



The Prophet's Biography and Its Impact on Understanding and Documenting Early Islamic History

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ABSTRACT

The Prophet's biography, or the life of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), is considered one of the essential elements and main focal points in interpreting early Islamic history. It represents a fundamental source for understanding and analyzing the circumstances and events surrounding the emergence of Islam and the building of the first Islamic state. Through the study of the Prophet's biography, we open a wide window onto the events and transformations that the Islamic nation underwent in its beginnings. The Prophet's biography provides a comprehensive insight into the social, political, and cultural context in which Islam arose. It reveals the impact of the Prophet Muhammad's actions and stances in shaping the trajectory of the early Islamic nation. Understanding the Prophet's biography extends beyond merely recording historical events; it encompasses a deep understanding of the values and principles carried by Islam through the life and example of the Prophet. It serves as a model for Islamic leadership and provides guidance for Muslims in dealing with various challenges, whether internal or external. In this research, we will shed light on the role of the Prophet's biography as a crucial link in understanding and documenting early Islamic history. We will trace and analyze the stages of interest in and documentation of his biography, and how it influenced the paths of Islamic history and its development, to discover the importance and impact of this pivotal element in shaping early Islamic identity and development.

Keywords:

Prophet's biography, Prophet's life, Oral tradition, Historical consciousness, Historical narrative.

Introduction

The noble Prophetic biography holds immense significance in Islamic historical studies, serving as a primary source for understanding and documenting the history of Islam and its profound impact on Islamic civilization. This growing interest is attributed to its fundamental role in comprehending the circumstances surrounding the emergence of Islam and the establishment of the first Islamic state. The particular importance of the Prophetic biography lies in its association with the personality of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), the founder of the first Islamic

state, making it an indispensable focal point in the study of Islamic history. Writing the Prophetic biography is considered the initial link in early Islamic history, revealing the stages of the formation and development of the Islamic state. Throughout the ages, historians and researchers have drawn inspiration from the Prophetic biography to understand the Prophetic period and the evolution of the early Islamic state. Despite the diversity of theories and methodologies adopted in these studies, they all aim at a deep understanding of the impact of the Prophetic era on historical figures and events. With the emergence of Orientalists,

Arab and Muslim scholars interacted with their works in studying the Prophetic biography, being influenced by the approaches and methods employed by Orientalists. This contributed to expanding the scope of understanding, analyzing, and documenting the biography. Thus, the Prophetic biography remains a subject of interest for researchers and historians who delve into its study with depth and meticulous analysis, recognizing its credibility and the significance of the Prophetic teachings in building the Islamic state and guiding the Islamic nation. These varied and diverse efforts make the Prophetic biography a vital source for understanding the historical and civilizational development of Islam, reflecting its prominent role in shaping Islamic identity and its illustrious history.

In this research, we seek to explore the dimensions of this pivotal role and its impact on building historical consciousness among Arab Muslims. We will analyze the factors that drove Arab Muslims to focus on documenting the biography of the noble Prophet (peace be upon him), and how these factors aided in preserving the Prophet's traditions, starting from the oral tradition phase to the beginnings of documentation, and subsequently the commencement of documenting the Prophetic biography and the Prophet's expeditions in independent compilations. We will highlight the importance of this role played by Arab and Muslim scholars, as their compilations became fundamental sources for studying and understanding the Prophetic biography, and how their categorization represents the starting point for Arabs in historical writing, contributing to the preservation of heritage and Islamic identity.

The Biography Of The Prophet Muhammad (Peace Be Upon Him) And Its Impact On Building Historical Awareness Among Muslim Arabs

The classical revival movement was not solely inspired by itself, as Renaissance historians believe⁽¹⁾. With a focus on the role of the hero in history, the Arab movement was active in this field. The writing of the Prophet's biography was the first historical documentation undertaken by Arabs, as they needed to know

the life of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) and investigate his traditions (Sunnah). Arabs began to collect and document his news, marking the beginning of their engagement with history. Biographies and profiles held a prestigious position in Arab history, as they were considered important means for understanding and documenting individuals' lives and events, shedding light on prominent figures and their initiatives⁽²⁾. It cannot be denied that history was one of the fields that Arabs and Muslims were interested in, studying, reflecting upon, and benefiting from. Their interest in history dates back to the pre-Islamic period, where they considered their genealogies important and took care to preserve and document them meticulously, along with their interest in history itself. Then came the noble Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), inviting people to Islam, and Allah revealed the Noble Quran, which contains clear verses that mention stories and news about previous nations and their conditions, calling for studying their situations, reflecting on them, and drawing lessons from them. After the Prophet's death, the Islamic Arab state expanded, stretching from Central Asia in the east to the Atlantic Ocean in the west, and the Pyrenees Mountains in the north. This vast state encompassed many peoples and races⁽³⁾. This has led to immense cultural diversity and a varied and rich history of experiences and events. In the face of this world full of cultural and intellectual diversity, Islamic heritage has become a point of convergence for civilizations, driving cultural development in Islamic societies through its spiritual, intellectual, and political values. It serves as a significant axis in enriching the cultural system of those societies, as Islam is considered a comprehensive religion, culture, and way of life. Hence, history appears as a comprehensive science that extends and penetrates to encompass all aspects of knowledge, combining memory, thought, and analysis in various fields and events⁽⁴⁾. In this context, the study of the purified biography of the Prophet Muhammad stands out as a gateway reflecting the concept of early Islamic history. It still holds a significant place in thought and research, as the biography immersed as the

primary link in documenting Islamic history, which is considered one of the elements of civilization in a long cultural exchange⁽⁵⁾.

This has influenced the minds of both thinkers and orientalists alike, as it has contributed to the emergence of diverse opinions and ideas. Its contents have raised historical awareness among early Muslims who were interested in documenting and pondering over it, leading to works that attracted the attention of orientalists, who delved into its details and meanings. Contemporary scholars also engaged in dialogues and discussions regarding the significance of the Prophet's biography in Arab-Islamic history and civilization, drawing from its authenticity in Islamic sources and countering some orientalist misconceptions about it.

Thus, the importance of studies and research shedding light on various aspects of the Prophet's biography becomes evident, as it serves as the primary inspiration for Muslims, igniting their historical consciousness and serving as the fundamental basis behind their interest in their own history. These efforts continue to enrich knowledge and direct attention towards concepts of early Islamic history, allowing for precise conclusions that contribute to a deeper understanding of its values and meanings. Therefore, these endeavors enrich knowledge and deepen the understanding of our Islamic culture. The Prophet's biography is an integral part of Islamic history and civilization, serving as the starting point of Muslims' historical interest. Hence, studying and analyzing it represents a continuous and stimulating challenge for thought and research, deserving ongoing attention and effort.

The study of the Prophet's biography is among the most complex and intriguing historical subjects, given its close connection to the personality of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), who constitutes a central figure in Islamic religion. This central figure continues to captivate historians, researchers, and thinkers alike. The study of the Prophet's biography reveals a vast diversity in sources and related literature, ranging from Muslim authors and thinkers to orientalists, scientists, writers, and religious figures, all contributing to solidifying

the status of the Prophet's biography in Islamic history and culture. This has prompted some to compile dictionaries containing the names of authors who have written about the purified biography of the Prophet and its related works⁽⁶⁾. Despite this diversity, the influence of religious and intellectual orientations is clearly evident in the works of some researchers and historians. They have deviated from the path of neutrality and scientific objectivity, and their writings have been affected by bias and subjectivity⁽⁷⁾. Some have been stirred up regarding the credibility of what they present, and indeed, this bias has caused a perpetual debate about the Prophetic biography, both among Muslims themselves and between Muslims and Orientalists. Some Orientalists have exploited weak narratives found in some Islamic sources to further their own agendas, which has heightened tension and controversy surrounding the personality of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). Consequently, the Prophetic biography has become a contentious and contradictory subject.

Nevertheless, the early Arabs and Muslims recognized the importance of documenting the biography of the Seal of the Prophets (peace be upon him) and its significance. Therefore, they studied, memorized, and transmitted his biography to their children as an integral part of their upbringing⁽⁸⁾. It seems that this was a response to the command of Allah, the Exalted, who directed His servants to follow His Prophet and take him as a role model, and to adhere to his guidance, as is evident from His saying, And whatever the Messenger has given you - take; and what he has forbidden you - refrain from⁽⁹⁾. And His saying, There has certainly been for you in the Messenger of Allah an excellent pattern⁽¹⁰⁾. Therefore, the history of the Islamic nation stems from the purified Prophetic biography, as it is the primary model and practical embodiment of Islam, concerning creed, Sharia, ethics, and behavior that Muslims should focus on. They have done so in an unparalleled manner, as no biography of any prophet, king, or great figure has been written as the biography of Prophet Muhammad, (peace be upon him). Most of its events are found in the books of the noble Hadith, which has garnered

unprecedented attention from scholars, unlike any other nation before or within Islam. Additionally, the Quran has detailed many events of the Prophetic biography and also indicated the psychological state of the Prophet, (peace be upon him), revealing that these are pieces of information known only to Allah, who knows the secrets and mysteries⁽¹¹⁾. Furthermore, Allah Almighty honored the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) with a Surah in the Quran consisting of thirty-eight verses, named Surah Muhammad.

With the beginning of the interest in the noble Prophetic biography, scholars competed to obtain this honor due to their awareness of the importance of their Prophet's (peace be upon him) history and their love for him. This led to the birth of the first patterns of historical writing that appeared among Muslims, represented by oral narration about the purified biography. Historical sources indicate that these narrations began during the lifetime of the Prophet (peace be upon him), where the companions exchanged them in their gatherings, participated in their events, and contributed to shaping them. For example, Abu Bakr al-Siddiq (11 - 13 AH / 632-634 CE) narrated the details of his migration with the Prophet (peace be upon him) to Medina, recounting them to his companions as he experienced them⁽¹²⁾. Among other evidence, Umair ibn Wahb al-Jumahi visited the city after Safwan ibn Umayyah ordered him to kill the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). He found Umar ibn al-Khattab (13-23 AH / 634-643 CE) and a group of Muslims discussing the Battle of Badr and its campaigns⁽¹³⁾. Saheb al-Rumi preferred to talk about the Prophet Muhammad's (peace be upon him) campaigns⁽¹⁴⁾. Abu Saad ibn Abi Waqqas was keen on documenting the campaigns for his sons. It was narrated that Saad said: My father used to teach us about the campaigns and expeditions of the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) He used to say: 'O my sons, this is the honor of your forefathers, so do not forget to mention it ⁽¹⁵⁾. It seems that the companions' interest was directed towards collecting narratives of the campaigns of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), as they

initially focused on documenting his campaigns. They began to record a significant portion of the events of his life and the events that occurred during the Prophet's lifetime. However, this documentation was not prominently distinct; rather, it was implicitly part of the noble Hadith that the Prophet (peace be upon him) addressed⁽¹⁶⁾. Among them was Al-Ala'a Al-Hadrami⁽¹⁷⁾. And Sahl ibn Abi Hathmah Al-Madani Al-Ansari⁽¹⁸⁾. Saeed ibn Saad ibn Abadah Al-Khazraji was born during the time of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) and is considered among those who recorded the events of the Prophet's life⁽¹⁹⁾. Abdullah ibn Abbas, a famous companion renowned for his knowledge and interpretation of the Quran, used to narrate to his students and companions the news of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) in scholarly gatherings⁽²⁰⁾. And Bara' ibn Azib, may Allah be pleased with him, narrated many of the campaigns of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) in his scholarly gatherings, especially regarding the Prophet's migration and some of the battles such as the Battle of Badr, Uhud, the Trench, the Treaty of Hudaibiyyah, the Conquest of Mecca, and the Battle of Hunayn⁽²¹⁾.

Indeed, the companions had the habit of narrating the news of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him)⁽²²⁾. During the era of prophethood and the early days of Islam, many companions were illiterate, unable to read or write. They heavily relied on memorization to transmit news and knowledge, drawing from their remarkable ability to memorize poetry, events, and occasions. They took pride in this skill, using it to boast about their lineage and virtues. They often used oral communication to spread the news they had memorized, boasting about their heritage and lineage, which fueled their competition in memorization and recollection.

Their tribal pride played a role in enhancing this ability to memorize and circulate Hadiths and news. Although writing was initially a rare skill among them, they learned and became accustomed to it over time. Initially, the Prophet (peace be upon him) prohibited the writing of Hadith out of fear of it being mixed with the

Quran, but he later allowed it when the need for documenting Hadiths and news increased.

They received Hadith from the Prophet (peace be upon him) either through observation of his actions and reports or through hearing from those who had heard or witnessed his actions and reports. Not all of them attended his gatherings, as some were delayed by various needs. This explains the keenness of the companion Abdullah ibn Abbas, who said, "I used to stick to the older companions from the Muhajireen and the Ansar, asking them about the campaigns of the Messenger of Allah and the verses revealed concerning them. I was given a wooden board on which I used to write down whatever I heard from them until Abdullah ibn Amr ibn al-As described me as 'the one who knows best what was revealed'⁽²³⁾. From this, it becomes clear to us that Abdullah ibn Abbas's knowledge of the Prophet's (peace be upon him) affairs was not solely the result of direct contact and observation of events but also through seeking information from senior companions. This was due to his young age; he was around thirteen or fifteen years old at the time of the Prophet's (peace be upon him) passing⁽²⁴⁾. Indeed, regardless of the circumstances, this reflects the historical awareness and sensibility among the companions, including Abdullah ibn Abbas, who diligently worked on documenting his knowledge to safeguard it from being lost⁽²⁵⁾. Indeed, it seems that the Arabs' interest in history, especially in battles and the noble Prophetic biography in Islam, did not arise out of nowhere. The pre-Islamic Arab interest in history was foundational to the emergence of historical knowledge and writing among them. Arabs before Islam demonstrated a clear interest in history through their love for and enthusiasm in hearing and transmitting oral narratives. This innate interest served as a precursor to the development of historical scholarship and written records among them⁽²⁶⁾. Indeed, despite the absence of a true historical writing tradition, some studies indicate that the Arabs were not far from history. Certain groups had their own histories, whether written, inscribed, or oral. There were records of some kings or tribes in Yemen and elsewhere⁽²⁷⁾.

Indeed, the interest in history and its documentation in the Islamic era was the result of several factors, including practical, intellectual, and spiritual needs linked to the Islamic religion. After the advent of Islam, Arabs felt they were bearers of a great message, and their lives became a significant historical axis with the expansion of the Islamic Arab state and its spread. As major battles and conquests began, people realized that their role in human history had become more important and perilous. Hence, there arose a need to document these events and understand them better, leading to increased interest in history and its study.

As a result, historical studies and event documentation became fundamental components of the cultural and intellectual life of Muslims, with history becoming one of the most important sciences to develop and flourish in the Islamic world⁽²⁸⁾. Indeed, Islam directed human thought primarily towards perceiving events as lessons, and this was the first intellectual renewal in terms of looking at history⁽²⁹⁾. Glory be to Him Who changes the night and the day: there is surely a lesson in this for those who have eyes⁽³⁰⁾. Many verses and chapters of the Quran are dedicated to historical matters, which take on various dimensions and directions, ranging from direct presentation to narrative storytelling of the experiences of human communities⁽³¹⁾. Dr. Abduljabbar Najee considers the Noble Quran as a primary source that richly contributes to studying many aspects of the noble Prophetic biography, whether during the Meccan or Medinan periods. This includes Islamic creed and the evolution of the call of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), starting from his noble mission, migration to Medina, and the events he experienced until his passing and meeting with the highest companion.

Dr. Abduljabbar Najee stands against the belief of some Arab and foreign researchers who view the Quran as a secondary source for the events of the Prophetic biography. The reason for this belief lies in their reliance on what was mentioned in the biographies of Ibn Ishaq (151 AH / 768 CE) and Ibn Hisham (218 AH / 833 CE), as well as the narrations of the Sunni

scholars without considering the traditions of the infallible Imams and their narrations. These traditions are primarily found in the Shia interpretations based on the golden chain of the sayings and narrations of the Imams. These interpretations include works like "Nahj al-Balagha" by Imam Ali (35-40 AH / 655-660 CE) and the interpretation of Imam Hasan al-Askari (260 AH / 873 CE), as well as the interpretation of Jabir al-Ju'fi, which is considered an interpretation of Imam Abu Ja'far al-Baqir (114 AH / 732 CE). Al-Kulayni, in particular, took the hadith from Imam al-Baqir in the honorable al-Kafi from Jabir al-Ju'fi, making him one of the early interpreters⁽³²⁾. It might be useful here to mention the opinions of some researchers that address many factors and reasons that contributed to the emergence and development of historical writing in the Islamic era. Some attribute credit to the Holy Quran for directing Muslims towards the study of history and the noble biography of the Prophet, as it imposed on them the necessity of studying the biographies of nations, prophets, and messengers. It emphasized the importance of studying the biography of the Prophet, peace be upon him, as a duty of obedience and emulation, as God described it as a "good example." Therefore, it is not surprising that Muslims learn the biography of the Prophet with the same seriousness and dedication with which they learn the Holy Quran, the book that provided a global perspective on history, giving a deep understanding of civilizations and nations, and calling for contemplation on the fate of peoples and their civilizations⁽³³⁾.

Others believe that some of these factors are related to political, administrative, or social aspects. Caliphs and rulers are known to have played a significant role in encouraging and supporting historical knowledge and documentation. They sought to establish documentary records similar to those found in other nations, and Islamic governments, especially the financial and judicial systems, were among the factors contributing to the emergence of a historical movement. The financial system led to the development of a new branch of history due to changes in the system of distribution since the era of Caliph

Umar ibn al-Khattab. Allocation began to be determined according to precedence in Islam, and the need for genealogy continued to estimate the allocation for soldiers, arranged according to proximity to the Prophet, then proximity to others. This contributed to the spread of literacy and writing among Muslims, driving their interest in documenting their history.

Furthermore, there were some supportive factors that facilitated historical documentation, such as the establishment of the Hijri calendar during the era of Caliph Umar (13 AH - 23 AH / 634-643 CE), the emergence of certain sciences, especially Arabic literature, cultural movements, and the appearance of paper, which facilitated the transition of history from memory to written form. With these factors and aids, the process of historical documentation among Muslims evolved while preserving the spirit and historical authenticity of the text⁽³⁴⁾. At the end of the Prophet's life, a set of factors emerged that drove people to take an interest in historical documentation, especially concerning his sayings, battles, and noble biography. Observing historical narrations, one can notice that this interest began to manifest in the latter period of the Prophet's life. Initially, recording had been prohibited, but later, during the final years of his life, some companions were permitted to write down his sayings. For instance, Abdullah ibn Amr was allowed to write down what he heard from the Prophet. The Prophet said to him, "Write, by Him in Whose hand is my soul, nothing comes out from it but the truth." ⁽³⁵⁾. And his saying, peace be upon him, "Write for Abu Shah," indicates that the Prophet allowed writing about him for those who feared forgetting, while he prohibited writing about him for those who were confident in their memory. This was to preserve the clarity of the Quran from any confusion with the noble Hadith⁽³⁶⁾. From these narrations, it becomes clear that the Prophet (peace be upon him) initially granted specific permission for writing, and then he issued a general permission when most of the revelation was revealed and memorized by many, ensuring its distinction from anything else. He said, "Preserve knowledge by writing it down." Undoubtedly,

some companions wrote down a portion of the Hadith during his lifetime. Among those who did so with specific permission from the Prophet (peace be upon him) was Samurah ibn Jundub, who compiled many Hadiths in a large collection inherited by his son Sulaiman, who narrated them. Ibn Sirin remarked about this collection in a letter to his sons, mentioning abundant knowledge about the prophetic era. Thus, writing became an important means of documenting Hadiths and knowledge.

One of the most notable written compilations at that time was "Al-Sahifah Al-Sadiqah" written by Abdullah ibn Amr ibn al-Aas, one of the companions who collected Hadiths from the Prophet. This compilation became famous for containing a thousand Hadiths, parts of which are found in the Musnad of Imam Ahmad ibn Hanbal. This document stands as one of the most authentic historical records proving the writing of Hadith during the time of the Prophet (peace be upon him). This compilation succeeded in documenting Hadiths and events, directly resulting from the Prophet's (peace be upon him) ruling and guidance.

When Abdullah ibn Amr asked the Prophet (peace be upon him) about the matter of writing, the Prophet responded that he could write down everything he heard, whether in times of contentment or anger, affirming that he would only speak the truth⁽³⁷⁾. By reviewing the texts, it seems that the process of documentation combined materials of historical biography with narrations of Hadith with a jurisprudential character. A prime example of this is the mentioned "Al-Sahifah Al-Sadiqah," which one researcher described as the most authentic historical document proving the writing of Hadith during the time of the Prophet (peace be upon him)⁽³⁸⁾. Indeed, some of the companions paid attention to narrating it, among them Muhammad ibn Yahya ibn Sahl ibn Hithmah, who narrated it from his father or grandfather, the companion Sahl ibn Hithmah. This is confirmed by his statement, "I found it in the books of my father"⁽³⁹⁾. Additionally, Ibn Abbas was also interested in narrating its events from the manuscripts and documents, as he narrated a text from the book of the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) to Al-Mundhir ibn

Sawi⁽⁴⁰⁾. And his book to the people of Khaybar⁽⁴¹⁾. Based on this, it cannot be accurate what some scholars have mentioned, that the process of compilation and documentation only occurred several generations after the death of the Prophet (peace be upon him), as all the materials from the books that have reached us came from oral sources⁽⁴²⁾. The claim by some researchers that oral tradition cannot be relied upon in writing history because it is subject to change, alteration, and forgetting cannot be accepted⁽⁴³⁾. Because this does not apply to the Prophet's biography since its documentation paralleled its oral narration, and a sufficient period of time did not pass for these flaws to emerge. The orientalist Shibli Nomani acknowledged this fact and even stated that the process of re-documentation occurred during the Prophet's lifetime, relying on the private records of Anas ibn Malik, Ibn Abbas, and Abdullah ibn Umar ibn al-Khattab⁽⁴⁴⁾. Hence, the companions were deeply concerned with documentation to the extent that it is narrated from Muawiyah ibn Qurrah who said, "Whoever does not write down knowledge, his knowledge will not be considered knowledge."⁽⁴⁵⁾. And from Ibn Abbas, he said: "Preserve knowledge by writing it down. Who will buy knowledge from me for a dirham?"⁽⁴⁶⁾. Dahhak ibn Makhled narrated from Ibn Juraij from Abdul-Malik ibn Sufyan from his uncle that Umar ibn al-Khattab (may Allah be pleased with him) said, "Preserve knowledge by writing it down."⁽⁴⁷⁾. And it's narrated from Thumamah ibn Abdullah ibn Anas that Anas ibn Malik used to say to his son: "O my son, preserve knowledge by writing it down."⁽⁴⁸⁾.

Opinions among the companions and the followers (Tabi'un) indeed varied regarding the issue of writing, as some of them disliked it based on the Hadith of Abu Sa'id al-Khudri, in which he said: "Do not write anything from me except the Quran, and whoever writes anything from me other than the Quran, let him erase it"⁽⁴⁹⁾. Nevertheless, others permitted it and considered it permissible, a position later agreed upon by Muslims, and the dispute regarding it ended. Al-Qadi 'Iyad clarified this matter, stating that the companions and the followers differed on the issue of writing: some

disliked it while others permitted it. However, in the end, Muslims reached a consensus on its permissibility. Al-Qadi 'Iyad cited the Quranic verse: "His knowledge encompasses all things, recorded in a Book. My Lord does not err, nor does He forget." (Quran 20:52) ⁽⁵⁰⁾. It appears that the documentation of knowledge and scholarship is Shariah-compliant, and the process of recording Prophetic traditions began during the reign of Caliph Umar ibn Abdul Aziz (99-101 AH / 717-718 CE). He ordered the collection and documentation of Hadiths. In Sahih Bukhari and other sources, it is mentioned that Umar ibn Abdul Aziz instructed Abu Bakr ibn Hazm to examine and record Hadiths, fearing the loss of knowledge and lessons. This indicates the beginning of recording Prophetic traditions. Some individuals documented these Hadiths at the command of Umar ibn Abdul Aziz, as mentioned in Fath al-Bari. Ibn Shihab al-Zuhri was among the first to record Prophetic traditions at his command ⁽⁵¹⁾. Regardless of acceptance or rejection of documentation, it is evident that the initial attempts to record the Prophetic Sunnah, the Prophet's news (peace be upon him), and narratives of his biography and expeditions were from their original sources, namely the companions and the successors (Tabi'un), who directly transmitted these Hadiths from the Prophet (peace be upon him). This minimizes the chances of errors or additions in their material to a great extent. Therefore, the narration of the Prophetic biography possesses a significant advantage when compared to other historical periods, especially in the medieval ages, where Greek or Roman historians rarely had direct sources for their information, as emphasized by Margoliouth ⁽⁵²⁾.

It's evident that the strong inclination towards documentation led to a significant accumulation of narrations regarding the Prophetic biography, ultimately resulting in the emergence of a new phase of classification and organization according to the subjects of historical biography in the first century of the Hijra. This phase began with Urwah ibn al-Zubayr (d. 94 AH / 712 CE) and included prominent figures such as Asim ibn Umar ibn Qatadah al-Ansari (d. 120 AH / 737 CE),

Muhammad ibn Shihab al-Zuhri (d. 123 AH / 740 CE), Abdullah ibn Abi Bakr ibn Muhammad ibn Umar ibn Hazm (d. 135 AH / 752 CE), Musa ibn Uqba al-Madani (d. 140 AH / 757 CE), Muhammad ibn Ishaq ibn Yasar (d. 151 AH / 768 CE), Abu Ma'shar al-Sindi al-Madani (d. 170 AH / 786 CE), in addition to Muhammad ibn Umar al-Waqidi (d. 207 AH / 822 CE), and others. These historians contributed to the compilation and organization of historical materials related to the biography of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), benefiting from the method of Isnad (chain of transmission) which distinguished the Islamic nation in conveying trustworthiness and connection until the narrations reached Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). This method became a general scientific phenomenon, particularly beneficial in historical research, especially concerning the Prophetic biography, which has a close connection with Hadith. Isnad became an integral part of the principles of historical research in the field of transmission among those interested in historical narration. The rules of this method were used in collecting materials and documenting narrations, and these narrations became the basis for the acceptance of a historian's narrative. Therefore, Isnad became the scientific foundation specialized in Islamic history over other Islamic disciplines. Most biographers relied on it to document their narrations from the time of the companions until the tenth century CE, indicating that they were primarily hadith scholars ⁽⁵³⁾.

Therefore, it can be said that the history of Arabs and Muslims owes much to the attention given to narrating and documenting the biography of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) and the accounts of his expeditions. The Muslims' eagerness to know about the Prophet's (peace be upon him) life drove a group of narrators to memorize these accounts and spread them orally, and later through writing. However, love and organization were not the only motivations for this interest. Arabs and Muslims were amazed by the profound changes brought about by the noble Prophet (peace be upon him) in the Arabian Peninsula, prompting them to learn about his life and the

steps of his jihad. Additionally, the element of general Islamic interest was an additional motive for this attention, as it was necessary to understand the words and actions of the Prophet (peace be upon him) for guidance and reference in legislation and righteous behavior in life. His expeditions and the accompanying rulings taught people about the life of their Prophet and how to apply it in their new lives. Subsequently, interest in the biography of the Prophet (peace be upon him), his companions, and their followers expanded to various segments of society, such as rulers, judges, writers, poets, physicians, and Sufis. Works were written about these figures. When the Prophet's companions (may Allah be pleased with them) recorded what they saw or heard, they faced opposition to their work, as they wanted to direct all their efforts to caring for the Quran and preserving it without being preoccupied with Hadith, as mentioned earlier. This led the companions (may Allah be pleased with them) to rely on memorization, as they made their hearts and chests notebooks in which they recorded what they learned from their Prophet (peace be upon him) ⁽⁵⁴⁾. After the departure of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), the companions and their followers took on the responsibility of conveying events by narrating and transmitting his accounts. This indicates the value of active individuals in shaping destinies and guiding the course of affairs. Thus, among Muslims, the concept of "seerah" emerged, or the art of translating life. This seerah became an integral part of historical thought, with its influences extending, spreading, and evolving. Eventually, it transformed into an art form standing on its own ⁽⁵⁵⁾.

The number of companions (may Allah be pleased with them) during the Farewell Pilgrimage of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) reached one hundred thousand, among whom were ten thousand companions whose names and circumstances were mentioned in specialized historical books dedicated to documenting their details. It's notable that at that time, history wasn't concerned with recording these specific circumstances. However, each companion

memorized a portion of the Prophet's (peace be upon him) sayings. After the Prophet's (peace be upon him) passing, the companions continued to transmit these narrations, even into the first century of the Islamic calendar, where the last of them lived. Then the task of narrating Hadith and introducing the Prophet's (peace be upon him) biography shifted to the followers of the companions.

Ibn Saad mentioned in his book "Tabaqat" that there were 139 of the followers in Medina who witnessed the companions and heard from them directly, and 129 from the second tier who met most of the companions and transmitted from them. The third tier, consisting of 87 individuals, included those who saw one or more companions. The total number of followers in Medina reached 355. This number can be used to estimate the number of followers in other Islamic cities like Mecca, Ta'if, Basra, Kufa, Yemen, Egypt, and elsewhere. Their primary task was to spread the message of Islam and transmit the sayings and biography of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). Thousands of companions conveyed what they saw and heard of the Prophet's (peace be upon him) circumstances, as he instructed them, saying, "Convey from me, even if it is a single verse" ⁽⁵⁶⁾.

Early Muslim Chronicles: Essential Sources For Understanding The Prophet's Biography

Biographies and narratives hold a distinguished place in the annals of history. If history is the pursuit, examination, and clarification of truth in any aspect of human life, then biography is the search for truth in the life of an exceptional individual. It unveils their talents and the secrets of their genius within the circumstances they lived and the events they faced in their surroundings. The impact they left on their generation makes biography particularly intriguing to readers of all historical genres. Sometimes, biography may overshadow history itself and dominate a significant portion of historical records. Some historians argue that history lacks value without the biographies of great figures, a perspective ingrained in correct scientific thinking. However, biography doesn't hold its rightful place in historical records unless it itself expresses historical truth—the

truth that connects the hero with the social forces that interacted with and challenged them toward their desired goal.

In reality, historical truth cannot be grasped unless historians understand its origins, forms, and evolution over the past years, whether brief or extended up to the present time. The primary means to comprehend this truth lies in historical chronicles. If spared from the ravages of decay, these chronicles become valuable ammunition for historical inquiry. The value of such chronicles lies in their ability to guide researchers into the past. They may not directly reveal the past, but they shed light that illuminates the path for historians. With knowledge of historical fundamentals and awareness of the evolution of historical truth, historians can provide deeper analyses and better understandings of historical events and phenomena ⁽⁵⁷⁾.

As mentioned earlier, one of the most important sources used by Muslims in documenting the Prophet's biography, which holds significance in providing historical credibility and stability, is the Quran. The Quran is considered a primary and closely related source to the Prophet's biography, encompassing various aspects of Prophet Muhammad's life before and after prophethood. It provides us with a comprehensive overview of the Prophet's life, from his upbringing, trade, and the revelation of the Quran to his prophetic mission. The Quran describes his challenges, battles, and ethics, adding a spiritual and moral dimension to his biography. Therefore, the Quran is one of the most important sources that confirm and validate the authenticity and accuracy of the Prophet's biography, making it reliable and credible for Muslims and others in understanding the life of Prophet Muhammad and the history of Islam.

In addition to the Quran, the collections of Prophetic traditions (Hadith) are among the most important sources that document and elucidate the Prophet's biography. These collections preserve the words, actions, and circumstances of the Prophet with accuracy and stability. Hadith collections comprise a vast array of traditions, numbering in the hundreds of thousands. Scholars have meticulously

categorized and authenticated these traditions, ensuring the reliability of the narrations. Among the most prominent Hadith collections are the six authentic books of Hadith, along with the compilations of Musnad (hadith arranged by narrator) which are important sources for authenticated Prophetic traditions.

Furthermore, general history books that begin with the Prophet's biography are among the most reliable and extensive sources. Among these books, Ibn Saad's "Tabaqat" holds a prominent position in terms of importance. Alongside it, there are renowned works like "Tarikh al-Tabari" (History of the Prophets and Kings), "Al-Tarikh al-Saghir" and "Al-Tarikh al-Kabir" by Muhammad ibn Isma'il al-Bukhari, "Tarikh Ibn Hayyan," and "Tarikh Ibn Abi Khaythama al-Baghdadi."

Books of miracles (Dala'il) are also among the essential sources for studying the Prophet's biography, shedding light on the miracles that occurred in his life. Some of these books include "Dala'il al-Nubuwwah" by Abu Ishaq al-Harbi, "Dala'il al-Nubuwwah" by Ibn Qutaybah, "Dala'il al-Nubuwwah" by Al-Bayhaqi, "Dala'il al-Nubuwwah" by Abu Nu'aim al-Isfahani, "Dala'il al-Nubuwwah" by Al-Mustaghfiri, and "Kitab al-Khasa'is al-Kubra" by Al-Suyuti.

Similarly, books of virtues (Shama'il) are another essential source for studying the Prophet's biography, focusing on his character, habits, and virtues. Among them, the most prominent is the book "Shama'il al-Tirmidhi" by Al-Tirmidhi, which some scholars have supplemented with additions. Other scholars have authored works in this field, including "Shama'il al-Nabi" by Abu Abbas al-Mustaghfiri and "Safwat al-Safwa" by Majd al-Din al-Firuzabadi. Additionally, early historians documented the conditions of Mecca and Medina, mentioning landmarks, plans, and rulers. Among the earliest books in this context are "Akbar al-Madina" by Ibn Zabala (199 AH/814 CE) and "Akbar Makkah" by Al-Azraqi (223 AH/837 CE), as well as "Akbar al-Madina" by Umar ibn Shabah (268 AH/881 CE), followed by "Akbar Makkah" by Al-Fakihi (275 AH/888 CE) ⁽⁵⁸⁾.

THE CLASSIFICATION IN THE PROPHETIC BIOGRAPHY AND ITS IMPACT ON PRESERVING ISLAMIC IDENTITY

We have previously mentioned that the purified Prophetic biography is considered one of the most important historical topics that influenced Islamic heritage with thousands of works in various branches, starting from the Prophet's mission, his battles, and his life, up to his passing and ascension to the higher companion. Dr. Salah al-Din al-Munjid listed 2491 works in Arabic that addressed the biography of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), indicating his understanding of the diversity, complexity, and branching in this field. The books dedicated to the Prophet (peace be upon him) or related to him exceed thousands of works ⁽⁵⁹⁾. This means that Muslims were committed to studying the Prophetic biography through multiple books, and they continue to follow this approach. The earliest books on the biography were directly received from the Prophet's companions, as well as a large number of their students. Subsequently, they analyzed and interpreted it meticulously, always seeking to clarify any unclear points and resolve any issues hindering understanding ⁽⁶⁰⁾. Let's move beyond what Arabs and Muslims have written about their Prophet, as they hold him in great reverence and consider it a religious duty and an asset on the Day of Judgment. Let's take a look at those who write about his biography despite not believing in him or accepting his message. In India, Hindus and Sikhs have written extensively about him. Mr. Sulaiman Nadvi pointed out that Urdu literature witnessed numerous compositions in this context, despite it not being a literary language until the last two centuries at most. Regarding Europeans who do not adhere to Islam, they have also extensively written about his biography, including evangelists and orientalist, driven by their interest in history and satisfying their scholarly curiosity. Nadvi mentioned reading a statistic in *Al-Muqtabs* magazine about the number of books written in European languages about the Prophetic biography, which reached about three hundred books. If we add to this number what has been published by European printing presses about

the Prophetic biography up to the present time, the total would be comparable to what Muslims have produced. This demonstrates the significant interest in the Prophetic biography and the Prophet's character, which has been a subject of great concern for orientalist, who have written about it in various styles according to their intellectual and cultural schools of thought ⁽⁶¹⁾.

Historical writing among Muslims began with the documentation of the Prophetic biography, influenced by the method of collecting Prophetic traditions. Historical writing was considered a branch of Hadith scholarship, where historians followed the approach of Hadith scholars in collecting historical narrations. The chain of narrators, or *isnad*, became the basis for scrutinizing the historical narrative among Muslim historians. They meticulously recorded history with precision in terms of years, months, and days. The writing of history among Muslims evolved from these early periods to encompass the history of the Islamic state and eventually the history of the world as a whole, adopting the annalistic method.

After the weakening of the Abbasid Caliphate (132-656 AH / 750-1258 CE) and the emergence of independent states, historical writing diversified. Interest arose in documenting the history of independent states in Iraq, Egypt, and Yemen. Works such as biographical dictionaries, classes, and genealogies emerged. Islamic historical writing evolved with an increasing focus on interpreting and analyzing events, understanding causality and consequence. This reached its peak with Ibn Khaldun in his famous introduction, elevating the study of history to a standalone subject. This was exemplified by al-Sakhawi in the fifteenth century CE in his work "*Al-I'tibar bi Takhrij Man Dhamma al-Tarikh*" (Criticism of Those Who Criticize History) ⁽⁶²⁾.

This means that Islamic documentation was not limited solely to preserving the biography of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) but expanded to encompass all aspects related to it. This trust was safeguarded with utmost care, as the Prophetic biography remained untouched by the hands of loss or the whims of time. So

much so that the entire world stands amazed and bewildered by this profound interest in it. Since the prophetic era, people have been preserving the sayings of the Prophet (peace be upon him), narrating his traditions, and everything related to his life. They transmitted this biography, documenting and authenticating it with extreme precision. This dedication extended to subsequent generations, where biographers documented the lives, manners, and deeds of these narrators who transmitted the Sunnah and traditions of the Prophet (peace be upon him). Scholars wrote biographies of these narrators, documenting what they transmitted of Hadith and Sunnah, including their names, lineages, residences, manners, and customs. Thanks to this massive effort, what they wrote in this field became an independent science later known as "Ilm al-Rijal" (the science of narrators), which comprehensively covers the affairs of their lives ⁽⁶³⁾.

It appears that Muslims' documentation of the Prophetic biography was the gateway through which they entered into precise historical writing. They began with writing general history, known as al-Muhaj, and al-Azami reviewed many historians who wrote before Ibn Ishaq, relying on the list provided by Dr. Muhammad Hameed Allah in his introduction to Ibn Ishaq's biography, based on the book "History of the Arabs" by the orientalist Wellhausen. Al-Azami mentioned twenty-seven historians before Ibn Ishaq, including Aqil ibn Abi Talib, Ziyad ibn Abi Sufyan, Mukhzamah ibn Nawfal, Daghil ibn Hanthalah, Ubaid ibn Shariyah al-Jurhumi, Abu Klabb and Qa'a Lasan al-Hamra, Al-Hatib ibn Zaid ibn Ja'una, Zaid ibn Kiyas, Ibn al-Kawwa' al-Yashkari, Yazeed ibn Bakr ibn Dabb and his sons Isa and Yahya, Alaqah ibn Kareem al-Kalabi, Sahar ibn Ayyash, Uruwah ibn al-Zubayr, Saleh ibn Imran al-Kalabi, Amir al-Sha'abi, Wahb ibn Manbah, Qatadah ibn Damaah al-Sudosi, Ibn Shihab al-Zuhri, Abu Mukhnif Lut ibn Yahya, Shubayl ibn Uruwah, Musa ibn Aqabah, Abu Umair Majlad ibn Said, Sharqi ibn Qatami, Tareef ibn Tariq al-Madani, Abdullah ibn Abbas, Muhammad ibn al-Sa'ib al-Kalabi, Awanah ibn al-Hakam, in addition, Hameed added six names to the list, which are Aban ibn Uthman ibn Affan, Aasim ibn

Umayr ibn Qatadah, Sharhabeel ibn Sa'ad, Abu al-Aswad Yateem bin Marwa, and Sulaiman ibn Tarkhan al-Tamimi. Al-Azami suggests that it is not possible to confirm the writing of history or the Prophetic biography by some of them; they may have transmitted oral narrations on the subject. However, it is certain that documentation in general history has been done, as in the Diwan of Umar ibn al-Khattab arranged according to tribes, which is actually a work on genealogies, and the works of Daghil ibn Hanthalah and Ubaid ibn Shariyah al-Jurhumi, as well as Ubaidullah ibn Abi Rafi, who authored a book on the wars of Imam Ali and Muawiya, mentioning the names of the Companions who participated in the war with Ali, and Wahb ibn Manbah who wrote the book "Al-Tijan" and "Al-Mubtada". It is not crucial to review everything written in history in the first century of Hijrah, but what is important is to confirm the existence of writing in this century. Despite its scarcity, it was indeed present ⁽⁶⁴⁾.

Dr. Abdul Jabbar Naji emphasizes the significance of the Prophetic mission in its great scientific impact on the development of Islamic narrative writing since the beginning of historical and Hadith documentation of events in the early first century of Hijrah. Several Muslim scholars in Medina and Iraq started writing about various aspects of the life of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), in the form of letters and booklets. Dr. Abdul Jabbar Naji relied on what Ibn al-Nadim mentioned in his index, as well as al-Najashi in his "Rijal", and Ya'qut in his "Mu'jam al-Adab." Additionally, he referenced the works of the German orientalist Brockelmann and Fuad Sizkin.

These works include, for example, the books by Ali ibn Fadal on the signs of Prophethood, the book of the prophets, and the book of the names of the things brought by the Messenger of Allah and the names of his weapons. There are also books on the death of the Prophet (peace be upon him), such as those by Hussein ibn Ashqib al-Khorasani refuting the claim that the Prophet (peace be upon him) followed the religion of his people. Ja'far ibn Ahmad ibn Ayyub al-Samarqandi wrote a book on this subject entitled "Refutation of the claim that the Prophet followed the religion of his people

before Prophethood." Abdul Aziz al-Jaludi al-Azdi wrote a book titled "Imam Ali in the wars of the Prophet," as well as books on the news of Quraysh and idols, the sermons of the Prophet, the lineage of the Prophet, and the mission of the Prophet. There are other books related to the news of delegations to the Prophet. Abdullah ibn Maimoon al-Qaddah wrote a book about the Prophet's mission, while Muhammad ibn Ammar al-Kufi wrote a book titled "The News of the Prophet" and another one titled "The Faith of Abu Talib." Ahmad ibn Isa al-Ash'ari wrote a book called "The Virtues of the Prophet." Abu Muhammad Ja'far ibn Ahmad al-Qummi wrote a book titled "The Informer about the Asceticism of the Prophet." Hassan ibn Khuradadh wrote a book about the "Names of the Messenger of Allah," and Abu al-Bukhtari Wahb ibn Wahb ibn Kathir wrote books about the "Description of the Prophet" and another one about the "Lineage of the Prophet." Additionally, he wrote about the "Lineage of the Children of Ismail ibn Ibrahim." Ali ibn Bilal al-Muhallabi al-Azdi wrote a book titled "The Book of Clarification about the Best of Allah's Creation in the Faith of Abu Talib and the Fathers of the Prophet." Ahmad ibn Muhammad ibn Saeed al-Sabiee al-Hamdani wrote a book titled "Mention of the Prophet, the Rock, the Monk, and the Ways of that." Al-Mudaini wrote several books on the news and circumstances of the Prophet, including "The Mothers of the Prophet," "The Pacts of the Prophet," "Those who harmed the Prophet," "The Naming of the Mockers who made the Quran a prey," "The Messages of the Prophet," "The Disconnections of the Prophet," "The Openings," "The Wars," "The Expeditions of the Prophet," "The Expeditions," "The Entourages," "The book of the Yemeni delegations to the Prophet," "The delegations of Madr," "The delegations of Rabi'a," and he also wrote books about the prayer of the Prophet, the story of the lie, the work of the Prophet in distributing charities, the wives of the Prophet, and what the Prophet wrote as a book and a trust, as well as the ones who were paid Zakat by Quraysh Arabs. There are also books about the news of Abu Talib and his children. Ahmad ibn Abu Musa ibn Mujahid, who was appointed as the governor of the city of peace in his time,

wrote a book about the readers of the Prophet. Abu Ali al-Naqar wrote a book titled "The Readers of Imam Ali to the Prophet." Ibn Qutaybah wrote a book titled "The Signs of Prophethood." Abu Ma'shar Najih al-Madani wrote a book called "The Expeditions." Hisham al-Kalbi wrote books about the delegations and the wives of the Prophet. Muhammad ibn Habib wrote a book titled "The Mothers of the Prophet," and another one about the relatives between the Messenger of Allah and his companions, apart from the clan. Abu Zaid al-Balkhi wrote a book about the protection of the Prophets, and Darar ibn Amr wrote a book titled "Refutation of Hashwiyyah in their claim that if the Prophet prays for someone, his sins will be forgiven." Ubaidullah ibn Abu al-Dunya wrote a book about the jurisprudence of the Prophet, and Ibrahim ibn Hammad wrote a book titled "The Signs of Prophethood" ⁽⁶⁵⁾.

All that has been mentioned reflects the expansion and interest in the biography of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) and his mission, aiming to achieve a deeper understanding and contemplation of the history of Islam, its stages of development, and origins. It becomes evident that the early historical experience of Muslims in documentation was a blend of Hadith (sayings of the Prophet) and history, as seen in the books of campaigns and biographies. The Muslims' interest in the sayings and actions of the Prophet was the driving force behind the writing of his biography, his campaigns, and the campaigns of his companions. This explains why most early biographers were from Medina, where most of the events of his biography took place, making them better able to understand and document those events and news.

The separation of these sections into separate books did not prevent scholars from including their contents in various sections of their works. This can be observed in the Musnad of Ahmad ibn Hanbal, Sahih al-Bukhari, and Sahih Muslim, where the narrations related to campaigns are gathered in separate chapters.

Ibn Shihab al-Zuhri documented the Prophetic Sunnah during the reign of the Caliph Umar ibn Abdul Aziz and became one of the most

important and reliable sources in the biography of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). Among the most famous authors in this field were Muhammad ibn Ishaq and Muhammad ibn Umar al-Waqidi. It is noteworthy that al-Zuhri was the first to use the term "Sunnah" to refer to the life of the Prophet, and he was the first to document his reports and narrations. This is attributed to his extensive knowledge of Hadith, from which he benefited greatly and used his information to serve his interest in the biography of the Prophet. Alongside him were two scholars, Musa ibn Uqba and Muhammad ibn Ishaq, both known for their expertise in campaigns. Ibn Ishaq was praised for his comprehensive knowledge of the Prophet's biography, making him a reference in campaigns. Ibn Ishaq, on the other hand, was of Persian origin, born in 85 AH (704 CE) and raised in Medina, where he benefited from prominent scholars. He received knowledge from the scholars of Medina, such as Muhammad ibn Abi Bakr, Aban ibn Uthman, Muhammad ibn Ali ibn al-Husayn ibn Ali ibn Abi Talib, and Nafi, the servant of Abdullah ibn Amr ibn Shu'ayb al-Zuhri. Muhammad ibn Ishaq was renowned for his extensive knowledge of campaigns, to the extent that Imam Shafi'i referred to him as a primary reference in this field, saying, "Whoever wants to delve into the campaigns should rely on Muhammad ibn Ishaq." Thanks to his knowledge and significant contribution to documenting the biography and campaigns, his works became an important source for studying the history of Islam and the biography of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) ⁽⁶⁶⁾.

The significant evolution witnessed in the documentation of Islamic narrations during its early stages is evident through the general writing of the Prophet's biography. Several prominent scholars of Hadith mentioned that Urwah ibn al-Zubayr ibn al-Awam and his student Ibn Shihab al-Zuhri were among the first to write in this field. They independently produced two books: the first being "Maghazi Rasulallah" by Urwah ibn al-Zubayr, narrated by Abu al-Aswad, and the second titled "Al-Maghazi Al-Nabawiyya" by Ibn Shihab al-Zuhri. However, these two books were originally

compilations of narrations by Urwah and Ibn Shihab al-Zuhri. Professor Muhammad Mustafa al-Azami collected reports of the campaigns, and the Arab Education Office published it as an independent book in the year 1401 AH (1981 CE). Additionally, Dr. Suhail Zakar printed the book "Al-Maghazi Al-Nabawiyya" by Ibn Shihab al-Zuhri independently in Damascus at Dar Al-Fikr Al-Mu'asir in the same year. Dr. Suhail Zakar mentioned in the introduction to his research that... [content of the introduction is missing] ⁽⁶⁷⁾.

The book before us contains some of Al-Zuhri's knowledge regarding the campaigns, but not all that he possessed... He did not structure this book with the intention of producing a comprehensive work on the biography and campaigns as his two successors, Musa ibn Uqba and Muhammad ibn Ishaq, did.

Historian Abdul Jabbar Naji confirms that specific information regarding Urwah ibn al-Zubayr's authorship of a book on the noble Prophetic biography or campaigns is not available. However, he and his sons, Hisham and another son, Uthman, are considered the main sources in the narrations of the Prophetic biography and campaigns. Their narrations have been documented in collections of Hadith, Sunan, Musnads, and histories. Dr. Suhail Zakar suggests that the book he researched primarily consists of historical verdicts (fatwas), as Al-Zuhri used to receive inquiries concerning various historical matters from the Umayyad court. He would respond to these inquiries, and the collection of his responses, along with those of his students, was classified and published by him. This indicates that the book was not originally intended to be a comprehensive work on the Prophetic biography but rather historical verdicts directed by the Umayyad authority. Furthermore, it indicates Urwah ibn al-Zubayr's role in serving the Umayyad court, as he participated in the cultural committee formed by Muawiyah ibn Abi Sufyan. Abdul Malik ibn Marwan was also a member of this committee, and its aim was to write the noble Prophetic biography ⁽⁶⁸⁾. Al-Yasiri continued his discussion about Muhammad ibn Ishaq ibn Yasar al-Asadi al-Mutalib, who passed away in the year 151 AH (771 CE), at the beginning of

the Abbasid Caliphate. He was renowned for his biography, which became famous under his name. Although we haven't received it in its entirety, Ziyad al-Bakai (d. 183 AH/799 CE) mastered its narration from him, having heard it directly, and then transmitted it to Abdul Malik ibn Hisham ibn Ayyub al-Hamiri (d. 218 AH/833 CE), who edited, expanded, and refined it. This edited version is what has reached us and has become the primary reference in the field of Prophetic biography for all later authors, compilers, or commentators. Ibn Ishaq thus became a symbol of Prophetic biography narration, his name mentioned automatically in discussions about the Prophetic biography. Consequently, his work remains foundational in all matters related to narrating and documenting the biography, not only in the biography itself but in all aspects of Islamic history. As for Ibn Hisham's work on the biography, he outlined his approach in his introduction, wherein it appears that he added to Ibn Ishaq in certain areas he found necessary for further research. He provided explanations and interpretations of unfamiliar poetry and elucidated the meanings of many Quranic words. He also corrected some names and information ⁽⁶⁹⁾.

It is noteworthy to mention that this historical perspective adopted by Muslims became a distinguishing feature of historical documentation among Muslims. After this, no historian among the Arabs and Muslims, whether in biographical literature, biographical dictionaries, chronicles, or annals, can be found who did not follow this approach. This tradition began with Ibn Saad in his "Tabaqat al-Kubra," Khalifa ibn Khayyat (d. 240 AH/854 CE), then Abu Ja'far al-Baghdadi (d. 245 AH/859 CE) in his "Al-Mahbub," Al-Baladhuri (d. 279 AH/892 CE) in his book "Jumal min Ansab al-Ashraf," Al-Hafiz Abu Zura al-Dimashqi (d. 281 AH/833 CE) in his history, which included the noble Prophetic biography, and similarly Al-Tabari in his history from which the biography of Ibn Ishaq was extracted. Abu Hatim al-Darimi (d. 345 AH/956 CE) in his book "Prophetic Biography and Caliphs' News," Ibn Hazm al-Andalusi (d. 456 AH/1063 CE) in "Jawami' al-Sira" and five other essays, Ibn Abd al-Barr (d.

463 AH/1070 CE) in "Al-Isti'ab fi Ma'rifat al-Ashab," Al-Khatib al-Baghdadi (d. 464 AH/1071 CE), Al-Hafiz Ibn Asakir al-Shami (d. 571 AH/1175 CE), Abu al-Qasim Abd al-Rahman al-Sahili (d. 581 AH/1185 CE), who elaborated on it in his book "Al-Rawd al-Anif," Abu al-Faraj Ibn al-Jawzi (d. 597 AH/1200 CE) in his comprehensive history of kings and nations, Abu Dhar al-Kashani (d. 604 AH/1207 CE) who explained its poetry and interpreted what was attributed to the Prophet from the unusual hadiths, Ibn al-Athir (d. 630 AH/1232 CE) in "Al-Kamil fi al-Tarikh," Abu Zakariya Yahya ibn Sharaf al-Nawawi, who died in 676 AH, in his book "Tahdhib al-Asma' wa al-Lughat," Abu al-Fida Ismail ibn Kathir (d. 752 AH/1351 CE) in his history "Al-Bidayah wa al-Nihayah," Ali ibn Ibrahim al-Hilli (d. 1044 AH/1634 CE) in his book known as "Insan al-Ayun fi Sira al-Amin al-Ma'mun," which became famous as "Al-Sira al-Halabiyya" and other sources.

In reality, documenting the Prophetic biography and other historical events was of great importance throughout historical epochs. However, it can be said that the first three Hijri centuries were the primary period that laid the foundational framework for Muslim historians, leading to the emergence of the science of history among the Arabs. The first three Hijri centuries witnessed the establishment of this science and made it a broad scientific base that enabled Muslim historians of that period to regulate historical narrations and events. They made significant contributions to the development of historical science both locally and globally. They understood the importance of preserving Islamic sources and the original narrations, aiming to avoid the confusion and inaccuracy that appeared in the writings of earlier historians, historically known as "Isra'iliyyat." The urgent need to document and authenticate Islamic historical sources and avoid mixing authentic and fabricated narrations prompted Muslim scholars to exert great efforts in this field. These efforts placed the science of history at the pinnacle of sciences worldwide and showcased the creative minds that contributed to this evident work ⁽⁷⁰⁾. Despite the diversity in Islamic methodologies regarding the interest in the Prophetic

biography, the ultimate goal was singular: to preserve the biography of the Prophet Muhammad and his traditions. This indicates that the characteristic interest in the Prophetic biography in the first century of the Hijra relied on eyewitness accounts and reports. Those engaged in this field were called "reporters" because they derived texts of the Prophetic biography from contemporaneous companions of Prophet Muhammad and later from the successors (Tabi'un) and the successors of the successors. The early reporters lived in Medina, where they diligently sought out and orally transmitted the reports of the Prophet Muhammad.

Dr. Hasan al-Hakim emphasizes the necessity of thorough examination and analysis of the texts provided by these reporters, especially those close to the time of the Prophet Muhammad. He suggests that the political aspect may have influenced their departure from truthfulness in narrating events, especially considering their oral transmission, as some of them lived during the Umayyad and early Abbasid periods. This exposure to authority might have occasionally subjected them to its influence⁽⁷¹⁾. In the second century of Islam, which witnessed the documentation of the Prophetic biography, there was a noticeable increase in productivity and richness in historical writing, including the history of the Prophetic biography among Muslims. It is also observed that the historical understanding of the battles (mughazi) and the Prophetic biography became more accurate and clear. With the beginning of the third century of the Hijra, there was a significant breakthrough in historical writing in general, and specifically in the Prophetic biography. Historical writing began to crystallize in its comprehensive concept, and historical encyclopedias emerged, which in turn relied on the Prophetic biography as a starting point for historical writing in all its dimensions and stages. One of the most important events that dominated these historical encyclopedias was the Prophetic biography⁽⁷²⁾.

It seems that Arabs' mastery of history surpasses their proficiency in other sciences. They illuminated the torch of modern European civilization by completing what the Greeks and

Romans began in constructing historical thought. Arabs developed and diversified various historical arts, narrating conquests, compiling biographies, documenting regions and cities. They were among the first to write about the history of history, clarifying the concepts of time and place, categorizing eras and dates of historical events by days, months, and years, a practice not known to Greek and Roman historians. They relied on citation in historical narration, a commendable tradition they inherited from Hadith narration to preserve the text. Ibn Khaldun came to connect individuals, society, events, and the environment, laying the foundations of historical criticism and philosophy⁽⁷³⁾. The writing of biographies and compilations of individuals' life stories reached heights not attained by the hands of the Greeks and Romans. This is evident beyond doubt in their contribution to writing the biography of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him).

Conclusion

after studying the Prophet's biography and its impact on understanding and documenting early Islamic history, the researcher has arrived at several important conclusions:

1. The research confirms that recording the Prophet's biography was the first form of historical writing among Arabs and Muslims, laying the foundation for historical writing among them.
2. The research highlights the significance of the Prophet's biography as a subject revolving around his personality and life, which greatly influenced historians and researchers, leading to diverse interpretations due to differences in thinking and reading of its events, making it a lively subject of continuous debate.
3. The research demonstrates that the history of the Islamic nation derives its behavioral norms, ethics, and beliefs from the Prophet's biography, prompting Muslims to take comprehensive and accurate interest in documenting it.

4. The research emphasizes that Muslims' interest in the Prophet's biography was driven by theological considerations and Quranic guidance, giving it special importance as a pivotal turning point in human history.
5. The research shows that the beginnings of documenting the Prophet's biography occurred during his lifetime, and although it was on a small scale, it constituted an important beginning in its documentation.
6. The research underscores the importance of documenting the Prophet's biography in historical studies, as its sources are original accounts from the Prophet's companions and followers.
7. The research reveals that the history of Arabs and Muslims owes much to the era of the Prophet's biography, as it was the gateway from which Muslims embarked on historical documentation in general.

Based on these conclusions, it can be said that the Prophet's biography continues to be an important source for understanding and documenting Islamic history, remaining a central subject for research and debate within and outside the Islamic world.

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1. The Renaissance is known as the European cultural period that followed the Middle Ages. It was characterized by a series of political, social, economic, and intellectual transformations that affected Europe from the end of the Middle Ages, specifically from the 11th century to the 16th century. This period marked the transition from the Middle Ages to the modern era in Europe, spanning several centuries and witnessing radical transformations unprecedented since the Middle Ages. Its prominent elements include the revival of classical literature and philosophy, the emergence of a new European civilization, which began in Italy in the late 14th century, with its roots tracing back to the Middle Ages in the 12th century. See: Abdul-Kazem, Starr Alak, "European Renaissance: Characteristics and Results 1500-1789," published in the Journal of Humanities, College of Education / Safi Al-Din Al-Hilli, University of Babylon, (Volume 1), (Issue 2), (Iraq - 2010).
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