



ترجمة ملخصات المحتوى

Summaries of Researches and Articles

Tradition Between Constative-Epistemological Knowledge and the Performative Studies of Orientalists: Theodor Nöldeke as an Example

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Human beings are inclined toward seeking knowledge, and this explains why there are individuals who embark on studying certain knowledge domains out of personal interest. However, as humans have personal, social, and geographical interests, it is not uncommon for some of them to engage in scholarly studies for political aims such as conquering and dominating the other, which renders scholarship in this case a mere pretext which conceals the true purpose. Such studies have been termed “performative research” in the essay as they do not aim to uncover or provide information about reality, but aim to create and impose a certain reality under the excuse of academic scholarship. Through numerous examples, it may be observed that orientalist studies are performative studies cast into academic slogans but possessing a strategic and dominating character. One of these examples is the excessive orientalist usage of an unconventional methodology which leads to a non-epistemological conclusion, and a negligent methodology which controls the range of the conclusion according to the researcher’s wishes. This hypothesis is applied to some passages from the book *The History of the Quran* by the German orientalist Theodor Nöldeke, exposing -with the aid of an analytical methodology- his orientalist art of manipulation of certain topics, a manipulation which was carried out by implementing the two aforementioned methodologies.

Keywords: Tradition, Epistemological Study, Performative Study, Theodor Nöldeke.

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The Problem of Orientalism: A Dilemma in Epistemology or in Recognizing the Other?

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Orientalism has striven for some time to produce static paradigms for orientalist topics which are described as backward among a host of other disparaging descriptions. The orientalist objective is for such topics to remain in a subordinate status, and to be repeated monotonously in a manner which suits the interests of the West. Proceeding from this objective, orientalists have carried on extensive research on the East, exploring numerous topics and implementing various techniques, from travel literature to the orientalism of local cultures. Thus, the study of the “other” has evolved from researching the other for the purpose of conquering him and maintaining exploitation of his lands, and has been transformed to a state-aligned institution through various forms.

This essay employs an academic methodology, which at times includes criticism and providing direction, in its examination of Edward Said’s hypothesis. It attempts to survey a history of dual and difficult relationships –epistemological relationships which have not occurred in circumstances conducive to a healthy acquaintance between nations, but have been rather reduced to epistemological opinions and inferences made by a group of orientalists in Europe and later in America and elsewhere. This is done while recognizing the role of Said in subjecting the philosophy of orientalism to criticism and reformative analysis, which has opened the way for Arab and Muslim researchers, among others, to understand the background and aims of orientalism, subjecting it to research, analysis and criticism.

Keywords: Edward Said, Reformative Criticism and Analysis, Philosophy of Orientalism, Occidentalism, Colonialism, Political Orientalism.

(*)- **University Professor, Lebanon. This essay was published in 1983 in Issue 31 of the journal Al-Fikr al-‘Arabi. Khalil authorized the journal Dirāsāt Istishrāqiyah to republish this essay after applying the necessary modifications.**

Imam Jaafar Al-Sadeq: An Orientalist Perspective

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Orientalist studies on the Islamic World and Islamic heritage have not been restricted to a certain historical era and have investigated the details of various stages in Islamic history. The period which directly followed the demise of Prophet Mohammad was no less important than the period spanning the Prophet's lifetime from the perspective of orientalists who proceeded to analyze and discuss the events after the Prophet's death, the subsequent era of the Imams, and later stages in Islamic history.

The central and constructive role which Imam Jaafar al-Sadeq played in establishing and clarifying jurisprudential and theological themes of Imami Shiism is considered a rich research domain. The legacy and role of Imam Jaafar al-Sadeq in reviving fields of knowledge has driven prominent Western researchers to direct their attention to this research field. This is particularly evident through the encyclopedias, essays, research papers, and studies on Islam which have been published in the West and which frequently include studies on the life and teachings of Imam Jaafar al-Sadeq. This essay scrutinizes orientalist entries in encyclopedias, research, scholarly articles, book chapters, and university dissertations on Imam Jaafar al-Sadeq, followed by an analysis of Imam al-Sadeq's impact on Islamic jurisprudence, hadith, and theology. The essay divides the opinions of orientalists into four sections and proceeds to criticize each one of them: The Imamate of Imam al-Sadeq, Imam al-Sadeq's opinion regarding the Caliphs, Imam al-Sadeq and Mu'tazili thought, and the influence of Imam al-Sadeq on Shiite thought.

Keywords: Imam Jaafar al-Sadeq, Mu'tazili Thought, Western Studies, Jonathan Brown, Karim Douglas Crow, Wilferd Madelung, Mathew Pierce, Shiite Thought.

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The Emergence of Shiism and Shiites from an Orientalist Perspective: A Critique of the Opinions of Heinz Halm

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Orientalists have displayed a marked interest in Islam, Muslims, Islamic sects, and the geography of Muslim countries, meticulously researching all possible topics and even focusing on issues, themes, and details which Muslims themselves have not tackled. It is clear that such a scholarly effort does not merely emerge from the desire to acquire knowledge, especially when we consider the fact that orientalist studies on the main sources of Islam lack academic rigor, objectivity, or a systematic methodology, and that many orientalists do not scrutinize the sources of their information in a scholarly manner. In this context, orientalist studies on Shiite history and theology and on Shiite Imams and scholars have not departed from this course.

This essay attempts to specify in general the date of the introduction of the study of Shiism and Shiites into the orientalist research framework. Some historians have noted that the gradual familiarity with Shiism commenced with the Crusades, and that the beginning was marked with a brief introduction to Ismaili Shiites. This was followed by the second phase which may be traced to the Safavid period (10th to 12th century AH). It appears that the first serious scholarly effort in Shiite studies during the 19th century was exerted by the Hungarian orientalist Ignác Goldziher (1850-1921). This was followed by many studies on Shiism and Shiites throughout the years until contemporary times, such as the work undergone by the German researcher Heinz Halm and others. The research of Halm revolves around the history of Islam in the Middle East -particularly the history of early Shiites, Ismailis, and other Shiite subdivisions- and the political impact of Shiites on the historical transformations in Iran. It also clarifies a wide range of doctrines adopted by Shiite subdivisions and introduces the doctrinal and historical foundations of Shiites.

Keywords: Heinz Halm, Shiism, Shiites, Emergence of Shiites, Religious Party, Religious Phenomenon, Early Islam, Imam Ali, Caliph.

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The “Shi’i Quran” in Western Studies

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There is a considerable extent of orientalist and Western examination of topics and issues on Shiism, but Western scholarly perspectives on many details pertaining to this field of study are not unified. This is mostly evident in critical topics such as the Quran in Shiite thought, a subject matter which researchers have focused on ever since the emergence of Shiite studies, and a primary issue tackled by Western scholarship. In this context, this essay examines the so-called Shi’i Quran in Western studies by considering the differences in opinion regarding the variant readings of the Quran. It is claimed that there are old Shiite allegations regarding the loss of the authentic edition of the Quran, and it is stated that these allegations receded with the passage of time until Shiites began to claim their acceptance of the canonical ‘Uthmanic edition. Many studies have been published on this issue, the first of which was Todd Lawson’s survey published in 1991 under the title “Note for the Study of a Shi’i Quran”.

This essay states that it is clear and universally accepted that a number of variant readings of the Quran existed shortly after the time of Prophet Muhammad’s death. However, it is not known either how many variants there were, or how greatly they differed from the later ‘Uthmanic text. According to the author, this uncertainty has provided the opening for some Shiites to advance a claim that there was an original text which authorized Imam Ali and the family of the Prophet to lead the Ummah. However, this uncertainty also provided the opposite opportunity. That is, it allowed opponents of the Shia to falsely ascribe such views to Shiites for the sake of making them appear heretical and thereby discrediting the party. The author points to the fact that only a very few variants and textual differences may be attributed to Shiites, and that “surat al-nurayn” (Surah of the Two Lights) and “surat al-walayah” (Surah of Divine Friendship) are forgeries.

Keywords: Shi’i Quran, Shiism, Messianism (Mahdism), Legitimate Authority, Western Scholarship, Shiites of Ali.

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Orientalist Fallacies in Quranic Studies: An Analytical and Critical Examination

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This essay aims to expose the intentional and unintentional fallacies promoted by orientalists in their study of the Holy Quran. Orientalists have perpetually striven to prove the human origin of the Quran and have accordingly presented various allegations, attributing the Quran to the influence of other religions or to the authorship of Prophet Muhammad. To justify their unfounded claims, orientalists have suggested theories and interpretations on the personality of Prophet Muhammad. Most orientalist efforts have been confined to these inclinations, despite the variety in orientalist thought as presented by figures such as Ignác Goldziher, Theodor Nöldeke, and Arthur Jeffery among others. Even though many studies consider that the methodologies employed by orientalists are academically sound, this essay contradicts this view and asserts that these orientalist methodologies are not valid and that they represent misleading arguments. This essay is divided into three sections: The first section clarifies the motives behind the orientalist interest in the study of the Quran, the second section examines the orientalist fallacies in the study of the Quran, while the third section focuses on a set of examples on orientalist fallacies at the level of Quranic studies, topics, and research techniques.

Keywords: Holy Quran, Orientalist Fallacies, Methodologies, Influence, Doubt, Questionability, Fabrication, Projection, Selectivity.

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