

**Roman Empire and The Arab World:  
A Historical Investigation of the Relationship up to the Period of the Last Prophet of Allah-  
Hazrat Muhammad (S.A.W.W صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ)**

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**Abstract:**

*As compared to Arabs, Roman Empire was an older civilization. The Constantine I accepted Christianity in fourth century A.D. and made his new capital city on the ancient site of Byzantium called after his name, Constantinople. The Roman Empire and the Arab world were interconnected in terms of their common borders, trade, religion, and politics. Eastern Roman Empire had a rival Persian Empire, both had set up their vassal regimes of the Ghassanids and Lakhmids. However, the frontier regions were the source of communication between Arabs and Roman Christians. The whole political, social and religious paradigm of Arabs had been changed with the arrival of Islam. Last Holy Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.W صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ) emerged as the religious and political leader in the state of Madinah. He (S.A.W.W صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ) formulated strategic policies, first; to secure the Muslim state of Madinah, later Arabia and to defend and spread the teaching of Islam in the world, second; to restore the trade route of Arabia and third to get His leadership and Muslims power recognized by the external powers.*

**Keywords:** Tetrarchy, Constantinople, Augustus, Amulius, Byzantium, Roman-Empire

**INTRODUCTION: BYGONE DAYS OF THE ROMAN EMPIRE**

The history of Rome can be divided into different periods. The first mythological foundation of Rome was led by Romulus and Remus in 753 B.C. (Harrison & Sullivan, 1971, p.104). Both fought against their uncle, Amulius, and killed him. They decided to establish their new city and quarreled over its site. In this dispute, Romulus killed Remus. He founded the city on the Palatine Hill. Eratosthenes and other European and Muslim historians claim that Romulus was the founder of Rome. He named the town after his name Roma or Rome (Masudi, 1958, pp.250-251).

The time from 753- 509 B.C is known as the reign of Kings. From the rule of Romulus from the eighth century until mid of the sixth century B.C, there were six kings. On the one hand, Roman kings held supreme judicial, military, executive, and priestly power, but on the other hand, they were governed by an advisory senate. Further, the city-state was divided into two classes of Patrician and Plebeians. In the revolution against the Etruscan King, Patricians took the lead and dethroned the king. The year 509 B.C is marked by the formation of Roman Republic (Harrison & Sullivan, 1971, p.105). They introduced the Republican constitution. According to it, two consuls, the highest magistrates, were elected each year from among the Patricians. Apart from other reforms, the Republican Rome saw the rise of nobility from the Patricians and Plebeians. Social hierarchy was developed during the Republican reign. The time of fifth-second century B.C is

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known as the era of growth of the Roman Empire. Rome expanded its territories and regional power to the Italian peninsula. The Romans defeated their rival groups and made them allies as part of their emerging empire. These wars also caused damage to Rome itself as it was sacked by invading Celtic tribes in 390 B.C. (Harrison & Sullivan, 1971, p.104). But Rome remained successful in Punic wars and conquered Carthage and Corinth in 146 B.C. (Harrison & Sullivan, 1971, pp.107-108). This led to Roman intervention into the Greek world. The discord among leading politicians caused severe damage to demolishing the republican constitution throughout the first century B.C. Therefore, some ambitious and leading politicians found new routes to power. This situation led to the end of the Roman Republican rule in 60 B.C while paving the way for the totalitarian regime of Roman emperors.

Julius Caesar was a distinguished military leader and a very adept politician (Harrison & Sullivan, 1971, p.115). He emerged as the sole ruler of Rome at the end of the Republican era. In 49 B.C, he assumed power as a dictator, which enabled him to exercise extraordinary powers. Under his command, Romans captured and conquered not only all the Italian peninsula but extended their mighty hand towards the East. They acquired all the territory of Asia Minor (Anatolia), Byzantium, and North Africa (Khalidun, 2004, pp.232-233). These newly captured territories became the eastern province of Roman Empire. Julius Caesar had adopted his great-nephew Gaius Octavius (Khalidun, 2004, pp.234-238). After his death, Octavius instantly tried to take hold of his father's political and financial legacy in 31 B.C, declaring himself the sole ruler. He adopted the title of Augustus (the Augustus I) for himself in 27 B.C.. His constitutional reforms made him the first great Roman emperor (Harrison & Sullivan, 1971, pp.119-122). He captured the land of Alexandria and Egypt from Queen Cleopatra (Khalidun, 2004, p.234). After him, many successors from Caesar's lineage became the emperors of Rome.

At the start of third century A.D, the Roman Empire faced many internal and external issues. In the line of succession, there were twenty-seven claimants to imperial power in fifty years. This situation was indicative of the lack of a defined system for succession and a lack of befitting governing methods. The rulers were constantly changing and assassinated on the will of armies. Roman society became disturbed and divided. The trade collapsed. Poor harvests and an indefatigable plague resulted in tormenting misery and social breakdown of Romans. The once menacing Roman imperial power at the capital gradually weakened, leading to various other political strongholds like Milan, Trier and Byzantium (Harrison & Sullivan, 1971, pp.140-144).

Emperor Diocletian ruled from 284 A.D, till 305 A.D. He managed to resolve the crisis in Rome with a strict, and innovative rule. In 293 A.D, he introduced the institution of tetrarchy (Harrison & Sullivan, 1971, p.151). In this form of government, the power was shared between four emperors, the two senior Augusti and two junior Caesars.

Moreover, he divided the empire into east and west. Although his reforms split the kingdom, he divided the provinces into small units and reallocated the military on frontier provinces. This strategy helped him to remain in power, unscathed by the control of the army. He also did significant reform to stabilize the economy (Harrison & Sullivan, 1971, pp.154-156).

Constantine I (306- 337A.D) rose through the ranks of the tetrarchy (Harrison & Sullivan, 1971, p.152). He won a series of civil wars to gain complete control. He continued many of his

predecessor's civil, military and economic reforms. He accepted Christianity towards the end of his rule and made it the official religion of the Roman Empire (Harrison & Sullivan, 1971, pp.154-157). Therefore, his reign marks a major turning point in the history of Rome.

Constantine I founded Constantinople on 8<sup>th</sup> November 324 A.D. (Sphrantze, 1980, p.1). It was geographically located between Europe and Asia Minor. Since the seventh century B.C, Greek Colony Megara had controlled the ancient site of Byzantium. Romans conquered the ancient city and made it the new capital of the Roman Empire (Sphrantze, 1980, pp.1-4). Constantinople was significant in terms of commercial advantages and its strategic location. The citizens of this empire may not have been aware of the word 'Byzantine' because it was coined much later by a French historian in the seventeenth century (Sphrantze, 1980, pp.1-4). They knew their empire just as Roman Empire. They also considered their emperors or *basileus* as direct descendent of the Roman Empire (Sphrantze, 1980, pp.2-6).

In the final years, the Byzantine Empire was also called Romania. The center of the Eastern Roman Empire or Byzantine Empire was Constantinople. It was called by different names in historical records such as New Sion, New Jerusalem, New Rome, Second Rome, Queen of cities and the city (Sphrantze, 1980, pp.1-6).

The western part of the Roman Empire collapsed in 476 A.D. (Harrison & Sullivan, 1971, p.157) when Romulus Augustus was forced to abdicate to the Germanic warlord Odovacar, whereas the eastern part of Roman Empire continued to exist and rule till its fall to Ottoman Turks in 1453.

### **HISTORICAL ACCOUNT OF THE ARABS BEFORE THE RISE OF ISLAM**

As compared to the Roman Empire, the Arab world is known as a land of Arabs. Arabs were simply known by their economic and social conditions rather than geographical boundaries. Arabia is known as an area of Arab settlement (O'Leary, 1989, pp.5-6). According to ancient geographers, the land of Arabia was more than the present peninsula. A large part of land consisted of desert. There were three central deserts: Nefud, Dahana, and Harrah. (O'Leary, 1989, p.6) The area of Hijaz is situated on the western side of Nefud and Jebal Shammar from Gulf of Aqba to Yemen. The Land of Hijaz has always been more significant throughout ancient times in terms of trade routes and pilgrimage. Makkah and Madinah, were situated on the sides of the trade route, which ran from south to north from San'a to El' ala or Aqba (O'Leary, 1989, p.8).

The basis of Arabs social organization was tribal. According to the Arabs historian, all Arab races were geological, belonging to these main divisions: Qahtan, Adnan and Quda'a. Qahtan were known as Yemenites and Adnan as North Arabs while Quda'a belonged to Himyar. The Qahtan and Adnan both lived under different conditions. North Arabia was inhabited by nomadic tribes while southern part comprised many Kingdoms (O'Leary, 1989, pp.15-16).

The people of Adnan traced their lineage back to Hazrat Ismail *Alayhis Salaam* (A.S).The descendants of Fahir ibn Malik ibn Nadhir were called as Quraysh. Fahir was the first person who became famous by the name of Quraysh. (Guillaume, 1955, p.4).

The Greek and Syriac accounts on Arabs settlement show that settlement of Arabs began in the ninth century B.C. (Shepard, 2008, p.174). The following centuries proved their presence in Arabia, Syria, and Iraq and their interaction with adjacent lands. This interaction was promoted by Roman

and Persian policies of using Arab groups to protect their desert borders and perform military functions as confederates. In Syria, Arabs took up settled life in rural villages. Arabs partly populated the surroundings of domestic Syrian cities and major cities like Damascus and Aleppo had a substantial Arab population (Shepard, 2008, pp.174-177).

### **POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC INTERESTS OF THE THEN SUPER POWERS**

There was very little in Arabia to attract foreign powers to establish their rule over them. It was only Arabia's role of controlling any intrusion from the east that lent any importance to them. Arabia became the focus of imperial maneuvering and power politics (Shepard, 2008, p.185). Several factors caused the rivalry of the two imperial powers of Rome and Persia. The establishment of Constantinople under Constantine made immediate competition and dispute with Persia (Shepard, 2008, pp.184-185). Over time, both had developed as world powers. They used political, economic, and military strength to pursue their imperial aims. Both competed for control of western Asia and adopted more global strategies to promote their interests and undermine others (Shepard, 2008, pp.186). These two great powers manifested this strategy where Arabia and Arabs were concerned. Through the spread of their religion and setting up the trading posts, they promoted their interests. Both powers used tribal allies in Arabia to protect their Arabian frontier zones and confronted the tribal forces of others (Shepard, 2008, p.187 and Shaban, 1971, pp.2-3). Persian main tribal ally was Lakhmids, who had established themselves in northeastern Arabia by the fourth century and founded a stable base at al-Hira (Shepard, 2008, p.187). Eastern Roman Empire made first Kinda their ally and later the Ghassanids, a south Arabian tribe that migrated to northern Arabia and Syria in the fifth century (Shepard, 2008, pp.187-190). Romans gave the title of *Phylarch* to Ghassanid leader along with honors, privileges, and money. In return, it was expected that the leader would keep his tribe under control and protect imperial interest from other tribes (Shepard, 2008, p.188). The history of the Arabs client regime is essential, but they were not central to the imperial policies of both powers. The Romans had little faith in the abilities, motives, or intentions of their Arab allies (Shepard, 2008, p.189).

The trade route of Arabia connected it with two great world powers, the Eastern Roman Empire and the Persian Empire. Makkah was the center of trade activities in Arabia. It was first established as a local trading center around the religious place of Kaaba (Shaban, 1971, p.3). As a sanctuary and to assure the visitors' safety, an elaborate system of sacred month, pilgrimage, and religious rites were recognized with the accord of the surrounding tribes. The system worked successfully expanding trade activities. It paved the way for the establishment of new marketplace (Shaban, 1971, pp.3-4). From the very start, religion was inseparable from trade, and the success of one assisted in boosting the success of others. In fact, each tribe of Arabia had its deity, but Makka's Holy place needed to hold supremacy for tribesman who was receiving help from Makka trade system.

Internally, the tribes of Qahtan had ties with Persian Empire, while Adnan was allied with Roman Empire. At that time, tribal rivalries forced them to join one power against others. Makkans were pro Romans (Byzantine) because of their strong commercial ties with Syria. This led the rival tribes of Madinah to make alliances with Qahtan, who had affiliations with the Persian Empire (O'Leary, 1989, p.17).

In the first half of the sixth century, Makkah was prospering, and its local trade depended on its religious prestige. The real change in the trade system of Makkah occurred with the shift in its local trade to international trade. It happened due to the achievement of Hashim, great-grandfather of Muhammad (S.A.W.W **صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ**) (Shaban, 1971, p.6). The struggle between two great powers to dominate trade routes and center in Arabia made the trade center of Makkah a key place of interest for both empires. Therefore, Hashim agreed with Eastern Roman emperor, for the safe conduct for the merchants of Makkah and their commodities whenever they visited Syria. He also entered into a similar agreement with Persian and Abyssinian rulers. (Shaban, 1971, p.3)

Hashim secured trade routes from international communities and made dual policy with various Arab clans for the security of the caravans of Makkah. Perhaps, it was an original form of *ilaf*, pact of security (Shaban, 1971, p.3). Further, this international trade on a large scale involved the two great powers of the time, the Persian and East Rome.

### **RELIGIOUS DOGMAS AND BELIEFS IN ARABIA**

The religious life of Arabs before Islam ranged from the worship of one supreme God, which they precisely called Allah, to the worship of rough stones, sand-heaps and in case they failed to find any other object, then they would worship the stick of wood or the small sandpits. Though they believed in Allah to be the Supreme God, His worship was not very common (Guillaume, 1955, pp.35-36). The ancient Arabs were polytheistic. Every tribe had its deity. The belief in monotheistic religion also existed in Arabia in the Jewish community. In north, the Jews had settled down in Madinah and Khyber. Bani Qainuqa, Banu Nadir and Bani Qurayza were Jewish tribes. They fully established their domination over these areas by collecting tax from other tribes (Shepard, 2008, p.180).

The Christianisation of the Roman Empire from its new capital in the fourth century opened the way of the large-scale spread of Christianity in the homeland and outer world, including Arabia. It spread to Arabs through monasteries and missionaries. For example, Banu Taghlib and Ghassanids entire tribes converted (Shepard, 2008, p.182). In southern part of Arabia, Ibn Ishaq traced the origin of Christianity in Najran with the arrival of Faymiyun. (Guillaume, 1955, p.14) He described the event as “at that time, people of Najran worshipped a great palm tree. These people were inspired by his thoughts and accepted his religion. He instructed them in law of Isa b. Maryam” (Guillaume, 1955, p.15).

Dhu Nuws, a Jewish leader, came with his armies and asked them to accept Judaism or face death. They chose death, and he consequently killed thousands of them (Guillaume, 1955, p.17). Daus Dhu Tha’laban escaped on horse and reached the Roman court. He asked for help against the Dhu Nuwas and his troops by telling them what happened. The emperor replied that his land was far too distant to send troops for help. Instead, he wrote a letter ordering the Abyssinia King to help Daus Tha’laban and take revenge (Guillaume, 1955, p.18). The King was Christian, and his territory was near Yemen. Daus Thalaban went to Negus with the emperor’s letter. The king sent seventy thousand Abyssinians under the command of Aryat. In his army, there was a man called Abraha ‘split face’. They defeated the Dhu Nuwas and his army and took control of Yemen. He remained in Yemen for few years. Abraha led a dispute over his authority that split the Abyssinians army into two parties. During their clash, Aryat was murdered by his man (Guillaume, 1955, p.20).

Afterwards, Abraha established his supremacy over Yemen with the consent of Abyssinian King (Guillaume, 1955, p.21). He built a magnificent cathedral in Sana to divert the Arabs pilgrimage to it. When he heard the news that Arabs were still going to perform pilgrimage at their Holy place in Makkah, he was infuriated and swore that he would go to this temple and destroy it (Guillaume, 1955, pp.21-25). So, he appointed one of the Arabs as Amir of Mudar and ordered him to go among the people to invite them to pilgrimage at his cathedral (Guillaume, 1955, p.23). The opponent tribe killed Amir of Mudar. On hearing this news, Abraha decided to attack Makkah and destroy Kaaba. Upon arrival near Makkah, Abraha ordered his people to plunder, which they did and took two hundred camels of Abdul Muttalib bin Hashim. He, at that time, was the leading shaykh of Quraysh Delegates from both sides and exchanged the messages of their leaders. But Abraha did not accept the terms of Abdul Muttalib. Abdul Muttalib went back to Quraysh and ordered them to evacuate Makkah and take up defensive positions on the peaks and passes of the mountains (Guillaume, 1955, p.25).

In the morning, Abraha prepared to enter the town, made his elephant ready for the battle, and drew up his troops. Then Allah sent upon them birds from the sea like swallows and starlings. Each bird carried three stones, like peas and lentils. Everyone who was hit died. As they withdrew, they were continually falling by the wayside dying miserably by every waterhole. This year 570 A.D was known in the history of Arab as the year of the Elephant (Guillaume, 1955, pp.28-30 and Khaldun, 2004, pp.97-98).

In Rome, at the time of the accession of Emperor Heraclius (610-641), Persians attacked the Roman territory from east in 611 A.D. (Shepard, 2008, p.226). They captured the province of Syria and Antioch. Later they occupied Damascus. In 614 A.D. Jerusalem was also conquered, and they took a relic of the original true Cross to Ctesiphon (Shepard, 2008, p.227), The loss of the holy city and holy relic shocked the Romans. The Persian invasion did not stop there; between 617 and 619, they occupied Egypt. Emperor Heraclius now decided to undertake an offensive campaign against Persians (Shepard, 2008, pp.227-228). In 627, he finally defeated the Persian army near Nineveh, and Persian King Chosroes was dethroned and killed (Harris, 2007, p.65). The province of Syria, Palestine, and Egypt and the holy Cross returned to Eastern Roman Empire (Harris, 2007, pp.65-67). The war between East Rome and Persia reopened the whole questions of frontiers and allegiances in Arabia. Heraclius was the contemporary Emperor of East Rome of the Last Holy Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.W صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ) (Khaldun, 2004, pp. 258-363). The advent of Islam in central Arabia marked the turning point of the world history; major changes had been seen after the rise of Islam in the Arab world.

### **THE ARABS AND ROMAN RELATIONS AFTER ISLAM**

The rise of Islam on the land of Arabia not only changed the thoughts and outlook of its people but inspired them to spread the message of Islam to the rest of the world. A great transition had been seen after the rise of Islam in Arabia in terms of religion, politics, social, cultural, economic, and foreign relations.

Last Holy Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.W صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ) was born on Monday 12<sup>th</sup> Rabi -ul-awwal in the year of the elephant 570. He belonged to a very respectful and noble family of Quraysh. Ibn Ishaq in his book traces back the lineage of the Prophet (S.A.W.W صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ)

to Hazrat Adam (A.S) (Guillaume, 1955, p.3). Last Holy Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.W صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ) was from the lineage of Ismail b. Ibrahim. (Guillaume, 1955, pp.3-4). Last Holy Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.W صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ) was the son of Abdullah b. Abdul Muttalib and Amina d. Wahb.

People of Quraysh used to do trade with Syria. Abu Talib had planned to go in a merchant caravan to Syria and took Muhammad (S.A.W.W صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ) along with him (Guillaume, 1955, p.79). When the caravan reached Basra in Syria, (Guillaume, 1955, pp.79-80 and Lings, 1985, p.29) they met a monk named Bahira, who was well versed in the knowledge of Christianity. He observed all the movement of the caravan and the young boy. He warned Abu Talib and asked him to quickly take his nephew back to his country and guard him carefully against the Jews because he had a great future (Guillaume, 1955, p.81 and Khaldun, 2004, p.364).

Last Holy Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.W صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ) also participated in trade and visited Syria several times. Due to his noble, trustworthy, and honorable character, he became popular among the people of Quraysh. At the age of forty, the Last Holy Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.W صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ) received the first revelation from Allah in the month of Ramadan (Guillaume, 1955, p.105). In accordance with the words, he began to speak about the angles and revelation to close family and friends. Gradually, many people started accepting Islam (Guillaume, 1955, pp.111-117). The revelation of the verses of Holy Quran was immediately transmitted by the Prophet (S.A.W.W صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ) to those who were with him, then passed from person to person, memorized and recited.

The people of Makkah considered this new religion as an immediate threat to their status quo. Therefore, they utilized all possible means to sabotage the spread of Islam. They committed all sorts of atrocities against those who adopted the new faith. After some time when circumstances became too harsh to bear, the Prophet (S.A.W.W صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ) asked his followers to migrate to the nearby Christian country of Abyssinia, where they would be protected and treated well by the King Negus (Guillaume, 1955, pp.143-150). People of Quraysh tried their best to bring them back to Makkah, but they remained unsuccessful (Guillaume, 1955, pp.150-153). However, the hardships for those staying in Makkah continued and even intensified. They even planned to murder the Prophet (S.A.W.W صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ). Such hindrance led Muslims and the Prophet (S.A.W.W صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ) to the conclusion to leave Makkah and migrate to *Yathrib* now called Madinah.

Madinah at that time was inhabited by the tribes of Aws and Khazaraj along with a sizeable Jewish community (Guillaume, 1955, p.231). The Jews despite having alliances with both tribes, often intrigued and made them fight against each other but during such feuds kept themselves aloof. The tribes of Khazaraj had a strong link of kinship with the Prophet (S.A.W.W صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ) from his mother side (Lings, 1985, p.57).

The Last Holy Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.W صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ) had been preaching Islam to all the tribes that visited Makkah for the annual pilgrimage. As a result, some people from Madinah converted to Islam, and their members grew every year. Soon both the major tribes converted to Islam. Consequently, when the Last Holy Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.W صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ) migrated to Madinah on Monday 27<sup>th</sup> September 622 A.D., the Muslims of Madinah welcomed him in the most honorable manner (Guillaume, 1955, p.227 and Khaldun, 2004, p.378).

In contrast to the life of Makkah, Madinah provided a peaceful environment and the basis for the establishment of an Islamic State. Holy Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.W صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ) now set to achieve full concentration and energy, therefore, first time in the history of Arabs, various tribes in Madinah signed a pact or treaty known as Charter of Madinah. Under it, the Muslims, non-Muslims, and Jewish tribes living in Madinah surrendered their power to the leadership of the Prophet (S.A.W.W صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ). Soon after, Madinah emerged as the first Muslim Modern city-state with proper setup of defense and religious freedom under the leadership of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.W صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ). The message of Islam now spread throughout Arabia and beyond (Guillaume, 1955, pp.231-235 and Khaldun, 2004, p.379).

Apart from religious and social reforms of Arabs society, the Last Holy Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.W صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ) had an excellent vision for the spread of Islam. First, the constitution of Madinah led to the formation of a new commonwealth known as Ummah (Shaban, 1971, p.11). The most significant part of this was, "the members of this new commonwealth did not have to accept the new religion: they only had to accept the special authority of the Prophet (S.A.W.W صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ)" (Shaban, 1971, pp.11-13). Madinah was declared as a *haram* which was a strong indication of the establishment of a new centre of trade (Shaban, 1971, p.13).

According to M. A. Shaban assessment, Quraysh made agreements for the safety of their caravan with outer tribes, but no such agreement existed between Makkah and Madinah (Shaban, 1971, pp.13-15). Therefore, when Muslims started ambushing on Makkan caravans under the command of the Prophet (S.A.W.W صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ), it tended to reach such a pact with a real danger to their trade and their long-held centre in Makkah (Shaban, 1971, p.15). Therefore, Muslims of the new state also started to do raids on outer tribes of Madinah, who lived alongside the north route of trade and allied to Quraysh. The Makkans were determined to eliminate any threat to their economic power, which quickly suffered as Muslims of the Madinah raided the routes to their most important markets in the north (Shaban, 1971, p.11). This conflict bore several battles between the people of Makkah and Muslims of Madinah, resulting in the latter's victory with the conquest of Makkah. As soon as the news of this victory Muslim spread in Arabia, delegations from all the powerful tribes began to arrive in Madinah to reach an agreement with Muhammad (S.A.W.W صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ) (Guillaume, 1955, pp.627-642).

#### OVERSEAS RELATIONS AND ASSOCIATIONS

The confrontation in Arabia had entirely immobile the trade. It was now the responsibility of the Prophet (S.A.W.W صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ) to re-establish it (Shaban, 1971, p.14). Now he had to convince the foreign powers that he was in control and secure the trade route. On the other hand, the Prophet (S.A.W.W صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ) also wanted to spread the message of Islam. As Tabari has mentioned in his work that the Prophet (S.A.W.W صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ) after coming back from Hodaybbiya in the month of Dul al-Hajj, 628A.D/6 A.H, sent messages to Kings, invite them to join the community of believers (Tabari, 1985, p.706). Dihya b. Khalifa al-Kalbi was sent to Caesar and others to the Persian King Chosroes II, to the Negus of Abyssinia, and others with the messages calling them to Islam (Tabari, 1985, pp.706-710).



Muslim sources depict that Heraclius recognized the truth but did not accept Islam. Perhaps he could not abandon his privileges or was scared of rejection and opposition from the Roman Patricians and dignitaries (Tabari, 1985, pp.706-707).

The most impressive acknowledgment by Heraclius of the Prophethood of Muhammad (S.A.W.W صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ) appeared in the chronicle of Tabari. This report concerns the Abu Sufyan's meeting with Heraclius to discuss rumors about the Prophet's emergence in Arabia (Tabari, 1985, pp.704-706). Most Muslim sources reported that Heraclius had responded positively to the Prophet's letter that left a long-lasting impact on Roman's image in Muslim history and legends (Cheikh, 1992, p.133).

Muhammad (S.A.W.W صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ) also sent messengers towards north Arab tribes, such as to the chief of Ghassanids. He responded in very harsh words. Such an act could not go unpunished (Lings, 1985, p.286). Ghassanids were mainly Christians and had the support of Romans. Another event caused the change in the policies of the Prophet (S.A.W.W صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ) towards Syrian Arab tribes. When Dihya b. Khalifa al-Kalbi coming back to Madinah from East Rome reached a valley called Shanar, the clan of Banu Judham attacked and seized everything he had. With the help of Banu Dubayb, Dihya b. Khalifa al-Kalbi returned to Madinah and reported his experience to the Prophet (S.A.W.W صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ). Then Muhammad (S.A.W.W صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ) sent Zaid b. Haritha with a force against Banu Judham. In this raid Ziad b. Haritha remained successful (Guillaume, 1955, pp.662-664).

Similarly, Muhammad (S.A.W.W صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ) sent military expeditions along the north route to impress the East Roman authorities with his strength. Prophet (S.A.W.W صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ) started a Syrian campaign against East Rome. The first raid was held in Mu'tah in 629A.D/ 8 A.H. Prophet (S.A.W.W صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ) ordered an army of three thousand men, under the command of Zayed. Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.W صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ) instructed them that if Ziad got martyred, Jafar should take the place and then Abul Allah ibn Rawahaha should succeed him (Guillaume, 1955, pp.531-532 and Lings, 1985, pp.286-287). If all three of them were martyred, then the commander was to be locally selected, and others should follow him. When this army reached the Syrian borders, they heard that not only the northern tribes had come out but also the imperial army of Caesar had joined them against Muslims. During the fight, the last person who took the white standard and took command was Khalid bin Waleed. He knit the rank of Arab Muslims together, drew the enemy back enough to enable the Muslims to make an orderly retreat. It was thus something of a victory for Khalid bin Waleed that Muslims reached safely back to Madinah. The set back of Mu'tah was an encouragement to the northern tribes to strengthen their resistance to the new Islamic State (Lings, 1985, pp.288-289).

When this news reached the Prophet (S.A.W.W صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ), he sent three hundred men under the command of Amr, with instructions to fight where necessary and to win allies where possible (Lings, 1985, p.289). Muhammad (S.A.W.W صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ) also sent Abu Ubaydah with two hundred men (Lings, 1985, pp.289-291). Amr now led his five hundred men on the Syrian border, and as they advanced in Syria the enemy dispersed.

The second raid was held on Tabuk in 630A.D/9 A.H. as part of a Syrian campaign (Guillaume, 1955, p.602). In this expedition Prophet (S.A.W.W صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ) ordered his people to prepare for a

raid on Roman under very difficult circumstances in terms of weather and food. When the Prophet (S.A.W.W صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ) reached Tabuk along with Muslim armies, Yuhanna b. Ru'ba governor of *Ayla* came and made a treaty with him and paid poll tax (Guillaume, 1955, p.607). The people of Jarba and Adhruha also came and made a treaty with him and paid poll tax (Guillaume, 1955, p.609). Prophet (S.A.W.W صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ) in his last days selected the young man Usamah bin Ziyad to command the expedition towards Syria (Guillaume, 1955, p.768). After getting the news of Prophet's (S.A.W.W صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ) death, forces came back. When Abu Bakr (R.A) became first Muslim Caliph in 632 A.D., he sent Muslim armies again towards Syria under the command of Usamah bin Ziyad and thus continued the Muhammad's (S.A.W.W صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ) Syrian campaigns (Tabari, 1985, pp.830-831).

#### LOOKING-FORWARDING OF THE LAST PROPHET MUHAMMAD ( صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ )

All the above battles highlighted the farsightedness of the Prophet (S.A.W.W صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ) for the conquest of Syria and Rome. He was confident that Allah would open the gate of Syria to his armies. Perhaps he thought that time had come or whether he wished to give his armies some training for the inevitable northern campaigns.

Many times, he gave glad tidings to his followers about the conquest of Syria and Rome. Some of them are reported by historians in their books. Most of the sayings of the Prophet (S.A.W.W صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ) are noted down in *Hadith* literature. As an example, during the battle of Trench, Muslims dug out the trench outside of Madinah. While digging the trench, at some hard spots, they asked for Prophet's (S.A.W.W صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ) help. (Lings, 1985, p.218). Last Holy Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.W صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ) took pickaxe and gave the rock a blow. At that time light flashed back over the city and towards the south. Second time when he gave a blow again a flash of light emerged in the direction of Uhud and towards north. When third time he hit the rock, it split into fragments. Again, this time light flashed towards east. When Sulayman Farsi asked the Prophet (S.A.W.W صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ) for the interpretation of the event, Prophet (S.A.W.W صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ) told him that "by the light of first strike he had seen the castle of Yemen, by the second he had seen castle of Syria and in third light he had seen white castle of Kasra at Mada'in" (Lings, 1985, p.219).

#### HADITH REGARDING THE CONQUEST OF ROME/ CONSTANTINOPE

Imam Abul Hussain Muslim bin al-Hajjaj in his book *Sahih Muslim*, notes down the *Hadith* of the Prophet (S.A.W.W صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ) under the chapter nine, the Conquest of Constantinople, Emergence of Ad-Dajjal and the Descent of Isa bin Maryam:

34 - (2897) حَدَّثَنِي زُهَيْرُ بْنُ حَرْبٍ، حَدَّثَنَا مَعْلَى بْنُ مَنصُورٍ، حَدَّثَنَا سُلَيْمَانُ بْنُ بِلَالٍ، حَدَّثَنَا هُرَيْرَةُ، أَنَّ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ، قَالَ: " لَا تَقُومُ السَّاعَةُ حَتَّى يَنْزِلَ ( "سَهَيْلٌ" ، عَنْ أَبِيهِ، عَنْ أَبِي الرَّومِ بِالْأَعْمَاقِ أَوْ بِدَابِقِ، فَيَخْرُجُ إِلَيْهِمْ جَيْشٌ مِنَ الْمَدِينَةِ، مِنْ خِيَارِ أَهْلِ الْأَرْضِ يَوْمَئِذٍ، فَإِذَا تَصَافَوْا، قَالَتْ الرُّومُ: خَلُّوا بَيْنَنَا وَبَيْنَ الَّذِينَ سَبَّوْا مِنَّا نَقَاتِلُهُمْ، فَيَقُولُ الْمُسْلِمُونَ: لَا، وَاللَّهِ لَا نُحَلِّي بَيْنَكُمْ وَبَيْنَ إِخْوَانِنَا، فَيُقَاتِلُونَهُمْ، فَيَنْهَزُهُمْ ثَلَاثٌ لَا يَثُوبُ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِمْ أَبَدًا، وَيُقْتَلُ ثَلَاثُهُمْ، أَفْضَلُ الشَّهَادَةِ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ، وَيَفْتَتِحُ الثَّلَاثُ، لَا يُعْتَنُونَ أَبَدًا فَيُعْتَنِحُونَ سُطُنْطِينِيَّةً، فَيَبْنِيانَهَا هُمُ يَفْتَسِمُونَ الْعَنَائِمَ، قَدْ عَلَّقُوا سُبُوقَهُمْ بِالرُّبُثُونَ، إِذْ صَاحَ فِيهِمُ الشَّيْطَانُ: إِنَّ الْمَسِيحَ قَدْ خَلَفَكُمْ فِي أَهْلِيكُمْ، فَيَخْرُجُونَ، وَذَلِكَ بِأَطْلٍ، فَإِذَا جَاءُوا الشَّامَ خَرَجَ، فَيَبْنِيانَهَا هُمُ يُعَدُونَ لِلْقِتَالِ، يُسَوِّرُونَ الصُّفُوفَ، إِذْ أَقْبِمَتِ الصَّلَاةُ، فَيَنْزِلُ عَيْسَى ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ، فَأَمَّهُمْ، فَإِذَا رَأَهُ عَدُوُّ اللَّهِ، دَابَّ كَمَا يَدُوبُ الْمِلْحُ فِي الْمَاءِ، فَلَوْ تَرَكَهُ لَأَنْدَابَ حَتَّى يَهْلِكَ، وَلَكِنْ يَقْتُلُهُ اللَّهُ بِيَدِهِ، فَيُرِيهِمْ نَمَةً فِي حَرْبَتِهِ" (Hajjaj, 2007, pp.291-292)

(7278) 34- (2897) It was narrated from Abu Hurairah that the Messenger of Allah (S.A.W.W صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ) said “The Hour will not begin until the Romans camp at Al-A'maq or Dabiq and an army composed of the people on earth at that time will go out from Al-Madinah to meet them. When they arrange themselves in ranks, the Romans will say: ‘Do not stand between us and those who took prisoners from us; let us fight them.’ The Muslims will say: No by Allah we will never let you reach our brothers.’ Then they will fight them and one that will flee, his repentance will never be accepted by Allah; one third will be killed, and they are the best of martyrs before Allah, and one third will prevail and will never succumb to any fitnah, and they will conquer Constantinople. While they are dividing the spoils, having hung their swords on the olive trees, the *Shaitan* will shout out among them: Al- Masih has taken your place among your families. So, they will march, but that will be false news. When they reach Ash-sham, he will emerge and while they would be still preparing for battle, drawing up their ranks, the *Iqamah* for prayer will be called, and Isa bin Maryam will descend and will lead them. When the enemy of Allah sees him, he will melt as salt melts in water. If he left him alone, he would still melt until he was destroyed, but Allah will kill him by his hand and he will show them his blood on his lance” (Hajjaj, 2007, pp.292-296.)

Imam Bukhari in his book *Sahih Al- Bukhari* notes down the *Hadith* of Prophet (S.A.W.W صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ) about Rome under chapter forty-one ‘What is said about the fighting against Al-Rum (the Byzantines)’:

1260: عن أم حرام، أَنَّهَا سَمِعَتْ النَّبِيَّ صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ، يَقُولُ: " أَوَّلُ جَيْشٍ مِنْ أُمَّتِي يَغْزُونَ الْبَحْرَ قَدْ أَوْجَبُوا، قَالَتْ أُمُّ حَرَامٍ: قُلْتُ: يَا رَسُولَ اللهِ، أَنَا فِيهِمْ؟ قَالَ: أَنْتَ فِيهِمْ، قَالَتْ: ثُمَّ قَالَ النَّبِيُّ صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ: أَوَّلُ جَيْشٍ مِنْ أُمَّتِي يَغْزُونَ مَدِينَةَ قَيْصَرَ مَغْفُورٌ لَهُمْ " فَقُلْتُ: أَنَا فِيهِمْ يَا رَسُولَ اللهِ؟ قَالَ: لَا " . (Zubaidi, 1994, p.600)

“1260. Narrated Umm Haram (R.A): I heard Prophet (S.A.W.W صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ) saying “Paradise will be granted to the first batch of my followers who will undertake a naval expedition” (Umm Haram added), I said, “O Allah’s Messenger! Will I be amongst them?” He replied, “You are amongst them.” The Prophet (S.A.W.W صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ) then said, “the first army amongst my followers who will invade Caesar’s city will be forgiven their sins.” I asked, will I be one of them, O Allah’s Messenger?” He replied in the negative. (4:14-O. B)” (Zubaidi, 1994, p.600).

## CONCLUSION

It has been determined to have a culmination and zenith that existed an invincible and indomitable fitting together. The Eastern Roman Empire (Byzantine) and Arabs world were both interconnected before and after the advent of Islam in Arabia. Romans and Persian were well-thought-out as super world powers of the yore years. They fought many wars with each other. In these wars, they established their regimes with those tribes who lived on the northern and southern borders of Arabia as their allies against each other. Central Arabia was connected to East Romans through the trade route and economic interests. Islam became the uniting force among the Arab tribes under the leadership of Last Holy Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.W صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ) in the first Muslim state of Madinah. Arabs used to do trade with Syria which is the province of Roman Empire.

Therefore, the rise of Arab Muslims unbolted the enmity of East Romans with Arabs. Perhaps, Eastern Romans were not expecting the rise of Arabs under Islam in Arabia. Therefore, in Syria, Arab tribes did not accept the invitation of the Prophet (S.A.W.W صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ), and the internal situation of Syria provoked the Arab Muslim's campaign of Syria. Prophet (S.A.W.W صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ) had the vision of the victory of Muslim armies on these lands. Thus, many sayings and words of Prophet (S.A.W.W صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ) on the conquest of Syria and Rome, were preserved by proper system of *Hadith* literature and histories. The knowledge of *Hadith* literature and history developed with the passage of time in the Arab world, later became a source of inspiration for Muslim armies to attack and besiege Constantinople, the capital of the Eastern Roman Empire.

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