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A Novel Critical Approach to the Leiden *Encyclopedia of the Quran* (EQ)

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Abstract

In this article, after briefly introducing the Leiden *Encyclopedia of the Quran*, the strengths and merits of this work are mentioned, and its structural and methodological problems are highlighted. Then, the most important problems with the content of this Encyclopedia are deliberated on and discussed in a logical manner with complete references and documentation. In this way, through the use of the descriptive-analytical method, the shortcomings and methodological errors in Islamic and Quranic studies are identified and explained. Some of the shortcomings of the Orientalists' works are as follows: 1. lack of references to the primary sources in their analysis of Quranic verses, hadiths, and terms; 2. failure to comprehend the status of the Prophet and the Quran, thus treating the Prophet like an ordinary person and the Quran as a book written by him; and 3. Lack of expertise in assessing the authenticity of the hadiths they refer to, or in explaining the meaning of such hadiths. The writer believes that the Orientalists' failure to understand the spirit of Islam and the Quran is the cause of their unfair and inappropriate presentation of the teachings of the Quran.

Keywords: Quran, Orientalism, Orientalist, encyclopedia, Jane Dammen McAuliffe.

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Introduction

In the contemporary era, the encyclopedia is a conspectus of human knowledge, in a single discipline or in all disciplines, which is structured in a thematic or alphabetical order (Al-Bustānī n.d., 4:500). In his definition of the term 'encyclopedia,' Dihkhudā writes: "A book containing the sum of human knowledge, culture, sciences, and arts. It is a comprehensible summary of human learning; a compendium of technical information comprising various disciplines and fields of study, in distinct topics that are usually arranged alphabetically, such as the Encyclopaedia Britannica, which was first published in 1768. Encyclopedias are sometimes limited to one specific discipline as in the case of the Catholic Encyclopedia and the like" (Dihkhudā 1994, 6:8976).

The most important features of a good encyclopedia include:

1) Providing comprehensive information on a subject or a discipline such that a researcher would not require to turn to other secondary sources after referring to it.

2) Arranging the information in the form of articles.

3) Following the standard methods of composing encyclopedia articles, including:
   a. The articles should be descriptive.
   b. Observance of neutrality in the presentation of the contents, views, and evidence on the subject being discussed and refraining from any form of prejudice or imposition of any opinion on the reader.
   c. Observing the approved methods of technical writing.
   d. Maintaining brevity and avoiding unnecessary verbosity and repetition.
   e. Including references for all the content.
   f. Using original and reliable sources.

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g. Using standard academic prose and avoiding poetic expressions.

h. Presentation of facts in a coherent manner or theories that have been propounded in the quest for knowledge creation (Rezā'ī-Isfahānī 2007, 44-45).

Noteworthy is that the fundamental principle in developing or compiling an encyclopedia is remaining unbiased while presenting information and avoiding all preconceptions and prejudice. Indeed, the best way to defend the truth is to eschew partiality and convey the reality as it is. Hence, the inclusion of unsubstantiated material along with dogmatism resulted in some scholars showing no interest in developing encyclopedias on issues pertaining to faith and religion.

A Brief Survey of the Leiden Encyclopedia of the Quran

The general editor of this encyclopedia is Jane Dammen McAuliffe, a professor at Georgetown University in America, plus four renowned researchers on the Quran who are her associate editors, namely: Claude Gilliot (France), William A. Graham (America), Wadad Kadi (Chicago), and Andrew Rippin (Canada). The advisory board is made up of Nasr Hamid Abu-Zayd, Mohammed Arkoun, Gerhard Böwering (America), Gerald R. Hawting (United Kingdom), Frederik Leemhuis (Holland), and Angelika Neuwirth (Germany). Its board of contributors consist of both Muslims and non-Muslims from various countries. This work includes about a thousand entries in six volumes and has been published and distributed by Brill Publishers. The aims of composing this work have been highlighted in its preface and include:

i. Creating a reference work that would capture this century's best achievements in Quranic studies.

ii. This encyclopedia should stimulate even more extensive scholarship on the Quran in the decades to come.

iii. To make the world of Quranic studies accessible to a broad range of academic scholars and educated readers, especially since the number of reference works for the Qur'an accessible in European languages is very small and much of the available information is partial and incomplete (McAuliffe 2002, Preface).

Strengths of the Leiden Encyclopedia of the Quran

1) The inclusion of articles from a variety of authors from both the West and East.

2) Attention has been paid to new subjects (such as feminism) alongside traditional Quranic subjects.

3) Distinguishing between the Quran and the exegesis of the Quran.

4) Proper planning with regard to the timing and speed of publication of the Encyclopedia.

5) Turning back from the methods of earlier Orientalists and observing fairness in the comments made in most of the entries.

Problems and Shortcomings of this Encyclopedia

1) Structure and Methodology:

   a) A brief examination of the board of writers reveals that most of them have only one and almost the same basic insight into the Quran, which is a modernistic, relativistic, and evolutionary perspective that considers the text of the Quran to be the work of a human being and as such, they only seek a historical

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commentary on it. Even though the methods and techniques of these writers may differ, the fundamental view they all share is based on this basic insight. This is true of both Muslim and non-Muslim writers. Such a selection could never be random. Therefore, the choice of authors for the project reflects the preferences and tendencies of the editors themselves.

b) Despite the editors' claim that religious affiliation has no bearing in an academic study, around twenty percent of the authors that they have chosen are Muslims, with particular backgrounds and academic leanings. This means that they have already decided on in advance and on a specific stance.

c) The Muslim authors have mainly contributed articles on topics of secondary importance, and most of the articles on fundamental topics, outlooks, and Quranic vocabulary have been written by non-Muslim contributors.

d) The claim that the *Encyclopedia of the Quran* contains different viewpoints may be correct to some extent, but the origin of all these viewpoints is that the phenomenon of revelation as Islam has proposed and understood is invalid and shaky.

e) It seems that some of the non-Muslim authors have a shallow understanding of Islamic sources and, at times, make serious claims based on secondary sources. For example, when the author of the article "Names of the Prophet" refers to the sixth verse of Sūra al-Ṣaff, he presents a reading from Ubayy ibn Kaʿb which is starkly different from the standard text of the Quran. In the commonly accepted reading, it is narrated that Jesus said, "I give you glad tidings of a Prophet who will come after me, and his name is Aḥmad." However, the variant reading that the author of this entry mentions states: "I

announce a prophet whose community will be the final one and by whom God will put the final seal on prophets and messengers" (Déclais 2003, 3: 502).

This variant reading has only been reported by Rudi Paret and nobody else (Paret 1971, 476).

f) One of the methods of Mohammed Arkoun, the author of the article "Contemporary Critical Practices and the Quran," is to accuse and pass judgment on his opponents, which he does in the many instances where he questions those who do not employ the modern critical methods of historical analysis and the like. Interestingly, he does not provide a single instance, piece of evidence, or even a name for his claims. He repeatedly hints that those who agree with him are free thinkers, while those who oppose him are somehow slaves to the status quo [or what he terms 'dogmatic enclosure']. It appears that this approach is not academic; in fact, it is not even in line with scholarly ethics. Any person can go to a judge alone and accuse and lay blame upon his opponents.

Arkoun has made many claims in this article, but he fails to provide any witnesses or evidence for them. For example, he says that theological authorities and 'guardians of orthodoxy' look suspiciously at the history of religions. However, he does not mention a single individual or offer even a single quote from any source as a reference for his claim. In his article, the author questions the sum of all the Shii and Sunni exegeses throughout the ages and states three problems that they all suffer from a wide range of possible interpretations, the influence of cultural contexts of different social groups, and medieval approaches now considered sacred (Arkoun 2003, 1:

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412-430).

Such treatment and depiction of thousands of exegeses on the Quran which make up a legacy of Muslim scholarship spanning fourteen centuries is neither academic nor fair.

g) Typically, Orientalists take their material from Sunni sources and limit their understanding of Islam to the perspective of this specific sect. It then forms the basis of their judgments. It has been quite recently that they refer to the Shii works on hadith, theology, philosophy, and history, and heed the teachings of Islam in a rational form, based on the Quran and the sunnah of the Prophet, from the words of the Ahl al-Bayt to better understand the reality of Islam.

Of course, the phrase, 'Sunni Islam' and 'Shii Islam' do not seem correct. This is because two different Islams do not exist. Rather, Shiism and Sunnism are two sects within Islam that share fundamental tenets and only have different views on some historical, creedal, and juristic issues. In any case, it is necessary and crucial for Orientalist researchers to give due attention to the Shii school of thought to receive proper explanations of Islamic views and teachings.

As an example, G. H. Juynboll, the author of the article "Ḥadīth and Quran" relies mostly on Sunni hadith sources for references in his study of exegetical traditions. In addition to the Sunni hadith corpus *al-Ṣiḥāḥ al-Sittah*, he refers to works such as Mālik's *al-Muwaṭṭaʾ*, *Muṣannaf al-Ṣanʿānī*, *Muṣannaf Ibn Abī Shaybah*, *Sunan al-Dārimī*, al-Suyūṭī's *al-Itqān*, al-Zarkashī's *al-Burhān,* and others. However, of all the available Shii works on ḥadīth and other subjects, he has only referred to *al-Kāfī* and *Biḥār al-Anwār*, and that too only in his discussion

on the Quran (Juynboll 2003, 2:376-396).

More than anything else, in his study of the hadiths, the author has focused on the examination of chains of transmission for assessing the extent of the historical authenticity of a ḥadīth before passing judgment on its soundness or weakness. Yet one of the important means of evaluating the acceptability of hadiths [that he has overlooked], aside from the chains of transmission, is the assessment of the contents of the hadiths.

For example, Muslim scholars have rejected the narrations of 'the myth of the cranes' (*gharānīq*) and the forgetfulness of the Prophet in memorizing and preserving verses of the Quran, using content-based evaluation (since the contents of this hadith go against the explicit verses of the Quran that establish the perfect infallibility of the Prophet) or rational evaluation.

2) Problems Related to Content

   a) The claim that in-depth research has been carried out (which is mentioned in the *Encyclopedia*'s preface) is not in conformity with the deeds of some of the authors. For instance, in his article "Exegesis of the Quran: Classical and Medieval," Claude Gilliot introduces al-Sayyid al-Murtaḍā's (d. 406 A.H.) *Ḥaqāʾiq al-Taʾwīl fī Mutashābih al-Tanzīl* as a Mutazilite exegesis and even states that al-Shaykh al-Ṭūsī (d. 460 A.H.) and al-Shaykh al-Ṭabarsī were Shii Muʿtazilīs (Gilliot 2003, 2:99-124). It seems that he overlooked the fact that the Muslim world had three predominant schools of dialectic theology: the theological

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school of the Asharites, the theological school of the Muʿtazila, and the theological school of the Shiʿa.

Even though the third school is similar to the school of the Muʿtazila in certain approaches, such as rationalism, each of the two is separate and independent, having its own specific characteristics. For example, the Shii believe in the continuity of the Divine guidance after prophethood through the institution of imamate, but the Muʿtazila do not espouse the same theological position; the Muʿtazila propound the theory of 'a state between two states' (*al-manzilah bayn al-manzilatayn*) [that designates the salvational status of a moral sinner] which is not accepted by the Shiʿa.[2]

b) Even though the *Encyclopedia*'s general approach is far different from the approach of the earlier Orientalists, and a fair and scholarly outlook is witnessed in many of its articles, there are still some authors who echo and repeat the same claims of earlier Orientalists without any new insight. For instance, in his entry on "Aaron," Andrew Rippin writes that the Quran wrongly refers to the mother of Jesus as the sister of Aaron: *"O sister of Aaron"* (Q19:28) despite the fact that Aaron had died centuries before the mother of Jesus. He says, "According to the biblical story, Aaron did have a sister called Miriam…, but she was not, of course, the same as Mary, the mother of Jesus, and the Muslim tradition has never taken that to be the case" (Rippin 2003, 1:1-2).

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[2] . Cf. Khwāja Naṣīr, *Sharḥ Tajrīd wa al-Ījī, Sharḥ Mawāqif*.

This blunder by Andrew Rippin in understanding the very verse of the Quran, his lack of attention to the exegeses and exegetical traditions, and his attribution of a historical error to the Quran (which conflates Maryam at the time of Moses with Maryam mother of Jesus) are equally problematic for the Leiden *Encyclopedia*, since the editors, reviewers, and proofreaders of the *Encyclopedia* paid no attention to the research of earlier Orientalists and Muslims' responses to the same, as the point raised by Andrew Rippin is not new; rather, it is a mere repetition of certain claims of earlier Orientalists. In fact, this claim against the Quran was first made by an individual by the name of Adrian Reland (1676- 1718) and it has since been responded to many times by Muslim scholars, who have pointed out the mistake of Orientalists in understanding this verse. Among these was ʿAbd al-Raḥmān Badawī (d. 1988) in his work *Difāʿ ʿan al-Quran* where he mentions this very claim (p. 161) and provides a detailed response to it. However, it is quite surprising that fourteen years after the publication of ʿAbd al-Raḥmān Badawī's monograph, the very same mistake of the earlier Orientalists has been repeated in the Leiden *Encyclopedia of the Quran* without any mention of the response.

c) Sometimes contradictions are noticeable in the Leiden *Encyclopedia of the Quran*. For example, in his article "Ḥadīth and the Quran," Juynboll mentions something about distortion (*taḥrīf*) in the Quran. He quotes al-Suyūṭī saying that the verse of stoning was revealed to Muhammad but was not included in the Quran. Another example is the change of the word "Aʾimmah" to "Ummah" which is a view he attributes to the Shīʿa, as with the belief that Sūra

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al-Aḥzāb was originally longer than Sūra al-Baqarah before it was subjected to change and abridgment. He also states that the Shiʿa interpret the "seven readings" as seven ways of issuing legal opinions [by the Imam] (Juynboll 2003, 2:376-396).

Firstly, the hadiths that speak of distortion or alteration [in the Quran] have been criticized time and again by great Sunni and Shii scholars and have been rejected. This is because most of these hadiths contradict the Quran itself, and anything that contradicts the Quran has no value. The chains of transmission of these hadiths are also flawed and some of them actually refer to differing interpretations and readings. Among the scholars who have written works on this subject are Ayatollah Sayyid Abū al-Qāsim al-Khūʾī in his book *al-Bayān*, Ayatollah Muḥammad Hādī Maʿrifat in his book *Ṣīyānat al-Quran ʿan al-taḥrīf*, and Dr. Najārzadigān in his book *Salāmat al-Quran min al-taḥrīf*.

Secondly, the issue of Sūra al-Aḥzāb being lengthier than Sūra al-Baqarah is attributed among the Ahl al-Sunnah to Ubayy ibn Kaʿb and ʿĀʾishah.[3] Why then does the author accuse the Shīʿa of believing this when it has already been seen that the actual hypothesis of distortion [in the Quran] is incorrect and both Sunni and Shii scholars have rejected it?!

Thirdly, the reports that speak about the seven readings of the Quran have been faulted by Shii scholars

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3. Cf. *Musnad Aḥmad*, vol. 5, p. 132; al-Suyūṭī, *al-Itqān*, vol. 2, p. 72.

both for their chains of transmission and their content.[4] And since the [variant] readings are not frequently related (*mutawātir*) and the [authenticity of the] Quran is not established through them, they cannot form the basis of any jurisprudential ruling.

d) It is seen that sometimes certain inappropriate attributions are made to the Divinely-appointed Prophets. For instance, in the entry on "Abraham" by Reuven Firestone, Āzar is considered to be his biological father, and in the story of the birds, Abraham is portrayed as having challenged God. In the same entry, the forefathers of the Prophet Muḥammad are depicted as idol worshippers (Firestone 2003, 1:7).

However, a number of exegetes of the Quran, such as the authors of *Majmaʿ al-Bayān*, *al-Mīzān*, *Tafsīr nimūnih,* and others, have discussed this matter in their commentaries of the verses (113-114) of Sūra al-Tawbah, verse 6 of Sūra al-Mumtaḥanah, (verse 47) of Sūra Maryam and verse 86 of Sūra al-Shuʿarāʾ where they have either offered explanations for this or rejected it. They have clarified that Āzar was the paternal uncle of Prophet Abraham and the tradition that has been narrated about the [forefathers of the] Prophet Muḥammad is fabricated. They also evince many proofs about the faith of the ancestors of the Prophet.[5]

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[4]. Cf. Abū al-Qāsim al-Khūʾī, *al-Bayān fī tafsīr al-Qurʾān*, in the discussion on [variant] readings; Muḥammad Hādī Maʿrifat, *al-Tamhīd fī ʿulūm al-Qurʾān*, in the discussion on variant readings and the ḥadīth of the seven letters.

[5]. Cf. *Majmaʿ al-bayān* and *al-Mīzān* under the verses mentioned, and *Tafsīr nimūne*, vol. 8, pp. 158-159.

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e) Another problem with this work is the report of *Isrāʾīliyāt* (fabricated traditions that have roots in Judeo-Christian teachings which found their way into Islamic sources) without any criticism. For example, in the entry on "Adam and Eve," while discussing the creation of Adam and Eve, Cornelia Schöck states that the Quran says, "*People! … Your lord who created you from a single person and created from him his wife*," meaning that "she was created from the lowest of Adam's ribs… or from a rib on his left side" (Schöck 2003, 1:22-26).

Firstly, there is no explicit mention in the verse, or in any verse of the Quran for that matter, that Eve was created from the rib of Adam. Therefore, attributing such a thing to the Quran is against the principle of staying true and faithful to the original text.

Secondly, the Torah states: *"Then the Lord God made a woman from the rib he had taken out of the man, and he brought her to the man. The man said, "This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called 'woman,' for she was taken out of man"* (Genesis 2:22-23). Hence, this is part of the stories of the Torah that Cornelia Schöck has attributed to the Quran in her article.

Thirdly, if the author had referred to the exegeses authored by Muslim scholars about the verses that speak of the creation of Adam, she would not have made this error. Scholars such as Allama Ṭabāṭabāʾī, in *al-Mīzān*, explicitly state that the narration which speaks of the creation of Eve from Adam's rib is false and is part of the *Isrāʾīliyāt* (Ṭabāṭabāʾī 1973, 1:147).

f) The authors of the articles "Shīʿa," Arzina Lalani, and
    "Shīʿīsm and the Quran," Meir Bar-Asher, have cast a
    shadow of doubt upon the principles and tenets of Shiism
    and have presented unscholarly theories which they
    [falsely] attribute to the Shīʿa (Bar-Asher & Lalani 2003,
    4:591-609).

    Regarding the reports that have been reported by
    Muḥaddith Nūrī in the second article, it must be said that
    they lead to certitude, neither in theory nor in practice, for
    they are all single reports (*āḥād*). Hence, the claim that
    these reports are numerous and successively quoted is
    utterly baseless. Secondly, none of these reports have been
    mentioned in the four canonical Shii hadith collections.
    Therefore, these reports cannot be relied upon and there is
    no connection between the occurrence of distortion in the
    Torah and Gospels with its occurrence in the Quran.

g) Uri Rubin, the contributor of the article "Muḥammad," has
    displayed special skill in uttering objections, step by step,
    to the receiving of revelation by the Prophet and casting
    serious doubts as to the origin of the Quran. Yet the entire
    article about the Prophet Muḥammad is written based on
    verses of the Quran. As a result, the foundation of all that
    is true in the article is undermined. This is the best method
    of casting doubt which is done by incorporating incorrect
    and damaging ideas along with correct ones, such that the
    reader may be affected by them subconsciously (Rubin
    2003, 3: 440-457).

h) The author of the article "Psalms," Arie Schippers, makes
    false attributions (such as playing musical instruments,

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illicit relations, and so on) to Prophet David which are not acceptable in any way to the majority of Muslims, and especially the Shiis (Schippers 2003, 4: 314-317). This is because he does not refer to all the primary Islamic sources and relies instead upon weak reports. In his entry, the author has mostly used the reports that are found in the first part of al-Ṭabarī's *Tārīkh*, and this section of the book is replete with *Isrāʾīliyāt*. Furthermore, while recounting its historical reports, the chains of transmitters have not been mentioned. Hence, these kinds of references have no connection to the Quran and the Muslims are closer to the distorted stories of the Torah, thus they do not have any value or significance.

i) Rotraud Wielandt, the contributor of the entry "Exegesis of the Quran: Early Modern and Contemporary," has completely ignored the exegetical developments in Iran, Iraq, and Lebanon (Wielandt 2003, 2:124-140). Noteworthy is that the exegetical developments in the twentieth century (14th and 15th centuries A.H.) in these three countries were due to the outstanding efforts carried out by Shii scholars. These developments have included issues related to politics and government in exegesis, focus on societal needs, attention to empirical sciences, studying the views of secular ideologies and critiquing them, consideration of the thematic exegesis [of the Quran] and its different aspects, and emphasis upon the method of interpreting the Quran through the Quran, as is seen in the following works:

Tafsīr al-Mīzān by Allama Ṭabāṭabāʾī,
Tafsīr Nimūnih by Ayatollah Makārim Shīrāzī,
Tafsīr al-Furqān by Ayatollah Ṣādiqī Tehrānī,
Tafsīr Navīn by Muḥammad Taqī Sharīʿatī,

Taqrīb al-Quran ilā al-Adhhān by Sayyid Muḥammad Ḥusaynī Shīrāzī,

Tafsīr Rawshan by Ḥasan Muṣṭafawī,

Tafsīr Kawthar by Ayatullāh Yaʿqūb Jaʿfarī,

Min Hudā al-Quran by Sayyid Muḥammad Taqī Mudarrisī,

Tafsīr Tasnīm by Ayatollah ʿAbdullāh Jawādī Āmūlī,

Tafsīr Kāshif by Dr. Sayyid Muḥammad Bāqir Ḥujjatī and Dr. Biyāzār Shīrāzī,

Tafsīr al-Quran al-Karīm by Ayatollah Sayyid Muṣṭafā Khumaynī,

Tafsīr al-Atharī al-Jāmiʿ by Ayatollah Muḥammad Hādī Maʿrifat (both from Iran),

Tafsīr al-Kāshif by Muḥammad Jawād Mughniyah,

and *Tafsīr Min Waḥy al-Quran* by Ayatollah Sayyid Muḥammad Ḥusayn Faḍlullāh (from Lebanon).

j) Even though Richard Bell's article on the inimitability of the Quran can be considered one of the most scholarly entries in the Leiden *Encyclopedia of the Quran*, its author has sufficed with studying the literary aspects of the Quran only (Bell 2003, 526-535). This is despite the Quran's being for all people in every era, and its inimitability cannot be restricted to only one particular aspect, rather it can encompass all the aspects simultaneously. This is why we see that with the passage of time, more aspects of its miraculousness and inimitability come to light.

k) While the article "Fāṭima" by Jane Dammen McAuliffe has some positive points such as emphasis on the merits of Lady Fāṭimah and making use of both Sunni and Shii exegetical sources, it also has some flaws. This is because

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the article mentions only three verses of the Quran about al-Sayyidah Fāṭimah. In contrast, exegetical hadiths mention her in the commentary of 135 verses. As such, the article is incomplete and the author has not recounted and analyzed all the verses and traditions regarding this noble lady. McAuliffe has not even included a complete listing of these hadiths. Secondly, the author mentions some of the questionable reports like that of ʿIkrimah in relation to the Verse of Purification (Sūra al-Aḥzāb [33]) but fails to mention the responses that have been given to them [by scholars] (McAuliffe 2003, 2: 192-193).

l) Some general problems with the article "Imam" contributed by Imtiyaz Yusuf include:
    1- Lack of a definition for the term,
    2- Failure to clearly present the subject,
    3- Lack of objectivity on the part of the author,
    4- No bibliography or list of references, and
    5- An overall inability to convey the actual discussion.

    The fundamental problem with this article is that it has failed to present the core meaning of the terms 'Imam' and 'Imamate' to the level expected of such an encyclopedia. Rather, it contains selective and incomplete discussions that only raise questions, accompanied by some errors in scholarship that do not present any particular conclusion in the end (Yusuf 2003, 2: 502-504).

m) "Chronology and the Quran" is an important historical subject. In order to research it well with the correct methodology and approach, historical evidence, authentic hadiths, and the connotations of verses and sūras of the Quran must be consulted. Keeping this in mind, Muslim

researchers of the Quran have mostly referred to the reports of Ibn ʿAbbās on this subject and, based on these reports, they have reconstructed the chronology of the revelation of the Sūras. However, since Orientalists have mostly focused their study on the tone, pace, and style of the verses and Sūras, upon which they have based their criteria, or have resorted to weak reports, they have mostly come up with incorrect conclusions (Bowering 2003, 1: 316-335).

n) In the article "Form and structure of the Quran," the author states that the redaction of the Quran carried out under ʿUthmān bin ʿAffān saw the incorporation of passages into completely new contexts (Neuwirth 2003, 246).

Since the order of the verses was predetermined, the claim that in many instances ʿUthmān shifted verses and incorporated them into new contexts cannot be substantiated. Furthermore, aside from the consensus [on this issue among Muslim scholars], there are numerous reports that clearly state that the order of verses was predetermined.[6]

Conclusions

The results of the present research are as follows:

1. In their study of the meanings of terms or exegeses of the Quran verses, or in explaining the connotation of Islamic hadiths, many Orientalists have failed to refer to the primary sources or have referred to them sparingly. In numerous instances, they prefer to relate the views and

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[6]. Cf. al-Suyūṭī, *al-Itqān fī ʿulūm al-Qurʾān*, vol. 1, pp. 62-63; and al-Ṣāliḥ, *Mabāḥith fī ʿulūm al-Qurʾān*, p. 70.

statements of other Orientalists as their references. It is obvious that research that is based on this methodology and approach remains devoid of any tangible scholarly value.

2. Some Orientalists easily attribute forgetfulness to the Prophet or the influence of Satan on the revelation of the Quran. They compare a number of sound hadiths on the merits of the Quran to magical charms and talismans and mention the interaction of the Prophet with the jinn in a manner reminiscent of crowd-pleasing fables.

3. Undoubtedly, hadith corpora depict some teachings in a manner not intended by the apparent meaning and are thus in need of explanation or an allegorical interpretation. There are also instances where some of the reports are not considered reliable due to specific reasons. Unfortunately, by referring to the hadith corpus directly, Orientalists have taken hold of these kinds of traditions and have accused both the Shii and the Sunni of adopting a particular position concerning the distortion (*taḥrīf*) of the Quran.

4. It is entirely unfair and inappropriate to present a compendium containing guidelines, with arbitrarily selected and misconstrued analyses, aimed at cultivating the hearts and minds of people, without understanding the spirit of Islam and the spirit of the Quran.

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