

# Criticism of Muhammad

This article is about criticism of the Islamic prophet Muhammad.. For criticism of Islam as a religion, see [Criticism of Islam](#).

**Criticism of Muhammad** has existed since the 7th century, when Muhammad was decried by his non-Muslim Arab contemporaries for preaching monotheism. During the Middle Ages he was frequently seen in Christendom as a heretic, and/or possessed by demons. In modern times, criticism has also dealt with Muhammad's sincerity in claiming to be a prophet, his morality and his marriages.

## 1 Critics



Muhammed and the Monk Sergius (*Bahira*). This 1508 engraving by the Dutch artist Lucas van Leyden shows a legend that circulated in Europe. In early Christian criticism, it was claimed that Bahira was a heretical monk whose errant views inspired the *Qur'an*.<sup>[1]</sup>

### 1.1 Jewish criticism

Main article: [Judaism's views on Muhammad](#)

In the Middle Ages, it was common for Jewish writers to describe Muhammad as *ha-meshuggah* ("The Madman"), a term of contempt frequently used in the Bible for those who believe themselves to be prophets.<sup>[2][3][4]</sup>

### 1.2 Christian criticism

#### 1.2.1 Early middle ages

The earliest (documented) Christian knowledge of Muhammad stems from Byzantine sources, written shortly after Muhammad's death in 632. In the *Doctrina Jacobi nuper baptizati*, a dialogue between a recent Christian convert and several Jews, one participant writes that his brother "wrote to [him] saying that a deceiving prophet has appeared amidst the Saracens". Another participant in the *Doctrina* replies about Muhammad: "He is deceiving. For do prophets come with sword and chariot?, ...[Y]ou will discover nothing true from the said prophet except human bloodshed".<sup>[5]</sup>

One Christian who came under the early dominion of the Islamic Caliphate was John of Damascus (c. 676–749 AD), who was familiar with Islam and Arabic. The second chapter of his book, *The Fount of Wisdom*, titled "Concerning Heresies", presents a series of discussions between Christians and Muslims. John claimed an Arian monk (whom he did not know was Bahira) influenced Muhammad and viewed the Islamic doctrines as nothing more than a hodgepodge culled from the Bible.<sup>[6]</sup> From the 9th century onwards, highly negative biographies of Muhammad were written in Latin,<sup>[7]</sup> such as the one by Alvarus of Cordoba proclaiming him the Anti-Christ.<sup>[8]</sup>

#### 1.2.2 Middle Ages

Main article: [Medieval Christian views on Muhammad](#)

During the 12th century Peter the Venerable, who saw Muhammad as the precursor to the Anti-Christ and the successor of Arius,<sup>[8]</sup> ordered the translation of the *Qur'an* into Latin (*Lex Mahumet pseudoprophete*) and the collection of information on Muhammad so that Islamic teachings could be refuted by Christian scholars.<sup>[7]</sup> During the 13th century a series of works by European

scholars such as Pedro Pascual, Ricoldo de Monte Croce, and Ramon Llull<sup>[7]</sup> depicted Muhammad as an Antichrist and argued that Islam was a Christian heresy.<sup>[7]</sup>

The fact that Muhammad was unlettered, that he married a wealthy widow, that in his later life he had several wives, that he ruled over a human community, was involved in several wars, and that he died like an ordinary person in contrast to the Christian belief in the supernatural end of Christ's earthly life were all strategies used to discredit Muhammad.<sup>[7]</sup> One common allegation laid against Muhammad was that he was an impostor who, in order to satisfy his ambition and his lust, propagated religious teachings that he knew to be false.<sup>[9]</sup> Some medieval ecclesiastical writers portrayed Muhammad as possessed by Satan, a "precursor of the Antichrist" or the Antichrist himself.<sup>[10]</sup>



*Peter the Venerable, with other monks, 13th century illuminated manuscript.*

A more positive interpretation appears in the 13th century *Estoire del Saint Grail*, the first book in the vast Arthurian cycle, the Lancelot-Grail. In describing the travels of Joseph of Arimathea, keeper of the Holy Grail, the author says that most residents of the Middle East were pagans until the coming of Muhammad, who is shown as a true prophet sent by God to bring Christianity to the region. This mission however failed when Muhammad's pride caused him to alter God's wishes, thereby deceiving his followers. Nevertheless, Muhammad's religion is portrayed as being greatly superior to paganism.<sup>[11]</sup>

The *Tulusceptrum de libro domni Metobii*, an Andalusian manuscript with unknown dating, recounts how Muhammad (called Ozim, from Hashim) was tricked by Satan into adulterating an originally pure divine revelation. The story argues God was concerned about the spiritual fate

of the Arabs and wanted to correct their deviation from the faith. He then sends an angel to the monk Osius who orders him to preach to the Arabs. Osius however is in ill-health and orders a young monk, Ozim, to carry out the angel's orders instead. Ozim sets out to follow his orders, but gets stopped by an evil angel on the way. The ignorant Ozim believes him to be the same angel that spoke to Osius before. The evil angel modifies and corrupts the original message given to Ozim by Osius, and renames Ozim Muhammad. From this followed the erroneous teachings of Islam, according to the *Tulusceptrum*.<sup>[12]</sup>

### 1.2.3 Martin Luther

Martin Luther viewed Muhammad as "a devil and first-born child of Satan."<sup>[13]</sup>

### 1.2.4 20th-century

In the early 20th century Western scholarly views of Muhammad changed, including critical views. In the 1911 *Catholic Encyclopedia* Gabriel Oussani states that Muhammad was inspired by an "imperfect understanding" of Judaism and Christianity, but that the views of Luther and those who call Muhammad a "wicked impostor", a "dastardly liar" and a "willful deceiver" are an "indiscriminate abuse" and are "unsupported by facts: Instead, 19th-century Western scholars such as Sprenger, Noldeke, Weil, Muir, Koelle, Grimme and Margoliouth give us a more unbiased estimate of Muhammad's life and character, and substantially agree as to his motives, prophetic call, personal qualifications, and sincerity."<sup>[10]</sup>

Muir, Marcus Dods and others have suggested that Muhammad was at first sincere, but later became deceptive. Koelle finds "the key to the first period of Muhammad's life in Khadija, his first wife," after whose death he became prey to his "evil passions."<sup>[10]</sup> Samuel Marinus Zwemer, a Christian missionary, criticised the life of Muhammad by the standards of the Old and New Testaments, by the pagan morality of his Arab compatriots, and last, by the new law which he brought.<sup>[14]</sup> Quoting Johnstone, Zwemer concludes by claiming that his harsh judgment rests on evidence which "comes all from the lips and the pens of his [i.e. Muhammad's] own devoted adherents."<sup>[10][15]</sup>

### 1.2.5 Regensburg address

The Regensburg address is a lecture delivered on 12 September 2006, by Pope Benedict XVI at the University of Regensburg in Germany. The Pope had previously served as professor of theology at the university, and his lecture was entitled "Faith, Reason and the University – Memories and Reflections". The lecture contained the following passage by Emperor Manuel II:<sup>[16]</sup>

“Show me just what Muhammad brought that was new and there you will find things only evil and inhuman, such as his command to spread by the sword the faith he preached”

The passage originally appeared in the “Dialogue Held With A Certain Persian, the Worthy Mouterizes, in Anakara of Galatia”, written in 1391 as an expression of the views of the Byzantine emperor Manuel II Paleologus, one of the last Christian rulers before the Fall of Constantinople to the Muslim Ottoman Empire, on such issues as forced conversion, holy war, and the relationship between faith and reason.

### 1.3 Hindu criticism

See also: Hindu–Islamic relations

#### 1.3.1 Nineteenth century



Swami Vivekananda.

In his 1875 work *Satyarth Prakash*, Dayanand Saraswati, the founder of Arya Samaj, quoted and interpreted several verses of the Koran and described Muhammad as “pugnacious”, an “imposter”, and one who held out “a bait to men and women, in the name of God, to compass his own selfish needs.”<sup>[17]</sup> Swami Vivekananda wrote in his 1896 book *Raja Yoga* that though Muhammad was inspired, “he was not a trained *Yogi*, nor did he know the

reason of what he was doing.” Vivekananda wrote that great evil has been done through Muhammad’s fanaticism with “whole countries destroyed” and “millions upon millions of people killed.”<sup>[18]</sup>

#### 1.3.2 1920s caricatures

In the 1920s, three caricatures published by Hindus attacked Muhammad and marriages– the book *Vichitra Jivan* (meaning *Strange Life*) by Pandit Kalicharan Sharma in 1923, the pamphlet *Rangila Rasul* (meaning *The Colourful Prophet*) by an anonymous author going by the pseudonym of Pandit Chamupati in 1924, and the essay *Sair-i-Dozakh* (meaning *The Trip to Hell*) by Devi Sharan Sharma in 1927.<sup>[19][20]</sup> In *Vichitra Jivan*, Sharma wrote that Muhammad fell victim to many evils, all his marriages were extraordinary and improper, and that he suffered from epilepsy.<sup>[19]</sup>

Sharma examined in detail the “marvelous powers” of Muhammad, the “products of his body”, and every feature of his “marital and sexual relations”, and ended the book by saying that such a person could not have been a divine messenger.<sup>[19]</sup> The *Sair-i-Dozakh* was a take on the *Isra and Mi'raj*, Muhammad’s journey to heaven and hell according to Islamic traditions. Described as a “brutal satire” by Gene Thursby, it described a dream purportedly experienced by the author in which he mounts a mysterious animal and sees various Hindu and Sikh deities and Gurus in the realm of salvation.<sup>[19]</sup>

#### 1.3.3 Modern criticism

Jai Maharaj, sponsor of the *Satyameva Jayate* website, wrote that Muhammad was “in fact a terrorist, criminal and murderer whose entire life was based on victimizing innocents and indulging in mindless violence, carnage and massacre.” Maharaj chronicled what he called were Muhammad’s “criminal acts in the form of battles and murders”, including the killing of four merchants during the sacred month of *Rajab*, the killing of 70 merchants and 900 men from Mecca, the killing of the poets 'Asma' bint Marwan and Abu 'Afaq, and the initial motivation to kill followed by eventual expelling of the Jewish tribe of Banu Qaynuqa.<sup>[21]</sup>

### 1.4 Voltaire

*Mahomet* (French: *Le fanatisme, ou Mahomet le Prophète*, literally “Fanaticism, or Mahomet the Prophet”) is a five-act tragedy written in 1736 by French playwright and philosopher Voltaire. It made its debut performance in Lille on 25 April 1741. The play is a study of religious fanaticism and self-serving manipulation based on an episode in the traditional biography of Muhammad in which he orders the murder of his critics. Voltaire described the play as “written in opposition to

L E  
FANATISME,  
O U  
M A H O M E T  
L E P R O P H E T E,  
T R A G É D I E.  
P A R  
M . D E V O L T A I R E.



A A M S T E R D A M,  
Chez ESTIENNE LEDET & COMPAGNIE.  
M D C C L I I I.

*Frontispiece of the 1753 edition of Voltaire's play Mahomet*

the founder of a false and barbarous sect to whom could I with more propriety inscribe a satire on the cruelty and errors of a false prophet".<sup>[22]</sup>

In a letter to Frederick II of Prussia in 1740 Voltaire ascribes to Muhammad a brutality that "is assuredly nothing any man can excuse" and suggests that his following stems from superstition and lack of enlightenment.<sup>[23]</sup> He wanted to portray Muhammad as "Tartuffe with a sword in his hand."<sup>[24][25]</sup>

### 1.5 Modern Western criticisms

Modern critics have criticized Muhammad for preaching beliefs that are incompatible with democracy; Somali-Dutch feminist writer Ayaan Hirsi Ali has called him a "tyrant"<sup>[26]</sup> and a "pervert".<sup>[27]</sup> The Dutch Party for Freedom leader Geert Wilders calls Muhammad a "mass murderer and a pedophile".<sup>[28]</sup>

Neuroscientist and prominent ideological critic Sam Harris contrasts the example of Muhammad with that of Jesus Christ. While he regards Christ as something of a

"hippie" figure, Muhammad is an all together different character and one whose example "as held in Islam is universally not [that of] a pacifist," but rather one of a "conquering warlord who spread the faith by the sword." Harris notes that while sayings such as "render unto Caesar that which is Caesar's" provide Christianity with a "rationale for peace," it is impossible to justify non-violence as central to Islam. Harris contends the example of Muhammad provides an imperative to "convert, subjugate, or kill" and "the core principle of Islam is Jihad."<sup>[29]</sup> Harris also suggests that Muhammad "may well have been schizophrenic," dismissing the Prophet's claim that the Koran was dictated to him by the archangel Gabriel.<sup>[30]</sup>

American historian Daniel Pipes sees Muhammad as a politician, stating that "because Muhammad created a new community, the religion that was its *raison d'être* had to meet the political needs of its adherents."<sup>[31]</sup> Scholar Ibn Warraq finds Muhammad's message problematic due to abrogation of passages advocating "clemency and tolerance" by passages advocating "violent action."<sup>[32]</sup>

## 2 Points of contention

### 2.1 Muhammad's marriages

See also: Muhammad's wives

"Muhammad's marriages have long provided another source of Western criticism of the moral character of the prophet."

— John Esposito, *Islam: The Straight Path*<sup>[33]</sup>

One of the popular historical criticisms of Muhammad in the West has been his polygynous marriages.<sup>[34][35][36][37]</sup> According to American historian John Esposito, the Semitic cultures in general permitted polygamy (for example, the practice could be found in biblical and post-biblical Judaism); it was particularly a common practice among Arabs, especially among nobles and leaders.<sup>[34]</sup>

Muslims have often pointed out that Muhammad married Khadija (a widow whose age is estimated to have been 40), when he was 25 years old, and remained monogamous to her for more than 24 years until she died.<sup>[34]</sup> Norman Geisler frames Muhammad's marriages as a question of moral inconsistency, since Muhammad was unwilling to abide by the revealed limit of four wives that he enjoined on other men.<sup>[38]</sup> The Quran states that the limit of four wives does not apply to Muhammad.<sup>[Quran 33:50]</sup> Muslims have generally responded that the marriages of Muhammad were not conducted to satisfy worldly desires or lusts, but rather they were done for a higher purpose and due to God's command.<sup>[39]</sup> Medieval Sufi, Ibn Arabi, sees Muham-

mad's relationships with his wives as a proof of his superiority amongst men.<sup>[40]</sup>

### 2.1.1 Aisha

Main article: [Aisha](#)

See also: [Baligh](#)

From the 20th century onwards, a common point of contention has been Muhammad's marriage to Aisha, who was six or seven when betrothed to Muhammad<sup>[41]</sup> and nine, or according to al-Tabari, ten, when the marriage was consummated.<sup>[41][42][43][44][45]</sup> American historian Denise Spellberg states that "these specific references to the bride's age reinforce Aisha's pre-menarcheal status and, implicitly, her virginity."<sup>[41]</sup> Some modern Muslims, however, have estimated the age of Aisha at the time of her marriage to Muhammad to be between 12 to 24 years of age.<sup>[46][47]</sup>

Colin Turner, a UK professor of Islamic studies,<sup>[48]</sup> states that since such marriages between an older man and a young girl were customary among the Bedouins, Muhammad's marriage would not have been considered improper by his contemporaries.<sup>[49]</sup> Karen Armstrong, the British author on comparative religion, has affirmed that "There was no impropriety in Muhammad's marriage to Aisha. Marriages conducted in absentia to seal an alliance were often contracted at this time between adults and minors who were even younger than Aisha. This practice continued in Europe well into the early modern period."<sup>[50]</sup>

Critics such as Baptist pastor Jerry Vines and the Dutch Party for Freedom leader Geert Wilders have cited the age of Aisha to denounce Muhammad for having had sex with a nine-year-old, referring to Muhammad as a pedophile.<sup>[28][51][52]</sup> Pandit Chamupati wrote that Aisha was about the same age as Muhammad's granddaughter, and a better way for Muhammad to make Abu Bakr (Aisha's father) a relative would have been to adopt Aisha as his own daughter and marry her off.<sup>[53]</sup>

### 2.1.2 Zaynab bint Jahsh

Main article: [Zaynab bint Jahsh](#)

Western criticism has focused especially on the marriage of Muhammad to Zaynab bint Jahsh, the divorced wife of Zayd ibn Harithah, an ex-slave whom Muhammad had adopted as his son.<sup>[54]</sup> According to Tabari, taken from Al-Waqidi, the story goes that<sup>[55]</sup> "One day Muhammad went out looking for Zayd. There was a covering of haircloth over the doorway, but the wind had lifted the covering so that the doorway was uncovered. Zaynab was in her chamber, undressed, and admiration for her entered the heart of the Prophet. After that Allah made her unattractive to Zayd and he divorced Zainab." Karen Armstrong's

2006 biography of Muhammad contextualises this: "A pious woman, [Zaynab] was a skilled leather-worker and gave all the proceeds of her craft to the poor. Muhammad seems to have seen her with new eyes and to have fallen in love quite suddenly when he had called at her house one afternoon to speak to Zayd, who happened to be out. Not expecting any visitors, Zaynab had come to the door in dishabille, more revealingly dressed than usual, and Muhammad had averted his eyes hastily, muttering 'Praise be to Allah, who changes men's hearts!'"<sup>[50]</sup>

According to William Montgomery Watt, Zaynab herself was working for marriage with Muhammad and was not happy being married to Zayd.<sup>[56][57]</sup> Watt also places doubt on the story outlined by Al-Waqidi and states that it should be taken with a "grain of salt."<sup>[58]</sup> According to Watt, Zaynab was either thirty-five or thirty-eight years old at the time and that the story initially outlined by Al-Waqidi in which he detailed Muhammad's incident with Zaynab during the absence of Zayd may have been tampered with in the course of transmission.<sup>[59]</sup> According to Mazheruddin Siddiqi, Zaynab as the cousin of Muhammad was seen by him many times before her marriage to Zayd.<sup>[60]</sup> Siddiqi states: "He [Muhammad] had seen her many times before but he was never attracted to her physical beauty, else he would have married her, instead of insisting on her that she should marry Zaid."<sup>[61]</sup>

According to the English translation of the book, *The Wives of the Messenger of Allah* by Muhammad Swaleh Awadh, it states that she was married to Muhammad in Dhul Qa'adah, in the fifth year of Hijra. Since Zaynab was the wife of Muhammad's adopted son, pre-Islamic practices frowned upon such her marriage with the prophet.<sup>[62]</sup> Arab society would have viewed this union as profoundly wrong; because they considered an adopted son was truly a "son", for a man to marry his adopted son's wife - even if she was divorced - was considered wrong.<sup>[63][64]</sup>

The marriage was used by Munafiqs of Medina to discredit Muhammad on two fronts, one of double standards as she was his fifth wife, while everyone else was restricted to four, and marrying his adopted son's wife. This was exactly what Muhammad feared and was initially hesitant in marrying her. The Qur'an, however, confirmed that this marriage was valid. Thus Muhammad, confident of his faith in the Qur'an, proceeded to reject the existing Arabic norms.<sup>[65]</sup> When Zaynab's waiting period from her divorce was complete, Muhammad married her.<sup>[66]</sup> In reference to this incident, Sura Al-Ahzab 33:37 says:

"Behold! Thou didst say to one who had received the grace of Allah and thy favour: "Retain thou (in wedlock) thy wife, and fear Allah." But thou didst hide in thy heart that which Allah was about to make manifest: thou didst fear the people, but it is more fitting that thou shouldst fear Allah. Then when Zaid had dissolved (his marriage) with her, with the nec-

essary (formality), We joined her in marriage to thee: in order that (in future) there may be no difficulty to the Believers in (the matter of) marriage with the wives of their adopted sons, when the latter have dissolved with the necessary (formality) (their marriage) with them. And Allah's command must be fulfilled."

Critics have pointed to this Sura as an example of a self-serving revelation that reflected the Prophet's desires rather than the will of God.<sup>[67][68][69][70][71]</sup>

## 2.2 Treatment of enemies

Norman Geisler accuses Muhammad of "mercilessness" towards the Jewish tribes of Medina.<sup>[72]</sup> Geisler also argues that Muhammad "had no aversion to politically expedient assassinations," "was not indisposed to breaking promises when he found it advantageous" and engaged in retaliation towards those who mocked him."<sup>[72]</sup> The Orientalist William Muir, in assessing Muhammad's character, described him as cruel and faithless in dealing with his enemies.<sup>[73][74]</sup>

Magnanimity or moderation are nowhere discernible as features in the conduct of Mahomet towards such of his enemies as failed to tender a timely allegiance. Over the bodies of the Coreish who fell at Badr, he exulted with savage satisfaction; and several prisoners,—accused of no crime but that of scepticism and political opposition,—were deliberately executed at his command. The Prince of Kheibar, after being subjected to inhuman torture for the purpose of discovering the treasures of his tribe, was, with his cousin, put to death on the pretext of having treacherously concealed them: and his wife was led away captive to the tent of the conqueror. Sentence of exile was enforced by Mahomet with rigorous severity on two whole Jewish tribes at Medîna; and of a third, likewise his neighbours, the women and children were sold into distant captivity, while the men, amounting to several hundreds, were butchered in cold blood before his eyes. ... The perfidious attack at Nakhla, where the first blood in the internecine war with the Coreish was shed, although at first disavowed by Mahomet for its scandalous breach of the sacred usages of Arabia, was eventually justified by a pretended revelation. ... The pretext on which the Bani Nadhîr were besieged and expatriated (namely, that Gabriel had revealed their design against the prophet's life,) was feeble and unworthy of an honest cause. When Medîna was beleaguered by the confederate army, Mahomet sought the services of Nueim, a traitor, and employed him to sow distrust among the enemy

by false and treacherous reports; "for," said he, "what else is War but a game at deception?" ... And what is perhaps worst of all, the dastardly assassination of political and religious opponents, countenanced and frequently directed as they were in all their cruel and perfidious details by Mahomet himself, leaves a dark and indelible blot upon his character.<sup>[73]</sup>

### 2.2.1 Jewish tribes of Medina



*The massacre of the Banu Qurayza.*

See also: Invasion of Banu Qurayza

Muhammad has been often criticized outside of the Islamic world for his treatment of the Jewish tribes of Medina.<sup>[34]</sup> An example is the mass killing of the men of the Banu Qurayza, a Jewish tribe of Medina. The tribe was accused of having engaged in treasonous agreements with the enemies besieging Medina in the Battle of the Trench in 627.<sup>[75][76]</sup>

Ibn Ishaq writes that Muhammad approved the beheading of some 600-900 individuals who surrendered unconditionally after a siege that lasted several weeks.<sup>[77]</sup> (Also see Bukhari 5:59:362) (Yusuf Ali notes that the Qur'an discusses this battle in verses <sup>[Quran 33:10]</sup>).<sup>[78]</sup> They were buried in a mass grave in the Medina market place, and the women and children were sold into slavery.

According to Norman Stillman, the incident cannot be judged by present-day moral standards. Citing Deut. 20:13-14 as an example, Stillman states that the slaughter of adult males and the enslavement of women and children - though no doubt causing bitter suffering - was common practice throughout the ancient world.<sup>[79]</sup> According to Rudi Paret, adverse public opinion was more a point of

concern to Muhammad when he had some date palms cut down during a siege, than after this incident.<sup>[80]</sup> Esposito also argues that in Muhammad's time, traitors were executed and points to similar situations in the Bible.<sup>[81]</sup> Esposito says that Muhammad's motivation was political rather than racial or theological; he was trying to establish Muslim dominance and rule in Arabia.<sup>[34]</sup>

A few Muslim scholars, such as W. N. Arafat and Barakat Ahmad, have disputed the historicity of the incident.<sup>[82]</sup> Ahmad argues that only the leading members of the tribe were killed.<sup>[83]</sup> Arafat argued that Ibn Ishaq gathered information from descendants of the Qurayza Jews, who exaggerated the details of the incident.<sup>[84][85]</sup> However Watt finds Arafat's arguments "not entirely convincing."<sup>[86]</sup>

### 2.3 Death of Kenana ibn al-Rabi

Main article: [Kenana ibn al-Rabi](#)

After the last fort of the Jewish settlement called Khaybar was taken by Muhammad and his men, the chief of the Jews, called Kinana ibn al-Rabi, was asked by Muhammad to reveal the location of some hidden treasure. When he refused, Muhammad ordered a man to torture Kinana, and the man "kindled a fire with flint and steel on his chest until he was nearly dead." Kinana was then beheaded, and Muhammad took his young wife Safiyya as a concubine.<sup>[87]</sup>

Critics take these events, especially the story of the torture of Kinana, to be another blot on Muhammad's character.<sup>[73][88]</sup> Those few Western scholars who discuss the alleged torture of Kinana, like William Muir, do not question the validity of the story.<sup>[89]</sup> Muslims generally dispute this incident. Some claim that this was yet another story that Ibn Ishaq heard second-hand from Jewish sources, casting doubt on its authenticity.<sup>[90]</sup> Others argue that Kinana was killed in battle and never taken captive.<sup>[91]</sup>

### 2.4 Ownership of slaves

Main article: [Muhammad and slavery](#)

Rodney Stark argues that "the fundamental problem facing Muslim theologians vis-à-vis the morality of slavery is that *Muhammad bought, sold, captured, and owned slaves*", though he states that Muhammad did advise that slaves be treated well: "Feed them what you eat yourself and clothe them with what you wear...They are God's people like unto you and be kind unto them". In addition, Stark contrasts Islam with Christianity, implying that Christian theologians wouldn't have been able to "work their way around the biblical acceptance of slavery" if Jesus had owned slaves like Muhammad did.<sup>[92]</sup>

Some Western thinkers and Christian evangelicals criticize Muhammad for having had a child (Ibrahim, who died in infancy) by a slave girl called Maria al-Qibtiyya, one of his concubines who was a present from the Christian Byzantine ruler of Egypt. Sources, including Ibn Qayyim Al-Jawziyya claim that she was a concubine and not a slave.<sup>[93][94]</sup> She is also not mentioned in Ibn-Hisham's notes on Ibn-Ishaq's biography where he lists the wives of Muhammad.<sup>[95]</sup> According to a hadith, Muhammad would eventually possess no slaves.<sup>[96]</sup>

Muhammad made it legal for his men to marry their slaves and the women they captured in war, giving them full marriage rights.<sup>[97][98]</sup> In addition, according to Muslim theologians, he made it lawful for male masters to have sexual relations with female captives and slaves;<sup>[99][100]</sup> according to Salafi cleric, Muhammad Al-Munajjid this is regardless of whether or not the slave woman gives her consent ("...a slave woman does not have the right to refuse her master's requests unless she has a valid excuse. If she does that she is being disobedient and he has the right to discipline her in whatever manner he thinks is appropriate and is allowed in sharee'ah."<sup>[101]</sup>

Al-Muminun 6 and Al-Maarij 30 both, in identical wording, draw a distinction between spouses and "those whom one's right hands possess", saying "أَزْوَاجَهُمْ أَوْ مَا مَلَكَتْ أَيْمَانُهُمْ" (literally, "their spouses or what their right hands possess"), while clarifying that sexual intercourse with either is permissible. Sayyid Abul Ala Maududi explains that "two categories of women have been excluded from the general command of guarding the private parts: (a) wives, (b) women who are legally in one's possession".<sup>[102]</sup> This practice is referred to in the Quran as *ma malakat aymanukum* ("what your right hands possess").

One of the five pillars of Islam (according to the Sunnis), or one of the five Furoo-e-Deen ("Branches of Religion," according to Shi'as), Zakat is meant to encourage Muslims to donate money to free slaves and bonded labourers in countries where slaves and bonded labourers may have existed. The amount of zakat to be paid on capital assets (e.g. money) is 2.5% (1/40)<sup>[103]</sup> for people who are not poor.

Quran, Surat At-Tawbah 9:60 specifies that Zakat is to be used for freeing slaves and bonded labourers:

"Zakat expenditures are only for the poor and for the needy and for those employed to collect (Zakat) and for bringing hearts together and for freeing captives (or slaves) and for those in debt (or bonded labour) and for the cause of Allah and for the (stranded) traveller - an obligation (imposed) by Allah . And Allah is Knowing and Wise."

Muhammad would send his companions like Abu Bakr and Uthman ibn Affan to buy slaves to free. Many early

converts to Islam were the poor and former slaves like Bilal ibn Rabah al-Habashi.<sup>[104][105][106][107]</sup>

## 2.5 Religious syncretism and compromise

John Mason Neale (1818-66) accused Muhammad of pandering to his followers, arguing that he constructed Islam out of a mixture of beliefs that provided something for everyone.<sup>[108]</sup>

That Mahomet was not the enthusiast which some semi-infidel or latitudinarian authors have considered him, is evident from the ingenuity with which, while he panders to the passions of his followers, he also infuses into his religion so much of each of those tenets to which the varying sects of his countrymen were addicted, as to enable each and all to please themselves by the belief that the new doctrine was only a reform of, and improvement on, that to which they had been accustomed. The Christians were conciliated by the acknowledgment of our LORD as the Greatest of Prophets; the Jews, by the respectful mention of Moses and their other Lawgivers; the idolaters, by the veneration which the Impostor professed for the Temple of Mecca, and the black stone which it contained; and the Chaldeans, by the pre-eminence which he gives to the ministrations of the Angel Gabriel, and his whole scheme of the Seven Heavens. To a people devoted to the gratification of their passions and addicted to Oriental luxury, he appealed, not unsuccessfully, by the promise of a Paradise whose sensual delights were unbounded, and the permission of a free exercise of pleasures in this world.<sup>[108]</sup>

Thomas Patrick Hughes (b. 1838) argued that the Hajj represents an expedient compromise between Muhammad's monotheistic principles and Arabian paganism.<sup>[109]</sup>

The Makkan pilgrimage admits of no other explanation than this, that the Prophet of Arabia found it expedient to compromise with Arabian idolatry. And hence we find the superstition and silly customs of the Hajj grafted on to a religion which professes to be both monotheistic in its principle, and iconoclastic in its practices.

A careful and critical study of Islām will, we think, convince any candid mind that at first Muḥammad intended to construct his religion on the lines of the Old Testament. Abraham, the true Muslim, was his prototype, Moses his law-giver, and Jerusalem his Qiblah. But circumstances were ever wont to change not only

the Prophet's revelations, but also his moral standards. Makkah became the Qiblah; and the spectacle of the Muslim world bowing in the direction of a black stone, whilst they worship the one God, marks Islām, with its Makkan pilgrimage; as a religion of compromise. Apologists of Islām have endeavoured to shield Muḥammad from the solemn charge of having "forged the name of God," but we know of nothing which can justify the act of giving the stupid and unmeaning ceremonies of the pilgrimage all the force and solemnity of a divine enactment.<sup>[109]</sup>

## 2.6 Psychological and medical condition

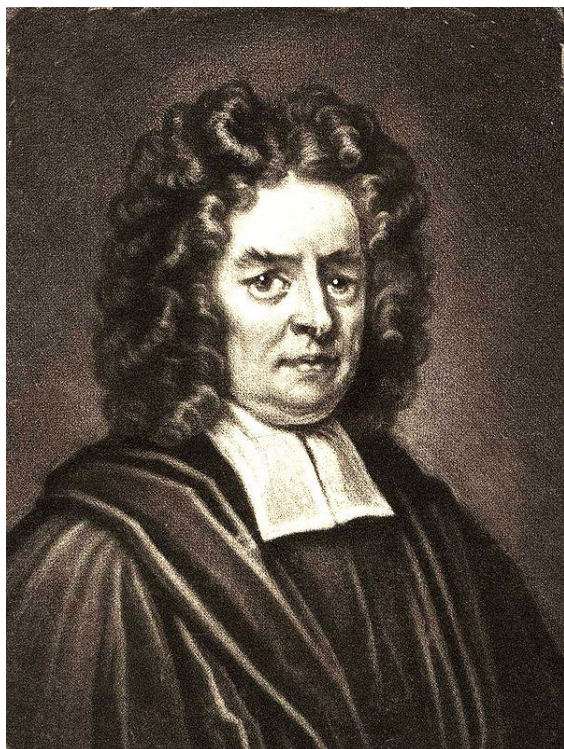


*Muhammad depicted as having a seizure (1640)*

Muhammad is reported to have had mysterious seizures at the moments of inspiration. According to Philip Schaff (1819-93), during his revelations Muhammad "sometimes growled like a camel, foamed at his mouth, and streamed with perspiration."<sup>[110]</sup> Welch, a scholar of Islamic studies, in the *Encyclopedia of Islam* states that the graphic descriptions of Muhammad's condition at these moments may be regarded as genuine, since they are unlikely to have been invented by later Muslims. According to Welch, these seizures should have been the most convincing evidence for the superhuman origin of Muhammad's inspirations for people around him. Others adopted alternative explanations for these seizures and claimed that he was possessed, a soothsayer, or a magician. Welch states it remains uncertain whether Muhammad had such experiences before he began to see himself as a prophet and if so how long did he have such experiences.<sup>[111]</sup>

According to Temkin, the first attribution of *epileptic* seizures to Muhammad comes from the 8th century Byzantine historian Theophanes who wrote that Muhammad's wife "was very much grieved that she, being of no-



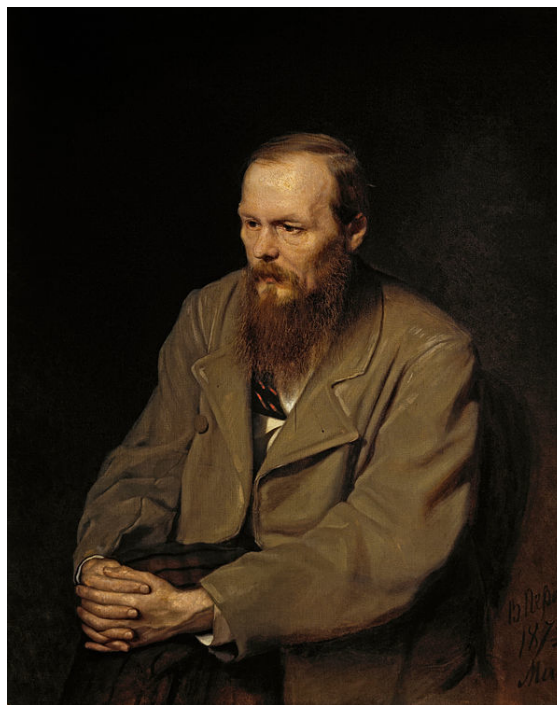


*Humphrey Prideaux, engraving by John Simon.*

ble descent, was tied to such a man, who was not only poor but epileptic as well.”<sup>[112]</sup> In the Middle Ages, the general perception of those who suffered epilepsy was an unclean and incurable wretch who might be possessed by the Devil. The political hostility between Islam and Christianity contributed to the continuation of the accusation of epilepsy throughout the Middle Ages.<sup>[112]</sup> The Christian minister Archdeacon Humphrey Prideaux gave the following description of Muhammad’s visions:<sup>[112]</sup>

He pretended to receive all his revelations from the Angel Gabriel, and that he was sent from God of purpose to deliver them unto him. And whereas he was subject to the falling-sickness, whenever the fit was upon him, he pretended it to be a Trance, and that the Angel Gabriel comes from God with some Revelations unto him.

Some modern Western scholars also have a skeptical view of Muhammad’s seizures. Frank R. Freeman states Muhammad had “conscious control over the course of the spells and can pretend to be in a religious trance.”<sup>[112]</sup> During the nineteenth century, as Islam was no longer a political or military threat to Western society, and perceptions of epilepsy changed, the theological and moral associations with epilepsy were removed; epilepsy was now viewed as a medical disorder.<sup>[112]</sup> Nineteenth century orientalist, D. S. Margoliouth claims that Muhammad suffered from epilepsy and even occasionally faked it for effect.<sup>[113]</sup>



*A portrait of Fyodor Dostoyevsky in 1872 painted by Vasily Perov.*

Sprenger attributes Muhammad’s revelations to epileptic fits or a “paroxysm of cataleptic insanity.”<sup>[110]</sup> In Schaff’s view, Muhammad’s “early and frequent epileptic fits” provided “some light on his revelations.”<sup>[110]</sup> The most famous epileptic of the 19th century, Fyodor Dostoyevsky (d.1881) wrote that epileptic attacks have an inspirational quality; he said they are “a supreme exaltation of emotional subjectivity” in which time stands still. Dostoyevsky claimed that his own attacks were similar to those of Muhammad: “Probably it was of such an instant, that the epileptic Mahomet was speaking when he said that he had visited all the dwelling places of Allah within a shorter time than it took for his pitcher full of water to empty itself.”<sup>[112]</sup>

In an essay that discusses views of Muhammad’s psychology, Franz Bul (1903) is said to have observed that “hysterical natures find unusual difficulty and often complete inability to distinguish the false from the true”, and to have thought this to be “the safest way to interpret the strange inconsistencies in the life of the Prophet.” In the same essay Duncan Black Macdonald (1911) is credited with the opinion that “fruitful investigation of the Prophet’s life (should) proceed upon the assumption that he was fundamentally a pathological case.”<sup>[114]</sup>

Modern Western scholars of Islam have rejected the diagnosis of epilepsy.<sup>[112]</sup> Tor Andrae rejects the idea that the inspired state is pathological attributing it to a scientifically superficial and hasty theory arguing that those who consider Muhammad epileptic should consider all types of semi-conscious and trance-like states, occasional loss of consciousness, and similar conditions as epilep-

tic attacks. Andrae writes that "[i]f epilepsy is to denote only those severe attacks which involve serious consequences for the physical and mental health, then the statement that Mohammad suffered from epilepsy must be emphatically rejected." Caesar Farah suggests that "[t]hese insinuations resulted from the 19th-century infatuation with scientifically superficial theories of medical psychology."<sup>[115]</sup> Noth, in the *Encyclopedia of Islam*, states that such accusations were a typical feature of medieval European Christian polemic.<sup>[116]</sup>

Maxime Rodinson says that it is most probable that Muhammad's conditions was basically of the same kind as that found in many mystics rather than epilepsy.<sup>[117]</sup> Fazlur Rahman refutes epileptic fits for the following reasons: Muhammad's condition begins with his career at the age of 40; according to the tradition seizures are *invariably* associated with the revelation and never occur by itself. Lastly, a sophisticated society like the Meccan or Medinese would have identified epilepsy clearly and definitely.<sup>[118]</sup>

William Montgomery Watt also disagrees with the epilepsy diagnosis, saying that "there are no real grounds for such a view." Elaborating, he says that "epilepsy leads to physical and mental degeneration, and there are no signs of that in Muhammad." He then goes further and states that Muhammad was psychologically sound in general: "he (Muhammad) was clearly in full possession of his faculties to the very end of his life." Watt concludes by stating "It is incredible that a person subject to epilepsy, or hysteria, or even ungovernable fits of emotion, could have been the active leader of military expeditions, or the cool far-seeing guide of a city-state and a growing religious community; but all this we know Muhammad to have been."<sup>[119]</sup>

Frank R. Freeman (1976) thinks that the above reasons given by modern biographers of Muhammad in rejection of epilepsy come from the widespread misconceptions about the various types of epilepsy.<sup>[112]</sup> In his differential diagnosis, Freeman rejects schizophrenic hallucinations,<sup>[120]</sup> drug-induced mental changes such as might occur after eating plants containing hallucinogenic materials,<sup>[121]</sup> transient ischemic attacks,<sup>[122]</sup> hypoglycemia,<sup>[123]</sup> labyrinthitis, Ménière's disease, or other inner ear maladies.<sup>[124]</sup> At the end, Freeman argues that if one were forced to make a diagnosis psychomotor seizures of temporal lobe epilepsy would be the most tenable one, although our lack of scientific as well as historical knowledge makes unequivocal decision impossible. Freeman cites evidences supporting and opposing this diagnosis.<sup>[125]</sup> In the end, Freeman points out that a medical diagnosis should not ignore Muhammad's moral message because it is just as likely, perhaps more likely, for God communicate with a person in an abnormal state of mind.<sup>[126]</sup>

From a Muslim point of view, Freeman says, Muhammed's mental state at the time of revelation

was unique and is not therefore amenable to medical or scientific discourse.<sup>[112]</sup> In reaction to Freeman's article, GM. S. Megahed, a Muslim neurologist criticized the article arguing that there are no scientific explanations for many religious phenomena, and that if Muhammad's message is a result of psychomotor seizures, then on the same basis Moses' and Jesus' message would be the result of psychomotor seizures. In response, Freeman attributed such negative reactions to his article to the general misconceptions about epilepsy as a demeaning condition. Freeman said that he did plan to write an article on the inspirational spells of St. Paul, but the existence of such misconceptions caused him to cancel it.<sup>[127]</sup>

### 3 Criticism of Muhammad's personal motivations

#### 3.1 19th century and early 20th century

William Muir, like many other 19th century scholars divides Muhammad's life into two periods — Meccan and Medinan. He asserts that "in the Meccan period of [Muhammad's] life there certainly can be traced no personal ends or unworthy motives," painting him as a man of good faith and a genuine reformer. However, that all changed after the *Hijra*, according to Muir. "There [in Medina] temporal power, aggrandisement, and self-gratification mingled rapidly with the grand object of the Prophet's life, and they were sought and attained by just the same instrumentality." From that point on, he accuses Muhammad of manufacturing "messages from heaven" in order to justify a lust for women and reprisals against enemies, among other sins.<sup>[128]</sup>

Philip Schaff says that "in the earlier part of his life he [Muhammad] was a sincere reformer and enthusiast, but after the establishment of his kingdom a slave of ambition for conquest" and describes him as "a slave of sensual passion."<sup>[110]</sup> William St. Clair Tisdall also accused Muhammad of inventing revelations to justify his own desires.<sup>[129][130]</sup>

But at Medina he seems to have cast off all shame; and the incidents connected with his marital relations, more especially the story of his marriage with Zainab the wife of his adopted son Zaid, and his connexion with Mary the Coptic slave-girl, are sufficient proof of his unbridled licentiousness and of his daring impiety in venturing to ascribe to GOD Most High the verses which he composed to sanction such conduct.<sup>[129]</sup>

D. S. Margoliouth, another 19th century scholar, sees Muhammad as a charlatan who beguiled his followers

with techniques like those used by fraudulent mediums today. He has expressed a view that Muhammad faked his religious sincerity, playing the part of a messenger from God like a man in a play, adjusting his performances to create an illusion of spirituality.<sup>[131]</sup> Margoliouth is especially critical of the character of Muhammad as revealed in Ibn Ishaq's famous biography, which he holds as especially telling because Muslims cannot dismiss it as the writings of an enemy:

In order to gain his ends he (Muhammad) recoils from no expedient, and he approves of similar unscrupulousness on the part of his adherents, when exercised in his interest. He profits to the utmost from the chivalry of the Meccans, but rarely requites it with the like... For whatever he does he is prepared to plead the express authorization of the deity. It is, however, impossible to find any doctrine which he is not prepared to abandon in order to secure a political end.<sup>[132]</sup>

### 3.2 Late 20th century

According to Watt and Richard Bell, recent writers have generally dismissed the idea that Muhammad deliberately deceived his followers, arguing that Muhammad "was absolutely sincere and acted in complete good faith".<sup>[133]</sup> Modern secular historians generally decline to address the question of whether the messages Muhammad reported being revealed to him were from "his unconscious, the collective unconscious functioning in him, or from some divine source", but they acknowledge that the material came from "beyond his conscious mind."<sup>[134]</sup> Watt says that sincerity does not directly imply correctness: In contemporary terms, Muhammad might have mistaken for divine revelation his own unconscious.<sup>[135]</sup> William Montgomery Watt states:

Only a profound belief in himself and his mission explains Muhammad's readiness to endure hardship and persecution during the Meccan period when from a secular point of view there was no prospect of success. Without sincerity how could he have won the allegiance and even devotion of men of strong and upright character like Abu-Bakr and 'Umar ? ... There is thus a strong case for holding that Muhammad was sincere. If in some respects he was mistaken, his mistakes were not due to deliberate lying or imposture<sup>[136]</sup>...the important point is that the message was not the product of Muhammad's conscious mind. He believed that he could easily distinguish between his own thinking and these revelations. His sincerity in this belief must be accepted by the modern historian, for this alone makes credible

the development of a great religion. The further question, however, whether the messages came from Muhammad's unconscious, or the collective unconscious functioning in him, or from some divine source, is beyond the competence of the historian.<sup>[137]</sup>

Rudi Paret agrees, writing that "Muhammad was not a deceiver,"<sup>[138]</sup> and Welch also holds that "the really powerful factor in Muhammad's life and the essential clue to his extraordinary success was his unshakable belief from beginning to end that he had been called by God. A conviction such as this, which, once firmly established, does not admit of the slightest doubt, exercises an incalculable influence on others. The certainty with which he came forward as the executor of God's will gave his words and ordinances an authority that proved finally compelling."<sup>[139]</sup>

Bernard Lewis, another modern historian, commenting on the common Western Medieval view of Muhammad as a self-seeking impostor, states that<sup>[140]</sup>

The modern historian will not readily believe that so great and significant a movement was started by a self-seeking impostor. Nor will he be satisfied with a purely supernatural explanation, whether it postulates aid of divine or diabolical origin; rather, like Gibbon, will he seek 'with becoming submission, to ask not indeed what were the first, but what were the secondary causes of the rapid growth' of the new faith.

Watt rejects the idea that Muhammad's moral behavior deteriorated after he migrated to Medina. He argues that "it is based on too facile a use of the principle that all power corrupts and absolute power corrupts absolutely". Watt interprets incidents in the Medinan period in such a way that they mark "no failure in Muhammad to live to his ideals and no lapse from his moral principles."<sup>[141]</sup>

## 4 See also

- Criticism of Islam
- Depictions of Muhammad
- Historicity of Muhammad
- Censorship in Islamic societies

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- [67] "Being the wife of an adopted son, she was unlawful to the Prophet, but a pretended revelation (see Qur'ān, Sūrah xxxiii. 37) settled the difficulty, and Muḥammad married her. "Hughes, T. P. (1885). *A Dictionary of Islam: Being a Cyclopædia of the Doctrines, Rites, Ceremonies, and Customs, together with the Technical and Theological Terms, of the Muhammadan Religion*. London: W. H. Allen & Co.
- [68] "However, Muhammad did this, and had to justify his action by alleging that he had for it the direct sanction of God. It was first necessary to show that God did not approve of the general objection to marriage with wives of adopted sons, and so the revelation came thus: Nor hath He made your adopted sons to be as your sons.—Sūratu'l Ahzāb (33) v. 4. ... Having thus settled the general principle, the way was clear for Muhammad to act in this particular case, and to claim divine sanction for setting at nought the sentiment of the Arab people. So the revelation goes on to say: And remember when thou (i.e. Muhammad) said to him (i.e. Zaid), unto whom God had shown favour and to whom thou also hadst shown favour, 'Keep thy wife to thyself and fear God;' and thou didst hide in thy mind what God would bring to light and thou didst fear man; but more right had it been to fear God. And when Zaid had settled to divorce her, we married her to thee, that it might not be a crime in the faithful to marry the wives of their adopted sons when they have settled the affairs concerning them. And the order of God is to be performed. No blame attaches to the Prophet where God hath given him a permission.—Sūratu'l Ahzāb (33) vv. 37–8. This relaxation of the moral law for Muhammad's benefit, because he was a prophet, shows how easy the divorce between religion and morality becomes in Islām." Sell, E. (1905). *The Historical Development of the Quran* (pp. 150–152). London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge.
- [69] "But we learn the same lesson from all such investigations, and that is how completely Muḥammad adapted his pretended revelations to what he believed to be the need of the moment. The same thing is true with regard to what we read in Sūrah Al Ahzāb regarding the circumstances attending his marriage with Zainab, whom his adopted son Zaid divorced for his sake. The subject is too unsavoury for us to deal with at any length, but a reference to what the Qur'ān itself (Sūrah XXXIII., 37) says about the matter, coupled with the explanations afforded by the Commentators and the Traditions, will prove that Muḥammad's own character and disposition have left their mark upon the moral law of Islām and upon the Qur'ān itself." Tisdall, W. S. C. (1911). *The Original Sources of the Qur'ān* (pp. 278–279). London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge.
- [70] "But at Medina he seems to have cast off all shame; and the incidents connected with his marital relations, more especially the story of his marriage with Zainab the wife of his adopted son Zaid, and his connexion with Mary the Coptic slave-girl, are sufficient proof of his unbridled licentiousness and of his daring impiety in venturing to ascribe to GOD Most High the verses which he composed to sanction such conduct." Tisdall, W. S. C. (1895). *The Religion of the Crescent, or Islām: Its Strength, Its Weakness, Its Origin, Its Influence*. Non-Christian Religious Systems (p. 177). London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge.
- [71] "The scandal of the marriage was removed by this extraordinary revelation, and Zeid was thenceforward called not "the son of Mahomet," as heretofore, but by his proper name, "Zeid, the son of Hārith." Our only matter of wonder is, that the Revelations of Mahomet continued after this to be regarded by his people as inspired communications from the Almighty, when they were so palpably formed to secure his own objects, and pander even to his evil desires. We hear of no doubts or questionings; and we can only attribute the confiding and credulous spirit of his followers to the absolute ascendancy of his powerful mind over all who came within its influence." Muir, W. (1861). *The Life of Mahomet* (Vol. 3, p. 231). London: Smith, Elder and Co.
- [72] Geisler, N. L. (1999). In Baker encyclopedia of Christian apologetics. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books. Article on *Muhammad, Character of*.
- [73] Muir, W. (1861). *The Life of Mahomet, Volume IV* (pp. 307–309). London: Smith, Elder and Co.
- [74] Thomas Patrick Hughes also accuses Muhammad of cruelty. "A striking instance of the cruelty of Muḥammad's

- character occurs in a tradition given in the Ṣaḥīḥu 'l-Bukhārī (p. 1019). Anas relates, "Some of the people of the tribe of 'Ukl came to the Prophet and embraced Islām; but the air of al-Madīnah did not agree with them, and they wanted to leave the place. And the Prophet ordered them to go where the camels given in alms were assembled, and to drink their milk, which they did, and recovered from their sickness. But after this they became apostates, and renounced Islām, and stole the camels. Then the Prophet sent some people after them, and they were seized and brought back to al-Madīnah. Then the Prophet ordered their hands and their feet to be cut off as a punishment for theft, and their eyes to be pulled out. But the Prophet did not stop the bleeding, and they died." And in another it reads, "The Prophet ordered hot irons to be drawn across their eyes, and then to be cast on the plain of al-Madīnah; and when they asked for water it was not given them, and they died." Hughes, T. P. (1885). In *A Dictionary of Islam: Being a Cyclopædia of the Doctrines, Rites, Ceremonies, and Customs, together with the Technical and Theological Terms, of the Muhammadan Religion*. London: W. H. Allen & Co.
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- [77] Ibn Ishaq, A. Guillaume (translator), *The Life of Muhammad*, p. 464, 2002, Oxford University Press, ISBN 0-19-636033-1
- [78] Yusuf Ali, "The Meaning of the Holy Quran", (11th Edition), p. 1059, Amana Publications, 1989, ISBN 0-915957-76-0
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- [88] Ibn Warraq, *Why I Am Not a Muslim*, p. 99, Prometheus Books, 1995, 0879759844
- [89] William Muir, *Life of Mahomet*, p. 391, 2003, Kessinger Publishing, ISBN 0-7661-7741-6
- [90] Bassam Zawadi, *Rebuttal to Silas's Article "MUHAMMAD AND THE DEATH OF KINANA"*
- [91] Islam Online on Safiyya, Safiyah Bint Huyeyi Ibn Akhtab
- [92] Rodney Stark, "For the Glory of God: How Monotheism Led to Reformations, Science, Witch-Hunts, and the End of Slavery", p. 338, 2003, Princeton University Press, ISBN 0-691-11436-6
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- [112] Frank R. Freeman, *A Differential Diagnosis of the Inspirational Spells of Muhammad the Prophet of Islam*, *Journal of Epilepsia*, 17 :4 23-427, 1976
- [113] Margoliouth, David Samuel (1905). *Mohammed and the Rise of Islam*. Putnam. p. 46.
- [114] Jeffery, Arthur (2000). *The Quest for the Historical Muhammad*. Prometheus Books. p. 346. ISBN 1-57392-787-2.
- [115] See:
- Caesar Farah, "Islam: Beliefs and Observances" (2003), Barron's Educational Series, ISBN 0-7641-2226-6
  - Tor Andrae, *Mohammad: The Man and his Faith*, trans. Theophil Menzel (New York: Harper Torch Book Series, 1960), p.51
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- [118] Fazlur Rahman, *Islam*, University of Chicago Press, p.13
- [119] See:
- W.Montgomery Watt, Richard Bell. "Bell's Introduction to the Qur'an"(1995) Edinburgh University Press. ISBN 0-7486-0597-5, pp 17-18;
  - Watt, W. Montgomery (1961). *Muhammad: Prophet and Statesman*. Oxford University Press. p. 19. ISBN 0-19-881078-4.
- [120] Freeman starts his own differential diagnosis by arguing that "one must remember that Muhammad's inspired followers lived closely with him in his early and unsuccessful ministry; these same individuals demonstrated brilliant leadership of the explosively expanding Islamic state after his death". He thus rejects schizophrenic hallucinations thesis arguing that the blunted affect of the schizophrenic can hardly inspire the tenacious loyalty of the early followers. "It is also unlikely that a person with loose associations and other elements of schizophrenic thought disorder could guide the political and military fortunes of the early Islamic state."
- [121] Freeman does so for two reasons: It can not justify the rapid, almost paroxysmal onset of these spells. Furthermore, without personal conviction of the reality of his visions, Muhammad could not have convinced his astute followers.
- [122] According to Freeman, "Too many of these spells occurred over too long a period of time to suggest transient ischemic attacks, and no neurologic deficits outside the mental sphere were observed."
- [123] Freeman argues that long duration, absence of worsening, and paroxysmal onset make hypoglycemia unlikely
- [124] He argues that absence of vertigo rules out labyrinthitis, Meniere's disease, or other inner ear maladies.
- [125] Supporting this diagnosis, he cites Paroxysmal onset, failing to the ground with loss of conscious, autonomic dysfunction and hallucinatory imagery. On the evidences opposing the diagnosis he mentions the late age of onset, lack of recognition as seizures by his contemporaries, and lastly poetic, organized statements in immediate postictal period.
- [126] Freeman explain this by quoting William James "Just as our primary wide-awake consciousness throws open our senses to the touch of things material, so it is logically conceivable that if there be higher spiritual agencies that can directly touch us, the psychological condition of their doing so might be our possession of a subconscious region which alone should yield access to them. The hubbub of the waking life might close a door which in the dreamy subliminal might remain ajar or open."
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- [129] Tisdall, W. S. C. (1895). *The Religion of the Crescent, or Islām: Its Strength, Its Weakness, Its Origin, Its Influence. Non-Christian Religious Systems* (p. 177). London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge.
- [130] "But we learn the same lesson from all such investigations, and that is how completely Muḥammad adapted his pretended revelations to what he believed to be the need of the moment. The same thing is true with regard to what we read in Sūrah Al Aḥzāb regarding the circumstances attending his marriage with Zainab, whom his adopted son Zaid divorced for his sake. ... a reference to what the Qur'ān itself (Sūrah XXXIII., 37) says about the matter, coupled with the explanations afforded by the Commentators and the Traditions, will prove that Muḥammad's own character and disposition have left their mark upon the moral law of Islām and upon the Qur'ān itself." Tisdall, W. S. C. (1911). *The Original Sources of the Qur'ān* (pp. 278–279). London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge.
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- [132] Margoliouth, David Samuel (1926). *Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics (Volume 8)*. T&T Clark. p. 878. ISBN 0-567-09489-8.
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- [139] Encyclopedia of Islam, *Muhammad*
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- [141] Watt, W. Montgomery (1961). *Muhammad: Prophet and Statesman*. Oxford University Press. p. 229. ISBN 0-19-881078-4.

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