Rarest Biography Collections On Life Of Prophet Muhammad (Pbuh): As A Part Of Curriculum

Dr. Rukhshanda¹, Dr. Majid Jamal Khan², Dr. Mussarrat Malik².¹

¹ Assistant professor. University of Wah, Wah Cantt Pakistan.

² Associate Professor, COMSATS University Islamabad, Wah Campus Wah Cantt.

².¹ Senior Lecturer. University of Wah, WAh cant.

Abstract

There is no reason to deny the fact that no other civilization of the world could boast so vast a store of literary historical sources as the Islamic civilization. The striking thing in the colossal growth of historical works is the rapidity of its development. In every era incredible and important work on life of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) is done. Some of the ancient and well-known biography on the life of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) written by Muslim scholars. The aim of conducting the work is that the rarest work vanish with the passage of time and current generation is unaware of these tressise. Apart from it, these manuscripts are available in some of the world well known libraries but they are locked in restricted collection. It is need of the day that the rare manuscripts on Life of the Prophet (PBUH) translated to local languages, reprinted and available in print and online languages and part of curriculum.

Keywords: life of Muhammad (PBUH), biography, manuscripts, curriculum

Introduction

In Arabic the word Sirat Rasul Allah (Life of the Messenger of God) or al-Sirat al-Nabawiyah (Prophetic biography) is used biographies, histrocial information and life of Muhammad (PBUH) and early life of islam, written by Muslim and non muslim writer. However, in rare manuscript the fame was acquired to Sirat Rasulallah³ a well known work of author, historian and hagiographer Muhammad Ibn Ishaq (d. 151/768) full name Muhammad Ibn Ishaq ibn Yasar Ibn

¹ Corresponding author. Assistant professor. University of Wah, Wah Cantt Pakistan. rukhshanda.mushtaq@uow.edu.pk

² Associate Professor, COMSATS University Islamabad, Wah Campus Wah Cantt. majidjamal@ciitwah.edu.pk

².¹ Senior Lecturer, University of Wah, WAh cantt. mussarat.malik@uow.edu.pk

Khiyar he was also known as, Ibn Khabbar, or Kuman, or Kutan The work is known as the comprehensive work on the biography of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) till date. Ibn ishaq was an Arab scholar and well known historian of time. Oral tradition used Ibn Ishaq for collection. The book consists of various chapters from the genealogy, life of Prophet before and after revelation, life at Makkah and Madina and concludes with death. Currently, the work is available in form of English version The Life of Muhammad and The Life of Muhammad Apostle of Allah. However, the works have been lost and are only known from the quotations of later authors.

Some of the well known master piece of the author are Al-Mubtada Wa Al-Ba’Th Wa Al-Maghazi—the Kitab al-Mubtada and Kitab al-Mab’ath both present in parts, however al Mab’ath, in ibn Hisham and al-Mubtada manuscript available in whole. He is also credited with the lost works Kitab al-khulafa’, which al-Umawwī related to him and a book of Sunan (Ḥajdjidj Khalifa, II, 1008).

Another scholar and most famous historian in the field of Maghazi literature was Al Waqidi (d. 207/747-823) full name is Abu Abdullah Muhammad Ibn Omar Ibn Waqid al-Aslami of Madina. He is known by his great work “Kitab al-Tarikh wa al-Maghazi” (Book of History and Campaigns), describes the battles (Arabic "Ghazwat") fought by Muhammad.

Bibliography work of the same kind is “Kitab Ul Tabaqat Al Kabir ” (The Great Book Of The Classes) by Muhammad Ibn Saad (d. 230/844-5) full name Abu Abd Allah Muhammad Ibn Saad Ibn Mani Al-Basri Al-Hashimi Katib Al-Waqidi or simply Ibn Saad and nicknamed "Scribe of Waqidi" (Katib al-Waqidi) a pupil of Al-Waqidi commonly called Katib Al- Waqidi (Scribe of Waqidi).
During the first Abbasid century, we also notice the celebrated historical works of distinguished Arab historians like Abu Ubaydah Amir Ibn Abdullah Ibn Al-Jarah is commonly known as Abu Ubayda (d. 825), Al-Azraqi (d. 834) who wrote a history of Mecca12,13, Al- Madaini (Abu Al Hasan Ali) (d. between 830-845), author of “Kitab Al Maghazī” and “tarikh Al Khulafā”14, Al Zubair Ibn Bakkar (d. 870) wrote a work entitled “Muwaffiqiyat”15,16, Abu Al Hasan Al Masudi full name Abu Al-Hasan Ali Ibn Al-Husayn Ali Al-Masudi (d. 896–956), wrote a great historical work the “Akhbar Al Zaman” and some other works20. Arabic historical literature is so extensive and important that the producers of it may reasonably be proud. It is a product of several countries and not of Arabia alone.

Some literary men of Central Asian origin had begun to translate works, not existing in Arabic literature. The chief work translated out of the Pehlevi into Arabic was the fables of “Kalila And Dimma” by Ibn Al-Muqaffa17 (d.720-757), and “Khudai Nama” under the title “Siyar Muluk Al Iran”22.

Among the other first formal historians there were two names sake of Central Asian origin, one of them is Ibn Qutaiba also known as Abu Muhammad Ibn Muslim Al-Dinwari d. 276/ 889-90) was of Central Asian extraction18. His chief work “Kitab Al Maarif” (book of knowledge) is the first Arabic manual of history19. His contemporary Abu Hanifa Al-Dinwari commonly known as Ahmad Ibn Daud (d. 282/995-6)20 wrote his historical work “Akhnar At Tiwal” (Book Of Long Stories)21.

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12 Sahih al-Bukhari book of Maghazi, Ghazwa Saif-al-Jara
13 Tabqat ibn al-Saad volume no:1, chapter no:1, p. 138
22 Houtsma, M., T. Encyclopedia of Islam, Brill Academic, 1993 p. 977
i. Al-Baladhuri Era

Ahmad Ibn Yahya (d. 892 AD) was a historian of Central Asian origin. He wrote two important works known as “Kitab Futuji Al Buldan” (History of the Muslim conquests) and another book “Kitab Ansab Al-Ashraf” (the book of the lineages of the nobles) which is a chronicle of the early history of the caliphate. One of the most important representatives of this epoch was Muhammad Ibn Jarir Abu Jafar Al-Tabari (d. 310/922-3) a great scholar of Central Asia who was equally prominent as a commentator of the Quran and a historian. He wrote a monumental history which bears the title “Tarik Al Rusul Wal Muluk” (the history of the Prophets and the Kings). “Balami”, Abu Ali Muhammad Bin Muhammad Ziqid of the Samarids in Central Asia, translated it into Persian (Tarjameye Tarikh Tabari). In the opinion of W. Barthold “for the history of the first three centuries of Islam Abn Al Athir’s chief source was the compilation of Al-Tabari’s work”. Al-Tabari has been justly called “The Father Of Arab History”.

The two more historical works on the history of Bukhara of Samanid Kingdom were written by Abu Abdullah Muhammad Ahmad Bin Sulayman Al-Bukhari (d.312/924)Somewhat later in 332/993-4, Abu Bakr Muhamamd Bin Jafar Al Narashakhi (d. 348-959) wrote in Arabic a “History of Bukhara” in a most eloquent style. Another work was written by Abu Abdullah Muhammad Bin Ahmad Al-Bukhari Al-Ghunjar (d. 412/1012) a librarian and paper manufacturer by profession.

ii. The Ghaznavids era

The Ghaznavids contributed both to history and culture, one of the most prominent figures of the period is Abu Nasi Al-Utbi (d. 427/1035) who wrote a panegyric biography of the valiant sultan under the title “Tarikh i Yamini”, it was translated from Persian into English in 1858 by James Reynolds under the title, Kitab-i-Yamini. Contemporary with Utbi was the most outstanding historian of this age Al-Biruni, Abdir Rayhan Muhammad Bin Muhammad birth place is Khwarizm (d. 1048 Ghazna). His most important works are “Al Athar Al Baqiya An Al Qurun Al Khaliya”, “Tarihik Hind” and “Al-Qanun Al Masudi”.

About 1050 AD, Abu Saaid Abdul Hay Bin Ad Dahhak Gardizi wrote his masterpiece “Zaynu Al Akhbar” (The Adoring Of History). In 459 AH/1058 Mahmud Warraq wrote the history of “Several Millennia” to 409. Al-Bayhaqi frequently quotes from it in his book. Another great work


iii. The Seljuk Era

Of the Seljuk period in the 12th century a well known work in the historical literature

a. “Mujmil Al Tawarik Wal Qisis” (The Collection of histories and Tales) written in the year 520/1126 by an unknown author, which records events from the creation of the world and brought down up to 520 AH.

b. “Lam At Tawarik” by Abu Al Futuh Barakat Bin Mubarak Bin Ismail born on 460 AH/ 1068 AD (d. 525AH/ 1131 AD).


d. The most outstanding work of this epoch is “Rahatu’s Sudur” by Abu Bakr Najmud Din Muhammad Bin Ali Al-Rawandi which embraces the history of Seljuke upto 595 AH/1199 and is based on “Seljuk Nama” of Zahirud Din Nishpuri This work is now extant.

iv. The Ghorid era

During the Ghorid period, Minhaj I Siraj Muhammad Juzjani, wrote a large general history entitled “Tabaqat-I-Nasir” (The Generations Of Nasiri). The author was the foremost historian of the Delhi Sultanate.

v. The Mongol Era

During the Mongol period, one of the most important works is “Jami-Ut-Tawarikh” (Collector Of Chronicles) by Rashid-Ud-Din Fadlullah Tabib (d.1318 AD). The writer was born in Hamadan, Tabriz in 1248 AH. It is one of the greatest historical works of the Central Asia, written in Persian.

31 Grunebaum,G.E.V., Classical Islam: A History, 600-1258. p. 113
b. Another earliest work of the Mongol times is the “Tarikh-I-Jahangushay” (History Of The World Conquer) by Ala Ud Din Ata Malik Al-Juwayi (d. 681 AH/1283 AD)36.

c. Among the historical literature of the Mongal period. The most important as a source is called “Tajziyatut Ul Amsar-U-Taz Jiyatul Al Sar” also called as “Tarikh Vassaf” by Shibah-Ud-Din Abdullah Bin Fadlallah Sharaf Shirazi.

d. By the 14th century, there appeared another great work entitled “Tarikh-I-Guzida” (Selected History) composed by Hamdullah Bin Abu Bakr Mustawfi Quzwini37.

vi. Timurids era

During the Timurids Regin, a large amount of historical literature was produced. The first work is the “Majma ’U’T Tawarik” (A Compendium of History) composed by Abdullah Bin Lutfullah Bin Abdur Rashid Bihdadin38 (d. 833 AH/1430 AD), only known as Hafiz Abru39, a court historian of Shahrukh. Ulugh beg, Shahrukh’s son, composed a work entitled “Tarikh-I Arbaulus” deals with the history of the whole Mongol Empire.

Two more outstanding compilations were the “Raudatus Safa Fi Sirat Al Anbiya” by Muhammad Bin Khavand Shah, best known as Mir Khvand (d. 903 AH/1498). It consists of seven books40. The second work was the “Habibus Siyar” composed by Ghiyath Ud Din Muhammad, better known as Khvand Amir.

Another well known work of Muhammad Mahdi Khan Astarabadi, who served as a secretary of Nadir Shah. They are “Tarikh I Jahangushai Nadiri” (History of Nadir Shah's Wars) and the Durra-I-Nadira41.

In the 12th/18th century there appeared also the historical compositions of Khwaja Niamtullah Al Haravi, Court Historian of Mughal Emperors Akbar and Jehangir. The historical work, which bears the title of “Tarikh-I-Khanjahani U Makhzan-I-Afghani” was written in 1021 AH/1613. It deals with the ancient history and the genealogy of the Afghans42.

vii. Shaybani era:

Of the Shaybani period, one work which enjoys the greatest reputation is the “Book Of Shaybani” or “Shaybani Nama” in the verse form\textsuperscript{43}.

A large number of historical literature was produced in the subcontinent by the eminent writers of the age who belonged to Central Asia in one way or another. Among them, earliest work is “Futuhu’s Saltin” (the conquests of sultans), by Isami “Tabaqat-I Akhbari” (The Generation Of Akbar) was composed by Nizaam-Ud-Din Al-Haravi (d.1003/1594)\textsuperscript{50}.

These historical works, another work of great reputation is “Muntakhabuat Tarikh” (Selection From History) by Abdul Qadir Badauni, a historian of Akbar’s court\textsuperscript{44,45}. Another well-known work was written by Muhammad Qasim Hindu Shah, born in Astarabad (d.978AH.1570AD) commonly called Firishta. This work is known as “Gulshan Ibrahimi” or “Tarikh-I-Firista”\textsuperscript{46}.

Many historical works flowed from the pen of historians on the history of Mughal empire.

Among these the best and well-known work is “Siyarul Muta Akhkrin” written by Ghulum Husain Khan Tabatabai.

The two subjects were in the foreground of interest in the early days of Islam are the Biography of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) and the events of the first Battle of Islam (Al-Maghazi). That is the reason that the Arabic literature is rich in biographies literature produced in Central Asia is also abundant. A large number of works dealing solely with the life of the Holy Prophet and his companions, caliphs, imams ruling figures, saints, scholar, poets and biographies of other elite were written.

The biographical sketch of the Holy Prophet (PBUH) also existed the interest of the Central Asian scholars and historians. Among these works “Maariju Nubuva Fi Madarji Ul Futuva” composed by Muin Ud Din Farahi (d.907-1501) and the “Madarij Un Nubuva” written by Sheikh Abdul Haqq Dehlvi\textsuperscript{47}, “Shavahidu Un Nubuva” by the renowned poet and “Raudatul Ahbab Fi Siyari Un Nabi Vaul Al Val Asbab” (d. 900AH/1494-95).

Among these books the lives of eminent saints, ascetics and mystics, the best known works are “Halat U Sukhanan-I Sheikh Abu Saad” composed by Muhammad Bin Abi Rauh Lutuffullah Bin Abi Saad, “Manaqibul Arifin” written by Shams Ud Din Ahmad Aflaki in the (d. 600AH /

\textsuperscript{50} Habib, Irfan, H., Akbar and His India. New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1997.
\textsuperscript{44} Majumdar, R. C., The Mughul Empire. 2007
\textsuperscript{45} The History And Culture Of The Indian People. Mumbai:Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan. VII (4th ed.). pp. 6-7.
\textsuperscript{46} Miers, E.H., The History of India, As Told by Its Own Historians.
\textsuperscript{47} Abd al-Haqq “Haqqi” Dihlavı Buḫārī d. 1052/1642. Profile Packard Humanities Institute
1400AD\(^48\) and “Rashahat-I-Ayni Ul Hayat” (The Drops Of The Spring Of Life) composed by well known Husain Waiz Kashifi.

There are a large number of collective biographies that flowed from the pen of the Central Asian scholars in both Persian and Arabic some of these celebrated works are “ Vafayat Al Ayan” composed in Arabic by Ibn Khallikan (d. 681 AH/ 1282AD)\(^50\), “Tabaqat-I-Shahjahani” was written in Persian by Muhammad Sadiq Hamdani, “ Majalisul Mum’Minin” by Syed Nurullah Bin Sayyid Sharif Shishtari\(^49\), “ Haft Iqlim” was written by Amin Razi, “ Tadhkirat Ul Auliya” by poet Farid Ud Din Attar\(^50\) and “ Nafaht Ul Uns” an original Persian work of the later period by Nur ad-Dīn Abd ar-Rahmān Jami\(^51\).

Among the works about the lives of poets and scholars, the first work of this nature is the “Lubab Ul Albab” written by the poet Sadiduddin Muhammad Aufi (1171-1242)\(^52\), Daulat Shah Al Samarqandi composed “ Tadhkiratul Sh-Shul Ara” (Memories Of Poets)\(^53\). An excellent work entitled “ Khutasat Ul Ashar Va Zubda Tul Afkar” composed by Taqi Ud Din Muhammad Khikri commonly known as Taqi Kashi (d.993AH/1585AD)\(^54\). Among other Tadhkiras composed “ Atashkada” by Haji Luf Ali Beg Adhar, “ Arafatul Arifin Va Arasatul Ashiqin” written by Sheikh Hazing (d. 1165 AH/1752AD) and “ Riyadu Sh-Shu Ara ” composed by Ali Auli Khan Valigh Daghistani\(^55\).

Conclusion

The main purpose of conducting the desk research is that highlight the manuscripts work of the above rare manuscripts are vanishing with the passage of time. The manuscripts on Life OF Prophet (PBUH) are not available to local person as they are locked and kept in restricted areaes. These manuscripts are use as a reference by scholars but not avaible to scholars as these manuscript

\(^49\) Hasan,S.N.,& Satish Chandra, S., Religion, State, and Society in Medieval India. 2005, p. 76.
\(^51\) Chad,L., Jami's Salaman va Absal: Political Statements and Mystical Advice Addressed to the Aq Qoyunlu Court of Sultan Ya'qub (d. 896/1490). Iranian Studies, 2011, 44 (2): 175–191
\(^54\) ibid
\(^55\) Aziz ahmad Studies in Islamic culture in the Indian environment Oxford University press 1964
are either not existing or lock in the restricted section of libraries. A very few number of scholars knows the existing of these manuscripts around them or only the theologian scholars concern the manuscripts on Life Of The Prophet (PBUH). Therefore, it is required that translate the manuscript and make it a part curriculum in academic institutions. So, that new generation come to know in depth about the life of Holy Prophet (PBUH).

**SUGGESTION AND RECOMMENDATION**

- translate the manuscript in local, national and international languages and make it available online as well. Hence, the new generation acquire knowledge about the Holy Prophet (PBUH) life and religion, hardship life of Holy Prophet (PBUH) and his companions. And the true meaning of Islam open to new generation

- A long and lengthy procedure has to be followed by the researchers for access to these manuscripts. Therefore, the manuscripts needs to be part of curriculum at least at higher education level. So that the upcoming researchers will conducted by the researcher on different perspectives

- Include a subject on the life of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) in curriculum at different level.

- Make the manuscript available in hard and soft form in online libraries.