



## A Sociopsychological Analysis of the Profiles of the Earliest Muslims and the Nature of the Islamic Call

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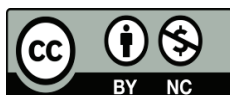
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**Abstract:** Islam is the religion preached by all prophets, from the first human being and the first prophet, Adam, to the last prophet, Muhammad. However, over time, people have deviated from it due to various psychological, sociological, cultural, and economic reasons and have adopted false religions. Thus, an overwhelming number of people are on multiple paths other than what is revealed to the Prophets. When humanity is faced with choices of right and wrong, it is important to examine both states of mind. This can be done by studying the invitation of the last Prophet Muhammad, the characteristics of the first Muslims who responded to it, and why some rejected the invitation. However, it is crucial to approach this issue transparently and realistically; otherwise, the true essence of the matter will be lost. Various statements have been made by different groups, particularly orientalist, about the attributes of the early Muslims and their motivations for embracing the Islamic call. It is essential to clarify these arguments to uncover the truth behind them. Some have suggested that the first Muslims were generally weak and young. Thus, they propose reasons such as "the aspiration to eliminate victimization" and "lack of rational thinking due to youth" as justifications for accepting the call. Consequently, the divine origin, message content, conformity to human nature, and organizing principles of the Islamic call are overlooked. Therefore, the aim of this article is to consolidate and analyze both claims and facts, drawing conclusions about the true nature of the issue without getting caught up in unnecessary debates.

**Keywords:** Islamic History, Prophet Muhammad, Şahāba, Islamic Call, First Muslims.



## Sosyo-Psikolojik Boyut ve İslâm Davetinin Özellikleri Bağlamında İlk Müslümanların Tahlili

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**Öz:** İlk insan ve ilk peygamber Hz. Âdem'den son peygamber Hz. Muhammed'e kadar bütün peygamberlerin tebliğ ettiği din İslâm'dır. Ancak süreç içerisinde insanlar psikolojik, sosyolojik, kültürel ve ekonomik temelli birçok sebepten dolayı sapmalar yaşamış ve bâtıl dinlere tâbi olmuşlardır. Bu sebeple yeryüzünde hak din olarak İslâm'ın müntesipleriyle birlikte bâtıl birçok dinin müntesipleri de var olagelmıştır. İnsanlığın hak ve bâtılı tercihe yöneldiği bu noktada iki ruh hali de incelenmelidir. Bu gerçek son peygamber Hz. Muhammed'in daveti, ona icabet eden ilk Müslümanların özellikleri ve daveti reddedenlerin sapma nedenleri üzerinden araştırılarak bir neticeye ulaştırılabilir. Ancak meselenin şeffaf ve gerçekçi bir şekilde incelenmesi gerekir. Aksi halde meselenin esas mahiyetinden uzaklaşılır. Zira ilk Müslümanların özellikleri ve İslâm davetini kabul etme gerekçeleri hususunda başta oryantalistler olmak üzere farklı çevreler tarafından dile getirilen iddialar, gerçeğin ortaya konması sadedinde elzem hale gelmiştir. Çünkü söz konusu iddialar, ilk Müslümanların genellikle güçsüz ve genç kimselerden oluştuğunu dillendirmekte, gerçeğe olarak da "mağduriyetlerin sonlandırılması isteği" ve "makul düşünceye yaşta olunmaması" gibi imaları gündeme getirmektedir. Böylece İslâm davetinin vahiy menşei, mesaj içeriği, insan fitratına uygunluğu ve düzenleyici özelliği arka plana itilmektedir. Dolayısıyla bu makalede iddialar ve gerçekler bir araya getirilip süzgeçten geçirilmekte, çok fazla tartışmaya girilmeden meselenin esas mahiyeti üzerinde reel çıkarımlar yapılmaktadır.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** İslâm Tarihi, Hz. Muhammed, Sahabe, İslâm Daveti, İlk Müslümanlar.

## Introduction

Humans are composed of the physical body and soul, and their ability to live a healthy life is closely tied to correctly meeting the needs of both aspects. Throughout history, prophets have been sent to guide people in meeting their spiritual needs effectively. However, various psychological and sociological factors have undeniably influenced how individuals react to these calls, positively or negatively.

When faced with the invitations of prophets, the elite, often spiritually weakened, were primarily concerned about safeguarding their interests and generally responded negatively. Conversely, individuals from all walks of life who maintained some positive spiritual qualities reacted positively to these invitations. The Islamic call extended by the last prophet, Muhammad, evoked similar reactions. Among the initial audiences of the Islamic call, albeit with some proportional differences, individuals from all spectrums of society can be found. This study uses sources of Islamic history to provide an overall picture that reflects the initial reluctance of the elite section of society toward the Islamic call. Thus, the researcher provides a historical contextualization of the lives of the first Muslims, specifically their demographic data, in order to uncover the sociopsychological motivations behind their embrace of Prophet Muhammad's Islamic message in 7th-century Meccan society.

This article analyzes the reasons behind this situation. During our research, we discovered that Abdurrahman Kurt had conducted a partially similar study on this subject.<sup>[1]</sup> However, while Kurt's study was a valuable effort, it limited itself to discussing the demographic characteristics of the first Muslims concisely and descriptively. In contrast, this study looks at the characteristics of early Muslims in greater detail and explores the factors contributing to their positive response to the Islamic call. To this end, it first presents the somewhat stereotypical discourse of the orientalists on the subject. Afterward, it criticizes these claims in light of the gathered data.

### 1. Orientalists' Views on the Islamic Call and the First Muslims

Orientalists have differing views on the interpretations of the Islamic call and the characteristics of the earliest Muslims. Most Orientalists reject the notion that Islam originated from divine revelation, opting instead to explain it as a product of Prophet Muhammad's personal experiences and thoughts. They tend to attribute the early Muslims' acceptance of the Islamic call to material factors. This view is so common in the Orientalist circle that only a minority have held opposing views.

While explaining the origin of Islam, Antony Black presented it as a product of Prophet Muhammad's fabrication and a necessary force for social transformation, stating:

"Muhammad created a new monotheism fitted to the contemporary needs of tribal society, if that society was to make something more of itself. To this end, he adapted ideas current in the Middle East. He gave a rationale for seeing the Arabs as the chosen people and giving them a mission to convert or conquer the world. He enabled them to achieve the transition simultaneously from polytheism to monotheism and from tribalism to nationhood to internationalism."<sup>[2]</sup>

In these words, Black disregards any notion of Islam having a divine origin and instead presents its message as having a more nationalistic and revolutionary undertone where the leader's

[1] See Abdurrahman Kurt, "Demografik Değişkenler Açısından İlk Müslümanlar," *Uludağ Üniversitesi İlahiyat Fakültesi Dergisi* 18/2 (June 1, 2009), 27–41.

[2] Antony Black, *The History of Islamic Political Thought: From the Prophet to the Present* (Psychology Press, 2001), 10.

primary focus was to enhance the political and belief systems of his community. Hodgson similarly emphasizes the societal transformation in Mecca and proposes that the Islamic invitation was a conjunctural reality created by Prophet Muhammad in response to a particular situation. In this context, Hodgson states the following:

“In Mecca, as the individual began to act more freely in his own private interest, the tribal expectations came to fit less well. Particularly, those who were disadvantaged in the new, more individualistic pattern welcomed a moral conception that could restore something of the older moral security in a form adapted to individualistic, commercial life. To this end, Islam was highly appropriate. Muhammad’s creative act of accepting prophethood thus found a public capable of responding to it.”<sup>[3]</sup>

Here, Hodgson also portrayed Islam as the Prophet’s creation. He touched on the main focus of this study —the demographic composition of the first people who embraced the Prophet’s message. Drawing from his stereotypical portrayal, Hodgson concluded that the call was merely a social revolution that appealed to an existing crowd.

Dozy also characterizes the first Muslim community as small, weak, and self-interested. He claims that very few wealthy and elite individuals converted to Islam. Instead, he argues that the early Muslims were mostly foreigners, slaves, and women. According to Dozy, the belief in the oneness of God and the concept of accountability created a need for guidance and inspired new hopes among these people. He suggests that Prophet Muhammad fulfilled this need by performing miracles. Dozy claims that the initial followers of the Prophet were mostly from the lower class, with few from the upper class, and argues that the majority rejected the faith. To buttress his argument, he noted an example of the few elites, Uthman (d. 35/656), who, he suggests, became a Muslim hoping to marry the Prophet’s daughter, Ruqayya (d. 2/624).<sup>[4]</sup>

While proving his point, Dozy was inconsistent, especially regarding the case of ‘Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb (d. 23/644). Although he openly admired ‘Umar’s pre-Islamic personality, his portrayal of him changed once he embraced Islam. Dozy claimed that 52 individuals converted to Islam before ‘Umar, suggesting that he was a late convert who accepted Islam with a defensive mind-set.<sup>[5]</sup> Dozy went on to argue that the authentic narrations in Islamic historical sources regarding ‘Umar’s conversion to Islam are fabricated and created solely to demonstrate the influence of religion. However, he fails to provide a clear justification and instead tries to suggest that ‘Umar acted out of self-interest.<sup>[6]</sup>

Consequently, Filibeli Ahmed Hilmi and Ziya Nur Aksun would rightfully criticize Dozy based on his inconsistency and incorrect ordering, stating:

“He attempts to explain ‘Umar’s conversion to Islam as a result of self-interest rather than conviction and faith. However, it is inconsistent to suggest that ‘Umar, who held a significant position within the Quraysh, would join a small community of only 39 people for personal gain. If we do not recognize the compatibility of Islamic principles with human nature and dismiss faith and conviction as valid reasons, then there is no logical explanation for ‘Umar’s decision to embrace Islam.”<sup>[7]</sup>

[3] Marshall G. S. Hodgson, *The Venture of Islam, Volume 1: The Classical Age of Islam* (University of Chicago Press, 2009), 1/167.

[4] Reinhart Pieter Anne Dozy, *İslam Tarihi*, trans. Vedat Atilla (Gri Yayınevi, 2006), 34.

[5] Dozy, *İslam Tarihi*, 40-41.

[6] Dozy, *İslam Tarihi*, 40-41.

[7] Şehbenderzade Filibeli Ahmed Hilmi ve Ziya Nur Aksun, *İslam Tarihi* (İstanbul: Ötüken Yayınları, 2022), 164.

Similar to the other Orientalists, Montgomery Watt's persistent efforts to depict early Muslims as young, inexperienced, and weak and to undermine their status distort the historical record. In doing so, he disregards the historical facts and diminishes the importance of the Hāshimids, who held significant positions as providers for pilgrims (rifāda) and custodians of Zamzam (siqāya), as well as possessing spiritual authority over Mecca. Watt goes so far as to present figures like Ja'far b. Abū Ṭālib (d. 8/629) and Ḥamza b. 'Abd al-Muṭṭalib (d. 3/625), who held prominent positions within both their tribe and Meccan society, as having low status. Conversely, he assigns a noteworthy position to Abū Lahab (d. 2/624), despite belonging to the same tribe.<sup>[8]</sup>

Watt went on to examine the clans of al-Muṭṭalib, Taym, Zuhrah, 'Adī, Hārith b. Fihri, 'Amr, Asad, Nawfal, 'Abd Shams, Mahzūm, Sahm, Jumah, and 'Abd al-Dīdār, to which most of the first Muslims belonged. He systematically analyzes each tribe, aiming to demonstrate their weaknesses or the youthfulness of their Muslim converts who held less prominent roles. In summarizing the first Muslims from these tribes, he classifies them into three groups:

- Young sons of prominent families [such as Khālīd b. Sa'īd (d. 14/635) and Arqam b. Abū al-Arqam (d. 55/675)].
- Men from other families, mostly young. (These individuals belong to clans that are relatively weaker but still hold some influence.)
- People who have no close ties to any clan and are only nominally allied with a clan but are not truly a part of it. (These individuals may be slaves or have their patronage rejected either by their own clan or by their allied clan.)

In this taxonomy, the youth make up the first two groups, while the weak form the third group. Watt emphasizes the significant number of young individuals among the early Muslims and regards this movement as a struggle between the upper and middle classes. According to Watt, the middle class becomes aware of the inequality between themselves and the upper class, feeling they lack sufficient privileges.<sup>[9]</sup> Thus, he inferred that the religious fraternity was to close this gap or dismantle the enabling structure. Drawing from Khālīd b. Sa'īd's dream, where the Prophet saves him from being thrown into the fire by his father, Watt suggests that it is a metaphor for Khālīd's father pressuring him to enter Mecca's financial whirlpool.<sup>[10]</sup> Therefore, while he firmly agrees with the religious motivations behind his conversion, Watt also incorporates the economic aspect. In Watt's words, within the second group, Hamza acted out of loyalty to his clan,<sup>[11]</sup> while 'Umar felt anger towards those from his tribe who converted to Islam. 'Umar worried that his tribe, which had already lost its value despite its important position, would become even more insignificant due to the new converts. Regarding the third group, consisting of weak individuals, Watt states that they are influenced by their own internal and external insecurities.

In a similar vein, Lapidus characterizes the early Muslims as rootless migrants, impoverished persons, members of vulnerable tribes, and young sons of powerful tribes. For him, the Prophet's

[8] Montgomery W. Watt, *Muhammad at Mecca* (London: Oxford at the Clarendon Press, 1960), 88.

[9] Watt, *Muhammad at Mecca*, 88-96.

[10] Watt, *Muhammad at Mecca*, 97-98.

[11] The fact that Hamza publicly declared his faith while showing solidarity with his cousin, the Prophet, does not necessarily mean that it was his main reason for converting. This is because he did not have to convert to Islam to support his nephew and the Hashemites. For example, Abū Ṭālib stood by the Prophet until his death without accepting Islam. The Hashemites, except for Abū Lahab, faced a 3-year boycott even though not all of them embraced the call to Islam. Another uncle of the Prophet, Abbas, only became a Muslim after the battle of Badr. Therefore, even though Hamza openly declared Islam at a time when his nephew was being mistreated, the sincerity of his proclamation should not be dismissed as mere solidarity.

message offered a vital alternative for these people, who frequently felt uneasy amid Mecca's shifting moral and social landscape. <sup>[12]</sup>

Cahen also aligns with other orientalists in depicting the early Muslims as weak individuals. However, he offers a detailed analysis of the factors that contributed to the negative reception of the Islamic message. He presents the following assertions:

“Muhammad found ardent followers within his own family, including his wife Khadija (d. 620) and his cousin Ali (d. 40/661). They were joined by individuals who were foreign-born freed slaves and young, impoverished people living in challenging circumstances. However, they faced opposition from the Quraysh as a whole. This opposition stemmed partly from disdainful skepticism and partly from the fear that Muhammad would disrupt their religious and commercial order, which was the basis of their power. It is important to note that Mecca was not only a revered city for pilgrimage but also a fairground for all Arabs.”<sup>[13]</sup>

Emphasizing that the early Muslims were weak or young, Hodgson also adopts the view of the majority of Orientalists while stating:

“When Muhammad began to preach publicly his new cult, particularly when he began to oppose the old cults, most men of the Quraysh naturally ridiculed and opposed him, but he won many converts, especially among the younger men. Some converts were slaves or tribeless persons, but most were from the less powerful Quraysh clans, and a number were among the less well-placed younger men in the very top families.”<sup>[14]</sup>

Meanwhile, contrary to most Orientalists, Jurjī Zaydān argues that the call cannot be attributed to Prophet Muhammad for mere personal gain but rather based on divine revelation. In this context, Zaydān aptly presents his critique and rationale as follows:

“Some non-Muslim writers hold the belief that the Prophet Muhammad claimed prophethood solely due to a desire for leadership and to perceive himself as distinct and superior to others or for personal gain. We find no justification for this perspective. He genuinely invited people with honesty and sincerity. Otherwise, he would not have been able to withstand the immense resistance and persecution he faced. Moreover, he had already gained popularity in the community before this.”<sup>[15]</sup>

In a similar submission, William Muir noted that the first converts to Islam were not only people of good character but also Prophet Muhammad's close friends and family members, which confirms his sincerity. Muir points out that these individuals, who were intimately acquainted with his personal life, would surely have noticed any inconsistencies between his public declarations and his private behavior had they existed.<sup>[16]</sup>

## 2. Characteristics of the First Muslims and Appraisal of the Claims on the Subject

The claims about the characteristics of the early Muslims seem to revolve around their youthfulness and powerlessness. Therefore, two questions need to be addressed: “Were the first adherents of Islam really young and weak?” and “If this is true, is it a flaw to a religion's call when those attracted to it are predominantly young and weak individuals?”

[12] Ira M. Lapidus, *A History of Islamic Societies* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 21.

[13] Claude Cahen, *İslamiyet*, trans. Esat Nermi Erendor (Istanbul: Bilgi Yayınevi, 2000).

[14] Hodgson, *The Venture of Islam*, 1/167.

[15] Corci Zeydan, *İslam Uygarlıkları Tarihi*, trans. Nejdēt Gök (Istanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2020), 1/65-66.

[16] William Muir, *The Life of Moḥammad from Original Sources* (Edinburgh: John Grant, 1923), 55.

To address the first question, we have created a comprehensive table by gathering and analyzing data from multiple sources of Islamic history.<sup>[17]</sup> This table, which displays the ages and social statuses of the earliest Muslims, will provide greater clarity and improve understanding of the topic at hand.

Order	Name	Tribe/Family	Gender	Age	Status
1	Khadija bint Khuwaylid	Quraysh/Banū 'Āṣim	Female	55	Central position in Quraysh, noble, wealthy
2	Waraqā b. Nawfal	Quraysh/Banū 'Āṣim	Male	Advanced age	Sage, wise
3	'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib	Quraysh/Banū Hāshim	Male	11	Son of tribal leader
4	Abū Bakr al-Ṣiddīq	Quraysh/Banū Taym	Male	≈ 42	Renowned merchant
5	Zaynab bint Muhammad	Quraysh/Banū Hāshim	Female	≈ 11	Daughter of Prophet Muhammad
6	Umm Kulthūm bint Muhammad	Quraysh/Banū Hāshim	Female	Young age	Daughter of Prophet Muhammad
7	Ruqayya bint Muhammad	Quraysh/Banū Hāshim	Female	≈ 8	Daughter of Prophet Muhammad
8	Fāṭima bint Muhammad	Quraysh/Banū Hāshim	Female	≈ 6	Daughter of Prophet Muhammad
9	Umm Ayman	Abyssinian	Female	Over 50 years	Freedwoman and nanny of Prophet Muhammad
10	Zayd b. Hāritha	Yemeni/Kalb	Male	≈ 15	Freedman of Prophet Muhammad
11	Hind b. Abī Ḥālāh	Tamīm	Male	Young age	Stepson of Prophet Muhammad
12	'Uthmān b. 'Affān	Banū 'Umayya	Male	Between 25-31	Renowned merchant
13	Zubayr b. Awām	Quraysh/Banū 'Āṣim	Male	16	Nephew of Prophet Muhammad
14	'Abd al-Raḥmān b. 'Awf	Quraysh/Banū Zuhrah	Male	≈ 17	Merchant

[17] This table was prepared using the following sources: Muḥammad b. 'Umar b. Wāqīd Abū 'Abdullāh al-Wākiqī, *Kitāb Al-Maghāzī*, critical ed. Marsden Jones (Beirut: Dār al-'Ālamī, 1989), 1/156; 'Abd al-Malik b. Hishām b. Ayyūb al-Himyarī Ibn Hishām, *al-Sīra al-nabawīyya*, critical ed. Muṣṭafā al-Saqā' et al. (Egypt: Maṭba'at Muṣṭafā al-Bābī al-Ḥalabī wa Awlādihī, 1955), 1/240-263, 537-541, 603, 707; Abū 'Abdullāh Muḥammad b. Sa'd b. Mūnī Ibn Sa'd, *al-Ṭabaqāt al-kubrā*, critical ed. Muḥammad 'Abd al-Qādir Aṭā (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyya, 1990), 1/105, 324; 3/15, 29, 32, 37, 39, 62, 65, 66, 67, 75, 92, 101, 103, 110, 111, 118, 119, 121, 128, 160, 170, 173, 174, 180, 183, 186, 290, 294, 298, 306, 307, 312; 4/70, 92, 93, 101, 153; 7/269; 8/16, 25, 46, 179, 196, 207, 233; Abū al-Ḥusayn 'Abdul-Bāqī b. Kānī, *Mu'jam al-ṣaḥāba*, critical ed. Ṣalāh b. Ṣalīm al-Misrātī (Madina: Maktabat al-Ghurabā al-Asriyya, 1418), 2/234, 306; Abū Nu'aym Aḥmad b. 'Abdullāh b. Aḥmad b. Ishāq b. Mūsā b. Mihrān al-Iṣfahān, *Ma'rifat al-ṣaḥāba*, critical ed. 'Adil b. Yūsuf al-Azāzī (Riyad: Dār al-Waṭan, 1998), 1/140, 322; 2/954, 990; 4/2049, 2059, 2070, 2226; 6/3410; Abū 'Umar Yūsuf b. 'Abdullāh b. Muḥammad b. 'Abd al-Barr, *al-Istī'āb fī ma'rifat al-aṣḥāb*, critical ed. 'Alī Muḥammad al-Biqāwī (Beirut: Dār al-Jil, 1992), 2/426, 575, 796; 3/300, 1037-1038, 1089-1090, 1235; 4/1544, 1817, 1839, 1853; Izz al-Dīn Ibn al-Athīr, *al-Uṣd al-ghāba fī ma'rifat al-ṣaḥāba*, critical ed. 'Alī Muḥammad Mu'awwad, 'Adil Aḥmad 'Abd al-Mawjūd (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyya, 1994), 1/334, 661; 2/97; 3/84, 391; 4/287, 375; 5/159, 403, 416; 6/148; 7/80, 131, 225, 225, 290; Abū al-'Abbās Shams al-Dīn Aḥmad b. Muḥammad b. Ibrāhīm b. Abī Bakr Ibn Khallikān, *wafayāt al-a'yān wa anbā' abnā' al-zamān*, critical ed. Iḥsān 'Abbās (Beirut: Dār al-Sādir, 1900), 3/64; Abū al-Faṭḥ Fakhr al-Dīn Muḥammad b. Muḥammad b. Muḥammad al-Ya'mari Ibn Sayyid al-Nās, *'uyūn al-athar fī funūn al-maghāzī wa al-shamā'il wa al-sīra*, critical ed. Ibrāhīm Muḥammad Ramaḍān (Beirut: Dār al-Qalam, 1993), 1/115; Shams al-Dīn Abū 'Abdillāh Muḥammad b. Aḥmad b. 'Uthmān b. Kāymāz al-Dhahabī, *Siyar a'lām al-nubalā'*, critical ed. Shu'ayb al-Arnā'ūt et al. (Beirut: Mu'assasat al-Risāla, 1985), 1/100; 3/5-18; Shams al-Dīn Abū 'Abdillāh Muḥammad b. Aḥmad b. 'Uthmān b. Kāymāz al-Dhahabī, *Tārīkh al-islām wa wafayāt al-mashāhir wa al-a'lām*, critical ed. 'Umar 'Abd al-Salām al-Tadmurī (Beirut: Dār al-Kitāb al-'Arabī, 1993), 2/59; Aḥmad b. 'Alī b. 'Abd al-Qādir Taqī al-Dīn al-Maqrizī, *Imtā' al-asmā' bi-mā li-rasūl min al-abnā' i wa al-aḥwāl wa al-hifādh wa al-matā'*, critical ed. Muḥammad 'Abd al-Ḥamid al-Nimisī (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyya, 1999), 1/36; 9/112, 113; Muḥammad Ilyās 'Abd al-Raḥmān al-Fālūdhā, *Al-mawsū'ah fī ṣaḥīḥ al-sīrat al-nabawīyya* (Makkah: Maṭābi' al-Safā, 1423), 247-258; Khayr al-Dīn b. Maḥmūd b. Muḥammad b. 'Alī al-Zirkalī, *Al-A'lām* (Beirut: Dār al-'Ilm li-l-Malāyīn, 2002), 3/229; 4/102; 8/115; Hüseyin Algül, "Hind b. Ebū Hāle," *Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı İslām Ansiklopedisi* (İstanbul: TDV Yayınları, 1998); İbrahim Sarıçam, *H. Muhammed ve Evrensel Mesajı* (Ankara: Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı, 2011), 339; M. Yaşar Kandemir, "Hālid b. Sa'īd," *Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı İslām Ansiklopedisi* (İstanbul: TDV Yayınları, 1997).

Order	Name	Tribe/Family	Gender	Age	Status
15	Sa'd b. Abi Waqqāş	Quraysh/Banū Zuhrah	Male	17	Noble
16	Ṭalḥa b. 'Ubayd Allāh	Quraysh/Banū Taym	Male	≈ 17	Merchant
17	Yāsir b. 'Āmir	Yemeni origin	Male	Elderly	Ally of Banū Makhzūm/ Marginalized
18	Sumayya bint Khabbāb	Yemeni origin	Female	Elderly	Ally of Banū Makhzūm/ Marginalized
19	'Ammār b. Yāsir	Yemeni origin	Male	Between 40-50	Ally of Banū Makhzūm/ Marginalized
20	Suhayb b. Sinān	Rabī'a/Banū Numayr b. Qāsīt	Male	≈ 20	Ally of Banū Taym/ Marginalized
21	Miqdād b. 'Amr al-Kindī	Baḥrā	Male	≈ 25	Ally of Aswad b. 'Abd Yaghuth
22	Bilāl b. Rabah	Abyssinian	Male	≈ 35	Slave
23	Khālid b. Sa'īd Ibn al-'Ās	Quraysh/Banū Umayya	Male	≈ 25	Belongs to an influential family
24	Umayna bint Khalaf	Khuzā'a	Female	Young	Noble/ Khālid's wife
25	'Abdullāh b. Mas'ūd	Ḥuḏayl	Male	≈ 16	Ally of Banū Zuhra
26	Abū 'Ubayda 'Āmir b. Jarrāḥ	Quraysh/Banū Hārith	Male	≈ 13	Respected literate person
27	Abū Salama b. 'Abd al-Asad	Quraysh/Makhzūm	Male		Son of the Prophet's aunt
28	Arqam b. Abū al-Arqam	Quraysh/Makhzūm	Male	17	From an influential family
29	'Uthmān b. Maḏ'ūn	Quraysh/Jumah	Male	51	One of the prominent figures of Mecca
30	'Abdullāh b. Maḏ'ūn	Quraysh/Jumah	Male	≈ 20	Brother of 'Uthmān b. Maḏ'ūn
31	'Ubayda b. al-Hārith	Quraysh/Banū Hāshim	Male	≈ 52	Noble
32	Qudāma b. Maḏ'ūn	Quraysh/Jumah	Male	≈ 22	Brother of 'Uthmān b. Maḏ'ūn
33	Sa'īd b. Zayd b. Nufayl	Quraysh/Banū 'Adī	Male	≈ 18	Grandson and brother-in-law of Hāshim
34	Fatima bint al-Khaṭṭāb	Quraysh/Banū 'Adī	Female		Sister of 'Umar/ Sa'īd's Wife
35	'Ā'isha bint Abi Bakr	Quraysh/Taym	Female	≈ 6	Wife of the Prophet and daughter of Abū Bakr
36	Asmā' bint Abi Bakr	Quraysh/Taym	Female	17	Daughter of Abū Bakr
37	Khabbāb b. al-Aratt	Banū Sa'd	Male	16	Ally of Banū Zuhra
38	'Umayr b. Abi Waqqāş	Quraysh/Banū Zuhra	Male	Young (died at 16)	Brother of Sa'd b. Abi Waqqāş
39	Mas'ūd b. 'Amr al-Qārrī	Qārā	Male		Insufficient information
40	Salīt b. 'Amr b. 'Abd al-Shams	Banū 'Āmir b. Luay	Male	Young	Hāshim
41	Hātīb b. 'Amr	Banū 'Āmir b. Luay	Male	Young	Brother of Salīt b. 'Amr
42	'Ayyāsh b. Abi Rabbī'a	Quraysh/Makhzūm	Male		Aunt's brother of Abū Jahl
43	Asmā' bint Salama	Tamīm	Female		Wife of 'Ayyāsh b. Abi Rabbī'ah
44	Hunayy b. Ḥuḏāfah	Banū Sahm b. 'Amr	Male	Young	Husband of Ḥafsa bint 'Umar
45	'Āmir b. Rabī'ah	Yemeni origin	Male		Ally of 'Umar
46	'Abdullāh b. Jahsh	Banū Asad	Male	≈ 34	Son of the Prophet's aunt
47	Abū Aḥmad b. Jahsh		Male		Ally of Banū Umayya
48	Ja'far b. Abi Ṭālib	Quraysh/Banū Hāshim	Male	22	Son of the Prophet's uncle/ Noble

Order	Name	Tribe/Family	Gender	Age	Status
49	Asmā' bint Umayss	Ḥasan	Female		One of the famous sisters
50	Khaṭṭāb b. al-Ḥārith	Quraysh/Jumah	Male		
51	Fukayha bint Yasār		Female		Wife of Khaṭṭāb b. al-Ḥārith
52	Fāṭima bint al-Mujallil	Quraysh/Āmir b. Luay	Female		Wife of Ḥātīb b. al-Ḥārith
53	Ma'mar b. al-Ḥārith	Quraysh/Jumah	Male		
54	Sā'ib b. 'Uthmān b. Maz'un	Quraysh/Jumah	Male	≈ 18	Son of 'Uthmān b. Maz'un
55	al-Muṭṭalib b. Azhar	Quraysh/Banū Zuhra	Male		
56	Ramla bint Abū 'Awf	Ka'b b. Luay	Female		Wife of al-Muṭṭalib b. Azhar
57	Nu'aym b. 'Abdullāh	Quraysh/Banū 'Adī b. Ka'b	Male		One of the wealthy in Mecca
58	'Āmir b. Fuhayra	Azd	Male	≈ 26	Slave
59	Abū Ḥudhayfa b. 'Utba b. Rabī'a	Quraysh/Banū Umayya	Male	≈ 31	From a noble family
60	Wāqid b. 'Abdullāh	Tamīm	Male		Ally of Banū 'Adī b. Ka'b
61	Khālīd b. Bukayr	Allied with Banū 'Adī b. Ka'b	Male	≈ 21	Ally of Banū 'Adī b. Ka'b
62	'Āmir b. Bukayr	Allied with Banū 'Adī b. Ka'b	Male		Ally of Banū 'Adī b. Ka'b
63	'Āqil b. Bukayr	Allied with Banū 'Adī b. Ka'b	Male	≈ 22	Ally of Banū 'Adī b. Ka'b
64	Iyās b. Bukayr	Allied with Banū 'Adī b. Ka'b	Male		Ally of Banū 'Adī b. Ka'b
65	Ummu Ubays	Banū Taym	Female	Young	Slave
66	Abū Fuqayhah	Azd	Male	Young	Slave of Safwān b. Umayya

A careful examination of the characteristics of the first generation of Muslims shows that a considerable number of them were young individuals. While a few individuals aged 50 and older were in the community, the majority comprised young people under 30.<sup>[18]</sup> Many young individuals from privileged and respected families in Mecca displayed a stronger inclination towards Islam compared to other demographic groups, including the elderly, slaves, and those who were impoverished or marginalized. Hence, it is accurate to assert that the Prophet's primary supporters in the propagation of Islam were young individuals. The first group included 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib, who became a Muslim at the age of ten, 'Abdullāh b. 'Umar (d. 73/693), and Abū 'Ubayda b. Jarrah (d. 18/639), who became a Muslim at thirteen, 'Uqbah b. 'Āmir (d. 58/678), who became a Muslim at fourteen, Jābir b. 'Abdullāh (d. 78/697), and Zayd b. Khārisha (d. 8/629), who became Muslims at fifteen.

In addition, this group also includes 'Abdullāh b. Mas'ūd (d. 32/652-53), Khabbāb b. al-Aratt (d. 37/657), and Zubayr b. Awwām (d. 36/656), who accepted Islam at sixteen; Ṭalḥah b. 'Ubaydullāh (d. 36/656), 'Abd al-Raḥmān b. 'Awf (d. 32/652) and 'Arān b. Abū al-Arqam, who became Muslim at seventeen; Abū al-Arqam, Sa'd b. Abū Waqqāsh (d. 55/675), Asmā' bint Abū Bakr (d. 73/692), Mu'adh b. Jabal, and Mus'ab b. 'Umayr, who all accepted Islam at the age of eighteen, and Abū Mūsā al-Ash'arī (d. 42/662), who became Muslims at the age of nineteen. Moreover, Ja'far b. Abū Ṭālib (d. 8/629), who became a Muslim at the age of twenty-two, and Uthmān b. al-Huwayrith (d. ?), Uthmān b. 'Affān, and 'Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb, who became Muslims between the ages of twenty-five and thirty-one, constituted this first group.<sup>[19]</sup>

[18] Sariçam, *Hz. Muhammed ve Evrensel Mesajı*, 86.

[19] Sariçam, *Hz. Muhammed ve Evrensel Mesajı*, 339.

In the early stage of Islam, it was not uncommon to see some of these young people forsake their comfort for their newly found faith. For instance, Mus'ab b. 'Umayr was one of the young companions who dedicated his life, especially his youth, to spreading the message of Islam. Mus'ab's very wealthy mother used to dress him in the finest clothes. When he heard about the Prophet's call, Mus'ab embraced Islam at Dār al-Arqam and would secretly meet the Prophet. When 'Uthmān b. Ṭalḥah (d. 42/662) saw him praying, he informed Mus'ab's mother and others. They imprisoned him, and he remained in prison until the first migration of the Muslims to Abyssinia.<sup>[20]</sup> The narrative regarding the Prophet's encounter with Mus'ab was portrayed effectively, capturing his predicament. The Prophet noticed his companion, who wrapped a sheepskin around his waist, and remarked, "Look at this person whose heart has been enlightened by Allah." I saw him enjoying the finest food and drinks in the care of his parents. He was wearing a garment that cost 200 dirhams. The love for Allah and His Messenger led him to the state you see now."<sup>[21]</sup>

The story of Zubayr b. Awwām is another notable portrayal of the early privileged young Muslims. He embraced Islam at the age of sixteen and displayed unwavering devotion to his faith, even in the face of persecution from his uncle, Nawfal. At first, Nawfal held affection for Zubayr, but his sentiments shifted upon learning of Zubayr's conversion to Islam.<sup>[22]</sup>

Since it is evident that the majority of early converts to Islam were predominantly young, one might question whether this demographic trend presents a problem or has any implications for the significance of the call. Undoubtedly, age held great importance in the Jāhiliyya society and was even seen as a criterion for leadership. However, we should not overlook the fact that as people grow older, their knowledge and experience deepen, which can make them more entrenched in their beliefs and less receptive to new experiences. On the other hand, youthfulness, characterized by a lack of experience, is often accompanied by a willingness to embrace change and question established norms. Taking these facts into account, it is possible and realistic to explain the relatively low number of older individuals among the early Muslims as a result of some blindly following their ancestors out of fanaticism. However, it is also important to note that the human ego is more dominant during youth, and the pursuit of pleasure is more tempting. Thus, responding to a call that requires adherence to moral principles instead of indulging in desires is a noteworthy point here. Therefore, it would be naive to consider the acceptance of Islam by young individuals solely as a form of social protest rather than devotion.

Against the popular stereotype that the first Muslims were weak and young, the table demonstrates that individuals in the middle and older age groups, as well as those with wealth and high social status, were also part of the initial Muslim community, albeit to a lesser extent. This reveals the fact that Islam appeals to people of all ages and social statuses. Be that as it may, it would be contrary to reality to explain the acceptance of weak people to the call of Islam based on material grounds. This is because, by choosing Islam, these individuals did not transition to a more comfortable material life but rather to a more challenging one. In order for the thesis that they accepted Islam out of self-interest to be valid, they would have had to become Muslims in later periods when Muslims were growing in number and strength. However, they made their choice in the early stages when Muslims were still weak, and they did not hesitate to sacrifice their lives for this cause. The sources of sīrah and Islamic history are filled with examples of this.

When the Prophet sat with Muslims like Khabbāb, Ammār, Abū Fukayha al-Yasār, a freedman of Şafwān b. Umayya and Şuhayb, the leaders of Quraysh, would mock them and say to each other,

[20] Muḥammad Yūsuf b. Muḥammad Ilyās b. Muḥammad Ismā'īl al-Kāndahlawī, *Ḥayātu al-ṣaḥāba*, critical ed. Bishār Awwād Ma'rūf (Beirut: Mu'assasat al-Risāla, 1999), 1/136.

[21] al-Kāndahlawī, *Ḥayātu al-ṣaḥāba*, 2/573.

[22] Veysel Akkaya, *Genç Sahabiler* (Istanbul: Erkam Yayınları, 2019), 65.

“These are his companions, as you see? These are those whom Allah has bestowed upon them from among us with guidance and truth! If what Muhammad came with was any good, these people would not have preceded us to it, and Allah would not have singled them out from us.”<sup>[23]</sup>

Similarly, it has been reported that when al-Aswad b. ‘Abd Yaghūth saw the poor Muslims; he would mockingly say, “These are the kings of the earth who will inherit the kingdom of Kisra.” He would also say to the Prophet, “Have you not been spoken to today from heaven, O you!”<sup>[24]</sup>

The weak Muslims, who endured the mockery and insults of the polytheists, demonstrated the same unwavering resolve in the face of their torture. Among those who were most severely tortured were the Yāsir family, Khabbāb b. al-Aratt, Bilāl b. Rabāḥ, Zinnīra, and al-Nahdīyya, all of whom were among the weaker Muslims.<sup>[25]</sup>

The Companions were subjected to such severe torture that they would sometimes approach the Prophet and complain about its severity. The Prophet would then admonish them using examples. Khabbāb b. al-Aratt recalled, “We were experiencing the most extreme torture from the polytheists. We went to the Prophet while he was leaning against the Ka‘aba, using his cloak and garment as a pillow. We presented our condition to him and complained, ‘O Messenger of Allah! Pray to Allah for us! Seek help from Allah for us! O Messenger of Allah! Will you not pray to Allah for us against these people whom we fear might lead us astray from our religion? Will you not pray to Allah for us?’ The Prophet’s face immediately changed color. It turned red, and he sat up straight and said, ‘By Allah, among those before you, there were believers who were seized, a pit was dug for them in the ground, and they were buried in it up to their knees. Then, a saw would be brought and placed on their heads, and they would be sawn into two halves. But this torture could not make them abandon their faith! Or their flesh and nerves would be combed with iron combs, scraped from their bones. But this torture could not make them abandon their faith! Fear Allah! Surely, Allah will grant you victory! By Allah, the help of Allah is coming! Surely, this matter will be completed! The ruling of this matter will surely be fulfilled! To the extent that a rider may travel from Sana‘a to Ḥaḍramawt, fearing none but Allah or a wolf as regards his sheep. But you are being hasty!’”<sup>[26]</sup> One of the prominent figures among those who suffered torture was Bilāl b. Rabāḥ al-Habashī. ‘Umayya b. Khalaf used to take him to the desert in the scorching heat and subject him to torture by placing a rock on him, all in an effort to force him to renounce his faith.<sup>[27]</sup>

Looking at these examples, it is clear that these individuals possess a strong determination fueled by their beliefs and unwavering resolve. If their motivations had solely been based on worldly gains and status, they might not have been able to endure the ridicule and torture they faced. Therefore, it is more convincing to attribute their endurance to their spiritual experiences and their taste of faith, which made the torture seem insignificant to them. This deep faith guided their actions. The most important aspect of their faith is that they focused not on worldly gains, such as a change in status, but on heavenly rewards in the afterlife.<sup>[28]</sup> If they had focused solely

[23] Ibn Hishām, *Al-sīra al-nabawīyya*, 1/392.

[24] Abū al-Ḥasan ‘Alī b. Abū al-Karīm Muḥammad b. Muḥammad b. ‘Abd al-Karīm b. ‘Abd al-Wāḥid al-Shaybānī Ibn al-Athīr, *al-Kāmil fī al-tārīkh*, critical ed. Abū al-Fidā’ ‘Abdullāh al-Qāḍī (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyya, 1987), 1/668.

[25] The Yāsir family, who were allies of the Banū Makhzūm, were taken to a place called al-Abṭaḥ and tortured by Abū Jahl. Consequently, Yāsir and Sūmayya were both martyred. In a similar vein, Khabbāb b. al-Aratt was also subjected to torture by the polytheists. He was made to lie on hot sand with his bare back, had hot stones placed on him, and his head was submerged in hot sand. See Ibn al-Athīr, *al-Kāmil*, 1/663-665.

[26] Abū ‘Abdillāh Muḥammad b. Ismā‘īl al-Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* (Damascus-Beirut: Dār Ibn Kathīr, 2002), “Menāqib al-Anṣār”, 29.

[27] Muḥammad b. Muḥammad Ṣuwaylim Abū Suhbah, *al-Sīrat al-nabawīyyah ‘alā daw’ al-Qur’ān wa al-sunnah* (Damascus: Dār al-Qalam, 1427), 1/342.

[28] Aḥmad Aḥmad Gallūsh, *al-Sīrah al-nabawīyya* (Beirut: Mu’assasat al-Risāla, 2003), 13.

on the material world, they would likely have succumbed to their oppressors, who might have spared them and offered them a more comfortable worldly condition.

On this note, it is important to clarify that while presenting these examples of principled behavior within the first Muslim community, it is worth noting that there were also wealthy and high-status Muslims among them. When we examine those who migrated to Abyssinia, we can observe that just as we had people of low status who were weak, there were also rich and powerful persons. Among their ranks were Ja'far b. Abū Ṭālib, Zubayr b. Awwām, 'Uthman b. Affān, 'Abd al-Rahman b. 'Awf, Abū Salama al-Mahzūmī, and Umm Habība bint Abū Sufyān.<sup>[29]</sup>

At this point, another issue arises that must be examined to draw the correct inference. This relates to the attitude of the polytheists who hold high social positions. While the claim that weak individuals converted to Islam for personal gain is contradictory, it is a consistent argument, supported by historical evidence, to state that those in positions of status opposed Islam in order to preserve their current position. Hitti concisely summarizes this situation with the following statement:

“But Abu-Sufyan, representing the aristocratic and influential Umayyad branch of Quraysh, stood adamant. What they considered a heresy seemed to run counter to the best economic interests of the Quraysh as custodians of al-Ka'bah, the pantheon of multitudinous deities and center of a pan-Arabian pilgrimage.”<sup>[30]</sup>

By and large, while socioeconomic and sociopolitical factors may have influenced the preferences of some individuals, they did not significantly impact the conversion to Islam. As we have seen thus far, people of all ages, genders, and social statuses could be found among the early Muslims. Therefore, the correct interpretation should be that the first Muslims consisted of people of all ages and various social statuses, although the ratios varied. Nevertheless, it is not accurate to explain the reasons for the first Muslims' conversion to Islam solely based on gender, age, and status. This highlights another important fact: Islam is a religion that appeals to people from all walks of life and is compatible with human nature. It should be noted that while the polytheistic Arabs coexisted with Christians and Jews and had knowledge of their religions, this did not significantly impact the Arabs, unlike Islam.<sup>[31]</sup> At this juncture, it would be appropriate to discuss the characteristics of the Islamic call comprehensively.

### 3. Characteristics of the Islamic Call

Islam is considered a pure faith that embodies the original inclination to worship God (*fiṭra*). The Quran states that humans were created with this inherent nature.<sup>[32]</sup> This concept refers to humankind's natural disposition to worship their Creator before external influences corrupt this nature. In a hadith, the Prophet said: “There is not a newborn child who is not born in a state of *fiṭra*. His parents then make him a Jew, a Christian, or a Magian.”<sup>[33]</sup> From the Quranic verse and hadith, we understand that Islamic monotheism is the religion that aligns with *fiṭra*—the innate nature of humanity. In all its aspects, Islam is expected to fulfill both the material and spiritual needs of humans. Therefore, those who have not entirely lost their natural inclinations should

[29] Abdurrahman El-Muhacir, *Rasulullah (s.a.s)'ın Hayatı ile İslam'ın Hareket Metodu*, trans. Eyüp Aslan (Istanbul: Hak Yayınları, 2017), 1/234-235.

[30] Philip K. Hitti, *History of the Arabs from the Earliest Times to the Present* (London and Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1970), 113.

[31] Hilmi and Aksun, *İslam Tarihi*, 132.

[32] Rūm 30/30.

[33] *al-Bukhārī* “Janā'iz”, 92.

be able to be influenced by its teachings in some way. This is evident in the attitude of some of the polytheistic leaders who rejected the Prophet Muhammad's message.

According to the sources of Islamic history, one night, Abū Sufyān, Abū Jahl, and al-Akhnas b. Sharīq, unknowingly to each other, went to listen to Prophet Muhammad recite the Qur'an at night in his house, each of them hiding somewhere. They spent the night listening to the Prophet reciting the Qur'an. As dawn broke, they left their hiding places and dispersed. As they tried to leave without being seen, they bumped into each other. Realizing the awkwardness of their actions, they reproached each other and said, "Let us not do such a thing again! If one of the common people sees us, doubt will surely fall into his heart," and they left. But on the second and third night, the same situation repeated itself. When they finally left, they said to each other, "Let us not leave this place unless we swear that we will never return," and they dispersed after agreeing.<sup>[34]</sup>

In another report, the polytheists, concerned about the rapid increase in the Muslim population, sent representatives to Prophet Muhammad in an attempt to persuade him. One of these representatives was 'Utba ibn Rabī'a. 'Utba spoke at length, reiterating the proposals the polytheists had already made. The Prophet listened silently until Utba finished, then responded, "O Abu al-Walid! Have you finished speaking?" When 'Utba confirmed that he had, Prophet Muhammad said, "Now you listen to me!" He proceeded to recite Sūrat al-Fuṣṣilat. After reading verse 37, the verse of prostration, the Prophet prostrated himself and rose, saying, "O Abū al-Walīd! You have heard what you needed to hear; now it is up to you to decide." Utba then got up and returned to his companions. The polytheists who observed him remarked, "By Allah, Abū al-Walīd is coming back with a completely different facial expression than when he left. His mood has changed a lot!" When he reached them, they eagerly asked 'Utba, "What happened? Tell us!" 'Utba replied, "By Allah, I have heard such a word that I have never heard anything like it before. It is neither poetry nor incantations nor sorcery..."<sup>[35]</sup>

By and large, it can be inferred that the Islamic call, along with the shari'a - beliefs and norms it embodies - is not a product of social development and interaction but rather a product of revelation. It is not something created by society but rather something that aims to make society. Its purpose is to guide individuals towards virtuousness and extend this virtue to all levels of society and the state. Thus, the text of this call has the potential to create an ideal individual and society in any era. Historically, it transformed its initially marginalized audience from camel herders into world rulers. The first Muslims also adhered to the principles of Islam and transitioned from weak individuals, fearful of capture, to becoming a significant power within about 20 years.<sup>[36]</sup>

Considering the nature of the Prophet's call and the circumstances surrounding it, it becomes clear that his purpose was to invite people to embrace Islam, become Muslims, and attain salvation. Notably, that he did not seek political gains or make any political promises, as he was not in a position to do so in Mecca.<sup>[37]</sup> However, if his call did result in any political gains or overall social reform, it would be due to the quality of the call itself, supported by the sincere commitment of its early adherents.

The call to Islam was not limited to a specific group of people; it included everyone, regardless of their social class, whether they were free or slaves, rich or poor, male or female, young or

[34] Ibn Hishām, *al-Sīra al-nabawīyya*, 1/315; Ra'ūf Shalabī, *al-Da'watu al-islamiyya fi ahdihi al-makki: manahijuhā wa ghayātuhā* (Damascus: Dār al-Qalam, no date), 408.

[35] Ibn Hishām, *al-Sīra al-nabawīyya*, 1/293-294; Abū al-Fidā' Ismā'il ibn 'Umar al-Qurashī Ibn Kathīr, *Al-Bidāyah Wa al-Nihāya*, critical ed. 'Abdullāh b. 'Abd al-Muḥsin al-Turkī (Cairo: Dār al-Ḥijr, 1997), 3/81.

[36] 'Awda, *al-Tashrīḥ al-Jinā'ī*, 1/22.

[37] Muḥammad b. Muṣṭafā b. 'Abd al-Salām al-Dabīsī, *al-Sīrat al-nabawīyyah bayna al-'āsār al-marwīya wa al-āyāt al-Qur'āniyya* (Cairo: Jāmi'at Umm al-Shams, 2010), 319.

old, and regardless of their color or race. The situation of the first people who embraced Islam highlights an important point. Although there were class differences among them, the Islamic message encompassed all of them and did not differentiate between them. In Islamic literature, there is no superiority based on class distinctions. Superiority is only attained through piety.<sup>[38]</sup>

### Conclusion

Religion, sent by the Creator to His servants through prophets as a set of guiding principles, fulfills a natural need for human beings. Throughout history, people's attitudes towards religion have generally manifested in two ways. Some have embraced religion as it is and wholeheartedly submitted to it, while others have displayed an adverse attitude, believing that it conflicts with their personal interests, prejudices, and tastes. However, even those who held this adverse view could not completely do away with religion. Thus, they either created religions that aligned with their circumstances or altered existing religions.

Despite varying proportions, many factors influence individuals' decisions regarding their religious choices, including age, economic status, gender, social status, and prejudice. However, considering the divine nature of the Islamic call and its compatibility with human nature, it is seen that the first Muslims responded positively to this call because they discovered in it the material and spiritual fulfillment they sought. The presence of people from diverse backgrounds among the first Muslims, as well as the rapid material and spiritual transformation they underwent after embracing Islam, serves as evidence for this.

In Orientalist-centered discourses, in particular, the fact that the majority of people in the first Muslim community were young and weak was seen as a negative situation. This demographic has often been viewed negatively, and their conversion to Islam was attributed to their lack of experience or a desire to escape their current circumstances. However, this interpretation fails to acknowledge the divine nature of the Islamic call, which aligns with the inherent nature of humanity.

The period of youth is characterized by high levels of activity and intense worldly desires and aspirations. It may seem paradoxical for a young person, who is so focused on their interests during this time, to accept a message that restricts their worldly pleasures and demands sacrifice. Therefore, it is difficult to explain the youth's acceptance of the Islamic call based solely on self-interest. Additionally, youth is a time when individuals are still exploring and are not heavily influenced by traditional norms. In contrast, old age is a period when one's personality is established, and their knowledge tends to be more conservative. Thus, it would be more appropriate to consider the conservatism of older people in the context of their relatively high rejection rates rather than viewing the majority of young people among the first Muslims as a negative situation.

In conclusion, to claim that the weaker members of society embraced Islam in hopes of material salvation is not in line with reality, because the position of the Muslims at that time required sacrifice rather than gaining a benefit. Explaining the reasons for the first Muslims embracing Islam on fallacious grounds is a manifestation of neglecting the spiritual dimension of human beings, reducing them solely to material beings - when considered with good faith. On the contrary, such evaluations could be interpreted as being influenced by ideology.

[38] 'Abd al-Qādir 'Awda, *al-Tashrīh al-jinā'ī al-islāmī muqārānan bi al-qānūn al-waz'ī* (Beirut: Dār al-Kitāb al-'Arabī, no date), 1/23.

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