

## **The Influence of Hebrew in the Qur'an: A Scientific Response on Abraham Geiger's Views**

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### **Abstract:**

This research focuses on examining Abraham Geiger's views regarding the Al-Quran. This is important because it affects the purity of the Al-Quran. The method the author uses is descriptive analysis with a qualitative approach and verification methods. The results of the research are that according to Geiger, the Al-Qur'an available to Muslims is not an authentic, transcendent and original book, because many of its teachings are constructed and imitated from Judaism. These teachings are linguistic vocabulary in the Al-Quran, religious concepts including views of life, rules and morals, as well as stories in the Al-Qur'an. However, Geiger's views are not free from criticism. Several Muslim scholars have commented and criticized his views. The aim is to show that the Al-Quran is an authentic and original holy book and book of revelation, even though some of its teachings are contained in Jewish teachings, because Islam does not exist in a vacuum without inhabitants, but is present in the midst of society with various different cultures.

**Keywords:** *Al-Qur'an, Abraham Geiger, Jewish Teachings, Linguistic Acculturation Response*

## A. Introduction

Critical study of the authenticity of the Al-Quran is a hot theme that has always been the focus of Orientalist studies. If in the past Orientalists studied Islam because of the wealth of knowledge in Islam, then they began to translate Muslim scientific works for the development of science and technology (translation ages, 11th century AD-16 AD)<sup>1</sup>, so that the shackles of the dark ages were released into an era of enlightenment (renaissance), recently (in the 18th/19th century AD to be precise) orientalist studies have spread to the stage of 'criticism' or to the area that Muslims call 'tsawabit' (Arkoun calls it 'the unthinkable', like the issue of the authenticity of the Al-Quran).<sup>2</sup>

In fact, Orientalist studies on the authenticity of the Qur'an have existed since the 9th century AD, as carried out by 'Abd al-Masih Ibn Ishak al-Kindi, Abu Nuh al-Anbari, and Yahya al-Dimasyqi (John of Damascus),<sup>3</sup> but it was given the name orientalism or became an academic study only starting in the 18th/19th century AD.<sup>4</sup> There are several factors why orientalists always increase their criticism of the holy book Al-Qur'an which Muslims believe to be the truth. First, because since it was first revealed, the Qur'an has challenged and criticized Jewish and Christian religious doctrines regarding faith, such as those found in the QS. al-Ma'idah/5 verses 17,18, "Indeed, those who say that Allah is the Messiah, the son of Mary have disbelieved", and verse 73 "Indeed, those who say that Allah is false have disbelieved." one of the three", also His words in QS. an-Nisa'/4 verse 157 "And because of their words, we have indeed killed al-Masih, Jesus, son of Mary, the Messenger of Allah, even though they did not kill him or (nor) crucify him, but (what they killed was) the person who resembled him. with Jesus." Second, because the Qur'an reveals the ins and outs

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<sup>1</sup> Westerners needed a period of 5 centuries (from the 11th century AD-16 AD) to translate the works of Muslims such as the works of Ibn Sina, Ibn Rushd, al-Farabi, al-Ghazzali and the works of scientists such as al-Khwarizmi, Jabir ibn Hayyan, Ibn Haytham, al-Hazin and Ibn Bajah. See, Hamid Fahmy Zarkasyi, *Liberalisasi Pemikiran Islam (Gerakan bersama Missionaris, Orientalis, dan Kolonialis)*, (Ponorogo: CIOS-ISID-Gontor, 2010), h. 5.

<sup>2</sup> Adian Husaini, *Wajah Peradaban Barat (Dari Hegemoni Kristen ke Dominasi Sekular-Liberal)*, (Jakarta: Gema Insani, 2005), h. xxv.

<sup>3</sup> Sahiron Syamsuddin, "Pendekatan Orientalis dalam Studi Al-Qur'an" dalam Islam, Agama-agama dan Nilai Kemanusiaan: Festschrift untuk M. Amin Abdullah, Ed. Moch Nur Ichwan dan Ahmad Muttaqin, (Yogyakarta: CISForm, 2013), h. 97.

<sup>4</sup> *The Oxford English Dictionary*, (Oxford, 1993), vol. VII, h. 200. Lihat juga, Azim Nanji (ed), *Peta Studi Islam: Orientalisme dan Arah Baru Kajian Islam di Barat*, (Yogyakarta: Fajar Pustaka Baru, 2003), h. 33-37.

*The Influence of Hebrew in the Qur'an: A Scientific Response on Abraham Geiger's Views* of the deviations carried out by Jewish leaders against the teachings of the Prophets.<sup>5</sup>

On this basis, orientalists conducted academic studies of the Al-Quran with one aim of denying Muhammad's prophethood and finding errors in the Al-Quran.<sup>6</sup> This is no exception to Abraham Geiger. Geiger is an orientalist who wants to prove the influence of the Al-Quran on Jewish and Christian traditions. With his works *Judaism and Islam and Was hat Mohammed Aus Dem Judenthume aufgenommen?*, Geiger made the statement that the Al-Qur'an in Muslims is a book that was adopted, formed, or created from Jewish and Christian traditions.<sup>7</sup> In other words, the Al-Quran is not a transcendent and original book, because much of it is constructed, imitated, influenced and taken from Jewish and Christian languages and traditions. The Al-Qur'an is only Muhammad Saw's reflection on the culture of Arab society at that time, so that from existing traditions Muhammad Saw was inspired to make the Al-Qur'an. Abraham Geiger uses a historical-critical approach in proving the results of his research.<sup>8</sup>

This article aims to elaborate, answer and respond to the criticism leveled by Abraham Geiger. In the initial discussion, the author first explains the figure of Abraham Geiger, his thoughts on the prophet Muhammad, so that later he comes to criticism that the Al-Quran is imitative.

## **B. Literature Review**

### **1. Influence, Absorption, and Adaptation of a Language**

In the Big Indonesian Dictionary, influence is the power that exists or arises from something (person, object) which helps shape a person's character, beliefs or actions.<sup>9</sup> From this it can be simplified that a person's actions and beliefs can

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<sup>5</sup> Wan Mohd Nor Wan Daud, dalam esai "*Islam dan Tantangan Kebudayaan Barat*" dimuat dalam majalah *Dewan Budaya*, edisi Oktober dan November 1993 di Kuala Lumpur. Lihat juga, Hamid Fahmy Zarkasyi, *Misykat (Refleksi Tentang Westernisasi, Liberalisasi, dan Islam)*, (Jakarta: INSISTS-MIUMI, 2012), h. 43-44.

<sup>6</sup> Although some Orientalist studies are objective, they are all designed for the purpose of knowing your enemy (knowing the enemy's strength). Hamid Fahmy Zarkasyi, *Misykat...*, h. 95. Lihat juga Adian Husaini, *Wajah Peradaban Barat...*, h. XXXI.

<sup>7</sup> Abraham Geiger, *Was hat Mohammed Aus Dem Judenthume aufgenommen?*, (Bonn: F. Baaden, 1833)

<sup>8</sup> Yudhi R, Haryoni, dkk., *Al-Qur'an Buku yang Menyesatkan dan Buku yang Mencerahkan*, (Bekasi: Gugus Press, 2002), h. 85.

<sup>9</sup> Pius Abdillah & Danu Prasetya, *Kamus Lengkap Bahasa Indonesia*, (Surabaya: Arloka,) h. 256.

be influenced by something. This influence can be due to the quality or even power of a person or object.

For example, in a language, influence can have an effect on the absorption of another language into the desired language. Absorption is a word that was originally used in a foreign language and then integrated into another language.<sup>10</sup> Loan words are the result of mutual agreement between experts and can be generally accepted.<sup>11</sup> According to Badudu, in creating loan words there are several things that must be taken. First, adoption, namely using the language as a whole. This means that the absorption of foreign words does not differentiate between form and meaning. Example of the word "supermarket" which is interpreted as a modern market. This word is an adoption from English to Indonesian and has become common and accepted by Indonesian society.

*Second*, Adaptation is simply adapting a foreign language and then making it easier to pronounce it. The way of writing and spelling have been changed to Indonesian spelling. For example, the word "pluralization" from Dutch which has a pluralistic meaning has been adapted to "pluralization" in Indonesian. Adapted by Indonesian to make it easier for Indonesians to pronounce.

## **2. Scientific Criticism**

Criticism in terms is a criticism or response which is sometimes accompanied by a description and consideration of the good and bad of a work, opinion, thought and so on. Meanwhile, scientific means logical and empirical. Logical means reasonable, empirical means discussed in depth based on facts that can be accounted for.<sup>12</sup>

If these two terms are combined, scientific criticism is a person or other party's response to work, opinions or thoughts accompanied by a reasonable rebuttal based on facts that can be accounted for. Criticism of theories or thoughts in the realm of science is nothing new. The purpose of this criticism is clear, namely because the thoughts expressed by Geiger are not based on a complete reading, so the statements conveyed tend to be one-sided. Apart from that, it seems as if the influence of the Qur'an on one language shows that the book is not authentically God's revelation.

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<sup>10</sup> J. S Badudu, *Kamus Kata-Kata Serapan Asing Dalam Bahasa*, (Jakarta: Kompas, 2003).

<sup>11</sup> J. S Badudu, *Kamus Kata-Kata Serapan Asing Dalam Bahasa*, (Jakarta: Kompas, 2003).

<sup>12</sup> Wattimena. A, *Filsafat dan Sains: Sebuah Pengantar*, (Jakarta: PT. Grasindo, 2008), h. 110.

There are several characteristics of scientific criticism as stated by Pradopo<sup>13</sup> as follows:

- a. Scientific/academic criticism uses scientific systematics, for example in the arrangement of chapters and subchapters in stages.
- b. Scientific/academic criticism uses accurate references.
- c. Scientific/academic criticism uses standard language, for example in Indonesia uses standard Indonesian, a language that is good and scientifically correct.

### **C. Research Methods**

This research uses a descriptive analysis method with a qualitative approach<sup>14</sup> and verification methods in describing research results. Descriptive analysis is analyze data by describing or describes the data that has been collected as it is.<sup>15</sup> In this research, descriptive methods were used to explain Abraham Geiger's statement regarding the influence of Al-Qur'an vocabulary on Hebrew. From this information an analysis was then made as a response to Geiger's thoughts. Meanwhile, the verification method is used to answer whether or not there is influence of Hebrew in the Al-Quran.

### **D. Results and Discussions**

#### **1. Get to know Abraham Geiger**

Abraham Geiger was a scholar, historian, religionist and founder of Jewish reformers who was born on May 24 1810 in Frankfurt. His father is Michael Lazarus Geiger and his mother is Roschen Wallau. Since childhood, his father taught him the Hebrew Bible, Mishnah and Talmud so that he became a child who was knowledgeable and critical in thinking. This can be seen from his doubts about the traditional teachings of the Jewish religion, which according to him there is a contradiction between the Bible's statements about divine authority and classical history.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> Rachmat Djoko Pradopo, *Prinsip-Prinsip Kritik Sastra Teori dan Penerapannya*, (Yogyakarta: Gadjah Mada University Press, 2011), h. 214.

<sup>14</sup> Lexy J. Moleong, *metodologi Penelitian Kualitatif*, (Bandung: Remaja Rosdakarya, 2002), h. 61.

<sup>15</sup> Sugiyono, *Metode Penelitian Kuantitatif, Kualitatif*, (Bandung: Alfabeta, 2014) h. 21.

<sup>16</sup> Saifus Subhan Assuyuthi, *Abraham Geiger: Antara Wissenschaft des Judentum dan Kajian Al-Qur'an* dalam buku "Kajian Orientalis Terhadap Al-Qur'an dan Hadis", (Jakarta: UIN Syarif Hidayatullah, 2012), h. 36.

At the age of 17 Geiger had succeeded in writing a comparison between the laws contained in the Mishnah, Bible, Talmud and had contributed to the creation of a Jewish Mishanic (Rabbinic) dictionary. In 1829, at the age of 19, Geiger continued his studies at the University of Heidelberg with a concentration in Syrian language, philology, Jewish language and classical languages, also in the same year he moved to the University of Bonn to study Arabic and the Al-Quran. His study of the East resulted in a work entitled "Was hat Mohammed aus dem Judenthume aufgenommen?" (What did Muhammad take from Jewish teachings?) and made his name as an expert on the Eastern world. Thanks to this work, and his scientific research into Jewish texts, in 1834 he succeeded in completing his Ph.D. at the University of Marburg.<sup>17</sup>

It didn't stop there, Geiger continued to write and show that both Christianity and Islam were influenced by Jewish teachings. Even more than that, for him the two religions, both Christianity and Islam, were not only influenced by Jewish teachings, but spread Jewish monotheism to the teachings of pagan religions.

Geiger's phenomenal work, namely *Was hat Mohammed aus dem Judenthume aufgenommen?*, *Nachgelassene Schriften* Vol. 5, part 1 (German Edition), *Das Judenthum und seine Geschichte zwölf Vorlesungen*, *Wissenschaftliche Zeitschrift fuer Juedische Theologie*, *Juedische Zeitschrift fuer Wissenschaft und Leben*, and *Judaism and Islam*. Geiger spent the rest of his life becoming a Rabbi, because at that time in Germany, the opportunity to become a professor was not possible. Geiger breathed his last breath on October 23, 1874, in the city of Berlin.

## **2. Abraham Geiger's Historical-Critical Method**

Tracking Jewish and Islamic history as well as comparative reading of the Torah, Talmud and Al-Qur'an have led to the conclusion that the Prophet Muhammad founded Islam because he took and copied Jewish teachings. According to Geiger, the Qur'an is only a reflection of Muhammad on the Arab people at that time who were in fact Jews. From this it can be seen that Geiger's analysis was only based on the geographical location of Arab society at that time.

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<sup>17</sup> Sara E. Karesh & Mitchell M. Hurvitz, *Encyclopedia of Judaism*, (New York: Facts On File, Inc, 2006), h. 168.

As for his response to the verses of the Al-Quran which criticized Jewish and Christian teachings, according to him, this was all due to Muhammad's misunderstanding of the teachings and doctrines of the Jewish religion. This statement resulted from his in-depth historical-critical study of the Al-Quran with a comparative analysis of Judaism and Islam. In conducting research, Geiger places Judaism at a higher authority to judge Islam, so it is natural that the Al-Quran criticizes Jewish doctrine. Geiger dismissed criticism of the Al-Quran on the grounds that it was all due to a misunderstanding of the Prophet Muhammad.<sup>18</sup>

### **3. Criticism of the Al-Quran**

In the book *Was hat Mohammed aus dem Judentume aufgenommen?* and *Judaism and Islam*, Geiger said that the Qur'an is not an authentic holy book, because some of its content and contents were constructed, taken and adopted from the traditions and language of Jews, Christians and Jahiliyah society at that time. The reason Geiger said that was because first, when the Prophet Muhammad was in Medina, the Prophet had lived and mingled with the Jews who had long had a big influence on the people of Medina. This is in line with the introduction written by Moshe Pearlman in Geiger's work, that the Jewish community living in Arabia before the arrival of Islam, was already at a stage of good political, intellectual, agricultural and economic conditions. So the arrival of the Prophet in Medina had certain motives and goals, one of which was to take advantage of this opportunity to attract people to follow the religion he created.

*Second*, Rasulullah SAW had close relations with Jews (Waraqah bin Naufal, Abdullah bin Salam) who both understood the holy books and Hebrew. Likewise with the Arab king Habib bin Maliki who was previously very devoutly Jewish, but after the arrival of Muhammad he was influenced so that he wanted to follow Muhammad's teachings. For Geiger, the religion brought by the Prophet Muhammad was created because of the process of interaction with the Jewish people. Likewise, the verses in the Qur'an which condemn Jewish deviation are all because Muhammad understood the Jewish religion through a process of interaction alone, aka not studying the Jewish holy books

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<sup>18</sup> Lihat, Lenni Lestari "Abraham Geiger dan Kajian Al-Qur'an Telaah Metodologi atas Buku *Judaism and Islam* Abraham Geiger and the Study of the Qur'an Analyzing the Methodology of the 'Judaism and Islam'. UIN Sunan Kalijaga, Yogyakarta, dalam *Jurnal Suhuf*, Vol. 7 No 1 Juni 2014, h. 56.

directly. Third, Muhammad did not have the slightest knowledge of the Jewish holy books. Even so, Muhammad did not give up, he would continue to look for sources of information, even though he only got it through the process of interacting with people who were familiar with the ins and outs of the Jewish religion.<sup>19</sup>

Apart from that, according to Geiger, there are several things in the Al-Quran that were constructed, taken and adopted from Jewish traditions and language. First, linguistics/vocabulary, second, faith and doctrine, third, law or rules and morals. Fourth, view of life and stories in the Al-Quran.<sup>20</sup>

### Linguistics of the Jewish Tradition

According to Geiger, in the Al-Quran there are 14 vocabulary words<sup>21</sup> which were taken, adopted, influenced and constructed from Hebrew, namely the words tabut, sakinah, jannatu 'adn, taghut, taurat, Jahannam, ahbar, sabt, furqan, ma'un, malakut, mathani, darasa, and rabhani. First, Ark, Geiger said this word did not come from the original Arabic language, but was constructed from Hebrew. The ending of the word tabut also makes it clear that there is no ending "ut" in the original Arabic language. If in the Qur'an this word means a storage box for the law and agreements which are a sign of the king's power,<sup>22</sup> In Jewish teachings, this word has a similar meaning, namely when the Prophet Moses was put by his mother in the boat, and means covenant. In this way, the similarity of the meaning of this word in the Qur'an to Jewish teachings shows the significance of the authenticity of the Hebrew language adopted by Muhammad.<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> This argument was strengthened by Geiger by quoting the verse of the Al-Quran, surah al-Baqarah/2 verse 76 “عِنْدَ رَبِّكُمْ أَفَلَا تَعْقِلُونَ قَالُوا أَتُحَدِّثُونَهُمْ بِمَا فَتَحَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْكُمْ لِيُحَاجُّوكُمْ بِهِ” (“Will you tell them what Allah has explained to you, so that they can refute you before your Lord? Don't you understand?”). Lenni Lestari “Abraham Geiger dan Kajian Al-Qur'an...”, h. 51.

<sup>20</sup> Abraham Geiger, *Judaism and Islam*, (New York : Publishing House, 1989), h. 41-72.

<sup>21</sup> As-Suyuthi has also studied some of this vocabulary in his book. As-Suyuthi, *Al-Itqan fii 'ulum Qur'an*, (Beirut : Dar al-Fikr, 2008), h. 198.

<sup>22</sup> وَقَالَ لَهُمْ نَبِيُّهُمْ إِنَّ آيَةَ مُلْكِهِ أَنْ يَأْتِيَكُمُ التَّابُوتُ (”And their Prophet said to them: "Indeed, the sign that he will become king, is the return of the Ark to you") QS. Al-Baqarah/2: 248.

Translated *Tafsir Ibnu Katsir*, Jilid 1, (Bogor: Pustaka Imam Asy-Syafi'i, 2006), h. 501. See also QS. Thaha/20 verse 39 "Put him (Moses) in a chest, then throw him into the river...".

<sup>23</sup> Abraham Geiger, *Judaism and Islam; A Prize Essay* trans by A Member of the Ladies League in Aid of the Delhi Mission, (Madras: MDCSPCK Press, 1898), p. 31-32.



*Second*, Torah means law. This word is used specifically for the revelatory tradition of the Jewish religion. However, Muhammad SAW, with his ignorance and oral tradition, was unable to distinguish the meaning of the Torah with certainty and truth. Even worse, Muhammad interpreted the Torah with the Pentateuch.<sup>24</sup>*Third*, *Jannatu 'Adn*. According to Geiger, the word 'adn, which Muhammad interpreted as happiness, pleasure and heaven, actually comes from Hebrew. In Judaism, the name 'adn is a place that was once inhabited by Adam and his wife (Eve), namely in the form of a tree garden which is termed the "Garden of Eden". Even though in its development this word was interpreted as heaven (no longer referring to the name of a place), on a practical level the Jews still used the Garden of Eden as a place.<sup>25</sup>*Fourth*, Jahannam. According to Geiger, this word is taken from Jewish language. In Jewish tradition, Jahannam refers to a valley of hinnom, namely a place of idol worship that is full of misery. In the Qur'an, Jahannam means hell.<sup>26</sup>

*Fifth*, *Rabbani*. Like the ending "ut" in the word *tabut*, the word *rabbani* ending "an" for Geiger is taken from the Jewish language. According to him, the ending "an" is a word commonly found in Jewish languages such as *rubhan* and *rabban* which means priest/teacher (monk). It is very likely that the word *rabbani* which Muhammad SAW interpreted as God is taken from Hebrew.<sup>27</sup>*Sixth*, *Sat*. The word used to refer to Saturday by Judaism, Christianity and Islam. In the book of Exodus fifth) and *sabt* (sixth). According to Geiger, the word *sabt* in Arabic *shin*, which is pronounced like *samech* in Hebrew, was interchanged in their writing.<sup>28</sup>

## **Faith and Religious Doctrine**

Apart from adopting vocabulary, according to Abraham Geiger, Muhammad Saw had adopted aspects of faith and doctrine contained in Jewish teachings. All of these aspects, firstly, relate to the creation of heaven and earth. According to him, the verse of the Al-Quran which explains the creation of the heavens and the earth in six periods,<sup>29</sup> the same as mentioned in the Bible. In further research, Geiger found another verse in the Qur'an which was similar

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<sup>24</sup> Abraham Geiger, *Judaism and Islam...*, p. 32.

<sup>25</sup> Abraham Geiger, *Judaism and Islam...*, p. 33.

<sup>26</sup> Abraham Geiger, *Judaism and Islam...*, p. 38.

<sup>27</sup> Abraham Geiger, *Judaism and Islam...*, p. 37.

<sup>28</sup> Abraham Geiger, *Judaism and Islam...*, p. 38.

<sup>29</sup> "Indeed, your Lord is Allah who created the heavens and the earth in six times..." QS. Jonah/10: 3.

but contradictory, namely "the earth was created during two times".<sup>30</sup> Geiger then concluded that, apart from being clever at adopting, Muhammad had very little insight into the Bible, which is why Muhammad Saw made so many mistakes. Second, seven levels of heaven. Mentioned in the holy book Chagiga 9: 2, heaven has seven levels and all have been given names. This is similar to the explanation of Muhammad Saw in his holy book QS. al-Baqarah/2 verse 29.<sup>31</sup>

*Third*, resurrection and retribution in the afterlife. For Geiger, the resurrection, retribution and related matters were also adopted by Muhammad from Judaism. Many of the beliefs believed by Jews are also believed by Muhammad Saw, such as heaven and hell, the inhabitants of hell screaming for food, the characteristics of the end times which are marked by the disappearance of religious knowledge, and the human body which will give testimony.<sup>32</sup> Fourth, the oneness of God. Geiger believes that all religions in the world declare their unity with God. Therefore, it is unethical for certain religions to claim that belief in God comes from their religion alone. Geiger also emphasized that the concept of montheism in Islam basically comes from Judaism.<sup>33</sup>

## **Legal and Moral Rules**

Geiger draws out the similarities between Jewish and Islamic teachings by showing the attitudes of both religions in treating parents. In Jehamot verse 6 it is explained "let all people obey the commands of their parents, but let all of you continue to make Saturday a day to worship me". The editorial of this verse is exactly the same as Al-Qur'an surah al-Ankabut verse 8 "And We have enjoined upon humans to (do) good to their parents. And if they force you to associate me with something you have no knowledge of, then do not obey them...".<sup>34</sup> Apart from that, the teachings that Muhammad SAW took from Judaism were a series of prayers, such as praying while afraid (khauf prayer), the prohibition of praying while drunk, and the permissibility of washing with dust (tayammum) if there is no water. In the Khauf prayer, for example, according to Geiger, Muhammad's movements were exactly like those of a

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<sup>30</sup> "Say, "Is it right for you to deny God who created the earth in two times..." QS. Fussilat/41: 9.

<sup>31</sup> "It is He (Allah) who created everything on earth for you, then He went to the heavens, then He perfected them into seven heavens..." QS. Al-Baqarah/2: 29. See also, Abraham Geiger, *The Origins of the Al-Quran*, (New York: Prometheus Books, 1998), p. 174.

<sup>32</sup> Abraham Geiger, *Judaism and Islam*, Cornell University Library, p. 54.

<sup>33</sup> Abraham Geiger, *Judaism and Islam...*, p. 46.

<sup>34</sup> Abraham Geiger, *Judaism and Islam...*, p. 65.

rabbi who had full authority in determining the prayer position. Geiger said this as Muhammad himself said "stand when facing your Lord, but if you are afraid, pray while walking or driving" (al-Baqarah/2: 239). Likewise, praying while drunk and tayammum, the invalidation of ablution when touching a woman, the duration of the 'iddah period of three months and breastfeeding for two years, the rules for fasting and the ethics of congregational prayer, all according to Geiger are teachings adopted by Muhammad SAW from the Talmud or Jewish teachings. .<sup>35</sup>

## **Views on Life and Stories in the Qur'an**

In addition to the points explained previously regarding Muhammad's adoption and imitation of Jewish teachings, Abraham Geiger believes that the worldview and stories in the Al-Quran were also constructed from Jewish teachings. The first example is related to outlook on life. The view of life in question is:

- a. The desire to die in good condition (husnul khatimah). If in QS. ali-Imran/3 verse 193 reads "...And die us along with those who are devoted",<sup>36</sup>In Balaam, the editorial reads "Let me die the death of the righteous".<sup>37</sup>
- b. Manners in making promises. Saying Insha Allah when promising to do something is part of Allah's command in the Al-Quran "And never say to something "I will definitely do that tomorrow morning" except (by saying) "Insha Allah".<sup>38</sup>This is the same as taught in Judaism.
- c. A reward from God for people who do good while living in the world. In Islam, this belief is mentioned in the Qur'an, surah an-Nisa'/4 verse 85 "Whoever gives help with good help, he will surely get a share of (the reward)",<sup>39</sup>while in Jewish religious beliefs this kind of redaction is found in Bava Kamma: 92.
- d. The rolling and implementation of charity for someone who has died. If in Islam a person who dies leaves behind all but one, as the Prophet said, "There are three who follow the corpse to the grave, two will return and one will remain with them. What follows are family, wealth and charity. What comes back is family and property. What remains together in the

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<sup>35</sup> Abraham Geiger, *Judaism and Islam...*, p. 64-72.

<sup>36</sup> *وَتَوَفَّيْنَا مَعَ الْأَبْرَارِ*...QS. Ali-Imran/3: 193.

<sup>37</sup> Abraham Geiger, *Judaism and Islam...*, p. 70.

<sup>38</sup> *إِلَّا أَنْ يَشَاءَ اللَّهُ وَلَا تَقُولَنَّ ذَلِكَ غَدًا*

<sup>39</sup> *مَنْ يَشْفَعْ شَفَاعَةً حَسَنَةً يَكُنْ لَهُ نَصِيبٌ مِنْهَا...* QS. An-Nisa'/4: 85.

grave is charity."<sup>40</sup>In the Jewish religion, they also believe in the same thing, namely that people who die leave everything behind, except their deeds of worship.<sup>41</sup>

Geiger also said that several stories in the Al-Quran were imitations of Judaism. The story in question is the story of male leadership (patriarchs) such as the story of the prophet Adam to the prophet Noah, Noah to the prophet Ibrahim, the prophet Ibrahim to the prophet Moses, the story of prophets and kings whose power was unlimited such as the prophets David, Sulaiman and the king of Thalut, as well as people -a holy man who was sent after the prophet Solomon.<sup>42</sup>

The entire discussion above for Abraham Geiger is an imitation, adoption, construction carried out by Muhammad Saw from the traditions of Arab ignorance and Judaism. What are the views of Muslim and non-Muslim scholars regarding Geiger's thoughts above?

#### **4. Response to Abraham Geiger's Thoughts**

Abraham Geiger is not the only one who has studied the language of the Al-Quran. Previously, several Muslim scholars had been involved in the same mission and studies but with different motives, such as Jalaluddin as-Suyuti and Imam Badruddin Muhammad bin Abdullah az-Zarkasyi asy-Syafii. Both figures agree on the involvement of other languages in the Al-Quran and according to them this is normal and natural. Imam As-Suyuti, for example, stated that there are 120 foreign words in the Al-Quran that do not come from Arabic but are borrowings or constructions from other languages. It shows that the Qur'an is a book that includes all knowledge both previous and future.<sup>43</sup>

For example, the word Jahannam. Imam Suyuti admitted that the word did not come from Arabic but from foreign languages such as 'Ajam, Persian and Hebrew (from the word Gehinnom). Muhammad al-Sayid 'Ali Balasi stated the same thing, the word jahannam comes from the Hebrew "gehinnom", then was absorbed into Arabic to become the word jahannam.<sup>44</sup> The word rabbani is also

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<sup>40</sup> HR. Bukhari, no. 6514 and Muslim no. 2960.

<sup>41</sup> Abraham Geiger, *Judaism and Islam...*, p. 72.

<sup>42</sup> Abraham Geiger, *Judaism and Islam*, Cornell University Library, p. 185.

<sup>43</sup> Jalaluddin As-Suyuti, *Al-Itqan fi 'Ulum Qur'an*, (Beirut: Dar al-Fikr, 2008), p. 195.

<sup>44</sup> Muhammad Al-Sayid 'Ali Balasi, *Al-Mu'arrab fi Al-Qur'an Al-Karim; Dirasah Ta'siliyyah Dilaliyyah*, Cet. 1, (Beghazi: Dar Al-Kutub Al-Wataniyyah, 2001), p. 192-193.

the same, Imam As-Suyuti is of the opinion that this word comes from two languages, namely Aramaic and Hebrew.<sup>45</sup>

So, despite the differences in opinion, Muslim scholars actually admit that some of the vocabulary in the Al-Quran is an borrowing from other languages. Therefore, the influence of the vocabulary of the Qur'an on other languages, both from Judaism and pre-existing traditions, is actually a natural thing and is understandable, because the Qur'an's descent cannot be separated from socio-cultural conditions. Arab society at that time, where not all of the people spoke purely in Arabic, but instead used Persian and Hebrew, and indirectly the absorption of these languages in the Al-Quran had been Arabized (had become Arabic). This is in line with Nasr Hamid Abu Zaid's statement, one of the important characteristics of the Qur'anic text is that it interacts with other texts that have existed before. The pre-Qur'an texts consist of religious texts such as the Torah and Gospel, and cultural texts such as poetry and kinanah.<sup>46</sup> Another theological argument is why the Qur'an absorbs several vocabulary words from other languages because the Qur'an is the most complete book which includes previous knowledge and future knowledge. This shows the perfection of the Al-Quran which is the original holy book revealed by Allah SWT.

Apart from the denials above, Geiger also received lawsuits and harsh criticism from Western scholars for his accusations that Islam and the Al-Quran were not original religions and revelations from God. This is clearly stated in Muhammad Anwar Syarifuddin's essay entitled "Al-Qur'an and Hadith in Western Scholarly Studies". The following figures criticize Geiger's thinking<sup>47</sup>: 1.) William Saint Clair Tisdall, in his book "The Source of the Qur'an" (1905). According to William, from a historical perspective, the Al-Quran was revealed to the Prophet Muhammad SAW when he was among the Arabs who were inhabited by a hegemonic society. The textuality of the Al-Quran is influenced by several factors, including local community customs, news from Christian religious sects, Zoroastrian sources, and the Hanif religious traditions that

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<sup>45</sup> Muhammad Al-Sayid 'Ali Balasi, *Al-Mu'arrab fi Al-Qur'an Al-Karim...*, p. 207-208.

<sup>46</sup> Moh. Nur Ichwan, "Al-Qur'an Sebagai Teks" (Teori Teks dalam Hermeneutika al-Qur'an Nashr Hamid Abu Zaid" dalam *Studi al-Qur'an Kontemporer*, (Yogyakarta: Tiara Wacana, 2002), h. 159.

<sup>47</sup> Muhammad Anwar Syarifuddin, *Al-Qur'an dan Hadits dalam Kajian Kesarjanaan Barat*" dalam buku "*Kajian Orientalis Terhadap Al-Qur'an dan Hadis*", (Jakarta: UIN Syarif Hidayatullah, 2012), h. 19-20.

developed in Arab society. Geiger's reasoning regarding the claim of the sole influence of the Qur'an on Judaism is inaccurate.

2.) HAR Gibb in his book "Mohammadenism" (1946) declared Muhammad as Khatamul Anbiya with the miracle of the Al-Quran as the finalization of Allah's revelation which erased previous revelations. 3.) Tor Andre, in his book "Mohammed the Men and His Faith" (1936) explained that the emergence of the originality of Islamic teachings so that they became a new religion was a manifestation of Muhammad's character. Spirituality in Islamic teachings is an energy that continues to develop, attracting other spiritual energies to enter it. As concrete evidence, namely the development of Islamic culture. 4.) Louis Massignon stated that the Al-Quran was an original revelation revealed to Muhammad as well as the answer to Ibrahim's prayer about his son Ismail who came from the Arab nation. And 5.) Angelika Neuwirth in the seminar "The Al-Quran and Historical Literary Criticism" based on her discussion, the Al-Quran is a collection of God's words whose inspiration is the dialogue of religions and traditions of previous societies. Therefore, the similarity to the concepts brought by Islam over previous religions is merely a concretization of the challenges and questions of Arab religious leaders at that time.

### **Orientalists and their Motivations**

Orientalists have certain motivations in studying the East and Islam. This motivation is due to the encouragement of Gold, Gospel and Glory. Syed Muhammad Naquib Al-Attas explains this encouragement at length in his book entitled *Islam And Secularism*, which can be summarized into five points. First, the rise of Muslims on the historical stage has challenged the claim of Christianity as a universal religion for all mankind. Second, Islam has changed the bodies and souls of Western people in a revolutionary way in the linguistic, social, cultural, scientific and economic fields. Third, the expansion of Islamic influence and its conquered lands throughout the Middle East, including areas previously owned by the Byzantine Empire, India and Africa in a very fast time, and for five centuries controlling the Mediterranean and Indian sea trade. Fourth, since it was first revealed, the Qur'an has challenged and criticized Jewish and Christian religious doctrines, as found in the QS. al-Ma'idah/5 verses 17,72,73, QS. an-Nisa'/4: verse 157, and reveals the intricacies of the deviations carried out by Jewish leaders against the teachings of the Prophets.

Fifth, Islam has the potential to rise based on its concept of *tajdid* and be able to challenge Western cultural hegemony in the future.<sup>48</sup>

The five points above can be simplified into two motives, namely religious motives and political motives. First, religious motives because the West, which on the one hand represents Jews and Christians, views Islam as a religion that has opposed its doctrines from the start. Islam, whose mission is to perfect the previous *millah*, has certainly made many corrections to that religion. That is why Islam is considered to "sow the wind" and then reap a storm of hostility with Jews and Christians. Even more extreme, this feud has existed since before Islam came. Thomas Right, author of the book *Early Christianity in Arabia*, indicated that the feud between Islam and Christianity had occurred since the Christian army led by Abraha attacked the Kaaba two months before the Prophet was born. So the motif of Orientalism is religious.

*Second*, political motives because Islam for the West is a civilization that in the past has spread and dominated world civilization very quickly. The West, as a civilization that has just emerged from darkness, sees Islam as a major threat to their political and religious power. The West is well aware that Islam is not just magnificent palaces, brave armies or monumental buildings, but a civilization that has treasures and high scientific traditions. Therefore, they needed to seize this treasure for their progress and at the same time to conquer Islam.<sup>49</sup>

*Soorientalism, which is known today as a tradition of scientific study of Islam, is actually based on the perspective and experience of Western humans which is triggered by missionary motives and spirit. But this motivation is covered with a cloak of intellectualism and academic dedication. It is not surprising that orientalism is then considered to have a 'distinctive' scientific discipline and attitude, even becoming a framework for study. Even though they are scientific, if their perspective and objectives are colored by religious and political backgrounds as well as the Western worldview or the values of Western civilization, their studies are more likely to be wrong. This proves that science is not value free. Therefore, today's Orientalists are considered objective and scientific only correct on the surface. Academic and scientific studies of it prove otherwise. Their perspective on the Prophet, the Al-Quran and Islam as a*

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<sup>48</sup> Syed Muhammad Naquib Al-Attas, *Islam And Secularism*, (Kuala Lumpur: International Institute Of Islamic Thought And Civilization-ISTAC, 1993), h. 97-132.

<sup>49</sup> Hamid Fahmy Zarkasyi, *Liberalisasi Pemikiran Islam...*, h. 58-59.

religion still cannot be separated from the influence of their predecessors. And earlier orientalism was colored by the experience of Western humans.<sup>50</sup>

## E. Conclusion

Even though the Qur'an is partially borrowed from tradition, Hebrew and other languages, this is not an absolute variable. The Qur'an can be said to be fake or not a revelation from God. Why is that? Because Islam, with its reference source, the Al-Quran, is present as a complement to previous books which contain various stories of previous people. Apart from that, Islam does not exist in a vacuum, uninhabited space, but is present in the midst of society with various different cultures, so it is natural for there to be acculturation of cultural traditions and languages with other religions.

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<sup>50</sup> Hamid Fahmy Zarkasyi, *Liberalisasi Pemikiran Islam...*, h. 58-59.



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