him two problems were solved: He would have a family, and with the help of her money he would have a business. At this time Muhammad was 25 years, and Khadija at least 10 years older (she is said to have been 40 years, but that is unlikely if she bore Muhammad six children). She was attracted to Muhammad because he served her as a honest and

successful agent. Tradition has it that “when he returned to Mecca and brought Khadija her property she sold it for about double her investment” she must also have been impressed by his spiritual qualities, as a legend has her listening to the report of Muhammad’s traveling companion Maysara; “At noon while he was riding in the intense heat I saw two angels shading the Apostle from the sun’s ray.

As the husband of Khadija, Muhammad had a secure economic future and an honourable position in Mecca society, although he was excluded from the inner circle of high financiers who controlled the political life of Mecca. The couple had two sons: al-Qasim and Abdallah (also known as at-Tahir and at Tayyib although some would make these distinct persons) and four daughters: Zaynab, Ruqaya, Umm-Kulthun and Fatima. The sons died young, while the daughters lived to maturity. Yet of these only Fatima gave Muhammad grandchildren and a lasting line of descendants.

The only other event reported in this period of adulthood is Muhammad’s participation at the age 35 in the rebuilding of the ka’ ba. Legendary detail tells how Muhammad settled the rivalry of the various tribes for the honour of replacing the Black Stone. He had it put on a cloth, and a representative of each tribe held one edge of the cloth and together they lifted the stone into position.

As for the rest of Muhammad’s life before the age 40, there are many legendary stories about Jews and Arabs who predicted the coming of a prophet or were searching for the true religion. Even the Bible (John 15:26) is quoted as predicting the coming of Muhammad, who is asserted to be the “Paraclete”.

### **3.2 His call at the Cave of Hira (610 AD)**

The accounts of the first revelation, as reported by the Hadith of al-Bukhari, the Holy Quran (Q56:4-10) and the Sura avoids legendary and miraculous events and shows the human weakness of the prophet. This indicates a sound historical basis, whether it is interpreted simply as a religion mystical experience, or also as a revelation from God Himself. Certainly from this moment the life of Muhammad underwent a radical change, which affected not only His personal affairs but also the social life of the entire town of Mecca and eventually the history of the world. About the date of the first revelation ‘Sura of the clot’ Q 96:1-5,, we can accept that, according to the Quran 10:16, Muhammad received it as a matured man, which is considered 40 years of age Q 46: 15. The event of the revelation took place in the cave of Hira (a mountain near Mecca where he used to spend time in prayer and meditation) around 610 AD. Tradition fixed the exact day of the first revelation as having taken place

on the 27<sup>th</sup> of the month of Ramadan, during the night that was afterwards known as “The night of Power” (Laylatul-Qadr). Muhammad communicated his experience in secret to his wife Khadija she comforted him in his doubt and distress, and gave him the assurance that what happened was the explicit will of God

Muslim traditions say that she sent him (Muhammad) to her Christian relation Waraqah Bin Nawfal, who seems to have seen a link between this revelation and that of the Jewish and Christian traditions. He also approached other intimate members of his family such as his uncle Abu Talib and his cousins Ali and Zayd. Only gradually did he begin to address his call (da’wa) to the entire Mecca Community. The first revelation was shortly followed by a second one, which came to Muhammad when he was shivering and has been covered by a mantle at home. The command was “O thou enveloped in thy cloak, Arise and Warn! Thy Lord Magnify..” (Q 74:1-3). Muhammad through Allah’s word had been chosen to spread His message.

### **3.3 His early Preaching Major Emphasis al-Tawhid**

Muhammad began his mission quietly he preached the oneness of God (al-Tawhid). He stressed that Allah is all-powerful. He is the creator of the Universe, and the Master of the Day of Judgment. On the day of judgment the faithful and righteous will be rewarded paradise, while the unbelievers and the idolaters will end up in hell, as abode of great torture and suffering. In all, Muhammad’s teaching he made it very clear that he was not super human or an incarnate of God, but only a human being and a messenger of Allah. The Quran testified to Muhammad’s human nature, “Say: for myself I have no power to benefit nor power to hurt, save that which Allah willeth... I am but a Warner, and a bearer of good tidings unto folk who believe” (Q 7: 188). In the first three years, Muhammad had only converted a few Meccans. Important names among them are: Khadija his wife, Ali his young cousin, Abu Bakr, Uthman and Talha; all his friends. Because of his stern preaching on Mount Safa and his warning that all those who could not submit to God would be judged. “Nay but they deny (the coming of) the Hour, and for those who deny (the coming of) the Hour. We have prepared a flame” Muhammad followers increased to about 40 men, most of them young and generally from influential families of Mecca. They carried on their religious activities discretely, but not like a secret society which could not be observed. “At this time”, says Ibn-said, “the unbelieving Quraysh did not criticize what he said. When he passed by them as they sat in groups, they would point to him and say, “There is the youth of the clain of Abdal Muttalib who speaks of things from heaven’.

There are five main themes Muhammad emphasized according to the Quran before the opposition and persecution.

1. God's power and goodness, shown particularly in the creation of man, but also in creating and providing for the rest of nature (Q 96:1-5; 90:4, 8-10; 80:17-22; 87:1-3; 55;88:17-20). These passages assume the existence of God, since the Arabs always believed in a supreme deity, and this belief was reinforced by Jewish and Christian influence. Yet since the Arabs tended to think of Allah as limited in power, the first among a pantheon of other deities, Muhammad's preaching emphasized the greatness of God. At this stage there is no mention of the unity of God. That is a point, which claimed special attention later in the context of controversy with the Meccans.
2. Man's return to God for judgment (Q 96:8;78; 80:22;84:1-12). These passages teach that man will rise on the last day and face judgment, and then proceed to his reward or punishment. At this stage, however fear of condemnation is not prominent, and there are none of the vivid descriptions of hell that came in later Quranic passages.
3. Man's responses to God in gratitude and worship (Q 80:16ff;106; 87:14ff;96:ff) these passages describe gratitude through its opposite, ingratitude. The word used for an ungrateful person *Kafir*, a term which later came to mean an unbeliever. Condemned also are presumption, meaning total self-confident with no regard for God's restrictions, and pride in wealth, with no sense of dependence on God's power. Positively, gratitude is expressed in worship, particularly in the performance of salat with all its bodily demonstrations of subservience to God.
4. Man's response to God in generosity to men (Q 93:9-11; 104:1-3; 92; 5-11; 68: 17-33; 53:34ff; 100:6-11;89:18-21; 51:17-19;70:17ff). Only the first reference given here is definitely from the period before the opposition arose to Muhammad; yet the others are from the early Meccan period and reflect what the earliest message must have been. These texts sharply attack hoarding wealth and having no concern for those in need. They do not mention property rights, inheritance or other rules for social living, which are the concern of later suras, but they do constitute an attack on the life style of the Mecca elite, and show that Muhammad had a concern for social problems right from the beginning.

5. Muhammad's role in Islam (Q 74: 2;87:a) these texts tell Muhammad to "warn" and to "remind" people particularly about the greatness of God and of the certainty of his judgment on the last day. At this time the message was confined to simple and obvious statement about religion, which anyone could recognize as true. Much Muhammad's task was simply to convey this message, nothing more.

### 3.4 His Persecution

Muhammad was never secret about his preaching, or he would not have won so many followers for Ibn-Ishaq the beginning of public preaching coincides with the beginning of opposition to Muhammad. Ibn-sa'd give the following reason for the Meccans' change of attitude.

This (peace) lasted until God (in the Quran) spoke shamefully of the idols they worshiped other than himself and mentioned the perdition of their fathers who died in unbelief. At that they came to hate the Messenger of God and to be hostile to him"

The first opposition to Muhammad, however, seems to have had little to do with worship of traditional divinities. Ibn-Ishaq gives no Quranic verse to illustrate condemnation of such worship at this time. Those most hostile to Muhammad were, like Abu-Jahl young men with political ambitions. They saw Muhammad growing in popularity and were fully aware of the revolutionary social implications of his teachings and movement; if his movement was not nipped in the bud it might one day sweep all contenders away and leave Muhammad master of Mecca. We must realize that the development of Mecca as the hub of international trade, from Syria in the Byzantine empire through Yemen to the far East, called for a new political leader who could unify Arabia and secure the trade route.

Ibn-Ishaq relates the following incident when Muhammad and his companions were outside praying:

"A band of polytheists came upon them as they were doing salat and criticized them, attacking what they were doing, and even fought them. Sa'd Ibn-abi-Waqq-as then struck one of the polytheists with a camel's jawbone and wounded him. That was the first blood shed in Islam"

Although Muhammad had made no direct attack on the traditional religion, his preaching about the power of God and his demands upon men were clearly divergent, at least in emphasis, from traditional beliefs and practices. It is true that the traditional religion, inseparable from clan

life and social structure, was shaken once people settled in cities, mixing with people of other tribes and participating in international trade and cultural exchange. Nevertheless it could still command a nostalgic loyalty. With some reason, then, the Meccans could complain to Abu-Talib.

“Abu-Talib, your brother’s son has insulted our gods, insulted our religion, called our way of life stupid, and said our ancestors were in error. Either you must stop him yourself or let us at him, since you are opposed to him just as we are, and we will rid you of him. Abutalib gave them a polite diplomatic answer and they went away.

The hostility against Muhammad continued with open persecution. While the opposition was going on, Muhammad sent some of his followers away to the Negus in Ethiopia. He saw that this Christian country would readily welcome his persecuted followers. The total number of adult males is given as eighty-three, and it included was the future third caliph ‘Uthman Ibn-Affay who went with his wife Ruqayya, a daughter of Muhammad. There was a very impressive report of the excellent hospitality the emigrants received from the Negus, King of Ethiopia (615 AD). Ibn-Ishaq gives a probably imaginary or embellished story of how the King (emperor) interrogated the Muslims about their faith and equivalently became a Muslim, declaring “that there is no God but Allah and Muhammad is his servant and messenger, and that Jesus, son of Mary is his servant and messenger, his spirit and his word which he planted in Mary” These words are a quotation of Quran 4:171, which even Muslims say dates from the Medina period, much later than the time of this conversation.

During the trying time of Muhammad in Mecca his wife Khadijah and his uncle Abu Talib died thus Muhammad referred to that year as year of sorrow 619AD.

### **3.5 His Migration (Hijra) 622AD.**

Muhammad’s preaching challenged the traditionist Meccans thus they began to grow in hatred for him. By 621 AD, He was asked to live Mecca. He left by 622 AD for Yathrib (Medina). The first group of the immigrants of Medina started the migration (Hijra) in summer 16<sup>th</sup> July 622 AD. The 1<sup>st</sup> Muharram off that year was afterwards chosen by the caliph Umar as the beginning of the Islamic Era (Calendar) i.e. Muharram K.A. H. By the end of summer of the same year almost all the Muslims had left Mecca for Medina and had received hospitality there. By middle of September that year Muhammad and two other followers with their families set out to Medina. They were warmly received on their arrival to Medina.

#### 4.0 CONCLUSION

In this unit Muhammad was able to establish himself as a family man. He received the call to be a messenger of God which he obediently accepted with the support of his wife Khadija and his uncle Abu Talib. He emphasized God's power and goodness in creating man; man's return to God for judgement; Man's responses to God in gratitude and worship; man's response to God in generosity to men and Muhammad's role as a "warner" and "reminder". He faced persecution and later decided to leave Mecca for Medina where his services are needed through Migration (hijra). In Medina, he settled with his followers as a community of believers. He became both religious and political leader of his people and thereby formulate guiding principles that will sustain and guide the daily lives of the people.

#### 5.0 SUMMARY

Muhammad established himself in Medina with a term of reference of not associating with any of the existing tribes. His position was understood and accepted. The community that formed itself into a unit will now become the ideal example for future Muslim communities to follow.

#### 6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT (TMA)

1. Why did the Meccan leaders defend the traditional religion?
2. Why did Muhammad leave Mecca?
3. Comment on the implication of the Hijra to Ethiopia for Christian-Muslim relations in Africa.

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## MODULE 2

Unit 1	The Orthodox Caliphs
Unit2	The Unayyad Dynasty (661-750ad)
Unit 3	The Abbasid Dynasty (750-1254 Ad)
Unit 4	Major Schools Of Thought In Early Islam
Unit 5	Islamic Culture and Practices

### UNIT 1 THE ORTHODOX CALIPHS

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- 3.0 Main Body
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  - 3.2 Umar Ibn-al-Khattab (634-644 AD)
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#### 1.0 INTRODUCTION

In Medina, Muhammad was the leader of the emigrants (Muhajirun), the Ansar among whom there are hypocrites (Munafiqun), the Medinan and the Jewish tribes formed the 10 thousand inhabitants of Medina. Three major wars were fought with the Meccans before Muhammad could enter into an agreement with them by 628 AD. The wars are Badr 624, Uhud 625 and al-khandaq (Trench) 627. He won the first war decisively, lost the second war to the Meccans and both experienced losses in the third war. The Messenger of God entered into an agreement with the Meccans not to allow any further war with them for 10 years. By 630 AD Muhammad took the Meccan by surprise fought a Jihad against them thereby establishing his control over Mecca. He gave his farewell address early in 632, by 6<sup>th</sup> June 632 Muhammad died and he was buried in the room of his preferred wife, Aisha.

The death of Muhammad brought confusion to the community since he never named a successor after him. There were four categories of people entitled to succeed him. The members of his household among who Ali was quite outstanding, the emigrants, the Ansar, and the Medinans who

provided the land upon which the community settled. In this unit we shall look at the period of the four successors of Muhammad in Medina.

## **2.0 OBJECTIVES**

It is hoped that by the end of this unit each student will be able to:

- Describe how Abubakar was elected as the first caliph stating his achievement and failure
- Highlight the contributions of Umar Ibn-Khatib to the expansion of Islam.
- Highlight the contribution of Uthman in the collation of the Quran.
- Describe the life and contribution of Ali Ibn-Abu Talib and what cause the division in Islam.

## **3.0 MAIN BODY**

### **3.1 Abubakr (632-634AD)**

When Muhammad died, Umar Ibn-al-Khattab, followed by the other leading Muslims, clasped the hands of Abu-Bakr as a sign of allegiance. This action was used as a precedent for many generations of Muslims that, in theory, the leader (Imam) of the Muslim community should be of the tribe of Quraych, which embraced all the Meccans, and that the caliph (Khalifa = “successor) should be chosen by a special group of leaders (ahl al-‘aqd wa-l-hal= “the people who bind and loose”), whose choice was then ratified by the people at large. The rights and duties of the caliph varied with the times, but from the beginning there was no doubt that he was to enforce God’s law in both religious and worldly matters.

Abubakr’s first act as head of state was to send an expedition north, as Muhammad had instructed, to fight the Byzantines who were the victors at Mu’ta and were not seriously challenged at Tabuk.

There was disintegration among the Arab tribes, a revolt against the central authority of the caliph. The general Khalid Ibn-al-walid, returning from war against the Byzantines, conducted a campaign which reduced the Arab tribes one after another to subjection.

Because trade was in ruins, booty gained through expansive wars was to be the mainstay of the Muslim polity for some time, until Damascus and Baghdad could assume their roles as trade centers between Asia and Europe. Khalid therefore led the Muslim forces in war of expansion which brought under Muslim rule the remainder of the Arabian peninsula, the south of Iraq and much of the southern Byzantine

territories up to the gates of Jerusalem. The Arabs' success was favoured (1) by the presence of a sizeable Arabized population in Syria, Palestine and Iraq, formed by Immigrant Arabs who had intermarried with the local people 2) by the traditional and instinctive urge of the Arab nomads to raid settlements, this natural tendency was reinforced by the religious motivation of Jihad, fighting to spread the rule of God; and finally 3) by the power vacuum left by the weakened state of the Byzantine and Persian empires. Abu-Bakr's major contribution was the consolidation of the Arab tribes before his death in 634 AD.

### **3.2 Umar Ibn-al-Khattab (634-644AD.)**

Before Abu-Bakr died in 634, he urged the Muslim community to elect Umar as his successor. This energetic man, whose daughter Hafsa was one of Muhammad's wives, continued the conquests, taking the Persian capital Ctesiphon and overrunning the heartlands of the empire; in the west he took all of Syria, Palestine and Egypt. Jerusalem surrendered peacefully under generous terms; Christians were given freedom of worship and levied a tax, which was less than what they had paid to Byzantines. Umar ordered a mosque built on the site of the Temple ruins, which was later replaced by the present Dome of the Rock.

Umar appointed emirs (governors) over the conquered territories and set up a workable machinery of government. He introduced wise measures for land administration to guarantee its continued productivity. In an area which surrendered peacefully (Sulhan) the owners were left in possession of the land in exchange for the payment of tribute; lands conquered by force ('unwatan) became public land and the former owners were kept on as tenants to assure its cultivation. Arabs were not to be granted any land, but were to settle in camp towns like Kufa and Basra in Iraq, where they were to be ready to go out and fight where they were needed. In fact, however, many Arabs did acquire large estates in the conquered lands.

Umar also introduced a pension scheme where-by everyone who was entitled to public funds was registered and paid at a scale determined by (1) his degree of relationship with Muhammad (2) the contribution he made by fighting or learning and (3) the length of time he was a Muslim.

Umar also decided for security of the empire, to make the Arabian Peninsula a purely Muslim state. Disregarding the earliest treaties of Muhammad, he expelled most of the Jews and Christians, sending them to Syria and Iraq,

Umar met a violent death, stabbed by a Persian slave over a personal dispute. Before expiring he left the choice of succession to Six Qurayshites Uthman and Ali were son-in-laws of Muhammad, Uthman having been married to Ruqayya and later to Umm-Kulthum, and Ali to Fatima. The elector chose Uthman, probably because they thought he would continue previous policies, while Ali has made it known he would make changes which would not suit the entrenched interests of some people. Immediately after Uthman's election, Ali joined his opposition.

### **3.3 Uthman Ibn-Affan (644-656)**

Uthman the third caliph was faced with difficulties from the start. The first problem was to save the son of Umar, whom Ali and others wanted to put to death according to the Sharia for having killed the assassin of his father out of anger.

Uthman was a pious man who spent much time in prayer and set up a commission to make the Quran uniform. Yet opposition to his rule grew constantly. He was accused of innovation (*bid'a*), that is, of heresy in matters of ritual; his Quran project was not well received by all; and above all he was accused of maladministration of state property. Great gaps emerged between those who profited from the conquests and the new soldiers in the camps, and their grumbling grew louder.

Although Uthman did not have tight control on his subordinates, he was not a particularly weak man, as was shown when he was called upon to abdicate and when he faced death, nor was ill-advised, since he had a council of companions of Muhammad led by Marwan. The problems of his administration were rooted in the logic of the conquest movement initiated by Muhammad. As nearby rich provinces were overrun the loot coming into Medina created instant fortunes among the few dedicated soldiers who first join the army. But after these finished their own despoilment of the conquered provinces, particularly the estates of fleeing Byzantine officials, only small pickings were left for the hordes of nomad Arabs whose cupidity was stirred and to enlist in future expeditions. Uthman tried to placate their disappointment by authorizing conquests further away. Outlying Asian provinces were conquered and the armies marched across North Africa as far as Tunisia. But conquests so far from home were expensive, and little could be carried back over such great distances. So the discontent resulting from the end of the booty boom was compounded, especially in Iraq and Egypt. Furthermore, the Arab soldiers were now cut off from their former nomadic and free pastoral way of life and were trapped in the organizational machinery of a bureaucratic state. Their frustration at this

new way of life, to which they had not adjusted, added to their discontent.

A delegation from Egypt came to Uthman demanding reforms in the distribution of funds. They were promised reforms and turned to go back to Egypt. On their way they supposedly intercepted a letter from Marwan to the governor of Egypt ordering their leader to be punished. Learning also of renewed unrest in Medina, during which stones were thrown at Uthman in the mosque, they turned back to Medina to join the dissidents. They blockaded Uthman's house and unsuccessfully demanded his abdication. Eventually news came that help for Uthman was on its way and this drove the dissidents to desperation. They broke into his house and killed him while he was reciting the Quran. Muslims of note, including the son of Abubakr, were among the murderers of Uthman, while Ali kept a complicit silence in the background. The Scandal of this event shook the Muslim world.

The leaders of Medina then chose Ali to be caliph, since he was the leading man left among Muhammad's companions, and would be sure to get the support of the Uthman's opponents.

### **3.4 Ali Ibn-Abu Talib (655-661)**

Most of his reign was characterized by civil war. Although Ali at first seemed to have the support of all Medina, and thereby of the Muslim world, opposition to him surfaced by the quiet withdrawal from Medina of Abdallah Ibn-Umar and some others, Muawiya, the governor of Syria in Damascus, refused to recognize Ali. Claiming that he was next of kin to Uthman, he said that he had the authority according to Quran 17:33, to avenge Uthman's death.

A third group, led by Muhammad's widow Aisha and two men from Mecca Talha and az-Zubayr, openly revolted after a few months and moved to Iraq to gain support. Ali pursued and defeated this group near Basra. The event was called the Battle of the camel, because Aisha watched it from the seclusion of a canopy tent on top of a camel. Talha and az-Zubayr were killed, and Aisha was sent back with due respect to Medina, while Ali moved his administrative base to Kufa.

Ali next turned against Muawiya for refusing to pay him homage. The two armies met in June 657 AD at Siffin, along the upper Euphrates, and after a couple of months of hesitation began battle in earnest. As the tide began to turn against Muawiya, some of his men suggested that his soldiers should tie copies of the Quran to their lances, appealing in this way to Ali not to fight his brother Muslims, but to accept arbitration. Some religious minded supporters of Ali forced him to accept this

proposal. Having no doubt of a favourable outcome, they chose his loyal supporter Amr Ibn-al-As, the conqueror of Egypt. The arbiters' task was to decide whether Uthman was killed unjustly or not, upon which decision depended Muawiya's claim to the right of vengeance. As the arbiters met and leaned towards a decision against Ali some of Ali's supporters decided that not only was Uthman rightly killed, but that consequently Muawiya was a rebel for not submitting to Ali; furthermore, Ali himself sinned gravely by accepting arbitration since the Quran 49:9 says to fight rebels until they return to obedience. Since Ali allowed the arbitration to continue, these dissidents withdrew to a place called an-Nahrawan. Ali's supporters therefore gave them the name "Kharijites" from the Arabic word meaning to "go out". They themselves accepted the name with the meaning given in Quran 9:81 to go out and fight; this God commanded; but condemned those who sat at home. The Kharijites took as their rallying cry Quran 6:57 "la hukum illa li-Allah" ("No judgement but God"). This was not an appeal for God to show his judgement by giving victory to the right side, rather it meant that they should not stop and discuss, but follow the clear judgement that God had already made in the Quran to fight the rebels. The Kharijites had no doubt about the rightness of their stand.

When the expected verdict of the arbiters came, Ali did not accept it, and in April 658 Muawiya was acclaimed caliph by his followers. Ali intended to pursue the war against Muawiya, but first had to deal with the Kharijites. He persuaded some of them to return to his camp; the rest he attacked and massacred. That was not the end of the Kharijites, however, because the massacre caused so much indignation that many more of Ali's followers left him. He had to abandon his advance on Muawuya and go back to his headquarters at Kufa. The arbiters met once more at Adruh, and Abu-Musa declared that neither Muawiya nor Ali should be caliph, but a third party should be elected, preferably Abdallah Ibn Umar, Amr, the other arbiter, simply declared his unqualified support for Muawiya and the meeting broke up without result. Each contender governed his own area, Muawiya was clever enough not to risk a direct battle with Ali. On 24 January 661 a Kharijite relative of one of those massacred at an-Nahrawan stabled and killed Ali in the mosque in Kufa.

Muawiya then induced Ali's son al-Hasan to forgo his claims to the caliphate and accept a comfortable retirement in Medina. The supporters of Ali's family (later called Shiites), led by Ali's other son al-Husayn, and the Kharijites continued in opposition, but Muawiya became the overall ruler of the Muslim world, with Damascus as its new capital.

## 4.0 CONCLUSION

The four orthodox caliphs Abubakr, Umar, Uthman and Ali remained up till this day the outstanding leaders who succeeded Muhammad and took the Muslim world to greater height. They are regarded as rightly guided by Allah in their style of leadership. They helped to appropriate and formulate policies they inherited from the Prophet. Their outstanding contribution in the expansion of Islam and the Muslim world is highly commendable.

## 5.0 SUMMARY

The life, achievements and failure of the orthodox caliphs represent the beginning of the history of Islam after Muhammad. Abubakr was an old man and the closest associate of Muhammad. He further expanded the Muslim territories by defeating the Byzantines Empire. Under the second caliph, Umar overran the decaying Persian Empire and took from the Byzantines the territories of Syria, Egypt and Libya. He introduced pension scheme during his period. A Persian slave killed him.

Uthman took over after the first wave of Islamic expansion, when the “booty boom” (war spoils) gave way to a relative austerity. He commissioned the compilation and collation of the Quran. He was accused of mal-administration. He was assassinated and Ali Ibn Abu Talib became the fourth caliph. Ali the husband of Fatima Muhammad’s daughter became caliph at the face of civil war. Muawiya proposed for arbitration challenged him and the arbiters declared Ali deposed. Ali’s supporters then split. The Shiites continued to support Ali in the territory he controlled. While the Kharijites fought him for the sin of giving in to arbitration with a rebel and one of them eventually assassinated him.

## 6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENTS (TMA)

1. Briefly explain the achievements and the failure of the four orthodox Caliph.
2. Uthman and Ali are the major cause of the division in Islam. Discuss
3. Compare the Administrative lifestyle of Umar the second caliph to Uthman the third caliph.

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## **UNIT 2 THE Umayyad DYNASTY (661-750AD)**

### **CONTENTS**

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Body
  - 3.1 The Growth of the Umayyad (656-750)
  - 3.2 Achievements of the Umayyad
  - 3.3 Decline/Fall of the Umayyad dynasty
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor Marked Assignments
- 7.0 Reference/Further Readings

### **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

The Umayyad began with the great grandson of Qurayshite Umayya. The Umayyad were different from the fatherly, plain dressing accessible caliphs of Medina, who depended heavily on the companions of Muhammad for advice in ruling; the Umayyad assumed a ceremonial regal, aloof style, and were not afraid to innovate legislation with scant reference to Islamic precedents. Moreover by nominating their sons to succeed them, they undermined the electoral system and instituted a hereditary monarchy. Among their subjects the primary distinction remained that between Muslim and important distinction was made between Arabs and non-Arabs, complicated further, by tribal conflicts among Arabs themselves. In this unit, we shall look at the historical take up of power by Muawiya, the achievements of the Umayyad and their decline/fall.

### **2.0 OBJECTIVE**

It is hoped that by the end of this unit, each student will be able to:

- Describe how Muawiya seized power from Ali and his supporters.
- List the achievements of the Umayyads; and
- Explain what led to their decline/fall.

### **3.0 MAIN BODY**

### 3.1 The Growth of the Umayyad (656-750)

Because of the arbitration, which Ali lost by the judgment of Muawiya's followers, the date of the take off was drawn back from 661 to 656. Muawiya successfully consolidated his power and effectively ruled and expanded territories of the Islamic caliphate. He died in April 680 at the age of 80, leaving his son Yazid to succeed him.

Yazid was at once faced by revolts. Ali's son al-Husayn fled to Mecca and then to Kufa where his supporters rallied to him. The Umayyad governors, however subdued Kufa and went out against al-Husayn's remaining supporters. They rejected his call to surrender, and were all killed at Karbala on the 20 Muharram (= 10 October) in the year 680. This day became sacred to the Shiites who to this day observe it with passion, drama and cutting themselves to display their own blood.

Another rebellion was led by Ibn-az-Zubayr (son of the man killed at the Battle of the Camel), who had fled to Mecca with al-Husayn. The Medina Ansar (helpers) accepted him as caliph and drove the Umayyads out of town. Yazid sent Syrian troops against Medina who captured and destroyed the city. They then marched on Mecca, and during the siege the ka'aba was destroyed by fire. The fighting stopped, however, when news came that Yazid was dead (in 683).

Yazid's sick son died after three months, and chaos broke out. Ibn-az-Zubayr had his supporters in Syria especially among the northern Arab tribes. The Yemenites however supported the Umayyad Marwan. A twenty-day battle in July, 684 left Marwan the victor. Yet Ibn-az-Zubayr still held Mecca and Medina and Western Arabia together with the south of Iraq, while the east of Arabia was in the hands of a Kharijite group led by Najra Ibn-Amir, who had helped Ibn-az-Zubayr in defending Mecca and then ruled his own area.

The Umayyads recorded coup and counter coup during their reign. This left the dynasty in fragmented form with each area having an outstanding ruler or general in control. Al-Mukhtar tried to bring all the non-Arab Muslims together (Mawali) this move helped the non-Arab status to be raised from that of a second-class citizen while they are still Muslims. Al-Mukhtar met his end at the hand of the governor of Basra who was a brother and representative of the Medina anti-caliph Ibn-az-Zubayr.

However, Abdal Malik who ruled from 685-705 found solution to the fragmentation of his empire in the able general al-Hajjaj. Al-Hajjaj

marched against Ibn az-Zubayr and killed him while storming Mecca in 692. He then went on to drive the Kharijites out of eastern Arabia and moved up to Iraq, where he ruled with an iron hand and launched further conquests in the east until his death in 714; this was during the reign of the last great Umayyad, 'Abdalmalik's son al-Walid (705-715). In the final years of the Umayyads the short rule of Umar II Ibn-Abdul Aziz (717-720) was noteworthy because of his strict and impartial observance of the Sharia. He encouraged conversions and eliminated discriminations against non-Arab Muslims for the length of his reign. He tried to assure non-Muslims better treatment than they had yet he enforced many humiliating restrictions on them which became precedents for later constitutional theorists. After the twenty year reign of Abdalmalik's fourth son Hisham (724-744) Umayyad rule was reduced to a vain containment of one rebellion after another.

### 3.2 Achievements of the Umayyad

The Umayyad period saw a considerable development of religious literature; legal studies, commentaries on the Quran (tafsir), and history. Hadith literature, philosophy and theology (kalam) were not developed until the Abbasid period. Poetry also flourished but, in spite of an Islamic veneer, was more in the tradition of pre-Islamic poetry. Poetry written for entertainment often dwelt on romantic love. Political poetry engaged in praise of political patrons and satire of their opponents. It also promoted certain theological ideas that had political implications. Many of the famous writers of this period were not Arabs at all, but Persians and others, who learned Arabic. They were the ones who systematized Arabic grammar and composed its most excellent literature.

The Umayyad political system was fundamentally organized as a federation of tribes tied together by a pact of covenant (*hifl*). There was no word the whole of the Muslim peoples, except perhaps *jama'a*. In the Quran the words *qawm* or *umma* are used with the meaning of "tribe". Only later was the word *Umma* used to designate the totality of the world Muslim community. Besides the full member tribes of the Federation, here were second-class members, communities of Jews or Christians, which were inserted into the general society by a relationship of dependence and protection (*dhimma*). Non-Arab converts to Islam were obliged to take adopted membership in an Arab tribe and be called by its name. They were known as clients (*mawali*, plural of *mawla*) and did not enjoy the same rights or privileges as the Arab Muslims.

The ruler of the empire was known as the caliph or *khalifa*, meaning deputy or successor, in this case of Muhammad. His role was that of the

Arab sayyid, or tribal chief, yet the caliphs tried to expand both the secular and religious basis of their –power.

As for judicial matters, the caliphs sometimes decided cases themselves, but usually left them to provincial governors or other officials. The office of *qadi* developed corresponding to the pre-Islamic *hakam*, who was a wise man who heard cases but had no executive power and could only get the parties to promise to accept his decision. The *qadi* at this time was not a specialist in law, since Islamic law had not yet developed much beyond the Quran.

Revenue for the Umayyad state came from booty, a land tax called Kharaj, a special tax on non-Muslims called *jizya* and *Zakat*, the normal yearly tax all Muslims of means had to pay. As for the disbursal of funds, the Quran (8:41 etc) stipulates that one fifth of booty goes to Muhammad (and by analogy to the caliph). Other funds were distributed in the form of arrival stipends varying according to the date a person had become Muslim. For instance the widows of Muhammad got most, then those who fought at Badr, followed by those who were Muslims before Hudaibiyya (628), converts of the time of Abu-Bakr, dependents of these groups etc.

### 3.3 Decline/Fall of the Umayyad dynasty

The eventual collapse of the Umayyad dynasty came as a result of the following reasons. The caliphs could not solve the social and political problems of the empire. In spite of their military success, the social structure was static and suffocating.

One major social problem as observed by M.A. Shaban was national and religious apartheid. The Arabs kept apart from the people they had conquered and were governing, except in Syria, where Arabs had been indigenized before the conquest. Towns, which began as barracks, attracted more Arabs, and even local people flocked in for work and trade. This influx forced al-Hajjaj to declare kufa and Basra demilitarized. The natural trend in such a situation was towards assimilation, but Islam resisted assimilation with non-Muslims, and Arabism resisted assimilation with non-Arabs. The Quroysite group of Arab tribes particularly tried to maintain the distance between Arab and non-Arab Muslims. Another major problem was how to govern Arabs who, before the rise of Muhammad, ruled themselves as so many hundreds of independent clans or tribe expansion further compounded the problem by providing the government with new hordes of non-Arab, non-Muslim peoples either to be assimilated or ruled as distinct second-class subjects. Abdulmalik saved the empire from collapse by the use of military power and forcing the recalcitrant Arab leaders into line

whereas the use of conversion and assimilation was applied by Umar II and Yazid III yet the social problem increased until the Umayyad dynasty fell into the hands of the Abbasid in 750AD.

#### **4.0 CONCLUSION**

Under the Umayyad dynasty the Muslim rule spread west to the Atlantic, and upward to Spain and the South of France. It spread north of Arabia to include Armenia, northeastward into Turkestan (modern day Turkey) and the borders of China, and eastward into India (including Pakistan).

#### **5.0 SUMMARY**

In this unit we have been able to learn about the Umayyad dynasty their growth, development and decline.

#### **6.0 TUTOR MARKED ASSIGNMENTS (TMA)**

1. The Umayyad rule expanded the Muslim territories-discuss
2. What are the factors that affected the growth of the Umayyad dynasty as a unifying force of the Muslim world.
3. Discuss the contributions and the development of the Umayyad dynasty t knowledge.

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### **UNIT 3 THE ABBASID DYNASTY (750-1254 AD)**

## CONTENTS

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Body
  - 3.1 The growth and development of Abbasid dynasty
  - 3.2 Achievement of the Abbasid dynasty.
  - 3.3 Decline and fall of Abbasid dynasty
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor Marked Assignments
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### 1.0 INTRODUCTION

The Umayyad fell to Abu-I-Abbas (750-54), Known as-saffah (the bloody), who founded the Abbasid dynasty. The dynasty was named after an uncle of Muhammad from whom the ruler descended. However, the fragmented few of the Umayyad dynasty who escaped the massacre, continued in Spain in their Muslim community until the early 20<sup>th</sup> century.

In this unit, we are going to examine the growth, achievement and the decline of the Abbasid dynasty.

### 2.0 OBJECTIVES

It is hoped that by the end of this unit, each student will be able to:

- Explain what led to the overthrow of the Umayyad dynasty by AL-Abbas;
- Describe the growth and development of the Abbasid rule;
- Enumerate the factors that led to the decline of the dynasty; and
- Highlight the contribution of the Abbasid dynasty to learning.

### 3.0 MAIN BODY

#### 3.1 The growth and development of Abbasid dynasty.

The Abbasids did not seem to have really believe that their family or the clan of Hashim had any special title to the Caliphate but they were ready to use any sympathizers they could find to achieve their goal.

Four groups of people supported their revolution (1) the Mawali (non-Arab Muslims), (2) a variety of Shiite movements (Ali supporters), (3) religious reformers in the centers of learning, and (4) Arabs settled on

the frontiers. The Arab settlers were the mainstay of the revolution against the Umayyad, particularly the Kharsan Arab settlers. In 671, 50,000 families settled around Menv in order to secure the occupation of the territory and to have base for further conquest. The overthrow of the Umayyad was bloody. The last Umayyad caliph Marwan II was killed in the process. By 749 AD, the Abbasid forces took kufa where Abu-Salama, “Wazir of the family of Muhammad” proclaimed the Hashimite caliphate without however, naming the caliph. Among the descendants of al-Hasan or al-Husayn, he offered the caliphate to Jafar as Sadiq, Abdallah Ibn-al-Hasan and Umar Ibn-Ali Ibn-al-Hasan, but all refused to accept it under the limitation he proposed. It is note worthy, that the supporters of the revolution did not want a leader with the same powers as the Umayyad whom they threw out but instead they wanted a man they could use.

In the meantime, the Khurasan Arabs in Kufa proclaimed Abul-Abbas (later named “as-Saffah”, “the bloody”), a brother of Ibrahim as caliph. The Abbasid armies went on to defeat the Umayyad completely in Syria and Egypt, gaining control of the whole Muslim world as far as Tunisia. The rest of the Maghrib was independent, and a branch of the Umayyads continued to rule in Spain.

Thirty-seven caliphs of the Abbasid dynasty reigned over the Muslim world from AD 750 (132AH) to AD 1258 (656AH). Outstanding among the rulers in the first century of these rule are:

1. Abu-Abbas (as-Saffah) 750-754, once in power, systematically had any potential enemies killed, including every member of the Umayyad family he could find.
2. Abu-Jafar al-Mansur (754-775), brother of Abu-I-Abbas and his close collaborator, was a much stronger character, and for that reason was not chosen as the first Abbasid caliph. He began to reign by having the powerful Abu-Muslim assassinated and removing his own uncles from their posts because they were potential rivals; later he executed his uncles’ famous secretary Ibn-al-Muqffa. He nominated his son Muhammad al-Mahdi as his successor, thereby setting up a dynasty of the Abbasid family and excluding and alienating the descendants of Ali and their supporters.
3. Al-Mahdi (775-785) He faced the problem of Shiite opposition. He tried to make peace with them by granting an amnesty to imprisoned Hasanid rebels, and even made one of them Yaqub Ibn-Dawud, his wazir, dismissing the faithful Abu-Ubaydallah who has been his tutor in childhood and then his minister. Al-

Mahdi second problem was the growing influence of the Persian secretariat classes who were very cultured, but had little Islamic conviction. He persecuted many of them under the charge of Zandaqa a Persian word for heresy irreligion, which meant in practice a secular attitude with disregard for Sharia. All-Mahdi is also known for having instituted a Luxurious and ceremonial life style into his court, keeping an executioner always at hand and Isolating himself form easy access.

Others are; Al-Hadi (785-786); Harum ar-Rashid (786-807); Al-Amin (809-813); Al-Mamun (813-833); Al-Mulasim (833-842); Al-Wathiq (842-847); Al-Mutawakkil (847-861) he was brother of al-Wathiq who began his reign by officially repudiating Mutazilism. Hanbalite (a Sunni Law Shool) pressure forced to shut down the University Bayt al-Hikma and send away all the philosophers, Mutazilites and other “dangerous thinkers”. At the same time he distanced himself from eastern interests, curtailing the powers of the powerful Tahir family and taking anti-shite measures. He also enforced the discriminatory laws against Christian and Jews, which had fallen into abeyance. He was assassinated by the mamluk army officers in Samawa army camp he tried to displaced. His is son al-Mustansir was chosen to succeed him.

### **3.2 Achievement of the Abbasid dynasty.**

As-Saffah, Abu-l-Abbas made kufa his capital. From this capital the Abbasids controlled Muslim Asia and had influence over Egypt, but Africa to the West of Spain were out of their real control. The pressures the Umayyads had sustained against the Byzantines was also removed by the distance of Baghdad from the Byzantigm border.

Absolution became a feature of the caliphs’ governing style as a result of contact with the Persians whose Sasanian emperors had the same style of government. The Abbasid caliphs lived above and apart from the ordinary people; they could be approach only through many intermediaries, and they always had an executioner standing by to show their absolute power over life and death. Their claim to divine authority was shown in the throne names they took which refer to their special relationship with God. They also used the title “caliph of God” (Khalifat Allah) more frequently than the Umayyads, as well as the title “Shadow of God on the earth’ (dill Allah ala l-ard). On occasion to the throne and for Friday prayers they would wear the *burda*, mantle supposedly also worn by the Prophet Muhammad.

The Abbasid government had normal civil service corps, headed by the distinctive office of the Wazir. The role of the Wazir may have been

influenced by Persian tradition, but the word is used twice in the Quran (20:29; 25:35) for Aaron's role in relation to Moses.

Economic prosperity characterized the early Abbasid period because of the strong central control and success in containing revolts and civil turmoil in the empire. Paper and the art of making it were brought in from China, Agriculture developed with the use of canals and irrigation in the Mesopotamian valley, and a banking system allowed far-reaching credit and exchange facilities. Mostly Jews or Christians provided this service, because of Quranic prohibitions on usury. The Abbasids organized prosperous state and a scientific renaissance unequalled in the world of that time. Christians from Syriac into Arabic translated Greek scientific and particularly medical works, which had been translated into Syriac, again during the period 800 to 1000 AD. The absorption of Greek culture was selective in that only scientific, not literary works were selected and translated along with mathematical works. These subjects borrowed in their rudiments, were pursued and developed, and other subjects, as geography, started from scratch, with first-hand descriptions and maps making. Although Jews and Christians had a major share in pursuing these sciences, the Muslim government with the participation of Arab Muslims patronized them.

Nevertheless, these non-religious sciences were always suspect to the religious establishment who thought that everything worth learning was in the Quran. Greek thought, nonetheless found its way right into Islamic religious sciences, causing a split between those who wanted to use philosophy to explain Islamic teachings and those who wanted to keep exclusively to the Quran and Hadith.

Another crisis emerged from the development of Sufism, a spiritual or mystical movement deriving inspiration not only from the Quran but also from Christian and Hindu experience. The great theologian, Al-Ghazali (d. IIII), made a reformed type of Sufism acceptable within Islam, but condemned the Philosophers and scientist for their free-thinking ways which sometimes conflicted with Islamic beliefs.

### **3.3 Decline and fall of Abbasid dynasty**

During the first century of Abbasid rule, while power was being consolidated in the central Arab territories, the peripheral religions were slipping away. The first to go was Spain, which was taken over by AbdarRahman I, the grandson of the Umayyad caliph Hisham in 756.

In north Africa a kharijite revolt began among the Berber tribes of Tripolitania in 757 and spread to western Algeria. There, Ibn-Rustam

founded a state which had extensive relations with West Africa and lasted until the Fatimid take-over in 909.

Morocco came under a kind of Shiite rule with the coming of Idris Ibn Abdallah, a great-grandson of Ali's son al-Hasan and brother of Muhammad an-Nafs az-Zakiyya. After the failure of a Shiite revolt against the Abbasids, he fled to Morocco, gathered Berber followers and built Fez as his capital.

To control what remained of the maghrib, Harun ar-Rashid appointed Ibn-al-Aghlab, the son of a *Khurasanian* army officer, as governor of ifriqiya (Tunisia) in 800. The Aghlabid dynasty ruled Tunisia and Sicily until the Fatimid conquest of 909. The overlordship of the Abbasids was merely nominal. Apart from mentioning the caliph's name in the Friday prayer and sending an annual tribute, the Aghlabids ruled independently.

In Kharasan a similar development of power was made in 820 to *Tahir*, a Persian general responsible for *al-Mamun's* victory over his brother al-Amin. His family ruled *Khurasan* until 873 when the rival *saffarid* dynasty took over.

The rise of provincial governors meant the diminishing of the caliph's political and military power, and the total loss of secular authority by the middle of the 10<sup>th</sup> century.

At the same time a struggle among the various groups who had brought the Abbasids to power was weakening the caliphate right at the centre. These groups formed two main camps: those who wanted a constitutionalist type of government and those who wanted the caliph to have autocratic powers. The constitutionalists wanted the *Sharia*, that is, the Quran and Hadith, to be the ultimate authority to which even the caliph is subject. In practice this meant that the caliph must abide by the decisions of the *Ulama*, the religious scholars who supplied the judges and similar officials of the government. The autocratic block, on the other hand, wanted the caliph to be unhampered by the *Ulama* and their conservative views and give him a free hand.

Among those who supported an autocratic caliph were the secretaries or civil servants who were recruited from the Persian *Mawali*. These had great attachment to their traditional culture and promoted it through a movement called the *shunbiyya* from *sha'b* = (people). This was basically a literary movement propagandizing the merits of the non-Arabs. The secretaries' pride in culture also implied that their traditional culture and values to offer society independently of Islam. This meant *Sharia* was not the exclusive and infallible guide for all matters.

Also among the autocratic bloc were the Shiites from their basic belief in the Charism attached to the family of Ali to which Abbasids pretended to be the heirs.

#### **4.0 CONCLUSION**

The Abbasid dynasty ruled the Muslim world for about 408 years providing leadership styles beginning with caliph and moving to constitutionalism, and monarchism. However, though they spent longer time than the Umayyad, they did not enjoy consolidated system of government their predecessors enjoyed. The dynasty ends up in being fragmented with different people ruling in the different territories in the Muslim world. Their contribution in Economics-banking system and production of papers for record keeping is highly commendable.

#### **5.0 SUMMARY**

In this unit we have dealt with the growth, development, achievements and the decline of the Abbasid dynasty. This study ends the golden age of the Islamic history 7<sup>th</sup>-13<sup>th</sup> centuries.

#### **6.0 TUTOR MARKED ASSIGNMENTS**

1. Discuss the methodology used by Al-Abbas in the overthrow of the Umayyad dynasty.
2. What are some of the contributions of the Abbasid dynasty to the Muslim world.

Discuss the factors that led to the fall of the Abbasid dynasty.

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### **UNIT 4 MAJOR SCHOOLS OF THOUGHT IN EARLY ISLAM**

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### 1.0 INTRODUCTION

In this unit emphasis shall laid on the major Islamic Schools of thought in early Islam and how they influenced later social, political and religions spheres in their application. The origin teachings of each of the schools will be examined. This will help every student to put the schools into their proper context whenever and wherever they are manifested.

### 2.0 OBJECTIVES

In this unit, the main objective is to expose you to the major Schools of thought in early Islam and Islamic Culture. It is hoped that by the end of the unit, you will be able to:

- Describe the history and the development of the Kharijite thought;
- Explain the position of the Murjiite on a grave sinner;
- List the five principles of the Qadariites on the power of man over his acts; and
- Distinguish between the two divisions in Islam the Sunni and the Shiites.

### 3.0 MAIN BODY

#### 3.1 Kharijites

The Kharijites are the first fundamentalist group in Islam. They belong to the group of those who “left” Ali’s camp in Kufa and turned against him because he had accepted a human arbitration between himself and Muawiya, whereas ‘the judgment belongs to God alone’,

Their doctrine: They are essentially cultural and moral rigourism, and are puritans of Islam. For them, the faith demands the works and every Muslim sinner is a renegade (*Murtadd*). Certain extremist *Kharajites* declares themselves the only true Muslims, having the duty to kill all the other Muslims as infidels. The *Kharijites* live on today in a much more moderate form under the name Ibadites in North Africa and Oman. Their religious practice is marked by strictest observance of ritual purity and the law. Some of them have refused to accept Sura 12 (Yusuf) as being too frivolous to form part of the Quran. Another characteristic of the *Kjarijites* was their rigorous egalitarianism between Muslims and Arabs and non-Arabs. Every Muslim can be a caliph and was he a black slave, if he has required moral and intellectual qualities. Some writers describes them as a charismatic community’. Their theology develops very early, especially among the *Ibadites*. It is strongly impregnated with the national approach of *Mulazilism*.

### 3.2 Murjiites

They share a contrary view from the Kharijites about the position of the grave sinner in the Muslim community. They advocate the ‘sending back’, remitting (*irja*) to God of any judgement over the Muslim sinner. Historically, the concept of *Irja* was born in connection with Muawiya in his quarrel with Ali, Retrospectively this neutral position was applied to those who refused to take sides concerning the question of who was responsible for the murder of Uthman, and later during the ‘battle of the camel’ between Ali on the one hand, and Talha, Zubayr and Aisha on the other. Then it is applied to every Muslim Sinner; here below he remains member of the community and one judges him, having regard to his external profession of faith whereas in the other life, his fate is committed to, and it is left in the hands of God (*tafwid*) in a way diametrically opposed to that of the Qadarites. They will later form the majority Sunni Islam.

### 3.3 Mutazilites

The *Mutazila* is the first theological school of Islam in the proper sense because of:

1. The real unity of the thinkers attached to the school-in spite of their diversity.
2. The vigour and audacity of their thought.
3. The use made of an elaborate Hellenistic philosophy for rendering intellectually fertile the revealed sources, Quran and Hadith.

The *Mutazilites* are the true creators of Muslim theology, even of its name *ilm al-kalam*. This fact is acknowledged by the later Muslim authors, although they refute the *Mutazilites*, as well as by the orientalist who are at the same aware that earlier theological authors prepared the *Mutazilites* way. The vigour of *Mutazilite* thought, however much anarchic and immature, did shock the Muslim Tradition which from the 10<sup>th</sup> century onwards spent the best of its intellectual energies to refute them. Again from the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century onwards one witnesses a renewal of *Mutazilism* which is still at work. Today Islam quite happily links itself with *Mutazilism* whereas for ten centuries the mere name of it was synonymous with heresy and shame. *Mutazilism* is the most studied sector of Muslim theology. The only well-known *mutazilite* work available before 1952 is *Kitab al-Intisar* by *Hayyat* (d. 912) edited by H.S. Nyberg, with the help of Ahmad Amin. Other newly discovered works are the works of Qadi Abdul Jabbar (d. 1025) who tells us about his predecessors whose works are under editing and critical study.

Their name came from the Arabic word *itazala*: to separate or isolate or secede: *madhhab al-lizali*, Mutazil; Mutazila. Various explanations are given about their name; the orthodox say: the name was given because they have separated themselves from the *ahl-al-sunna wa'l-jamaa*. Others say because they separated from the world. However, it is noteworthy that nothing is ascetical about them.

The doctrine of the mutazila: The mutazilites were vigorous, original and individually distinct religious thinkers. They saw themselves as one intellectual family, with masters and disciples. They felt free to trace their masters. They were not a 'School' in the strict sense of the word. Rather, they constituted an intellectual movement bringing together different intellects. They came to consider as sign of being a Muslim the adherence to five principles (*al-usul al-khamsa*). These are the five theses which form the basic framework of the Mutazilite doctrine, and after it, of all Muslim theology.

**(a) al-Tawhid (Oneness of God)**

It is the fundamental affirmation of Islam: God is one. But the *Mutazilites* affirm in addition the internal oneness of God; in God everything is one, in the divine essence there is no distinction. Hence, the attributes (*sifat*) as e.g knowledge, power, will, speech, sigh etc are identical with the essence (*dhat*) of God.

**(b) *al-Adl (Divine Justice)***

God being just he cannot reward or punish but a being responsible for his/her acts, a being, therefore, which is author of its acts and free. Man is author even 'creator of his acts' (*khaliq li afalihi*), a scandalous formulation in the ears of mainstream Muslims for when God can be qualified only as creator. There are two overriding concern about this concept; (1) God cannot be the author nor the creator of evil (2) God is just, hence he cannot punish or award but a person is responsible for his/her acts, hence their free author.

**(c) *al-wa'd wa-l-wa'id:***

Promise and warning: This is the problem of retribution in the life to come. Man will be judged by his works. A Muslim who is a grave sinner and who does not repent, will go to hell, eternal hell. To paradise goes only the believer who performs the works demanded by his religion. Thus is resolved the problem of faith and works, and for the first time, the distinction is made between 'grave' and 'light' sins (*kabair* and *saghair*).

**(d) *al-Manzila bayna-l-manzilataynl* (the intermediary situation.)**

This is the *Mutazilite* solution for the problem of the status (*hukm*) here below of the Muslim who has committed a grave sin (*murtakib kabiratan*). He will be punished in the life to come but down here he will continue to belong to the Muslim community.

**(e) *al-Amr bi-l-ma'ruf wa-l-nahyi an al-munkar:* the duty to ordain the good and forbid the evil.**

The Muslim community has received the order from God (Q 3:104; 110:114;7:57-9:67.71.112,22:41;31:17) to make reign good and to prohibit the evil. On the individual level this means: approach your neighbour and give him *nasiha* (good counsel). Help to get him back onto the straight path. But on the corporate level, it leads directly to religious despotism.

The *mutazilites* were sincere Muslims and loyal servants of Islam. They were advocates of reason but not rationalists. They were not free

thinkers of Islam on the pattern of the agnostic rationalism of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The mutazilites were thinkers in defence of human freedom but not liberals. They are the first real and fully developed school of Muslim theology.

### 3.4 Qadarites (al-Qadariyya)

These are the first advocates of the power (*qadar*) of man over his acts. God has delegated to man the full power (*tafwid*) over the acts. He executes them alone, and, in consequence, he is rewarded according to the strict divine Justice. God has no knowledge of the human act before it is “produced”. He knows them only when and if they are accomplished by man. Some reputed Qadarites like Hasan Al-Basri (642-728) in the *Risala Fi 'l-Qadar* which is attributed to him, admitted the foreknowledge of God, preceding the act (*ilm Allah al-sabiq*), but such foreknowledge al-Basri stressed did in no way imply any kind of predestination. Evil, in particular, does not come from God but from man, under the influence of the demon. In this way, man is free and responsible for his acts, and the divine omnipotence is limited in favour of divine justice. The *Qadarites* are the ancestors of the *Mutazilites*.

### 3.5 The two major divisions in Islam

The two major divisions that took their root in the seventh century are the Shiite and Sunni. The Shiites are the group of people who faithfully attached to Ali and his family and the Sunni are those who are faithfully to the tradition (Sunna) of the Prophet Muhammad (PBH) and the community.

#### 3.5.1 Shiites

The Shia party of Ali were faithful to the memory of the “martyrs” (esp. Ali, assassinated in 661 and Husayn, his second son, killed in Karbala in 680). On the tenth of Muharram they commemorate the murder of Husayn. The doctrine of *Taqiya*, which grew out of times of severe repression on the part of the Sunnis, gives them permission to dissimulate their faith. They believe that Ali inherited from Fatima Muhammad’s daughter, part of the divine light which is transmitted to his successors. The successor of Ali has disappeared in the eighth century according to the seveners (i.e. the Ismailis who believe in seven Imams), or in the 10<sup>th</sup> century according to the Twelvers’ (i.e. the *Ithna Ashariyya* who believe in twelve Imams). In the succession of 12 *Imams*, the last of the Imams in each of the two subgroups are believed to be hidden (*gha'ib*). He is impeccable but known to some initiates only from generation to generation, until he will appear in order to make reign peace and justice.

Shiites are numerous in Iran, where they have deposed the Shah and in his place installed the Ayatollah *Khomeini* and enforced Islamic law as the rule of the government. *Khomeini* has gone beyond that by declaring that his command is as good as that of the prophet Muhammad. The Shiites believe that Abu-Bakr, Umar and Uthman were to them Usurpers and all the hadith traced back to them on which the Sunni *Ulama* base their arguments, are worthless and cannot be used to tie down the caliph.

### **3.5.2 Sunnism or mainstream Islam**

Nine over ten of the Muslims are Sunnis. It begins with the *murjiites*. They “send back” the judgment as to the legitimacy of the caliph to God and accept the de facto rule of *Muawiya* as caliph. For them, the Muslim sinner, including the sinful caliph, remains a member of the community. He will be punished in the Hereafter, but down here one has to obey the reigning power, even if its representative is sinful. This is in order to avoid the peril of anarchy. The Sunni are the first important Muslim sect. The literal meaning of the word Sunni in Arabic is “One on the path”. Many of them take the title of the *Najiyah*, meaning those who are “being saved”. They acknowledge the first four caliphs as the rightful successors of Muhammad. They received the “Six correct books” of tradition and belong to one of the schools of Islamic Jurisprudent-founded by the four Imams. Their origin can be traced back to the controversy between Ali the fourth caliph 656-661 on the one hand and the governor of Syria *Muawiya* who challenged Ali to an arbitration panel.

## **4.0 CONCLUSION**

It is important to understand the major schools of thought in early Islam. This will help the individual reader to understand why certain sectarian groups behave in a particular very different from the others. While the *kharijis* will like to take law into their hands, the *Murjiite* will remit judgment to God. As the Shiites will like to solve their problems with militant spirit, the Sunni will handle their own problem believing in God’s divine intervention. The behaviour of every believer in the sectarian group is determined to a large extent by the belief and practices of the group they belong to.

## **5.0 SUMMARY**

In this unit, the schools of thought in early Islam is examined with the two main sects in Islam, Shia and the Sunni is discussed.

## **6.0 TUTOR MARKED ASSIGNMENT**

1. “A believer who sins in a Muslim Community ceases to be a member of the community”-Discuss this statement in the light of the *kharijites* doctrine on a grave Sinner.
2. What is the position of the *murjiites* on the position of grave sinner in a Muslim community?
3. Briefly discuss the five principles of the Mutazilites.
4. Discuss the Oadarites doctrine of “free will”, should man be held responsible over his acts?
5. The controversy between Ali and Muawiya in 656-61 was the cause of the division in Islam-Discuss.

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## **UNIT 5 ISLAMIC CULTURE AND PRACTICES**

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## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

The Islamic Culture and practices remained the summary of the total teachings and sources of Islam, which are found in the QURAN, Hadith and Sharia (law documents). The understanding of the origin of these cultural emphases becomes very important for a clear articulation of Islam. In this Unit, focus will be on these unique culture and practices.

## 2.0 OBJECTIVES

It is hoped that by the end of this unit, you will be able to:

- Highlight the importance of the Quran; its collation and compilation as the primary source of Islam;
- Explain the meaning of Hadith and its relevance as the commentary of the Quran and the secondary source of Islam;
- Explain the meaning of Sharia, its sources and its importance Muslims;
- Describe the five pillars of Islam as a way of man's fulfilling his/her responsibility to God; and

- Define the Jihad, and the types of Jihad within the context of the teachings of the prophet Muhammad.

### **3.0 MAIN BODY**

#### **3.1 Al-Quran. The Primary Source of Islam.**

The Quran is believed to be the message of Allah (God) revealed to Prophet Muhammad through Archangel Jibril (Gabriel) over a period of time during his lifetime (i.e. 22-23 years). It is the primary source of law in Islam. Muhammad received the revelation from Allah in three modes identified in the Quran (Q 42:51);

1. al-wahy (inspiration)
2. al-Ruyah (Kashf (dream/vision)
3. al-Rasul (sending of a messenger)

“It is not fitting for a man that God should speak to him except by inspiration from behind the veil, or by sending of a messenger to reveal with his permission what he wills, for he is most high most wise”.

Al-Quran is the proper name of the book revealed to Prophet Muhammad (PBH) in Arabic through the Angel Gabriel, during his twenty-two years and seven months of prophetic mission both at Makkah and Medina in the Arabian Peninsula. It is the eternal word of God according to Muslims belief in meaning, content and language and a universal message of final divine guidance to mankind for all times Al-Quran was delivered to the Prophet in Arabic words and was collected in the same language. It is the collection of the hard core of all the revealed scriptures of the past.

From the first revelation to the last one, the Quran continued to be revealed piece meal. As at the death of the prophet there was no written collection of revelation of the Quran in a final form. This was so because the revelations expanded throughout the lifetime of Muhammad from his call to prophet-hood, to his death, with new ones-being added to earlier ones.

#### **3.2 Collection and Compilation of the Quran.**

There was no compilation of the Quran in the form we have it today during the life of the prophet. After his death, many were fought and the companions of the prophet who memorized the Quran started to lose their lives in the battle field hence the fear that there might come a time when the memorizes would all have died and the chapters of the Quran forgotten. Umar, the second caliph, encouraged Abubakr, his predecessor to compile one. He did, but it was not a standard one.

During the reigns of Umar, however, nothing was done to the sub-standard copy of AbuBakr. During the reign of Uthman bin Affan (3<sup>rd</sup> Caliph), there emerged different version of the Quran in Kufa, Basra, Hims and Syria. The problem that occurred was that if that situation was allowed to continue, the Quran that was supposed to build the community together because of its uniqueness might turn around to split it because of its versions. The Caliph therefore appointed a commission charged with the ability of collecting the extant versions under the leadership of Zayd bin Thabit, who as the head of the prophet's private secretaries. The other members of the commission are: Abdullah bin al-Zabayr, Zaid bin Al-As and Abdu Rahman bin Al-Harith. The commission was charged with the responsibility of producing a standard version of the Quran. That remembers were allowed to give preference to the Quraysh dialect where there are dialectical differences or clashes during the course of their work since Qurash is the Prophet's dialect, as well as the standard dialect of Arabic at the time. The commission finished the job and in good time. It came up with a standard version called the Uthmanic Edition. This version was however lacking in diacritical points and vowels. Al-Haliph Yusuf was a great lexicographer and he was asked to work on the standard Quran that we have today.

### 3.2.1 Form of the Quran

The Quran contains 114 *Surahs* (chapters) 6,616 *ayat*\_ (verses), 77,934 words and 333671 letters. The title of every Surah is derived from a distinctive word in the chapter e.g. *Surat ul-Baquarah* (chapter two the cow) where the word cow is mentioned in verses 67-73. In other chapters, the title might be a word taken at the beginning or at the end. The Surahs have varying lengths, some very short, some very long. Each is made up of a certain number of verses called *Ayat*. The shortest chapter has three verses while the longest has 287 verses. For the purpose of recitation and discussion during the month of Ramadan, the Quran is divided into thirty equal portions called *Juzu* corresponds to the number of days in the month of Ramadan. The Quran is arranged mechanically rather than chronologically following the order of revelation. Though Iqrah as the first verses to be revealed now form verses 1-5 of chapter 96 in mechanical arrangement.

### 3.2.2 The significance of the Quran

The significance of the Quran lies in the uses it can be put to, the treasures found in it, it's dealing in history, literacy, and administration along with legislation and administration along with legislation and religion. The Quran has successfully erected a new phase of human thought and created affected the religious, social and political history of the world.

It directs the course of the one-fifth of the world population from cradle to grave, by prescribing a complete way of life. One of the principal aims of the Quran is to establish a close relationship between man and God by instilling in man, faith in the oneness of God and making him conscious of discharging his duties effectively to God and to fellow creatures. It prohibits intoxicants, interest, gambling, committing adultery and fornication, stealing and all other evils. The Quran categorically lays it down that all human beings are born innocent and with their actions they can shape their destinies and they are accountable for their worldly deeds in the eternal life hereafter.

### 3.3 Al-Hadith

Hadith literally means a piece of news, a tale, a story or a report. Hadith in Sharia means the sayings, deeds and silent approvals of the prophet Muhammad (PBH).

Sunnah is the concrete implementation of divine will. It is a practice distinct from any documentation. It is an action of a direct method for the performance of certain actions. The practice without any verbal pronouncement from a prophet is regarded as a valid sure of law.

A Hadith can be divided into two main parts, *al-matn* the text, and *al-ismnad* the chains of transmitters. The matn includes the sayings or deeds of the prophet and the Isnad contain the names of the transmitters in Chronological order. Critical analysis of the Hadith as a literature gave birth to the *ilm al-Hadith* the science of Hadith which include over one hundred branches. The Hadith literature serves the purpose of the commentary on the Quran. It is not merely an historical account of the earliest Muslim tradition, but it is the perfect portrait of implementation of the Quranic teachings.

The Quran emphatically commands to the believers to follow the life of the prophet, which is the model for them in all aspects of their life (Q33:21). In the obedience of the prophet; Gods' obedience and love is confined (Q 14,11;3:13) collection of the Hadith.

The collection of the Hadith was carried on as an individual endeavour from the beginning for a long time. It was only those who had interest that undertook the collection of the Hadith. Later on many of those who committed the Hadith to memory were dying and there was a fear that if nothing serious was done about the matter, the knowledge of the Hadith might disappear. It is reported that the Umayyad Caliph Umar bin Abdul Aziz gave an order to the great traditionalist called Abubakr bin Muhammad bin Muhammad bin Hazm of Medina to write down all the tradition he could collect especially from Amrab bin Abdul Rahman.

She was then the best custodian of high-class traditions. This caliph also requested scholars in many parts of Arabia to collect as many Hadith as they could and write them into books.

Many collectors of Hadith emerged in various provinces. There was need for more formal books and when these were compiled, a system of criticism was developed and applied to each of the collections. Six of these books of Hadith were later accepted. They are called the six canonical Books of Hadith;

- Sahih of al-Bukhari ((d. 870)
- Sahih of al-Muslim (d. 875)
- Jami of Tirmidhi (d. 892)
- Sunan of Abu Dawud (d. 888)
- Sunan of Ibn Majah (d. 886)
- Sunan of Al-Nasai (d. 916)

Most modern scholars accept many Hadiths as going back to Muhammad substantially though not in the exact words. They regard Hadiths as products of Muhammad's companions and their successors detailing what Muhammad would have said or done in new circumstances. Other Hadiths they reject on ground of their deviating from the Quran. A few other modern Muslims reject Hadith altogether, such as Gaddafi of Libya.

### **3.4 Sharia (Islamic Law)**

The word Sharia comes from a root word meaning "path". It is usually translated laws. There are problems with this translation first, there is the lost of the association with the idea of a "path" or "road". This is strong in Arabic and even today the ordinary word "street" is the closely related word to Sharia/Shari. The second problem with the translation of Sharia as "law" is more serious. In the Western world, "Law" is often understood as something, which is largely, if not primarily arbitrary. The sovereign authority of a given country has the right to make its own laws. These may vary widely. It is true that within Western jurisprudence there is the idea of "natural justice", but this does not fundamentally alter the situation and there remains an element of arbitrariness in the Western ideas of law in connection with the concept of the "sovereign state".

The Sharia on the other hand, is not arbitrary in this sense. It is "religious" law because it is held to reflect the "Divine Will" Divine Will" for human individual and human society. It is believed to be the wisdom and insight of the creator into the reality of human nature and of

the world as a whole. In this way it may accurately reflect the true (Head of) human life than any product of limited and finite human mind could produce. It is this, which distinguishes it most clearly from Western idea of law it is not a question simply of general principles, which may be organized and arranged into many different but equally valid systems of law. Rather Sharia reflects God's knowledge about human beings in particular and is designed in specific as well as in principle for the realities of human life.

There is however, room for diversity within the Sharia and fourteen centuries of Islamic culture. It shows its ability to adapt to different historical, geographical, social and political circumstances. The authoritative codes of law were given their basic structure early in Islamic history. A school of law is called a Madhab (pl Madhahib) and there are four in Sunni Islam. A Sunni Muslim may follow any one of them and all four are equally authoritative.

1. Hanafi (Abu Hanifa d.767). This law school is well practiced in India, Pakistan; Afghanistan, and Turkey.
2. Maliki (Ibn Malik d.788) mostly practiced in West Africa.
3. Shafii (al-Shaffii d. 854) mostly practiced in North Africa, Egypt, Malaysia, Indonesia
4. Hanba (Ibn Hanbal d. 855) mostly practiced in Saudi Arabia and in the Arab Gulf.

### 3.4.1 The Sources of the Sharia

The sources of the Sharia are usually figured to be four:

- a. The Quran, which forms the primary source.
- b. The Hadith, Sunah of the Prophet Muhammad that forms the second primary source.
- c. Ijma, the consensus of the community, especially those who have studied the law.
- d. Qiyas, the application of reason or analogy, the consensus of the jurist.

All schools of law accept the first two. The last two received various emphasis and interpretations in the different law schools. Hanbalis, in principle limit the Muslim to the first two primary sources.

The Shia provided yet another school of Law called Jafariya after Imam Jafar al-sadiq. The differences between the law schools are often very minor and the majority of the religious laws are remarkably similar in all of the law schools. An example of the type of difference is in some schools where a woman can write into her marriage contract that, if her

husband takes a second wife, that is automatic ground for a divorce; but in other law schools this is not allowed.

### 3.4.2 The Division of Sharia (Islamic Law)

The law is divided into two large categories *Ibaadat* (worship) and *Muamalat* (relationships between human beings). Within these broad categories, there are further subdivisions *I'tiqaadaat* (beliefs), *adaab* (roughly ethnics), *Ibadaat* (worship more specifically) *Muamalaat* (litigation, marriage, family life, business contracts, commerce etc) *Uquwbaat* (roughly criminal laws).

The law is administered by *qaadi* a judge, who often decides the basis of legal opinion (*fatwa*) issued by a *mufti* who is qualified to rule how the law applies in particular areas of life (e.g. whether life insurance is permissible as a matter of general principle). In Shia Islam, there is still the office of *mujtahid*. This is someone who is qualified to decide not only how the law is applied in a particular situation, but also what in fact the law relating to a certain situation actually is. In theory, the "gate of *ijtihad*" is closed in Sunni Islam and the four recognized law schools offer the authoritative interpretation of what law about anything actually is. In practice this does not lead to a great difference in application between *Suah* and Sunni law, although the theoretical difference is important. Many Sunni Muslims are questioning whether or not the 'gate of *ijtihad*' should not be ac-opened. In practice there are various way, which it has. For example, applying rulings from different law schools more or les indiscriminately is becoming more common, and in some countries the government for different kinds of legal questions uses different laws. Human actions are broadly divided into two categories: *halaal* (permitted) and *Haraam* (forbidden). These are further subdivided into various categories. One common subdivision is *fard* and *waajih* (obligatory), *Manduwb* (recommended) *mubaah* (indifferent), *makruwh* (disapproved) and *haram* (forbidden).

The religious law of Islam has an important influence on the Islamic understanding of life and society. It means that many aspects of life, which are often considered secular and so religiously neutral or indifferent in Western culture, are actually taken into a person's religious action. It also means that many activities, which are matter of conscience in the West, are specifically religious obligations within the Islamic understanding of life. It means that one's relationship with other people becomes not only an area of moral activity but as specifically a religious activity as worship is usually considered to be. Sharia covers all aspects of life. Here traditional Sunni Islam has emphasized God's absolute power and freedom and concluded that his law does not command on forbid something because it is good or evil, but is good or

evil because God's law has declared it so. Commenting on Sharia Mawdudi said, it is the detailed code of conduct or the canon organizing ways and modes of worship, standard of moral and life and laws that allow and prescribe, that judge between right and wrong. Sharia stipulates the law of God and provides guidance of the regulation of life in the best interests of man. Its objectives are to show the way to man and provide him with the ways and means to fulfill his needs in the most successful and most beneficial way.

### 3.5 Five Pillars of Islam

The concept of *al-Tawhid* (oneness of God) is a responsible factor for the unity and harmony in the entire universe. Man being the trustee of God and the apex of His creation should worship God alone and thereby establishes a close link with scores of past prophets. God conscious cultures and civilizations (Q. 1:5; 6:165; 72:18;106:3; 51:56; 16:36; 14:40; 21:72-73; 19:54; 20:14; 2:83; 72:1-4; 20:132). The Muslims' belief in the oneness of God motivates them to observe their duties to Allah as prescribed in the five pillars which shall be considered in sequence.

#### 3.5.1 Al-Iman (faith)

The ultimate purpose of belief in Islam is to help the believer in performing his social obligations in the "presence" of Allah to love Allah and His entire creation for the sake of Allah and in this way his love for humanity is based on clear intentions. Basically, *Iman* is used in two different ways in the Quran:

First, a mere confession with the tongue that one believes in the oneness of God and the prophethood of Muhammad Q 2:62.

The other use of the word Imam implies the condition in which confession with the tongue is accompanied an assent of the heart and carrying into action of what is believed. The Hadith also speak about the meaning of Imam in the two different Quranic usage. It holds Imam in combination of faith and the translation of such faith in action.

Under Imam comes the profession of faith Shahadah which is required to be recited openly as a matter of conscience and not necessarily of action.

“Ashadu an laila ill-llah wahadahu la sharika lahu wa shaduan, Muhammadu abdu wa rasuluhu”

“I bear witness that there is no god except Allah. He is absolute. He has no associate. And I also bear witness that Muhammad is His messenger”.

The articles of faith include:

1. Belief in Allah and His attributes
2. Belief in Revealed Books
3. Belief in angels
4. Belief in Prophets
5. Belief in the last day.
6. Belief in Qadar (Fate)

### **3.5.2 Al-Salat (Liturgical Prayer)**

Salat is the first fundamental duty enjoined by Prophet Muhammad, consequently on all Muslims. Iman, having taken the first place of the five pillars of Islam and representing a metaphysical pillar, Salat is given the greatest prominence in the Holy Quran together with Zakat (obligatory alms). It however takes precedence over Zakat. The values of Salat include spiritual development, keeping away from evil, realisation of Human existence, closeness to Allah and attainment of moral height, unification of Humanity, Equality and love.

Prayer is regulated in Islam. All Muslims regardless of their mother tongue, are expected to say the Salat the same way all over the world. All Muslims are expected to gather together, stand up reverently, bow down, prostrate and sit down in unison before their creator as one.

### **3.5.3 Types of Prayers**

- a. The five obligatory prayers during day and night. They are: a-Subh, al-Zuhr, al Asr; amaghrib and al-Isha
- b. Firday congregational prayers and
- c. ‘Id prayers.(festival prayer, adha, fitri and asshurra).

To perform the Salat a Muslim must be pure in body, dress and environment. Salat unifies the whole of humanity. There is no priesthood required in the act of Salat in Islam. Prayer is always led by an Imam designated either for the neighbourhood mosque or the community mosque. The entire surface of the earth is said to be a mosque (masjid). Prophet Muhammad (PBH).

### **3.5.4 Zakat (Obligatory almsgiving)**

Al-Zakat is the spending of whatever has been given to man by God. That is setting aside of a determined part  $2\frac{1}{2}\%$  or  $\frac{1}{40}$  of one's wealth and transferring ownership of it to those whom God has decided to have them.

This is an obligatory act of benevolence for every Muslim who is free, has reached the age of puberty, of sound mind, possesses a specific amount of wealth (called Nisab) and free from debts. Zakat should be extracted from possession in money (gold silver) camels, cattle, sheep farm produce, commercial gain etc.

The beneficiaries of the Zakat can be categorized under eight headings (Q9:60) namely: the poor, the destitute, the agents (those who administer the sharing), for those whose hearts are to be brought together, slaves, debtors (in the Muslim Community), for use in God's way (Islamic Propagation) and travelers.

The Quran and Hadith clearly make a distinction between Zakat and Sadaqat. Zakat is the obligatory payment of a fixed proportion of wealth annually while Sadaqat is the giving out of any of one's wealth at any time. Every Muslim no matter his financial or social position in the society can observe Sadaqat.

Zakat in Arabic also means purity. Therefore only good things should be given out in Zakat and Sadaqat.

### **3.5.5 Al Sawn or Siyan (Fasting)**

Fasting takes place during the month of Ramadan (Q2:183-185, 187). Fasting in Islam is complete abstinence from food, drink, smoking and some otherwise legitimate actions during the hours of day light (dawn) till sun set. It is compulsory for all Muslims, man and woman, for twenty-nine of thirty days in the month of Ramadan (Q 12: 185) depending on the Lunar calendar. One has to abstain from speaking certain words when fasting.

#### **(i) Moral value and Advantage of fasting.**

- a.** It strengthens the stomach, since it rests throughout the day from taking in food and drink, for the space of a whole month.
- b.** It makes the rich learn by experience how much pain is caused by hunger and thirst. So they will be kind to the poor and the destitute and will have compassion on them.

- c. It makes one accustomed to be patient in bearing adversity, for the one who is feasting comes to desist from food and drink throughout the days.
- d. It instills into the souls of those who are fasting fidelity and a sense of shame. For the one who is fasting knows that there is no one keeping watch over him except God, so he is ashamed to commit sins since he knows that God is well-informed about him.

## (ii) Different kinds of fasting

Fasting can be divided into:

- a. That which is of precept (e.g. fast of the month of Ramadan) for every Muslim who has reached the age of puberty, in sound mind and body and is resident not traveling. Similarly for a Muslim woman if she has not her menstrual period or lochia.
- b. That which is obligatory, as when one has made a vow to fast for three days if one should succeed in some affairs.
- c. That which is meritorious (*Sunnah*), such as fasting on the *ninth* and *tenth* days of Muharram.
- d. That which is forbidden (*haram*), such as fasting on the two festivals and during the three days following the festival of sacrifice. (*id adha*).

## (iii) Legitimate Excuses for breaking fast

- a. Fear of falling ill or of sickness increasing especially when this is foretold by a skilled physician.
- b. Traveling, if it is for a distance of more roughly 84 kilometers
- c. While nursing in the womb or at the breast
- d. When fasting would be impossible on account of old age
- e. Whoever has one of these legitimate excuses can breakfast but is under obligation to compensate for what has been omitted, except for the fourth case when the obligation is to feed a destitute person for each day (omitted).

This is an easing of the obligation and mercy on the path of God towards his servants, because He does not burden them with what they

cannot bear. He is kind and compassionate towards his servant. Other penalty for breaking fast for no just reason is punishable by fasting for sixty consecutive days. For each of the days missed.

### **3.5.6 Al-Hajj (pilgrimage to Mecca and Medina)**

The pilgrimage was made a precept for Muslims at the end of AH (631AD), once in lifetime, for every Muslim who is free, subject to the obligations of law (Mukallaf), in good health, able easily to procure provisions and amount for the journey, able to provide maintenance for his dependents during his pilgrimage journey, and on condition that the roads are safe.

Quran 3:96 says “And pilgrimage to the House (of Allah) is incumbent upon men the sake of Allah, upon everyone who is able to undertake the journey to it”

From the above verse of the Quran, it is obvious that Hajj is unlike the other functions expected to be performed by a Muslim. All other functions in the five pillars are compulsory for Muslims but the performance of Hajj is an obligatory duty on those who can undertake the journey the rich and the healthy.

All rites performed at Mecca around Kaaba, at Mina and Arafat are the revival of the concept of Abraham worship of one God and these are accomplished international gathering of thousands of believers in one God in an absolute equality, discipline, brotherhood and uniformity.

It is a practical demonstration of *al-tawhid* by going round the centre of *al-tawhid* and submitting completely to God’s law and will establishing a direct link with whatever exists in the mighty universe.

### **3.6 Jihad (Struggling in the path of God)**

The origin of the idea of Jihad dates back to the first century of Islam 600-700AD when there were series of social evil in the Arabian societies. It was a defensive mechanism against the idolaters in Mecca, who were hostile to the Muslim community. It later developed to a means for survival in Medina. Later it was used for expansion of the Muslim territories acquisition land and properties. Further it was used for the propagation of the religion Islam. In (Q 2:216), it was prescribed for self- spiritual upliftment.

Jihad as a concept in Islam is very broad and it covers all forms of struggle both against oneself and against injustice and corruption, it

does include the possibility of physical warfare. On this point the Quran is clear:

“Fight them until persecution is no more and religion is for God. But if they desist then let there be no hostility except the wrong doers” (Q2:193) “Prescribed for you is fighting, though it be hateful to you” (Q2:216).

There has been many interpretations of the way in which the Muslim is to exercise the use of armed struggle against injustice. For some, it is seen as permissible only in cases of self defence. For others, it is permissible or even required in order to prevent injustice even when there is no immediate threat to the main part of the Muslim community. Others give even broader interpretations to the permissibility of the use of armed struggle. Since the use of armed struggle is dealt with in the Sharia, there are rules laid down for its use in the various law schools. Modern Muslim writers, however have developed a number of views on the subject which although not without precedent in the classical literature, do not necessarily represent the view of any particular school of law.

In a sense, the struggle for justice, in all its forms, is at the very heart of Islam because of its concern for the Muslim Community establish the divine will for human beings both in the lives of individuals and in the structure of society.

The various types of jihad can be summarized to be (1) the Jihad of the Sword, applied in the expansion of Islam;(2) the Jihad of speech, applied for dialogue and debate” defence of the faith, (3) the Jihad of script, identified in polemic writings and (4) Jihad of the soul, which is centered on the individual struggle to be in good relationship with God, a personal struggle for spiritual enrichment. The Sufi emphasized the last jihad more than the other three, when they speak of internal struggle to control individual base instincts so that more time and energy can be giving to spiritual matters.

#### **4.0 CONCLUSION**

The Islamic culture and practices provide the summary requirements, which a Muslim should believe and follow in order to fulfill the God’s ordained challenges for humanity.

This unit discusses more of the core teachings of Islam. The essence of this unit is therefore aimed at helping the students to have a well-balanced understanding of Islamic culture and practices.

## **5.0 SUMMARY**

In this unit, we have been able to examine the origin collection and collation of the Quran and Hadith, the importance of the Sharia in the context of the Islamic Culture and practices, the five pillars as prescribed obligation for every Muslim, and the place of Jihad in the Muslim tradition.

## **6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT**

1. From Muhammad to Uthman ibn Affan, Discuss the origin, revelation and the collation of the Quran.
2. Hadith literatures are very important document for clarification, guidance and spirituality-Discuss
3. What is Sharia? Discuss the sources division and the importance of Sharia in the Muslim Community.
4. The five pillars of Islam are the essential ingredient of faith in Islam-Discuss.
5. What is Jihad? Why is it necessary for a Muslim to be involved in jihad?

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## **MODULE 3            ISLAM IN NIGERIA AND ITS SOCIAL, ECONOMIC, POLITICAL MPACT**

Unit 1	The Spread Of Islam To Nigeria
Unit 2	The 1804 Jihad Of Uthman Dan Fodio
Unit 3	The Impact Of Islam On Nigerian Society

### **UNIT 1                    THE SPREAD OF ISLAM TO NIGERIA**

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#### **1.0    INTRODUCTION**

Before the coming of Islam into Nigeria, the citizens have their own religion. This is known as the African traditional religion.

The Religion teaches its adherents on the existence of supernatural beings in the cosmos. These beings were been worshipped by the people of Nigeria. A ruler of Kanem Umme Jilmi was converted into Islam together with his family about (1085-1095 AD). He sent his sons to Mecca to learn more about Islam.

However, around 19<sup>th</sup> century, Uthman Dan Fodio led a Jihad against pagans in the Hausa states of Nigeria. Many people began to accept Islam as their religion. Thereby, they abandoned their formal religion for Islam. It is hoped that in this unit, you will learn more about the spread of Islam in Nigeria. You are encouraged to study this unit carefully so that you can understand the origin, social, economic and political impact of Islam on Nigerians.

## 2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- Describe the spread of Islam to Nigeria;
- Describe the 1904 Jihad of Uthman Danfodio; and
- Highlight and the Impact of Islam in Nigeria.

Islam in Nigeria has a very long history. As early as 1085 A.D Islam has been accepted by the Kanem Borno ruler Umme Jilmi who ruled between 1085-1095 AD. An eminent scholar named Muhammad Mani converted him. His sons and grandsons continued their Interest in learning and practicing Islam. They went on pilgrimage to Mecca and also developed contact through correspondence with Tunisia.

The development and spread of Islam was slow in Nigeria until the 19<sup>th</sup> century when Uthman Dan Fodio in a dramatic series of events in West African history led a *Jihad* against the Hausa States. By 1808, the Hausalands had fallen into the hand of the reformer Jihadist Uthman Dan Fodio. The Jihad brought a renaissance in education and literature in its wake, and the stable and relatively peaceful conditions, which prevailed in the Hausa heartland.

Because of this initial success in Northern Nigeria, Islam spread rapidly to other parts of Nigeria. By 1830 A.D. some scholars of Islam came to Yoruba land from the North through Ilorin and settled in Ibadan. The Muslims in Yoruba land are called *Imole* (Imolile) which means “Knowledge by force”, the Quranic study when first introduced in Yoruba land might have seemed difficult in the beginning with the necessity of rote memorization of the Quran, the system which continues until today may be the underlying reason for the name. However, the name Musulumi (Muslim) a believer in Allah is more frequently used to describe the Yoruba Muslims.

The control and the spread of Islam to other parts of Nigeria, came as a result of dissension among some warring tribes for example, Nupe and Ilorin leaders sought help from the Sokoto caliphate, and Fulani helpers were sent to them. Mallam Dendo in the Nupeland and Mallam Alimi in Ilorin. Ilorin thus became a centre for Islamic studies in Yorubaland.

### 3.0 MAIN BODY

#### 3.1 The Role of the Cleric

It has been established earlier that there is no priesthood in Islam but clerics. These are learned scholar, in Islamic Studies and Sciences. They were the fore runners of the spread of Islam in Nigeria. In northern Nigeria in the early period of the spread of Islam the clerics were used as secretaries in the king's courts and also used as teachers of the kings family members who are opened to Islamic teachings. Wherever they go they try to introduce Islamic education. This idea led to a basic fact that the introduction and spread of Islam in Northern Nigeria is as old as the introduction of Islamic education in Hausa land.

In his Arabic work *Islam fi Nigeria* (Islam in Nigeria) an eminent Yoruba Muslim Scholar, Adam A. Ilori mentioned the name of an enthusiastic learned man and missionary to whose credit goes the foundation of Islamic learning in Ilorin. This scholar was sheikh Abu Bakr, bin al-Quasim who originated from Ibadan but whose father had settled down in Ilorin and was also trained at Ilorin. He started a large Madrasah where he taught Arabic Grammar, theology, Quranic Studies and Prophetic Traditions. Ibadan also became a reputed centre of learning under sheikh Harun, a disciple of sheikh Abu Bakr. It is said that sheikh Harun's scholarship became so famous that scholars came from as far as the Sudan and Sokoto and were often maintained financially by Harun.

It is noteworthy that the Muslim clerics who moved from one place to another helped greatly in the spread of Islam to Nigeria.

The other areas of Islamic influence in Nigeria are the Edo State (Old Bendel) and the South Eastern part (Anambra, Imo, Cross Rivers and River States). In Edo State, Auchi is the centre of Islamic Influence while Nsukka is the major centre of Islamic learning in Igboland.

It is noteworthy that the history of teaching the Arabic language throughout the Islamic world, particularly in the non-Arabic speaking world, has been the history of the spread of Islam. By inference therefore, whenever there is a Muslim Community in Nigeria, there is bound to be a Quranic school for both children and adult male and female Muslims in Search of knowledge.

### 3.2 The Muslim Traders.

Another important factor that influenced the spread of Islam is the activities of the Muslim traders. As these traders moved from place to place, they ardently practice their faith. Many of the people who watched them became enticed to their way of life and thereby challenged to want to identify with them. Since trading is one of the main stay of the people of West Africa and Nigeria in particular, the trade routes were followed by traders practicing their belief as they continued in their trading. Some later became settled traders and craftsmen who received warm receptions from their various hosts. Their social relations with their hosts, the attention attracted by their practice of the outward Muslim devotions and the effect of their confidence in the superior spiritual power of Islam in healing the sick, in ensuring the fertility of women and crops, in averting the dangers of witchcraft and sorcery moved the people they met to regard them as important and thus give allegiance to the religion they professed.

### 3.3 The medicine men/Holy men.

The unique role played by those people considered as Medicine men/Holy men in the spread of Islam cannot be underestimated. Some of these men combined the role of being a teacher to the practice of Medicine. To the average traditional Nigerian, the alternative healing therapy to the already existing traditional healing became a welcomed idea.

Further, these “holymen” of Islam along with their practice of faith, distributed *baraka* blessing through mystical means, this also attracted the people who hitherto will visit traditional healer and priest for help.

### 3.4 The Emigrants.

Other agents of lesser influence in the spread of Islam are the normads and travelers who practice their faith as they move from place to place. The normads who moved from one area to another caring for their herd of cows, sheep and goats also influence their hosts with their belief and practices.

However, mentioned need to be made of the role played by the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century Muslim reformers who fought wars in order to spread and enforce Islamic faith. The Fulani led jihad in the nineteenth century pushed Islam into Nupe land and across the Niger river into the Northern Yoruba speaking areas.

#### **4.0 CONCLUSION**

It is note worthy that by 1890 Sokoto exercised little more than moral authority, but that moral authority was highly commendable. The downfall of the Sokoto caliphate came as a result of it being cut up in a series of events originating outside West Africa and beyond the comprehension let alone its control. Islam under the colonial rule experienced slower rate of conversion due to the introduction of Western education and western political administrative system of government.

#### **5.0 SUMMARY**

In this unit we have explored the spread of Islam in Nigeria and all the agents that influenced its growth and development. the major influences include the activities of traders, Medicine menpholymen, the emigrant and the Jihad launched by the reformers.

#### **6.0 TUTOR MARKED ASSIGNMENTS (TMA)**

1. Briefly discuss the role of the Clerics in the spread of Islam in Nigeria.
2. Muslim Traders and Medicine men influenced the Spread of Islam in Nigeria-Discuss.
3. What is the major influence of the Sokoto Caliphate in the Spread of Islam and what are the factors that led to her decline?

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## UNIT 2 THE 1804 JIHAD OF UTHMAN DAN FODIO

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- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Body
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  - 3.2 Uthman as a Reformer
  - 3.3 Uthman as a Statesman
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor Marked Assignment
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### 1.0 INTRODUCTION

There were many *Jihad* launched in the 18<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup> centuries, in West Africa. These *Jihads* had their religious motives, since for many Muslims the necessity of living under Sharia left them the choice only of *hijra* (migration to an Islamic State). Nevertheless, economic motives were also very important. Notable among these was control over the Atlantic Slave Market.

The Sokoto *jihad* in Hausaland was the most significant of all in Africa. The Hausa states had their beginnings in the Middle Ages, but did not come into prominence until the 17<sup>th</sup> century after the disintegration of Songhay. Then they became trading partners with Borno (exporting to Tripoli), Gonja (involving the Atlantic trade via Ashanti, gold from the Akan fields and Kola) and Oyo (as a route to the Atlantic Slave market). The demand for slaves on the coast was the principal stimulus for the continual wars among the Hausa States, where captives were frequently sold.

Uthman Dan Fodio had a religious ideology to back up his Jihad, which he expressed in many writing. Beginning in 1804 he and his Fulani Flag bearers quickly overthrew most of the Hausa leaders, unifying Hausa land for the first time under the Sokoto caliphate. Thereafter the Muslims turned their energy towards the pagans of the middle-belt as a source of slaves, while they pushed relentlessly through Nupeland (1830) and the Oyo empire (1824-1836) towards the coast, while immediate northern neighbours such as Argungu and Sabon Birni, were left undisturbed. A more detailed study of the Jihadist Uthman Dan Fodio (*Fodiye*) will follow in the next discussion.

## 2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- Describe the life and contribution of Uthman Dan Fodio in the spread of Islam in Nigeria and in Hausaland in particular.

### UTHMAN DAN FODIO: A BRIEF HISTORY

Uthman Dan Fodio (*Fodiye*) was born at Maratta in 1754 of a Fulani clan specializing in Islamic learning whose origins go back to Futa Toro. His childhood, at Degal in Gobir territory north of the present day Sokoto, included an elementary Islamic education under his father. In 1775 Uthman went to Agadez to study under Shaykh Jibril, a Tuareg who had ambitions of carrying out a jihad among his own people. Jibril went on pilgrimage to Mecca and wanted Uthman to accompany him, but Uthman could not get his father's permission. Instead, he returned home and formed a Jamaa, embryonic group of followers and supporters and went on preaching in towns, around Gobir, Zamfara and Kebbi.

## 3.0 MAIN BODY

### 3.1 Uthman as a Cleric

In 1788 the Sarkin Gobir, Bawa Jan Gwarzo, invited him to the 'Id al-adha prayer assembly where 'Uthman's followers outnumbered those of the sarki. Overawed, the Sarki granted him his five demands:

1. that he could preach without restriction.
2. that no one should be prevented from following him.
3. that Muslims wearing the turban should be treated with respect.
4. that Muslim prisoners would be freed and
5. that taxes should be reduced.

Bawa Jan Gwarzo's successor, Nafata (1801-3), opposed Uthman, forbidding anyone but Uthman himself to preach, forbidding conversion of those whose fathers were not Muslims, and forbidding turbans on men and veil on women. Nafata's son Yunfa (1803-08) began his reign friendly to Uthman, but then tried unsuccessfully to assassinate him at Alkalawa. Uthman found a chance to retaliate when Yunfa sent out a raiding party to capture a wealthy Gobir man, AbdasSalam, who had fled to Gunbara (near Jega) in the reign of his father. Yunfa's men failed to capture AbdasSalam but they raided his village and carried away prisoners. Uthman waylaid the raiding party on their return and freed the prisoners. Yunfa there upon ordered

Uthman to leave Gobir territory. In and around Gobir, Uthman served in the court of the sarakuna as an Arabic and Quranic Mallam.

### 3.2 Uthman as a reformer

On 21 February 1804, with the severance of ties umpired in a religious hijra, Uthman moved westward to Gudu. His followers against the wishes of Yunfa, joined him and in may 1804, made formal submission (bay'a) to him as their Imam. Afraid of Uthman's build up strength, Yunfa sent his army against him. Although outnumbered and short of provisions, Uthman's men had the advantage of being in a wooded area next to Lake kwatto. Because of this position and their better morale they defeated Gobir army. Uthman then moved camp to Magabshi (near Yabo) in kebbi territory. Many more Fulani joined him after his victory, but their raids for food alienated many of Hausa peasants.

In October 1804 and January 1805 the Fulani made unsuccessful attacks on the Gobir capital Alkalawa. Then Uthman moved his camp to sabon Gari in Zamfara territory while his younger brother Abdallah attacked and captured Birnin Kebbi, the kebbi capital, causing its sarki Muhammadu Hodi, to flee and eventually set up headquarters at Argungu Uthman's son Muhammad Bello began raiding Gobir and Zamfara villages for food, thereby making it dangerous for the Fulani to remain at Sabon Gari. In July 1805 they moved to Gwandu and fortified the town as a permanent base. In November 1805 a combined army of the Gobir, Tuareg, Zamfara and Kebbi marched on Gwandu. The Fulani went out to meet them and were severely defeated at Alwasa. The enemy pursued the Fulani to Gwandu and might easily have taken the town and ended the Jihad, but a delay on their part permitted the Fulani to rally their forces and on the rougher terrain near the town to rout the enemy completely. The Fulani were thereafter in the superior position. The town Sokoto was founded in 1809 when Muhammad Bello chose the site as his headquarters. The Fulani became rulers of the 7 Hausa states namely Kano, Rano, Daura, Katsina, Zamfara, Zaria, and Gobir.

### 3.3 Uthman as a Statesman

Uthman devoted his time to campaigning against deviations from Sunni belief and practice. He also emphasized the need for Muslims to have the knowledge of Islamic theology (ilm al-kalam). He spread the theories of hijra and jihad among the people of the conquered areas. In Ramadan November 1806, the *Bayan Wujub an-hijra al l-ibad* was compiled at a time when important centres such as Kano, Daura, Katsina and Zamfara were being integrated into the community. The

*Bayan wujub* served as a handbook for the warriors and a “mirror” (guide) for the emirs. He wrote other books expanding on the theme of *hijra-jihad* which include the division of the booty, the administration of the empire, the state treasury, the appointment of *walis*. The greatest contribution of Uthman’s reforming ideas apart from his views on Sunna and *bidaa* was in the field of *Madhahib* (schools of law). He declares in his *Hidays* that ‘neither God in His Book nor the Prophet in his Sunna made it obligatory that one particular *Madhhab* (law school) should be followed, nor did any early scholars enjoin a person to follow as a rite. He divided the conquered areas among his flag bearers throughout the Hausaland and beyond. Uthman moved to Sokoto in 1815 and died on 20<sup>th</sup> April 1817.

#### **4.0 CONCLUSION**

It is noteworthy that the role played by Uthman Dan Fodio in the spread of Islam in Nigeria is highly commendable. His production of principles and policies helped the sustainability of the various conquered territories until the coming of the British late in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century. Uthman was a cleric (teacher), a reformer, a scholar and a statesman.

#### **5.0 SUMMARY**

In this Unit, we have been able to see the life and contribution of Uthman Dan Fodio in the spread of Islam in Nigeria and in Hausaland in particular.

#### **6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT (TMA)**

1. Sokoto Jihad of Uthman Dan Fodio had both religious and Economic Motives. Discuss.
2. Who is Uthman Dan Fodio? Expantiate your answer by providing a brief history of Uthman life and work.
3. What are the factors that helped Uthman to be a successful cleric, reformer and statesman?

## 7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READINGS

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## **UNIT 3 THE IMPACT OF ISLAM ON NIGERIAN SOCIETY**

### **CONTENTS**

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objective
- 3.0 Main Body
  - 3.1 Political Impact
  - 3.2 Social impact of Islam in Nigeria.
  - 3.3 Economics Impact of Islam in Nigeria.
  - 3.4 The Educational Impact of Islam
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References/Further Readings

### **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

Islam which was introduced to Northern Nigeria in the 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> century, but became known to the west and eastern Nigeria in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries has been playing a decisive role in all spheres of life in Nigeria. Therefore in this unit, we shall explore the impact of Islam in the political, social, economic and educational sphere of the Nigerian society.

### **2.0 OBJECTIVES**

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

- Explain the origin of Islam in Nigeria;
- Enumerate the benefits of Islam to the people of Nigeria; and
- Give reasons why the adherents of Islam abandoned their religion for Islam.

### **3.0 MAIN BODY**

#### **3.1 Political Impact**

During pre-colonial era each area North, West East and South are governed by their own set rules and monarchical system of government. The Northern kingdoms changed their administrative system of government at the introduction of the Sharia in the 19<sup>th</sup> century after Uthman Dan Fodio's Jihad. The political climate in the

north changed with the introduction of the indirect rule after the amalgamation of the North and Southern protectorate in 1914 which brought or usher in the British rule.

At independence in 1960 the political climate in the country changed when political parties were introduced namely NPC, NEPU, AG, NCNC etc. these parties drew members from all parts of the country. Nevertheless since the Jihad of Uthman Dan Fodio, Muslims have convinced themselves that they are superior to adherents of other religions and that they should rule and try to convert others to Islam. The one aim for this is creating avenue to push Islamic influences down south from interland to the sea. It must be noted that although Islam is not fully established where there is no strong independent Muslim state that is able to put into operation the Sharia. Therefore Islam as a religion believes that it is absolutely necessary to have a political organization through which its religious life can be properly expressed. The institution of Sharia by Uthman was made in order to provide avenue for the acquisition of political power when he made Sokoto the seat of his government. The colonial Administrator in the north was very conscious of this fact and thus lent its weight to its implementation both explicitly and implicitly. They treated Islam in the North as *religio licita* which led the Muslims to have preferential treatment when things are compared to what operated in the South.

The preferential treatment accorded the Northern Muslims led credence to the way for the eventual domination of the political life of the country by the Hausa and the Fulani. People of the Middle belt were caught out from any substantial leadership role until the President Olusegun Obasanjo exposed them to position of responsibility in 1999ff. from the brief statement made on the development of political thought in Nigeria one could see that Islam through Northern Nigeria have been playing some decisive roles in government. The impact is felt in the agitation for the entrenchment and the implementation of the Sharia. Today, Nigeria's south, south west and south east has remained predominantly Christian whereas the North has remained predominately Muslim with a sizeable number of Christians in the Middle belt and in the core north. There is no dichotomy between religion and politics in Islam, that is why Muslims permeate all the strata of social political arena.

### **3.2 Social impact of Islam in Nigeria.**

There is social interaction among the adherents of the various religious groups in Nigeria. Although the Muslims believe that God has revealed through Prophet Muhammad "a total pattern of life in which (all aspects of life) politics, ethnics, economics and social order

are welded in an indissoluble totality by the will of Allah which is the transcendental element in the compound”

Thus, the Muslim (community) social life is guided by whatever the Prophet prescribed as indicated in the Sharia. Social life affected by Islam include (i) dressing; a lot of people (men) have been influenced by the mode of dressing in the north (2) language, about 70% of the Hausa language is Arabic (3) culture, the socio-cultural idea of respect for elders is accepted in as it is done according the prophetic tradition. (4) family life and daily life; Islam has pervaded into them, providing modes of personal conduct as prescribed in the Sharia. Islam in predominant Muslim areas in the north has curbed the excessive use of Alcohol and all other vices.

### **3.3 Economic Impact of Islam in Nigeria.**

Since trade has been the main stay of the economic endeavour of the Northern Muslims, their sincere emphasis on profit making rather than interest has been very good in their handling of commercial enterprises. The area where there is a problem is in the management of public funds which is said should be the act the prerogative of whoever is handling it. A person occupying a leadership position where money is expended is beyond questioning since he will spend according to how he is supposed to have been guided by God. This is an area where the populace can be trampled upon when their allocation has been mismanaged. The southern Muslims could not but be very cautious because of their established system of accountability. In the economic sphere, there are both positive and negative impacts from the individuals who have taken up leadership position at one time or the other.

### **3.4 The Educational Impact of Islam**

Generally, education is geared towards the study of the Quran, Hadith and other Islamic sciences theology and philosophy. As a cleric (teacher) Uthman emphasized the need for people to be well educated. The impact of Islamic education is well established in Northern Nigeria. Therefore, Islamic education is a welcomed idea in the north in its theoretical and practical forms. Arabic letter are taught and used to explain thing to the people. For example, the Naira currency has some Arabic writing on it-which is just Hausa in Arabic letters or the denominations represented in the currency in Arabic.

Although Islamic education is not the system of education in operation in Nigeria, but it has a positive impact in Northern Nigerians. The effect of Islamic education (madrasah) in Northern Nigeria has been

tremendous, it is seen in the people's business transactions where the sense of justice and honest dealings are often reflected. Socially, such honest and just dealings deepen their relationship and commitment to one another in the matter of politics and community engagements.

#### **4.0 CONCLUSION**

The impact of Islam in Nigeria society is something of great importance in the study of social, political, economics, and educational influences on the people. Although, it may be judiciously said that Islam has greater impact in Nigeria north than in the south because of its long history and judicial administration. Yet, its effect on the southern Muslims as regards to political appointments, economic sustainability and the share of religious brotherhood can also be commended upon.

However, there is need for Muslims and people of other faiths to cooperate together, live in harmony and tolerance, accept one another in order to build a virile and responsible nation.

#### **5.0 SUMMARY**

In this unit we have examined the impact of Islam on Nigerian society pinpointing, political, social, economic and educational impacts respectively.

#### **6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENTS (TMA)**

1. What are the socio-political impact of Islam on Nigerian Society.
2. Briefly explain the Economic impact of Islam on Nigerian Society.
3. Islamic education has positive effect on the Muslim North-Discuss.

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