

ABSTRACTS:

**INTRODUCTION AND ANALYSIS OF SHAMĀIL E
TIRMAZI AND ITS ARABIC EXPLANATORY BOOKS**

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The prophetic qualities (Shamāil e Nabwī) are those habits and natural beauties that belong to virtual and internal characteristics Prophet Muhammad (P.B.U.H.). In this type of Hadith knowledge, body features, gatherings, day to day used items, habits, qualities and moral beauties of Prophet Muhammad (P.B.U.H.) are discussed, in his person. These Prophetic Qualities (Shamāil e Nabwī) have the highest valuable place with respect of literally art and thought in Islamic Studies. From this knowledge not only the believers get identification of their Prophet (P.B.U.H.) but also they may see the physical and natural qualities of him (P.B.U.H.), in the same way they glance at the real consideration of permanent and excellent deeds of the Rasool (P.B.U.H.). In this way, they heartily reach to the status of strong and firm faith in the Prophet-hood and get passion to follow the footsteps of the Prophet Muhammad (P.B.U.H.).

About this art there are many books of the past and the modern time but the most important and prominent book "Al Shamāil" written in third century, has the highest place among them. Its author is Hāfiz ul Hadīth Abu Esā Muhammad bin Esā Tirmazī. This valuable book has secured very famous place in to four dimensions in this universe on the basis of its surpassing features. On the other hand, many scholars wrote permanent books of Shamāil following the same patterns and several types of books got birth as explanation to this book. In this short piece of writing, the qualities and the prominences of Shamāil e Tirmazi with Arabic annotations and its important explanatory books would be introduced and research analysis would be presented.

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- that the Prophet was afflicted with epilepsy or hysteria, condemning him with faint praise in passages like the following: “It is incredible that a person subject to epilepsy, or hysteria, or even ungovernable fits of emotion, could have been the active leader of military expeditions, or the cool far-seeing guide of city-state and a growing religious community.”
- 61 Taiyaba Nasrin, *Development of Sirah Literature in Egypt in the 20th Century*, (unpublished PhD thesis, Centre of West Asian Studies, Aligarh Muslim University, Aligarh, India, 1990), p. 5 (of abstract).
- 62 Note: There were also many Sirah-writers who rejected these trends; among them were the most prominent: Muhammd Idris Kandhalwi, Qaadi Muhammad Sulaymaan Mansurpuri, Safi-ur-Rahman Mubaarakpuri, ‘Abd al-Ra’wf Danaapuri, Mawlaanaa Ashraf ‘Ali Thaanwi, Mirza Hayrat Dihlawi, Abu al-Hasan ‘Ali al-Nadwi, and Pir Muhammad Karam Shah al-Azhari. They presented the Prophet as a messenger of Allah for the guidance of humanity.
- 63 Taiyaba Nasrin, *Development of Sirah Literature*, pp. 31-32.
- 64 Taiyaba Nasrin, *Development of Sirah Literature*, pp. 119, 153, 176, 196.



- equality. Ramakrishna Rao, Prof. K. S., *Mohammad: The Prophet of Islam*, (Delhi: Madhur Sandesh Sangam, 2009), p. 4
- 35 A. Sprenger, *The Life of Mohammad from Original Sources*, (Allahabad: The Presbyterian Mission Press, 1851); William Muir, *The Life of Mahomet*, (London: Smith, Elder and Co., 1861); D. S. Margoliouth, *Mohammed and the Rise of Islam*, (New York, London: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1905); W. Montgomery Watt, *Muhammad at Mecca*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1953); W. Montgomery Watt, *Muhammad at Medina*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1956).
- 36 Sprenger, *The Life of Mohammad*, p. 1 .
- 37 Sprenger, *The Life of Mohammad*, p. 2.
- 38 Sprenger, *The Life of Mohammad*, p. 84, in f.n.
- 39 Note: He drew this conclusion from the Qur'aanic verse: 43:31. وقالوا لولا (وقالوا لولا) (نزل هذا القرآن على رجل من القريتين عظيم), Sprenger, *The Life of Mohammad*, p. 84.
- 40 Hans Wehr, *A Dictionary of Modern Written Arabic*, (London: Macdonald & Evans LTD, 1980), p. 537.
- 41 Sprenger, *The Life of Mohammad*, p. 85.
- 42 Al-Tirmidhi, *al-Shamaa'il al-Muhammadiyah*, Baab maa ja'a fi Mashyah Rasul Allah, *hadith* no. 117; Note: The complete *hadith* in the introduction of this paper.
- 43 Muir, *The Life of Mahomet*, p. 303.
- 44 Sprenger, *The Life of Mohammad*, p. 86.
- 45 Sprenger, *The Life of Mohammad*, p. 89.
- 46 Sprenger, *The Life of Mohammad*, p. 89.
- 47 Muir, *The Life of Mahomet*, p. 309.
- 48 Muir, *The Life of Mahomet*, p. 319.
- 49 Muir, *The Life of Mahomet*, p. 307-309.
- 50 Muir, *The Life of Mahomet*, pp. 309-310 .
- 51 Muir, *The Life of Mahomet*, p. 311.
- 52 Muir, *The Life of Mahomet*, p. 321.
- 53 Muir, *The Life of Mahomet*, p. 322.
- 54 Margoliouth, *Mohammed*, p. Iv.
- 55 Margoliouth, *Mohammed*, p. 44.
- 56 Margoliouth, *Mohammed*, p. 84.
- 57 Watt, *Muhammad at Medina*, pp. 321-324.
- 58 Watt, *Muhammad at Medina*, p. 324.
- 59 Watt, *Muhammad at Medina*, p. 332.
- 60 Watt is moderate in contrast to Sprenger and Muir, although his writing contains certain material objectionable to Muslims. For instance, he alleges

- 23 Ahmad al-Nuwayri, *Nibaayat al-Arab fi Funun al-Adab*, ed. Abu al-Fadl Ibrahim, (Cairo: Dar al-Kutub al-Misriyyah, 1374/1955).
- 24 Ibn Sayyid al-Naas, *Uyun al-Athar fi Funun al-Maghaazi wa-al-Shamaa'il wa-al-Siyar*, (Cairo: Muasasah Izz al-Din lil-Taba'ah wa-al-Nashr, 1406/1986).
- 25 Al-Dhahabi, *al-Sirah al-Nabawiyah*, ed. Hussam al-Din al-Qudsi, (Beirut: Dar al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyya, 1401/1981), pp. 290-378.
- 26 Ibn Qayyam al-Jawziyya, *Zaad al-Ma'ad fi Hadyi Khayr al-'Ibad*, ed. Shu'ayb al-Arnawt, ed. 'Abd al-Qadir al-'Arnawt (Beirut: Muasssisah al-Risalah, 1405/1985).
- 27 titled: Kitaab Sirah Rasul Allah wa-Dhikr Ayyaamih wa-Ghazawaatih wa-Saraayaah wa-al-Wufud ilayhi wa-Shamaa'ilih wa-Dalaa'ilih al-Daalih 'alayhi. Note: Mustafa Abd al-Wahid published al-Sirah al-Nabawiyah of Ibn Kathir from Matbah Isa al-Baabi al-Halbi, Cairo, in 1964. He also noted that it was part of *al-Bidaayah wa-al-Nihayah*.
- 28 Ahmad b. Muhammad al-Qastalaani, *al-Mawaahib al-Laduniya*, (Cairo: 1281).
- 29 Muhammad al-Zarqaani, *Sharh al-Mawaahib al-Laduniya*, (Cairo: Maktabah al-Azhariyah al-Misriyah, 1225-29AH).
- 30 Yasin Mazhar Siddiqi, *Masaadir Sirat-e Nabawi*, 379, 384/2.
- 31 Nur al-Din al-Halbi, *Insaan al-'Uyun fi Sirah al-Amin al-Mamun*, (Cairo: Matbah al-'Amirah, 1292AH).
- 32 Anwar Mahmud Khalid, Urdu Nasr main Sirat-e Rasul, (Lahore: Iqbal Academy, 1989), pp. 211-212.
- 33 Belyaev's *Arabs, Islam and the Arab Caliphate in the Early Middle Ages* addresses pre-modern Muslim history. His analysis of the early Arab conquest takes into account the geographical and socio-cultural milieu of the Arabs prior to the Prophet of Islam, and the rivalry between the Byzantine and Sassanid empires. Belyaev applies Marxist theories about class and social relationships to the history of Islam, presenting the Prophet as a successful social reformer. Belyaev, E. A., *Arabs, Islam and the Arab Caliphate in the Early Middle Ages*, tr. Adophe Gourevitch, (London: Pall Mall, 1969).
- 34 Ramakrishna Rao states that Prophet Muhammad brought a great revolution. The equality, social justice and democratic values he espoused led Sarojini Naidu, Mahatma Gandhi and George Bernard Shaw to praise him. Rao points out that women's rights, only achieved in England in 1881, were a much earlier feature of Islamic law. He adds that Louis Massignon and Thomas Carlyle believed the zakat and inheritance system of Islam to have been a far-reaching step towards emancipation and human

- 5 Shibli Numani, *Sirat al-Nabi*, (Lahore: Dini Kutub Khana, 1975), 60/1.
- 6 The present Kitaab al-Maghaazi of 'Urwa was compiled by Muhammad
Mustafa A'zami who collected all reports of 'Urwah from various sources
which are revealed on authority of 'Abd Allah b. Lahiyah through Abu al-
Aswad. *Maghaazi Rasul Allah li-'Urwa b. Zubayr*, ed. Muhammad Mustafa
Azami, Trans. (Urdu) Muhammad Saeed ur-Rahman Alawi, (Lahore: Idara
Thaqafat al-Islamiyyah, 1990).
- 7 Hamid Allah collected the report of Ibn Ishaq, which is narrated on the
authority of Yunis b. Bukayr (d. 199/814-5) and Muhammad b. Salamah al-
Harraani (d. 191/806).
- 8 Ibn sa'd, *al-Tabaqaat al-Kubra*, (Beirut: Dar al-Sadir, 1957), pp. 360-438.
- 9 Al-Balaadhuri, *Ansaab al-Ashraaf*, (Cairo, 1959), pp. 257-271.
- 10 Al-Baladhuri, *Ansaab al-Ashraaf*, pp. 386-96.
- 11 Yasin Mazhar Siddiqi, *Masadir Sirat-e Nabawi*, (Lahore: Dar al-Nawadir,
2016), 277/1.
- 12 Ibn Hibbaan al-Busti, *Kitaab al-Thiqaat*, ed. Ibn Hajr al-Haythami, (Haider
Abad Dakkan: Majlis Daar al-Maarif al-Islamiyyah, 1395/1975) 145-151/1.
- 13 Ibn Hazm, 'Jawaami' al-Sirah, pp. 21-22, 41-44.
- 14 Perhaps, Abd al-Karim al-Jili took the idea of perfect man from the
Shamaa'il traditions.
- 15 Qaadi Ayaaz, *al-Shifaa bi-Ta'rif Huquq al-Mustafa*, pp. 46-126.
- 16 Muhammad Ismaa'il Kandhalwi was the first to translate *al-Shifaa* into
Urdu, under the title *Shamim al-Riyaad*. It was published in 1913 by Matba'
Nawal Kashur. Ahmad Ali Shah Bataalwi also contributed an Urdu
translation, published by Manzil Naqshbandiyyah, Lahore, in 1341 AH
/[1923].
- 17 Yasin Mazhar Siddiqi, *Masadir Sirat-e Nabawi*, 491/1.
- 18 Ibn Asakir, *Taarikh Madinah Dimashq*, ed. Nishat Ghazaawi, (Dimashq,
Majma' al-Lugha al-Arabiya, 1404/1984).
- 19 Ibn Jawzi, *Kitaab al-Wafaa bi-Ahwaal al-Mustafa*, ed. Mustafa 'Abd al-
Wahid, (Cairo: Daar al-Kutub al-Hadithah, 1966), 387-411/2.
- 20 Al-Maqdisi, Haafiz 'Abd al-Ghani, *Sirah al-Nabi wa-Ashaabuhu al-'Asharah*,
ed. Hadyaan al-Sanawi, (Beirut: Markaz al-Khidmaat wa-al-Abhaath al-
Thaqafiyah, 1406/1986), pp. 50-54.
- 21 Al-Tabari, Muhibb al-Din Ahmad, *Khulaasat al-Siyar fi Ahwaal Sayyid al-
Bashar*, (Delhi: Delhi Printing Press, 1343).
- 22 Abu al-Fidaa Ismaa'il, *Kitaab al-Mukhtasar fi Akhbaar al-Bashar*, (Paris: al-
Taba'ah al-Malakiyyah, 1837).

Notes and References

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- 1 Yasin Mazhar Siddiqi argues that Shibli Nu‘mani and some other Sirah-writers have mixed up the term Sirah and Siyar. These are different terms for different disciplines. Siyar is employed for the documentation of the events of the Prophet’s life. He asserts that Sirah became a term for a particular discipline combining Siyar and Maghaazi. It is not correct to argue that books of Ibn Ishaq and al-Waaqdi record only the Maghaazi traditions. The titles of the books: *Kitaab al-Mubtadaa’ wa-al-Mab’ath wa-al-Maghaazi* and *Kitaab al-Taarikh wa-al-Mab’ath wa-al-Maghaazi*, also suggest that their writers linked the biography of the Prophet with universal history, rather than simply recounting his travels and battles. Shibli, ‘Abd al-Ra’wf Danaapuri and Kaandhalwi were not aware of this fact while Hamid Allah and Mahmud Ahmad Ghazi have analyzed the issue. However, they could not complete the investigation because the original work of Ibn Ishaq was not available at that time and they consulted a part of Ibn Hishsham’s book. Similarly, the portion of Waaqdi’s work that was related to Maghaazi has survived, while the remaining two parts (Taarikh and Mab’ath) have been lost. According to Siddiqi, al-Waaqdi’s text survives in the works of al-Balaadhuri, al-Kalaa’i and Ibn Sayyid al-Naas, These extant passages show that al-Waaqidi composed a consistent book of Sirah on the pattern of Ibn Ishaq; Yasin Mazher Siddiqi, “Sirat-e Nabwi kay Maakhidh par jaded Urdu tahqiqaat,” in *Dawr-e Jadid main Sirat nigaari kay Rujhanaat*, ed. Mubassir Hussain and ‘Abd al-Karim ‘Uthmaan, (Islamabad, Idaarah Tahqiqat al-Islami, International Islamic University, 2015), pp 3-28 at pp. 24-25.
- 2 Al-Bukhaari, *Sahih*, Kitaab al-Ta’bir, (10) Baab: Man Ra’aa al-Nabi fi al-Manaam, hadith no. 6996; Muslim, *Sahih*, Kitaab al-Ru’wya, Baab: Qawl al-Nabi, Man Ra’aani fi al-Manaam faqd ra’aani, hadith no.5921.
- 3 Muhammad Zakariyya Kandhalwi, *Khasaa’il Nabawi*, Trans. (Eng): Muhammad bin ‘Abdul Rahman bin Ebrahim (Karachi, Zam Zam Publisher, 1395/1975), p. 5.
- 4 Al-Tirmidhi, *al-Shamaa’il al-Muhammadiyah*, Baab maa ja’a fi Khalq Rasul Allah, hadith no. 7.
The translation, with a few corrections, has been taken from: Muhammad Zakariyya Kandhalwi, *Khasaa’il Nabawi*, Trans. (Eng): Muhammad bin ‘Abdul Rahmaan bin Ebrahim, pp. 9-10.

(1951), 'Abd Munim Shamis' *al-Abqariyah al-Askariyah fi Ghazwat al-Rasool* (1958), *Fatah Makkah* (1962), Muhammad Jamal-ud-Din Mahfuz' *Ghazwah Badar* (1963) Ahmad Yasri's *Ghazwah Uhad* (1965), Hasan Fath Allah's *Al Qayyim Al Khulqiyah al-Ruhiyya fi al-Ghazwah* (1971) and Mahmud al-Dar's *Tarikh al-Arab al-Askariyah: Harub Muhammad*.⁶⁴ On another note, a contingent of scholars has endeavoured to answer the objections Orientalists raised about polygamy, miracles, slavery, relationships with Jewish communities and the military policies of the Prophet. In all this flurry of defensive and apologetic authorship, the Shamā'il tradition, formerly at the forefront of Sirah studies, was largely neglected.

V- CONCLUDING REMARKS

In conclusion, this study finds that the Shamā'il traditions, which had been so crucial to early Muslim biographical and historical treatises, as well as to the *hadith* literature, have been pushed to the margins in contemporary Sirah-writing. Authors of the post-World War II period are mainly concerned with countering the objections of Orientalists in order to make Islam and its Prophet acceptable to today's readers, and with showcasing the admirable human aspects of the Prophet's personality. The hostile nature of nineteenth-century Orientalist biographies were supplanted in more recent times by Europeans who approved of the Prophet's social, political and military capabilities whilst expressing some reservations about his religious message. On the whole, Muslim Sirah-writers tended to adopt Western approaches for their Sirah studies. Their shift of emphasis has led to the downplaying of Shamā'il and a consequent decrease in devotional attitudes towards the Prophet.

writers:

In these works he is generally presented as a rare genius, as great ideologist, as matchless political leader and military general of great foresight and wisdom-and all these qualities were exhibited by him as a human being. Here a greater stress is laid down his human nature and character rather than his Prophet-Personality. Therefore, his achievements are studied and presented against the backdrop, and as such they are highlighted, so they may serve as models and example for ordinary people to follow.⁶¹

The proliferation of biographies of the Prophet written by Muslim in the twentieth century reflects the authors' sometimes conflicting motivations of imitation, apologetics, and the desire to redefine the social structure of the *ummah*. A number of these new Sirah-writers made great efforts to present the life of the Prophet within the context of modern socio-political systems like socialism, capitalism and democracy, using ideological methods to justify their conclusions.⁶² Analytical and critical approaches towards the investigation of history were utilized, at least in part, to refute Western disparagement and to demonstrate that reason and revelation are not at odds in the Islamic faith.

It may be useful to highlight briefly the central themes of those Muslim Sirah-writers of the past century who proceeded in the Orientalist pattern. Taiyaba Nasrin has analysed this propensity in the principal contemporary Egyptian Sirah-writers. She draws our attention to 'Abd al-Fattah Ibrāhīm, author of *Muhammd al-Qā'id* (1945), in which he presented the Prophet as an exemplary leader. This trend has been followed by later Egyptian scholars, such as Mahmud 'Aqqād. His *'Abqariyah Muhammad* (1946) seeks to portray the Prophet as a great revolutionary leader whose radical reforms overturned the course of human history. Other works painting the Prophet as an ideal leader include: Fathi Ridwān's *Muhammad-al-Atha'ir al-A'zam* (1957), Muhammad Shabih's *Muhammad* (1957), 'Abd al-Rahman al Sharqāwi's *Muhammad Rasul al-Hurriyah*, (1962), Khalid Muhammad Khalid's *Insāniyah Muhammad* (1971), Ahmed Husayn's *Nabi al-Insāniyah*, Muhammad Shalbi's *Shakhsiyah Muhammad*.⁶³

A large number of books by Egyptian Sirah-writers feature the Prophet as a military commander. The most important are: 'Abd al-Rahman-al-Bana's *Ghazwah Badr* (1952), 'Abd al-Majid al-Hawidi's *Muhammad al-Qā'id al-'āli* (1956), Muhammad Farj's *Muhammad-al-Maharib*

mutually hostile Arab tribes under the Islamic State of Medina. He further authored the constitution of the State of Medina, clearly designating himself as head of state and clarifying the character of the *ummah*. This constitution reformed the social structure of Arabia by assuring security of life and property.

Watt illustrates briefly the appearance and manners of the Prophet. His description, unlike Muir's, takes a moderate tone.⁵⁷ Enumerating the factors that led to a distorted view of the Prophet's personality, Watt remarks, "Of all the world's great men none has been so much maligned as Muhammad. It is easy to see how this has come about. For centuries Islam was the great enemy of Christendom, for Christendom was in direct contact with no other organized states comparable in power to the Muslims."⁵⁸ Above all, the Scottish biographer admires the Prophet's role as social reformer who contributed to the betterment of humanity by introducing "...a new system of social security and a new family structure, both of which were a vast improvement on what went before. In this way he adapted for settled communities all that was best in the morality of the nomad, and established a religious and a social framework for the life of a sixth of the human race today. That is not the work of a traitor or a lecher."⁵⁹

Our consideration of two key twentieth-century European Sirah writers demonstrates that later Orientalists were more balanced and less polemical than those of the nineteenth century in their treatment of the life of the Prophet.⁶⁰ The works of Margoliouth and Watt attract the attention of Muslim readers for their portrayal of the Prophet as a hero, a successful social reformer and a statesman. However, for faithful Muslims, Muhammad –peace be upon him- is a Prophet and the beloved of Allah. His spiritual role in human development supersedes any social or political actions he may have undertaken.

IV- Muslim Scholars Respond

Muslim scholars have been unavoidably affected by the intense Orientalist interest in Islam. Some of them attempted to counter modern methodologies like positivism, objectivism and rationalism. Others, however, followed in the footsteps of Margoliouth and Watt, highlighting the Prophet's achievements as a political leader and social reformer who established an Islamic state and society on the basis of the Islamic philosophy. Taiyaba Nasrin outlines the tendencies of these modern Sirah-

Islam as a social movement and the Prophet of Islam as reformer or statesman. In the process, religious elements of the Prophet's message were marginalised. Two leading scholars exemplified the trend: D.S. Margoliouth and William Montgomery Watt. Margoliouth, an Oxford professor of Arabic, painted the Prophet as hero whose extraordinary personality and strength of character enabled him to accomplish his mission. Watt, a Scottish linguist and professor of Islamic studies who was also a cleric in the Anglican church, emphasised the role of the Prophet as an exemplary national leader, whose primary achievement was establishing a political state in Arabia.

Both of these men of letters undertook biographical studies of the Prophet in the context of Mecca's socio-political, economic and religious centrality in Arabia. Margoliouth argues that the rise of the Prophet Muhammad should be understood as the outcome of financial crises of his time. Paganism was the source of the material prosperity of Mecca, and replacing these old cults with Christianity or Judaism would have given outside polities an opportunity to lay claim to it. Margoliouth lauds the achievement of the Prophet in replacing paganism with a new religion and challenging the supremacy of Christianity and Judaism, all the while maintaining the economic supremacy of Mecca in the region. He writes:

The ideal solution of the problem was clearly that discovered in time by Mohammed, of superseding both the enlightened religions; retaining the old source of wealth, but in a system which, so far from being backward, was in advance of the cult of the Roman Empire.⁵⁵

Indeed, the author portrays the Prophet as a heroic character, possessed of extraordinary intellectual and leadership qualities, along with the single-minded determination needed to make a success of his mission. He commends the Prophet as "a shrewd judge of men," who assessed the calibre of those around him with the aim of making the best use of their capabilities.⁵⁶ Despite his expressions of admiration, Margoliouth does not specifically address the study of the Shamā'il.

William Montgomery Watt contends that Muhammad was a gifted statesman and clan chieftan who successfully consolidated his authority in Arabia, unifying the Arabs by encouraging contracts and peace treaties among the conflicting groups. Watt provides a detailed explanation of pre-Islamic Arab rivalries. He maintains that the Prophet himself reconciled the

amounting to several hundred, were butchered in cold blood before his eyes. And what is perhaps worst of all, the dastardly assassination of political and religious opponents, countenanced and frequently directed as they were in all their cruel and perfidious details by Mahomet himself, leaves a dark and indelible blot upon his character.”⁴⁹ It is indeed regrettable that the author did not follow his own advice that an impartial historian should present both dark and bright aspects of persons and events, for he studiously ignored the Muslims’ account of the exile of the Jewish tribes.

Muir centres his discussion of the Prophet’s domestic life on the vexed issue of polygamy. He praises the Prophet’s life at Mecca, where he had lived as ‘a faithful husband’ to his wife Khadija for twenty-five years, but finds fault with marriages entered into during his mature years, which Muir suggests were undertaken because of an unseemly passion for female companionship.⁵⁰ He observes disapprovingly that Muslims tend to adopt the marital ways of “...the Prince of Medina, rather than the Prophet of Mecca.”⁵¹ He finally asserts that as long as people believe in the Quran, three radical evils will continue to plague the world: “First: Polygamy, Divorce, and Slavery, Second: freedom of judgement in religion, Third: a barrier...against the reception of Christianity.”⁵² Muir’s condemnation reaches its climax when he states: “The sword of Mahomet, and the Coran, are the most fatal enemies of Civilization, Liberty and Truth, which the world has yet known.”⁵³

The passages quoted in the preceding paragraph reflect the Scottish biographer’s ingrained prejudice against Islam. A strong bias concerning his topic of study is a hindrance to an historian. Not only has Muir overlooked the historical context of the Prophet’s marriages and the Muslim standpoint on them, but he dismisses the undeniable contributions made by Islamic culture to civilization and human well-being. Muir has, indeed, consulted various original sources for the early history of Islam, but his evangelical Christian beliefs have tainted his writing. Even other Orientalists were dismayed by his conclusions; D. S. Margoliouth declared, “... Muir’s *Life* is written with a confessedly Christian bias, and... Sprenger’s [work] is defaced by some slipshod scholarship and untrustworthy archaeology.”⁵⁴

Twentieth-century Orientalists introduced new trends for the study of Sirah. Where Sprenger and Muir had laboured to compose biographies of the Prophet using historical sources, the new trend was to interpret the

and even after his mission he was lead in all practical questions by his friends.”⁴⁶ On the whole, Sprenger’s version of the Shamā’il is polemical, rather than objective or descriptive.

The Scottish scholar and educationist William Muir, who long served in the Indian Civil Service, is perhaps the most renowned and controversial Orientalist for people of South Asia. Muir, like his predecessor Sprenger, demonstrated antipathy for Islam in his writings, claiming that it was a false religion which cobbled together Jewish and Christian traditions. The Prophet of Islam, in his view, at first adopted these earlier beliefs, but later ignored or even disowned them with the aim of establishing his own authority.⁴⁷ Muir devotes the last chapter of his biography to “The Person and Character of Mohomet”. His sketch of the appearance, habits and simple lifestyle of the Prophet is less disparaging than Sprenger’s, and he notes approvingly faithful friendships with relatives and followers. However, when he comes to the character of the Prophet, Muir adopts a censorious tone. He particularly finds fault with the Prophet’s behaviour at Medina, remarking that it was possible to “...trace from the period of Mahomet’s arrival at Medina a marked and rapid declension in the system he inculcated. Intolerance quickly took the place of freedom; force, of persuasion.” Unfortunately, Muir misinterpreted the Quranic rulings regarding the killing of enemies in the battlefield, believing that civilians were included in the category of those whom it was permissible to kill. This incorrect conclusion led him to thunder:

The name of the Almighty impiously borrowed, imparted a terrible strength to the sword of the State; and the sword of the State, in its turn, yielded a willing requital by destroying “the enemies of God,” and sacrificing them at the shrine of a false religion. “Slay the unbelievers wheresoever ye find them;” was now the watchword of Islam: - “Fight in the ways of God until opposition be crushed and the Religion becometh the Lord’s alone!” the warm and earnest devotion breathed by the Prophet and his followers at Mecca, soon became at Medina dull and vapid.⁴⁸

Under the heading “Cruelty towards his enemies,” Muir asserts that the Jewish tribes of Medina were treated with great harshness. He writes: “Sentence of exile was enforced by Mahomet with rigorous severity on two whole Jewish tribes at Medina; and of a third, likewise his neighbours, the women and children were sold into distant captivity, while the men,

Tirmidhi recorded on the authority of 'Ali b. Abi Tālib: that when the Prophet walked, he lifted his legs with vigour and strength (كان اذا مشى تفلح), and the same observation was documented by Hind b. Abi Hāla.⁴² It is true that, as William Muir points out, "...in the later years of his life, the formerly erect figure of Mahomet began to stoop. But his step was still firm and quick. His gait has been likened to that of one descending rapidly a hill. When he made haste, it was with difficulty that his followers kept pace with him."⁴³

Sperenger's prejudices come to the forefront in some of his renditions of traditional reports. A consideration of the Prophet's hair seems to have inspired him to embark on a tirade against polygamy. He writes, "...though he had not many grey hairs even when he died, he concealed them by dyeing or oiling them, in order to please his wives, many of whom were young and inclined to be giddy; and whose numbers he increased in proportion as he became more decrepit."⁴⁴

Under the heading "His Nervous Temperament," Sperenger improvises the following passage, which is loosely based upon a tradition of Ibn Abi Hāla:

The temperament of Mohammad was melancholic, and in the highest degree nervous. He was generally low spirited, thinking and restless; and he spoke little, and never without necessity. His eyes were mostly cast to the ground, and he seldom raised them towards heaven.⁴⁵

The actual passage by Ibn Abi Hāla reads:

When he looked at something he turned his whole body towards it. He always looked down. His sight was focused more to the ground than towards the sky. His modest habit was to look at something with a light eye, i.e. he looked at a thing with modesty and bashfulness, hence he did not stare at anything.

Juxtaposing the two texts enables readers to judge for themselves the extent to which Sprenger's interpolations have distorted the original, providing fuel for his thesis that the Prophet was of unbalanced mind and introverted nature. In a similar vein, he characterises as hysterical the state of the Prophet when he received the divine message (*wahi*), and asserts that he was unfit for normal life. He writes: "The faculties of his mind were extremely unequally developed; he was unfit for the common duties of life,

seminal Western biographies of the Prophet: Aloys Sprenger's *The Life of Muhammad from Original Sources* (1851); William Muir's *The Life of Mahomet* (1861); D. S. Margoliouth's *Mohammed and the Rise of Islam* (1905); and William Montgomery Watt's *Muhammad at Mecca* (1953) and *Muhammad at Medina* (1956).³⁵ We shall then evaluate the influence these Orientalists exerted on the Muslim Modernists in their treatment of Shamā'il.

Sprenger was an Austrian scholar who served for some time in India's colonial administration. He wrote extensively on Islam, declaring his intention to present "the life of Mohammad from original sources." Significantly, however, he declares on the first page of his biography of the Prophet that Islam is a false and derivative faith. He claims that its message, borrowed from Christianity, was designed "...to [fill] the ever-young Arabs with irresistible enthusiasm."³⁶ He further argues that the victory of Islam over the then-civilised world was not due to its spiritual or ethical content, but merely the result of a socio-political climate in Arabia which could not help but generate a new religion.³⁷ Sprenger's general arguments regarding Islam and its Prophet make us question the objectivity of his Sirah-writing.

Sprenger presents succinctly the Shamā'il. He notes that the Prophet's person and habits are described in minute detail by al-Tirmidhi and al-Bukhāri, as well as by the four other authenticated *hadith* writers.³⁸ Sprenger asserts that to necessary to know who is Muhammad before discussing his message and mission. He asserts that Khadija, the wife of the Prophet, induced him to "follow the natural bent of his mind, which was to ascetic exercise and religious speculations." Thus, Khadija was actually behind his success.³⁹

Sprenger presents the appearance of the Prophet with reference to al-Tirmidhi and al-Waqidi without evaluating the relative soundness of the two traditions. Moreover, in some places, his translations are inaccurate and his interpretations faulty. For instance, describing the Prophet's head, he notes: "The immoderate size of his head was partly disguised by the long locks of hair, which in slight curls came nearly down to the lobe of his ears." The Arabic word *ضم*, which he gives as "immoderate," in fact means "moderately large." The translator's error produces a negative impression.⁴⁰ In another puzzling instance, Sprenger writes, without citing his source, that the Prophet's "gait was careless."⁴¹ This portrayal contradicts what Al-

Dihlawi. Qādi Muhammad Sulaymān Mansurpuri (d. 1349/1930) penned *Rahmat lil-'Alamin*, the third volume of which treats the Khasā'is and Shamā'il traditions. *The Wasāil ila Shamā'il al-Rasul* by Shaykh Yusuf b. Ismā'il al-Nabhāni (d. 1350/1931) is a significant twentieth-century addition to the field. Sayyad Salmān Nadwi (d. 1372/1953), the foremost Urdu Sirah writer of modern times, considers the Shamā'il and Khasā'il traditions in the third volume and the Prophet's ethics in the sixth volume of his extensive *Sirah al-Nabi*. Another book of importance for the study of Shamā'il and Khasā'is traditions is *Sirah al-Mustafa* by Mawlana Muhammad Idris Kandhalwi (d. 1394/1974). *Ziā' al-Nabi* by Pir Muhammad Karam Shah al-Azhari (d. 1418/1988) encompasses Shamā'il traditions in nearly every one of its seven volumes; furthermore, an entire volume is devoted exclusively to the study of Shamā'il.

The preceding overview enables us to trace the development of the Shamā'il tradition within Sirah studies. Beginning with the ninth-century Ibn Sa'd, scholars approached the increasingly popular genre with the objective of presenting believers across the Muslim world with the example of an ideal man whose appearance and behaviour could be emulated if not replicated. The discussion that follows will address Orientalists' understandings and misapprehensions of the Shamā'il, and the uses they made of it in their Sirah-writings.

III- Orientalists and the Shamā'il Tradition

Islam captured the interest of a group of Western scholars, beginning in the nineteenth century. They laboured to produce a systematic account of the Prophet's life and achievements, using the materials they found in the Sirah literature. Employing analytical and theoretical methodology, they wrote biographies according to their own understanding. These mostly European authors, known as "Orientalists" for their focus on Asian and Middle Eastern material, tended to emphasise socio-political and economic factors in their evaluation of Sirah.³³ They admired the Prophet's views on social justice and equality under the law, whilst overlooking or even discounting his spiritual message.³⁴ The disconnect between the viewpoints of Muslim Sirah-writers and Orientalists gave rise to a flurry of new scholarship, and even attracted the attention of the public at large. Muslim researchers introduced new strategies to their Sirah-studies in response to Western publications. We shall examine the Shamā'il in the works of four

(part of *al-Bidāyah*) presents the Shamā'il in a new and distinctive manner, in which this descriptive material is classified into four discrete branches: Shamā'il, Dalā'il, Fadā'il and Khasā'is.²⁷

Yahya b. Abu Bakr al-'āmiri al-Shāfi'i (d. 893/1488) was a traditionist (Muhaddith) hailing from Yemen. It is not surprising, therefore, that his Sirah (*Bahjah al-Mahāfil wa-Baghyah al-Amail fi Talkhis al-Siyar wa-al-Shamā'il*) is based primarily on the *hadith*. Al-'Amiri divides his treatise into three parts: the first portion recounts the life of the Prophet, while the second and third address ethics, Khasā'is and Shamā'il.

Ahmad b. Muhammad al-Qastalāni (d. 923/1517) is the best known of Egypt's historians and biographers of the Prophet. His book, *Al-Mawāhib al-Laduniyyah*, is accepted by most experts of Sirah studies. Rather than dividing the work into chapters, he follows a novel classification method, organizing the material according to aims and objectives. He identifies his third aim as the depiction of the Prophet according to the Shamā'il.²⁸ Muhammad al-Zarqāni (d. 1122/1710) composed a commentary on *Al-Mawāhib*.²⁹ Although they are much admired, a recurring criticism of both *Al-Mawāhib* and its commentary concerns their authors' inclusion of many weak and fabricated traditions.³⁰

Nur al-Din al-Halbi (d. 1044/1634) was yet another Egyptian author specialising in Sirah literature. His *Insan al-'Uyun fi Sirah al-Amin al-Māmun*, commonly referred to as *Al-Sirah al-Halbiyyah*, comprises extensive documentation of Shamā'il and Dalā'il. This treatise is essentially a commentary on Shams al-Din al-Shāmi's *Al-Sirah al-Shāmiyyah* (the renowned Syrian scholar died in 942/1536).³¹ Meanwhile, the learned Mughal savant 'Abd al-Haq Dihlawi (d. 1052/1642) and his descendants made significant contributions to the Sirah. The first part of 'Abd al-Haq Dihlawi's *Dalā'il al-Nabuwah* sets out the Shamā'il and Fadā'il traditions. His son Nur al-Haq (d. 1073/1662) composed a commentary entitled *Shamā'il al-Tirmidhi*, and his grandson Sayf Allah wrote *Ashraf al-Wasā'il fi Sharh al-Shamā'il* in 1091/1680.³²

A constellation of modern scholars dedicated themselves to biographical and hagiographical research. Nawāb Sayyad Siddiq Hasan Khan Bhopali (d. 1307/1890) resolved to use only sound traditions when composing his *Al-Shamamah al-Anbariyah*, in which he incorporated Shamā'il derived from al-Tirmidhi, Ibn Hajr al-Makki and 'Abd al-Haq

succinctly presents material drawn from foundational sources. Al-Tabari devotes a long section of his book to an investigation of Shamā'il and Khasā'il.²¹

Abu al-Fidā Ismā'il (d. 732/1331) wrote the *Kitāb al-Mukhtasar fi Akhbār al-Bashar* with the intention of presenting the Prophet's biography in the context of world history. He, like other scholars, included matters falling under the rubrics of Shamā'il and Akhlāq.²² In a similar vein, the distinguished Egyptian scholar Ahmad al-Nawayri (d. 733/1332) wrote *Nihāyat al-Arab fi Funun al-Adab*. The work covers five branches of knowledge, including history. Three volumes of this comprehensive tome are related to Sirah and its subdiscipline, the Shamā'il tradition.²³

Another Egyptian author, Ibn Sayyid al-Nass (d. 734/1334), contributed the most influential treatment of Sirah of his time. *Uyun al-Athar fi Funun al-Maghāzi wa-al-Shamā'il wa-al-Siyar* broke ground in dedicating an entire chapter to Shamā'il, collecting the source materials from early works by al-Tirmidhi and Qādi Ayāz.²⁴ Al-Nass's contemporary, Hafiz Muhammad al-Dhahabi (d. 748/1348), was a noteworthy historian. He wrote extensively in the fields of *hadith*, history and Sirah. His *Al-Sirah al-Nabawiyyah*, which forms a part of his work on the history of Islam, is based upon the premise that the Prophet's life is a complete source of guidance for believers, comprising all that is necessary for succeeding in this life and attaining the life hereafter. Al-Dhahabi allotted a significant portion of his book to the study of the Shamā'il and Khasā'il of the Prophet.²⁵

Ibn Qayyam al-Jawziyyah (d. 751/1350) is the foremost representative of the Ibn Taymiyya school of thought. He composed several books on various branches of Islamic Studies. His *Zād al-Ma'ād fi Hadyi Khayr al-'Ibād*, a work of Sirah widely commended for its excellence, has had a remarkable impact on subsequent Sirah literature. The author advocated contemplating the life of the Prophet, which he pronounced the perfect guide for all mankind. Hafiz Ibn Hajr cited this treatise extensively in his *Fath al-Bāri*, a commentary on the *Sahih* of al-Bukhāri.²⁶

The Syrian historian and scholar Ibn Kathir (d. 774/ 1373) composed two volumes on Sirah: a brief study entitled *Al-Fusul fi Sirah al-Rasul*, and a portion of his history *Al-Bidāyah wa-al-Nihayah*. *Al-Fusul* is divided into two parts: the first outlines the events in the life of the Prophet, while the second summarizes the Shamā'il and Khasā'is traditions. His *Sirah al-Nabawiyyah*

Prophet's life. This abridged Sirah contains two chapters on the Shamā'il: *Sifatuh wa-Asmauh and Akhlaquh*.¹³

The scope of Shamā'il was extended over time, and the discussion about Huquq al-Mustafa (obligations towards the chosen Prophet) was introduced. The purpose of Huquq writing is to establish the preeminence of the Prophet by presenting him as a paragon for believers to emulate. He is said to have been superior to others in every respect—physical, moral and spiritual. As the perfect man, he should be loved, respected and followed in all spheres of life.¹⁴ Al-Qādi Ayāz (d. 544/1149)'s *al-Shifā' bi-Ta'rif Huquq al-Mustafa* is the leading work in the Huquq genre. The second chapter of his book studies extensively the Shamā'il and Khasa'il tradition.¹⁵ Shahāb al-Din al-Khifāji (d. 1069/1659) wrote a commentary on *al-Shifā'* entitled *Nasim al-Riyād*, in which he clarified the intricacies of the work and added significant insights of his own.¹⁶

Hafiz Ibn Asākir (d. 571/1172) was a leading historian of Islam's medieval period. Yasin Mazhar Siddiqi maintains that Ibn Asākir employed the approach favoured by traditionists (Muhadiththin) for verifying history and Sirah.¹⁷ Ibn Asākir traced local history and the biographies of leading personalities with the purpose of highlighting Muslim civilization. The second part of second volume is devoted to the study of Sirah while the chapters 9-12 record the Shamā'il wa-Khasa'il and Dalā'il traditions.¹⁸

The *Kitāb al-Wafā bi-Ahwāl al-Mustafa* of Ibn Jawzi (d. 597/1200) is rated one of the finest biographies of the prophet. Its second volume examines the Shamā'il and Khasail traditions. The author presents a systematic depiction of the Prophet in thirty chapters. These chapters enumerate the features and physical attributes of the Prophet's person that made him ideally beautiful.¹⁹

A brief synopsis of the life of the Prophet and his ten blessed companions was composed by Hafiz 'Abd al-Ghani al-Maqdisi (d. 600/1203). The *Sirah al-Nabi wa-Ashābuh al-'Asharah* contains two sections detailing the Prophet's appearance, including his moral and ethical beauties. Al-Maqdisi derived most of the reports from al-Tirmidhi, interpreting for the reader difficult words and expressions found in the earlier work.²⁰ He was followed by Muhibb al-Din Ahmad al-Tabari (d. 694/1294), a preeminent Sirah writer of the period, whose treatise, *Khulāsat al-Siyar fi Ahwāl Sayyid al-Bashar*, is a valuable addition to the genre. The author

introduced a number of traditional reports about his physical beauty (including his shoulders, hair, beard, and seal of Nabuwah.⁸

Al-Balādhuri (d. 279/882) was the author of the *Ansāb al-Ashraf*, an important source for genealogical studies of the Arabs. In this book he traces the genealogy of the Quraysh and Banu Hāshim tribes, and writes extensively about the Prophet. He has devoted a considerable portion of his narrative to the Shamā'il, including the description of the Prophet contributed by Umm Ma'bad.⁹ He further reports a portrayal of the Prophet attributed to Hind b. Abi Hāla Tamimi.¹⁰

Al-Tirmidhi (d. 279/892) built upon the tentative beginnings outlined above, and is therefore considered the founding father of the Shamā'il literary tradition. Yasin Mazhar Siddiqi points out that Tirmidhi's volume on Shamā'il is composed entirely of *hadiths* unrelated to legal issues. Subsequent *hadith* compilers emulated the priority al-Tirmidhi had accorded portrayal, using this means to express their love and devotion.¹¹ Al-Tirmidhi had discovered numerous descriptive traditions, attributed to Hind b. Abi Hāla Tamimi, 'Ali b. Abi Talib, Anas b. Malik, and 'ā'isha bint Abu Bakr; he focused not only upon the Shamā'il, but also stressed Khasā'il (habits and ethics of the Prophet). Kitāb al-Shamā'il contains fifty-eight chapters of unequal length, with each chapter comprising from two to twenty-seven reports.

As might be expected, Muslim historiographers incorporated the life history of the Prophet when composing their treatises. In most cases, the Shamā'il was an integral part of these biographical segments. For example, the leading Muslim historian al-Tabari (d. 310/923) included it, as did the renowned geographer and historian al-Ya'qubi (d. 315/927). Al-Ya'qubi not only presented a written likeness of the Prophet, but thought it useful to record the details of those persons who had boasted a physical resemblance to him.

Ibn Hibbān Busti (d. 354/965), an eminent traditionist and expert in the *Jarh wa-Ta'dil* (the discipline that evaluates *hadith* narrators for their trustworthiness) also recorded the biography of the Prophet. His *Kitāb al-Thiqāt* devotes a chapter entitled *Bāb wasf al-Rasul to Shamā'il*; it is essentially an index of *hadith* narrators. He also reveals the report of Hind b. Abi Hāla.¹² The Andalusian litterateur Ibn Hazm (d. 343/1064) composed the *Jawāmi' al-Sirah*, one of the shortest hagiographical accounts of the

teeth had a slight space between them. There was a thin line of hair from the chest to the navel. His neck was beautiful and thin, like the neck of a statue shaved clean, the colour of which was clear, shining and beautiful like silver. All the parts of his body were of moderate size, and fully fleshed. His body was proportionately jointed. His chest and stomach were in line, but his chest was broad and wide. The space between his shoulders was wide. The bones of his joints were strong and large (denoting strength). When he removed his clothing, his body looked bright and had a lustre. Between the chest and navel there was a thin line of hair. Besides this line neither the chest nor the stomach had other hair on it. Both sides the shoulders and the upper portion of the chest had hair. His forearm was long and palms were wide. The palms and both feet were fully fleshed. The fingers and toes were moderately long. The soles of his feet were a bit deep. His feet were smooth; because of their cleanliness and smoothness the water did not remain there but flowed away quickly. When he walked, he lifted his legs with vigour, leaned slightly forward and placed his feet softly on the ground. He walked at a quick pace and took rather a long step. He did not take small steps. When he walked it seemed as if he was descending to a lower place. When he looked at something he turned his whole body towards it. He always looked down. His sight was focused more to the ground than towards the sky. His modest habit was to look at something with a light eye, i.e. he looked at a thing, with modesty and bashfulness, hence he did not stare at anything. While walking he asked the companions to walk in front, and he himself walked behind. He made salām to whomsoever he met²⁴

II- The Development of the Shamā'il Tradition

Shamā'il literature gradually became an essential component of Sirah treatises. Shibli Nu'mami (d. 1332/1914) considered al-Tirmidhi's *Al-Shamā'il al-Muhammadiyah* a book of Sirah.⁵ However, the early sources do not contain significant reports about Shamā'il or Dalā'il. For instance, 'Urwah b. Zubayr's *Kitāb al-Maghāzi* includes extensive accounts of battles fought during the life of the Prophet, but nowhere refers to matters that fall under the Shamā'il rubric.⁶ Similarly, Ibn Ishāq's Sirah does not allude to the Shamā'il tradition.⁷ Ibn Sa'd (d. 230/845), who composed the *Tabaqāt al-Kubra*, was perhaps the first author to incorporate Shamā'il material in his writing. He attempted to evoke the personality of the Prophet in the light of the Torah and Injil (New Testament or Christian Gospels), and

Shamā'il, or to confuse it with other themes in the Sirah corpus. This paper seeks to trace the development of the Shamā'il tradition in Muslim scholarship. We shall also explore the Sirah-writings of four leading Orientalists: Spencer, Muir, Margolith and Montgomery Watt, with the purpose of discovering the reasons behind their interest in the Prophet's appearance. A further objective is to determine which elements of Orientalist Sirah-writing exerted the most influence on the biographical pursuits of the Muslim Modernists.

Before embarking on our endeavour, it may be helpful to provide the reader with an illustrative example of an early Shamā'il text. Al-Tirmidhi records this tradition, which is typical of the genre in its length and detail, on the authority of Imām Hasan Ibn Ali (May Allah be pleased with them!).

Hasan b. Ali reported: "I inquired from my maternal uncle Hind bin Abi Hālah about the noble features of the Prophet. He had often described the noble features of the Prophet in detail. I felt that I should hear from him personally, some of the noble features of the Prophet, so that I could make his description a proof and testimony for myself and also memorize them, and, if possible, try to emulate and adopt them. The uncle described the noble features by saying: "He had great qualities and attributes in him, others also held him in high esteem. His face shone like the full moon. He was slightly taller than a man of middle height, but shorter than a tall person. His head was moderately large. His hair was slightly twisted. If his hair became parted naturally in the middle he left it so, otherwise he did not habitually make an effort to part his hair in the middle.

Occasionally he used to part his hair in the middle with a comb. When his hair was abundant, it used to pass over his ear-lobes. He had a very luminous complexion (colour), and a wide forehead. He had dense and fine hair on his eye brows. Both eye brows were separate and did not meet each other in the middle. There was a vein between them that used to expand when he became angry. His nose was prominent and had a nur and lustre on it. When one first looked at him, it seemed as if he had a large nose, but looking at it carefully showed that the lustre and beauty made it look large, otherwise in itself the nose was not large. His beard was full and dense. The pupil of his eye was black. His cheeks were full and full of flesh. His mouth was moderately wide. His teeth were thin and bright. The front

I- Introduction

An attentive overview of the Sirah literature reveals that the first biographies of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) were penned in the context of his battles and travels. Consequently, these themes were central in early Sirah writings.¹ The popularity of detailed accounts of the Prophet's life was emerged during the second century of higraph, and Shamā'il features began to be added soon afterwards. Comprehensive works on Sirah were being composed by eminent historians, traditionists and biographers. Al-Tirmidhi's *Al-Shamā'il al-Muhammadiyah* influenced both Sirah-writers and traditionists (Muhaddithin), who included the Shamā'il, subsequently widening its scope by adding the sub-topics of the Khasā'il, Fada'il, Dala'il, Khasā'is, and Huquq al-Mustafa. Why is the Prophet's physical aspect significant for Muslims? The value of the Shamā'il can only be appreciated when we understand that thinking about and visualizing the Prophet is an act of devotional love that is central to the Islamic faith. A Prophetic tradition states, "The one who has seen me has realized the divine reality."² Perhaps this powerful affirmation inspired believers to envisage the Prophet in their imagination and dreams. The eminent Urdu Sirah composer Muhammad Zakariya Kandhalwi asserts:

It is impossible to accurately describe the beauty and elegance of the Prophet (peace be upon him). To draw a pen-picture of his appearance is beyond one's capability, but the companions of the Prophet have endeavoured, according to their capabilities, to preserve what little they could, of which some is written here. Qurtubi says: "The full beauty and elegance of the Prophet has not been made manifest, otherwise it would not have been possible for man to look at him." The Sahabah have done the ummah an immense favour by conveying to them the perfect intrinsic knowledge, as well as the perfect conspicuous elegance and beauty of the Prophet. When an unfulfilled lover is deprived of meeting the beloved then he stands in front of the beloved's house remembering the features of his beloved, in an attempt to gain some solace. It is from habits and features that the heart is appeased.³

The later Muslim biographers placed greater emphasis on the Shamā'il and related topics than had their predecessors. In point of fact, most Orientalists were unable to appreciate the devotional perspective of Shamma'il in Sirah-writing. Consequently, they tended to ignore the

SHAMĀ'IL TRADITION: THE INFLUENCE OF ORIENTALISM ON SĪRAH WRITING

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Abstract: This paper aims to study the development of the *Shamā'il al-Muhammadiyah* (description of the character and appearance of the Prophet Muhammad -peace be upon him-) in the larger Muslim Sirah (biographical study of the Prophet) tradition. It further explores European scholarly reception of these texts, and twentieth-century Muslim revision of the Sirah material in response to the criticism of the "Orientalist" scholars. It has been established that the Shamā'il genre gained a significant position in Sirah and *hadith* literature from the third century, especially since al-Tirmidhi (d. 279/892) composed his *magnum opus Al-Shamā'il al-Muhammadiyah*. Subsequent Muslim Sirah-writers joined traditionists (*muhadiththin*) and historians in devoting considerable space to the Shamā'il in their works. Historically, the objective of Shamā'il literature has been to establish the pre-eminence and perfection of the Prophet by portraying his physical appearance and spiritual beauties. It has been observed that the subject drew a wider attention and receptivity among scholars and believers. Moreover, various allied subjects were gradually incorporated, such as the Khasā'il (habits), Fada'il (merits) and Akhlāq (manners). By the same token, adding Khasā'is (specialities or special attributes), Dalā'il (signs and evidences) and the debate of *Huquq* Mustafa (the obligations towards the Chosen Prophet) increased the importance of Shamā'il within the larger field of Sirah literature. However, both Orientalists and Muslim Modernists focused on the social and humanistic facets of the Prophet's life, ignoring the devotional and spiritual aspects of the Shamā'il, which had been central in medieval traditional Sirah-writings.

Key words: *Sirah-writings, Shamā'il, Orientalists, Muslim historiography and Modernists.*

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19. al-Baqarah 2:61
20. <http://www.bing.com/search?q=cucumber&form=QBRE&qs=n>
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22. Ibn Qayyim al-jawziah, shams al-Dīn, Ṭibb-i-Nabawī, Lahore, Maktabah Qāsim al-`ulūm, 2011, p. 414
23. Muhammad Nawaz, Islam, Ṣiḥat awr jadīd Sā'insī taḥqīqāt, p. 311
24. Muhammad Aslam, Ḥakīm, FayḍānṬibb-i-Nabawī, p. 257
25. Ibid
26. Dr. Khalid Ghaznawi, Ṭibb-i-Nabawī awr jadīd Sā'ins, 1/261

“It was narrated by Ibn Abbas that the prophet (SAW) said: When one of you eats food let him not wipe his hands until he has licked it or someone else to lick it.”

Similarly, if after the meal, hands and mouth are not washed, food particles will remain attached to these, which will be cause of germs' growth and spread. Likewise, if a person goes to bed without washing his hands after meal, then oily food particles will be cause of attraction for various other creatures like the ant. During the sleep, such things may cause a great trouble to the person.

The wiping of hands and the bowl has been called the cause of blessing by the Holy Prophet(SAW).

عَنْ جَابِرٍ أَنَّ النَّبِيَّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ أَمَرَ بِلُعُقِ الْأَصَابِعِ وَالصَّخْفَةِ وَقَالَ إِنَّكُمْ لَا تَدْرُونَ فِي أَيِّهِ الْبَرَكَةُ (٥٢)
“Jābir(r.a) narrales that the Holy Prophet(PBUH) ordered to lick fingers and the container and further said one didn't know which grain of food contained Barakah (blessing).”

Conclusion:

The supraquoted literature clarifies that Prophetic manners and eatables, both have their efficacy regarding human health. Being Muslims, everyone has close affiliation with the Prophetic diet. For believers, scientific effectiveness is a secondary thing, but this worth of eatables strengthens the belief of the followers. While using the Prophetic food items, one should be aware of his own body temperament and the effect of the food item on human body. Without having this knowledge, one cannot get its benefits. Specifically, the Prophetic manners before and after eating prevent man from the harmful germs, the diseases and also the harmful arthropods. Ever increasing scientific research in this perspective will unveil more dimensions of efficacy and the human being will acknowledge “There is the best example is in the life of the Holy Prophet (SAW)

Notes and References

1. Al-'abas, 80:24
2. Shāh walī Allāh, ḤujjatUllah al Bālighah, Trans. By BurhānIlāhī, Ḥājī Ḥanīf and sons, 1999, 2/ 481

III) Prophetic Manners after the Meal:

a) Washing the Bowl :

The bowl in which things are eaten should be washed well after eating. If it is left unwashed, it would contain food particles which will attract microbes. The petrifying bacteria will become the cause of disease if the bowl remains unwashed.

حَدَّثَنِي جَدِّي أُمُّ عَاصِمٍ قَالَتْ دَخَلَ عَلَيْنَا نُبَيْشَةُ مَوْلَى النَّبِيِّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ وَنَحْنُ نَأْكُلُ فِي قَصْعَةٍ فَقَالَ قَالَ النَّبِيُّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ مَنْ أَكَلَ فِي قَصْعَةٍ فَلَجَسَتْهَا اسْتَعْفَرْتُ لَهُ الْقَصْعَةَ (٤٩)

“It was narrated that Umm `Āsim Said, Nabaishah, The freed slave of the messenger of Allah entered upon us when we were eating from a bowl He said that Messenger of Allah said, whoever eats from a bowl and cleans it, the bowl will pray for forgiveness for him.”

The bowl's prayer of forgiveness is that it is prevented from disease spreading germs and becomes useful for next usage.

b) Wiping Hands with Handkerchief:

It is a common practice that people use handkerchief to wipe their hands. If it is dirty with food particles, hands are swabbed with handkerchief, then these oily food particles will be transferred from hands to the handkerchief. It will make the clothes dirty to which it touches. Secondly, it will become a medium for the growth of germs. The best way is to either wash the hands before smearing with the handkerchief or to lick the hands. The Holy Prophet(SAW) has given:

عَنْ ابْنِ عَبَّاسٍ قَالَ قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ إِذَا أَكَلْتُمْ أَحَدُكُمْ فَلَا يَمْسَحَنَّ يَدَهُ بِالْمِنْدِيلِ حَتَّى يَلْعَقَهَا أَوْ يُلْعَقَهَا (٥٠)

“Ibn Abbas(r.a) narrated: The Messenger of Allah said that when one of you eats food, let him not wipe his hands with a handkerchief until he licks it or has it been licked.”

Not only wiping hands with handkerchief is unacceptable but wiping with other things is also prohibited.

عَنْ ابْنِ عَبَّاسٍ أَنَّ النَّبِيَّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قَالَ إِذَا أَكَلْتُمْ طَعَامًا فَلَا يَمْسَحَنَّ يَدَهُ حَتَّى يَلْعَقَهَا أَوْ يُلْعَقَهَا (٥١)

عَنْ أَنَسِ بْنِ مَالِكٍ قَالَ لَيْسَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ الصُّوفَ وَاخْتَذَى الْمُخْصُوفَ وَقَالَ أَكَلِ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ بَشِيعًا وَلَيْسَ خَشِينًا فَكَيْلٌ لِلْحَسَنِ مَا الْبَشِيعُ قَالَ غَلِيظُ الشَّعِيرِ مَا كَانَ يُسِيغُهُ إِلَّا بِمِزْجَةِ مَائٍ (٤٢)

“It was narrated from Ḥasan that Anas bin Mālik said: the Messenger of Allah wore wool, and his dress were sandal. He said; The Messenger of Allah ate coarse food and wore rough garments, It was said to Ḥasan: what is coarse food? He said: coarse barley which cannot be swallowed except with a mouthful of water.”

Barley is used in many ways. Its course meal is commonly used. Its baked powdered is used both dry and in water and it is very delicious and energizing. Ibn Sīnā says it soothes the heart and dispels the heat of stomach and liver.(43) Old Olympic players were always given the barley flour as it gives more energy as compared to other foods.(44)

h) Gourd:

Gourd is a common vegetable naturally grown in the summer season. It bears too many benefits. It has been mentioned in the Holy Qur’ān.

وَأَنْبَتْنَا عَلَيْهِ شَجَرَةً مِّنْ يَّفْطِينٍ (٤٥)

“And We caused to grow over him a gourd vine.”

The Prophet(SAW) liked to eat this vegetable:

عَنْ أَنَسٍ قَالَ كَانَ النَّبِيُّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ يُحِبُّ الْفَرْعَ (٤٦)

“It was narrated that Anas(r.a) Said: The Prophet(SAW) liked gourd.”

Seeing the Prophetic inclination to it, the companions also liked to eat it:

أَنَّسَ بْنَ مَالِكٍ يَقُولُ إِنَّ خِيَّاطًا دَعَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ لِبَطْعَامٍ صَنَعَهُ قَالَ أَنَسُ فَدَعَاهُتُ مَعَ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ فَرَأَيْتُهُ يَتَّبِعُ الدُّبَائِ مِنْ حَوَائِ الْقُصْعَةِ قَالَ فَلَمْ أَزَلْ أُحِبُّ الدُّبَائِ مِنْ يَوْمِئِذٍ (٤٧)

“Narrated Anas bin Malik: A tailor invited Allah's Apostle to a meal which he had prepared. I went along with Allah's Apostle and saw him seeking to eat the pieces of gourd from the various sides of the dish. Since that day I have liked to eat gourd.”

Imām Dhahbī is of the view that the use of gourd is anti-constipation and it dispels the inflammation of eyes.(48)

“Abu Hurairah says: The Messenger of Allah (P.B.U.H) said: 'Eat (olive) oil and anoint yourselves with it, for it is blessed.’”

Ibn Qayyim calls it a cure against Luke worms and the itching.(37)Imām Dhahbī reports that it reduces the effects of aging and good for the stomach diseases.(38)It kills acidity and protects inner lining of stomach. Above this, some Arab doctors have titled it as Hafiz and Amin (preserver) for these qualities. It prevents things from being decomposed. Sardines are packed in tins with olive oil. Despite being soft plush, it is neither decomposed till two to three years nor is decayed.(39)

In Germany an injection was prepared for the treatment of all the diseases of joints. It proved wonder in this regard. The manufacturing company admitted that the science used for this was gained from the Quran.(40)A research of German Medical Specialists concludes that finger tips containsuch protein which protects one from diseases like motions, vomiting and cholera. According to them, they are not bacteria but are called E.Coli. They kill bacteria on tips and prevent human body from harmful germs. Especially when the body sweats, this protein is activated. The experts think that if the protein had not been, the diseases like cholera would have been more common among children.

f) Dipping the Fly:

It is a common observation that house flies come when a person starts eating. There is a possibility that it may fall in the eatables or drinks. Fly is a filthy arthropod, so commonly people assume that the eatable has been polluted. But the Prophet(SAW) unveiled the fact that one of its wings carries valuable germs:

قَالَ النَّبِيُّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ إِذَا وَقَعَ الدُّبَابُ فِي شَرَابٍ أَخَذِكُمْ فَلَئِمَّعِيسُهُ ثُمَّ لِيَنْزِعْهُ فَإِنَّ فِي إِخْدَى حَنَاحِيهِ دَائِيٌّ وَالْأُخْرَى شِفَائِيٌّ (٤١)

“If a fly is dropped in any one`s food container, he should dip it first then take it out because one of its wings contains disease and the other one health.”

g) Barley:

Barley is a common staple food. Sometimes people use its flour for eating. The Holy Prophet(SAW) used to eat the bread of its flour.

Honey, perhaps, has worldwide fame for its nutritional and medicinal significance. Ḥakīm Kabīr al-Dīn has denoted the significance of honey in these words:

“Honey is mildly laxative, antiseptic and sedative, generally used in Ayurvedic and yūnānī system of medicines. It is preventive against cough, cold and blood purifier, curative for ulcers, useful after severe heart attacks. Typhoid germs are killed by honey within 48 hours.” (33)

Dr. Khālid Ghaznawī has reported his personal experience about honey:

“Once, during the spread of cholera epidemic in Lahore, I (Dr. Khalid Ghaznawi) also suffered from it. It was our duty to control the epidemic. So, could not take complete bed rest. I placed a glass of water with two spoons of honey on the table. I kept on taking it while working with patients. Another glass came after this. Thus three glasses of honey mixed water were taken from 12pm to 5pm. At the start of second glass, I felt the need to go toilet and then there was relief. The sickness of stomach went away as soon as first glass was finished. When we came out of hospital there was neither physical tiredness nor any weakness after ailment.”(34)

Honey may be used solitary, mixed with water or with any other thing. Some people prepare a drink by mixing with water. Above quoted literature depicts that physicians admit the efficacy of honey in various ways and for various purposes.

e) Olive:

Olive has been mentioned in the Holy Qurān:

وَالزَّيْتُونَ (۳۵)

“By the fig and the olive.”

Besides this, it has been mentioned in Surah al-an`ām, 6:99, al-an`ām, 6: 141, al-Nahl, 16:11 and al-Mu`minūn 23:2.

Olive has also been referred to in the Prophetic traditions:

أَبَا هُرَيْرَةَ يَقُولُ قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ كُلُوا الزَّيْتِ وَأَدَّهِنُوا بِهِ فَإِنَّهُ مُبَارَكٌ (۳۶)

Talbīnah is not only a useful food but also a remedy against so many diseases. It is useful in controlling high blood pressure, high cholesterol level, and complications in heart valves, the acidity of the stomach, constipation, and weakness during pregnancy, kidney infection and also a tonic for older people and young babies.(28) Modern sciences call it useful to control sugar and cholesterol level in blood.(29)

So, the intake of Talbīnah will last very good effects on the body of a person.

c) Hays : Mixture of Dates, Butter and Cheese

It is a compound meal whose constituents are date, butter and cheese. It is very energizer and moderate in efficacy. All of its constituents are much useful. It repairs the damages of the body and keeps the body healthy. Being moderate in effectiveness, it can be used by all people.

It has been quoted on the authority of Anas bin Mālik about the Prophet's *walima*:

أَنَّسُ بْنُ مَالِكٍ يَقُولُ قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ -- وَأَقْبَلَ بِصَفِيَّةَ بِنْتِ حُيَيٍّ -- صَنَعَ حَيْسًا فِي
نِطْعٍ ثُمَّ أَرْسَلَنِي فَدَعَوْتُ رِجَالًا فَأَكَلُوا وَكَانَ ذَلِكَ بِنَاءَهُ بِهَا (٣٠)

“He had Hays (a special dish prepared from dried yogurt) prepared and placed on a dining sheet. Then he sent me to invite some men, who (come and) ate: and that was his and Safiyya`s wedding feast.”

d) Honey :

Honey was the Prophet's favourite food. He liked it and often used. Honey bee and honey is mentioned in the Holy Qur`ān and it has been called cure for the people as follows:

يَخْرُجُ مِنْ بُطُونِهَا شَرَابٌ مُخْتَلِفٌ أَلْوَانُهُ فِيهِ شِفَاءٌ لِلنَّاسِ (٣١)

“There comes forth from their bellies, a drink of varying colour wherein is healing for men.”

The Holy Prophet used to take honey as a favourite drink:

عَنْ عَائِشَةَ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا قَالَتْ كَانَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ يَشْرَبُ عَسَلًا عِنْدَ زَيْنَبِ بِنْتِ جَحْشٍ
وَيَتَكَلَّمُ عِنْدَهَا (٣٢)

“Narrated 'Aisha (r.a): Allah's Apostle used to drink honey in the house of Zaynab(r.a), the daughter of Jahsh(r.a), and would stay there with her.”

عَنْ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ بْنِ جَعْفَرِ بْنِ أَبِي طَالِبٍ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمَا قَالَ رَأَيْتُ النَّبِيَّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ يَأْكُلُ الرُّطَبَ
بِالْفَيْئَاءِ (١٨)

“Narrated by Abdullah ibn Ja ‘far: I saw the Prophet eating dates with cucumber.”

Cucumber has been cultivated for hundreds of years. It is a beneficial food which is also mentioned in the Holy Qur’ān.(19) It is commonly used as salad. Some people use the decoction of cucumber to become slim. It is used as pickle in America and other countries.(20)Imām Dhahbī is of the view that cucumber opens strangury, it empowers the body and removes inflammation of stomach and intestines.(21) Ibn Qayyim says it is useful in the pain of bladder.(22) As 95% of its content is water, its regular use in summer prevents from dehydration. A research of Harvard University has unfolded the fact that cucumber contains necessary hormones for the production of insulin.(23) It is evident that both the new and old literature admit the efficacy of cucumber for human health.

Similarly, ‘dates’ are also valuable for human health. Besides their use as a staple food in the desert life, it has its medicinal importance as well. In 1927, a conference was held in Columbia which concluded that the dates are a source to create fresh blood. It controls the cholesterol level and does not allow the blood to coagulate.(24) Its regular use increases the haemoglobin level and the red blood cells in the blood.(25) They are used in jams and pastries. Its decoction is effective in sore throat. The kernel of the date catalyses the intestinal functioning and dispels the heat of the stomach.(26)

If used together, the hot effects of date are neutralized by the cold effects of cucumber.

b) Talbānah: Mixture of Barley and Milk

Talbānah is a compound food. It is made of barley, milk and honey. It is cooked in milk and honey is used for sweetness. It is moderate in its efficacy. It is very refreshing food item. The Prophet(SAW) used to eat this. It is quoted:

عَنْ عَائِشَةَ -فَإِنِّي سَمِعْتُ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ يَقُولُ التَّلْبِينَةُ مِحْمَةٌ لِفُؤَادِ الْمَرِيضِ تَذْهَبُ بِبَعْضِ الْحُزَنِ (٢٧)

“Ayesha narrated: I heard the Prophet saying that the Talbānah soothes the heart of the patient and releases him of his sorrow.”

ready, it stimulates the secretions necessary for food digestion. The Holy Prophet(SAW) has given:

أَبَا جُحَيْفَةَ قَالَ قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ لَا أَكُلُ مُتَكَبِّئًا (١٥)

"Abu Juhayfah told that the Messenger of Allah said: I do not eat while reclining."

If some simple food items are being taken even in squatting position will work as the narration below shows:

أَنَسُ بْنُ مَالِكٍ قَالَ رَأَيْتُ النَّبِيَّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ مُقْعِبًا يَأْكُلُ تَمْرًا (١٦)

"Anas bin Mālik said: I found the Prophet (peace be upon him) squatting and eating dates."

c) Checking the food before eating:

One should check what is being eaten by him. If he would eat unchecked food, then spoiled food may be taken in which would affect the health of a person. The Prophet (SAW) himself has set an example in this regard and he always used to check food before eating it as the narration says:

عَنْ أَنَسِ بْنِ مَالِكٍ قَالَ قَالَ أَبِي النَّبِيُّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ يَتَمَرٌ عَتِيقٍ فَحَعَلَنْ يُفْتَشُّهُ يُخْرِجُ السُّوسَ مِنْهُ (١٧)

"It was narrated that Anas bin Mālik said: Some old dates were brought to the Messenger of Allah and he started to check them and removing worms from them."

II) Some Eatables of the Prophet:

Since his life on this earth, man is living with animals and plants. His body remains in sound health if his all secretions are moderate. The food items he takes might possess some qualities which are suitable to the body of that person. While in other cases, they might not go with the temperament of that person. The nature of the eatable should be kept in mind and if it harms the body in one way some other thing should also be taken to nullify its effect.

a) Cucumber and Dates:

Cucumber naturally has the effects which are opposite to that of the dates. When they are taken singly, they might not be so beneficial. Therefore, the Prophet(SAW) sometimes used to eat them together:

عَنْ زَادَانَ عَنْ سَلْمَانَ قَالَ قَرَأْتُ فِي التَّوْرَةِ أَنَّ بَرَكََةَ الطَّعَامِ الْوُضُوءُ بَعْدَهُ فَذَكَرْتُ ذَلِكَ لِلنَّبِيِّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ فَأَخْبَرْتُهُ بِمَا قَرَأْتُ فِي التَّوْرَةِ فَقَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ بَرَكََةُ الطَّعَامِ الْوُضُوءُ قَبْلَهُ وَالْوُضُوءُ بَعْدَهُ (١٢)

“Narrated by Salman: He said I read in the Torah that the blessing of food is wuḍū after it. I told this to the Messenger and informed him about what I read in the Torah. He replied: the blessing of food is wuḍū before it and wuḍū after it.”

A person daily uses his hands for various purposes. They may become dirty and have germs attached. If they are washed, they become free of germs and can be employed to take food into the mouth without contaminating it. Therefore, the Prophet said:

عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ قَالَ قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ مَنْ نَامَ وَفِي يَدِهِ غَمْرٌ وَمَا يَغْسِلُهُ فَأَصَابَهُ شَيْءٌ فَلَا يَلُومَنَّ إِلَّا نَفْسَهُ (١٣)

Narrated AbuHurayrah(r.a): “The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: If anyone spends the night with grease on his hand which he has not washed away, he can blame only himself if some trouble comes to him.”

The same is given in another tradition:

عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ قَالَ قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ مَنْ بَاتَ وَفِي يَدِهِ رِيحٌ غَمْرٍ فَأَصَابَهُ شَيْءٌ فَلَا يَلُومَنَّ إِلَّا نَفْسَهُ (١٤)

Narrated AbuHurayrah: “The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: If anyone spends the night with the smell of grease on his hand which he has not washed away, he can blame only himself if some trouble comes to him.”

b) Body’s position while eating:

Eating and drinking may be carried out during various positions of the body i.e. sitting, reclining, laying and walking. However, the best way is to eat while one is in the sitting position because if someone is eating while walking, it seems the person is in hurry and he will not chew the food well before engulfing it. If a person is eating while laying, the possibility is there that the food would enter in his wind pipe. If a person is reclining with wall or something else, he may eat more than his capacity. Proper sitting position portrays the person’s mental readiness to have food. If mind gets

cannot do so. So, after death trillions of germs who have started the autolysis process will bring a great harm to the consumer. Maḥmūd Nāzīm al-Nasīmī is of the view that it causes Hepatitis.(4)

Likewise, blood is also detrimental to the human body if it's taken in as food or drink. It carries the wastes of the body.(5) So, if it is consumed, it will disrupt the body functions. Dr. Mohammad Nazer Aldekar opines that it increases the level of waste particles in the body. It is the best medium for the reproduction of microbes.(6) It can't be digested by human body and stops the digestive system. Consuming blood may cause colic pain.(7)

In the same way, swine flesh is also detrimental to health. It carries a toxic protein 'Stoxin' which is the cause of allergy, arthritis and nervous diseases. It enhances the fat and cholesterol level. It becomes the cause of skin and eye diseases.(8) It causes blood pressure and heart diseases.(9) Parasitology literature has unfolded that it carries the dangerous microbes like *Trichinella Spiralis*, *Taenia Solium* and *Ascaris Lumbricoides*.(10) Nasīmī calls it a cause of high cholesterol level, heart diseases, thickening of arteries and hair fall.(11)

Prophetic teaching regarding eating can be divided into three parts:

1. Prophetic manners before eating meal
2. His diet and some eatables
3. His manners after eating meal

I) Prophetic Manners Before Eating Meal:

Prophetic manners before eating meal include cleaning of hands before taking meal, taking care in the body's position while eating and checking the food before eating it.

a) Washing hands before eating:

All living beings need to eat food and in human beings hands are the medium to carry it to the mouth. If the food is ingested directly through the mouth, there is no need to wash hands before starting the meal, as the mouth contains saliva which digests the food taken in. If hand or some other article is used to take the food in, that very part of body or article should be clean. Every open thing is vulnerable to microbes present in the atmosphere. The Holy Prophet (SAW) has given importance to this issue as follows:

Allah Almighty warns human beings:

فلينظر الانسان الى طعامه (١)

“Then let mankind look at his food.”

To have an eye on the eatables has two aspects:

1. Man should see the purity and cleanliness of food.
2. Whether the food is useful or harmful to the person having the meal. Man should avoid the things which do not suit his body.

Human beings use various types of food which produce different effects on human body. Likewise, bodies vary in their nature and their response to the food taken by them may vary. One of the causes of abrupt changes in human body and its habits is eaten and drunk things. (2)

That`s why every person should be very careful in his choice of food.

The Holy Prophet (SAW) is the best of all human beings in his humanly nature. Among his responsibilities was to teach human beings wisdom and selection of good food items is also a part of wisdom. He used various foods at various times of life, suggested his companions some food and also prohibited various food items, sometimes for specific people and sometimes for whole humanity. This prevention ensures the health of a person. Let`s consider the sagacity behind the prohibition.

Unlawful Things:

Islam has divided the eatables into lawful and unlawful things. There is some sagacity behind this division.

Islam is very keen regarding the health of its followers. It enjoins upon the believers the things that are healthy. It prohibits the things unbefitting for their health. As an example, the following Qur`ānic verse may be discussed here:

انما حرم عليكم الميتة والدم ولحم الخنزير (٣)

“Allah has made unlawful, the dead, the blood and the flesh of swine”

Death of a living animal without being slaughtered will be under the definition of ‘dead’. When a living being dies, there may be certain reasons for that: Aging factor, physical disease and some poison, etc. Whatever the cause of death may be, the dead body carries dangers. Unlike a living body which can give resistance to the germs entering the body, the dead body

TEACHINGS OF THE HOLY PROPHET (SAW) REGARDING MANNERS OF EATING AND BENEFICIAL EATABLES

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Abstract: Human beings use various types of food at various times to fulfill their basic need of existence. Being a human, the Prophet (SAW) also used various eatables at various occasions. He exhibited a healthy set of manners regarding eating and his selection of food was based on keeping their beneficial value in mind. Like other matters, his manners in this regard provide guidance for humanity and constitute a special branch of knowledge, called Tibb-i-Nabawī (The Prophetic Medicine). Besides having some medical benefits, the eatables of the Prophet (S.A.W.) had their territorial value. As all medicines are not useful for all patients, some people get benefit from certain medicines, while, for others they may be injurious to health. Similarly, the eatables used by the Prophet have health efficacy, no doubt, but they are medically beneficial for specific people. In this article, the manners of eating and the benefits of eatables of the Holy Prophet(SAW) will be discussed.

Key words: *Eating manners, Eatables of the Prophet, Efficacy, Diet,*

Eating and drinking is among the basic needs of human beings. Human body is made up of cells which in turn are formed by the food nutrients. The food nutrients are digested and dissolved in the stomach and absorbed into the membranes of the stomach. When these absorbed food contents are exhausted, the human body demands more food. After assimilation, this food becomes part of the body. This fully assimilated part of food becomes the source of energy for various body functions. When energy has been consumed, the body needs more food.

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