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### AN ANALYSIS ON THE ORIENTALISTS' EARLY STUDIES ON THE QUR'ÂN

*Oryantalistlerin Kur'ân Hakkındaki Erken Dönem Çalışmalarına Dair Bir Analiz*

#### AYŞE AYTEKİN

Research Assistant, Gumushane University, Faculty of Theology, Department of Tafsir.

Gümüşhane, Türkiye.

Araştırma Görevlisi, Gümüşhane Üniversitesi, İlahiyat Fakültesi, Tefsir Ana Bilim Dalı.

Gümüşhane, Türkiye.

ayseyaytekin\_03@hotmail.com

ORCID ID: 0000-0002-5952-762X

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## An Analysis on the Orientalists' Early Studies on the Qur'ân

### Abstract

The researches of the Western world on the Qur'ân and Tafsîr are related to the history of Orientalism and are subject to a similar its development and change process. The efforts of the Western researchers to recognize Islam have dated back to the Crusades, and as a result of their acceptance of the superiority of Islam and the civilization and culture in which it had been integrated, it had turned into a struggle attempt. In the beginning, translation movements had played a major role in this struggle. Forasmuch, to able to know culture and civilization is primarily about knowing and understanding the language. The Westerners, who had learned the Arabic language in order to understand Islamic thought, had taken the most important step in this struggle by translating the products and works of this language and culture into the Latin language. Commentaries, quotations, explanations, plagiarisms or whatever their name is, all researches, translations, works, products and studies can be mentioned in the focus of this application and step. In addition to the studies in which language is at the forefront, it is necessary to mention other factors affecting these studies. As a matter of fact, all factors involving life have taken a place in a similar course in academic, scientific, political, religious, social, economic and cultural dimensions. The Renaissance, the invention of the printing press, the expansionist policy of the Turks, other developments in science and philosophy, and the impact of these developments on Europeans had been influential in their work on the field of Islam. The first researches of the Orientalists on Islam and the Qur'ân -which they had done in order to achieve their various goals- had several aims such as religious, political, scientific, commercial and colonialism. The Orientalists, with their works shaped for these purposes, had engaged in activities such as fighting Islam by degrading the value of the Prophet Muḥammad (PBUH), preventing the spread of this religion by spreading the faults of Islam in the way which they had identified, and converting the Muslims to Christianity. Similarly, in academic studies, it has been understood that they had an extremely negative and cynical expression style devoid of criteria such as scientific impartiality, objectivity and originality. This is also evident in the studies on the Qur'ân and Tafsîr. In order to criticize Islam, they had made various criticisms, especially on the source and nature of the Qur'ân. In addition to the study areas where the Qur'ân is at the center, many works on the history of the Qur'ân, on the other hand, have explained how and through which phases the Qur'ân had come to the present day, from a Muslim perspective in a common manner. On the other hand, the non-Muslims have been interested in what the Qur'ân is, its origin, authenticity and its formation process as well as the Muslims. In order to evaluate the perspectives of the non-Muslim researchers and to comprehend the West and the Western studies on these issues, it is necessary to search, analyze and mention about the history of their relations with Islam, the Muslims, the Prophet Muḥammad (PBUH), the historical process of Orientalism and the Oriental studies on many fields in an objective and scientific way for having more new studies that are beneficial to humanity and science. Our work can be evaluated as an introduction for this field with a modest style. We will try to study and focus on especially the early works about these subjects. We will have the aim of explaining the Orientalists' early studies on Islam, the Prophet Muḥammad (PBUH) and the Qur'ân which they have an extremely vindictive and hateful expression rather than a scientific and academic method although they have reached criteria such as scientific impartiality, objectivity and originality in academic works in recent years. In our research, we will have labour to convey our findings which can be considered as a preliminary on the broad field in question and which we intend to examine by making a periodic distinction in our later works by trying to pass the discourses on the early period through a critical and an objective filter, rather than only mentioning different views.

**Keywords:** Tafsîr, The Qur'ân, Orientalism, The Western Studies, Analysis on the Early Period.

### Oryantalistlerin Kur'ân Hakkındaki Erken Dönem Çalışmalarına Dair Bir Analiz

#### Öz

Batı dünyasının Kur'ân ve Tefsir ile ilgili araştırmaları, Oryantalizm tarihiyle ilintili olup benzer minvalde bir gelişim ve değişim sürecine tabidir. Batılı araştırmacıların İslâm'ı tanıma çabaları, Haçlı Seferleri'ne kadar uzanmakta olup İslâm'ın ve entegre edildiği medeniyet ve kültürün üstünlüğünü kabul etmeleri sonucunda adeta bir mücadele girişimine dönüşmüştür. Başlangıçta, bu mücadele çerçevesinde tercüme hareketleri büyük rol oynamıştır. Zira, kültür ve medeniyeti tanımak, öncelikle dili bilmek ve anlamaktan geçmektedir. İslâm düşüncesini anlamak adına Arapçayı öğrenen Batılılar, bu dil ve kültürün ürün ve eserlerini Latinceye çevirerek bu mücadelede en mühim adımı atmışlardır. Şerh, iktibas, izah, intihal yahut adı her ne olursa olsun yaptıkları tüm araştırmalar, çeviriler, eserler, ürünler ve çalışmalar bu uygulama ve adım odağında zikredilebilir. Dilin başat noktada yer aldığı çalışmaların yanı sıra bu çalışmaları etkileyen diğer unsurlardan da söz etmek gereklidir. Nitekim, hayatı içeren tüm etkenler hem akademik hem

bilimsel hem siyasi hem dini hem sosyal hem ekonomik hem de kültürel boyutta benzer seyirde yer almaktadır. Rönesans, matbaanın icadı, Türklerin yayılcı politikası, ilim ve felsefe alanındaki diğer gelişmeler ve bu gelişmelerin Avrupalılara tesiri onların İslâm alanındaki çalışmalarında etkili olmuştur. Oryantalistlerin -çeşitli amaçlarını gerçekleştirebilmek için yapmış oldukları- İslâm ve Kur'an'a dair ilk araştırmaları, dini, siyasi, ilmi, ticari ve sömürgecilik gibi çeşitli hedefler taşımaktaydı. Oryantalistler, bu amaçlarla şekillenen çalışmalarıyla İslâm'ın ve Hazreti Muhammed'in (s.a.v) değerini düşürerek İslâm ile mücadele etmek, kendilerince tespit ettikleri İslâm'ın kusurlarını yaymak suretiyle bu dinin yayılmasını engellemek ve Müslümanları Hristiyanlaştırmak gibi faaliyetlerde bulunmuşlardır. Akademik çalışmalarda da benzer şekilde ilmi tarafsızlık, objektiflik ve özgünlük gibi kriterlerden yoksun son derece olumsuz ve garazkar bir ifade tarzına sahip oldukları anlaşılmaktadır. Kur'an ve Tefsir ile ilgili çalışmalarda da bu durum göze çarpmaktadır. İslâm'ı yermek adına özellikle Kur'an'ın kaynağı ve mahiyeti gibi konularda çeşitli eleştirilerde bulunmuşlardır. Kur'an'ın merkezde olduğu çalışma alanlarının yanı sıra, Kur'an tarihine dair birçok eser ise Kur'an'ın nasıl ve hangi evrelerden geçerek günümüze geldiği meselesini, yaygın bir biçimde Müslüman perspektifi ile anlatmaktadır. Buna mukâbil, Müslümanlar kadar Müslüman olmayanlar da Kur'an'ın ne olduğu, menşei, sahilîği ve oluşum süreci ile ilgilenmektedirler. İnsanlık ve bilim ortak paydasına faydalı olacak yeni araştırmalar adına, Müslüman olmayan araştırmacıların bu meseleler hakkındaki bakış açılarını değerlendirmek ve Batı'ya dair ve Batılı çalışmaları algılamak için onların İslâm, Müslümanlar ve Hazreti Muhammed (s.a.v) ile olan münasebetlerinin tarihçesini ve birçok alandaki Oryantalizm ve Oryantal çalışmaların tarihi sürecini objektif ve bilimsel bir şekilde araştırmak, analiz etmek ve bu konudaki çeşitli meselelere değinmek gereklidir. Çalışmamız, mütevazî tarzıyla bu alana giriş niteliğinde bir araştırma olarak değerlendirilebilir. Bahsettiğimiz hususlar çerçevesinde özellikle ilk dönem eserlerine çalışmayı ve odaklanmayı deneyeceğiz. Araştırmamızda, özellikle Oryantalistlerin -son yıllardaki bilimsel ve akademik yöntemler içeren ve ulaştıkları bilimsel, yansız, tarafsız ve orijinal kriterlere sahip akademik çalışmalarından ziyade- İslâm, Hazreti Muhammed (s.a.v) ve Kur'an hakkındaki oldukça kindar ve nefret dolu söylemleri haiz ilk dönemlerdeki çalışmalarını açıklama hedefine sahip olacağız. Daha sonraki çalışmalarımızda dönemsel bir ayırım yaparak incelemeyi amaçladığımız ve söz konusu geniş alana dair bir hazırlık ve ön çalışma olarak düşünülebilecek bulgularımızı, erken döneme ilişkin söylemleri -sadece farklı görüşlerden bahsetmek yerine- eleştirel ve objektif bir filtre aracılığıyla aktarmak için emek harcayacağız.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Tefsir, Kur'an, Oryantalizm, Batılı Çalışmalar, Erken Döneme Dair Analiz.

## Introduction

God's prophets and messengers, who had lived in different periods throughout the tradition of revelation, had owned the words of God and had tried to convey the same message in different conditions, situations, historical, social, political and cultural dimensions. The Prophet David had described God whom he had believed in Him in his holy book which is the Bible about 1700 years before the Prophet Muhammed (PBUH), as follows:

*"God is the One who created the heavens and the earth, the sea and everything in it. He is the eternal guardian of truth. He is the One who takes the rights of the oppressed and gives sustenance to the hungry. Your Lord is the One who makes captives free, opens the eyes of the blind with cure, guides those who stray from the straight path, loves the righteous people, protects the weak people, and watches over the orphans and widows. He does not guide the cruels to his right path."<sup>1</sup>*

The Creator had never blocked and stopped this path of revelation or message to protect them from wrong and perverted beliefs and bad behavior, and to teach how they live well, morally, ethically, correctly, honestly and beautifully, to ensure that people are happy and peaceful in this world and to gain the endless happiness and safety in the hereafter. These messages, which are guidances and pioneer for people, to teach, to explain and to tell the good, have been tried to be read, understood, comprehended, explained, interpreted, and disseminated from the beginning.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Kitâb-ı Mukaddes (Accessed 10 June 2022), Mezmurlar 146:6-9. cf. Luka 1:49; *Kur'an-ı Kerîm Meâlî*, trans. Halil Altuntaş-Muzaffer Şahin (Ankara: Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı Publications, 2009), al-An'am 6/144, at-Tawbah 9/60, Yûnus 10/25, al-Ahkâf 46/3; Mehmet Paçacı, *Kur'an ve Ben Ne Kadar Tarihseliz?* (Ankara: Ankara Okulu Publications, 2016), 63.

<sup>2</sup> Fazlur Rahman, *Ana Konularıyla Kur'an* (Ankara: Ankara Okulu Publications, 2012), 32.

The Qur'ān is a guide for all people to make them to choose the best way, to be a good person and a devout Muslim. God has mentioned the necessity of understanding and thinking His messages with this valuable statement:

“This is a blessed Book which We have revealed to you 'O Prophet' so that they may contemplate its verses, and people of reason may be mindful.”<sup>3</sup>

As it is known, the Qur'ān is the most important and sufficient source for all human beings in the world. The Qur'ān has showed the true way for people, has given the meaning of life and is light for ways of them, has taught the holy commands of God and the supreme aim of the creation for them. The Prophet Muḥammad (PBUH) had emphasized the importance of the Qur'ān by mentioning that:

“The most auspicious among you is who learn and teach the Qur'ān.”<sup>4</sup>

The sayings of God have been tried to be understood by people from the first revelation until recent days. The science of the commentary of the Qur'ān has taken a very considerable place and role about this subject and duty. In this field, the verse, the meaning of it, when it had been revealed, the conditions and situations, the main goals which should be learned by human beings from the command of God, the contents and the contexts that have been dealt with scholars, interpreters and experts. So we should look at the sayings of God, the commentaries of the Qur'ān, and try to comprehend the divine sayings, concepts, orders, forbiddens and related studies about it when we want to study on some verses and chapters.

The Qur'ān had started to be revealed to the Messenger of God who is the Prophet Muḥammad (PBUH) by God in the city of Mecca on the Arabian Peninsula in the year of 610 of the Gregorian Calendar. After the death of the Prophet Muḥammad (PBUH) in 632 of the Gregorian Calendar, the door of revelation had been closed. According to the general acceptance, the Messenger of God had not collected the written texts as revelation between two covers. The battle that had taken a place in Yamama during the Caliphate of Abū Bakr (d.13/634) had caused the death of many scholars who had memorized the Qur'ān. This situation had disturbed 'Abdallāh b. 'Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb (d.23/644) and it had started to be worry about the future of the religion and the Sacred book. So, it had also caused him to prompt Abū Bakr to suggest compilation of the Qur'ān. Zayd b. Thābit (d.45/665) who was the witness of arḍ al-ākhira which was between the Prophet Muḥammad (PBUH) and the Archangel Gabriel and one of the revelation scribes had been assigned and the first event of Jam' /the collection of the Qur'ān had emerged. After this event, the trust and the edition which was Mushāf had been given to Ḥaḥṣa (d.45/665) who was the daughter of 'Abdallāh b. 'Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb (d.23/644) after the death of 'Abdallāh b. 'Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb. With the emergence of different readings during the caliphate of Abān b. 'Uthmān b. 'Affān (d.35/656), the Qur'ān had been replicated and reproduced in accordance with the Mushāf which was in Ḥaḥṣa. Then, the Mushāfs which had been copied due to the revelation of the Qur'ān in the dialect of Quraysh, had been written in this manner, had become official and had been sent to the necessary cities.<sup>5</sup> Special copies of the documents about the

<sup>3</sup> Saad 38/29.

<sup>4</sup> Abū 'Abdallāh Muḥammad b. Ismā'il b. Ibrāhīm b. al-Mughīra b. Bardizba al-Ju'fī al-Bukhārī, *the Ṣaḥīḥs*, Critical ed. Mustafa Dīb al-Bagha (Damascus: Dār Ibn Kathīr and Dār al-Yamāmah, 1993), 1919; Abū 'Isā Muḥammad b. 'Isā b. Sawra (Yazīd) al-Tirmidhī, *Sunan*, critical ed. Aḥmad Muḥammad Shākir and Muḥammad Fu'ād 'Abd al-Bāqī and Ibrāhīm 'Utwā (Egypt: Sharikah al-Maktabah al-Maṭba'at Mustafa al-Bāb al-Ḥalab, 1975), 30; Abū Dāwūd Sulaymān b. al-Ash'ath b. Ishāq b. Bashīr b. Shaddād b. 'Amr b. 'Imrān (or 'Āmir) al-Azdī al-Sijistānī, *Sunan* (Beirut: n.d.), “al-Witr”, 14.

<sup>5</sup> Abdulwahid Hamid, *Islam the Natural Way* (London: Muslim Education and Literary Services, 1989), 8-32; Ulfat Aziz as-Samad, *The Great Religions of the World* (Delhi: Jayyed Press, 1991), 173-217; Muhammad Husayn Haykal, *Life of Muhammad (PBUH)*, trans. Ismā'il Rāzī A. Al-Faruqī (America: American Trust Publications, 1995), 137-193; Şaban Ali Düzgün, *Uncovering Islam - Questions and Answers About Islamic Beliefs and Teachings-* (Ankara: Publications of Presidency of Religious Affairs, 2009), 25-30; Imām 'Jalāl al-Dīn Imām 'Abd al-Raḥmān al-Suyūṭī, *The Perfect Guide to the Sciences of the Qur'ān*, trans. Hamid Algar (Lebanon: Garnet Publishing, 2011), 37-155. Note for this source: It has taken a place in British Library Cataloguing-in-Publication Data. A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library. It has been printed and bound in Lebanon by Internaitonal Press too. interpress@intpress.com Ahmet Nedim Serinsu, *Kur'ān ve Bağlam* (Istanbul: Şule Publications, 2012), 11-48; Ömer Dumlu (ed.), *Tefsir* (Eskişehir: Anadolu University Publications, 2012), 1-82; Bahattin Dartma (ed.), *Tefsir Tarihi ve Usulü* (Eskişehir: Anadolu University Publications, 2012), 2-108; Mehmet Akif Koç (ed.), *Tefsir* (Ankara: Grafiker Publications, 2012), 15-53; Mehmet Paçacı, *Çağdaş Dönemde Kur'an'a ve Tefsire Ne Oldu?* (Istanbul: Klasik Publications, 2013), 119-129; Halis Albayrak, *Tefsir Usulü* (Istanbul: Şule Publications, 2014), 11-39; Abdurrahman Çetin, *Kur'ān İlimleri ve Kur'ān-ı Kerim Tarihi* (Istanbul: Dergâh Publications, 2014), 13-87; Muhsin Demirci, *Tefsir Tarihi* (Istanbul: Marmara University Theology Faculty Foundation Publications, 2015), 36-51; Muhsin Demirci, *Tefsir Usulü* (Istanbul: Marmara University Theology Faculty Foundation Publications, 2015), 45-107; İsmail Cerrahoğlu,

Qur'an or the other Mushāfs such as in the possessive of Ka'b b. Mālik al-Anṣārī (d.33/654) and 'Abdullāh b. Mes'ūd (d.32/652-653) had been destroyed for protection the real, one and unique copy. Despite the fact that the written text had gone through such a phase, the Qur'an, through memorization and inscription, had managed to come to the present day in a mutawātir form without any distortion.<sup>6</sup>

Many works on the history of the Qur'an have explained how and through which phases the Qur'an had come to the present day, from a Muslim perspective. On the other hand, the non-Muslims as well as the Muslims had been interested in what the Qur'an is, its origin, its authenticity and its formation process. In order to evaluate the perspective of the West on these issues, it is necessary to mention about the history of their relations with the Muslims. The Western Christians and the Muslims had come into close contact with the Crusades from many fields and aspects. As a result of this relationship that had taken a place in the 9th and 10th centuries of the scene of history, the Western world, which had the opportunity to observe the superior Islamic civilization, had been affected by it and had felt the need to get to know the Islamic civilization more closely. Therefore, after these events, the Western students and researchers had been sent to North Africa and Spain to learn foreign languages, and they had started to translate the works written in the Arabic language in the Eastern Islamic world into their own scientific language, the Latin language. So, the formation of the oriental science, which is called Orientalism or *istishrāq*, had been realized by carrying the scientific knowledge of Muslims to their own lands rather than their religion.<sup>7</sup>

Nuriye Özsoy, who had prepared her master's thesis on the articles on Surah al-Ikhlās/the Chapter of the Sincerity published in *Der Islam* magazine, had studied and written the first part of her study on whatness of Orientalism and she had classified its formation phases in this chapter. If we take her classification which is meaningful, reasonable and logical as a basis, this period has characterized as early classical Orientalism. Later, the later phases of classical and modern Orientalism had emerged, during which more in-depth and specific research had been carried out on Islamic disciplines and sources.<sup>8</sup> Especially modern Orientalism, that is, from the middle of the 18th century to the last quarter of the 20th century, the Western researchers had given their best quality works. According to the common estimates, this period has also corresponded to the period when the Muslims were at their weakest period. Edward Said (d.2003), who had described Orientalism as an exploration branch of colonialism, had made one of the most comprehensive studies on this formation. His negative views on Orientalism have been still debated both in the East and in the West. Here, rather than mentioning different views, we will try to convey our findings - which can be considered as a preliminary on the broad field in question and which we aim to examine by making a periodic distinction in our later works- by trying to pass the discourses on the early period through a critical and objective filter. Therefore, it will be partially revealed how impartial or not the researchers in the field in question are, and for what purposes they make these discourses.

In the modern era, Orientalism and the fields of study related to this field had been a matter of curiosity in Turkey as well as in other world countries. In the perspective of this subject, many academic studies such as theses, articles, papers had been written and have continued to be published. Any research that impartially evaluates historical, scientific, cultural, social, political, economic and academic realities

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*Tefsir Tarihi* (Ankara: Fecr Publications, 2015), 13-60; Mustafa Öztürk, *Kur'an'ı Kendi Tarihinde Okumak -Tefsirde Anakronizme Ret Yazıları-* (Ankara: Ankara Okulu Publications, 2016), 7-76; Şemseddin Günaltay, *İslam Öncesi Araplar ve Dinleri* (Ankara: Ankara Okulu Publications, 2016), 7-84; Zeki Duman, *Nüzulünden Günümüze Kur'an ve Müslümanlar* (Ankara: Fecr Publications, 2016), 9-87; Ömer Dumlu, *Tefsir Usûlü* (İzmir: Tıbyan Publications, 2017), 1-48; W. Montgomery Watt, *Hız Muhammed'in Mekkesi*, trans. Mehmet Akif Ersin (İstanbul: İstanbul 29 Mayıs Üniversitesi Kur'an Araştırmaları Merkezi, 2017), 89-112; İsmail Cerrahoğlu, *Tefsir Usûlü* (Ankara: Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı Publications, 2018), 35-105; Mustafa Öztürk - Hadiye Ünsal, *Kur'an Tarihi* (Ankara: Ankara Okulu Publications, 2018), 9-155; Ahmet Nedim Serinsu, *Tefsir Tarihi Atlası ve Uygulama Haritaları* (Ankara: Grafiker Publications, 2019), 11-143; İsmail Çalışkan, *Tefsir Tarihi* (Ankara: Bilimsel Araştırma Yayınları, 2021), 13-35; Mehmet Akif Koç (ed.), *Kur'an İlimleri ve Tefsir Tarihi* (Ankara: Grafiker Publications, 2021), 77-100.

<sup>6</sup> İrfan Çakıcı, "Kur'an'ın Korunmasında Hıfz ve Kitâbet", *e-Şarkiyat İlmî Araştırmalar Dergisi* 11/2 (24), (August 2019), 579.

<sup>7</sup> İsmail Cerrahoğlu, "Oryantalizm ve Batıda Kur'an ve Kur'an İlimleri Üzerine Araştırmalar", *Ankara University Theology Faculty Journal* 31 (1989), 100.

<sup>8</sup> Nuriye Özsoy, *Der Islam Dergisinde Yayınlanan 112. El-İhlās Suresiyle İlgili Makaleler Örneğinde Oryantalistik Kur'an Çalışmalarının Değerlendirilmesi* (Ankara: Ankara University, Institute of Social Sciences, Master Thesis, 2010), 14-21.

and studies is valuable. Our study has aimed to take its place in this field with this intention and to try to help to get a perspective for researchers on it. With this aim, in our article, we will take the evaluations of the Qur'ān as a basis, especially the early data, and we will try to examine it. We have planned to examine the information about other periods with the reality that this study will exceed the limits, in a critical way by classifying and describing the periods in our new works.

## 1. On Definition of Orientalism

The lexical meaning of Orientalism, which can be briefly defined as the images, elements, items of the West about the East or the Western imagination about the East, is "Oriental science, science of the Eastern world, science of the Orient and science of the Sharq". Its origin had been based on the Latin word "oriens." This word had meant "sunrise". Orientalism, which had been used to show the east geographically, had meant "to be in an effort to learn about the East."<sup>9</sup> This word had been initially used in the sense of examining the Eastern people, their religions, languages, cultures, urbanity, life styles, civilizations, literature and history. Later, it had been specialized and had gathered under the theme of studies on Islam. In academic, religious, cultural and social studies, Orientalism had been adopted as a general term reflecting the attitudes of the Westerners towards the Islamic world. In this context, it is the road map of a conscious attitude that is inherited from the past with all its aspects and dimensions against the East, and the whole of the instruments and materials to be used in this map.<sup>10</sup>

Based on the thesis that there is no correct perception of history and writing, existing works and all studies had been created by the power of politics and power; the ideas, opinions and dominant knowledge of the period had been declared within the framework of the same power and relationship; Edward Said, who is so famous with his multi-faced aspects about Oriental studies and had made the first and most comprehensive study on Orientalism, had brought up the most serious criticism and defined Orientalism in a critical way as follows:

*"Orientalism is not a simple theme or a political field had been quietly revealed by culture, science, and institutions. Nor is it a widespread collection of works on the Orient. Nor is it a treacherous imperialist conspiracy of the West to crush the Eastern world. Orientalism is a set of geo-economic views that have been tried to be "transmitted" through aesthetic, scientific, economic, sociological, historical and philological texts. Orientalism is not a geographical distinction but a collection of "interests". This system has clearly encompassed all efforts to manipulate, exploit, or even dissolve a separate world.*

*Orientalism is an unbalanced shopping order that has not seemed to be related to political power, but it has arised from the power differences of various powers and thus it has maintained its existence. This exchange, to some extent, has continued and will continue with political power, as in colonial and imperial administrations; with intellectual power in the field of linguistics, comparative anatomy, or valid sciences from the modern political sciences; with cultural power in religion, institutions, valuations, national taste and literature; with moral power within the circle of ideas based on "us" and "them." Ultimately, my thesis on Orientalism has centered on the fact that it has spanned a very wide area within the framework of culture,*

<sup>9</sup> Semra Germaner - Zeynep Inankur, *Oryantalizm ve Türkiye* (Istanbul: Türk Kültürüne Hizmet Vakfı Sanat Publications, 1989), 9; Stuart Sim, *The Routledge Critical Dictionary of Postmodern Thought* (London: Routledge Publications, 1999), 328-329; Şevket Yıldız, *Oryantalizm ve İslam Tarihine Oryantalist Yaklaşımlar* (Bursa: Uludağ University, Institute of Social Sciences, Master Thesis, 2002), 6-15; Hâmit Atalay, *İngilizce-Türkçe Sözlük* (Istanbul: Atatürk Kültür Dil ve Tarih Yüksek Kurumu Türk Dil Kurumu Publications, 2004), 2438; İsmail Süphandağı, *Batı ve İslam Arasında Oryantalizm* (Istanbul: Maarif Mektepleri Publications, 2004), 112; Murat Ak, "Doğu-Batı İkileminde Bir Osmanlı Entelektüeli Ahmet Mithat Efendi'nin Batı'yı Tanıma Çabasına Bir Bakış", *Marife Dini Araştırmalar Dergisi* 6/3 (2006), 255; Mustafa Öztürk, "Oksidentalizm Bağlamında Afgânî-Abduh Ekolü", *Marife Dini Araştırmalar Dergisi* 6/3 (Winter 2006), 50; Osman Sarı, *Oryantalizm Üzerine Bir Araştırma* (Elazığ: Fırat University, Institute of Social Sciences, Master Thesis, 2008), 3-8; Gül Eren, *Edward Said: Oryantalist Söylem Analizinin Metodolojik Temelleri* (Erzurum: Atatürk University, Institute of Social Sciences, Doctoral Dissertation, 2013), 1-19.

<sup>10</sup> Alam Khan, "A Critical Study of G. H. A Juynboll's Methodology in the Study of Hadith", *Al-Idah* 39/1 (June 2021), 15; Alam Khan, "A Critical Study of Juynboll Approach to al-Mutawâtir", *Gümüüşhane Üniversitesi İlahiyat Fakültesi Dergisi* 10/20 (July 2021), 370; Alam Khan, "A Study of Orientalists' Theories about İmâm al-Zuhrî: دراسة نظريات المستشرقين حول الإمام الزهري", *Acta-Islamica* 9/1 (June 2021), 190; Alam Khan, *تقييم نظريات جونيل حول الحديث النبوي (Re-Appraisal of Juynboll Theories About Hadith)* (Juynboll'un Hadisle İlgili Teorileri Üzerine Bir Değerlendirme-Eleştirel Bir Çalışma) (Trabzon: Kalem Yayınevi, 2019), 5-30.

*politics, fashionable modern intellectual thought, but it has little relevance between "our" world and the real "East."*<sup>11</sup>

## 2. On A Brief Information About History of Orientalism

In order to understand the nature, origin and history of Orientalism, it is necessary to examine the adventure before the period when it had been created. In this direction, it is necessary to study the researches and studies of the Muslims about other religions before Orientalism, as well as the researches and studies of the Christians and the Jews about Islam.

From the second or eighth century according to the Hegira or the Gregorian Calendar, the Muslims had spreaded the world not only politically, but also religiously, scientifically and culturally. As a matter of fact, the works of the 'Abbāsīd caliphs' had great repercussions on both political, religious, scientific and cultural levels. As it has been seen in the example event in history, the second 'Abbāsīd caliph Manşūr (d.158/775) had ordered his clerk 'Abdullāh al-Muqaffā (d.142/759) to carry out translation activities. Following this order and task, some of Aristotle's books and works related to Iranian culture and civilization had been translated. Another 'Abbāsīd caliph, al-Ma'mūn (d.218/833) had founded Bayt al-Ḥikma (the House of Wisdom), the first academic research institute, academy of sciences, the palace of library and study center, which was the largest, greatest and most comprehensive scientific study of the Middle Ages. Translations from the Greek language, the Syriac language, the Sanskrit language, the Persian language and other foreign languages had continued for three centuries.<sup>12</sup> After these translation studies, philosophical movements that had affected the world of ideas such as Peripateticism, Averroism and Avicennaism had emerged. The most important Islamic philosophers who had influenced the West directly and indirectly with their works and studies are Abū Naşr Muḥammad al-Fārābī (d.339/950), sometimes referred to as "the Second Teacher" in the Arabic tradition (after "the First Teacher", Aristotle), Ibn Sīnā (Avicenna, d.428/1037) and Ibn Rushd (d.595/1198). As a result, the basis of the Renaissance, the infrastructure of science, intellect and thought, is the collection of the works which had been done and had completed in the Islamic world.<sup>13</sup>

At the same time, there was a tradition of writing refutations in the fields of Muslim theology, the history of sects and the history of religions. As a matter of fact, Ibn Rabbān al-Ṭabarī (d.247/861), who had made a comparative study for the first time in the field of the history of religions had written *ar-Rad ala'n-Nasārā*; al-Bīrūnī (d.453/1061), who had studied Indian religion and culture in his work named *Tahqīqu mā li'l-Hind*; Ibn Hazm (d.456/1046), who had worked and criticized the Jewish and Christian holy books and written *al-Fasl*; Shahrīstānī (d.584/1153) had the work named *al-Milal wa an-Nihal* can be included in the category of Muslim scholars who had worked on different religions and cultures with their works.<sup>14</sup>

While the refutations written by Muslim scholars against other religions were mostly scientific and religious, but ignorance and hate speech were dominant among members of other religions. Islam's criticism of Christianity and Judaism was the primary cause of this anger. As a matter of fact, as the Qur'an had stated in its own words, it was the most perfect and the last true religion that had been ordered to be believed. It had explained this fact with many evidences. Because the Qur'an had rejected the idea of the Jews that Uzayr was the son of God, and the Christians that there was the son of God and the third of the three (al-Māidah/the Chapter of the Table Spread 5/73, at-Tawbah/the Chapter of the Repentance 9/30,

<sup>11</sup> Edward Said, *Oryantalizm*, trans. Neziḥ Uzel (Istanbul: Irfan Publications, 1998), 26-27; Edward Said, *Against the Orthodoxies (Der. Anour Abdallah), For Rushdie: Essays by Arab and Muslim Writers in Defense of Free Speech* (New York: George Braziller, 1994), 260-262; Edward Said, *Şarkiyatçılık: Batı'nın Şark Anlayışları*, trans. Berna Ülner (Istanbul: Metis Publications, 2006), 11; Edward Said, *Oryantalizm (Doğubilim): Sömürgeciliğin Keşif Kolu*, trans. Neziḥ Uzel (Istanbul: Pınar Publications, 1982), 20; Edward Said, *Orientalism* (New York: Penguin Books, 1978), 30.

<sup>12</sup> Bekir Karlıḡa, *İslam Düşüncesinin Batı Düşüncesine Etkileri* (Istanbul: Litera Publications, 2004), 218-234.

<sup>13</sup> Hüseyin Sarıoḡlu, *İbn Rüşd Felsefesi* (Istanbul: Klasik Publications, 2003), 44.

<sup>14</sup> Ahmet Yücel, *Oryantalist Hadis Anlayışı ve Eleştirisi* (Istanbul: Marmara University Theology Faculty Foundation Publications, 2015), 18-19.

31). It had been expressing the necessity of worshipping only God by revealing the falsity of the other beliefs and practices. It had also declared that it was wrong for the People of the Book to believe in some of the prophets and to deny some of them, and to fabricate beliefs that had not suited the prophets, and that their books had been falsified (an-Nisā/the Chapter of the Women 4/46,150,151, al-Baqarah/the Chapter of the Cow 2/75, 79, 102).

Despite Christianity and Judaism, the rapid spread of Islam had created a sense of revenge in the struggle for political authority and supremacy in those who belong to these religions. The development in the political and scientific fields in the Islamic world had caused both a loss of authority in other regions and a great sense of defeat and insecurity in the society. Because of these feelings and results, the power of the religion of Islam and the great influence of Muslim scholars had been tried to be reduced. In this context, the liberation of the Byzantians against the armies of Islam had become a common goal and cause of the West. The Crusades had quality of real instance on this goal.

The treatise which had been written by Yuhanna ed-Dīmaṣḥī (d.132/749) who was known as “John of Damascus” in the Western studies, which was of great importance in the Christian world to reflect the culture and mentality of the period, was the main source of information and prejudices about Islam in the Middle Ages. According to this treatise:

- Islam was a false sect that had emerged from Christianity.
- Islam was the messenger of the Antichrist.
- Muḥammad was a dishonest person.
- Muḥammad was a false prophet who had wanted to abolish Christianity.
- Muḥammad had encountered Baḥīrā; he had benefited from it; he had seen the Old and the New Testaments, and thus he had established his own religion.
- Muḥammad was a lascivious man and he had enchanted people.
- Because Muḥammad was lascivious man, he had married many women and he had encouraged his believers to do so.
- Muḥammad was a cruel person to his enemies.
- The Muslims were a community that had believed in a polytheistic religion.
- The Muslims were aggressive, ruthless, rude, barbaric, immoral, monstrous, marauding and cruel people.<sup>15</sup>

In order to use the errors that could be detected in Islamic sources with the encouragement of the priests in the following periods, the Corpus of Toledo<sup>16</sup> consisting of seven works had been established.<sup>17</sup> Some works belonging to Muslims had been translated into the Western languages and the tradition of writing refutations had begun. Positive attitudes were rare in the Christian world. German poet Johann Wolfgang von Goethe (d.1832) had stated in his poem Mahomets Gesang/Muḥammad’s Tune that the Qur’ān had been sent down by God through Gabriel. According to him, Muḥammad was an exemplary person with superior spiritual qualities and moral attitudes. There were lofty ideas in the Qur’ān too.<sup>18</sup> Other intellectuals with positive approaches were Henry Stubbe (d.1676) and Thomas Carlyle (d.1881) against the common ideas and aspects in the period in question. Similar to the Christian cultural mentality, a negative point of view had been prevailed in the Jewish world in the Middle Ages. Most of the Jewish writers had found it appropriate to include slander, lies and unreal statements in their works, especially after the Crusades. The perception in the period was as follows:

<sup>15</sup> İsmail Taşpınar, “Doğunun Son Kilise Babası Yuhanna ed-Dīmaṣḥī ve İslâm”, *Marmara University Theology Faculty Journal* 2/21 (2001), 30-34; İbrahim Sarıçam and the others, *İngiliz ve Alman Oryantalistlerin Hz. Muhammed Tasavvuru* (Ankara: Nobel Publications, 2011), 54-76.

<sup>16</sup> The Corpus of Toledo was known as Corpus Toletanum or Colectio Toletana. This corpus had been created for use in missionary activities at the instigation, encouragement and motivation of Cluny priest Peter El Venerable (d.1156). See for more: Hüseyin Yaşar, *Avrupa ve Kur’an, Avrupa’da Kur’an Araştırmaları ve Çeviriler Üzerine Bir İnceleme* (İzmir: Tıbyan Publications, 2002), 156.

<sup>17</sup> Hüseyin Yaşar, *Avrupa ve Kur’an, Avrupa’da Kur’an Araştırmaları ve Çeviriler Üzerine Bir İnceleme*, 156-159.

<sup>18</sup> Bayram Yılmaz, *Goethe ve İslâmiyet* (İstanbul: Timaş Publications, 1997), 57-60.



- According to chronicles and other manuscripts, Muḥammad was a person of the Jewish origin or the cardinal of Christian origin.
- Muḥammad was a so-called and unreal prophet.
- Muḥammad was insane.
- Muḥammad was cursed.
- Muḥammad was a dishonest person.
- The Qur'ân was a book that Muḥammad had created after he had met Jewish religious leaders on his travels and he had received various information from them.<sup>19</sup>

After the conquests in Europe, the clergy had declared that after the rapid spread of Islam, this situation could not be prevented politically, so there was a need for religious theological arguments. Spanish Cardinal Segovialı (d.1458) had stated the seriousness of this situation clearly. Although this approach, which he had expressed for the first time, had not been implemented in his own time, the foundations of Orientalism, which he had dealt with the Eastern and the Far Eastern societies, had been laid in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries in the historical process. During this period, Arabic works, dictionaries, basic books, texts and grammar books had begun to be published and compiled. Encyclopedias had been prepared for those who want to learn about the Islamic world. The full text of the Qur'ân had been translated into the English language by George Sale (d.1736) for the first time. In the period following this period, Islamic studies had accelerated. Islamic chairs and associations had been established. Books, articles, journals, master and doctoral theses had published more.<sup>20</sup> As a matter of fact, Edward Said had said that the Orientalists had written about 60.000 works on Islam between the years of 1800 and 1910.<sup>21</sup> Societies and universities had been established in England, France, Germany, America, Austria, Russia, Sweden, Spain and many other countries. Various congresses had been organized in scientific centers such as Paris, London, Vienna, Berlin, Geneva, Rome, Athens, Leiden, Petesburg and the reports and studies which had been presented at these congresses had been published in volumes, magazines and some academic papers.<sup>22</sup> In addition to academic studies, the collection, the compilation and indexing of manuscripts, the verification and publication studies, Arabic copyrights in various fields and translations from the Arabic language to the Western languages in various fields were among the other scientific activities that the Orientalists were most engaged in their themes and dimensions of the studies.

### 3. On Investigation on Orientalists' Views on the Qur'ân

The Orientalists' Islamic studies had various purposes such as religious, political, scientific, commercial and colonialism. They had engaged in activities such as fighting Islam by degrading the value of Islam and the Prophet Muḥammad (PBUH) with many excuses; preventing the spread of this religion by spreading the faults of Islam that they had identified themselves even they were not real and logical in a sense; trying to convert the Muslims to Christianity. As a matter of fact, this purpose had been seen in the following words of the founder of the Cambridge University Executive Board Chair of the Arabic Language:

*"Our main purpose is to render useful service to king and state through our trade with the lands of the East, to expand the boundaries of the church, and to glorify God by inviting people who are now living in darkness to Christianity."*<sup>23</sup>

It has been observed the Orientalists', who had reached criteria such as scientific impartiality, objectivity and originality in academic studies in recent years, especially early studies on Islam and the Qur'ân -about the beliefs and principles of the religion of Islam- have an extremely vindictive and hateful

<sup>19</sup> Nuh Arslantaş, *Yahudilere Göre Hz. Muhammed ve İslâmîyet, İbranice Tarih Kitapları Açısından Bir İnceleme* (İstanbul: İz Publications, 2011), 81-214.

<sup>20</sup> İbrahim Kalın, *İslam ve Batı* (İstanbul: İsam Publications, 2007), 93-117.

<sup>21</sup> Edward Said, *Oryantalizm*, 325.

<sup>22</sup> A. Zeki Velidî Togan, *Tarihte Usûl* (İstanbul: Türkiye İş Bankası Culture Publications, 1985), 270-272.

<sup>23</sup> Mehmet Görmez, "Klasik Oryantalizmi Hadis Araştırmalarına Sevk Eden Temel Faktörler Üzerine", *İslâmîyât* 3/1 (June 2000), 17.

expression rather than a scientific and academic method. In order to criticize Islam, they had especially criticized issues such as the source and nature of the Qur'ān.

The views of the Orientalists about the Qur'ān are as follows, especially in the periods when they had criticized Islam with a style that was far from scientific data:

- They had tried to prove that the Qur'ān is not a divine revelation, on the contrary, it is a product of Muḥammad -by following the path of the disbelievers and the pagans- by showing the verses as evidence. The verses that they had used as evidence were the 3rd and 4th verses of Sūrah al-Furqān/the Chapter of the Criterion as: *"Yet they have taken besides Him gods who cannot create anything but are themselves created. Nor can they protect or benefit themselves. Nor can they control life, death, or resurrection. The disbelievers say, "This 'Qur'ān' is nothing but a fabrication which he made up with the help of others." Their claim is totally unjustified and untrue!"*<sup>24</sup>
- They had claimed that the stories in the Qur'ān had been taken from the Bible and the People of the Book, especially the views about 'Ād and Thamūd and examples of other punishment stories belonging to the Torah and Arab sources.
- According to the Orientalists, the deniers had been threatened by telling stories such as Noah, Lūt, and the Prophet Moses. While conveying these stories, Muḥammad had used the stereotypes in the Holy texts.
- Stories such as the Prophet Moses, Khiḍir and Dhul-Qarnayn had been also based on the Jewish and Christian legends.
- Most of the names which had been used in the Qur'ān, such as Lūt, Gog and Magog (Yājūj wa-Mājūj), Hārūt, Mārūt, Ṭālūt (Saul), Goliath (Jālūt), Madyan, Maryam (Mary), Hāmān, Ya'qūb and Yūsuf, were originally from the Old Testament, and a few of names were from the New Testament. Such names had been translated from primary and secondary sources.
- The source text of the Qur'ān had consisted of the Aramaic or Abyssinian languages translations, not the Hebrew language. Josef Horovitz (d.1931) had said that the concepts, words, terms and expressions such as the Qur'ān, rasūl (prophet), nabī (messenger), mīthāq, 'ummah, unbeliever, hypocrite, hanīf, rabbāniyah, aḥbar, dīn (religion), ḥikma (wisdom) etc. had been borrowed from societies and religious traditions such as the People of the Book, the Majūsīs and the Ṣābi's or the Sabians.<sup>25</sup>
- They had argued that the letters ḥurūf al-mukattaa' at the beginning of the chapters had been used under foreign influence. They had stated that the main source of this influence was Judaism.
- They had claimed that the information about Christianity and Jesus was incomplete, unfounded and wrong. Particularly, Paret had said that the knowledge of the people in Mecca about Christianity was incomplete and limited; the Arabs had not advanced in the right direction, therefore, the possibility of perverted views had increased; the verses rejecting the crucifixion of Jesus were false and it had showed that these mistakes had been considered as evidence that the information was flawed.<sup>26</sup>
- They had said that when Muḥammad had gone to Damascus for trade, he had taken lessons from the scholars of the period, he had combined these two religions by envisioning them in his mind, and what he had learned from the Priest Baḥīrā had proved this situation.
- They had stated that Muḥammad had a mood that was thoughtful, irritable, prone to melancholy, unable to tolerate the slightest subject and pain, and this situation had been reflected in his words in the verses.<sup>27</sup>

<sup>24</sup> Furqān 25/3-4.

<sup>25</sup> Josef Horovitz, *Koranische Untersuchungen* (Berlin Und Leipzig: Walter De Gruyter, 1926), 10-155.

<sup>26</sup> Rudi Paret, *Kur'an Üzerine ve İslam Sembolizmi*, trans. Hüseyin Yaşar (Istanbul: İz Publications, 2018), 40-140.

<sup>27</sup> Friedrich Max Muller (ed.), *The Qur'an, The Sacred Books of the East* (London: Clarendon Press, 1880), 14-69.

- When the words, terms, concepts, verses and chapters that had established the Qur'ān had been listed in the order of their revelation time, it had been understood that this book, which was the product of Muḥammad, had contained sections from his life. This book, which was his product, had been built on the situations that he had lived in private and social life because the religious and moral structure of the Qur'ān, its basic views on the Divine revelation and beings, the anachronistic situations and flaws that it had contained had proved this point.<sup>28</sup>
- The Qur'ān had adhered to Jewish myths. While describing these legends, it had dealt with the subject of angels, devils and jinn, especially the topics which had been known by the Arabs.<sup>29</sup>
- Although the text of the Qur'ān had been created with the influence of the Sacred texts and the Aramaic language, the Syriac language and other languages, it had been both misread, miswritten and misinterpreted in later periods. The precision and clarity of the inconsistency in the content of the text had been understood from this.<sup>30</sup>
- In the Qur'ān, which had been created by considering the customs of the old pagan Arabs, there was the concept of "hanīf", which Islam had attributed to Abraham while describing the monotheistic belief. In fact, this concept had been originally used to mean "idolator or pagan" in the Fertile Crescent region. This had showed that there was an undoubted connection between the pagans and the text of the Qur'ān.<sup>31</sup>
- The issue of reading the Qur'ān in different dialects, especially with seven letters, had also caused the text of the Qur'ān to change.
- There were doubts in the compilation process of the Qur'ān.<sup>32</sup>

## Conclusion

The most occupied issue in the world which we live in is the clash of civilization and culture. Although it had initially started as an indication of the conflict between the East and the West, it is actually a political and civilizational sovereignty concern. Orientalism had also been one of the important turning points of this struggle. In fact, behind the scenes of this conflict, there is Jewish and Christian bigotry and the mentality of sovereignty. This concern had grown especially after Iraq, Syria, Palestine, Egypt, Spain, North Africa and Anatolia had rapidly accepted Islam. Learning the Arabic language and doing academic studies after translation activities are actions for this purpose.

According to the result of our work, when Orientalism studies which had covered all the studies on the East had been concentrated on Islam -unfortunately- especially in the early periods, works that were far from scientific data and fair criticism had emerged.

The intense criticism of the Orientalists, especially about the source and the content of the Qur'ān, was to prove that it was not a reliable and revelation-based religion book at that time. For this purpose, the Orientalists had used all kinds of sources on the Sacred book, the Religion, the Prophet Muḥammad (PBUH), the Muslims by evolving according to their intentions and had produced works that were far from scientific analysis. Especially the works of the first period were examples of these intentions and actions. The declarations and subsequent academic studies in associations, organizations and societies had been mostly built on political and religious aims.

After their unfounded claims and criticisms about the Qur'ān, they had defamed other sources of Islam too. In this context, they had claimed that hadīths were not a reliable source. According to them, ḥadīths were the reflection of the religious, historical, cultural, social development and social life of the

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<sup>28</sup> William St. Clair Tisdall, *The Original Source of the Qur'an* (London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 1911), 27-280.

<sup>29</sup> Theodor Nöldeke, *Orientalische Skizzen* (Berlin: Paetel, 1892), 66-70.

<sup>30</sup> Arthur Jeffery, *The Foreign Vocabulary of the Qur'an* (Baroda: Oriental Institute, 1938), 19-23.

<sup>31</sup> Patricia Crone and the others, *The Making of the Islamic World* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1977), 12-138.

<sup>32</sup> Hamdi Zakzuk, *Oryantalizm veya Medeniyet Hesaplaşmasının Arka Planı*, trans. Abdulaziz Hatip (Izmir: Işık Publications, 1993), 75-94.

Islamic society in the first centuries. Groups that had fabricated ḥadīths according to their own interests, intentions, aims and various purposes had not refrained from this act in order to prove their legitimacy. This was the biggest example of damaging the reliability of ḥadīths. Then, the Orientalists had claimed that Islamic philosophy and Islamic law teachings, as well as ḥadīths, had been composed of non-Islamic knowledge. According to them, the Greek sources in philosophy and Roman law ideas in law were in the preliminary and necessary plan.<sup>33</sup>

Finally, we should mention that studies that have gained a more scientific identity by getting rid of hate speech in the following periods, especially in the last century, are important in terms of academic research. Any criticism based on impartiality and in accordance with logical rules is valuable in the academic platform.

It is our hope and aim that academic and impartial studies reach the value, position and degree that they deserve in terms of quality and quantity. We will work with this purpose in the following works on the other periods and their features.

## Declaration

1. **Finance:** I declare that no finance/incentive was used in the study.
2. **Conflict of Interest:** I declare that there is no conflict of interest in the study.
3. **Ethical Statement:** I declare that research and publication ethics are complied with in this article. Ethics Committee Permission is not required for this research.

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