



The Hijrah: a Re-Evaluation Through Contemporary Histrography and Moral Implications

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Abstract

Most of the works written by scholars on the Hijrah of the Prophet detailed its significance in establishing the Madinan state, which further led to the efflorescence of Islam from that century up to the present time without examining the moral precepts of modern man. Treating historical events from a purely causative angle often reduces its relevance in addressing modern socioeconomic and political challenges. Besides, a recent chronological assessment of the series of events and persons directly involved in the Hijrah has raised queries on the veracity of the age-long popular perception of the roles played

by individuals in the accomplishment of the journey. Identifying these two gaps provides us with the lacuna this work is out to fill. While relying on the rules of historiography, it is essential to determine the reliability of the available Islamic historical sources and scrutinize scriptural provisions that make the Prophet's life a model for all Muslims. So, migration is not only interrogated as a phenomenon with defining significance to the fortune of Islam but scrutinized to verify the accuracy of the order of events and the roles of individuals on the journey. Its planning and execution are also discussed to unravel the inherent lessons for troubleshooting, strategic planning, security consciousness, spiritual fortification, and peacebuilding as guides in life-changing endeavors.

Keywords: *hijrah, historiography, life endeavours, moral precepts,*

Abstrak

Sebagian besar karya yang ditulis oleh para cendekiawan tentang Hijrah Nabi Muhammad SAW secara rinci menjelaskan signifikansinya dalam pendirian Negara Madinah, yang kemudian memicu perkembangan Islam dari abad tersebut hingga saat ini, tanpa mengkaji prinsip-prinsip moral yang relevan bagi manusia modern. Memandang peristiwa sejarah dari sudut pandang kausalitas semata seringkali mengurangi relevansinya dalam menghadapi tantangan sosial, ekonomi, dan politik modern. Selain itu, penilaian kronologis terbaru terhadap rangkaian peristiwa dan tokoh yang terlibat langsung dalam peristiwa Hijrah telah menimbulkan pertanyaan tentang keakuratan persepsi populer yang telah lama beredar mengenai peran individu dalam pelaksanaan perjalanan tersebut. Mengidentifikasi dua celah ini memberikan kita ruang yang perlu diisi oleh karya ini. Dengan mengandalkan aturan historiografi, penting untuk menentukan keotentisitasan sumber-sumber sejarah Islam yang tersedia dan mengkaji ketentuan-ketentuan kitab suci yang menjadikan kehidupan Nabi sebagai teladan bagi seluruh umat Muslim. Oleh karena itu, migrasi tidak hanya dianalisis sebagai fenomena dengan makna menentukan bagi nasib Islam, tetapi juga dikaji untuk memverifikasi keakuratan urutan peristiwa dan peran individu dalam perjalanan tersebut. Perencanaan dan pelaksanaannya juga dibahas untuk mengungkap pelajaran mendasar dalam mengatasi masalah,

perencanaan strategis, kesadaran keamanan, penguatan spiritual, dan pembangunan perdamaian sebagai panduan dalam upaya-upaya yang mengubah hidup.

Kata Kunci: *hijrah, historiografi, upaya hidup, prinsip moral,*

INTRODUCTION

The history of Islam cannot be written without mentioning the *Hijrah* which significantly transformed a fledging group of men imbued with nothing but faith in God in Makkah to a strong nation of intellectuals and warriors holding its own against competing powers in the Arabian Peninsula and the adjoining regions in Madinah Hitti (1985). Makkah which was the bastion of Arab civilization because it housed the Ka'bah had acquired notoriety for idol worshipping and uncivil conduct at the time of the birth of Prophet Muhammad in 570 CE. Jahiliyyah connoting darkness, ignorance and barbarism was the term used by historians to describe the ways of lives of the Arabs of that region presenting a yearning gap for the rekindling of the light of guidance that the prevailing socioeconomic, political, and spiritual corruption had dimmed. It was into this mess that Muhammad was born and he grew up to see his people engaging in internecine conflicts over flimsy reasons, burying their daughters alive for lack of respect for womanhood and fear of poverty, excessive consumption of alcohol and gambling, and all other forms of immorality without joining them according to Hitti (1985). By 610 CE, forty years after his birth, he received his Prophetic mission in cave Hira, where he used to seclude himself away from the immoralities of the Makkan society. After this commissioning to Prophethood, Muhammad's immediate message to the Makkans hinged on the belief and worship of One Unseen God as well as righteous living was a direct assault on their lifestyles of idol worshipping and licentiousness elicited organized resistance, Haykal (1976). This Makkan resistance forced him to migrate to Yathrib to establish an Islamic State which eventually wrestled power from the Arabian hegemony in Makkah. This mass movement of Muslims from Makkah to Yathrib is the focus of this paper, particularly on the veracity or otherwise of the popular narratives of the Hijrah and how the epoch-

making journey can be the moral precepts to Muslims in their individual and collective life endeavors.

A Narrative of the Popular Historical Account of the Causes and Course of the Hijrah

Young Muhammad received the impetus to regularly sneak out of Makkah as a respite from the prevailing corruption in the city immediately after he got married to Khadijah in 595 C.E. Before this, he had endured the barbaric lifestyles of his people with equanimity hoping he could do something to halt the drift into socioeconomic, political and spiritual anarchy that was looming. So, his marriage to the wealthy Makkan widow of Banu Khuwaylid who was fifteen years older than him allowed him to concentrate on his new mission of redeeming his people. He chose a cave named Hira within the Mountain of Mercy about nine miles away from Makkah for meditation and contemplation, Masudu (2001). Muhammad kept pushing himself hard in thought while regularly secluding himself in this cave that by 610 C.E at a time he had attained the age of forty he encountered Angel Jubril who inducted him into Prophethood with the revelation of the first five verses of the significant message called the Qur'an, Qutb (nd). While in a trance in the cave. Upon this induction, the two prongs of the divine assignment namely monotheism and righteousness were thrust upon him as messages of redemption for the polytheist and immoral people of Makkah to turn a new leave. Expectedly, there was opposition from the established order and the powerful oligarchy of Makkah who felt that allowing this religio-ethical revolution to hold sway would shatter societal socioeconomic, political, and religious disequilibrium which was clearly in their favour Masudu (2001)

As ardent as Muhammad, the new Prophet of the Arabs, was to propagate the new faith amongst his people, the more the Makkan oligarchy was determined to stop him. Organized persecution was mounted to frustrate him through hurling verbal abuse, negative name-calling, and physical attacks on his person. So, the slaves and the lower classes expected as recruits into the socio-religious order became objects of intense brutal persecution by the powerful chieftain of Makkah. Some of them like the family of Sumayyah were maimed and

killed, Haykal (1976) while others such as Bilal bn Rabah, Hitti (1985) were severely beaten in the hot sun of the desert with heavy stones placed on their chests. These organized measures which did not spare the Prophet himself Hitti (1985) resulted in the migration to Abyssinia of eleven Makkan families followed in 615 CE by some eighty-three others to seek religious asylum, Hitti (1985) Undaunted by these dark days of persecution by the temporary loss of so many followers, Muhammad fearlessly continued to preach and by persuasion convert men from the worship of the many gods to that of one God, Allah. Despite the marginal success recorded in attracting some elites like Umar bn al-Khattab whose conversion signaled the commencement of open preaching and religious assemblage, Muhammad was still earnest in his *da'wah* mission as he visited Taif, a town about 9 kilometers away from Makkah to preach Islam to the inhabitants. More brutal than Makkah, the people of Taif sent their miscreants to stone him out of their town. Sullen and brutalized, he returned to Makkah to start planning his exit having convinced himself that he needed a friendlier environment to actualize his prophetic mission, Hitti (1985).

In seeking new ground for his proselytization, Muhammad in 620 CE met surreptitiously a party of traders from Yathrib who came for the annual Ukaz fair with the prospect of seeking a new religious base in their domain. In the following year, a larger deputation of about seventy-five men, mainly of the Khazraj tribe also met him to firm up earlier discussion and both parties eventually agreed to become allies as Hitti (1985) posited. They embraced the new faith and promised to provide his nascent community of believers with security and support whenever he decided to turn up in their domain. He in turn sent along with them a trusted companion Mus'ab bn Umair to teach them the new religion while he strategized on leaving Makkah now that the coast was becoming clearer. These events of 620 and 621 are referred to in history as the Pledges of 'Aqabah As-Sallaabee (2005) submitted. After obtaining the firm commitment of these Yathribites, Muhammad immediately allowed about two hundred traumatized followers to elude the vigilance of the Quraysh and slip quietly into Yathrib in batches. It is instructive to mention here the role of Abu Bakr, Muhammad's

childhood and closest companion in his eventual movement from Makkah to Yathrib as popular accounts suggest:

When the clandestine movement to Yathrib was ordered by Muhammad, Abu Bakr sought his permission to travel with others but he said to him “do not rush, for perhaps Allah will provide you with a (traveling) companion”.¹³ After Abu Bakr left his company, he began to plan and prepare for the impending journey to Yathrib. He bought two riding animals, kept them in his home, and fed them well in preparation for the upcoming long and arduous journey. Abu Bakr knew that the actual migration was going to be fraught with difficulties. He also knew that he could be ordered to leave at a moment's notice, and for this reason, he did not procrastinate; he made the necessary preparations in terms of arranging for riding animals and provisions. Abu Bakr's preparation was pivotal to Muhammad's successful migration to Yathrib. When the Quraysh came to know that the people of Yathrib had accepted Islam and that some Muslims of Makkah had started migrating to the city, they became agitated. They held a council of war and decided it had become expedient to kill Muhammad to protect their common tribal interest. The plan was that the young men representing all of the sub-tribes of the Quraysh should besiege his house at night and assassinate him in the early hours of the morning when he came out of his house. Muhammad forestalled the move of the Quraysh by sneaking out of his house through the back door after selling a dummy to the besieging assassins by asking his cousins Ali bn Abu Talib to sleep on his bed while he escaped. His first point of call after this was Abu Bakr's house to inform him that Allah had given him permission to leave and migrate to Yathrib. Abu Bakr became so happy that he began to cry. The cry of joy of Abu Bakr was not just a result of the news of his choice as the Prophet's companion but because he knew he was well prepared for the journey. He would have been utterly disappointed with himself if he had not planned or prepared well in advance despite having a clue about the impending journey. As-Sallaabee (2005)

Another aspect of the story that has come under the radar of recent discourse was the event of cave Thawr which provided a hidden fortress for the Prophet and his companion from the prying eyes of their Makkan pursuers.

Muhammad and Abu Bakr left but remained hidden in a cave in Mount *Thawr* outside Makkah for three days. The Quraysh scoured the countryside in pursuit of them. One of the searching parties came to edge of the cave where they were both holed but a spider wove its web at the entrance of the cave with a pair of wild pigeons on the threshold and assuming the impossibility of anyone being in the cave, the Makkan search party retreated. After three days, with the slackening of the vigilance of the Quraysh, Muhammad and his friend got out of the cave and took the way to Yathrib. Masudu (2001)

They traveled by unfrequented paths with the help of Abdullah bn Urayqit, a non-Muslim Arab who was hired as a guide on the journey because of his knowledge of the routes. They suffered considerable hardship on account of the scarcity of water and the severity of the desert heat. After a six-day arduous journey, Muhammad and Abu Bakr reached Quba, a suburb of Yathrib, on September 23, 622 CE. This successful migration is called the *Hijrah*. It is not a flight but a scheme of migration carefully planned and executed for two years. Hitti (1985)

In explaining the above incident of the arrival of the searching parties and the presence of a spider covering its entrance, a further twist in the popular narrative was added with the employment of a Makkan seer whose assignment it was to ascertain for them whether the Prophet and his companion were actually in the cave or not. The narrative is rendered thus:

The Makkan search party came along with a renowned seer who they trusted would be able to tell them where Muhammad and his companion were hiding. On getting to the cave entrance, Satih the seer made them stop and, upon divination, told the spies that he and his companion were undoubtedly in the cave. In fact, the reference of "...and he said to his companion; have no fear, for Allah is with us..." in Qur'an 9:40 was the Prophet's verbal reassurance to his companion (which was inaudible to the search party) who had become apprehensive on sighting Satih. Satih's unequivocal conclusion on the matter was, however, considered incomprehensible and impossible by them, seeing that the cave's entrance was covered by a fresh, unbroken web of a spider and

pigeon eggs were lying inside the cave's floor. They surmised, contrary to the revelation of Satih, that there was no way the Prophet and his companion could have entered into the cave without disrupting the spider web and trampling on the pigeon eggs lying on the ground of the cave. Expectedly, an argument ensued between them and it was reported that they killed Satih whom they thought had lied to them. This Satih has been linked by extraneous sources such as Setilu in Africa's Yoruba religion. Masudu (2001)

The Prophet survived all the plots of his pursuers to bring him back to Makkah and he consequently reached Yathrib his destination, Safiur-Rahman (2011). Upon his arrival in Yathrib, the almost obscure city took a new name "Madinat-un-Nabiyy" meaning "City of the Prophet" but shortened as Madinah. His arrival was heralded by the locals with wild jubilation who had not had a rallying point for years due to the quarrel between the major tribes of Khazraj and Awz. Muhammad was thus not only seen as a reconciler by the warring tribes some of whom had embraced Islam but as a religio-political leader by the nascent Muslim community whose membership had blossomed since the return of the covenanted Muslims at the pledges of Aqabah, Bello (2023).

Muhammad seized the momentum provided by the political leadership vacuum in Madinah to establish a state guided by the "Madinah Charter" which recognized the emerging state's different cultural and religious diversities. In Madinah, the Muslim community was represented by the "Ansar" (Madinites whom Muhammad affectionately referred to as the "Helpers") and the "Muhajirun" (the emigrants who came from Makkah). There were other groups like the Midianites who did not embrace Islam, the Jews, and the Christians who formed a distinct religious community, as Khalil (2003) posited.

Dichotomizing the Popular Narrative in the Light of Current Historiography

History has a way of developing complexities over a long period when not properly documented at the time of its occurrence or embellished with extraneous narratives by writers to serve ulterior ends. While the Hijrah of the Prophet is acknowledged as having occurred at the time

it happened and there is no account that suggests anything to the contrary, there is considerable discussion in recent times as regards who was his companion in the cave of Thawr? Was Abu Bakr the companion in the cave with the Prophet, as suggested by the majority of the sources of the historical accounts of the Hijrah, or someone else amongst other persons who were around him on the journey? Is the recent suggestion that the person in the cave of Thawr who the Qur'an referred to as "second of the two" was Abdullah bn Urayqit bn Bakr historically correct?

Answering these and similar questions from the lenses of historiography would assist us in determining the veracity or otherwise of the different claims. Historiography in this context appertains to the writing of history based on the critical examination of sources and the synthesis of different details into a coherent narrative that stands the test of critical examination, Cambridge (2025). The controversy over the identity of the person with the Prophet in the cave came about as a result of the seeming contradiction conveyed by two following *Ahadith* in Sahih Bukhari on where Abu Bakr was at the time of the Prophet's Hijrah:

When the earliest emigrants came to Al-'Usba a place in Quba, before the arrival of the Prophet, Salim the slave of Abu Hudhaifa, who knew the Qur'an more than the others used to lead in prayer. *Ṣaḥīḥ* Bukhari, Book 11, Hadith 662 (nd)

Salim, the freed slave of Abu Hudhaifah, used to lead the prayer of the early Muhajirun (emigrants) and companions of the Prophet in the Quba Mosque. Among those (who used to pray behind him) were Abu Bakr, Umar, Abu Salama and Amir bn Rabi'a. *Ṣaḥīḥ* Muslim, Book 4, Hadith 1543 (2000)

While the first Hadith reported that a group of companions used to congregate in Quba for Salat behind Salim before the arrival of the Prophet in Madinah, the second listed Abu Bakr as one of the companions who prayed behind him thereby making his popularly acclaimed journey with the Prophet on Hijrah an impossibility. He could not have been in Madinah praying behind Salim, but he still accompanied the Prophet on the journey.

This conundrum provided by these two *Ahadith* is what we seek to resolve particularly because those contesting Abu Bakr's companionship with the Prophet in the cave hinged their position on it. Besides, they argued that using the words "his companion" in the conversation between the Prophet and the person with him in the cave did not conclusively indicate that it was Abu Bakr. This is because the word 'Sahaba' is not an exclusive term for the companions of the Prophet as it was used elsewhere in the Qur'an to denote someone who shared a mean of conveyance or an abode with someone else at a given time. This can be found in the story of Prophet Yusuf when he referred to the prisoners, he shared incarceration with as "O my two fellow-prisoners, (Qur'an 12:39) Ali (2002). They asserted that the words "his fellow" as referenced in Qur'an 9 verse 40 could be referring to any of the other four persons namely Abdullah bn Abu Bakr, Muhammad bn Abdullah, Amir bn Fuhayrah and Abdullah bn Urayqit bn Bakr around the Prophet in the cave apart from Abu Bakr whom the text of the above two *Ahadith* had foreclosed his participation in the Prophet's Hijrah.

In resolving this seeming contradiction, it is important to note that all the biographers of the Prophet as well as available biographical accounts of his life without exception affirmed that Abu Bakr was the companion of the Prophet in the cave of Thawr. From the works of Ibn Ishaq of the second century of Islam to those of Ibn Shihab al-Zuhri and Ibn Hisham of the third century, Ibn Hibban of the fourth century, and the 14th century Muslim theologian and historian Ibn Kathir (2010), nothing suggested that there was any other person in the cave with the Prophet which the Qur'an referenced other than Abu Bakr. The works of Ameer Ali (1873, 1922 & 2008)

Muhammad Haykal, Philip Hitti, A. Rahim (1990) and other recent historical accounts of Islam which heavily relied on the works of the earliest biographers above also towed the same line. Even some Shi'a biographers who ordinarily do not consider him a worthy successor of the Prophet also acknowledged that he was with the Prophet in the cave. His fearful disposition in the cave according to a Shi'a source, was a sign of lack of trust in the leadership of the Prophet which consequently disqualified him from succeeding him after his demise.

While Abu Bakr's qualification for the Khilafah is outside the purview of this work, it is clear that, despite their resentment, some Shi'as also acknowledged his companionship with the Prophet in the cave.

From the above, it is clear that no other source apart from the two Ahadith earlier cited cast doubt on the role of Abu Bakr as the Prophet's companion in the cave. Every available historical record about the Prophet validates Abu Bakr's role in the migration story. In assessing the information conveyed by these two Ahadith, therefore, there can only be two possibilities to explain this apparent contradiction with established historical facts. It is either the narration is incorrectly reported or that the Abu Bakr mentioned in one of them was not the same Abu Bakr, the foremost companion of the Prophet. More so because all other narrations in Sahih al-Bukhari on the migration story detailed the role of Abu Bakr not only in the execution but also in the conception and planning of the Hijrah of the Prophet. Regarding the roles of other persons in the migration story, Ibn Kathir extensively detailed their specific responsibilities, which left no one in doubt about the indispensable role of Abu Bakr. He wrote inter alia:

...Then Allah's Messenger and Abu Bakr reached a cave in the mountain of Thawr and stayed there for three nights. Abdullah ibn Abu Bakr who was an intelligent and sagacious youth used to stay with them overnight. He used to leave them before daybreak so that in the morning, he would be with the Quraysh as if he had spent the night in Makkah. He would keep in mind any plot made against them, and when it became dark, he would inform them of it. 'Amir bn Fuhaira, the freed slave of Abu Bakr used to bring the milch sheep (of his master Abu Bakr) to them a little while after nightfall in order to rest the sheep there. So they always had fresh milk at night, the milk of their sheep and the milk which they warmed by throwing heated stone on it. 'Amir bn Fuhaira would then call the herd away when it was still dark (before daybreak). He did the same on each of these three nights. Allah's Messenger and Abu Bakr had hired a man from the tribe of Banu Ad-Dail from the family of Abu ibn Adi as an expert guide, and he was in alliance with the family of Al-As ibn Wail As-Sahmi and he was in the religion of the infidels of Quraysh. The Prophet and Abu Bakr trusted him and gave him their two she camels and took his promise to bring their two she camels to the cave of the mountain

of Thawr in the morning after three nights later. And when they set out, 'Amir bn Fuhaira and the guide went along with them and the guide led them along the seashore, Ibn Kathir, (2010).

It would therefore be historically incorrect to wish away Abu Bakr from his companionship role to the Prophet in the cave of Thawr on the basis of an incorrectly written or reported hadith. Besides, a historical fact that is available in the Qur'an 9 verse 40 cannot be invalidated by just the text of the two ahadith. This is because one of the basic rules of criticism of *Matn* of Hadith, according to Doi (1982), is that "Hadith should not be contrary to the text or the teachings of the Qur'an or accepted basic principles of Islam." Apart from this, Hadith should also "not be contrary to the traditions which have already accepted by the authorities as reliable and authentic by applying all the principles", Doi (1982)

Another aspect of the popular narrative is the spider web and two wild pigeon stories. This aspect received no mention in both Ibn Hisham's and Ibn Kathir's biographies of the Prophet. Perhaps, according to Doi (1982), because of this omission and the attempt by some orientalist to discountenance its importance as just one of the "three miracles accomplished daily on God's earth," some Muslim commentators (Doi (1982) are now seeing it as mere embellishment to the Hijrah story without any originality. They contend that the narrative is similar to Felix Nola's story in ancient Christian history. Felix was a Christian presbyter at Nola near Naples in Italy. According to a source:

When Bishop Maximus fled to the mountains to escape the persecution of the Roman emperor Decius, Felix was arrested and beaten for his faith instead. He escaped prison, according to legend, being freed by an angel so that he could help bishop Maximus. Felix found Maximus alone, ill and helpless and hid him from soldiers in a vacant building. When the two were safely inside, a spider quickly spun a web over the door, fooling the imperial forces into thinking that it was long abandoned and they left without finding the Christians. A subsequent attempt to arrest Felix followed, which he avoided by hiding in a ruined building where, again, a spider web was spun across the entrance, convincing the soldiers the building was abandoned. The two

managed to hide from authorities until persecution ended with the death of Emperor Decius in 251 AD. Bert (2025)

While the two narratives share similarities in the spider web spun across the entrance, the fact that the Prophetic story occurred in a cave far from the city and that of Felix Nola was in a vacant building within the town is a significant disparity that cannot be ignored. Besides, in the opinion of an informed observer: “Felix of Nola is primarily known as a Christian saint and martyr, and there is no connection between his life or teachings and Islamic history or theology”, Abdul Azeez (2024) posited.

Therefore, one can posit that the allusion to Felix Nola’s story in trying to discredit the miracle of the spider web and two wild pigeons is diversionary and unnecessary because it does not invalidate the fact that the Prophet and his companion hid in the cave for three days without being discovered by his pursuers.

In the Satih, the seer’s story, nothing in Islamic annals connects him with the Hijrah of the Prophet except the peripheral mentioning of his name in the records of Ibn Ishaq, Abdul Azeez (2024), as one of the seers who predicted his coming during the Jahiliyyah days. Perhaps the only explanation for its infiltration into the Hijrah story thereafter is the usual attempt by Yoruba historians and biographers to link Islam with the Yoruba religion historically and theologically. (*Reference to the effort to link the ancestry of Yorubas to Makkah through Lamurudu whom they erroneously believed he was the same personage as Namrud the contemporaneous King with Prophet Ibrahim*).

Moral Precepts of the *Hijrah* in Life-Changing Endeavours

Understanding man as a social being is often tied amongst other indices to understanding the prevailing religious traditions in a given society. This is because religion is a powerful sentiment subscribed to by many peoples of the world. The idea of a God or Supreme Being Who is entitled to obedience and worship is as old as the existence of man and as adherents of various religious creeds acknowledge such His interventional role in his destiny. This divine intervention is manifested in the emergence of Prophets at different thresholds of

human history as moral conscience, role models, and guiding lights for other mortals.

Adherents of various religions therefore often rely on their exemplary lifestyles as precepts in their socioeconomic, political and spiritual life endeavours. For instance, in Islam, Prophet Muhammad's life pattern generally in terms of challenges and accomplishments are considered as a practical model for the Muslims: *"You have indeed in the Messenger of Allah a beautiful pattern (of conduct) for anyone whose hope is in Allah and the Final Day, and who engages much in the Praise of Allah"*. (Qur'an 33:21)

Instructively too, Muslims are directed to always take instructions from the Prophet in terms of permissible and prohibitions: *"...And whatever the Messenger gives you, take it and whatever he forbids you, abstain from it. And fear Allah; verily Allah is Severe in punishment"*. (Qur'an 59:7)

Therefore, apart from serving as a model for state formation, the *Hijrah* of the Prophet also offered moral precepts to the practitioners of Islam in different life-changing endeavors. For instance, migration from a point of danger to a point of safety has become the standard practice amongst Muslim reformers and mystics. Usman Dan Fodio, the 19th century Islamic reformer in Northern Nigeria had to migrate with his followers from Yunfa to Gudu in order to escape assassination after a period of protracted persecution. It was from Gudu, having been strengthened by a large number of people who fought alongside him that he launched attacks to wrest power from the corrupt Hausa/Fulani oligarchy in the region.

Between 1804 and 1808, an Islamic State which annexed virtually all the Hausa/Fulani territories in the North Western part of Nigeria was established, Adamu (nd) In the same manner, Ibn Arabi, the 13th-century Muslim mystics had to flee Egypt when he was threatened with mortal danger as a result of constant theological conflicts with local scholars. He had to wander from city to city until he finally arrived and settled in Baghdad, where he lived the greater part of his life before his death around 1240 CE. Ibn Arabi considered his movement as *Hijrah* with Egypt representing his own Makkah and Baghdad as his own Madinah. Hitti (1985). Other moral precepts to guide Muslims in their

socioeconomic endeavors are discussed under the following sub-headings:

Seeking New Alliances

The Hijrah presents Muslims with the imperative of seeking new alliances in situations where old friends and connections are either becoming increasingly unreliable or incapable of guaranteeing the quantum leap required to attain success in any endeavor. At the commencement of his mission in Makkah, the whole of the city except for a few of his friends (Abu Bakr and Uthman bn Affan) and relatives (Khadijah and 'Ali bn Abu Talib) were vehemently opposed to him. The Makkan powerful men did not only strengthen one another in harming their slaves and other less privileged persons who embraced Islam through organized persecution but also in scaring or hampering others from joining him, Sidiq (2022). In this precarious time, the Prophet relied so much on the love and support of his wife Khadijah and his uncle Abu Talib, who held two edges of a common destiny. While Khadijah was the first Muslim, Abu Talib remained a Kafir in spite of the Prophet's entreaties but both united in defending and protecting him and died the same year one after the other. The year of their death, 619 CE, was thus referred to as "the year of double sorrow," and it marked a significant turnaround in the Prophet's handling of his mission in terms of propagation and growth initiatives. It was clear to him that with the death of Khadijah and Abu Talib, he had lost formidable and irreplaceable allies and his continued stay in Makkah has become increasingly dangerous. He consequently reached out to visitors to the Ka'bah from Yathrib the following year, and his interaction with them culminated in Aqabah's first pledge. The success of this first pledge was a new alliance of friendship and support which got strengthened with the second pledge culminating in the Hijrah in 622 CE, Hitti (1985).

Prioritizing Safety Over Success

The city of Makkah was everything to the Prophet just as it was to every Makkan. They were so overtly proud of this ancestral home that they often felt like "fishes out of water" whenever they had to step out of the city on business trips and other unavoidable exigencies. The strategic

location of the "House of God" Ka'bah in Makkah to which every Arab of the region make recourse to annually, conferred unequal respectability and honour on the Makkans, making it almost impossible for them to trade off staying in it for anything. The Prophet himself loved the city because it was the city of his origin and birth. Allah in an unequivocal manner declared "and you are a freeborn of this city." Hitti (1985) given a scriptural (divine) validation of his citizenship of the city. However, in spite of this undying love, he had to prioritize self-preservation in the face of the danger to his life and the lives of his followers. Once, he permitted some of his disciples to seek asylum in Abyssinia before the massive movement to Yathrib after the failure of the Taif expedition. While underscoring his love for the city and the expediency of his eventual migration, the Prophet was reported to have said: "By Allah, you are the best and most beloved land of Allah. Had I not been driven away from you, I would not have left you", Hitti (1985) Muslims have always taken this Prophetic motive as a template for emulation in their socioeconomic life patterns. Being security conscious in terms of one's life, health and well-being and prioritizing it above every other consideration is the import of the following Qur'anic verse which this Prophetic tradition exemplified:

O you who believe! Take care of yourselves; no harm will come unto you from those who stray if you follow guidance. The goal of you all is Allah: it is He that will show you the truth of all that you do. (Qur'an 5:105)

Avoidance of Procrastination

Procrastination is the habit of delaying or postponing an action, Hitti (1985), and it is one of the impediments to the attainment of success. The companion's exceptional handling of Prophet's instruction is quite exemplary in this regard. When Abu Bakr intended to migrate to Madinah, the Messenger of Allah said to him, "...do not rush, for perhaps Allah will provide you with a (traveling) companion" What effect did these simple words have on Abu Bakr? After Abu Bakr left the Prophet's company, he began to plan and prepare for the impending journey to Madinah. He bought two riding animals, kept them in his home, and fed them well in preparation for the upcoming long and

arduous journey. Abu Bakr knew that the actual migration was going to be fraught with difficulties. He also knew that he could be ordered to leave at a moment's notice, and for this reason, he did not procrastinate; he made the necessary preparations in terms of arranging for riding animals and provisions. When the Messenger of Allah finally came and informed him that Allah had given him permission to leave and migrate to Madinah, Abu Bakr became so happy that he began to cry. The cry of joy of Abu Bakr was not just as a result of the news of his choice as the Prophet's companion but because he knew he was well prepared for the journey.

He would have been utterly disappointed with himself if he had not planned or prepared well in advance despite having a clue about the impending journey, Hitti (1985). Procrastination would not find a willing tool for domination in an unyielding worker who never accepts failure. The more a man keeps moving forward, pressing hard to attain success, the farther the spirit of procrastination moves away from him. However, once a man shows an indication of tiredness from trying again and again, he becomes a slave of procrastination. The spirit tells him to abandon the work for "some other time" and "some other time" which may never be available to him again. Muslims should therefore like Abu Bakr resolve not to leave whatever is to be done now for later. The spirit of success and accomplishment has no soft spot for a procrastinator. In fact, once a man is on the path of success or accomplishment and he decides to start procrastinating, the spirit of success may drift away from him immediately.

Developing Like Minds

The *Hijrah* demonstrated that any venture's success is determined by the venture's initiator and those he or she surrounds himself or herself with. Though it can be said that the majority of his companions were faithful, loyal and dependable yet, he was careful in choosing amongst them whom to travel with and whom to use as a distraction for the unbelievers as he escaped from Makkah. These deliberate choices accounted primarily for the success of the migration. For instance, Abu Bakr had occasions to show his loyalty, foresightedness, and obedience during the migration journey. They were met on the way by

a man who asked, "Who is this man that is with you?" Abu Bakr quickly answered, "He is a guide: He is guiding me to the way". The questioner of course assumed that Abu Bakr meant that he was guiding him through the pathways of the desert, and that is what Abu Bakr wanted him to understand from his statement. He really meant that the Prophet was guiding him to the way of goodness. By playing with words like this without lying, Abu Bakr was trying to conceal the identity of the Prophet for he knew that the Makkans were trying to locate him and capture him. Similarly, one cannot forget the loyalty and sacrifice of 'Ali bn Abu Talib who agreed to sleep on the Prophet's bed to deceive the besieging Makkan assassins while he sneaked out through the back door. 'Ali knew without any doubt that it was possible that the assassins may mistakenly take him for the Prophet and kill him with their swords but he did not mind that outcome since it was enough for him that the Messenger of Allah is saved, Hitti (1985)

Strategic Planning

Strategic planning is seen as an organisation's process of defining its strategy or direction, and making decisions on allocating its resources to attain strategic goals. A cursory assessment of the Prophet's Hijrah revealed careful strategic planning from conception to execution. For instance, Muhammad mindful of the failure he recorded in Ta'if where he was not only brutalized with his boy attendant Zayd bn Harith but chased out by the miscreants of the city, Hitti (1985) he carefully planned his next move by: (a) 'Looking before leaping' by choosing Yathrib after considering many of the options available to him; (b) Meeting the People of Yathrib twice surreptitiously (in the first and second pledges of al-Aqabah) and getting some of them to accept Islam and pledge allegiance to him, thereby preparing a favourable ground for his eventual movement (*Hijrah*); (c) Sending into their midst a companion (Mus'ab bn Umair) not only to serve as their teacher but to test the ground in order to ascertain the receptiveness of the people of Yathrib to strangers; (d) Selling a dummy to the Makkans by asking his cousin Ali bn Abu Talib to sleep on his bed in order to deceive those who besieged his house thereby making it easy for him to escape through the back door unnoticed; and (e) Asking his disciples to sneak

out of Makkah in batches to avoid the suspicion of the Makkah This strategic movement was to serve the end that by the time Muhammad himself arrived in Yathrib with Abu Bakr they were about 200 *Muhajirun* there who joined the tumultuous crowd of Yathribites to welcome him into their city.

Seeking Help Where Necessary

Apart from Abu Bakr, to whom he gave the privilege of accompanying him on the journey, Muhammad enlisted the assistance of other persons to make the journey less stressful and provided him and his companion a road map to their destination. Two such persons were Asma' bint Abu Bakr who used to carry food to them under cover of dark and 'Ali bn Abu Talib (his cousin), who slept on his bed to sell a dummy to the Quraysh while he escaped through the back door when his house was besieged. Another was a young boy in Makkah Abdullah bn Urayqit, Hitti (1985) who as at that time had not embraced Islam but was hired to assist in navigating their way on the journey because of his knowledge of the routes. He took them through an unknown path northward in order to remain off the beaten track of the Makkan spies and travelers returning from Syria who may encounter them on the way if they had taken the usual route. In life's journey, others' experience and expertise may be sought where necessary to guarantee success.

Persistency and Consistency

In spite of the tortuousness of the journey, Muhammad and his companion Abu Bakr were very persistent. They traversed the rocky plains and sandy paths for more than a week, dodging the Makkan's spies sent against them before reaching Yathrib. At one point, they had to hide in the Cave of *Thawr* to escape being discovered, and when Abu Bakr had become grievous stricken, he assured him, "Do not grieve, for Allah is with us". Hitti (1985) Even when Surakat on the orders of the Quraysh caught up with them and was daring to take them captives to Makkah for humiliation, Muhammad displayed uncommon courage, exuding so much confidence and faith in the God that sent him ordered land to entrap his horse. He never contemplated failure for once while on the journey because he knew the consequence of failure in his life

and mission was grave. Positive Mental Attitude and Persistence are key ingredients of success that every Muslim should be mindful of.

Seizing Momentum

Muhammad's posture in the immediate period after he arrived in Yathrib is indicative that it is not humility to shirk away from taken responsibilities when they present themselves. At his entrance into Yathrib and understanding the lacuna provided by the impasse between the Awz and Khazraj tribes, he seized the momentum by filling the void of leadership without blinking the eye. This is after the people had publicly acknowledged his leadership by naming their city Yathrib after him "Madinat-ul-Nabiyy" meaning "City of the Prophet".

Muhammad immediately kicked the ground running establishing a Commonwealth of Muslims comprising the Muhajiruns and Ansars. He also did not slack in putting a common charter in place to regulate the affairs of all the citizens of Madinah, Muslims and non-Muslims alike through the proclamation of the Madinan Charter. This proactive posture is similar to the self-recommending attitude of Prophet Yusuf as chronicled in Qur'an chapter 12. After he had successfully interpreted the riddle of the dreams of the King upon his release from the prison for that purpose thereby endearing himself to the King, Prophet Yusuf recommended himself to superintend over the food security of Egypt without hesitation on the basis of his competence and integrity:

And the King said: "Bring him to me that I may attach him to my person". Then, when he spoke to him, he said: "Verily, this day, you are with us high in rank and fully trusted." Yusuf said: "Set me over the storehouses of the land; I will indeed guard them with full knowledge. (Qur'an 12:54-55)

CONCLUSION

In this work, the debate regarding who was with the Prophet's companion in the cave of Thawr has been disposed of in favour of Abu Bakr, as recorded in most of the available biographical accounts. Additionally, in understanding the Prophet's Hijrah as examined above, it can be deduced that the importance lies in the popular saying that

“every adversity has the seed of an equivalent or greater benefits”, Hitti (1985) No doubt, the Prophet’s life in Makkah was full of adversity spanning thirteen years when he and his fledging community of vulnerable had to endure different kinds of persecution with unusual equanimity. They were despised, scornfully treated, and physically abused by the Makkans based on their religious affiliation. However, with the Hijrah, the Prophet and the Muslims attained tranquility, which galvanized them into a formidable nation that eventually wrested power from their hitherto tormentors in Makkah. The lessons taught by this epoch-making migration to assist adherents of Islam in life’s difficult situations in strategic planning, developing loyal and capable lieutenants, taking measured risks, prioritizing survival, and seizing momentum without slacking when necessary have thus been examined above.

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