

ATTENTIVE MUSLIM REFLECTIONS ON ORIENTALISTS' CONCEPTION OF *SIRAH*

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Abstract: There has been a chronic tendency among the various religious researchers to highlight pros of their own religious founders and neglect the veracity of others. Particularly, this approach and phenomenon has been perpetually observed during the last fourteen years history of Judo-Christian antagonism against Islam and Prophet of Islam. In this background the *Sira* of Prophet of Islam has obtained extraordinary attraction and became a spotlight not only in Muslim intellectuals but in Western literary circles as well. However, Muslim scholars have always been vigilant and attentive in responding and evaluating the absurdities propagated by Orientalists. In this paper an exclusive study has been focused in reference to highlight the paramount contribution of Muslim researchers and historiographers in the field of research in *Sira* Studies.

After Muir's work¹ in the second half of the nineteenth century, Muslim historiographers have paid attention towards orientalists' approaches about the *Sirah* of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). Consequently, Sir Syed Ahmad Khan has refuted the questions raised by William Muir on the life of the Holy Prophet in this work. Sir Syed expressed his views in the preface of his book, "When this work appeared, the curiosity it excited among the reading public was only equalled by their impatience to peruse it, but no sooner was it found that simplest and plainest facts connected with Islam and Muhammad (PBUH) had been strained and twisted and distorted in short, subjected to the vigorous process in order to make them the indices or exponents of the author's prepossessions and prejudices, then the interest created by the announcement of the work fell to zero. As the young Mohammadans who were pursuing their study of the English literature, and were perfectly ignorant of their own theology the perusal of the work under consideration raised in their youthful mind the question, if what Sir William

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Muir has written is a misrepresentation of plain and simple facts, what are those facts in reality”?²

Sir Syed Ahmad Khan has refuted the questions raised by William Muir on the life of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) at Mecca. He has briefly discussed about the ‘Historical Geography of Arabia, Various religions of pre-Islamic Arabians, History of Holy Mecca, Pedigree of Muhammad, manners and customs of Pre-Islamic Arabians, Birth and Childhood of Muhammad, the Holy Qur’ān, Muhammadan theological literature, Muhammadan Tradition, *Shaqq-al-Ṣadr and Mīrāj*, Prophecies respecting Mohammad and whether Islam has been beneficial.³

Syed Ahmad Khan has given new dimension of research to Muslim writers through this work. In this work he has refuted raised the questions by Muir on Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) thoroughly and logically. He has also presented careful and exhaustive analysis of various aspects and pointed out the serious errors of Muir’s judgment and interpretation. In this work he has rejected the tradition upon which Muir and other orientalists have built their stories about the life of the Prophet. His work is a good addition for understanding the approaches of Muir and other orientalists.

Shiblī Nu‘mānī in his famous work “Sīrat al-Nabī” which is a well-known source comprehensively describing the biography of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), critically analyzed the views of European scholars on the life of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). He emphasizes to examine Western general trend, common mistakes, sources of information and the reason for the common errors which they commit while delving into the study of Sīra. In this way, we shall try to Judge to what extent malice and prejudice consequently.⁴ Shiblī has also discussed the approaches of orientalists in seventeenth to nineteenth century about Sīrah of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), while giving a list of books written by orientalists on the life of Prophet and divided European scholars into three different groups.⁵ Pointing out the faults of orientalists’ methodology in studying Islam,⁶ Shiblī has discussed the common views expressed by orientalists about Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). In short, he has refuted Western objections applying logical and historical arguments and presented comprehensively an appropriate and immaculate image of Prophet’s life.

Syed Amīr ‘Alī another Muslim thinker in his book titled “The Life and Teachings of Muhammad” a work which has been applauded round the

globe for his critical rethinking the Western mind in respect of Sīrah scholarship. In this book, he has discussed in detail, the approaches of orientalists like Maurice, Stanley, Carlyle, Emerson, Parker, Channing, Draper, Weil, Springer, Noldeke, Caussinde Perceval, William Muir, Dozy and some other western scholars.⁷ Syed Amīr ‘Alī has also presented the names of French orientalists like Oelsner, Deutsch, Barthelemy St. Hilair, Davenport, Higgins and Carlyle.⁸

Most popular subjects of Prophetic biography like ascension (*mi’rāj*), Tradition, Jihad,⁹ Prophet’s response towards Jews and Christians¹⁰ Polygamy and some other aspects of Sīrah of Prophet’s life have been the central focusing themes. Hence, this volume got a huge recognition in understanding the case of orientalists, especially towards Sīrah. However, one must keep one thing in mind that the author (Syed Amīr ‘Alī) has taken up a view which differ the majority of *ummah* on the same issues.

Another eminent Muslim scholar, Qāzī Muḥammad Salmān Manṣūr Pūrī has written a valuable book on the biography of Prophet titled “Muhammad, Mercy for the World” focusing different topics like *Tafsīr*, History and Sīrah of Prophet. In his book, he has critically evaluated the negative approach of the Western scholars towards Sīra while refuting the queries made by orientalists on Prophet’s Life, applying logical reasoning and statistics related to Polygamy¹¹. Manṣūr Pūrī has also presented the concept and status of polygamy in Hinduism¹², and at the end of this discussion gives a detailed chart about prophet wives that elaborates the purpose behind polygamous aspect of Prophet’s life.¹³ In the second part of the book, he has presented a brief introduction of Holy wars analyzing the aspects statistically, rebuffing thus, their objectives.¹⁴ Manṣūr Pūrī has given a comparison chart of Holy war with other World Wars.¹⁵ This volume has been considered as an excellent work in understanding the case of orientalists’ objections on the subject.

In the continuation of this chain of Muslim historiographers, Sayyed Sulaimān Nadvī is one the eminent scholars who presented eight lectures on Sīra in November 1992 at Madrās (India) on the invitation of “Muslim Educational Association of Southern India” to counter the efforts of Christian scholars in order to avert Muslim social circles to take up eccentric ideology or to get mixed up with their creeds. These lectures have widely been appreciated among all the Muslim communities throughout the world.

The focus of these lectures remained the life of Prophet Muhammad¹⁶ while taking an evaluation of Western scholars' methodology and historical fallacies in addition. In the third lecture he discussed the approach of German orientalist Dr. Springer history¹⁷ and evaluated the views of some other orientalists like Sir William Muir, Goldziher,¹⁸ attitude of Bosworth Smith and John Davenport about the biography of the Prophet of Islam.¹⁹

Syed Abul 'A'lā Maudūdī's work on Islam has not been obscured in both Muslim and non-Muslim circles, on biography of Prophet, "Sīrat-e-Sarwar-e-Ālam" is a work which has been attributed to him where he flatly refutes all allegations propagated by western scholars on the authenticity of revelation of Qur'ān,²⁰ the status of Sunnah of Prophet.²¹ In critically analyses the negative approach of orientalists about three different *Qasāṣ* (Stories) of Qur'ān like journey made by Mūsā, Pharaoh's plans of killing Prophet Mūsā and the story of the men of cave.²² He has also drawn authentic maps for illustration. Hence, the book is of extreme importance in understanding the true picture of Prophet's life.

Dr. Ḥamīd Ullāh a famous researcher of Sīra and Islamic sciences, exceptionally, writes meticulously on original themes in relevance with biography of Prophet. A volume titled "The battle field of the Prophet Muhammad" is the most important work which presents various aspects of Prophetic life and refutes misleading questions of orientalists in a logical way. Firstly he presented the system of Islamic State of Madina in the period of Holy Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), while highlighting the role of prophet in establishing peace among pluralist society.²³ Whereas, in the second part of the book he has given a detail about Holy wars separately one by one and their status and justification, applying maps for better understanding about the wars. His book "Muhammad Rasūlullāh" is also a useful addition in the study of Sīrah. It is a matter of fact, late Dr. Ḥamīd Ullāh received an esteem appreciation by his contemporaries like Dr. Maḥmūd Aḥmad Ghāzī who declared him 'Imām of Sīra' in the modern era and *Mujaddid of Ulūm-e-Sīrah*²⁴.

Justice Pīr Karam Shah al-Azharī' work titled "Zia' al-Nabī" is a very famous peace of work among Muslim literary circles. An important feature of this book is that justice Karam Shah has specifically focused the case of orientalists in volume VI and VII. In volume VI, he has introduced the orientalists'²⁵ historical background of this movement²⁶, its objectives and

orientalist methodology,²⁷ and their baseless approach towards the Qur'ān²⁸ by rebutting the objections raised in this regard.

He has also refuted the questions raised on the Ḥadīth and Sunnah literature in a very sophisticated way.²⁹ At the same time, all other objections related to the Prophet-hood, polygamy, Holy wars and epilepsy³⁰ have been counter-argued very logically.³¹ In fact the contribution of Justice Karam Shah is of immense importance that helps in understanding the place of Western scholarship on Islam and Sīra. He has presented a critical evaluation of the works of Sir William Muir, Tor Andre, Watt, and Arthur Jeffery etc.

Zafar 'Alī Qurashī is a contemporary Muslim writer of Sīra whose work under the title, "Prophet Muhammad and his western critics" is well known. This book contains thirteen chapters in two volumes which refutes most of the objections raised by William Montgomery Watt. The first and second chapter focuses on the objections regarding the battle of *Mūtah*, and the third chapter discusses *Mūtah*, the "Northern Policy" of Prophet Muhammad. In the subsequent chapter, his tribal policy has been discussed, while doing so, he writes on his "Hypothesis of the Prophet Muhammad being "moved" by material consideration. Quraishī discusses alleged general lines of Prophet's "Tribal Policies", "*Hijrah to Abyssinia*", "rise of opposition of the Prophet and persecution of Muslims"; Prophet's preaching mission; spread of Islam in Madina, the beginning of Prophet's wars with *Quraysh* and other enemies."³² The author has countered critically the views of W. Montgomery Watt on the life of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) highlighting the main reasons of their biasness and prejudice. He comments:

"One of the main reasons for the wild attacks of western writers on the person on the Prophet Muhammad has been for many a century their stupendous ignorance about Islam and its prophet. Although the middle ages down to the eighteenth century they had most fantastic, puerile and absurd notion about the Prophet. Tales were spin round his person whose ingenuity was surpassed only by their absurdity. The reality and gullibility of the westerners in this respect were the most astounding and staggering. And all connections and fabrication about Islam were made by Christian priests in the name of religion and greater glory of Christendom."³³

In short we can say that Zafar 'Alī Qurashī has comprehensively examined and analyzed the case of orientalists and their criticism on Sīra.

Dr. Zia al-'Umri is another contemporary Muslim historiographer who has compiled many books but one of his important books is "Madinan Society at the time of the Prophet" that has been beautifully translated in to Urdu language by Dr. 'Azrā' Nasīm Fārūqī. Dr. Zia al-'Umri expressed his views on orientalists' methodology towards history of Islam. He has aptly analyzed the work of orientalists and concluded that they have always adopted materialistic approach in their research work.³⁴

Muhammad Asad (formerly Leopold Weiss, d. 1992) was a famous Muslim writer, who wrote many books as "Islam at the crossroads"³⁵ "My discovery of Islam"³⁶ and "The road to Mecca"³⁷. In these books he has critically analyzed the approach of western scholars towards Islam and Sīra. He has presented his views in a succinct and logical manner. He has aptly countered anti-Islam propaganda. It has been witnessed that his book "Islam at the Crossroads" is a valuable work in understanding the case of orientalism. This book has seven chapters. Chapter one portrays the real theme of Islam and also the importance of religion in social structure. Here, the ethical values have also been discussed.³⁸ The second chapter focuses on the basic theme of western civilization, and comments on the modern phase of western civilization.³⁹ The third chapter explains the basic causes behind the orientalists' biasness. The western attitude is not one of indifferent dislike as in the case of deep-rooted and almost fanatical aversion, not only intellectual, but bears an intensely emotional tint.⁴⁰ Chapter four discusses the approach of Muslims towards western education. Muhammad Asad has also pointed out in chapter five that "the imitation – individually and socially of the western mode of life by Muslims is undoubtedly the greatest danger for the existence or rather the revival of Islamic civilization".⁴¹ Chapter six and seven deal with Hadith and Sunnah. In these last two chapters he has flatly refuted all the objections raised by the western scholars about Sunnah of the Holy Prophet.

Maryam Jamīlah is well known contemporary Muslim scholar. She has done her work on the theme of orientalists' works. In this regard her book "Islam and Orientalism" is a very valuable work in understanding the basic concepts of Orientalism. Her book covers different dimensions of Orientalism like, "Islamic history through the lens of Orientalism,"⁴² "The Christian view"⁴³, "The Jewish view,"⁴⁴ "The secular view."⁴⁵, "The humanist view,"⁴⁶ and "The conspiracy of orientalists".⁴⁷ In these

discussions, Maryam Jamīlah has critically evaluated the approach of Dr. Philip K. Hitti, Dr Kenneth Cragg, S.D. Goitein, Dr Wilfred Cantwell Smith, Nadav Safran and Freeland Abbott. She has also presented the criteria by which the orientalists judge our faith, that are:

- i. The uncritical acceptance of Charles Darwin's theory of evolution that mankind emerged from very lowly animal origins, that when life first appeared on earth, it was of the simplest and lowliest which over the ages evolved into more and more complex and highly developed creatures at the apex of which stands the human race.
- ii. That Darwin's theory of biology is equally valid when applied to human society which has emerged from the most primitive level such as that of the Australian and South African Bushman into cover more and more complex and highly developed cultures at the apex of which stand modern western civilization.
- iii. Therefore to defy modern western culture is tantamount to defying the law of evaluation to rebel against progress, against the very law of nature itself the progress from the low, primitive culture to ever more and more highly advanced civilization is not only desirable but an inevitable and immutable law of nature. Since every change is an improvement along the road to progress, the newest is always the best and any attempt to defined order or previously established standards means retrogression to a more primitive and constricted existence.
- iv. Modern scientific knowledge has rendered religions based upon divine revelation and transcendental values obsolete. A society whose members regulate all aspects of their lives according to a divinely revealed law equally valid for all times and all places inevitably results in cultural stagnation and backwardness for once the truth is known, it cannot be changed and without changed, no "progress" is possible.⁴⁸

The work of Maryam Jamīlah, "Islam and Orientalism," is an authentic source in this context.

Khurram Murād, a prominent preacher and scholar of Islam, who also observed the Western methods of studying the Islam and the life of Prophet. He contributed valuable points in his book "West and Islamic world", where he critically evaluated their approaches. In the first part of his

work, he has pointed out the basic source of confrontation between Islam and the West.⁴⁹ He also discussed the negative approach of the West towards blasphemy laws.⁵⁰ Moreover, he has discussed new crusade and the role of the religious institutions. He identified the real face of terrorism.⁵¹ In the third part, the case of Bosnia has been discussed and the related western response in this context.⁵² In the third and forth parts, his has focused on the relations between Pakistan and the Muslims and the Christians⁵³ and in the last part, discussed the contemporary challenges faced by the Muslim community. He has also tried to point out the responsibilities of Muslims in these circumstances. At the end he logically discussed the future of the world and the status of Islam. The approach of Murād is so beneficial in understanding the objectives laid down by Orientalists regarding Islam and Muslims.

Jabal Muhammad Buaben is presently a lecturer in Islamic Studies, University of Birmingham (UK). His famous work “Image of the Prophet Muhammad in the West: A Study of Muir, Margoliouth and Watt” in which he has critically analyzed the three most influential English writers of our times as are William Muir, David S. Margoliouth and William Montgomery Watt. This work is consisting of two parts and six chapters, focuses initially on “The Medieval European View of Muhammad”, whose underlying hypothesis is that the negative approach of Orientalists in modern era deriving their roots from the medieval war propaganda.⁵⁴

In the second chapter, the work of Sir William Muir has been examined very critically with special emphasis on his biographical work on Muhammad (PBUH). Muir’s methodology and some selected themes like Pre-Muhammadan Makkah – birth and childhood of Muhammad, from youth to Prophethood, Prophethood in Makkah and Muhammad in Madinah have been examined very critically. Muhammad Jabal Buaben has presented his views after long discussion, “Muir had the original source before him, much as a blacksmith with a peace of iron in front of him, however, his defectiveness is not that he could not read the Arabic but in insisting that he reads it in a particular way.”⁵⁵

Chapter three focuses the work done by David Samuel Margoliouth where Jabal has also evaluated the book of Margoliouth, “Muhammad and the rise of Islam”. Some selected themes of this book have been examined like “the pathological theory”. Revelation of the Holy Qur’ān”, “Prophet-

hood" Superstitions and Idolatry, "The Stanic Verses," "Borrowing," "Morality", "Sexuality/Sensuality", "Violence", "Bribery," "The Madinan charter" "the Jewish Questions", "The Christians" The Hudaibiyah Treaty, Muhammad Letters, and "Muhammad Personality". He has presented conclusion about Marogoliouth's methodology, whose style is fundamentally different from that of Muir probably because Muir was an imperial officer, the quality which allowed him to be blunter. Thus, it appears that he has failed to function critically in a disciplined way. This is not to question his use of sources but rather his interpretation.⁵⁶

In the fourth chapter, a survey of twentieth century literature has been presented thoroughly. In chapter five, the work of W. Montgomery Watt has been examined.⁵⁷ Jabal Muhammad Buaben has critically examined all themes presented by Watt in these books. In the last chapter he has presented the conclusion of his work. In modern era Jabal Muhammad Buaben's work is unique and important in understanding the image of the Prophet Muhammad in the West.

Professor Muhammad Mohar 'Alī is a scholar of Sīrah and Ḥadīth who served as lecturer in Islamic History at the Islamic Universities of Madīnah and Riyādh for long time. He has written many books and his work "Qur'ān and the orientalists" and "Sirat-un-Nabī and the orientalists" have been appreciated through width and breadth. The book "Sirat-un-Nabī and the orientalists" has two volumes and seven different sections.⁵⁸ In this book the work of William Muir and D.S. Margoliouth and W. Montgomery watt were examined very critically. In the first section the sources and the background of Sīrah have been discussed.⁵⁹ In section II, the family background, birth and childhood, the orientalists on the Prophet & family status, name and childhood, adolescence and youth, the allegation of ambitions, the theme of Judeo - Christian influence and the alleged contemporary errors in the Qur'ān are discussed.⁶⁰ In section III, various topics have been discussed, "On the Eve of the call to Prophethood," "The orientalists and the Ḥanīfs (the Jeffery - Bell theory)" and in this context Watt views.⁶¹ In section IV, "Divine communication (WAHY) and inception of this mission," "Wābi and the orientalists (Watt views)", have been critically examined.⁶² In section V, "The early phase of the mission", Margoliouth "Theory of Islam as a secret society", "The Bell - Watt Theory about the context of early revelations", and "The early phase of the mission

and Watt's socioeconomic interpretation" have been contemplated upon.⁶³ In section VI, "The Makkah opposition: nature, causes, and the immediate allegation", "The migration to Abyssinia", "The spurious story of the "Satanic Verses" the climax of opposition and calamity", "Watt Theory about the causes of opposition", "The unbelievers, objections vis-à-vis the orientalists" have been brought under discussion.⁶⁴ In section VII, the late Makkah Phase and migration to Madina, and "The orientalists on the migration to Madina" have been discussed critically.⁶⁵ In volume II, the writer has discussed Madinan period. It is beyond doubt that this book is a very good addition in Sīra literature.

Dr Muhammad Sana Ullāh Nadvī, Professor of Arabic in Muslim University 'Alī Garh, has translated and compiled a book under the title "*'Arabī Islāmī 'Ulūm aur Mustashriqīn*" which gives an academic touch to the subject of Islam in addition to Prophetic status towards Orientalism. It contains fifteen topics like, Qur'ān, Hadith, Sīra of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), Theology, Law, Philosophy, History and Literature etc.⁶⁶ the third article of this book is comprised of Sīrah of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). Basically this article written by Dr. 'Imād al-Dīn Khalīl is in Arabic language and Dr. Sana Ullāh Nadvī has translated into Urdu language. In this article, the case of W. Montgomery Watt has especially been critically examined. The approach of some other orientalists has also been refuted in this article.⁶⁷ Orientalists' methodology has been questioned and it has been observed that they have used materialistic approach for getting desired results. Without having proper knowledge of Islamic traditions, they have come up with limited ideas. They have a vague concept of Divine communication (*wahy*), and status of Prophethood. They always rely on human experiences.⁶⁸ For understanding of Orientalism, this book is of immense value both for students and teachers. All types of intellectual approaches have been presented in this book and generally this book a good example of critical analysis.

Dr. Yaḥyā Murād has written a book under the title "*Iftirā'at-ul-Mustashriqīn alā al-Islām wal Raddu 'alaihā*". In this book Dr. Yaḥyā Murād has refuted the misconceptions created by orientalists about the Qur'ān, and the Sīrah of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). In first chapter of this book, he has given the basic theme of Orientalism, its history and its evolution. He has also explained the philosophy of Orientalism.⁶⁹ In the second part he

has refuted the negative approaches of the western scholars towards the *Sīra* of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), Islamic law, History of Islam and its political, social, economic system of Islam. He has also discussed the research methodology adopted by orientalists in their studies. Actually Dr. Yahyā Murād has evaluated orientalists' works very critically.

Dr. 'Imād ud-Dīn khalīl has written a book under the title "*Al-Mustashriqīn wal- sīrat un Nabawīyya*". In this book, he has discussed approaches of the orientalists towards the *Sīrah* of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH)⁷⁰ and methodologies adopted by them have been refuted.⁷¹ Basically Dr 'Imād ud-Dīn Khalīl has critically analysed the work done by Watt, Margoliouth, William Muir, Velhozen and some other orientalists. This book is a very good addition in literature on Orientalism

Dr. S. Muīnul Haq is another eminent researcher and historian. In his book "Muhammad life and Times" he gives direct references from the holy Qur'ān and the Sunnah of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). He has criticized the orientalists' approaches towards the Prophet's life on the basis of solid arguments. He has briefly discussed the case of A.J. Wensinck, William Muir, Goldziher, Prof. J. Harovitz, Bosworth Smith and Tor Andrae in the first chapter.⁷² In the next chapter, he has critically discussed the misleading remarks of Watt about the conquest of *Khayber*.⁷³ Here he has discussed questions and objections made in a highly scholarly manner. This book has been appreciated by erudite.

Dr. Muṣṭafā Murād in his book "*Sīrat-e-Rasūl*" has described all major events of Prophet's life and has refuted the questions raised by western scholars on Prophet's life especially on Holy wars, and wives of the Prophet's Muhammad (PBUH).⁷⁴ He has also defined the basic objectives of marriages in Prophet's life, for example educational, religious, social and political etc.⁷⁵

The work of some other eminent scholars has been widely appreciated, for example the scholarly works of Dr. Muhammad Fathī Ullāh al-Ziyādī. He has written a book "*Al-Istashraq Ahdāfuhū Wa Wasā'luhū*".⁷⁶ And Dr. Muṣṭafā al-Sibā'ī, "*Al-Mustashriqūn wal Islām*", a critical work translated by Sayyed Sulaimān Nadvī into Urdu from Arabic. In these critical works many dimensions of Orientalism have been discussed. They have covered historical background, objectives, resources, research methodology, efforts and contribution of Orientalists, and some other

aspects of this movement as well.⁷⁷ Dr Mustafa has countered the allegations or misconception of Orientalists eruditely.

Nūr Aḥmad, a member of the first Constituent Assembly of Pakistan, compiled a book under title “Islam and its Holy Prophet as judged by the non-Muslims world”. This book has two volumes and forty chapters. The writer has critically and analytically examined the approaches adopted by the western scholars about the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH).⁷⁸ An important thing is that he has quoted so many statements of western scholars about the personality of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) and his status.

Similarly, Dr. Sayyed ‘Abdul Qādir Gilānī has done his Ph.D research work on “Islam, Prophet of Islam and the approaches of Western Orientalists”. His work comprises six chapters. Fourth and fifth chapters focus on orientalist endeavours and objections on Islam, Qur’ān, Ḥadīth and the life of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH).⁷⁹ He has, examined the theory and history of Orientalism very critically. This work has been completed in a scholarly manner and gives a thorough analysis of various aspects of Orientalism.

‘Abdullāh Muḥammad al-Amīn al-Na‘īm has written a book on Sīrah of Prophet Muhammad and orientalism. The title of his book is “Al-Istishrāq fī Sīrat al- Nabawiyya”, that critically analyses the case of M. Montgomery Watt, Brukman and Velhozen.⁸⁰ He has pointed out the drawbacks of Orientalists in a logical manner. Similarly, ‘Abdul Mu‘āl Muḥammad Al-Jabrī is another eminent scholar who has done his research on misconception of orientalists towards the Sīra of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). He has also pointed out the basic causes of their negative approaches. He has critically judged and evaluated methodology adopted by orientalists in the study of Sīra. He has also refuted all the objections made by orientalists on the Prophet’s life at Makkah and Madina. This book is of greater significant due to its critical evaluation of research methodology of Orientalists.⁸¹

Dr. Ahmad Ghorāb, a graduate of Cairo University and a Ph.D in Islamic philosophy from Oxford University, has written so many books on various topics but his work, “Subverting Islam: The Role of Orientalists Centers” is a wonderful attempt towards understanding current Euro – American crusade against Islam; it also elaborates the purpose behind the

formation of an anti-Muslim network of institutions and scholars marching under the banner of Islamic studies.⁸²

Dr. Muhammad Arshad, another contemporary Muslim scholar, has critically analysed the work done by Bernard Lewis, S.P Huntington, Fred Holliday and John L. Esposito in a different style.⁸³ This book is very helpful in understanding the theory of fundamentalism, clash of civilizations and some other misconceptions created by Western scholars. He has challenged the concepts of these Orientalists with authority.

Dār-al-Muṣannīfīn Shiblī Academy A'zam Garh has compiled different articles on "Islam and Orientalists". The work has made available the most important literature for understanding the nature of Orientalist works on Islam and the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). "Islam and Orientalists" compiled by *Dār-al-Muṣannīfīn Shiblī Academy* has seven volumes. First volume covers proceedings of seminar, held on 21 to 23 February 1986.⁸⁴

Islam aur Mustashriqīn Vol. II focuses on different articles related to orientalists' approaches about Islam. *Islam aur Mustashriqīn* Vol. III includes six research papers. These papers are related to "Russian Orientalism" presented by Muhammad Asad, "Islam and Mustahriqīn" by Prof. Syed Ḥabīb ul Nadvī, "Study of Seerah and Mustahriqīn" by Dr. Nisār Ahmad, "Hazrat Ibrāhīm aur Mustashriqīn" presented by Maulanā Ḥifz ur-Rehman, "Arz-al-Qur'ān" by Maulvī 'Umair Ṣiddīq Nadvī and "Sir Syed Ahmad Khan aur Mustashriqīn" presented by Maulvī 'Ubaid Ullāh Kotī Nadvī.⁸⁵ These are very important articles in the context of Islam and Orientalism. *Islam and Mustashriqīn* volume IV focuses on different topics like, status of compilation of Qur'ān, Sīrah of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), Islamic Law, Ḥanafī School of thought, Religion and Science, Islamic culture, minorities rights, etc. These articles are worth of greater scholarly value.⁸⁶

Islam aur Mustashriqīn Vol V contains "The interests of orientalists in Islamic literature and arts". The basic causes of their interests and efforts in Islamic literature and arts have been discussed very briefly. The objections alleged by orientalists on Islam, the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) and Islamic History have been refuted very logically.⁸⁷ *Islam and Mustashriqīn* Vol VI comprises seven different research articles like, "Qur'ān and Mustashriqīn" presented by Dr Al-Tahāmī, "Schacht aur Ḥadīth Nabī" by Dr. Muhammad Muṣṭafā Al-A'zamī, "Shakat and Fiqh" by Dr. Muhammad

Anas Zarqa, "Seerah of Prophet Muhammad and critical analysis of what approaches" by Dr. 'Imād ud-Dīn Khalīl, "Social Structure of Islam in the perspective of orientalists approaches" by Dr. 'Abdul Wahāb and "The Islamic culture of Spain in the perspective of Orientalists approaches" presented by Dr. Muṣṭafā Al-Shk'a.⁸⁸ These articles are a valuable contribution which could help understand Orientalism in its context of Islam. *"Islam aur Mustashriqīn"*, Vol. VII, contains different research articles. These articles have presented the critical analysis on different approaches of orientalists towards Islam, Qur'ān, Divine commandment, prophethood and Islamic literature and arts.⁸⁹

Zafar Ishāq Anṣārī and John L. Esposito have jointly compiled a book under title "Muslims and the West: Encounter and Dialogue" which contains twelve research papers presented by various eminent scholars. First paper "Muslim and the West in history" presented by Ismā'il Ibrāhīm al-Nawwāb, second paper "perception of Islam and Muslims in English Literature a Historical Survey" by 'Abdur Raḥīm Kidwāī, "Beyond pride and prejudice: western perceptions of Islam and the Muslims" by Ḥussain Muṭalib, "Civilizational self-perception and Pluralistic coexistence: A examination of the image of the 'other'" by Aḥmad Davutoglu, "Naming the other: Names for Muslims and Europeans in European and Muslim languages" by Muhammad Khālid Mas'ūd, "Christian Missionary views of Islam in the 19th – 20th centuries" by Jane I. Smith, "The Jewish and Christian encounter with modernity relevance for Muslims" by Mustansar Mīr, "Muslim perception of the other" by Riaz Hassan, "Modernity, Islam and west" by Tamara Sonn, "Islam and the west in the Emerging world order" by Muzzaffar Iqbāl, "Islamism: A Designer Ideology for Resistance Change and Empower" by Yuonne Yazbeck Haddad, and the last paper "Status and Islamization" has been presented by Sayyed Vali Reza Nāṣir. The compilation of these articles is of immense value in understanding the basic causes of confrontation between Islam and the West.⁹⁰

Conclusion:

This survey of Muslim historiographers throws the light on twofold facts, first the vigilance Muslim eye on the literature of Western academicians extended in view of deteriorating the sacred face of the biography of the Prophet of Islam, while on the other hand Muslim historiographers specially, Arab and sub-continental scholars have dedicatedly delved

themselves into the matter seriously and they evaluated Orientalists' work regarding *Sira* of Prophet (PBUH) in such a meticulous way that all the absurdities have been vigorously detected and eradicated.

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