



## CONTEMPORARY TRENDS IN SEERAH LITERATURE IN WESTERN WORLD

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### Abstract

This study is designed to investigate contemporary trends in seerah literature in western world. As majority of western seerah writers belonging to the religions other than Islam. A closer look at the investigations and writings about the Seerah of prophet reveals that they refute the principles of impartiality and acknowledgment of the facts while writings seerah literature. It is a ridiculous aspect of their research that they themselves collect material from our intellectual heritage to refute the prophet of Islam, so the text which is in their favor is presented as an argument but abruptly ignore other evidences of the same books which is a definitive argument against their own opinions and conclusions. For gaining the sympathy of Muslims and proving the validity of their research sometimes they sincerely but often hypocritically support Islam and prophet of Islam, while presenting general aspects of seerah they remain moderate while investigating historical fact they distort it, which make readers hesitant specially youth and those who are not fully aware about their own intellectual heritage, as a result modernist minds of Muslim Ummah have been subjected to a great deal of skepticism. For defending their fictitious theories about the prophet of Islam they present ahadith which have been declared fabricated and unreliable by most narrators and jurists. In addition, it is also an undeniable fact that educated Europeans have accurate information and sources of knowledge about Islam and Prophet of Islam but blindly support myths and baseless rumors over facts in support of their prejudiced theories. It is also another factor of their prejudiced behavior that in their writings they address the opponents of Islam and they certainly feel pleasure with the statements which denigrate Islam and ridicule its principles, unfortunately, they had no idea that what Muslim would feel after these writings, that's why they write whatever they want.

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## Introduction:

There are a large number of writers who are not convinced of the Prophet's prophethood but for various reasons have a keen interest in the biography and history of Islam, such as the Jewish and Christian authors (known as Orientalists). Who has written numerous books on the biography and history of Islam over a period of almost a thousand years and are still writing with full enthusiasm. One of their scholarly achievements is that after a great deal of research, they traced the original and ancient sources and collected manuscripts from all over the world, edited them and also published their translations in different languages. In this way, they had provided such a vast body of knowledge on Islam that it is now inevitable for anyone who writes on Sira or Islam to benefit from his writings.

Their scholarly endeavors have generally been appreciated, but there has been a perception in Islamic circles that he did not use scientific honesty, impartiality and broad-mindedness in presenting his biography and Islam, but with misrepresentation and prejudice. They have deliberately distorted the events and made a concerted effort to distort the history of Islam.

Orientalists have written countless books on Islam, not only in English but also in the world and in other languages. What they want to say and explain about Islam, In this way, the true picture of Islam will not be presented to them. Besides, future generations who see Islam through the eyes of these Orientalists will also remain skeptical of Islam. In view of these circumstances, it is necessary to present a balanced and scholarly review of his writings, openly acknowledging his strengths and exposing his shortcomings. This is what has been attempted in the article under review.

Before critically examining the writings of Orientalists, one must also look at the circumstances under which these books were written in order to identify the factors that have been at the core of these scholarly endeavors. Here are some historical facts that will hopefully help you understand the nature of the matter.

Jews and Christians came into contact with Muslims at an early age. In the Meccan period of the life of the Prophet (PBUH), Jews and Christians had started objecting to the religion of Islam and in opposing it, they were sympathetic to the idol of Quraysh. This opposition intensified during the ten-year period of Madinah. Opposition to the Jews in particular and a variety of fiber optics continued unabated. Various objections have been raised by them against the revelation of the Qur'an Al-Hakim and the truthfulness of the Prophet (PBUH).

As Islam began to spread rapidly throughout the world and its popularity began to grow day by day, people began to take refuge in the embrace of Islam in droves. The reality of Islam and its enlightening teachings began to subdue the hearts of the people and the whole world began to believe in the greatness of Islam. Its life-affirming message dispelled the allure of other religions and religions and the code of conduct of nations and their teachings. It was also



a fact that all the claims of religions of that time were proving to be hollow and useless for human society. They did not have a satisfactory solution to the problems that arose in human life. On such an occasion, Islam performed the important duty of the Messiah of humanity and presented itself as the best code of human life. The people responded to his invitation and fell in love with him. When did the enemies of Islam, especially the Jews and Christians, fear that Islam would prevail over us?

The birth of the Prophet (PBUH) in Bani Ismail instead of the Prophet of Israel increased the enmity of the Jews of Madinah and this enmity increased. The Prophet (PBUH) was tortured first and foremost because of his conspiracies and anti-Islamic activities. The fall of the Roman Empire, the occupation of Jerusalem by the Muslims, and the conversion of a large number of their own people to Islam were troubling to their ruling class, especially the clergy. The rise and conquests of Islam deprived the ruling class of Christians of political power, not only the interests of the religious class and the nobility and feudal lords, but also the merchants, but all this together with the flood of Islamic conquests was bad. Had failed, And they also feared that the footsteps of Muslims would be frozen in the rest of Europe. Therefore, all these sections made a concerted effort to reclaim their lost territories from the Muslims.

To achieve this goal, the political powers, the nobles, the feudal lords, the clergy and the merchants all came together. It was achieved by telling them that Islam is the greatest enemy of Christianity that it has destroyed the Christian world, that churches have been turned into mosques, and that Christians are being forcibly converted to Islam, that the cross is being broken, that Christianity is in danger." Arise and save your holy churches from this savage nation. A flood of Christian armies came from Europe seeking to sweep the Islamic world. This is known as the military flood and the Crusades, which lasted for centuries.

Leading scholar Ernest Barker (1874-1960), referring to the early Crusades, stated that Pope Urban II preached the Crusades and called it a jihad against "infidels".<sup>1</sup>

From the House of Commons, the pope took command of the war against Islam. The religious leaders of the Christian world were well aware that we can compete with the Islamic world only by establishing a military system. Islam was declared the special enemy of Christianity. The Christian governments of Europe united and fought the Islamic Middle East for two hundred consecutive years, from 1096 to 1296, at the behest of Pope Urban II, with the apparent aim of snatching the holy places from Muslim control. Some Orientalists have tried to give the term a broader meaning and have called every confrontation with the Nation of Islam the Crusades.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> - میراث اسلام، مرتبہ سر تھامس ارٹلڈوالفریڈ گلیام (حروب صلیبیہ: ارٹسٹ بارکر) اردو ترجمہ عبدالمجید سالک، مجلس ترقی ادب لاہور، ۱۹۶۰ء، ص ۶۳

<sup>2</sup> - اردو دائرہ معارف اسلامیہ صلیبی جنگیں اظہر ظہور احمد، دانش گاہ پنجاب لاہور، ۱۹۷۳ء، ج ۱۲، ص ۲۰۹



This is the time when not only the educated but also the serious writers not only spread lies, rubbish and ridiculous things to provoke the people but also make very serious allegations against Islam. The failure of the Crusades, waged by religious leaders, further fueled Europe's hatred and bigotry. He then attributed the most painful things to the Prophet to turn his defeat into victory. Against this background and environment, it is not difficult to understand how much scientific honesty there will be in what was written on Sira and Islam and in the spirit under which it was written.

In an atmosphere of hatred and enmity while poisoning is going on everywhere and disgusting propaganda against Islam is going on, the educated class is also swept away. This flood could be stopped only by those who have the correct knowledge of Islam, who work with honesty and integrity and whose critical consciousness is awake and strong. But this was the only class that disappeared in Europe.

### **Orientalist art of biography:**

What were the sources of objections from medieval Orientalists? Some of the baseless and ridiculous things that the losers and the runaway soldiers had made famous in Europe were also copied by the serious writers without any hesitation, but where they felt the need to fabricate their own fictional stories. Defaming Islam, denouncing it as a false religion and doing evil to it was considered a service to Christianity, and misrepresentation was justified for it. - He writes:

*"Few great men have been so maligned as Muhammad. Christian scholars of medieval Europe painted him as an impostor, a lecher, and a man of blood. A corruption of his name, "Mahound" even came to signify the devil"<sup>3</sup>*

Very few great people have been slandered as much as Muhammad (pbuh) has been slandered. Christian scholars in medieval Europe portrayed him as a deceiver, a luxury, and a bloody man. Even a distorted pronunciation of your name has been made synonymous with Mahoond (God forbid) Satan. " Even though copying Kufr is not Kufr, it is still very difficult to copy what has been said in the name of the Holy Prophet. For example, it was written in connection with the death of Hazrat:

*"That he was eaten by dogs .....or by pigs"<sup>4</sup>.*

With the passage of time, the age of wisdom in the West changed, and they began to raise objections to the Prophet's biography on scientific grounds (but) with very little emphasis and hypothetical arguments. He attributed every bad thing to you. Create anecdotes, tell stories of birds and sparrows, create heartbreaking tales of savagery. He fabricated the myth of the well, prepared stories of sickness, expounded the conditions of revelation and made the spirit unconsciously delusional, imposed polygamy on selfishness, interpreted the hardships of the Prophet (PBUH)

<sup>3</sup> Encyclopaedia Britannica, 1984, "Muhammad" Vol 12 p 609

<sup>4</sup> Islam and the west, p40



as luxury. Proved Islam to be a violent religion and proclaimed the homeland of Khurasan to prove its connection with the Prophet's forefathers, Genghis Khan, arranged a supposed trip to Spain, beat the drums of so-called education from monks, Christians The storytelling of training in the army, the fictitious order accusing the blood of the thighs, the accusation of Christian duty and divinity, then the crook changed and forced the demons of hell to seek refuge. Negative emotions always bleed for justice. The West knows the facts, but prejudice and enmity still cling to the mind.<sup>5</sup>

Also, how much nonsense has been said can be gauged from the fact that Norman Daniel had to start his book with the words:

“ ناقل الكفر ليس بكافر ”

These words are generally written by all Orientalists. References to them can also be found in "Islam and the West". For example, pp. 3,5,6,40,68,79,92,97,101

It is not that authentic Islamic books were not in their knowledge or out of reach. A significant number of Orientalists have been so in modern times. Those who have generously used their mental and intellectual abilities in the study of Islamic sciences and have dedicated their lives to it.

"Islamic manuscripts that had been deprived of sunlight for centuries became acquainted with broadcasting and escaped the neglect and favor of ignorant and incompetent heirs. How many scholarly sources and important historical documents first came to light as a result of their efforts and scientific interest and passion which enlightened the eyes of the scholars and researchers of the Eastern world and furthered their work of knowledge and research. Orientalist AJ Wensinck (1882-1939) has compiled a very detailed index for the extraction of hadiths from fourteen books of hadiths and biography. In the same way, he has also supervised the compilation of the dictionary of the words of the Prophetic Hadiths. The Orientalist G. L. Strange (1854-1933) and his book "Lands of the Eastern Caliphate" (Geography of the Eastern Caliphate) also fall under this category. All these writings and scholarly and research endeavors are proof that these writers and editors have not spared any effort in their struggle and have given full proof of their sincere devotion to their subject in this long life of study and effort.

The famous German Orientalist Allama Bro Kelman is one of the greatest Orientalists of our century and undoubtedly an unparalleled scholar of Arabic literature. Cannot be presented in the bill. Also from Ibn Al-Nadim's "Al-Fahrist", Mustafa Tash Kabradizada's "Muftah Al-Saadat", Haji Khalifa's "Kashf Al-Zanoon", Ismail Pasha's "Idhah Al-Maknoon" and "Hidayat-ul-Arfeen" and Yusuf Ilyan Allama Brockman's history of Arabic literature is by far the highest. Today, it is impossible to imagine a library of Orientalists without this priceless book of Allama Brooklyn.

<sup>5</sup> ذاکر عبد القادر جیلانی، اسلام، بتغییر علیہ السلام اور مستشرقین مغرب کا انداز فکر، ۲۰۰۷ء، ص ۱۶۲ و ۳۱۹



But it is the same Allama Bar-e-Kalman who, after becoming a staunch Christian and writing the history of the Muslim world with the feelings of preferential privileges and privileges of the European nations in his heart, continues to write such awkward things that many countries The book had to be banned from entering their countries. - Therefore, the entry of this book is also closed in Pakistan. Dr. Abdul Qaddos Hashmi writes: I read this book. I am amazed that this great scholar of Arabic books gives the name of books. Tells the name of the author and the year of his death. It also tells in which libraries and where the book is available. Why don't you ever open the books and read them. First of all, read books very little, those who read did not consider their traditions, then the causes and consequences were created in such a way that such strange causes and results could not come in the mind of a person. Why did this happen? The answer is nothing but that while writing history, his mind was the mind of a fanatic and his heart and mind were occupied by the ideas of the superiority of European nations.

It is an undeniable fact that at least the educated Europeans had the correct knowledge of Islam. But in their blind support of Christianity, they preferred myths and baseless rumors to facts. One of the reasons for this was that in his writings he addressed Christians, and wrote for them. And the Christian masses were certainly pleased with the statements that denounced Islam and mocked its principles. The writers had no idea what the Muslims would say after reading these books. That is why he used to write whatever he wanted without any hesitation.

Despite all the hostility and hatred, Orientalists were compelled to recognize Islamic tolerance in view of these rules of Islam and their just and generous measures. Thus the French Orientalist Muse Sedillet writes in "Summary of Arab History"

*"The clear evidence that those who call Islam a barbaric religion have a dark conscience is that they do not see the obvious signs that have erased all the evil traits of the Arabs that have been prevalent throughout the country for so long. The Qur'an eradicated vile rituals such as revenge, perpetuation of family feuds, malice and oppression, child molestation, etc. Most of these things were and still are in Europe."<sup>6</sup>*

British author Kiran Armstrong has written a valuable book on Sira-e-Taiba. He authored a book, Muhammad, a Western Attempt to Understanding Islam. While acknowledging this historical and undeniable fact, I write:

*"Muhammad...Founded a Religion and a Tradition that was not based cultural on the sword. despite the western myth. and whose name Islam, signifies peace and reconciliation"<sup>7</sup>*

In these words, Arthur Gillman, one of Europe's greatest intellectuals, pays tribute to this exemplary demonstration of religious tolerance and general forgiveness on the occasion of the conquest of Mecca by the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH).

<sup>6</sup> ایم سیڈیلٹ: خلاصہ تاریخ عرب، اردو ترجمہ عبدالغفار، نیشنل اکیڈمی کراچی، طبع ۱۹۸۶ء، ص: ۳۴

<sup>7</sup> .Karren Armstrong: Muhammad a Western Attempt to Understanding Islam. London 1992. P 266.



*The victory of Muhammad (PBUH) was in fact the victory of the world. It was a political victory. They eradicated all traces of self-interest and uprooted the tyrannical monarchy. And when the proud and arrogant chiefs of the Quraysh stood like humble criminals with their heads bowed, Muhammad (PBUH) asked them: What do you expect from me? Mercy. O generous brother, have mercy," he said. He said: "Go, you are all free."<sup>8</sup>*

The books that have been written in Europe so far on the Prophet Muhammad and Islam are flawed in that they contain mostly unauthentic events, some prejudices have been used and not all aspects of events have been examined. We then assure you that we will use impartiality to narrate the authentic facts and to analyze the causes and effects in a reasonable manner. In this way, readers get the impression that their books, at least, do not contain the nonsense that medieval Christians or Jews used to write. These artists then describe the political, economic, social, and religious situation in Arabia at the time of the Prophet Muhammad's resurrection, examine the traditions, and draw some maps as if the Arab lands were a religious leader. Was feeling the need.

With this in mind, they gradually open up and say that Hazrat Muhammad (PBUH) formed a new religion by combining the polytheistic beliefs of the Arabs, the ignorant customs, the beliefs of the Jews and some of the principles of the Christians and gave it the name of Islam. - Circumstances compelled you to claim prophethood, so you made this claim. The pressure of the situation and the different effects caused you a special kind of condition and in that condition what you said was called Qur'an. You consider these impressions to be revelations from God. It is particularly emphasized that most of what is said in the Qur'an is what you have heard from time to time from Jews and Christians. The Arab tribal and economic system was such that they did not accept the principles you proposed.

Eventually seeing the favorable conditions in Madinah, Hazrat Aun went there. As economic pressures increased, they attacked the caravans of the Quraysh, looted them, evicted the Jews from their lands, and massacred one of their tribes, which is a disgrace to Islam. After praising your worldly understanding, they say that your marital life is questionable from European point of view, otherwise it is not much more questionable from the point of view of Arabs and Easterners. Then they criticize jihad, jizya, number of marriages, divorce, slavery, destiny and other principles of Islam and in this way they are doing it as if in sympathy of Muslims. This is exactly what the bigoted Christians and Jews used to say a thousand years ago. He used to say "false prophet". Such words are not used by modern Orientalists but they say so clearly that you know that you are a prophet, that is, you were not really a prophet. The result is that your claim of prophethood is not true. In this way, the spread of words, the confusion and the magic of the words are said to be the same as what the Jewish and Christian fanatical writers used to say before them, the only difference being that "modern ideas" , Lays out acceptable and deceptive layers of "research and criticism" so that Muslims do not get angry at first sight.

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<sup>8</sup> Arthur Gillman : The Saracens, London, p 184, 185)



Therefore, it was decided to acknowledge some of the virtues of the Holy Prophet (PBUH) and at the same time to make this confession ineffective, some unrealistic justification should be given which would not allow the virtue of Muhammad to be revealed to the readers. O, Nicholson Reynold Alleyne Nicholson (3-9 CE) has acknowledged the sincerity of the Holy Prophet (PBUH) in the preface to the translation of the Qur'an by Palmer Edward Henry Palmer (2-9 CE), but refrained from saying so.

*When the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) became a ruler and a legislator under the pressure of circumstances, it was a psychological necessity for him to continue to consider himself the chosen source of divine messages. ”<sup>9</sup>*

Allama Dennis Sora, a renowned professor at the University of London, in his book "History of Religions" has been filled with the full force of the unspoken objections about the Quran and the Prophet (PBUH) and the lies spread by the Orientalists before him. The book was published from London in 1933. He seems to be such a non-partisan and unbiased author in his statement that no one seems to have any room to doubt his intentions. Explain that

*"Perhaps Muhammad is the only one of the great founders of religions whose personality is historically clear and whose superstitions have not obscured his personality."<sup>10</sup>*

And after that, in a devout manner, they praise the deeds of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) and pay homage, but after that they also say that

*Undoubtedly, the Arabs worshiped jinn and spirits and believed in the presence of spirits in cell statues. Apart from these, there were also separate idols of the tribe. Islam destroyed all these idols. Only one Black Stone remained, perhaps because it was meant to honor Hazrat Ibrahim Khalilullah, or perhaps it was a political act intended to preserve the mutual consensus of the Arabs.<sup>11</sup>*

If you study in depth, you will come to the conclusion that all the nonsense and nonsense that European writers have said about the Prophet from the ninth, tenth to the end of the nineteenth century has been called by the famous Orientalists of the twentieth century. Hesitation repeated with the same nonsense.

Thus Arnold J. Toynbee (A.J. Toynbee 1889-1975) is a famous modern historian who studied religions in depth. And in his great work, the study of history has expressed a generally reasonable attitude towards Islam. There was a positive opinion about Twin Bee that he presented samples of his scholarly research in his books and his personality was considered as a source of international references. But he also compared him to the warrior Caesar. If he had studied the two personalities scientifically and rationally and logically beyond prejudice, he would have had to think a thousand times before giving such an opinion about the Holy Prophet. Behavior is the worst insolence and humiliation in the glory of the Prophet.

<sup>9</sup>.Referring to Islam, the Prophet of Islam and the Orientalists' view of the West, oxford press 2004, P:78

<sup>10</sup>. Allama Dennis Sora, ,History of Religions, Oxford 2002, P:121

<sup>11</sup>.المشرقون والاسلام مصنفه زكريا باشم زكريا۔ طبع القايرہ 1965ء، ص 221



The objections raised on the Prophet's biography in a planned manner cannot be termed as the efforts of a few, but rather a large number of such people. - Joseph White, Humphrey Prado, Reski, Reland, Reski, Edmund Dotte, St. Hillary, The Ancona, Simon Oakley, Edward Gibbon, George Sell, Goethe, Thomas Carlyle, Devon Pot, Boss Worth Smith, Stanley Lane Poole, Renan, Washington Irving, H. G. Wells, Kaitani, Baker, Garm, Wilhausen, John Kramer, Noldicki, Springer, Dozi, Gold Zehr, Weber, David Margo Leth, Henry Lehmann, William Meyer, etc., made the biography of the Prophet more or less the subject of discussion.

Many of them have stumbled, knowingly or unknowingly, while discussing the biography of the Holy Prophet (PBUH) and have expressed their ulterior motives somewhere.

*"Their objections contain poetic skill which is not easy for the common man to reject. These objections are pleasing to the Christian world, disturbing to the Islamic world and misleading to the neutral people."<sup>12</sup>*

Today, not only are the old accusations reshaped and the same old ideology is molded into new words, but films, dramas and cartoons are also used to propagate these accusations. Dr. Abdul Qadir Jilani writes:

*No other personality of the universe has become so much a topic of conversation as the all-round personality of the Servant of the Universe. If they were considered as poets, sorcerers, insane and fascinated, then Sadiq, Amin, Waleem and Kareem would also acknowledge them. Understand the reflection, put your mental ugliness into words and keep imagining it as a biography".<sup>13</sup>*

Maulana Syed Abul-Ali Maududi writes:

*"These evil people, in the name of knowledge, first decide their place in the investigation that the Qur'an is not to be considered as a destination from Allah. Now it is necessary to prove from somewhere that what Muhammad (pbuh) has presented in it are articles and information stolen from such and such places. The folds of the earth and the sky are joined so that the disgusting becomes disgusting and man is compelled to say that if his name is scientific research then curse is on this knowledge".<sup>14</sup>*

<sup>12</sup>. Referring to Islam, P:98

<sup>13</sup>. اسلام، پیغمبر ﷺ اسلام اور مستشرقین مغرب کا انداز فکر، ص ۱۹۱-۱۹۲

<sup>14</sup>. سید ابوالاعلیٰ مودودی، سیرت سرور عالم ﷺ، دہلی، ج ۱، ص ۳۲۳



## **Conclusion**

Non-Muslim scholars of Islam always took great interest for writing on seerah, these non-Muslim scholars can be categorized in three folds, one who are prejudiced and used their attentions and energy to propagate about Islam with their own imagined picture. Second are pure academicians, who are writing and investigating about Islam for their livelihood only and third type of non-Muslim Islamic scholars are those who are in search of truth. There are a large number of writers who are not convinced of the Prophet's prophethood but for various reasons have a keen interest in the biography and history of Islam, such as the Jewish and Christian authors (known as Orientalists). Who has written numerous books on the biography and history of Islam over a period of almost a thousand years and are still writing with full enthusiasm. One of their scholarly achievements is that after a great deal of research, they traced the original and ancient sources and collected manuscripts from all over the world, edited them and also published their translations in different languages. In this way, they had provided such a vast body of knowledge on Islam that it is now inevitable for anyone who writes on Sira or Islam to benefit from his writings.