

# **The Life & Work of the Prophet of Islam, Vol.1 by Mahmood Ahmad Ghazi: A Reading**

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“If a book is worth reading, it is worth buying.” John Ruskin  
(1819-1900)

## **Introduction**

*Sirah* or Life of the Prophet of Islam (*Sal'lallahu 'Alayhi Wa Sallam*) has been a subject of great significance for Muslim scholarship and common man as a normative source of guidance. *Sirah* has been a subject of endless series of writings and studies done by historians, traditionalists, jurists and scholars interested in the disciplines of social sciences.<sup>1</sup>

In the 1<sup>st</sup> century of Islam, *Sirah* became a vital source of developing the religious, socio-economic and political laws of Islam, interpretation of Holy Qur'an, of Islamic history and other areas of the activity. The first three centuries of Islam is a period of compilation and classification of the available

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information about the life, conduct, personality and statements of the Prophet of Islam (peace on him). In the later period, the scholars focused on the interpretation of the collected data and the transformation of Sirah as a systematic discipline.<sup>2</sup>

The arrival of Western colonial powers to the Muslim World in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century opened a new era of studying Sirah. Because of the intense intellectual encounter between the Muslim orient and colonial occident, new aspects of studying Sirah were discovered and a new genre of literature emerged in response to the large quantity of work produced by the Western writers on Sirah.<sup>3</sup>

With this brief preamble of Sirah, we shall now present a *tour de force* on Sirah of the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. This will help the readers to understand the nature of this work.

### **Background of the Work**

In 1959, Dr. Muhammad Hamidullah (1908-2002) produced a masterwork in French language on Sirah entitled: *Le Prophete del' Islam: Sa Vie et Son Oeuvre* (in two volumes). The work has gone through several editions in French and Turkish Languages. A Turkish scholar also translated the first edition of this work in English language. He updated this translation in the light of eighth edition, in which the author had incorporated his latest findings. This translation

was also incomplete at several places and needed improvement and completion because the translator had left the material un-translated in some chapters.<sup>4</sup>

In 1997, Dr. Mahmood Ahmad Ghazi (1950-2010) revised and edited this work with a fresh English translation entitled: *The Life & Work of the Prophet of Islam, Vol. 1*. The English translation was edited by Mehboob Ahmad (Lecturer of Economics in International Islamic University, Islamabad), who also assisted all through its publication process.<sup>5</sup>

In 1998, this work was published by *Islamic Research Institute*, P. O. Box No. 1035, Islamabad, Pakistan with a price of PKR350, US \$30; ISBN: 969-8413-00-6.<sup>6</sup>

While discussing the above work, it would be appropriate and interesting for the readers to recall the academic contributions of the two prominent Muslim scholars of their time (Dr. Muhammad Hamidullah and Dr. Mahmood Ahmad Ghazi), who contributed their scholarship to the above work and other disciplines of Islamic social sciences.

### **Introduction of the Author of French-Work**

The author of the book "*Le Prophete del' Islam: Sa Vie et Son Oeuvre*", Dr. Muhammad Hamidullah<sup>7</sup> (February 19, 1908-December 17, 2002), was one of the most widely read and renowned Islamic scholar of the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century. He represented the unique combination of several academic and

intellectual traditions of the East and the West. He extensively wrote on different aspects of Islam but Sirah was his main area of interest. He introduced new avenues in the study of Sirah and produced a large volume of literature of the subject, characterized by the novelty of its approach, extensive nature of its treatment and the originality of its content. He kept engaged with Sirah for more than six decades and produced dozens of books, hundreds of studies and research papers on different aspects of Sirah. His field of interest included all the disciplines of Islamic Social Sciences. He authored more than one hundred sixty five books and over a thousand research articles in Arabic, Urdu, English, French and German languages.<sup>8</sup>

### **Introduction of the Translator/Author of English-Work**

The book "*Le Prophete del' Islam: Sa Vie et Son Oeuvre*" was translated in English and published with the title "*The Life & Work of the Prophet of Islam, Vol. 1*", by Dr. Mahmood Ahmad Ghazi (1950-2010). Dr. Ghazi was a globally renowned Islamic scholar of the late 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> centuries, acknowledged for his intellectual and academic contributions to *Islamic Social Sciences*, with special reference to the concept of cosmopolitan Islamic jurisprudence.<sup>9</sup>

Justice Dr. Mahmood Ahmad Ghazi was born on September 18, 1950 and died on September 25, 2010 (in Islamabad). He was serving as the Judge of the Federal Shari'at Court of Pakistan (from 26.03.2010 until he expired) and Professor of Shari'ah, Faculty of Shari'ah and Law, International Islamic University, Islamabad from 1987 till 2008.<sup>10</sup>

Professor Ghazi had thorough knowledge of Arabic, English, Persian, Urdu and French languages. During his lifespan, he held numerous academic and administrative positions, fellowships of several national and international scholastic bodies, and attended around 100 national and international conferences. For details, see the endnote.<sup>11</sup>

Dr. Ghazi was an extensively published scholar of English, Urdu and Arabic languages. He has produced more than thirty books in the areas of Islamic law, Muslim political thought, Islamic resurgence, Islamic economics and Islamic education. His major published, unpublished and incomplete works are cited in the endnote<sup>12</sup> of this article.

With this brief introduction of the two Islamic scholars, we shall now present a brief statement of the work and its contents.

### **Statement of the Work**

The volume contains 522 pages; translator's note (p. i); preface to the 1<sup>st</sup> English edition (p. iii), preface to the 5<sup>th</sup>

French edition (p. v); preface to the 4<sup>th</sup> French edition (p. vi); preface to the 2<sup>nd</sup> French edition (p. vii); preface to the 1<sup>st</sup> French edition (p. ix); 5 parts; 51 chapters; name index (pp. 492-512); subject index (pp. 513-517), and a corrigendum (pp. 518-522).<sup>13</sup>

The book is divided into five main parts namely, 1- *Introduction*, 2-*The Appearance*, 3-*The Mission*, 4-*The Hijrah or Immigration to Madinah* and 5-*The Politico-Religious Life*. These parts contain fifty-one chapters having different themes.

In the following segment, we shall provide a glimpse of the major themes of these chapters. While studying these chapters, we notice that the matter is brief, but has genuine references.

### **Themes of the Work**

1-*The Prophet of Islam: Why to Study his Life?*, emphasizes that without studying and following the life of the Prophet, a Muslim cannot become a Muslim, and for a non-Muslim, an unbiased study of the life of Muhammad (peace on him) as a reformer is important to get awareness of the truth (pp. 3-5).

2-*Material and Primary Sources*, about Prophet Muhammad (peace on him) is abundant. The principal sources are Qur'an, Hadith or Sunnah. There are hundreds

of thousands of secondary sources for instance the narrations of Prophet's companions, inscriptions, dedications, biographies, poetry and historical records. However, the contemporary chronicles of the West unfortunately still lacks in having the complete record of Muhammad (peace on him). Therefore, classical and other material available in different languages has been used to produce this work (pp. 6-8).

*3-Environment and Circumstances*, highlights the religious, social, economic and political state of affairs of the neighbours of Arabs i.e. China, India, Turkestan, Mongolia, Byzantine empire, Iran and Abyssinia, before the advent of Islam. Wars, foolish prejudices of race, colour, language or religion, poverty and unequal distribution of wealth was common in that period. Humans had forgotten that all of them were the descendants of one couple: Adam and Eve (pp. 9-13).

*4-Choice of the Venue*, explains the geographical, sociological, psychological, linguistical reasons, and the wisdom and judgment of Allah (*Subhanahu Wa Ta'ala*), in choosing the venue for His last message to humanity (pp.15-19).

*5-Choice of Mecca as the Centre*, discusses the religious, socio-economic conditions and the customs and habits of the people of that period, and advocates that Makkah was the

central and suitable place for the emergence of Islam, in that period of history (pp. 20-22).

6-*Choice of Muhammad for the Supreme Divine Mission*, suggests the rationale and wisdom of Allah (*Subhanahu Wa Ta'ala*) in choosing Muhammad (peace on him) for the divine mission. On the eve of Islam, the City of Makkah was inhabited and ruled by the Arabs of the Quraysh tribes, and a number of residents amounted to about 10, 000. Instead of monarchy, oligarchy of ten principle families reigned over the City-State. Among these was *BanuUmayyah* who held the military power and *Banu Hashim* who seized the religious power, being the two most prominent but rival clans (pp. 23-25).

7-*The Prophet's Ancestors*, gives a brief historical account of the ancestors of Muhammad (peace on him) in the light of Islamic traditions. The description of this ancestry starts from Isma'il (*Alay Salam*), Jurhamis, Adnanis, Qahtanis, Mudrs, Kinanis, Qurayshis, Qusay, Khuza'is, 'Abd al-Manaf, Hashimis, Abd al-Muttalib and ends to Abdallah (pp. 26-29).

8-*Birth of Muhammad*, is a description about Prophet's birth and the family incidents of demise, which took place till he reached the age of eight (pp. 33-37).

9-*The Orphan at his Uncles's House*, gives a brief account of the life of Muhammad (peace on him) as an orphan at his uncle Abu Talib's house. The event of meeting the monk



*Bahira* during the business trip to Basra (Syria) has also been reported, when the Prophet (peace on him) was nine years old (pp. 38-41).

10-*War of Profanation and the Order of Chivalry*, reports the incidents of Prophet's gallantry during the period of his youth hood (pp. 42-45)

11-*Life of Independence*, speaks about the economic activities of the Prophet (peace on him) before marriage with Khadija (Allah be pleased with her) (pp. 46- 48).

12-*Marriage and Family Life*, reports about the Prophet's marriage with Khadija (Allah be pleased with her) and their family life (pp.49-54).

13-*Awakening of Religious Conscience*, states the experience of the revelation during Prophet's private life and the beginning of public life (pp.55-62).

14-*Beginning of the Mission*, describes the beginning of the sacred mission of the Prophet (peace on him). Commentators of the Qur'an have noted that the messages attributed to Zoroaster, Buddha, Moses and Jesus have all mentioned of the coming of someone who will put the finishing touches to what they have not been able to accomplish (pp.65-69).

15-*Communication of the Divine Message*, gives a detail account of the spreading and acceptance of the divine message by the people like Rukanah, 'Umar and Hamzah

(Allah be pleased with them). Miracle of the splitting of the Moon has also been reported (pp.70-86).

16-*Emigration to Abyssinia*, is an account of the persecution of the Muslims in Makkah, the worsening situation and difficulties faced by Muslims which compelled them to migrate from Makkah Abyssinia (pp.87-90).

17-*Social Boycott*, reports the hardships of the Prophet (peace on him) and his followers in the form of social and economic boycott in Makkah by the Quraysh (pp. 91-92).

18-*In Search of Asylum*, is an account of the persecution, worsening situation and difficulties faced by the Prophet (peace on him) in Makkah, which compelled him to take the option of asylum to Ta'if (pp. 93-95). (pp. 93-95).

19-*Mi'raj and Miracles*, gives an interesting detailed account of Isra', *Mi'raj* or the Ascension of the Holy Prophet (peace on him) towards God and a number of his other miracles. In this detailed account, the author has elaborated some interesting and thought provoking points in the light of Qur'an and Ahadith (pp. 96-114).

20-*Islamization of Madinah*, gives a detailed picture of the religious, social, economic and political measures taken by the Holy Prophet (peace on him) to form the Islamic State of Madinah al-Munawwarah (pp. 115-127).

21-*The Women's Role in Islam Before the Hijrah*, elaborates the contribution of Muslim women for Islam

before migration to Madinah. The women discussed under this topic are: Khadijah, Lubabah Bint al-Harith, Ghuzayyah, Umm Sharik, Fatimah bint al-Khattab, Shifa bint 'Abdallah, Sa'da bint Kurayz, Umm Habibah, Saudah; and the persecuted women, specially Sumayyah, 'Ammar ibn Yasir' mother, Zinnirah and Lubaynah (Allah be pleased with all of them) (pp. 128-132).

*22-First Measures Taken in Madinah*, describes the socio-economic steps taken by the Holy Prophet (peace on him) after *Hijrah* or immigration to Madinah in the Islamic State of Madinah. Important measures were rehabilitation of immigrants and forming the faith-based bond of fraternity between the Ansars of Madinah and Muhajirs of Makkah (pp. 135-140).

*23-Organizing the Community*, informs about the typology of the population; the internal affairs of Madinah; implementation of educational system; forming of constitutional law of the first Islamic state by the Holy Prophet Muhammad (peace on him) (pp. 141-153).

*24-Constitution of the State*, provides the translation of the entire text of the Constitution of the City-State of Madinah and a brief introduction of the New Muslim colonies formed in Madinah al-Munawwarah (pp. 154-164).

*25-Relations with the Quraish of Mecca*, is an account of the politico-religious life of the Prophet (peace on him) as the

head of Islamic State of Madinah with the people (Quraysh) of Makkah al-Mukarramah. This part reports the reasons and results of the battles of *Badr*, *Uhud*, *Khan'daq* (Trench); first Maritime-War between Muslims and Quraysh; Unification of Madinah and Makkah and their administrative organization; the last sermon the Holy Prophet (peace on him) at 'Arafat (pp.166-210).

26-*The Ahabish Tribes*, gives a detailed genealogical account of the Ahabish tribes of Makkah, their political affiliation with Quraysh and their religious beliefs (pp. 211-214).

27-*Relations with the Abyssinians*, highlights the relation of Makkans with Abyssinians (in Arabic *Habash*), before and after the Islamic period (pp. 215-230).

28-*The Original of the Letter of the Prophet to the Negus*, contains an analysis of the objections raised by the Orientalists on this letter of the Prophet (peace on him) (pp. 231-234).

29-*Realtions with Egypt*, and Makkah are discussed in the historical perspective which starts from Isma'il (Alayh Salam) this chapter (pp. 235-238).

30-*The original of the Letter to the Moqauqis*, offers contents of this letter written by the Prophet (peace on him) with an analysis on the objections of the Orientalists (pp.239-243).

31- *Relations with the Byzantine Empire*, provides a detail account of the relations of Christian-Muslim States of that era i.e. Ghassans of Syria and Byzantium (pp. 244-256).

32- *Original of the Letter to Heraclius*, offers contents of the letter of the Prophet (peace on him) with an analysis on the objections of the Orientalists and its evaluation (pp. 257-263).

33- *Relations with Iran*, provides a detail account of the important relations of Iranian empire with its Arab neighbours before and after the Islamic era. Contents of the letter written to the Emperor of Iran, is discussed (pp. 264-273).

34- *Original of the Prophet's Letter to Kisra*, reports about the discovery of this letter; peregrination of this document; analysis and comments on this document (pp. 274-280).

35- *Relations with the Iranian Colonies*, provides a detail account of the important relations of Iranian colonies with Arabs before and after the Islamic period (pp. 281-287).

36- *The Original of the Letter to Al-Mundhir*, offers contents of this letter written by the Holy Prophet (peace on him) to al-Mundhir ibn Sawi, Persian ruler of Bahrain with an analysis on the objections of the Orientalists and its evaluation (pp. 288-292).

37- *Other Persian Colonies in Arabia*, provides a geo-strategic, religious and political introduction of the non-

Arabs colonies, specifically the tribe of Tamim of Bahrain (modern al-Ahsa'); tribe of Bakr ibn Wa'il, neighbours of Bahrain (modern al-Ahsa'); tribe of Banu Taghlib, descendants of the brother of the tribe of Bakr ibn Wa'il, who were Christianized; tribe of 'Abd al-Qays, who lived south of Bahrain (modern al-Ahsa'); tribe of Banu Hanifah, who lived near Najd; tribe of Banu Mustakbir of 'Uman (Oman) on the extreme south of east coast of Arabia; tribe of Samawah, who lived on the extreme north of Arabia, on the Western bank of river Euphrates (pp.293-314).

38-*The Original of the Letter of the Prophet to the Co-sovereigns, Jaifar and 'Abd of 'Uman*, depicts the history of the discoveries (since 1854,) of the original letters written by the Holy Prophet (peace on him) to al-Muqauqis, al-Mundhir ibn Sawa, to Negus, to Kisra, to Heraclius. Translation of the particulars of these letters has also been cited (pp. 315-323).

39-*Arab Tribes of the peninsula*, firstly, provides a brief socio-economic and geo-political history of tribes Damrah, Mudlij, Juhainah and Muzainah situated in the Arabian peninsula, and secondly, informs about the conquests, pacts and reforms done by the Holy Prophet (peace on him) with these tribes (pp. 324-338).

40-*The Ambassador par Excellence, 'Amr ibn Umayyah*, provides a brief biography, attributes and contributions of

'Amr ibn Umayyah, for the propagation of Islam (pp.339-343).

41-*Other Arab Tribes*, provides a brief history of the tribes Banu Khuza'ah and Banu Sulaim, and describes their important role in the early history of Islam (pp. 344-365).

42-*Hawazin Tribe and Town of Ta'if*, gives an introduction and the details of the treaty made by the Holy Prophet Muhammad (peace on him) with this tribe (pp. 366-383).

43-*Other Tribes*, describes the dialogue and military expeditions against the neighbours of Ta'ifi tribes of Azd, Jurash, Banu Ghatfan, Taiy (originated from Yemen), Banu Asad, Banu Quda'ah, Banu Kalb, residents of Dumat al-Jandal, tribe of Judham and other tribes which were left aside (pp. 384-409).

44-*Denunciation of the Pacts of Alliance with the Pagans*, or disapproval through revelation is the subject of matter of this chapter, which portrays the condemnation of Allah (*Subhanahu wa Ta'ala*) of the Pagans that they can stay in the Islamic State, but are not allowed to enter Makkah because of their polytheistic beliefs (pp. 410-412).

45-*Apostasy and Rebellion of Certain Tribes*, states that the act of apostasy and rebellion in an Islamic state is not allowed. The people involved in this act were punished by the Islamic government at times were: Musailimah from Najd, Al-Swad al-'Ansi from Yemen, Dhu't-Taj Laqit ibn Malik in

'Uman, al-Ash'ath al-Kindi in Yemen, Umm Zamil or Umm Ziml among the Ghatfan, and Tamimite Sajaai, who claimed prophesy, within her own tribe (pp.413-414).

46-*Relations with the Jews*, gives a detailed overview of the history and relations of Arabs and Israelites from the pre-Islamic and post-Islamic period (pp.415-443).

47-*Jews outside Madinah*, presents an account of the socio-economic state of affairs of the Jewish community of Khaybar, Wadi'l-Qura, Fadk, Taima, Maqna (Tabuk), Jarba', Adhruh, Ta'if, Jews of South and the East of Arabia and their relations with the Muslims (pp. 444-464).

48-*Relations with the Christians*, have been explained in the historical perspective, who were very rare in Makkah; a large number of Christians of Balharith (abbreviation for Banu'l-Harith ibn Ka'b), a subdivision of Madhhij, in Najran (Yemen); other branches of Balharith; and the Ruha, like Balharith, a branch of Madhhij. Dialogue, military expeditions and treaties are the subject matter of this in this chapter (pp. 465-475).

49-*Jesus Christ and Christianity according to the Qur'an*, mainly deals with two aspects; his human life and the special nature of his birth. Concerning his personal life, the Qur'an repeatedly endorsed that Jesus was a prophet and messenger sent to the people to guide them about the morals as defined by Allah (*Subhanahu wa Ta'ala*). Islam considers



miracles as the work of Allah (*Subhanahu wa Ta'ala*). In a broader sense, they are natural phenomena which Allah (*Subhanahu wa Ta'ala*) sometimes causes to appear in order to prove the truthfulness of His messengers, thus convincing people of their time to stop persistency in denial of the teachings of these divine Messengers; that miracle is not a necessary requirement for prophets; that they cannot produce miracles on their own; that Allah alone does them (pp. 476-484).

50-*Other Religions*, apart from Christians and Jews in the pre-Islamic Arabia, among its inhabitants were Magians (Zoroastrians), Sabians, Materialists, Atheists, Idolaters, Fethichists (Sorcerers) and animists, who constituted the majority. A brief discussion on the presence of Buddhism and other religions of China, India and southeast Arabia, at the time of Holy Prophet Muhammad (peace on him) is, also discussed (pp. 485-488).

51-*The Frontiers and Administrative Divisions of the State*, gives an overview of the administrative structure of the Islamic state of Madinah which starts from the 1<sup>st</sup> year of *Hijrah* till the demise of Prophet Muhammad (peace on him), in the 11<sup>th</sup> year of *Hijrah* (pp.489-491).

After understanding the major themes of this work, it would be appropriate at this point to have a brief view of the prominent features of this work.

### **Features of the Work**

The Presentation of Sirah with authentic references, within the disciplines of contemporary Social Sciences, i.e. Anthropology, Sociology, Economics, Political Science, and History is a significant contribution of this treatise.

Overall, the work is well organized. It provides an insight to the subject matter of Sirah, and identifies new paradigms, which can coexist alongside older ones.

This volume offers excellent overview to understand Sirah and its classic texts. The wide-ranging and eclectic collection of sources is a particular strength of this volume. Examples from the Islamic history, reference of classical books, geographical names with explanation, relevance, references, footnotes, name index and subject index has made this volume extremely valuable for researchers.

Observations and suggestions are inspirational for Sirah-writing in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Jargons of modern social sciences used in this treatise, is a unique quality. Those seeking an overview of Sirah terminologies, themes, and concepts as they emerged in this work will find much of value here, especially historians and Sirah-Writers.

Questions and answers in between the discussion of topics is a motivating source for exploring new vistas for the researchers of Sirah and a valuable contribution to the Institution of Sirah-writing.

Until now, we presented an abstract, introduction of the topic, background of the work, introduction of the author of French-work, introduction of the translator/author of English-work, statement of the work and contents, major themes of the work and prominent features of the work. The purpose of this attempt was to provide a complete view of the work under study to the readers. In the following segment, we shall now present the core thesis of this work.

### **Thesis of the Work**

The work proposes that due to the intense intellectual encounter between the Muslim orient and colonial occident, new aspects of studying Sirah should be discovered, and a new genre of literature should emerge in response to the large quantity of work produced by the Western writers on Sirah.<sup>14</sup>

This academic discourse is an introduction of the Prophet of Islam, for the French-speaking community of the world, because a huge amount of material is already available in other languages. It is a strict chronological and pioneering

research study on Sirah.<sup>15</sup> This French-work has used all the available material on Sirah from the primary and secondary sources found in several languages.<sup>16</sup>

The Sirah or life of the Prophet should be studied to find the ultimate Truth. Before giving a judgment about Muhammad (peace on him), a person must do an unbiased study of his life.<sup>17</sup> Sirah should be understood in the light of primary and secondary sources found in several languages.<sup>18</sup>

It seems that the Arabs must have given some information to Muhammad (peace on him) about the religious beliefs of the people of China, India, Turkestan, Mangolia, Byzantine, Iran, and Abyssinia.<sup>19</sup>

There are geographical, sociological, psychological, linguistical and practical, reasons behind the choice of venue (Makkah); his emergence as a Prophet in Arabian Peninsula<sup>20</sup>; and his choice for the supreme divine mission, by Allah (*Subhanahu Wa Ta 'ala*).<sup>21</sup>

There are lessons in the events of Prophet's birth, orphanage, chivalry, familial and social life and religious values.<sup>22</sup>

What was the message of the Prophet of Islam, and how he accomplished his mission?<sup>23</sup> What were the foundations, how were they placed, how were they administered, and what was the result of this politico-religious state of

Madinah<sup>24</sup>, and how were the International relations of this Islamic State managed.<sup>25</sup>

In the light of the above thesis, we shall now present a reading of this work.

### **Reading of the Work**

This work belongs to the genre of early Islamic history, Sirah, or what I term as the *Institution of Sirah*. This work should be considered, as a paradigm for Sirah-writing with a strict chronological and authentic approach to study Sirah from the primary and secondary sources found in several languages.

While reading this work, I have focused on the deep understanding of the author, especially as articulated in his encyclopedic synthesis of Sirah discourse, which seems to be inspired by the scholarship of the new emerging fields of Sirah in the disciplines of contemporary social sciences. This work introduces new methodological framework and uncovers new avenues, to place Sirah as an important discipline of *Islamic Social Sciences*.

This volume offers an excellent overview to understand Sirah as well as classic texts of Sirah. The wide-ranging and eclectic collection of sources is a particular strength of this volume. Examples from the Islamic history, reference of classical books, geographical names, explanation and

relevance to the subject is the quality of this volume. The observations and suggestions are inspirational for Sirah-writing in the 21<sup>st</sup> century in the jargon and methodology of contemporary social sciences.

This French-masterwork on Sirah of the late 19<sup>th</sup> century gives an essence of Sirah or the early history of Islam in a chronological order based on authentic classical references.

This academic discourse describes a stimulating observation and understanding about the biography, struggle and message of the Prophet of Islam (peace on him) from the religious, social, economic and political perspective, for the French-speaking community of the world.

This work has highlighted Sirah as a basic secured institution of Islam. The work shows that the Muhammad (peace on him) has created a nation on the basis of a philosophy, and preserved it by structuring the exemplary State of Madinah. This nation (Ummah), despite its frailty, continuously prevails to this day on its fundamentals and has remained attached to Sirah.

Lastly, Prophet Muhammad (peace on him) can become the role model for the humankind.

### **Critical Evaluation of the Work**

In my humble view, this original French-work on Sirah is commendable and extremely useful for the French-speaking

community of the globe. However, the English translation of this work (which is still incomplete) perhaps, is not of much value for those who can understand languages, other than English. Because, there are hundreds of thousands of authentic books and articles written or found in the other languages, especially in Arabic, Persian, Turkish, Malay and Urdu, written by the scholars of high repute, some of which are the work of art on Sirah. However, this English translation will help the future researchers to access or reach the authentic classical and contemporary sources or references.

In this treatise, the author has given a brief account of all the significant events related to Sirah, but has perhaps, intentionally ignored the details or incident of demise of Muhammad (peace on him) and the battles (Ghazawat) of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (peace on him), with a reason to present a soft picture of the Prophet (peace on him).

One problem with such kind of literary work is the amount of repetition, especially about the core concepts, principles and its history in practice. For the next edition of this work, we recommend re-editing, proofreading of spelling mistakes, irrelevant material, and repetition of paragraphs, words, sentences and incidents. For instance, the spelling of the word 'Mecca<sup>26</sup>' (chapter 5, 25, and other places) should be written as 'Makkah'.

## **Conclusion**

This work deals with Sirah or the Early Islamic history. The original-work appeals to the French audience, that Sirah should be studied to find the ultimate Truth. Moreover, before giving a judgment about Muhammad (peace on him), a person must do an unbiased study of his life.

There was no such kind of Sirah-Book in French literature, which provided full references and much new information based on continuous research by the author. Another, purpose was to translate the authentic study of Sirah to other languages. Another reason of producing this work was to pay back the welcoming hosts (French People), the result of more than 30 years of study and continuous research in the field of Sirah; a study not only of the original sources but also of the works produced by other researchers on the subject in different languages.

Available material of primary and secondary sources on Sirah, found in several languages, has been used in this French-treatise. Authentic references and citations from classical and contemporary literature is a prominent feature of this work.

It also seems that this work is as an intellectual encounter or response to the Western attitude or an effort to harmonize the relations of the Muslims non-Muslims.



This work offers geographical, sociological, practical, psychological, linguistical reasons behind the emergence of Muhammad (peace on him) in the Arabian Peninsula.

In the study of Sirah new aspects should be discovered. New genre of literature should emerge in response to the Western attitude towards Sirah.

Sirah-writing should be used as an instrument for the propagation of peace and harmony.

Sirah should be portrayed as the fundamental secured institution of Islam, which is capable to offer social, economic and political solutions to the humankind.

State of Madinah created by Muhammad (peace on him) still stands as role model for the solution of today's global problems.

## Notes & References

<sup>1</sup> Adapted from, Allama Shibli Nomani, *Seerat al-Nabi, vol. 1* (Islamabad: Services Book Club, 1985), pp. 1-7.

<sup>2</sup> Modified from, Mahmood Ahmad Ghazi, *Muhadrte-e-Seerat* (Lahore: Al-Faisal Nashran, 2008), pp. 136-180.

<sup>3</sup> Tailored from *Translator's Note*, Mahmood Ahmad Ghazi, *The Life & Work of the Prophet of Islam, Vol. 1* (Islamabad: Islamic Research Institute, 1998), pp. i-ii.

<sup>4</sup> Mahmood Ahmad Ghazi, *The Life & Work of the Prophet of Islam, Vol. 1* (Islamabad: Islamic Research Institute, 1998), p. ii.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, p. ii.

<sup>6</sup> Mahmood Ahmad Ghazi, *The Life & Work of the Prophet of Islam, Vol. 1* (Islamabad: Islamic Research Institute, 1998), Cataloging page.

<sup>7</sup> For a detail account of Dr. Hamidullah's life and works, see, "Special-Issue: Dr. Muhammad Hamidullah," *Fikr-o-Nazr, IIUI, Islamabad*, vol.40-41, no.1-4 (2003); also see, "Special-Issue: Dr. Muhammad Hamidullah," *Ma'arif-e-Islami, AIOU, Islamabad*, vol. 2 & 3, no. 2 & 1 (July 2003- June 2004); also see, "Special-Issue: Dr. Muhammad Hamidullah," *Da'wah, IIUI, Islamabad*, vol.9, no.10 (March 2003); also see, *Bedar*, Hyderabad, Pakistan, vol.7, no. 92 (November 2010), p.13

<sup>8</sup> Tailored from the articles of "Special-Issue: Dr. Muhammad Hamidullah," *Fikr-o-Nazr, IIUI, Islamabad*, vol.40-41, no.1-4 (2003); also, "Special-Issue: Dr. Muhammad Hamidullah," *Ma'arif-e-Islami, AIOU, Islamabad*, vol. 2 & 3, no. 2 & 1 (July 2003- June 2004); also "Special-Issue: Dr. Muhammad Hamidullah," *Da'wah, IIUI, Islamabad*, vol.9, no.10 (March 2003); also, *Bedar*, Hyderabad, Pakistan, vol.7, no.92 (November 2010), p.13.

<sup>9</sup> Sunni Ulema Forum, at: <http://www.sunniforum.com/forum/showthread.php?6353> (2010); Daily Times, at: <http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/default.asp?page=2010%5C09%5C27%5Cstory> [27-9-2010].

<sup>10</sup> *Da'wah*, International Islamic University, Islamabad, vol. 17, no. 4-5 (September-October 2010), pp. 165-173; See, <http://www.iiu.edu.pk/index.php>.

<sup>11</sup> **List of Dr.Ghazi's academic, administrative positions, fellowships and international conferences.**

Source: Federal Shari'at Court, <http://federalshariatcourt.gov.pk/AJ2.html> [retrieved: 01-01-2011].

- Professor/Associate Dean, Faculty of Islamic Studies, Qatar Foundation, Doha.
- Chairman Shari'ah Board, State Bank of Pakistan.

- Chairman Shari'ah Advisory Cell, International Islamic University, Islamabad.
- Chairman Shari'ah Supervisory Committee, Takaful Pakistan, Karachi (2005-2008).
- President, International Islamic University, Islamabad (2004-2006).
- V.P. (Academics), International Islamic University, Islamabad (Nov.1994-June 2004).
- Federal Minister for Religious Affairs (August 2000 to August 2002).
- Member, National Security Council, Government of Pakistan (1999-2000).
- Judge (Adhoc-Member), Shari'ah Appellate Bench, Supreme Court of Pakistan (1998-1999).
- Member, Council of Islamic Ideology (1990-1993 and 1997-2000).
- Director General, Shari'ah Academy, International Islamic University (1991-2000).
- Director General, Da'wah Academy, International Islamic University, (1988-1994).
- Khatib, Faisal Mosque/Director, Islamic Centre, Faysal Mosque (1987-1994).
- Editor, *al-Dirasat al-Islamiyyah*, Arabic journal of the IRI, Islamabad (1981-87, 1991-93).
- Editor, *Fikr-o-Nazar*, Urdu journal of the Islamic Research Institute, Islamabad (1984-87).
- Member of 'Constitution Commission' appointed by President, Islamic Republic of Pakistan(1983-85).
- Associate Professor, Islamic Research Institute, Islamabad (1981-87).
- Research Fellow/Assistant Professor, Islamic Research Institute, Islamabad (1979-81).
- Fellow/Lecturer, Islamic Research Institute (1973-79).

<sup>12</sup> List of Dr. Ghazi's published, unpublished, and uncompleted works in English, Urdu and Arabic languages.

Source: Federal Shari'at Court, <<http://federalshariatcourt.gov.pk/AJ2.html>> [Retrieved 01-01-2011].

- **Dr. Ghazi's Published Work in English Language**

1. The Hijrah: Its Philosophy and Message for the Modern Man, 1980, 1988, 1999.
2. An Analytical Study of the Sannusiyyah Movement of North Africa, IRI, Islamabad, 2001 (Based on Ph.D. Thesis).
3. Renaissance and Revivalism in Muslim India: 1707-1867, Islamabad, 1998.

4. The Shorter book on Muslim International Law (Edited and translated), Islamabad, 1998.
5. State and Legislation in Islam, Islamabad, 2006.
6. Prophet of Islam: His Life and Works (translated from French), IRI, Islamabad, 1998.
7. Qadianism: Lahore, 1992.

• **Dr. Ghazi's Published Work in Urdu Language**

1. Adab al-Qādi (comprehensive work on Islamic Law of procedure), IRI, Islamabad, 1983.
2. Musawwadah Qanun-i-Qisas-wa-Diyat, (a book on Islamic law of crimes against human body), (Edited and partially translated), IRI, Islamabad, 1986.
3. Ahkam-e-Bulghat (the Islamic law of majority), IRI, Islamabad, 1987.
4. Islam Ka Qanun Bain al-Mamalik, (A comprehensive book on Muslim International Law), Bahawalpur, 1997, Islamabad, 2007.
5. Muhadarat-e-Qur'ān, lectures on Ulum al-Quran, Al-Faisal Nashiran, Lahore, 2004.
6. Muhadarat-e-Hadith, lectures on Hadith, Al-Faisal Nashiran, Lahore, 2004.
7. Muhadarat-e-Fiqh, lectures on Islamic law, Al-Faisal Nashiran, Lahore, 2005.
8. Muhadarat-e-Sirat, lectures on the science of Sirah, Al-Faisal Nashiran, Lahore, 2007.
9. Muhadarat-e-Shari'at, lectures on Islamic Law, Al-Faisal Nashiran, Lahore, 2009.
10. Islami Shari'at Awr Asr-i-Hazir, a collection of 8 lectures on the understanding and application of Shari'ah in the modern world, IPS, Islamabad, 2009.
11. Quran: Ek Ta'aruf (An Introduction to the Qur'ān), Da'wah Academy, IIUI, 2003.
12. Muhkamat-e-'Alam-e-Qur'āni (Iqbal's concept of 'Quranic World') DA, IIUI, 2002.
13. Amr bil Ma'ruf wa'l-Nahy an-al-Munkar, Da'wah Academy, IIU, Islamabad, 1992.
14. Usul al-Fiqh-I (An Introduction), Shari'ah Academy, IIU, Islamabad, 2004.
15. Usul al-Fiqh-II (An Introduction), Shari'ah Academy, IIU, Islamabad, 2004.
16. Qawa'id Fiqhiyyah-I (A historical survey), Shari'ah Academy, Islamabad, 2004.
17. Qawa'id Fiqhiyyah-II (Study of Selected Qawa'id), Shari'ah Academy, Islamabad, 2005.
18. Taqin al-Shariah, Islamabad, Shari'ah Academy, Islamabad, 2005.

• **Dr. Ghazi's Published Work in Arabic Language**

1. A Critical Editing of Al-Siyar al-Saghir, by Imam Muhammad ibn al-Hasan al-Shaibani, IRI, 1998.
2. Al-Quran al-Karim: Al-Mujizah al-Ilaliyyah al-Kubra, Islamabad, 1994.
3. Ya Umam al-Sharq (translation of a Diwan of Allama Iqbal, from Persian into Arabic with commentary in collaboration with an Egyptian poet), Damascus, 1986.
4. Tarikh al-Harakah al-Mujaddidiyyah, Beirut, 2009.
5. Al-Awlamah, Cairo, 2008.

- **Area of Dr. Ghazi's published work:** More than one hundred articles on Islamic Law; Muslim resurgence, Islamic education, Sūrah, Islamic history, Islamic economics).

• **Dr. Ghazi's Unpublished Works:**

1. *Al-Wajiz fi Dirasat Ijaz al-Kitab al-Aziz* (An Introduction to the study of Ijaz al-Qur'ān down the ages), approximately pp. 200.
2. A Selection of *Mujadid's Epistles*. (With Arabic translation), pp. 250.
3. *Mabadi' al-Qanun al-Duwali al-Insani fi'l-Shari'ah al-Islamiyyah* ( An Introduction to the Shari'ah Principles of International Humanitarian Law).

• **Dr. Ghazi's Uncompleted Works**

1. Islamic Legal maxims, (Urdu).
2. A Text Book on Muslim International Law, (Arabic).
3. A fresh Arabic translation of Muhammad Iqbal's *Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam*.
4. A Textbook on the Philosophy of Islamic Law, (based on Maqasid al-Shari'ah).
5. Islamic Banking: An Introduction (Urdu), under print in Karachi.
6. *Muhadarat-e-Ma'ishat-o-Tijarat*, a collection of twelve presentations on Islamic principles of trade, commerce and economics, under print in Lahore.
7. *Islam Awr Maghrib*, lectures on relationship between Islam & West, under print in Karachi.
8. *A Brief Introduction to Maqasid al-Shari'ah*, (Urdu), under print in Karachi.
9. English translation of Dr. Hamidullah's *Le Prophete de l' Islam: Sa Vie et son Oeuvre*, vol.2.
10. English Translation of Ghazali's *Kitab Qawa'id al-'Aqa'id* with notes and Introduction.

<sup>13</sup> Mahmood Ahmad Ghazi, *The Life & Work of the Prophet of Islam, Vol. 1* (Islamabad: Islamic Research Institute, 1998), contents.

<sup>14</sup> \_\_\_\_\_, p. i.

<sup>15</sup> \_\_\_\_\_, p. ix.

<sup>16</sup> \_\_\_\_\_, pp. 6-8.

<sup>17</sup> Adapted from: Mahmood Ahmad Ghazi, *The Life & Work of the Prophet of Islam, Vol. 1* (Islamabad: Islamic Research Institute, 1998), pp.3-5.

<sup>18</sup> \_\_\_\_\_, pp. 6-8.

<sup>19</sup> \_\_\_\_\_, pp. 9-13.

<sup>20</sup> \_\_\_\_\_, pp. 15-22.

<sup>21</sup> \_\_\_\_\_, pp. 23-25.

<sup>22</sup> \_\_\_\_\_, pp. 33-55.

<sup>23</sup> \_\_\_\_\_, pp. 65-115.

<sup>24</sup> \_\_\_\_\_, pp. 135-154.

<sup>25</sup> \_\_\_\_\_, pp. 167-489.

<sup>26</sup> In the old versions of English and American dictionaries, the meaning of the word 'Mecca' is a 'pub' or 'bar' which serves alcoholic drinks and food to the customers. In new versions, this meaning as been changed as, 'a place that is an important center for a particular activity or that is visited by a great many people'. Also see, Microsoft® Encarta® 2009. © 1993-2008 Microsoft Corporation.