

Definition and description of Orientalists' studies and their views on the Imamite narrative heritage in the interpretation of the Holy Quran

تعريف ووصف دراسات المستشرقين ووجهات نظرهم في التراث الروائي الإمامي في تفسير القرآن الكريم

Shaimaa Hassan Abbas Al-Junaibi ^{1, *}, Saleh Al-Mu'taz ¹

شيماء حسن عباس الجنابي ^{1, *}، صالح المعتز ¹

¹ Department of Quranic Sciences, Faculty of Quranic Sciences, University of Religions and Denominations, Pardisan, Iran.

¹ قسم علوم القرآن، كلية علوم القرآن، جامعة الأديان والمذاهب، برديسان، إيران.

ABSTRACT

The Christian religion took root in the world as a universal monotheistic religion after the Jewish religion and expanded in the whole world until Islam came. They dealt with their research in the Holy Qur'an and the personality of the greatest Messenger (PBUH) and the family of the House. Evidence documenting and proving it. Shiite scholars agree that what is meant by the guardians here are the pure and infallible imams (pbuh), and among the similarities promoted by the orientalists is the likeness of the distortion of the Noble Qur'an. It is a false fabrication that has no foundation, and the origin of the reality of the Qur'anic text is proven in the sayings of our eminent scholars, not what the orientalists claim. Sayyid al-Khoei, who is well-known among Muslims, says that distortion does not occur in the Qur'an, and that what is in our hands is the entire Qur'an revealed to the Great Prophet (PBUH), and many scholars have stated this. Among them is the chief of the hadith scholars, al-Saduq Muhammad ibn Babawayh, and he counted the saying of non-distortion as one of the beliefs of the Imamiyyah, including the sheikh of the sect, Muhammad ibn al-Hasan al-Tusi. What we have mentioned of some of the opinions of the Orientalists is only the tip of the iceberg of the thousands of research and writings written by malevolent fingers that try to scatter Muslims and sow discord among them.

الخلاصة

لقد ترسخت الديانة المسيحية في العالم كديانة توحيدية عالمية بعد الديانة اليهودية وانتشرت في العالم أجمع حتى جاء الإسلام، وقد تناولوا في بحثهم القرآن الكريم وشخصية الرسول الأعظم (صل الله عليه وسلم) وأهل البيت (ع)، وقد جاء في ذلك شواهد موثقة ومثبتة، ويتفق علماء الشيعة على أن المقصود بالأولياء هنا الأئمة الطاهرون المعصومون (ع)، ومن المتشابهات التي يروج لها المستشرقون الشبهة بتحريف القرآن الكريم، وهي افتراءات باطلة لا أساس لها، وأصل حقيقة النص القرآني ثابت في أقوال علمائنا الأجلاء، وليس ما يدعيه المستشرقون، ويقول السيد الخوئي المعروف بين المسلمين أن التحريف لا يقع في القرآن، وأن ما بين أيدينا هو القرآن كله المنزل على الرسول الأعظم (صل الله عليه وسلم)، وقد صرح بهذا كثير من العلماء. ومنهم رئيس علماء الحديث الصدوق محمد بن بابويه، وقد عدّ القول بعدم التحريف من عقائد الإمامية، ومنهم شيخ المذهب محمد بن الحسن الطوسي. وما ذكرناه من بعض آراء المستشرقين ما هو إلا غيض من فيض من آلاف الأبحاث والمؤلفات التي كتبتها أصابع حاقدة تحاول تشييت المسلمين وبث الفتنة بينهم.

Keywords

الكلمات المفتاحية

Orientalists' studies , Holy Quran, narrative heritage, interpretation of the Holy Quran

Received

استلام البحث

08/2/2024

Accepted

قبول النشر

10/4/2024

Published online

النشر الالكتروني

12/5/2024

1. INTRODUCTION

The Islamic heritage received great attention from Orientalists in terms of study, publication, and verification, especially since Orientalism itself is "a movement with a scientific character and religious objectives." Definition of Orientalists in the Imamite narrative heritage through their books and methodology.

Christianity became established in the world as a universal celestial religion after Judaism and expanded across the world, east and west, until Islam came and the sound of Muslim horses' hooves echoed in the ears of all of Europe and the West. The control of Muslims extended "from India and the borders of China and the plateaus of Turkestan in the east to the shores of the Atlantic Ocean and the borders of France in the west." [2].

This rapid and widespread expansion had a profound impact on the West and Western ecclesiastical circles, especially after the Islamic battles and the significant acceptance of Islamic principles by the peoples conquered by the Islamic armies, as well as the spread of the Arabic language "over vast areas, extending the dominance of Islam itself." [2].

2. THE INTEREST OF ORIENTALISTS IN THE NARRATIVE HERITAGE

Religious circles in the West, especially, began to try to understand this new religion coming from the depths of the Arabian sands and on "the hands of people who, until very recently—before Islam—were counted only as slaves and subjects required to listen and obey and pay tributes to powerful and influential kingdoms." [3].

The curiosity of the West was stirred to learn about the strengths and weaknesses of this religion, "so I engaged in a movement of Arabization in order to understand this Arabic tongue that leads the way, and to study and master it to gain more insight into the history, culture, literature, and sciences of these Arabs."

The Islamic heritage received great attention from Orientalists in terms of study, publication, and verification, especially since Orientalism itself is "a movement with a scientific character and religious goals" [3].

The interests of Orientalists in Islamic heritage varied, and many specialized printing presses were established to publish Islamic and Arabic treasures, translations, and classifications. Some Orientalists even specialized in Eastern languages such as Hebrew and Persian, not to mention Arabic, "to challenge and respond to Muslim scholars and jurists with evidence and arguments drawn first from Islamic books and second from the Old Testament (Torah), as they consider the Torah the foundation of both Judaism and Christianity" [3].

And it should be noted that Western studies—despite reservations about some of their methodologies—have preserved much of the Islamic and Arab heritage for us. "Observers do not deny the contribution of Orientalists in reviving and serving the heritage, even for Arab and Muslim researchers, despite their belated practical attention to the heritage." [4].

Orientalists were interested in Quranic studies, the biography of the Prophet and his family - peace be upon them - their lives and sayings. Anyone studying Arabic antiquities must have knowledge of the Arabic language, so their studies focused on the Arabic language and its sciences. "They enriched the Arabic and European libraries with valuable references and seminal books that they published, thoroughly researched, verified, indexed, and classified. Following the Orientalists, a group of scholars emerged whose work was limited to publishing Arabic books, translating them into their languages, and writing about Arabic literature in their tongues." [5]. And there are some Orientalists who focused their work on one of these sections, while others combined both.

The official decision to pay attention to Islamic heritage was issued by the "Vienna" ecclesiastical conference, which established Oriental studies. Among its decisions was the establishment of a chair for the Arabic language in Rome at the expense of the Vatican, in the University of Paris in France at the expense of the King of France, and in England at the University of Oxford at the expense of the King of England. These studies were the official beginning of the Church's sponsorship of Oriental studies. "What came before was merely a precursor to the birth of this movement, followed by the spread of Oriental institutes concerned with studying the East and its Islamic sciences in a special manner." [6].

One of the first and most important tasks undertaken by Orientalists was the translation of the Holy Quran, not for the purpose of benefiting from its knowledge, but rather to combat it and to vilify its content out of fear that Western peoples would be captivated by it. Orientalism, "as a methodology and an intellectual attempt to understand Islam as a civilization, creed, and heritage, was originally motivated by the desire to deny the cultural and spiritual components of this nation's past and to condemn and belittle them." [7].

3. ORIENTALISTS AND THE SOURCE OF THE HOLY QURAN

Orientalists tried to cast doubts on the Holy Quran by claiming that the Quran is not from Allah, or that Muhammad (peace be upon him) took the Quran from the Torah and the Gospel after he read them, or that there were people who helped Muhammad (peace be upon him) in writing the Quran. All these efforts aim to deny the prophethood of Muhammad (peace be upon him). One of the most significant statements made in this regard was by the Hungarian orientalist "Goldziher," who said, "The preaching of the Arab Prophet is nothing but a selected mixture of religious knowledge and opinions that he learned thanks to his contact with Jewish and Christian elements, which deeply influenced him and which he saw as

worthy of awakening a sincere religious sentiment in his compatriots. These teachings, which he took from those foreign elements, were in his heart necessary to establish a way of life in a direction that Allah wanted." [8].

Although the Holy Quran is the sovereign and ruler of the Arabic language, and the standard of Arabic grammar, some Orientalists have attempted to deny its language and question the existence of grammatical inflection in the Quranic verses. The Orientalist "Paul Kahle" says: "The original text was composed in one of the local dialects that were prevalent in the Hijaz, or which do not have those endings called inflection." In doing so, they intend to deny that the language of the Quran was known or existed in Mecca during the time of the Prophet (peace be upon him) [9].

Among the accusations they raised against the Holy Quran is that it contains contradictions and inconsistencies. The orientalist "Tora Andre" mentions, "The ideas of Muhammad are heterogeneous, inconsistent, and extremely disturbed." He says elsewhere, "Muhammad appears in the Quran as a misguided dreamer who spreads the truth, forming his opinions and principles based on instructions he receives without grounding them in fixed and living facts." [8].

These statements made by the Orientalists are an attempt to tarnish the pristine image of the Holy Quran and its divine origin. They have not agreed on a single statement to refute the source of the Holy Quran or the character of Muhammad (peace be upon him) or the divine revelation bestowed upon him, due to their religious fanaticism or political or national motives.

4. THE PROPHETIC BIOGRAPHY AND THE STANCE OF ORIENTALISTS TOWARDS IT

The purified prophetic biography was one of the subjects that Orientalists extensively critiqued and studied after the Holy Quran. They wrote thousands of books and research papers in which they examined the personality of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) and tried to distort his image, undermine his character, and belittle his significance. Overall, these writings are fabricated, subjective, unjust, and unimportant, lacking any references or evidence to substantiate and validate them.

Among some of their doubts is that they portrayed the Prophet -peace be upon him- as a "cardinal who broke away from the papacy, aspired to its throne, and when his hopes were dashed, claimed prophet hood. They accused him of being a thief, a killer of women, an infidel, a sorcerer, a charlatan, a traitor, a debauchee, a devil, a terrorist spreading death and destruction, and a proponent of immorality who used the spread of women as a means to destroy the Jewish and Christian churches and moral virtues." [10].

To our most esteemed Messenger, the exalted one, who is above their words and their lies. If we look at their fabricated statements, we find that they do not differ from what the disbelievers of Mecca, the polytheists, and the hypocrites used to say. And Allah, the Exalted, has relieved us from the burden of responding to their lies in His Quran.

"They were astonished that a warner had come to them from among themselves, and the disbelievers said, 'This is a magician, a liar.'"

"Has the reminder been cast upon him from among us? Rather, he is a liar, a madman. (25) Tomorrow they will know who the liar, the madman, is. (26)"

"And if We had sent down to you a book on parchment, and they had touched it with their hands, the disbelievers would have said, 'This is nothing but clear magic.'

The Orientalists adopted a method of doubting the biography of the Master of the Messengers, Muhammad (peace be upon him and his family), and distorting the image of the Holy Quran in their writings about Islam—except for a few of them. These Orientalists relied on highlighting weak hadiths, spreading them, and generalizing them as the Islamic foundation. They also relied on dishonesty in transmission, elevating the views of some deviant sects, and presenting them as the ideal image in the West to vilify Islam, undermine its noble message, and belittle the role of the Greatest Messenger (peace be upon him and his family). The Orientalist "Bernard Lewis" says, "Little is known about Muhammad's lineage and early life, and this little has been diminishing gradually as European research progresses and raises another doubt about the material included in Islamic news."

In an attempt to deny the divine source of the Holy Quran, the Hungarian Jewish orientalist "Goldziher" establishes this by saying, "Muhammad came with a mixture of knowledge and religious opinions that reached him through his contact with Jewish and Christian elements, which he was deeply influenced by and deemed worthy of awakening a sincere religious sentiment in his people. These teachings he took from those foreign elements were, in his heart, necessary to establish a way of life in the direction God wanted. He was influenced by these ideas to the depths of his soul and perceived them with the suggestion of the power of external influences, so they became a belief that his heart embraced, and he considered these teachings a divine revelation."

Even the grave of the Prophet -peace be upon him- was not spared from them. This French orientalist "Monsieur Quimond" says, "The grave of Muhammad in Mecca is nothing but an electric pole that spreads madness in the heads of Muslims, forcing them to exhibit symptoms of hysteria and mental stupor, repeating the phrase 'Allah, Allah' endlessly. Customs turn into original traits such as the hatred of pork, wine, and music, and the arrangement of ideas that stem from cruelty and indulgence in pleasures." [10].

5. ISLAMIC HERITAGE AND THE STANCE OF ORIENTALISTS

When defining heritage, we said it encompasses everything that remains with us from the past and what the present has produced for us. It includes literature, traditions, sayings, actions, reports, sociology, and everything that touches this nation and its figures. The heritage of this nation is authentic, filled with all human, literary, and cultural knowledge and meanings, as its roots and extensions come from the divine source of legislation, which is the Holy Quran, the Prophetic Sunnah, the pure Ahl al-Bayt, and the esteemed Muslim scholars.

Orientalists have researched the history of Islam in all its details, and many of them attempt to distort the texts, misinterpret them through forgery, distortion, and doubt, and mix up the facts in line with their Orientalist vision. On one hand, they stir up media storms about their interest in heritage, its publication, and printing, claiming to be interested in the sciences, artifacts, and civilization of the East. In reality, they distort established facts and alter eternal texts to create contradictions and highlight conflicting narratives, such as their insistence on the spread of Islam by sword and force. The Orientalist "Rochelle" says, "A new enemy emerged in the East, which is Islam, founded on power and the most extreme forms of fanaticism. Muhammad - peace be upon him - placed the sword in the hands of those who followed him and relaxed the most sacred laws of morality, then allowed his followers to indulge in debauchery and plunder." [1].

And the attempt to trace the origins of Islam to Christian and Jewish roots, claiming that the Quran is contradictory, disorganized, and incoherent, and that Muhammad (peace be upon him) learned from Jewish rabbis and Christian monks, and that Islam is a splinter from the Church, and that Muhammad (peace be upon him) was a cardinal who split from the papacy after failing to obtain the papacy. "When his hopes were dashed, he claimed prophethood, and was a thief and a murderer, among other insults and slanders." [1].

The Arabic language did not escape their criticism, as they described it as stagnant, weak, awkward, and complex in pronunciation and writing, with numerous issues, and its inability to fulfill its tasks in the face of civilizations, scientific and technological advancement, and naming modern inventions, machines, and devices. Contexto:

Texto a traducir:

The role of Orientalists in studying and documenting heritage can be summarized through:

1. Orientalists who were interested in heritage, documenting it, studying it, and critiquing it in an independent scientific manner and with the neutrality of a scholarly researcher.
2. Orientalists attempted to distort Islamic heritage and created a systematic image of Islam that became dogmas and facts among Westerners, despite contradicting Islamic reality.
3. Malicious Orientalists tried to poison the honey by framing their studies with hatred towards Islam and the Prophet - peace be upon him - and attempting to portray Islamic heritage as stagnant and not keeping up with modernity and progress.

The truth is that most Orientalist writings, with the exception of a few fair-minded individuals, were not primarily intended to serve Islam and Muslims. Rather, they were rooted in their animosity towards Islam because it threatens their civilization and religion, leading them to doubt and belittle the religion in an attempt to bury the shining sun from the heart of the Arabian Peninsula to the entire world.

6. DESCRIBING THE VIEWS OF ORIENTALISTS ON THE IMAMITE NARRATIVE HERITAGE IN THE INTERPRETATION OF THE HOLY QURAN

The West realized since the Islamic conquest that this Islam is a great and solid structure with the ability to spread, and that if Muslims adhered to its teachings, they would become an invincible force capable of leading the entire world. Therefore, the West spared no effort in studying this religion and attempting to refute and eradicate it by every means. After trying the military approach in the Crusades for 200 years and realizing its failure, the West began searching for alternatives to combat this religion. The Orientalist movement, led by Europe and its thinkers, started studying Islam and identifying its strengths and weaknesses. "Within one hundred and fifty years of their emergence, the number of works they produced on Islam reached sixty thousand volumes, distributed across various Islamic and Arab sciences, arts, and knowledge." [10].

Western studies began to delve into the history of Islam, leaving no detail unexamined, scrutinized, or researched. These studies initially focused on the Holy Quran, then the character of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) and the pure family of the Prophet (peace be upon them). Here, we will mention some of their interests and present their views on Islam and the Imams of the Prophet's family (peace be upon them).

7. ORIENTALISTS AND SHIITES

The Orientalist studies that have been written about the Shia reflect the Western perspective on Shia Islam, as Orientalist studies serve as a mirror for the West and a source of knowledge about the East. Orientalism, as a principle, is a discipline that studies the history, geography, religions, and languages of peoples. One of the significant topics that Orientalists have delved into is the biography of the Ahl al-Bayt (peace be upon them) and their influence on doctrine, political, and social

life. They have written dozens of works and journals about the personalities of the Imams (peace be upon them), with these writings varying based on the authors' opinions and intellectual orientations[11].

We have observed a divergence in the portrayal of Shia in Orientalist works, as a result of their reliance on narratives from unreliable or weak sources, or even deliberately fabricated accounts about Shia. As a consequence, Orientalist studies on Shia have often been inaccurate or distorted. However, there are Orientalist studies that have adhered to a methodology that weighs and synthesizes historical narratives, presenting a clear and accurate image of Islamic society, especially Shia Islam.

The methodologies employed in studying Shia and the biography of the pure Ahl al-Bayt have varied among Orientalists. Some have examined Shia Islam from a perspective of intellectual projection and skepticism, driven by their own internal desires and hidden motives. The method of projection refers to "interpreting situations, stances, and events by imposing our own experiences and feelings onto them, viewing them through a reflection of what occurs within our own selves."

It is a purely materialistic approach that sees only what is written in books and does not pay attention to spiritual values, mixing them with material aspects to arrive at a satisfactory result. This materialistic approach obscures and perhaps denies the truths, negatively affecting the reading and interpretation of events, leading to a distorted portrayal of events by the writer, as described by the Orientalist.

"Montgomery Watt" described this approach as "one of the most aggressive, hostile Orientalist and missionary writings," stating: "There is no character among all the great men in the world who has been slandered or persecuted as Muhammad was, for Islam was for many centuries the greatest enemy of the Christian world."

In fact, the orientalist "François de Blois" confirms that some orientalist scholars have an intellectual stance against Islamic thought, stating, "Colonial powers sent missionaries or supported their sending to the Middle East to convert Eastern Christians (the Mashriqis) to Catholicism and Protestantism, and among these missionaries are those who harbor a deep animosity towards Islam under the guise of orientalism."

One of the methods followed by Orientalists in studying the Shiites is the "selective method," which involves selecting news about studies related to the Shiites based on the independence, neutrality, and scientific integrity of the Orientalist in including those sources in their research. This includes presenting weak, fabricated, and poorly-sourced narratives and compiling them to align with an idea held by the Orientalist, arranging them according to their whims and desires. This is what the Orientalist "Henry Lammens" followed when he referenced sources in the margins of his book "Fatima and the Daughters of Muhammad," citing them by page numbers. Dr. Abdel Rahman Badawi commented, "I reviewed most of these references in the books he referred to, and found that he either referred to non-existent pages in these books, or misunderstood the text in a twisted and malicious manner, or extracted conclusions with extreme force that indicate a corrupt mind and malicious intent." [12].

One of the research methods used by Orientalists is the approach of (dialogue, investigation, and scientific material research), which is a commendable method for gathering information and presenting it in studies, documenting it through research in narratives related to Shia studies. An example is the Orientalist "Henry Corbin," who "lived in Iran for sixteen years, debating Shia scholars and exchanging views with them, as several well-known debates took place between him and Allameh Tabatabai, the author of the Quranic exegesis." [11].

Among the Orientalists, there were those whose concern was independent scientific research. The Orientalist "Thomas Irving" distinguished himself with objectivity and moderation in his study of the personalities of the Ahl al-Bayt (peace be upon them). He described Imam Ali (peace be upon him) as "the one with a distinguished role in supporting the Prophet (peace be upon him and his family) to establish the pillars of Islam." He described Imam Ali with terms such as "the noble young man," "the righteous believer," and "the devoted." At the same time, he referred to many narrations about Imam Ali's heroic stance when he slept in the Prophet Muhammad's (peace be upon him and his family) bed when he left Mecca for Medina [11].

Among those who wrote and were fair in their writings is the French orientalist "Dominique," who recorded the historical scene of the Day of Ghadir, announcing that the chapters of the Farewell Sermon, which echoed in the ears of Muslims under the scorching sun in the middle of the sky on one of the days of the month of Dhul-Hijjah, known as the (Feast of Dhul-Hijjah or the Feast of Ghadir), produced the announcement of the appointment and allegiance to Imam Ali (peace be upon him) by the Prophet of Islam Muhammad (peace be upon him and his family) as the caliph of the Muslims, where: "Muhammad announced the Mohammed announced Ali's appointment as his successor.

Thus, we see that the Orientalists, according to the diversity of their studies, addressed significant and intricate issues in their research on Shiism, the source of the Shiites, and the pure and noble progeny - peace be upon them. They left no stone unturned, investigating and recording every detail in their books and research. Some were fair and objective, while others relied on weak and discredited narrations in their writings.

8. THE APPROACH OF ORIENTALISTS IN STUDYING THE INANI INTERPRETATIONS OF THE QURAN BY THE AHL AL-BAYT- PEACE BE UPON THEM

Most Orientalists follow a single line, succeeding one another on it, which is that the Holy Quran is not divine revelation but rather the composition of Muhammad (peace be upon him), and that he is not a prophet. They center around this statement, and there is no independence or neutrality in the pursuit of knowledge among them, despite their attempts to declare their methodology as scientific, independent, and objective. The German Orientalist "Rudi Paret" says: "We, the Orientalists, when we conduct studies in Arabic and Islamic sciences today, do not do so to prove the inferiority of the Islamic world; on the contrary, we demonstrate our special appreciation for the world represented by Islam and its various manifestations, which is expressed in Arabic literature." [10]

It seems from Bart's words that he confuses interpretation with Arabic literature, and Leopold Weiss, "Muhammad Asad," mentions, "The Orientalists' bias against Islam is an inherited instinct, especially a natural one, based on the influences left by the Crusades, with all their ramifications in the European mind." [13].

Dr. Abdul Rahman Badawi mentions about the orientalist "Henry Lammens": "The most atrocious thing he did, especially in the book 'Fatima and the Daughters of Muhammad,' was that he would refer in the footnotes to sources with their pages. I reviewed most of these references in the books he cited and found that he was referring to non-existent locations in these books. Most of his references to the sources were deception, lies, and a distortion of the texts. I do not know of any researcher among modern orientalist scholars who has reached this level of deception and malice." [14].

As for the orientalist "Nöldeke," he wrote a doctoral thesis specifically on the compilation and arrangement of the Quran and concluded that "the Quran could not have been compiled during the time of the Prophet (peace be upon him) because he says, 'It is self-evident that the Quran could not have been compiled in its entirety during the days of the Prophet.'" [15] This statement was responded to by Ayatollah al-Uzma Sayyid Abu al-Qasim al-Khoei, may God have mercy on him, who said, "The Quran was compiled in full during the time of the Messenger of God, peace be upon him and his family, and the material of the Quran existed in the form of independent chapters during the time of the Messenger of God, peace be upon him and his family. These chapters were such that they could not be confused with each other, and there was no ambiguity in what each of the verses contained. However, they were not compiled into a book between two covers, and this was not realized until after the Messenger of God, peace be upon him and his family, joined the higher companions." [16].

As "Nöldeke" pointed out in his book, the narratives that suggest that the Commander of the Faithful, Ali ibn Abi Talib (peace be upon him), "compiled the Quran while the Prophet (peace be upon him and his family) was still alive and attempted to refute them. In fact, he denies all those narratives by saying, 'We should not forget that all the narratives that speak of Ali as the compiler and editor of the Quran are subject to doubt as they are fabricated by the Shiites.'" [17].

One of the points that Orientalists focused on is the claim that Shiites accuse Sunnis of distorting the Holy Quran. Another group of Orientalists mentioned the opposite, claiming that Sunnis accuse Shiites of distorting the Quran. This is a malicious claim aimed at dividing the Muslim community and preoccupied it with futile conflicts. Among those who mentioned this is the Orientalist "F." Paul said: "The Shiites insist that the Sunnis have deleted verses from the Holy Quran that support the Shiite sect, while the Sunnis attribute this claim to the Shiites." [18].

Ayatollah Al-Khoei, may God have mercy on him, explained that these are among the intrigues propagated by foreigners to divide Muslims. He mentioned in his interpretation, "These accusations and similar ones are what have divided Muslims and allowed their enemies to dominate them, and perhaps they were foreign intrigues." [14].

One example of the misunderstanding by Orientalists of the Imami Islamic interpretations is the book by the Hungarian Jewish Orientalist "Goldziher" titled "Islamic Interpretation Schools." He "starts with negative assumptions that the interpretations of the Imami Shia are partisan and biased, and he tries to prove his point by distorting, altering, and cutting the words from the Imami Shia interpretations to twist the words according to the conclusion he initially assumed, which is that the Imami interpretations are partisan and biased." [19].

And also his reliance on sources that are not accepted by most Shia scholars, such as "Tafsir al-Qummi" and the interpretation attributed to Al-Hasan al-Askari (peace be upon him), which are subjects of debate and not accepted by a large number of scholars of the sect. Additionally, most of his references are from non-Shia books, such as "Tabaqat al-Sabki," "Tafsir al-Tabari," and "Al-Milal wa al-Nihal" by Al-Shahrastani. He also attempts to sow discord among Muslims, as mentioned on page 299 of his book, promoting the idea that there are two different Qurans: a Shia Quran and a Sunni Quran. [20].

And we see this in most of what Orientalists have written about Shia interpretations. They try to oppose every Shia foundation or principle due to their hatred for Islam, represented by the noble family of the Prophet - peace be upon them. Allah Almighty says, "And the Jews and Christians will never be pleased with you until you follow their religion. Say, 'Indeed, the guidance of Allah is the only guidance.' And if you were to follow their desires after what has come to you of knowledge, you would have against Allah no protector or helper." [21].

One of the doubts raised by Orientalists is the suspicion of the Shia party, as they mention, "In what way were the interests of the factions affiliated with the Shia party and their distinguishing fundamental principles introduced into the Quran?" [22] And we have mentioned that the school of Ahl al-Bayt is an extension of the school of the Prophet Muhammad - peace be upon him and his family - and it is the school of guidance, the school of truth, and the foundation of the Islamic message. By what right are the Shiites accused of partisanship and sectarianism?

And among the doubts they raised was their claim that "Shia scholars did not spare any effort to find their distinctive principles for their religious and political creed firmly established in the Quran in both a positive and argumentative manner." [20].

Here, the orientalist "Ignaz Goldziher" refers to the principle of Imamate, asserting that the stability of this principle is as stable as the Quran and its authority over Muslims, proving this from the Almighty's saying: "Indeed, your ally is Allah and His Messenger and those who have believed - those who establish prayer and give zakah, and those who bow [in worship]." [23]

And from Surah Al-Ma'idah as well: "O Messenger, proclaim that which has been revealed to you from your Lord. And if you do not, then you have not conveyed His message. And Allah will protect you from the people. Indeed, Allah does not guide the disbelieving people." (5:67) [23].

And these verses, along with many others, have been interpreted by both Sunni and Shia scholars as referring to the Ahl al-Bayt and their Imams, and the books of exegesis are filled with such meanings regarding the Ahl al-Bayt - peace be upon them.

The Orientalists objected to the Imami interpretation of the verse: "And those who disbelieve say, 'Why has a sign not been sent down to him from his Lord?' Say, 'Indeed, Allah leaves astray whom He wills and guides to Himself whoever repents.'" [1].

And the interpretation of the Messenger - peace be upon him - of it by saying, "I am the warner," and he gestured with his hand towards Ali's shoulder and said, "You are the guide, O Ali, by you the guided ones will be guided after me." [24].

Orientalists see this statement as an acknowledgment of Ali's (peace be upon him) knowledge, not an acknowledgment of his and his children's political rights. "Goldziher" mentions, "People began early on to extract legal evidence for these rights from the Quran, and the first to adhere to this were the Ja'fari sect, who cited the verse: 'And give the relative his right, and [to] the needy, and the traveler, and do not spend wastefully [on others]'. (Quran 17:26). The Shiites have transferred this matter from the realm of fulfilling humanitarian duties to the scope of international law and have applied it to the political rights of the Prophet's family." [1]

As for what they mentioned about the Prophet's (peace be upon him) saying to Ali (peace be upon him) (You are the guide, O Ali) and that it is an acknowledgment of knowledge, not political legitimacy, it is known that the Shia do not see a distinction between religious authority and political authority because the Quranic evidence for the Shia establishes the infallible's sayings in matters of politics and religion. Obedience to the Ahl al-Bayt is obligatory in religion, politics, and life in general. God's statement clarifies what the Shia believe in their doctrine: "O you who have believed, obey Allah and obey the Messenger and those in authority among you. And if you disagree over anything, refer it to Allah and the Messenger if you should believe in Allah and the Last Day. That is the best [way] and best in result." (Quran 4:59). [1]

Shia scholars agree that the term "those in authority" here refers to the pure and infallible Imams - peace be upon them. The concept of the verses in the Holy Quran indicates that the obedience intended is absolute, unconditional, and unrestricted. Al-Tabatabai says, "There should be no doubt that the obedience commanded in the verse (Obey Allah and obey the Messenger) is absolute, unconditional, and unrestricted, which is evidence that the Messenger does not command anything or prohibit anything that contradicts God's judgment in reality." And this very statement came at the beginning. [1]. And one of the misconceptions propagated by Orientalists is the allegation of the distortion of the Holy Quran [25].

It is a baseless and unfounded slander, and the essence of the Quranic text is affirmed in the statements of our esteemed scholars, not in the claims of Orientalists. Sayyid al-Khoei says, "It is well-known among Muslims that there has been no alteration in the Quran and that what we have in our hands is the complete Quran revealed to the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him and his family). Many prominent scholars have stated this, including the chief of the narrators, Al-Saduq Muhammad ibn Babawayh, who considered the belief in the non-alteration of the Quran as one of the beliefs of the Imamiya. Among them is the Sheikh of the sect, Muhammad ibn al-Hasan al-Tusi, who stated this in the introduction to his Tafsir (Al-Bayan) and quoted it from his teacher, Al-Huda Sayyid al-Murtada. Similarly, the famous commentator Al-Tabarsi said this in the introduction to his Tafsir "Majma' al-Bayan." Among them is the Sheikh of the jurists, Sheikh Ja'far, in his discussion of the Quran in his book (Kashf al-Ghita)." [1].

Many scholars of the Twelver Shia have mentioned the view of non-alteration, including "Sheikh al-Mashayikh Al-Mufid, the deeply knowledgeable and comprehensive Sheikh Al-Bahai, and the investigator Al-Qadi Nur Allah. In summary, the prevalent view among Shia scholars and their researchers, and indeed the consensus among them, is the view of non-alteration." [24].

So, this is a brief overview of Shia scholars and their prominent figures throughout different eras, confirming the non-alteration of the Holy Quran. We do not know where the Orientalists come up with these statements and fabrications about the Shia and their beliefs, except to undermine the edifice of Islam and spread their schemes.

Among the false accusations against the Twelver Shia in the interpretation of the Holy Quran is the claim by Orientalists that the Shia say there are additions in Shia texts not mentioned in the Uthmanic codices. These alleged additions were published by the Orientalist "Clair Tisdall" (W.St.). Clair Tisdall in English, and he claims that it indicates the continued assumption among Shiites that there is a significant deficiency in the Uthmanic text of the Quran compared to the original authentic manuscript.

And God has spared us the effort of responding to them with their own words, for this orientalist "Goldziher" in his book "Islamic Interpretation Schools" refers to this topic and says, "And in truth, they (meaning the Shiites) do not bring the incomplete parts of the text." [1].

This is an admission from him that the Shiites do not present incomplete texts as claimed by Orientalists, and there is no evidence of missing parts in Shiite sources.

One of the misconceptions put forth by Orientalists is that the highest sources of exegesis among the Shiites are the Imams. "Naturally, they place the Imams in the first rank to explain the correct interpretation of the Quran. They always appear in the exegetical notes among the Shiites as the highest sources. A continuous interpretation of Surah Al-Baqarah is attributed to the eleventh Imam, the last of the visible Imams, Al-Hasan al-Askari (died 260 AH), and no one would think that the Imam has any connection to this book." [15].

And we have previously mentioned the extent of the authority of the sayings of the Ahl al-Bayt (peace be upon them) and that they inherited knowledge from the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him and his family) even if it was reported.

And we have previously mentioned the extent of the authority of the sayings of the Ahl al-Bayt (peace be upon them) and that they inherited knowledge from the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him and his family). If the narration is authentic according to its conditions and does not contradict the Holy Quran, and is authentic in its chain of narration, then it is the established and followed narration among us. As for what they mentioned about the Quranic interpretation attributed to Imam al-Hasan al-Askari (peace be upon him), here are some of the sayings of the scholars of hadith regarding this interpretation:

The investigator Ibn al-Ghadha'iri says, "Muhammad ibn al-Qasim al-Mufasssir al-Astarabadi was narrated by Abu Ja'far ibn Babawayh, weak and a liar. A commentary was narrated from him by two unknown men, one known as Yusuf ibn Muhammad ibn Ziyad and the other Ali ibn Muhammad ibn Yasar, from their father, from Abu al-Hasan al-Thalith. The commentary is fabricated by Sahl al-Dibaji from his father with hadiths of this kind of absurdities." [24]

The investigator "Al-Damad," author of the book (Shari' al-Najat), said: "As for the interpretation of Muhammad ibn al-Qasim al-Mufasssir al-Isfahani, one of the teachers of Abu Ja'far ibn Babawayh, the hadith scholars consider it weak. The truth is that this interpretation is fabricated and attributed to Muhammad ibn Sahel ibn Ahmad al-Dibaji. It contains rejected hadiths and false reports, and its attribution to the infallible is a fabrication and slander." [26]

In the book "Dictionary of the Men of Hadith" by Sayyid al-Khoei, it is stated about this interpretation: "Anyone who examines this interpretation will not doubt that it is fabricated, and it is beneath the status of a scholarly expert to write such an interpretation, let alone the Imam - peace be upon him." [20]

So, this is a collection of opinions from Shia scholars of criticism and praise, and exegesis, who mention that this interpretation is not considered by the Shia. As for the statements of the Orientalists and their insistence on using it as evidence, it is an attempt to undermine Shia faith and a remedy for the malice and hatred in their hearts towards Islam and the doctrine of the Ahl al-Bayt (peace be upon them).

Conflicts Of Interest

The author declares no conflict of interest in relation to the research presented in the paper.

Funding

No grant or sponsorship is mentioned in the paper, suggesting that the author received no financial assistance.

Acknowledgment

The author extends gratitude to the institution for fostering a collaborative atmosphere that enhanced the quality of this research.

References

- [1] The Holy Quran
- [2] Al-Muqdad, M. (1992). *The history of Arabic studies in France*. Cultural Book Series. Kuwait: The National Council for Culture, Arts, and Letters. Retrieved from [Google Books](#)
- [3] Mehrpouyan, A., & Zakeri, E. . (2021). The Impact of Cultural and Translational Studies on Modern Comparative Literature Studies . International Journal of Linguistics, Literature and Translation, 4(10), 13-20. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.32996/ijlt.2021.4.10.3>
- [4] Al-Haj, S. (2002). *Critique of Orientalist discourse: The Orientalist phenomenon and its impact on Islamic studies*. Beirut, Lebanon: Dar Alia. Retrieved from [Google Books](#)
- [5] Nasir, A. (2001). *A scientific reading from the papers of Orientalism and missionary work*. Alexandria, Egypt: Al-Azhar House of Knowledge.
- [6] Smailović, A. (1974). *Philosophy of Orientalism and its Impact on Modern Arabic Literature* (p. 81). Retrieved from [Google Books](#)
- [7] Abdel Shafi Mohamed, A. L. (2007). *The prophetic biography and Islamic history* (1st ed.). Cairo, Egypt: Dar Al-Salam. (1428 AH). Retrieved from [Dar Alsalam](#)
- [8] Al-Bandaq, M. S. (2007). *Orientalists and the translation of the Holy Qur'an*. Beirut, Lebanon: Dar Al-Afaq Al-Jadida. Retrieved from [Quranpedia](#)
- [9] Niqra, A. (1999). *The methodologies of Orientalists in Arabic studies: The Qur'an and the Orientalists* (Vol. 1). The Arab Organization for Culture and Science. Retrieved from [Google Books](#)
- [10] Fattah, I. A. H. (1980). *Journey of thought and heritage: Arab-Islamic heritage and European Orientalism*. Baghdad, Iraq: University of Baghdad. (1400 AH). Retrieved from [koha](#)
- [11] Al-Obeidi, R. (2003). *The Orientalist movement: Its aims and objectives*. Baghdad, Iraq: Anwar Dijla Printing House. Retrieved from [library.iiraqacademy](#)
- [12] Khalil, I. (1999). *The methodologies of Orientalists in Arabic studies: Orientalists and the prophetic biography* (Vol. 1). The Arab Organization for Culture and Science. Retrieved from [dawa.center](#)
- [13] Al-Mat'ani, A. I. M. (1992). *The fabrications of Orientalists against Islam: Presentation and critique*. Cairo, Egypt: Wahba Bookstore. Retrieved from [dawa.center](#)
- [14] Badawi, A. R. (1993). *Encyclopedia of Orientalists*. Beirut, Lebanon: Dar Al-Ilm Lil-Malayeen. Retrieved from [Internet Archive](#)
- [15] Al-Tabatabai, M. H. (1988). *The Shiites: The text of the dialogue with the Orientalist Corbin* (2nd ed.; J. A. Kassas, Trans.). Qom, Iran: Dhu al-Qurba Press. Retrieved from [Internet Archive](#)
- [16] Irving, W. (1999). *Muhammad and his caliphs* (H. Yahya, Trans.). Beirut, Lebanon: The Arab Center. Retrieved from [Internet Archive](#)
- [17] Bart, R. (1970). *Arabic and Islamic studies* (M. Maher, Trans.). Beirut, Lebanon: National Center for Translation. Retrieved from [hindawi](#)
- [18] Asad, M. (1965). *Islam at a crossroads* (6th ed.; O. Froukh, Trans.). Beirut, Lebanon: Dar Al-Ilm Lil-Malayeen. Retrieved from [Internet Archive](#)
- [19] Al-Shirazi. (1957). *Translation of the Holy Qur'an* (3rd ed.). Beirut, Lebanon: Dar Al-Qur'an Al-Kareem. (1376 AH). Retrieved from
- [20] Al-Khoi, A. (1966). *Al-Bayan in the interpretation of the Qur'an*. Najaf, Iraq: Adab Press. Retrieved from [al-islam](#)
- [21] Rizwan, O. I. (1992). *The views of Orientalists on the Qur'an and its interpretation: A study and critique*. Riyadh, Saudi Arabia: Dar Taiba. Retrieved from [muslim-library](#)
- [22] Ugh, P. (1982). Article of distortion. In *Encyclopaedia of Islam*. London, UK: Brill. Retrieved from [Internet Archive](#)
- [23] Najarzagagan, F. (1963). *A presentation and critique of the views of Orientalists on the interpretation of the Qur'an by iTwelver Shia through the book Schools of Islamic Exegesis* (S. Malakuti, Investigator). Qom, Iran: The World Center for Islamic Studies – Imam Khomeini Higher School. Retrieved from [api.pageplace](#)
- [24] Goldziher, I. (n.d.). *Islamic interpretation schools*. Retrieved from [Internet Archive](#)
- [25] Al-Majlisi, A. (n.d.). *Bihar al-Anwar* (Vol. 35, p. 406). Retrieved from [masaha](#)
- [26] Al-Fayd al-Kashani, A. (n.d.). *Al-Wafi* (Vol. 5, p. 274). Retrieved from [ar.lib.eshia](#)