Muslims Historiography of the Caliphate in the British India (1857-1947)

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Abstract:

This study intends to analyze The Muslims’ Historiography of the Caliphate in British India (1857-1947). Muslim historiography from earlier period to nineteenth century passed through many stages which represents its changing nature and structure. In India, the Muslim historiography played a very important role in creating a separate Muslim identity. During the colonial period Muslims had to face a bulk of problems, but the intellectual challenge was the most important. Many Western Orientalists and Indian scholars had launch a move to alter the history writing, construct anti-Muslim heroism and challenge the historical narrative of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) and the early Muslim leadership. Although Muslims were also divided into two major sects (Shia, Sunni), they felt a need to respond intellectually and uniformly to the western intellectual challenges. That was the beginning of the modern Indian Muslim historiography with a re-constructionist and revisionist approach on the basis of modern logic, reason, tradition and through historical ideals. Three schools of thought came into existence, Rationalist/Modernist, Traditionalist/Orthodox and Idealist in India Muslim historiography. Every school follow a different a different approach to historiography. Shibli Naumani, Syed Ameer Ali, Moin ud din Nadvi, Akber Najeeb Aabadi, Aslam Jairajpuri, and Abdul Haleem Sharar’s has contributed in exemplary way, dealing with the history of Pious Caliphate, Umayyads, Abbasids and Spanish Muslim history as the golden era of Islam. This tendency contributed to the emergence of two nation theory and created a strong nationalism among the Muslims, subsequently that was the base of the ideology of Pakistan.

Keywords: Muslim Historiography, Caliphate, Rationalist/Modernist, Traditionalist/Orthodox, Idealistic approach of historiography.
Introduction

Historiography is the study of the various approaches, methods, models and themes of writing of history and interpretations of historical events. The evolution of historiography has been accredited to the ancient Greek historians like Herodotus and Thucydides. To impart lessons learnt from past to the nations virtually all societies and religions of the world used history and have developed themes of historiography. Islam and the Muslims contributed potentially to the elevation and promotion of historiography. The Holy Quran refers to a lot of historical events as a source of lesson to improve the conditions of human society. The Sirah of the Holy Prophet (PBUH) developed the foundation of Muslim historiography. The historiography followed the style of traditionists (Muhadseen) i.e. utmost care in the narration of the events in writing history. As the era of the Pious Caliphate (632-661 A.D.) was magnificent in the sense that frontiers of Islam expanded and the Caliphs became the focus of the Arabs and the Muslim society.

During the reign of the Pious Caliphs, the Muslim government had to face a bulk of problems, for instance, the opposition of Qureshite’s elite groups, and the agitating nature of nomadic Arab tribes residing in the cities of Kufa, Basra & Fustat and garrison towns founded by the Caliph Omer (RA). However, introvert centrifugal tendencies were culturally strong among the Arab nomadic tribes. This was essentially a strong barrier to consolidate the Arab tribes under a central power. Keeping a keen eye on the psyche of the Arab tribes, the Prophet of Islam Muhammad (PBUH) unified the whole Arabia under the Islamic state, governed from the center of Medina. As long as the Holy Prophet (PBUH) lived he performed the functions of lawgiver, religious leader, Chief judge and commander of the Army and civil head of the state—all in one.¹ However, after the demise of the Holy Prophet (PBUH), during the period of the Pious Caliphate, various fundamental

queries about sectarian, schism in thought and practice seems to be emerging. Khwarjites emerged as forces of split and perpetual conflict. Subsequently, such movements remained problematic in Islamic history both at the levels of thought and practice. The effects of this early schism could be seen even in current Muslim society. The Muslim societies and cultures are greatly associated with their isolated past, as the fundamentals of Islam, Quran and Sunnah have encapsulated their public and private life. Therefore, early epoch of Muslim history is always regarded as model for the subsequent Muslim historians.

The early phase of pious caliphs was peaceful and disciplined because the Arab community followed Islam adequately except few tribes who threatened Muslim solidarity after the demise of the Holy Prophet (PBUH). However, in the era of later pious caliphs Hazrat Uthman (RA) and Hazrat Ali (RA), the trends of society began to change due to increase in resources as a result of conquests, social and cultural interactions between Arabs and non-Arabs. The Caliphs tried their levels best to control the situation in better ways but the anarchic trends and elements could not come to an end. Subsequently, the state and society experienced bloodshed among the Muslims and the foundation of split in society.

When the British entered in the Subcontinent, the Muslims were divided into different theological groups and sects. The British began to influence the Indo-Muslim intellectuals by harshly criticizing Islam and heroes of the Muslims that generated not only a crises of identity rather raised new problematic issues of religious, social, political and intellectual concerns. As the British historians’ focus was on the early Islamic history and prominent heroes of the Muslims therefore, the British presented Europeans as heroes in comparison with the Muslim. The Muslim historiography and history began to turn as a scientific discipline in the Europe.

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2. Najeeb Abadi, Akber Shah Khan, Tareekh-i-Islam, Lahore: Chowburji, Vol.1, P.285 (the early literature of early Islamic history was mostly in Arabic and Persian language, and the people of subcontinent were using
In response, a bread of Muslim historians appeared in the Subcontinent during the British period who were acquainted with the Western and British Modern Historical tradition and Educational set up by the British. They are known as Rationalist. However, a group of Muslim historians who were trained from the traditional Madrassah (Traditionalist) were already responding to the British in the polemical context. They integrated the events and reconstructed the Islamic history according to their training they were in favor of tradition according to the relevance of *Quran* and *haddith*. There was appeared a third school of thought that could be known as the name of the New school /idealistic approach of Historiography, the historians of the idealistic approach were trained by the Urdu literary movements, that were prevailing during the British Indian era. In fact, historically it seems that this division was used to define the Muslim mind, Muslim outlook and an inclination to construct a Muslim identity around the world.

**Muslim Historiography from earlier to Eighteenth Century:**

The traditional historiography in Muslims had started from the earlier period of Islam, many forms and elements such as *Akhbar, Qasas, Tale, genealogy* and many other forms of historiography existed there ³. The Muslim or Arabic historiography is essentially the historiography of Islamic civilization and its coeval with Islam can be reconstructed fragmentarily from hints by authors and documents from other languages (Syrian *annales* and classical history and geography) and also from the many epigraphical documents that the south Arabian civilizations has left behind. This civilization firstly prevailed in Yamman during the first century A.D. But in this period Arabs were possessed for only a vogue and confuse record of historiography. Their little historical record was

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Urdu language since sixteenth century. Till that period Urdu translations were not available much and more)

mixed up with legendry material and they manipulated by arbitrary addition from the historians of antiquity. For the whole Islamic period the most reliable sources are the south Arabian inscription and the Greek or Roman, Byzantine and Syrian authors, to which the ancient Arabic poetry and popular ancient tradition furnished. The cases for which they provide circumstantial evidence must be evaluated individually. The First generation of Muslims were led by a natural drive of curiosity and piety to collect record and reports of the prophet’s personality and action. In the same way but in different and parallel process as it were the sacred Revelation contained in the Quran had already been collected during the life period of Prophet Muhammad(PBUH) and it was continued even after His demise. Over and above the divine text (which for some modern critics remains the chief and even the only sure source of Muhammad’s life) the records of what the prophet said and did his early mission were being collected and systematized as traditions of Haddith, soon to assume a precise and fixed form.

It is the text of his sayings or the related events prefaced by an Isnad or chain of transmitters. With this corpus of haddith soon developed an enormous amount of material of quite diverse value that Muslims learned. Islamic law, ritual and historiography arose because the biography of Muhammad and his companions provided the history of Islam’s early years. So the biography of the Prophet (PBUH) of Islam is the most favourite topic of the ancient Muslim historiography. The enormous material of haddith (and precisely that dealing specially with the history or the so-called history together with the other more narrative, religious and juridical tradition) was soon arranged in compilation embracing the whole or the part of life of the prophet with special reference to the period of his activity at Medina after the hijra, there he was the chief of the Islamic state. The Muslims had been started to write all acts and events of the Prophet (PBUH)’s life. The first classical biography of the founder of Islam which has come down to us

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4 - Francesco Gebrieli and M.S Khan, Arabic Historiography, Islamic Research Institute, International Islamic University, Islamabad, Islamic study, Vol. 18, No. 2, 1979, P. 82.
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is and which beginning of all Arabo-Islamic historiography is known by the more comprehensive known *Sira* by Ibn-e-Ishaq, in historical context after Ibn e Ishaq there is a great name of Al-Waqdi he wrote an extensive book on *Maghazi* in the second decade of ninth century, that dealt with the whole life of Muhammad (PBUH) at Madina. In the first half of the ninth century Ibn e Saad added to the picture of the life of Prophet Muhammad by including the life of his companions (*Sahaba*).

The *Tabqat* is the title of the book, it is rich in information. From the first half of the ninth century the history of the pious Caliphate became the part of the Muslim’s historiography.

Therefore, we can analyze that the Muslims had a great legacy in historiography as well as in the history of the pious Caliphate’s period, Al-Tabri, Al-Bladuri, Al-Yaqubi, Ibn-e-Athir, Mausoodi and the great historian and philosopher Ibn-e-Khaldun had focused the history of the pious Caliphate’s era, but all these histories were written in Arabic or Persian language so the Indian Muslims, the British intellectuals and historian could not get access to early Muslim history and historiography due to the linguistic barrier. The translations of works in English were not exactly according to the Arabic or Persian text; rather they were full of mistakes. Secondly these translations were translated by the biased and prejudiced British historians. That is why; we found a gap in the Muslim historiography of the Pious Caliphate period in the Subcontinent during the British Rule. Besides this, according to the situation the trends of Muslim historiography had been changed with the passage of time.

In fact, it gives the impression not particularly in the perspective of religion sensibility of the Muslims of South Asia; in eighteenth century a great polemical activity was perceived between the Sunni and Shia scholars. The first attempt to create harmonizing approach towards Shias, Shah Waliullah’s book *Izala-tul-Khafa* and later on Abdul Aziz wrote *Tohfa-e-Asna-i-Ashriyah*. Emerging Hindus violent behavior of nineteenth century, patronizing by Britain, made Muslim religious scholars of India more conscious to adopt harmonious methodologies which turned to the *Shia* and *Sunni* schism. Although, the differences were created in Muslims by
hundred years of the history but it is interesting to realize that how the historians of British India handled the period of pious Caliphate. While the historiography and history turning out as a scientific discipline in the Europe, European historians criticized the early Muslim history and historiography because it was not recorded according to the modern patterns of historiography. A wide range of Muslim historians appeared during the British rule in India who followed modern tools of historiography.

The Muslim intellectuals both independently and as part of liberal-left formations, were doing much the same acting not as Muslim intellectuals. They nevertheless saw themselves as transmitters of certain historical traditions. The historians of India carried forward the inclusive debate of the post-1857 decade, when the traditionalist and modernists intelligentsia were constrained to sketch out a role for themselves—within a religious traditions that had strong revivalist precedent as well as liberal and reformist tendencies. They did so because certain key aspects in those debates born contemporary relevance and related to how Muslims situated themselves in a world that was brutally shattered by partition. The concentrations on certain grounds in post independence India is the central theme of this discussion., through it is mainly confined to the realm of ideas mirrored by the Three schools of historiography in India during post colonial era.

The second half of the nineteenth century witnessed the growth of three broad yet distinct schools of Muslim historiography in India. These historical writings had originated from peculiar historical situation created by the political and intellectual developments of the post-1857 era. The failure of the rebellion of 1857 A.D., coupled with the hostile writings of some British authors, had contributed in undermining Indian Muslims confidence in their religion and history.

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5 Mushirul Hasan, Muslim Intellectuals, institutions and the post colonial predicament, Economic and political weekly, Vol 30, No 47, November 1995, P 2995
Muslim Historiography of the Pious Caliphate in British India:

The works which the Muslim writers produced covered almost every subject relevant to the understanding of the history of the pious Caliphate. In their quest to project the history of the pious Caliphate, they tried to prove their superiority over sectarianism (they traversed the different phases of the history of the pious Caliphate) and highlighted the intellectual, social and spiritual achievement of the pious Caliphs. These studies were undertaken with two-fold purpose: first, to show the Western critics of Pious Caliphate’s period; secondly, to restore a pride among the Indian Muslims in their Islamic past. The wide scope which these works attempted to cover resulted in an enormous number of writings on history which in turn produced an unprecedented popular interest in the Muslim past. The process of highlighting the achievements of Muslims gave birth to the Rationalists or Modernists, Traditionalists and the idealistic approach. The first two schools of Muslim historiography advocated distinct philosophies, whereas the third emerged as a meeting place of the themes of the other two schools.

Muslim Historiography of the (Pious) Caliphate by Rationalist Historians

A piety of soul, purity of heart and intention and the sincerity of comprehension are recognized as the essential of truth by eminent scientist and acknowledged intellectuals. Rationalism is the philosophical view that reason is the source of all knowledge, a view attributed to Descarts, Spinoza and Leibniz. It is in contrast to empiricism which believes that all knowledge is derived from experience. If reason is the source of all knowledge then everything that can be known, including God and natural world, must be intelligible and rationally explicable.

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6. Muhammad Aslam Syed, Muslim Response to the West: Muslim Historiography in India (1857-1914), The National institute of Historical and Cultural research, Islamabad, 1988, P. 5
In the earlier period of Muslim history the Mutazilites, the rationalist upheld man’s freedom of thought and action and hence his responsibility for whatever he does. They rejected the fatalism of the later Ashaarities. Due to the particular circumstances of that time, they lost their case to the Orthodox Ashaarities in the fourth and fifth centuries. However the rationalist trend continued through philosophers, thinkers and reformers in all Muslim countries7.

The Rationalist historians emphasized that Islam was an evolving religion. They made a distinction between Islam as an ideal religion and that evolved through history. In its ideal form they saw a living force, a philosophy that could develop in accordance with the needs of the changing times. Whatever its historical form, it contained a core message that was universal and aimed at the advancement of humanity. The greatest influence of Islam to humanity, according to the modernists, was its spirit for advancement which freed mankind from superstitions, intolerance, social and political tribulations. Although the followers of Islam had not always lived up to its ideals, their contribution was still much greater than followers of any other creed. Moreover, the civilizing spirit of Islam existed as Muslims to strive for the human perfection it defined8.

These convictions provided the modernists with the flexibility to analyze their history of the Caliphate period in the light of intellectual and social development. The modernist historian which are included as a part of this study such as Syed Ameer Ali and Shibli Naumani as well as a nationalist historian Abul Kalam Azad. Syed Ameer Ali and Shibli Naumani’s historiography on the period of Abu Baker and Omer (RA) express that even after the demise of the Holy Prophet (PBUH) the system of government introduced by the Caliphs was really according to the natural spirit of Islam9.

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7 Muhammad Rafi, Rationalism in Islam, Lahore, 2004, P.02
9 Shibli Naumani, Al-farooq, Aazamgharrh, 1894, P. 16-
Shibli Naumani (1857-1914) and Syed Ameer Ali (1849-1928) was well known historians of India, they were conscious of the threat to Islam and Muslim identity in India posed by the end of Muslim political dominance there, the exposure of Muslims to the West and Western criticism on Islam and Islamic heroes—-and least... Hindu revivalist and conversion movements. The response of late 19th century in India . At this time these historians systematically and rationally defended their heroes. Shibli Naumani was the author of Alfarooq, he explained the all prominent characteristics of Omer Farooq as the caliph of Islamic world, in fact Alfarooq is an admixture of literature and philosophy. Shibli Naumani’s historiography represents that the writer had endeavored to create the chain of causation in describing events. To create the connection between cause and facts historian could not use his speculative sense in the description of historical events. Nevertheless, in the narration of some event, it is necessary to the historian, he explained his speculative view about the event in such a style that nobody can distinguish the events of the author’s assumptions and interpretation. Shibli Naumani underlined the contribution and development of Islamic of Islamic Jurisprudence by Omer. He explained his primacy over the early Islamic Jurists (Abdullah bin Abbass, Zaid bin Sabit, Abdullah Bin Omer), although they were later legal doctors of theology, but were mere interpreters of Omer(RA)’s thought. Shibli used modern terminology for the administration of Omer (RA). His expressions showed the revenue system, police, volunteers programs, state welfare system, appointments of commission to investigate certain matters, and almost every other features of the British administration in India were known to him and practiced during his rule. In order to enhance the impact of his description, Shibli included numerous transliterated English words showing, perhaps, how modern administration Omer (RA) was.

Shibli’s historiography is marginally influenced by the rationalist approaches particularly in his criticism of Western methodology of history, and was more restrained in medieval

10. Shibli Naumani, Al-farooq, P. 289
rationalism of Al-Ghazali. Actually the Muslims of India were facing the same crises that the Muslim world had been already faced from the tenth to thirteenth century. That is why he tried to find out the solution of problems to the Muslims of India from medieval era. The role in which he saw himself was that of a Mutakallim trying to resolve, and replace the agreements of the modern rationalists on the basis of the medieval rationalism.\footnote{Muhammad Aslam Syed, Muslim Response to the West: Muslim Historiography in India1857-1914, P. 95}

In the expression of Ameer Ali, amongst the Arabs the chieftaincy is not inherited but selected, so the selection of Abu baker as a Caliph was a correct decision that was taken by the people, it was according to the real Arab tradition. He had high esteemed place in Mecca, and was recognized as a member of wisdom and moderation, his election was accepted with their usual devotion to the faith by Ali and the chief members of Mohammad’s family.”\footnote{Syed Ameer Ali, The Short History of the Saracens, P. 21}

Syed Ameer Ali belonged to Shi’a Sect, but his style of historiography shows him as such person who believes that Muslims should be united during the British rule in India. Ameer Ali was the first Indian person who used the term “nationality” to the Muslims of India in many associations.\footnote{K.K. A. Aziz, Ameer Ali: His Life and Work, Lahore, 1968, P. 63} So in the description of the history of the (Pious) Caliphate, he did not show any biasness in his views about the history of the four Caliphate’s era, however, he analyzed the history of Caliphate in a lenient and more realistic manner. He gives an account in the \textit{Spirit of Islam} that, after the demise of the Holy Prophet (PBUH) which system of government was introduced by the early four Caliphatess that was really according the natural spirit of Islam. According to Ameer Ali the martyrdom of Omer was the great loss of the Islamic state. He was specially fitted for the leadership of the unruly Arabs. He had detained the helm with a strong hand, and sternly repressed the natural propensity of discouragement among nomadic groups of the
people and semi-civilized tribes when coming in interaction with the luxury and voices and cities. Then he appreciated the reforms of Omer and his policy of the expansion of the state. Then according to rational approach he indicated some weak points of the era of Uthman (RA) politely and in lenient manner. After Uthman (RA) Ali (RA) tried to settle the matter as like as Omer (RA) but due to some political reasons that set up could not come into existence.

Actually, rationalist historians of India wanted to remove the misunderstandings that had been created by the western and Hindu scholars about early Muslim heroes, secondly they wanted to highlighted the bravery and justice of Islamic heroes, so they tried to proof it through facts and evidence. The Modernist historians although regarded the British victory in India with mixed feelings, they accepted it as a reality which had been caused by concrete historical forces and not by an unintelligible accident of fate. They thought that the decline of Muslims was a product of a series of decisions made by them over centuries. But their description about the pious Caliphate era made it clear that with the change of social, cultural and political trends. However under the modern patterns of historiography they reconstructed the early history Islam as well history of the pious Caliphate era, and they pressed the theological conflicts that were existed among them by hundred years and during the era of post 1857 A.D. they made them united against the Western intellectual challenges and highlighted their early Islamic heroes with full enthusiasm by the historical expression over reason and it proved that the heroes of the Muslims were much and more better in justice, bravery and as a ruler of Muslim state.

Muslim Historiography of the Pious Caliphate by Traditionalist Historians


The Traditionalists’ approach of Muslim history of the pious Caliphate period was more positive than that of the Modernists or Rationalists. It was not the intellectual aspect of Islamic civilization that inspired the Traditionalists; they were attracted by the dogmatic nature of Islam and its emphasis on believing without questioning\textsuperscript{16}. Traditionalist viewed that the human reason is as weak and corrupt as human beings themselves, and for whom revelation and scripture was the only sure part to truth. Traditionalists were often forced to engage with rationalists on philosophical grounds, and appropriated many arguments from the ancient philosophers such as AlGhazali, Al Kindi.

Despite their differences in affiliating with one school of traditionalist historiography, they all not only accepted Islam but also they believed in the history of the pious Caliphate as it was. So it assumed that the orthodox or traditionalist presented true Islam and the interests of its adherents; and the liberal and modernist currents are secondary or peripheral or more dominant, separatist, communal and neo fundamentalist paradigms, the heterodox trends which contest the definition of Muslim identity in purely religious term, and to refute to popular nation that Islamic values and symbols provide a key to understanding of the Muslim world view. It is fact that the Muslims are much and more attached with their religious entity, they always gave it more importance and value to their religio-cultural habits and institutions.\textsuperscript{17} For the orthodox/traditionalist Muslim historians, the period of pious Caliphate was most glorious and significant to the later Muslim rulers in the history of Islam. In other words they saw no dichotomy among the four pious caliphs as an ideal and as a product of history. This attitude logically led to a sharply differing perception of Muslim history of the pious Caliphate period from that held by the Rationalists. They saw no reason to doubt the ultimate triumph of their religion. Consequently

\textsuperscript{17} - Mushirul Hasan, Muslim Intellectuals, institutions and the post colonial predicament, Economic and political weekly, Vol 30, No 47, November 1995, P 2995
they ignored the social, economic and political forces of history and visualized the ouster of the British and the return of the glory of Islam and Islamic history in India\(^{18}\).

They emphasized that the period of (Pious) Caliphate was consisted of two phases. In the first phase of the Caliphate Abu baker (RA) and Omer (RA) were the Caliphs of Islam during their period the Muslim *Ummah* remained calm and peaceful. They expanded the boundaries of Islamic state from Medina to Iran, Iraq, Egypt and Syria. Different none Muslim elements started to include in Muslim *Ummah*. But during the earlier period of Pious Caliphate’s era, there could not be seen any split at political level or any class differences at social level among the Muslims. Pure Islamic culture could be seen everywhere in the first phase of the Caliphate. In this period the Muslim Armies conquered the great none Muslim States such as Iran, Iraq, Egypt and many other states and got a lot of money and other luxurious goods\(^ {19}\). But there was not importance of the Iranian and Roman’s luxurious goods in the eyes of the people. Religion was more important according to their thought.

Among the traditionalist historians the work of Shah Moin-Ud-Din Nadwi, Aslam Jairajpuri and Akber Shah Khan Najeeb Aabadi are more valuable in the historiography of the Caliphate period, although they all were the writer of general history, but their style of historiography towards four pious Caliphate is quite different from their predecessors. Beside this the project of *Siyer-ul-Sahaba*, multi-volume series written by Moin ud din Nadvi, though its different in scope, but it carries the purpose of the latter further in being inspired he explained his vision and in being as exemplification of the arguments and ideas as set out in the *Tariikh-e-Islam*. *Tariikh ul Ummat* by Aslam Jairajpuri and *Tariikh-e-Islam* by Akber Shah khan

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\(^{18}\)Muhammad Aslam Syed, *Muslim Response to the West: Muslim Historiography in India 1857-1914*. P. 11
Najeeb Aabadi are the wide worthy source of the relevant era. In their historiography they underlined the primacy of the Caliphates and emphasized that the selection of the Caliphate is most logical. The literary manners of these writers seems that they were intensely aware of the intellectual and literary movements and controversies of their time. Therefore, their style of historiography was the product of the colonial era on contemporary Muslim historiography. Their style and sources shows that they were strictly believed on tradition. For the explanation of every event, they related the events with Quran or Sunnah or they seems dependent on the early sources of historiography for their history of the Caliphate epoch. Although the orthodox/traditionalist historians were fanatically familiar with the Western intellectual challenge that they had to face, but in the response of that challenges they used the verses of Quran an Haddith as a source of logic in their text.

they think that the history is the best source to find out the truth and reality. For instance, due to the sectarian Issues there found some objections on the the selection of Abu Baker as the first Caliph of Muslims, Moin ud din Nadwi explained in the beginning of Seyer-ul-Sahaba, “Caliphate is the great esteem in Islam, after the Nabuwat, therefore if you cannot the solution of the problem in the Quran and the Haddith about any matter, then you should obey your Caliph. His order will be reliable for the people, and it will be necessary to the people that they accept the instructions of their caliph. ‘the Prophet Muhammad said, “you would follow my righteous descendants after me”’. So it is necessary at the time of the selection of the rular, people should see his political and administrative abilities apparently, and also should try to find out spiritual, intellectual and moral characteristics in him, that he had got from the close companion from Muhammad (PBHU). Therefore, according to the phenomena, the selection of the early four Caliphs after one another is ponderous causation of his hypothetical situation. All traditionalist historians explained this point of view according to their own style but they all are strongly agree with Moin ud din Nadwi.

—Moin ud din Nadwi, Seyer ul Sahaba, Vol. 1, P. 10
It seems that The traditionalist historians reconstructed the Islamic history and tried to highlight the glorious past of the Muslims in the British Indian Period. Their purpose to reconstruct the history of the pious Caliphate period was to defend their early Islamic heroes by their own tradition against the Western intellectual and political challenges. However the traditionalist school of thought followed the tradition of *Ash‘arites*, while the modernists declared themselves the followers of the *Mutazilites*, so in this perspective, the style and forms of their writings naturally differed from each other. The *Mutazilites* had used Greek philosophy in their arguments; the modernist drew upon the Western rationalism of the nineteenth century in interpreting their past. Their work clearly shows the impact of Western historiography. Even some of the themes they developed were taken from Western writings. For example, in establishing the Muhammad (PBUH) as a great leader, reformer and teacher and Omer (RA) as a good ruler, they drew upon the ideas of the Western historians, especially Carlyle and Gibbon.

As followers of the tradition of *Ash‘ari* and Ghazali, the Traditionalists saw little reason to rely on Western scholarship in their studies on Islam. In their rejoinders to the writings of Modernists, they utilized the reasoning of the medieval Muslim scholars. As a result, their works bear a medieval outlook. Even those biographies which were influenced by writer like Carlyle are closer to *Tazkirahs* than to modern biography.

**Idealistic Approach of Muslim Historiography of the Caliphate.**

In contrast to both the modernists or Rationalists and Traditionalists, the writers of the New School were not proponents of cohesive system of thought. Some were of a modernist persuasion, while others revealed a Traditionalist emphasis. Regardless of their point of view, however, they did

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not bother to develop religious ideas or any theory about the history of early Islamic heroes as the four Pious Caliphs systematically in their writings. What characterized the New School was its paramount concern for form; for popularizing Muslim history of the pious Caliphate era by using many of the forms of Western literature. The writings of Traditionalists and Modernists had created an interest in the history of the pious Caliphate period, but their highly intellectual approach to their subject matter made their works difficult for the common man to understand. But the writers of the New School did not address themselves to speculative issues. They used fiction to develop their historical themes, so they described the history of pious Caliphate period in a factious manner. They wrote their histories in essay style and according to the situation of British Indian period they tried to highlight their early Islamic heroes and they described about the events of wars and conquests. Their purpose by this narration was to express the bravery, boldness and good strategies about the wars of the Muslim generals under the leadership of the pious Caliphs. So their writings appealed to majority of the literate people of British Indian period.

Unlike the other two school which involved distinct philosophies of history of the pious Caliphate period, the new school simply presented a series of selected topics from the history which exposed their present decadence, but mainly exalted their glorious heritage. They selected heroes from different phases of Islamic history who not only assumed their demoralized community, but highlighted their past politically and culturally and underscored Islam’s contribution to World civilization.

The authors of the New School of historiography described the history of the pious Caliphate in a story style. The theme of their writings expressed the humiliation of none

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Muslims and the Christians at the hands of Muslims, and Muslim’s bravery and generosity as opposed to Christian cowardice and bigotry. On the one hand these themes show the motives of their authors to prove the superiority of Muslims over Christians, but on the other hand they served as reprisal in opposition to the adverse picture of Muslims in the western writings.

Conclusion:

With the passage of time, Muslim historiography from earlier period to nineteenth century got so many changing structures. The India Muslim historiography played a very important role in creating a separate Muslim identity. Unlike other Muslim societies who own the past of their countries, the Muslims of India kept themselves aloof from the Indian past and bent to the classical Muslim past. That is why there was a lot of historical literature on Islam and early Muslims. This tendency contributed to the two nation theory and alienated the Muslims of India from the ancient Indian past.

Although, the adverse opinion of these three schools on some considerable contentions of Islamic history give the impression of resistance any possibility of their concurrence, yet, after the War of Independence in 1857 A.D. situation was radically modified. The Muslims of India had fallen in more dangerous situation and they had to face western intellectual challenge. That is why they felt the need to unite themselves and avoid their internal conflicts in thought and practice. Thus the differences amongst the Rationalist, Traditionalist and the idealist historians diluted by a general Pan-Islamic zeal. They were united on the historically significant role of the Caliphate in the lives of the Muslims. They stained the early Muslim heroes, specially four pious Caliphate in their writings. Abdul Haleem Sharar, Shibli Naumani, Moin ud din Nadvi, Akber Shah Khan Najeeb Abadi Aslam Jairajpuri published their writing in Urdu and Ameer Ali in English. Numerous books on the history were produced with different themes, dealing with the heroes of Islam and depicting not only early four caliphs,
but also the period of Umayyad and Abbasids even the Muslim rule in Spain as the golden period.