

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

This chapter provides the background of the study. It highlights basic information about the research issues, on Aishah bint Abu Bakar who was one of the early figures in Islam and one of the most beloved wives of the prophet Mohammad – Peace be Upon Him -, as well as, its focus on Orientalist`s criticisms about her activities and personality. From two groups of orientalism, both biased and unbiased views of orientalism, will be discussed in this study. The research problems have been designed from the discussion in the literature review. A separate section has been put forwarded to address the research questions and identification of the objectives of the study followed significance, Literatures Reviews and Research Methodology in details. Therefore, the researcher is going to study on orientalist`s views about Aishah`s chastity, her age when she got married, about her accusation to adultery, her involvement in battle of camel, her activities and behaviors with others in the society and her contribution in Hadith and its reliability, through qualitative research methodology in six chapters based on introduction, Objectives and conclusion. On secondary data based, for data analysis, qualitative content and analytic approach will be followed through comparative study. This research will be a worthy work to prove Aishah`s positive personality in Islam and Islamic education.

1.2 Background of the Study

The Quran is the greatest prescription for all mankind which instructs to a peaceful, disciplined and modest life. This noble Quran was revealed on our last prophet Mohammad – Peace be Upon Him - as a complete code of life and reformation of all past religion which had confirmed all previous revelations even as it pointed out that the followers of the earlier revelations had broken their covenant with Allah and had falsified their scripture, it consented a special status to the people of the Book (*ahl al-kitab*) and it was in such a cruel situation while whole Arabian Peninsula was fulfill with all kinds of injustice, oppression, inhumanity and all kinds of viciousness activities and all people were ignored about right and wrong. The Prophet Mohammad – Peace be Upon Him - invited all people to Islam via Quranic verses. But some of them denied accepting the Quran as a divined and revealed book. They avoided it as own fiction/legend of Mohammad – Peace be Upon Him -. They accused against the Quran as written book of Mohammad – Peace be Upon Him - which is collected from previous Judaeo-Christian sources. But Allah himself challenged them many times in the Quran to prove the Quran as divine orders. Allah says in the Quran.

❖ **أَمْ يَقُولُونَ افْتَرَاهُ قُلْ فَأْتُوا بِعَشْرِ سُوْرٍ مِّثْلِهِ مُفْتَرِيَاتٍ وَاذْعُوا مَنِ اسْتَعْظَمَ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ صَادِقِينَ**

Or do they say, "He (Prophet Muhammad^(P)) forged it (the Qur'an)." Say: "Bring you then ten forged surah (chapters) like unto it, and call whomsoever you can, other than Allah (to your help), if you speak the truth!"(Hud-11:13)

❖ **قُلْ لَنْ يَجْتَمَعَتِ الْإِنْسُ وَالْجِنُّ عَلَىٰ أَنْ يَأْتُوا بِمِثْلِ هَذَا الْقُرْآنِ لَا يَأْتُونَ بِمِثْلِهِ وَلَوْ كَانَ بَعْضُهُمْ لِبَعْضٍ**

ظَهِيْرًا

"If the mankind and the jinns were together to produce the like of this Qur'an, they could not produce the like thereof, even if they helped one another." (Issra-17:88)

Thus, in many verses, the Quran challenged to who don't believe the Quran as revealed book and assert the Quran as Mohammad`s – Peace be Upon Him - legends and borrowing from Judaea - Christian sources. None could take the challenge. In spite of their inability, they didn't recognize the Quran as divine orders. In this way, in every era, there are some critics who blame the Quran with their little knowledge as a sign of their hostile mind to Islam. But the Prophet Mohammad – Peace be Upon Him - continued his mission to spread Islam and Quranic order in the unfavorable environment.

To spread Islam in the unfavorable situation, Prophet Mohammad – Peace be Upon Him - had to take up some techniques designed by Allah himself. He had to establish a fair relation with various tribes and clans in many regions, at first with his nearest and dearest ones. He had to marry different women in different ages to build up a relationship with the clan as it was a great technique to make a deep relationship and to organize a powerful group with other clan in the time in Arab.

As, Abu Bakar Ibn Uthman Abu Quhafa, from a rich family of Banu Taym clan, was a famous and dearest one of the prophet Mohammad – Peace be Upon Him - and he was the first person from male who accepted Islam. Prophet Mohammad – Peace be Upon Him - agreed to marry the girl after a keen observation of her intelligence when he received a propose indirectly to marry his youngest daughter Aishah at her 7 years old who was shown in dream in Macca and it was informed by Gabriele that she would be his wife, as well as prophet saw her in the haven also. Wife of the Uttman ibn Mazon and Khawlah bint Hakim proposed to prophet Mohammad – Peace be Upon Him - to

marry Aishah and he accepted it to get the chance of making a deep relationship with Abu Bakar (haylamaz-2013), as well as Gabriel (a) told Mohammad – Peace be Upon Him - to marry Aishah (Sahih al-bukhari **5:3462**)

By the order of Almighty Allah, he got marry Premature girl Aishah and after two years when she reached puberty, at 9 years old, she went to prophet`s house when Abu Bakar also told him to stay with his daughter. Aishah was prepubescent and too young to consummate marriage at age nine (*Hussain-2016*). The Prophet – Peace be Upon Him - did not force Aishah to be with him after marriage. But the marriage of 7 (or 6) year old Aishah bint Abu Bakar with the Prophet Muhammad – Peace be Upon Him - over 1400 years ago, has in recent years become a target for criticism and condemnation. Prophet Muhammad – Peace be Upon Him - could feel the necessity of Aishah in his life and he looked her intelligence, inquisitive mind for knowledge, a questioning nature and observant young girl with a very good memory. The beloved wife of the Prophet Muhammad – Peace be Upon Him -, Mother of the Muslims, Aishah, the veracious, had an important role in early Islamic history, both during Muhammad – Peace be Upon Him - life and after his death. She contributed to spread of Muhammad's message and served the Muslim community for 44 years after the prophet. Her personality and purity approved by the Quran and clear speech of prophet – Peace be Upon Him -. She got a special place to the Prophet – Peace be Upon Him -. Even some orientalist mentioned her as one of the most central women in Islam (Spellberg- 1994). Aishah emerges as a sharp wit and a profound thinker whose status as a beloved and important figure was widely recognized during Muhammad's lifetime. After the death of Muhammad – Peace be Upon Him -, Aishah was regarded as one of the most reliable sources in teachings Hadith- (Jawed 2005). She was a strong advocate for the education of Islamic women, especially in law and the teachings of Islam. She was known for her expertise

in the Quran, shares of inheritance, lawful and unlawful matters, poetry, Arabic literature, Arab history, genealogy, and general medicine. She was known for establishing the first *Madrasa* for women in her home. She was like a bridge between the time of the prophet and the future of Islam (Resit haylamaz -2013). Hakim said that “One fourth of the body of religious knowledge was transferred to us through Aishah” (Tahmaz sayyidatu Aishah-174)

Aishah’s knowledge was such that very old men who had been Companions of the Prophet – Peace be Upon Him - came to seek her counsel and instruction (Barbara Freyer Stowasser-2006). Mohammad ibn Shihab Zuhri said about her knowledge; “She was the most knowledgeable of people. For this reason, the most important companions of god’s messenger learnt things by asking her (Ibn sa`d, *tabaqat*, 2:374).. If the knowledge of Aishah put on the right scale and the knowledge of all women, including other wives of the god’s messenger was put on the left scale, Aishah’s knowledge would dominate in its superiority (Hakim, *mustadrak*, 2:12 (6734); Ibn Hajar, *Ishaq*, 4:349)

Early classical accounts, however, reflect her as a welcomed politician where she acted as the main consultant for the second and third caliphs, ‘Umar and ‘Uthman as well as other male companions (Spellberg, 1994). Aishah became involved in politic of the early Islam, during a time in Islam when women were not expected or wanted to contribute outside the household. Aishah delivered public speeches, became directly involved in war and even battles, and helped both men and women to understand the practices of Muhammad.

The importance of Aishah in Islamic resource and Quranic education is not simple, without Aishah, Islam and Islamic resource are incomplete. While, Aishah, the purest women, the Quran itself declared her purity and chastity, some Orientalist talk about her purity and chastity, unfortunately, some slanderers who had seen Safwan and

Aishah arrive alone together began to gossip and spread lies about them (Oliver leaman-2006), her involvement of war in the battle of camel, about her age when she got marriage. In recent years, there has been a revival of criticism against the marriage. Many have gone so far as to stir up despicable sexual misconduct charges against the Prophet. Much of the criticism against the marriage of young Aishah has been spearheaded by Christian polemicists, albeit, often through a secular lens ¹.

Since the very beginning biased views about Islam and its Prophet were initially produced and disseminated by the religious establishments and rulers in the Judeo-Christian world, who had largely lost their power due to the expansion of Islam, in response to the conversion of large numbers of people into the nascent Islam. The main purpose of their endeavor was to mislead people into staying away from Islam by creating a false image of the religion and Prophet Muhammad. Thus, such denigrated images of the Prophet as being "mentally ill", a "liar", a "fake prophet" and an "anti-Christ", none of which had any factual historical basis, were produced and re-produced throughout the centuries in the West².

Through the anti- Islamic approach, after 8th century, some Islam western scholars started to study Islam and the Quran, through academic approach; they started to find out the weakness of the Quran which have no reality without their wrong understanding of the Quran and hostility to it. In academic term, Orientalists are someone from the west who studies the language, culture, history or customs of countries in east and south Asia. There are two types of orientalism, which can be classified into two groups, the biased and unbiased. The biased Orientalists who study Islam and Islamic cultures to

¹ Hussain,T, (2016),”Debating the marriage Of ‘Aishah: Introduction & Overview”, MDI Canada

² T. A. Yusuf , 2012, “Islamic Studies And Orientalism” , National Open University Of Nigeria.

find out its weakness and criticize it, likewise, William Muir, Alois Sprenger, Barbara Freyer Stowasser, Denis Spellberge, Sherry Jones etc, while the unbiased Orientalists who study Islam and Islamic culture in academic purpose, likewise Henry, Johann, Thomas Carlyle, Oliver Leaman etc.

In biased Orientalism studies, it was assumed (and argued) that what prophet Mohammad had brought was not original; rather he 'composed' this religion as a collage of Judaism, Christianity, and even Mandaeanism, receiving different ideas from each of these older religions³. So, biased Orientalists are someone who studied Islam to analysis it in their own views through western scholarship. Basically, it emerged to study Islam and Islamic countries to find out its weakness⁴. The aims and objectives of orientalism are similar to that of missionaries; the main difference between them is that missionaries concentrate on general people while orientalism targets intellectuals. Undoubtedly, both operate for the domination of the West over the East, domination of the West on the Islamic World, particularly in social, cultural, economical, political, moral and religious aspect⁵.

Modern Orientalism in an academic sense begins at the end of the 18th century. In 1873 the first International Congress of Orientalists was held in Paris. With a few notable exceptions, most Orientalist scholars held negative views of Islam until the middle of the 20th century⁶. A number of leading Orientalists have made some special studies of

³ T. A. Yusuf , 2012, "Islamic Studies And Orientalism" , National Open University Of Nigeria

⁴ Richard C. Martin, Islam: a Cultural Perspective (New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 1982), 6

Nasreen, H, "Orientalists on Quran: A critical study", The dialogue, voll 3,p36

Martin Varisco,M, 2009, "orientalism and islam"

⁵ Ashraf ,A, 2016, "Islam and orientalism".

⁶ Martin Varisco,M, 2009, "orientalism and islam"

the Quran and its related personality like Aishah bint Abu Bakar. However, the attitude of such occidental scholars has been unsympathetic and sometimes hostile. In every century, they continued their anti-Islamic activities through their approaches. Yahya Damashqi (750c), Jerbert, Archbishop Raymond, Alexander Ross, Aloys Sprenger, William Muir, Theodore Noldeke and Richard Bell were the leading orientalist to continue the orientalism thought⁷.

The issue of the Quran also added in the famous Encyclopedia Britannica from orientalist`s views to prove the Quran as Fake activities of Mohammad (pbup). In the Britannica`s fifteen volume, they discussed about the Quran for just to prove it as false and browning element of Judaeo-Christian sources. Most of the concepts of the Encyclopedia Britannica about Quran, had focused to criticize the Holy Quran and its relevant issues. The new Edition of Britannica published in 2002 by the name of “New Encyclopedia Britannica” while much of the discussion, took place about the Quran and Islam, but every topic is for criticizing the Quran. There is too much discussion on the Quranic criticism.⁸

In the current century, the most important works of Orientalist on the Quranic studies is “The Encyclopaedia of the Qurān” with six volumes which was published by Brill publication while more than 1000 articles have been taken place by the world-famous Orientalists, like Wadad Kadi, Claude Gilliot, William Graham, and Andrew Rippin, and the General Editor of this Encyclopedia is Jane Dammen McAuliffe. Orientalist

⁷ T. A. Yusuf , 2012, “Islamic Studies And Orientalism” , National Open University Of Nigeria

فضل حسن عباس, 1989, "قضايا قرآنية في الموسوعة البريطانية",
عدنان وزان, "موقف المستشرقين من القرآن الكريم دراسة في بعض دوائر المعارف"

didn't avoid Aishah bint Abi Bakar also. They included Aishah also, as she is one of the most reliable sources of Islamic resources.

Though, they emerged in academic purpose, later they started to study sources of Islam, Aishah, to mislead people into staying away from Islam by creating a false image of Aishah who was like a bridge between the time of the prophet and the future of Islam.⁹ Thus, such denigrated images of Aishah as an adulterer¹⁰, disobedient to prophet¹¹, rebellious to Ali¹², were produced and re-produced throughout the centuries in the West, in recent time, about her young marriage by some anti-Islam scholar¹³.

So, the researcher is going to find out the criticisms and blames to Prophet's beloved wife -Aishah bint Abu Bakar who keeps very strong and most important personality in Islam and Quranic teaching, made by biased orientalist which are very important issue related to Aishah. Therefore, it is very worthy work to ascertain the criticisms about Aishah.

⁹ Nasreen, H, "Orientalists on Quran: A critical study", The dialogue, voll 3,

¹⁰ A. Spellberg, D, (2001) "Aishah bint Abi Bakar", The Aishah encyclopedia of the Quran, Brills

¹¹ A. Spellberg, (2001) "Aishah bint Abi Bakar", The encyclopedia of the Quran, Brills

¹² A. Spellberg, (2001) "Aishah bint Abi Bakar", The Aishah encyclopedia of the Quran, Brills,

Kamal, J., & Hamdani, S. (2012). A'isha bint Abu Bakr: A review of contradictory accounts

¹³ Haylamaz, R. (2013). *Aishah: The Wife, The Companion, The Scholar*. Tughra Books

1.3 Statements of the Problem:

Aishah bint Abu Bakar is one of the early figures in Islam. Without her contribution and importance, Islamic resources are not complete. Like the Quran and prophet Mohammad – Peace be Upon Him -, she was one of the main targets of Orientalists. Through Orientalism's Lane, Orientalists speak and write about her controversial issues. They criticize Aishah's age and puberty when she got marriage, slander of adultery, her disobedience to the Quran and prophet, her behavior with other wives, her political involvement of illegal fighting in the battle of camel against Ali , her contribution in Islamic education especially in Hadith narration and its accuracy in articles, books and conferences.

From the seventh century onward to the end of the 19th century, there is no single criticism on the marriage of the prophet with Aishah daughter of his best friend and the first pious Caliph Abu – Bakr, whom the prophet married at age of six and cohabitated with at nine. The common point of contention and criticism erupted from the 20th century onwards, as the religion competitors and other Orientalists (the Christian clerics and Monks) added this marriage to their offensive tool against the prophet. From the incidence, some denounced the Prophet accusing him of cohabitation with a nine-year child like Aisha and labeled Muhammad as pedophile. Orientalist argue about her age and marriage that she was not agree to marry with the prophet as her mind was set on another person as Sherry Jones stated in her book. She says that she was forced into marriage with Muhammad when her heart is already set on another, younger man¹⁴.

These western scholars also claim that when her marriage was done, she was not fit for

¹⁴ Geraldine Brooks-2008, "Muhammad's Youngest Wife", review article, Washington DC,USA

this marriage because of her youngest age, that time she was very young and immature at 6 years old. Even when she was gone to Mohammad`s house to consume the marriage, she was not fit for it. She didn`t reach at puberty. Many have gone so far as to strip up despicable sexual misconduct charges against the Prophet. They discover the prophet Mohammad – Peace be Upon Him - as a Child abuser and ravisher which is the hottest topic to the Orientalist to talk against Aishah. ¹⁵.

Orientalists doubt about her chastity, her declaration of purity by the Quran itself. Some orientalists belonging Spellberge and Shery Jones, believe that she involved in adultery and Quranic declaration does not mean her innocence. Denis spellberge identified her personality as disobedient wife of the prophet like wife of Prophet Lot and Noah. She was disobedient to Quran, prophet and other wives, and she is accused for slander of adultery¹⁶.

Orientalists criticize Aishah`s political engagements against Ali ibn Abi Talib in the battle of Camel; they see her engagement as disobedience to Quranic orders while Quran order the women to stay at home. For fighting against Ali ibn Talib, referring to Shii concepts, some orientalist like Spellberge stated the views of some Sahabah that she did Kufr (disobedience to Allah)¹⁷.

¹⁵ Hussain, T.(2016).Debating the marriage of Aishah: Introduction & Overview”, MDI, Canada

❖ Hussain,T,(2017).Debating the marriage of Aishah: Christian polemicist standard, MDI, Canada

❖ Hussain,T,(-2017).Debating the marriage of Aishah: Historical context”, MDI,Canada

❖ MDI team-2012, “The,, Problematic Age” of Aishah” MDI, Canada

*MDI team-2012, “The,, Problematic Age“ of Aishah” MDI, Canada

¹⁶ Aishah bint abi bakar-Britannica-vol-1, New Encyclopedia of Britannica.2015

*Spellberge.D.(2001), “Aishah bint Abi Bakar”, Encyclopedia of the Quran, vol-1

*Kamal, J., & Hamdani, S. (2012). A`isha bint Abu Bakr: A review of contradictory accounts

*Freyer Stowasser-(2006) .Wives of the prophet. Encyclopedia of the Quran, vol

¹⁷ Spellberge.D.(2001), “Aishah bint Abi Bakar”, Encyclopedia of the Quran, vol-1

Orientalists argue about Aishah's Hadith Narration. They are not trusted to her narration and Quranic explanations while she was a famous and expert Hadith narrator and Mufassir- Quranic commentary.

Thus, orientalist made research on Aishah Bint Abi Bakar, both from negative and positive views, and their concepts and views are not clear to the people and there are very few research on this field, which also are not combined and formative to clear these above mentioned controversial issues about Aishah. There for, it is very important issue to discuss and make a study on orientalist views about her chastity and character in order to prove her innocence and purity about their criticisms on her personality. As, she is one of the most important figures in Islam and it is quite essential to study about orientalist views about herself to get a clear concept about the matters and there is very few research on this issue which are not enough and complete, especially about their methods and tricks to criticize Aishah. So, the researcher is going to find out the orientalist's views about herself through focusing the methods they use. Based on the knowledge of researcher, there is scarcity of research in this particular filed that motives to continue the research by combining the stated factors.

1.4 Research Questions:

The researcher is going to find out the answers of following research questions based on the topic about Orientalist's views of Aishah's personality and controversial issues.

So, the following questions will guide the researcher:

- 1. Why did the Orientalists argue about Aishah's age and puberty when she got married?**
- 2. What is the orientalist argument on the accusation of adultery to Aishah and her purity?**
- 3. What is the Orientalist's regard about the Aishah's political involvement?**
- 4. What are the orientalist's criticisms about her Hadith narration and its accuracy?**

1.5 Objectives of the Study:

This is a very important issue to research about Aishah, the beloved wife of the Prophet Mohammad – Peace be Upon Him - about her chastity and personality. This research aims to study about orientalist views about Aishah and to prove her innocence; however, the specific objectives of this research are below:

- 1. To identify the orientalist's arguments on Aishah's age and puberty when she got married on the basis of Quran, Sunnah and historical perspective.**
- 2. To examine the orientalist's argument on the accusation of adultery to Aishah and her purity on the basis of Quran, Sunnah and historical perspective.**
- 3. To evaluate the orientalist regard of Aishah's political involvement on the basis of Quran, Sunnah and historical perspective.**

4. To discover the orientalist's criticisms about her Hadith narration and its accuracy on the basis of Quran, Sunnah and historical perspective.

1.6 Significance of the Study

Aishah, daughter of the first caliph Abu Bakar, the most beloved of the prophet Mohammad – Peace be Upon Him -, purest women declared by the Allah, keeps very important position in Islam and Islamic education. Without her narration of Hadith, Islamic resources are incomplete. Therefore, raising question about her age and puberty, chastity, character and accuracy in narration, as well as about her age when got married, her political involvement, her Hadith narration, it means making doubt on Quran and Islamic resources. The Quran declared her chastity and their marriage was made by almighty Allah's especial order¹⁸. According to the social custom of the era, the marriage was not illegal and blameworthy. This research finding also will give a clear concept on Orientalist views about accusation of adultery (Ifq) to herself while the Quran testify her purity and removed their accusation by revelation. This study finding also will make position of Aisha in the battle of Camel with Ali in the orientalist view. So, some western scholar, biased orientalist who study Islam to criticize it and its developers likewise Prophets Muhammad – Peace be Upon Him - and his wives, grow Questions about herself. This research aims to find out all the criticisms about Aishah to prove her purity and prophet's innocence of blaming for child abusing for her marriage, Aisha position in the battle of Camel, Her contribution in Hadith narration which is most recent topic, as well as the researcher will examine all criticisms about

¹⁸ Haylamaz, R. (2013). *Aisha: The Wife, The Companion, The Scholar*. Tughra Books.

herself in Quranic light and prophetic speech. Therefore, the research finding will clear the Aishah`s purity from the slander, her marriage issue, and her accuracy in her every event of life to the whole world, Muslim or Non Muslim, learner or teacher, and the Orientalist arguments will be rejected by this research.

1.7 Limitation of the study

This research will be limited in discussion of Aishah`s controversial issues related to her age and early marriage, accusation to adultery, battle of camel, her contribution in Hadith and her social behaviors and activities with slander of adultery from Orientalist` view who discussed about Aishah bint Abi Bakar. The researcher will revise some orientalist views about these issues and criticize them with their methods of criticisms after investigation through Quran, Sunnah and reliable history. Therefore, the researcher will limit his research area in Prophet`s wives, especially in Aishah bint Abu Bakar in the discussion that come from orientalist and others who blame Aishah within negative sense, to find out the criticisms against her personality which contain criticism against Aishah`s marriage, her chastity, her involvement in war against Ali, her behavior with other wives, and her contribution in Hadith narration and its accuracy, so that the researcher can prove her accuracy in all sense. This research will go through Quranic and Hadith documents as well as, true and reliable history which is not contested with Quran and Hadith related to prophet`s wife Aishah and others.