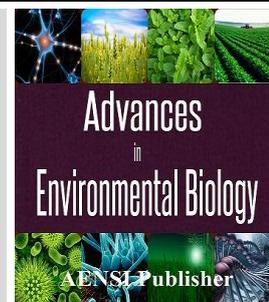




AENSI Journals

Advances in Environmental Biology

ISSN-1995-0756 EISSN-1998-1066

Journal home page: <http://www.aensiweb.com/AEB/>

Criticizing Thought of Joseph Durra Haddad about the Islamic Prophet's (PBUH) Education

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ARTICLE INFO

Article history:

Received 25 October 2014

Received in revised form 26 November 2014

Accepted 12 December 2014

Available online 15 January 2015

Keywords:

Muhammad is Ommee (illiterate), the Orientalist, criticizing thought of Durra Haddad.

ABSTRACT

Mr. Joseph Durra Haddad, a Christian author, using the expression "illiterate in Qur'an", some verses of the Quran and historical evidence, believes that Mohammed (PBUH) was an educated individual who learned something near Christian grandee and then expressed them to Arab people. In the present article, the main reasons of Mr. Haddad were firstly expressed and then his thought was criticized with regards to issues of lexical discussions, style of verses and his studied resources. The authors argue that, although the Quran hasn't used the word "ommee" (illiterate) for the Prophet as an individual who isn't able to read and write; many Islamic scholars have even gone wrong way; revelations and historical reports cited by Mr. Haddad don't implicate that Mohamed (PBUH) learnt something from People of the Book. Although the holy Prophet is an educated person, this education is due to Allah's teaching to the Prophet based on the wording of the verses of the Holy Quran; it isn't because of the teachings of People of the Book.

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To Cite This Article: Rahmat Shayesteh Fard and Abbas Hemami., Criticizing Thought of Joseph Durra Haddad About the Islamic Prophet's (PBUH) Education. *Adv. Environ. Biol.*, 8(25), 536-541, 2014

INTRODUCTION

Haddad's reasons to prove that the holy Prophet is educated First; the expression "Ommee"(illiterate) in the Holy Quran

1- People of the Book divided people into individuals of book and Ommee who had no revealed book and said 'there is no way over us as to the common people' (Al-Imran, 75). The Holy Quran also grouped like this in Peninsula as; "those who have been given the Book and to the common folk: 'Have you surrendered?' If they have surrendered, they are right guided"(Al-Imran, 20). Thus the entire pagan Arabs were illiterate because they weren't the People of the Book and had no revealed book.

2- Muhammad (PBUH) was illiterate because he was one of the illiterate Arabs who had no revealed book; "It is He who has raised up from among the common people a Messenger from among them, to recite His signs to them and to purify them, and to teach them the Book and the Wisdom, though before that they were in manifest error" (Al-Jomeh, 2). This verse certainty implies that "Ommee" is a Qur'an term and it means an Arabic person who has no revealed book. Therefore Muhammad is the prophet of common folk meaning the prophet of Arab because he is one of the Arab people who can neither read nor write and he was appointed to them by Allah. In this interpretation, there is no smallest meaning of "illiterate" in the sense of the word, science, knowledge, culture, education and teaching. Muhammad is the unlettered prophet since he had been known as this attribute before he was ordered to him in the cave Hera'; " and I was commanded to be of those who submit and to recite the Quran" (Al-Naml, 91-92). Muslims were ordered to join to the former people and to recite the Quran with them in Mecca; "You did not read any scripture before this, nor did you write it down with your right hand; otherwise the falsifiers would have doubted" (Al-Ankaboot, 48). So this verse doesn't witness to absolute illiteracy of Muhammad, rather it testifies to his illiteracy towards holy book. So when Muhammad learned the Book, Quran, i.e. he learned holy book and expression as the verse; The Compassionate. Has taught the Quran. He created man. And taught him clear expression (Al-Rahman, 1-4). Thus "man" is Metonymy of Muhammad

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and learning expression is attributed to compassionate God as He orders scribe to fairness "as God has taught him"(Al-Baqarah, 282).

Review and criticism:

1. Mr. Durreh Haddad correctly found that the Quran has used the word "Ommee"(illiteracy) in the opposite side of "people of Book", but it is clear that he as word scholars regarded that the word "illiteracy" means a person who cannot read and cannot write whereas according to research, as word follows the use of language specialists and many of them haven't provided strong evidence for the use of Arabic language specialists for this sense such as Arabic poems or phrases mentioned in the era of revealing. It clearly became common during the next periods and there was no such meaning in the Quran revelation time, therefore such understanding is not true and it cannot be regarded as a reason.

2. The phrase " the illiterate prophet" means prophet attributed to " the mother of cities" meaning the Prophet of Mecca as the verses Al-Anaam , 92 and Al-Shora, 7 demonstrated this point and Mr. Haddad has interpreted this phrase as "Arabic prophet" only to deny the universality of the holy Prophet's invitation and this claim is without proof.

3. Mr. Haddad claims according to verse 51 of Surah Al-Ankaboot, Quran testifies to Muhammad's illiteracy for the sake of holy book and not because of his absolute illiteracy. While a part of his speech is right and the other part is wrong; as the Quran used the phrase "you did not read", it is clear that the Quran negates continuously reading in the past. Therefore there may be some literacy before the holy prophetic mission. But the mentioned verse of Al-Ankaboot negates the holy prophet's absolute reading and writing of any book by expressing the phrase "From the Book".

4. Mr. Haddad has expressed the word "latahdadi" used in the verse 52 of Shoora in the passive voice to confirm his idea, while this reciting doesn't exist in any of the ten readings (Ibn al-jazari,1421, 546). In other words, Mr. Haddad has explicitly distorted the Quran verse here.

5. Although the initial verses of the Holy Quran in Sura(h) Al-Rahman explicitly mentions God as prophet's teacher and says: The compassionate, has taught the Quran. But Mr. Haddad resorts to the phrase of the holy verse "as God has taught him"(Al-Baqarah, 282) to substantiate his view that the holy prophet has learned the Quran from the people of Book, While in this verse, God does not tell that He has taught writing to the scribe even with mediator, rather He wants to say that as God has taught him how to write fairly, he should write.

Second; Quran's witness to the prophet's education

The first revealed verse of the Arabic Quran testifies to the fact that Muhammad reads and writes; read in the name of your lord who created, created the human from a (blood) clot, : read! your lord is the most generous, who taught by the pen, taught the human what he did not know" (AL-ALAQ (THE CLOT), 1-5). Revelation commanded him what was offered to him to read and if Muhammad is not able to read, (we seek refuge in God) Allah's command is vain and the verse "taught by the pen" testifies to the fact that Muhammad learned through writing and thus he wrote. Also attributing the word "Taught" to Muhammad indicates that he learned and therefore he was scientist. So the first verse testifies to Muhammad's education and his science.

Review and criticism:

Mr. Haddad has not paid attention to the context of the verses. The previous verses of these verses are as follow; "surely, the cautious shall have gardens of bliss with their lord, what, shall we make those who are submissive like the wrongdoers?" (AL-QALAM, 34-35). It is clear that the discussion in these verses isn't about the superiority of Muhammad and Muslims to polytheists. But God in these verses asks polytheists in the form question: for the righteous, there are gardens full of blessings and delight by the Lord. What, shall we make those who are submissive like the wrongdoers? What is the matter with you then, how do you judge? Or, have you a book from which you study? Surely in it you shall have whatever you choose! (AL-QALAM, 35-38). Thus the claim of Mr. Haddad isn't understood from these verses and it is the claim that has no rational logic.

3. Muhammad (PBUH) does not suffice to teaching "Imam Book", rather he was ordered to chant in a night rising: "o you (Prophet Muhammad) wrapped, rise (to pray) the night except a little; half the night, or a little less, or a little more; and with recitation, recite the Quran, we are about to cast upon you a weighty word" (AL-MUZZAMMIL, 1-5). Only ten verses of Arabic Quran at the beginning of chapters Al-Qalam and Al-Alaq were revealed and it isn't known enough to be absolutely presented as famous Quran. Therefore Muhammad (PBUH) is guided by believing in the holy book (Al-Shoora, 52). And he is commanded to recite Quran; thus the book is absolutely the Quran and the night rising for prayers and reciting verses is not an Arabic and Jewish habit, rather it is Christianity and monasticism. Therefore Muhammad was commanded to recite the Book with Mecca Christians in the night prayer after he had learned and had written revelation. Thus reciting the Book is the same teaching and prayer of Muhammad in the night rising.

Review and criticism:

As these verses show, there is no connection between chanting Qur'an and the Book. As part of Quran like chapters Al-Alaq and Al-Qalam have been revealed, it is sufficient for the Holy Prophet to know the Quran. So Mr. Haddad's view; the famous Qur'an is not known to Muhammad, is not acceptable. Mr. Haddad claims that night rising for prayers is not an Arabic and Jewish habit, rather it is Christian habit. Even if this story is true, there is no problem in the order of the Quran because firstly, many of the commandments in different religions are the same, as for example, the Qur'an explicitly mentions fasting for the previous religions (Baqarah, 183). Secondly, the holy prophet of Islam spent some days for the night rising even before the Prophetic mission in the cave Hera as it was a custom of Honafa.

5. People of Mecca know that Muhammad learns and writes the Book; they say: 'he has written tales of the ancients, they are recited to him at dawn and at the evening (Al-Forqan, 5). The Qur'an does not reject this accusation, just before this verse rejects libel to Arabic Quran. "The unbelievers say: 'this is but a falsehood he has forged? Another nation has helped him. 'So they have come with wrong and falsehood" (Al-Forqan, 4). So it is wrong to attribute the lies that have been told about Arabic Quran, but does not reject the help of others who emphasize in the next verse as; "they say: 'he has written tales of the ancients, they are recited to him at dawn and at the evening" (Al-Forqan, 5). So this transcribing doesn't stop the Quran's revelation:" say: 'it was sent down by him who knows the secrets of heavens and earth. he is forgiving, the most merciful" (Al-Forqan, 6). So if his writing of the book wasn't evident, Arabic Quran wouldn't quote the accusation that It is tales of the ancients.

Review and criticism:

According to these verses that Haddad mentions, the Quran explicitly calls injustice attribution of any help by the others to the Prophet and the holy Quran says; tell them the Lord, aware of the secret of the heavens and the earth, has revealed the Qur'an.

5. Muhammad (PBUH) learned the holy book as the people of the book have learned; " as such we make plain our verses, so that they can say: 'you have studied, ' in order that we clarify it to a nation that knows" (Al-Anaam, 105).

Review and criticism:

Commentators have different opinions about the meaning of this verse and two interpretations are the most favorable and accurate as expressed here:

A) We remind verses through a variety of expressions and statements for intended purposes; one is that these poor and wretch people accuse you that you learned these teachings from people of the book. The other aim is that the variation in speech makes the hearts of others remove any rascality and give them broad-mindedness (Tabatabaee, 1417, 303/7).

B) The unbelievers say that it is enough for you; you've delivered, read, repeated and you expressed. Let these people alone that anyone seeking guidance, he will believe and whose heart is blind, he will disbelieve.

6. Arabic Quran clarifies the phrase "Book Imams who teach Muhammad" and tells; "we have given the book to Moses, so (prophet Muhammad) do not be in doubt concerning the meeting with him (prophet Moses) and made it a guidance to the children of Israel, when they were patient, we made from them leaders, guiding with our command and they were certain of our verses." (As-Sajda, 23-24).

Review and criticism:

Mr. Haddad has interpreted this phrase "do not be in doubt concerning the meeting with him (Prophet Moses)"that you will certainly have a relationship with the Book of Moses. While this verse addressing the Holy Prophet to console him and says that have no doubt that Moses received the Book. The reason of this interpretation is that three sentences are used in the above verse, the first and last sentence is certainly about Torah and therefore it is appropriate that the middle sentence follow the same sense, it is not suitable to speak about the resurrection or the holy Quran. The sentence in this case will be parenthetical and we know that parenthetical sentence is contrary to appearances and we shouldn't refer to it unless we need it (Makarem Shirazi *et al*, 163-164/17).

7. Christian scholars of Israel Children are : "And those endued with knowledge, standing firm on justice" who along with God and angles testify that "the only religion with Allah is Islam" (Aal-Imran, 17-18) and they are called "those of them that are firmly rooted in knowledge"(Aal-Imran,17 & An-Nesa, 162), they are called "scientists"; " but it is only those amongst his worshippers that fear Allah who have knowledge. Indeed, Allah is the almighty and the forgiving (Fatir, 28). All of these are Qur'an phrases; if everyone pays attention to the literal meaning, he will fall in a wrong way...

Review and criticism:

1. The main principle in every text is the literal meaning unless there will be a reason to give up the meaning of the word. Therefore Mr. Haddad is not right regarding this issue.

2. If the Quran is interpreted based on terminological meaning, since the holy Prophet is responsible for expressing the meaning of the verses of the holy Quran, it is necessary to refer to his remarks (An-Nahl,44) and because the Prophet transferred the task of explaining and interpreting God's Book to the innocent Imams after himself then we should refer to them and they have introduced the phrase "those endowed with knowledge" as innocent Imam (Bahrani, 604/1, 1416).

8. Muhammad testifies the verse "and whosoever possesses knowledge of the book"(Al-Raad, 43) to verify his invitation, he knows the Book and disputes with the polytheists and seeks excellence. "Among people there are those, who without knowledge, dispute about Allah and follow every rebel Satan (Al-Hajj, 3), "some dispute about Allah, though they have neither knowledge nor guidance, nor an illuminating book" (Al-Hajj,8). Therefore Muhammad disputes with the polytheists because he was under the guidance of "illuminating book" and he taught "whosoever doesn't possess knowledge of the book.

Review and criticism:

1. Testimony of the Prophet to the great scholars of the Book oppose to the polytheists is a wise procedure, since the people of the book were known as an educated group when the Quran was revealed, the Holy Quran sometimes testifies to the people of the book so that they can understand the truth of the Holy Prophet, as commentators believed that this verse was revealed about Abu-Jahl (Alosi, 117/9, 1415). The Quran also invites the polytheists to ask the people of the book (An-Nahl,43).

2. But Mr. Haddad introduces "illuminating book" as the Bible that it is a claim without proof.

9. Having "book culture", thus Muhammad argued with the people who had knowledge of the book and the polytheists sought excellence against them because since he has obvious dominance in knowledge of book while they didn't have it. "Or, do you have a clear authority? Bring your book, if what you say is true!"(As-Saaffat, 156-157) or "bring me a book before this or some other remnant of knowledge, if what you say is true" (Al-Ahqaf, 4). Therefore he had a book and its knowledge before Arabic Quran, "and before him is the book of Moses for a guide and a mercy" (Hud, 17)" yet before it there was the book of Moses which was an authority, and a mercy. This (Quran) is the book confirming it in the Arabic tongue" (Al-Ahqaf, 12). So there is nothing but clear Arabic language in the Arabic Quran comparing to imam's book.

Review and criticism:

1. According to master Drozeh, the verse "yet before it there was the book of Moses which was an authority" means no more than this sentence that the book of Moses was Imam and mercy before Quran. Additionally Mr. Haddad neglected next sentence of the verse; "This (Quran) is the book confirming it in the Arabic tongue" that confess to the point that the Quran is an independent book..

2. The sentence "and before him is the book of Moses for a guide and a mercy" indicates that the contents of all the religions are the same, they have common content, and the materials that are mentioned in this Quran aren't allocated to the holy Quran and before Mohammed, Moses told these matters and the book of Moses was the leader and peaceful to the people at that time specially the word "mercy" was used in this phrase and it isn't appropriate to say that the Torah is mercy for the Quran, rather it was mercy for the people of its time.

10. Muhammad is commanded in Arabic Quran to follow the guidance of the people of the Book, the wisdom and prophet hood i.e. those who are the people of the book and the wisdom, Torah and Gospel; "those, we have given them the book, judgment, and prophet hood, those were whom Allah guided. Follow then their guidance" (Al-Anaam, 89, 90). Therefore Muhammad's education in Arabic Quran is completely "bookish" and ""Christianity".

Review and criticism:

1.The verses of chapter Al-Anaam which Mr. Haddad refers, the word "book" doesn't mean Torah because it is attributed to prophets such as Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Noah who lived earlier than Moses, then it is clear that the purpose is absolutely Heavenly Books, not just the Torah.

2. Since the nature of all the religions were the same, the Prophet Muhammad followed the guidance of the past prophets and all the prophets were guided.

11. Arabic Quran acknowledges "the book for guide and mercy" among the Arabs (Hud, 17); "this Quran could not have been forged by other than Allah. It confirms what was before it; a distinguishing book, in which there is no doubt, from the lord of all the worlds" (Yunus, 37). Muhammad truly explains about the book in Arabic Quran by permission of Allah in Hera and the word "Tafsil" (explanation) in the Quran means translation to Arabic....

Review and criticism:

It was clear from the words of Mr. Haddad that he believed the word "tafsil" in the Qur'an means "Taarib" and it is clear that this is not a reason in the science of word and in the use the Quran. The word "tafsil" meant explanation in the dictionary (Ibn-Manzoor, 521/11, 1414, Firuzabadi, 589/3, 1415, Tarihi, 280/3,1375).

12. Quran's resource Communication with the book of Imam and mercy indicates to this issue: "surely, this is in the ancient scrolls,"(Al-Ala, 18) and the Quran exists in the previous books, though the Lord has revealed; "truly, it is the sending of the lord of the worlds. Truly, it is in the books of the ancients."(Al-Shuara, 192, 196). These two features of the Arabic Quran indicate that Arabic Quran was revealed from the book of Imam and then Quran "Tanzi TAnzil"(revelation revelation), i.e. is its explanation...

Review and criticism:

1. Knowledge of past experience of the people has a tangible effect on the guidance of humans; so telling the story of the past people and some indicative examples has no improbability. Just as no one believed that Jesus (PBUH) wrote down the Gospel from Moses' Torah or Moses (PBUH) wrote down his Torah from Abraham's (PBUH) book. Accordingly, God mentioned in these verses to one the constant tradition in the societies: "prosperous is he who purifies himself, and remembers the name of his lord, so he prays, but you prefer the present life, but the everlasting life is better, and more enduring" (Al-Ala, 14-17). So the context of this verse clearly indicates that the demonstrative pronoun "this" in this verse does not refer to "Quran rather indicates the existence of these traditions in all human societies.

2. The suffix "Ho" "ه" in the phrase "انه في زبر الاولين" as Mr. Haddad interpreted in "Executioners" refers to "mentioning of the Quran" in the previous books rather than the Quran Itself so that we say "this Quran" exists in those books. So, as the Bible mentioned to Jesus (PBUH) and the other prophets, It also told about the Qur'an and the last Prophet.

13. Arabic Quran is "lessons" and "teaching" of the Imam's book, as it can be inferred from this stipulations that the word "wisdom" based on the Quran is the metonymy of the Gospel: "he (Jesus) said: 'I have come to you with wisdom'(Az-Zukhruf, 63) and the "book" is the metonymy of "Torah and the prophets" so He said to Jesus (PBUH);" how I taught you the book and wisdom, the Torah and the Gospel" (Al-Maeda, 110) and "we gave the family of Abraham the book and wisdom"(An-Nisa, 54) and "Allah has sent down to you the book and the wisdom and He has taught you what you did not know, the bounty of Allah to you is ever great" (An-Nisa, 113). The Christian scientists of Israel children taught him the book, Wisdom, the Torah and the Gospel...

Review and criticism:

Mr. Haddad claims that the word "wisdom" is the same as "Gospel" but according to the holy verse "he will teach him the book, the wisdom, the torah and the gospel" (Al-Imran, 48), it isn't acceptable. Because mentioning the words "book and wisdom" in the same line with the words "Torah and Gospel" refer to their contrast as some commentators have expressed it meant either inscription or a type of heavenly books (Beizavi, 18/2, 1418, Ibn-Atieh, 438/1, 1422).

2. According to the holy Quran, revelation to the Prophet Muhammad is like the revelation to the other prophets; "we have revealed to you as we revealed to Noah and to the prophets after him, and we revealed to (prophets) Abraham, Ishmael, Isaac, Jacob and the tribes, Jesus, job, Jonah, Aaron, and Solomon, and we gave to david the psalms" (An-Nisa, 163). Therefore there is no reason that the people of the book taught the holy prophet something.

14. The Arabic Quran is "tafsil and tanzil" both are "teaching and learning", because science does not prevent the revelation.

Review and criticism:

Mr. Haddad wants to question the global mission of the Qur'an and the Prophet's prophecy by the term "Arabic Qur'an", while many of the verses of the Holy Qur'an affirm the universality of the his mission:

- "we have not sent you (Prophet Muhammad) except as a mercy to all the worlds" (Al-Anbiya, 107).

- "blessed is he who has sent down the criterion to his worshiper (prophet Muhammad), that he is a Warner to all mankind (al-Forqan, 1).

- "we did not send you (Prophet Muhammad) for all mankind except to bring them glad tidings and to warn, but most people do not know (Saba).

Third: the testimony of the history to expanded education of Mohammed (PBUH)

1 Scientific and bookish environment of the Prophet and the Qur'an

Mr. Haddad in this part by referring to some historical stories tries to prove that the holy Prophet grew up in a bookish (especially Christian) environment and due to the connection with the Christian scientists, he was educated and thus he wasn't illiterate.

Review and criticism:

Since this analysis requires a separate article, on the other hand, Mr. Haddad refers to the holy verses of the Quran to prove his opinion in most cases; here we briefly criticize the above issue on the basis of verses of the Qur'an.

1. The Quran explicitly rejects assist by others to the holy Prophet; Allah introduced revelator of the Quran to the heavens and the earth: " the unbelievers say: 'this is but a falsehood he has forged? Another nation has helped him. 'So they have come with wrong and falsehood. They say: 'he has written tales of the ancients, they are recited to him at dawn and at the evening. Say: 'it was sent down by him who knows the secrets of heavens and earth. He is forgiving, the most merciful" (Al-Forqan).

2. Even If the holy prophet had some relation with some people before the prophetic mission, it wouldn't harm to the truth and genuineness of the revelation. As the Holy Quran clearly says:

- "nor does he speak out of desire. Indeed it is not except a revelation which is revealed (An-Najm, 3-4)

- "when our verses, clear verses, are recited to them, those who do not reckon to meet us say: 'bring a Quran other than this, or make changes in It. ' say: 'it is not for me to change it by myself. I follow nothing, except what is sent down to me. Indeed, if I should rebel against my lord I fear the punishment of a great day" (Yunus, 15).

We believe that the holy Prophet wasn't illiterate, but the Qur'an rejects that he has learned something from the others except God, is what denies it: "never before did you recited any book, or inscribe it with your right hand. If you had done so, those who follow falsehood would have doubted (Al-Ankaboot, 48).

Conclusions:

1. God hasn't used the word "Ommee" (illiterate) in the Qur'an about the Prophet and this characteristic in the Qur'an means a person attributed to "Umm al-Qura" (Mecca).

2. Referring to verses of the Holy Quran, it is unacceptable that Mr. Haddad tried to prove that the holy prophet learned from the people of the book and Mr. Haddad has imposed his opinion on the Quran.

3. It is true that the holy Prophet is an educated person but he was educated due to the teachings of the God, not by the People of the Book.

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