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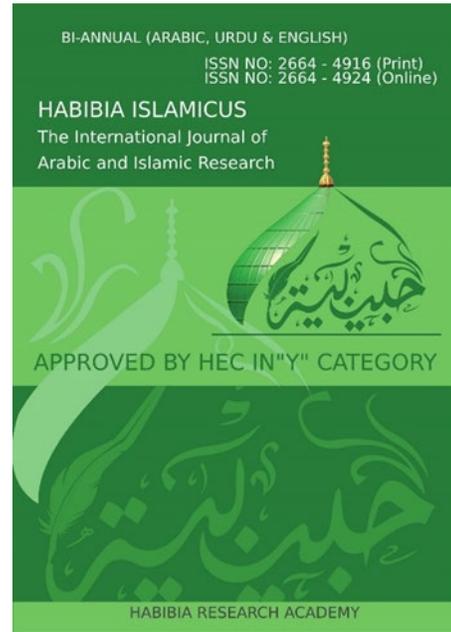
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**TOPIC:**

**THE EVOLUTION OF ISLAMIC HISTORIOGRAPHY UNDER THE SUPREMACY OF THE HOLY QURAN AS A PRIMARY SOURCE OF ISLAMIC HISTORIOGRAPHY THROUGH AGES**

**AUTHORS:**

1. Sohail Akhtar, Research Scholar in History, Lecturer Ghazi University, D. G. Khan. Email: [sakhtar@gudgk.edu.pk](mailto:sakhtar@gudgk.edu.pk), Orcid ID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-9344-7551>
2. Sajeela Perveen, Research Scholar, GU. D. G. Khan. Email: [sajilahaider@gmail.com](mailto:sajilahaider@gmail.com) Orcid ID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-9749-7230>
3. Muhammad Asim Rafiq, Research Scholar, GU. D. G. Khan. Email: [m.asimrafiq@gmail.com](mailto:m.asimrafiq@gmail.com), Orcid ID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-2771-5156>

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**THE EVOLUTION OF ISLAMIC HISTORIOGRAPHY UNDER THE  
SUPREMACY OF THE HOLY QURAN AS A PRIMARY SOURCE OF ISLAMIC  
HISTORIOGRAPHY THROUGH AGES**

*Sohail Akhtar, Sajeela Perveen, Muhammad Asim Rafiq*

**ABSTRACT:**

*Islam is the universal religion for the mankind and Allah almighty revealed Holy Quran as the last revealed book and a complete code of life for human being. The beginning of Islamic historiography is with the writing of the Holy Quran. It is considered that Holy Quran is the first written book of Islam which is a torch bearer for not only all mankind as well as for the Muslim Historians. The Holy Prophet ordered to write the Holy Quran and the companions wrote the Quran to preserve it for generation to generation. During first two centuries of Muslim Historians followed the trend of historiography set by The Holy Quran. Muslim historians started their historiography under the Islamic ideology based on truth. Muslims Historians tried and attempt to write their historiography according to the light of Quran. Quran is not only a book of religious matters but it is book of primary sources. No body among the Muslim historians can neglect the role and contribution of the Holy Prophet in Muslims historiography. This paper highlights the role and contribution of the Holy Quran in Islamic History as “The Holy Quran as a primary source of Muslim Historiography.*

**KEYWORDS:** the evolution of Islamic historiography, the supremacy of the Holy Quran as a primary source, Islamic historiography through ages, Historians, Historiography.

**INTRODUCTION:** The Paper primarily deals with the contribution of Holy Quran in the formation of the foundation of Islamic historiography according to the light of Islam. There is no doubt that Quran is the most authentic book of this universe and it has played a vital role in the foundation of Muslim’s historiography and other sciences. Quran is the basic source of the history of Islam as well as the Islamic ideology and Islamic jurisprudence. All the rules and regulations of humanity are found in this holy book. The Muslims believe that this book is pure from any error and it has full command to guide. This is Quran which clearly stated the events of the ancient nations which were out of sight and no other book have clear concept or knowledge about those nations which destroyed or faced torment due to disobedience. It is the Holy Quran which explored the realities and told the people to learn a lesson from the past. History is also considered the study of past and it took the events from the Quran. So this paper is an attempt to explore the role of Quran as a primary source in Islamic Historiography.

**Research Methodology** Holly Quran as a source of historiography is purely a based on historical knowledge and due to qualitative approach historic method of research has been used to compile this research paper with the help of historic material consist of primary and secondary data.

**Review of Literature:** The most relevant literature to this topic has been consulted for this research as Quran, Hadith, Seerat-ul-Nabi, Tareekh-e-Islam, Philosophy of History, Historiography, History of Islamic Historiography, Muslim Historians and many other books and articles.

**Historical Perspective:** Historically it is very clear that Quran and Hadith are the basic sources of Islamic historiography. Before the first revelation of the Quran at the cave of Hira there were no authentic book of the ancient history was available. The prophet ordered the companions to learn and write the Quran. The Prophet (PBUH) had assigned about forty Companions to write the Quran. The writing of Quran was the first step toward the Islamic historiography and it motivated the companions to write the Holy Quran and as well as the Ahadith. Basically Hadith was the interpretation of the Quran as it is said,

بعد القرآن يأتي الحديث لانه بيان للناس

In short Muslims started their historiography, from Quran and Hadith and gradually they started to write Seerat, Maghazi, Biographies and other aspects of history.

**Discussion:** The word history derived from Latin word "Historia" which means to investigate, research or inquiry. In Arabic the word "Arkh" is for day, date, era or epoch if we look at the science of history.<sup>1</sup> In Islam as the Quran considered it the past event as story or Tails of the nations as in Surah Yousuf; "And we have sent lot of stories towards to you so that you may learn a lesson".<sup>2</sup> It is a common knowledge like other sciences and it has superiority over the human sciences. This is the most important but less advanced knowledge of human life. History began with the creation of Adam, because the occurrence of events is history. And there is a deep connection between man and history. The history of history consists of two periods, one pre-written and the other post-written. The pre-writing period looks at archeology, anthropology and linguistics, as well as coins, books, seals, tools, weapons, pottery, architecture and antiques. Then human remains also provide the state of time such as bones, skulls, organs are human history, different languages Sumerian, Hebrew, Syriac, Dravidian, Aryan, Arabic, etc. are also evidence of the periods of history.<sup>3</sup> The definition of history in the Urdu encyclopedia is that the word history is the source of the Arabic language. And it literally means the occurrence of an event, as if writing events is history.<sup>4</sup> Shibli thinks that history began with a story -While Shibli believes that history is the sum of the changes that nature has made in human events and circumstances and the effects that man has had on the world of nature. In the same way, it is history to find out the conditions and events of the world and to find out the causes and causes of the evolution of civilization and events by connecting them with each other.<sup>5</sup>

While Allama Iqbal sees history as a matter of the world instead of region or race, he considers it narrow-minded to limit it to one region. 6 An important part of history is the study of world religions, about which the Holy Qur'an states that the religion of mankind has been only Islam, but man himself divided it into pieces and man was divided into different planets. Mankind was a nation, later divided into sects and sects."<sup>7</sup> Similarly, the

ancient occupations before the Flood of Noah are revealed in the past. It is known from the Quran that before the Flood of Noah, people had taken up different professions. This is very clear that all these information of the past have no other authentic source only the Holy Quran which is the evidence of all record of the Past. The Holy Quran also explained the disaster of Nooh AS when he called the nation towards Allah Almighty they refused and became disobedient. Maulana Akbar Shah Khan narrates many types of history, such as general and special, traditional and non-traditional. Then, in the same way, critically reviewing history, he says that many narrators have made many changes in the course of historiography. In his view, only trustworthy and authentic traditions are possible from the Quran. <sup>8</sup>The writing of Quran and then Hadith was an important phase of Islamic historiography. As Al-Sahavi mentioned that history decides the authenticity and importance of the Quran and Sunnah. Muslim historiography is incomplete without the Quran and Sunnah.<sup>9</sup>

Similarly, that important point is that the Companions of the Holy Prophet (PBUH) started historiography in their time were also writing Tafseer-e-Quran (commentary). These Quranic commentaries were the earlier books on Islamic historiography. Among these commentaries, the commentary of Hazrat Abi Bin Kaab and the other Hazrat Abdullah Ibn Abbas are famous. Hazrat Kaab RA died in 19 AH during the reign of the 2nd caliph Hazrat Umer Farooq RA. His Tafseer is the first regular commentary written by the Companions. From this commentary, Allama Tabari has narrated many traditions in his book Tareekh Tabari. Apart from Tabari, before him Imam Ahmad Bin Hambal in *Musnad* and Imam Abu Abdullah Al-Hakim Neshapuri in his book *Mustadrak* have narrated traditions from this commentary. If we consider, the death of Imam Hakim is about 406 AH. This means that in the fifth century AH, which is the time of Banu Abbas, the commentary of Abi Kaab was present and it was famous. As the saying;

" اما ابى بن كعب فعنه نسخة كبيرة يرويها ابوا جعفر رازى بواسطه ربيع بن انس بن العاليتة عنه و هذا اسناد و صحيح." <sup>10</sup>

Similarly, now Al-Nadeem in his book, this is one of the books of Tafsir which describes the virtues not only this, but it proves that it is the first source in Tafsir which was written in the early days of Islam. <sup>11</sup>

The other important historical document of the same period is the Tafseer Ibn Abbas. This is considered the most reliable. This commentary was written by Hazrat Abdullah bin Abbas who was the greatest scholar of Quran and Hadith and he was the cousin of the Holy Prophet. The main attribute of this book is the trust of historians and most historians cite Ibn Abbas as a reference. Regarding the commentary of Ibn Abbas, Imam Ahmad Bin Hambal says that there is a copy of it in Egypt, while Imam Muhammad Bin Ismail Bukhari and Hafiz Ibn Hajar Asqalani are also convinced that this commentary is authentic. Acknowledge. Among all of the books of tafsir, Tafsir Ibn Abbas was the most popular. This tafsir was present in every good library in the world in the past. <sup>12</sup>

These Quranic commentaries are a clear indication that Islamic history began with the writing of the Qur'an and then the Companions of the Prophet laid the foundation for the history of Islam by laying the groundwork for writing commentaries on the Quran. These are the interpretations that explain various events and in Islamic historiography by the Holy Quran they have the upper hand over all the secondary sources as basic historical and primary sources.<sup>13</sup> The Companions were learned scholars of the Quran and Hadith and they passed on the work of the Quran and Hadith to their followers who did not spare a single minute in taking the legacy of historiography to the heights. Among these followers are Saeed Bin Jabeer, Abul Aliyah, Muhammad Bin Al-Qarzi, Aswad Bib Yazid, Zaid Bin Aslam, Alqama Bin Qais, Qatadah and Khawaja Hassan Basri. The period of these subordinates ended in 181 AH. It is said that the last of the *Tabi* was the Half Bin Khalifah. He is said to have visited the last companion of Hazrat Amir Bin Wathila who passed away in 110 AH. And the oath died in 181 AH. All of these people, along with their commentaries, portrayed the condition of their time. Their manuscripts were distributed to every corner of the Islamic world, because the temptation to propagate Greek philosophy in that period also raised its head. Prevention was also necessary.

One of the most important concepts of Islamic history is the Quran, which is the basis of Islamic historiography. And all the sciences were compiled under the same principle. The basic principle of which is that in historiography and chronology, history should be written using truth and honesty and not distort the facts for the sake of expediency. The Quran promotes truthfulness in all spheres of life and therefore prevents lying in any science. The stories of the nations in the Quran are the concept of history through which the message of learning is supported. The narrator of events here is Allah Himself, the Creator of the universe. The Quran is the bearer of truth and its followers, with a special passion for its breathed soul, sought to compile the knowledge of history according to the principles laid down by the Quran.<sup>14</sup> The word history derived from Latin word *historia* and in Arabic the word *Arkh* is for day, date, era or epoch.<sup>15</sup> In Islam as the Quran considered it the past event as story or Tails of the nations as in Surah Yousif.

And we have sent lot of stories towards you so that you may learn a lesson".<sup>16</sup>

The development of historiography in east started with the advent of Islam in Arabic in 610 A D with the revelation of Quran at the cave of Hira.<sup>17</sup> The Muslims started their history with teaching of Islam in the perspective of Quran, which is the code of life for the Muslims. When we look the beginning of Islamic historiography, we cannot neglect the role and influence of religion on Muslim historiography.<sup>18</sup> All the guidance which we get from Islamic history it based on the True concept of Islamic Ideology which based on Holy Quran the base of Islamic Ideology can be judged according to the light of religious role in History. Islamic concept of History cannot discussed separately than the teaching of Islam and Islamic contribution to Historiography is vast and the founder of Islam Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) also taught the true basis of Islamic ideology and its base on truth.<sup>19</sup>

The Quran also emphasized to propagate the compulsion of religion and insisted the way which is most peaceful in meaning. If we look history, Quran which is a holy book, biao or statement or guidance, Hikmat, Science and Philosophy is based on complete truth. Therefore it guides the followers in every discipline of human knowledge<sup>20</sup>

Shibli mentioned, before the Islam Arabs were also aware to write events especially they wrote about the families which known as Asma-ul-Rijal”or the science of the genealogy or biographies.<sup>21</sup> When we look history, its look a dynamic force History is life and must consist of evidence of spoken or written. The Soul of history is truth and it constitute the realities directed by religion it motivates the Faith in God and urges the man to do needful and worship of God and to serve the humanity.<sup>22</sup> It is very important for the Muslims historian that they get guidance from the Holy Quran. The Muslim contribution is according to the light of Islamic ideology of truth and they have formed the entire knowledge and fundamental of historical criticism through Holy Quran.<sup>23</sup> Islam serves as a Model for the whole humanity and the holy Quran is a best source of Islamic laws and history, it consists of divine vision and the divine vision is more absolute and perfect to teach the mankind, it is the book which justified the Islamic contribution<sup>24</sup>

From early Muslim’s Historians, Al-Baironi and IB-e-Maskawia explained the philosophy of history in the light of the Holy Quran because both were strongly inspired by the Holy Quran. Both scholars studied the Holy Quran and told how the Muslims received knowledge from Quran.<sup>25</sup> The earliest period of Islamic historiography consists of the writing and interpretation of the Quran-The Quran is the first source of Islamic historiography, the authenticity of which is beyond doubt. The Qur'an also provided a detailed account of the condition of the nations, otherwise there was no authoritative source to examine the status of the ancient conditions.<sup>26</sup>

The great building of Islamic historiography has been built on the foundations of the Holy Quran. Which is completely contrary to the tradition. It is the Qur'an that unveiled the living conditions of the people of Aad and *Samud* and other nations and naturally gave the Muslims a chance to test the principle of righteousness in the history of history by making them aware of the conditions of a lost past, When Islamic philosophers explain history in a fundamental way, it is clear that it is the Qur'an that introduced the greatness of mankind and showed man the way to the conquest of knowledge by enlightening him to innumerable sciences. The teachings of the Qur'an are universal and ideal for all humanity. And all the changes and events of the past that have taken place in the past have been explained in detail in the Qur'an so that people can understand them.<sup>27</sup> The Qur'an has already mentioned the way social change is described by today's historians. How time changes and it's not always the same. As the Quran says;

Generally, history is regarded as the truth events, the facts of events from the history. Quran explored the subjects of history as the record of good and evil from the past not only it tells justice and injustice, rights, virtues, sins, races and the weakness of the past nations.<sup>28</sup>

Qurans present the stories of ancient nations as we looked the seven wonder of the world and one of them was the pyramids of Pharaoh (Firaun) in Cairo of Egypt, Quran confirmed the truth as this wonder.<sup>29</sup> “This day shall we save you in the body so that you may be a symbol to those people who will come after you”.<sup>30</sup> Quran clearly explains that Allah is the master of this universe and he is the source of power and the master of Miracles. He always grants opportunity to mankind for correction he has full command on everything sun, stars, sailing ships, day and night.<sup>31</sup> All the religions pushed man to historical truth and the divine power, but it is Islamic ideology which pushed man to acquire a right knowledge and it revealed purely and inspired the historians on the basis of historical criticism, which interpreted and entrusted to the reformation of mankind.<sup>32</sup>

The Quran is a source of guidance and played the massive role during the era of Banu Ummiad and Banu Abbasid in the construction and the foundation of Muslim historiography. Muslims never hesitated from the falsification of history due to the inspiration of the Holy Quran. The Influence of The Holy Quran on the historical work of Muslims had come to the notice in time to time and the Muslims Historians were mostly inspired from this divine,, as in this content, Iqbal also inspired from this influence of Islam. He also said we have discovered the historical foundations of the Muslims historical thoughts from the Holy Quran.<sup>33</sup> As Abul Qasim, quoted the story of God army thought the hearts of saints, he quoted from the Holy Quran, “we shall tell you all the stories of the messengers (of past) through as we shall steady your heart.<sup>34</sup> Same the Quranic philosophy of history is based on the various historical documentary works and it presents that the eternity of the creator.<sup>35</sup> G. J. Baraq stated that Quran is a Sahifa-e-Kainat and the, Ayat are as his sign for the correction of people. He pointed out that there are more than 150 verses to the topics of Prayer, Fasting, Hajj, Zakat, which are directly relevant to the people who are believers. Its words are heart touching especially when spoken.<sup>36</sup>

Flint explained the term history to dig out the truth and also preserve it. According to him truth means what has happened in the past and what is absolute reality. History is a truthful account of the past as well as a faithful record of the good and bad of the human past. No one or historians have a right to suppressions of facts or deliberate the facts and distortions or fabricates the facts of past.<sup>37</sup> The study of history as fact was inspired with Islamic philosophy of history flourished under the patronage of Islam as religion is greatly deal according to the light of Quran and Sunnah. Muslim historians believe that historical information are the source of inspiration.<sup>38</sup> It is a reality that the occurrence of human events from the creation of the universe to the present day, it is clear that the safest book of all these events is Holy Quran and if we consider the Quran as a historical source, it should be clear that the Quran is the most authoritative and comprehensive book in history. Therefore it is the book that preserves the entire history of the universe. Looking at the events of historiography in the Quran, it is clear that there are three types of events which preserved by the Holy Quran. These include ancient cultural and national events, apostolic

events, and individual events, respectively. Similarly, the status of the Qur'an is different from all other books and scriptures. The Qur'an describes the conditions of the first nations. These are events described in a historical context that are not addressed in the history books before the revelation of the Quran. The common and ordinary people were unaware from this situation because they had no other source of information about the very ancient nations and their circumstances which occurred in different times. In addition, the Quran describes the causes of the creation of the universe, as well as the early life of Muslims, such as in Mecca and Medina. Similarly, narrate the stories of Adam, Noah, Abraham, Moses, Jesus and their people as examples. One of the events unveiled in the Qur'an is that of the people of Noah. How Noah's ark survived the flood and the disobedient drowned. Then a new civilization was born from the existence of the survivors. Similarly, the mention of Moses and Firaun and how Moses was born and Firaun had millions of children killed so that no Moses would be born or challenged him. But Moses was brought up in *Firaun's* palace. It was the power and sovereignty of Allah Almighty and His omnipotence cannot be challenged. Even Allah Almighty punished Firaun with Torment and the drowning of *Firaun* is also an important historical event. Muslim historians Ibn Ishaq, Ibn Hisham, Tabari, Ibn Muskawiyah, Ibn Khaldun, etc. based their historiography on Islamic ideology based on the Holy Quran. If we talk about keeping experience in mind to teach man a lesson, then Quran has presented the same philosophy. For example, historical events are presented in the Quran unlike other religions; the Quran provides lessons for the individual and society through historical references.

The Quran makes it clear that people are given time to reform so that their destiny may be better, but those who are not willing are also punished so that they may suffer the consequences of their deeds. In this way, the Quran teaches guidance by attracting people to social organization and reform, which has led to a trend towards social historiography. The concept of the Quran is a lesson in history to distinguish between good and evil, to examine truth and falsehood, and to distinguish between truth and falsehood, which is an important aspect of Islamic historiography.

If we consider the Quran, it becomes clear that it does not only guide history from religious references, but that the concept of time and place in the history of the Quran is different from the general human historical concept. It is difficult for ordinary people to calculate whether it is a day or a month or a year or a century. The concept of Quran is linked to the philosophy of history of good and evil, when man puts the causes behind him in the decline of society or cannot correct it, then Allah interferes in the historical evolution and gives man justice. The Prophet (PBUH) commanded the writing of the Quran and at the same time the rules of memorization were laid down. This has never been seen before. So among the Islamic books, the Quran is the first complete written book and as a supporter it is beyond any doubt. You used to write the Qur'an regularly so that people could benefit from it. That is why on the occasion of the second pledge of allegiance to Aqaba, he handed over

the entire Quran written to a person of Bani Zariq up to that time and he used to go to his tribe and recite it daily.<sup>39</sup> Ibn Ishaq writes in his book Sirat-ul-Nabi that whenever a verse was revealed, he would recite it to men, then to women, and then asked to write it down so that the revealed verse would be preserved. Declare those who used to write the verses of the Quran and recite them after writing, and if there was any mistake, you would correct it.<sup>40</sup> While the ancient religious books traced the condition of this notion. But when one considers the Quran, it is neither the history of a region nor the history of the Arabs, but a collection of the history of the entire human race, covering the stories of the prophets, kings of the time and the nations of the world. The Quran not only mentions these nations but also teaches the Muslim Ummah to learn from the conditions of the previous Ummah.

### CONCLUSION:

This paper is a brief commentary on the role and contribution of Holy Quran as a primary source of Islamic historiography. No doubt Holy Quran is the first complete and authentic book for all the Muslims. Quran as a book is most safe book among the all and it preserved the events of entire universe from the beginning of universe to its end. It covers the whole situation of mankind and that why with the first revelation the prophet ordered to write it. After the period of Prophet (PBUH) all the Muslim Historians adopted the basic concept of Quranic philosophy of History in their writings as Tibri, Ibn-e-Muskawiyah and others. As a source of knowledge there is no other book as compare to the Holy Quran which leads to success, truth, good and moral values. In the end we summed this discussion that in the entire Islamic history the foundation of Islamic historiography is based on the guideline of the Holy Quran. While this, the only source of the ancient history and nations of this universe. All the Muslim Historians inspired from the authentic mode of information which based on absolute facts from the creation of the universe to the dooms day.

والله من ووراءهم محيط - بل هو قرآن مجيد في لوح محفوظ,

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