

**MODERN WESTERN TRENDS IN *SĪRAH*
WRITING: AN ASSESSMENT OF JOHN V.
TOLAN AND CRAIG CONSIDINE’S APPROACH**

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Abstract

The captivating realm of *Sīrah* writing, encapsulating the life of Prophet Muhammad (*Ḥaḍrat Muhammad Rasūlullah Khātām un Nabīyyīn Ṣallallahu ‘alaihi wa ‘alā ‘Ālihi wa Aṣḥābihi wa Ṣallam*), has long been a focal point within the intellectual tapestry of Islam. Scholars, historians, and biographers, both Muslim and non-Muslims, have passionately contributed to this genre, transcending linguistic boundaries and embracing the diversity of world languages. Western authors have depicted the Holy Prophet (*Ṣal Allah-u-‘alaihi wa sallam*) in a myriad of ways, often leaning towards disparaging and negative portrayals, with sporadic instances of a positive and unbiased approach. However, a significant transformation has unfolded, particularly in the post-9/11 era, where admirers of the Holy Prophet (*Ṣal Allah-u-‘alaihi wa sallam*) ardently advocate for his multi-dimensional personality as a beacon for human emancipation, peace, progress, and salvation. Two such examples are John V. Tolan (b. 1959) and Craig Considine (b. 1985) — contemporary luminaries whose works echo this positive shift within non-Muslim Western scholarship. This study delves into an assessment and analysis of Tolan and Considine’s approach to *Sīrah* writing, seeking to illuminate the ‘positive approach of non-Muslim Westerners in *Sīrah* writing.’ One of the major findings of this study is that in the post-9/11 era, we witnessed a number of instances of the positive and authentic facets of Islam and the life of the Holy Prophet (*Ṣal Allah-u-‘alaihi wa sallam*). Through scholarly endeavours, Tolan and Considine contribute significantly to this evolving narrative, marking a rising momentum in contemporary Western scholarship toward unveiling a more accurate and uplifting portrayal of Islam and the Holy Prophet (*Ṣal Allah-u-‘alaihi wa sallam*).

Keywords: *Positive Approach, Post-9/11 Era, Western*

*Scholarship, Contemporary Luminaries, Evolving Narrative,
Tolan and Considine*

Introduction

Throughout the history of Islam, *Sīrah* (the Holy Prophet's illustrious life and career) has received much scholarly attention and has been discussed by Muslim as well as non-Muslim writers equally in almost all languages. Admiration for the Holy Prophet (*Ṣal Allāh-u-'alaihe wa sallam*) stems from the belief that his multifaceted persona serves as a beacon for human emancipation, peace, progress, and salvation. Indeed, he is revered as a mirror through which the Muslim community, known as the *Ummah*, reflects upon its identity and purpose. In recent decades, the academic engagement of non-Muslim Western scholars with Islam and Muslims, especially with the life and times of the Holy Prophet (*Ṣal Allāh-u-'alaihe wa sallam*), has remained at the centre of their discourse. However, amidst scholarly admiration, there exists a lamentable trend of disparagement directed at the Holy Prophet (*Ṣal Allāh-u-'alaihe wa sallam*) and his legacy. This negative depiction finds expression in the infamous Danish Cartoons outrage, sparked by the publication of 12 caricatures ridiculing the Prophet Muhammad (*Ḥaḍrat Muhammad Rasūlullah Khātām un Nabīyyīn Ṣallallahu 'alaihi wa 'alā 'Ālihi wa Aṣḥābihi wa Ṣallam*), in 2005. Similar derogatory portrayals surfaced in 2015 in the Danish newspaper *Jyllands-Posten* and the French satirical magazine *Charlie Hebdo*,¹ as well as in the provocative film *Fitna* from Denmark.² All of them exemplify the negative Western perception of the Holy Prophet (*Ṣal Allāh-u-'alaihe wa sallam*). In all these cases, Western intellectuals and leaders questioned why Muslims were so angry and defended the “freedom of expression” of those offending. Despite these challenges, the enduring significance of the Holy Prophet (*Ṣal Allāh-u-'alaihe wa sallam*) persists, serving as an unceasing source of inspiration and contemplation for scholars and believers alike.

To understand the shifts, movements, and biases within the non-Muslim Western literature concerning the life and character of the Holy Prophet (*Ṣal Allāh-u-'alaihe wa sallam*) in the 21st century, it becomes imperative to first outline the prevalent negative portrayals (biased) within non-Muslim Western literature. This serves as a precursor to a detailed assessment of the emerging positive (unbiased) trends in *Sīrah* literature, which has increasingly dominated this genre in contemporary times. This will help us understand the relationship between Islam and the West. Yet, attempting to delve into both trends exhaustively within a single study poses considerable challenges. Hence, this study attempts to highlight the positive trends in the contemporary non-Muslim Western scholarship on the Prophet's *Sīrah* with a focus on the works

of two contemporary Western academicians, namely John V. Tolan's 'Faces of Muhammad' (2019)³ and Craig Considine's 'The Humanity of Muhammad' (2020).⁴

1. Understanding the Discourse of Islam and the West

Islam and the West are, and have been, the subjects of the writings of both Muslims and non-Muslim academicians alike. Western scholars have produced a plethora of literature on Muslims and their scripture. However, much of this literature predominantly exhibits bias and prejudice against Islam, Muslims, and the Holy Prophet (*Ṣal Allah-u-'alaihe wa sallam*). Pertinently, the history of medieval and early modern European\Western writings about the Holy Prophet (*Ṣal Allah-u-'alaihe wa sallam*) showcases a consistent pattern of misinterpretation. In this regard, some were 'deceptive', because they considered these biographical sources (produced in medieval times) as the only core data for studying/on the life of the last Prophet (*Ṣal Allah-u-'alaihe wa sallam*). Failing to access the fundamental sources, they relied solely on misinterpreted literature. In his book "Mythologies of the Prophet Muhammad in Early Modern English Culture," Matthew Dimmock, a Professor of Early Modern Studies at the University of Sussex, UK, argues that the distorted and exaggerated depictions of the Holy Prophet (*Ṣal Allah-u-'alaihe wa sallam*) were central to the Christian stereotypes of Islam in England. These portrayals were characterized by "vilification, caricature, and misinformation, shaping perceptions of Islam during that period".⁵ A study of the 'distortion of a biography', or possibly the 'biography of a misrepresentation', is how Dimmock succinctly summarized his work.⁶ In addition, Tarif Khalidi (b. 1938), Emeritus Professor and historian, at the American University of Beirut, in his book 'Images of Muhammad,' scrutinizes how the perception of the Holy Prophet (*Ṣal Allah-u-'alaihe wa sallam*) evolved and developed over time in the Muslim community.⁷ Besides that, Khalidi emphasises how Carlyle's lecture "The Hero as Prophet"⁸ and William Muir's work "Life of Mahomet"⁹ influenced 19th and early 20th century Muslim writers like Ameer Ali (1849-1928), Muhammad Iqbal (1877-1938), and Muhammad Husayn Haykal (1888-1956), and how these authors responded to the need for a new and modern *Sīrah* writing¹⁰ in their own distinctive ways.¹¹

Relatedly, in the 19th and early 20th centuries, the *Sīrah* literature that emerged from the West was Euro-centric and polemical, thus, portraying the Holy Prophet (*Ṣal Allah-u-'alaihe wa sallam*) negatively and offensively. Yet, a careful examination of their literature reveals that these writers were spurious with unreliable and biased sources from the medieval period. The deliberate distortion of the Holy Prophet (*Ṣal Allah-u-'alaihe wa sallam*) resulted largely from propagandist clergy, overly enthusiastic

polemicists, and some irresponsible travellers to the Muslim world. They maligned the representation of the Holy Prophet (*Ṣal Allah-u-‘alaihe wa sallam*) in their literature while using offensive language, which echoes the prevailing impact of the medieval legacy.

To substantiate this argument, Professor Kidwai argues in his book “*Images of Prophet Muhammad in English Literature*”, that their understanding and portrayal of the Holy Prophet (*Ṣal Allah-u-‘alaihe wa sallam*) is “largely unreceptive, teeming with factual errors, excoriating stereotypes, and even a malicious distortion of the truth.”¹² Karen Armstrong a well-known scholar of comparative religion, observed that Western Christian’s hostility to Islam caused them to develop a distorted image of Islam. So, Western scholars called Islam a blasphemous religion and called the Prophet Muhammad (*Ḥadīrat Muhammad Rasūlullah Khātām un Nabīyyīn Ṣallallahu ‘alaihi wa ‘alā ‘Ālihi wa Aṣḥābihi wa Ṣallam*) “the Great Pretender” who started a violent religion based on the sword to take over the world.¹³

2. Limitations of the Study

- 1) The study focuses on a specific timeframe, the post-9/11 era, during which numerous scholars from Europe and the West, spanning disciplines like religious studies, history, and sociology, have depicted the Holy Prophet (*Ṣal Allah-u-‘alaihe wa sallam*) positively. However, our focus is narrowed down to analyzing only two works published in 2019 and 2020, respectively.
- 2) We specifically delve into the contributions of two scholars, Tolan, a European historian, and Considine, an American sociologist, who are emblematic of positive trends. These scholars have meticulously employed primary and secondary sources to present Islam and Holy Prophet (*Ṣal Allah-u-‘alaihe wa sallam*) in a favourable and accurate light, particularly emphasizing the interfaith dimensions of the *Sīrah*.
- 3) Despite the extensive exploration by Tolan and Considine into various facets of the Prophet’s life and teachings, including their interfaith dimensions, this study is constrained to examining only prominent aspects covered collectively in their works.

3. Review of Literature

In the Western world, there is a myriad of literature investigating both positive and negative approaches to the *Sīrah* of the Holy Prophet (*Ṣal Allah-u-‘alaihe wa sallam*). Information on this discourse can be found in more than hundreds of books and articles. Negative/biased portrayals of the Holy Prophet (*Ṣal Allah-u-‘alaihe wa sallam*) have been the subject of several academic works from the very inception of history. To date, a large number of studies

and conferences have focused on the negative portrayal of the Holy Prophet (*Ṣal Allah-u-‘alaihe wa sallam*), but few studies have been carried out to highlight his positive teachings and practices, in Western scholarship as well as in the Muslim scholarship. To have a better understanding of the discourse, the overviews of some carefully researched works are mentioned below:

- 1) In his seminal work, *The Sum of all Heresies: The Image of Islam in Western Thought* (2008) Frederick D. Quinn provides a comprehensive and insightful exploration of the portrayal of Islam in Western literature. Drawing on a wide range of sources, including literary texts, art, theology, and political discourse, Quinn meticulously traces the evolution of Western perceptions of Islam from medieval times to the present day. Through his rigorous analysis, Quinn reveals the complex interplay of religious doctrine, geopolitical considerations, and cultural biases that have shaped Western attitudes towards Islam. His examination sheds light on the enduring legacy of Orientalist stereotypes and the challenges of fostering mutual understanding between Western and Islamic societies.
- 2) Norman Daniel's, *Islam and the West: Making of an Image*, (2009) delves into the history of Christian anti-Islamic polemic, shedding light on the various attacks directed at the Holy Prophet (*Ṣal Allah-u-‘alaihe wa sallam*). Daniel examines the misperceptions surrounding the Prophet's status as a pseudo-prophet and explores the motives behind such misrepresentations. In particular, he scrutinizes the imputation of idolatry to the Prophet and its significance in shaping Western attitudes towards Islam. Daniel also traces the survival of biased medieval concepts into modern times, highlighting the enduring legacy of these historical narratives in contemporary Western perceptions of Islam. Through meticulous research and analysis, Daniel offers valuable insights into the complex interplay of religious, cultural, and political factors that have influenced the portrayal of Islam in the West.
- 3) Tarif Khalidi's, *Images of Muhammad: Narratives of the Prophet in Islam Across the Centuries*, (2009), offers an elegant and nuanced account of the representation and adoration of the Holy Prophet (*Ṣal Allah-u-‘alaihe wa sallam*) from the origin and evolution of the Holy Prophet (*Ṣal Allah-u-‘alaihe wa sallam*) and his teachings up to the present. Khalidi scrutinizes how the image of the Holy Prophet (*Ṣal Allah-u-‘alaihe wa sallam*) factors that have impacted the Holy Prophet (*Ṣal Allah-u-‘alaihe wa sallam*) perception, including the significant influence of unfavourable ideas disseminated by the West. An intriguing aspect of Khalidi's work is its exploration of the historical representations of diverse cultures and beliefs, providing a

captivating insight into the depictions of the Holy Prophet (*Ṣal Allah-u-‘alaihe wa sallam*) throughout different epochs.

- 4) Ahmad Gunny, *The Prophet Muhammad in French and English Literature, 1650 to the Present*, (2010). Gunny has been a pioneer in the study of literary and theological representations of Islam in modern France and Europe. Students of *Sīrah*'s studies and academicians alike have discovered new and significant research avenues in this work because of his acclaimed critical studies and definitive editions of Voltaire. Gunny's novel approach to the representation of the Holy Prophet (*Ṣal Allah-u-‘alaihe wa sallam*) in 18th-century French literature complicates the current understanding of the subject. He examines the numerous and varied perspectives of the Holy Prophet (*Ṣal Allah-u-‘alaihe wa sallam*), and provides a survey spanning over 350 years that was held during the Enlightenment, rather than attempting to once again, reveal a 'Western prejudice towards Islam.'
- 5) Matthew Dimmock's, *Mythologies of the Prophet Muhammad in Early Modern English Culture*, (2013), is described rightly by the author as "a study of misrepresentation of biography" or "the biography of a misrepresentation". The admirable effort of identifying the last Prophet (*Ṣal Allah-u-‘alaihe wa sallam*) distorted picture has been completed by Dimmock in this commendable work. Dimmock describes how the Holy Prophet (*Ṣal Allah-u-‘alaihe wa sallam*) image was fabricated and misused in English literature from the beginning of the 17th century, during the Reformation era, on the stage plays in the Elizabethan era, religious writings, and popular culture. It is described as an "astonishing spectacle of substantial and insightful scholarship."
- 6) Abdur Raheem Kidwai's, *Images of the Prophet Muhammad in English Literature* (2018) describes and examines the Images of the Holy Prophet (*Ṣal Allah-u-‘alaihe wa sallam*), as portrayed in English literature from the twelfth to nineteenth centuries. In the wake of the Danish cartoons controversy and the tragedy of 9/11, which sparked a global interest in the Holy Qur'an in general and the *Sīrah* of the Holy Prophet (*Ṣal Allah-u-‘alaihe wa sallam*) in particular, Kidwai's admirable effort seeks to have a better understanding and relationship between the Muslim world and the West. The main focus of the book is to express the development of both the trends, negative and positive, and the portrayal of the Holy Prophet (*Ṣal Allah-u-‘alaihe wa sallam*) in English literature from the Middle Ages to Contemporary times.

From an outline of these works, it becomes evident that there have been few attempts by Muslim and non-Muslim academicians to provide a thorough and fair analysis of how the Holy Prophet (*Ṣal Allah-u-‘alaihe wa sallam*) has been depicted and portrayed from

antiquity to the present. Besides that, these works have contributed to a broader understanding of Islam and its rich cultural heritage, while also fostering greater dialogue and mutual respect between different religious and cultural communities. The literature review reveals that there have been no attempts so far to study the works/contributions of Tolan and Considine comparatively through the prism of a 'positive approach to *Sīrah*.'

4. Methodology

To ensure a comprehensive and rigorous examination of John V. Tolan and Craig Considine's contributions to *Sīrah* writing, this study employs a historical methodology characterized by a meticulous investigation of primary and secondary sources. The historical method is chosen for its capacity to provide a nuanced understanding of the context, allowing us to delve into the intricacies of the authors' perspectives on the life of the Holy Prophet (*Ṣal Allāh-u- 'alaihe wa sallam*). In the spirit of source verification, an extensive review of scholarly writings, biographical accounts, and historical records is undertaken. This process involves cross-referencing information to ensure the reliability and authenticity of the sources, contributing to the credibility of the study's findings. In addition, the arguments of Tolan and Considine are sometimes juxtaposed with the views of their contemporaries to give a more comprehensive understanding of the Western perspective of *Sīrah*. In both methods, an insider/outsider approach will be utilized.¹⁴ In this research, the insider approach refers to what Muslims believe and advocate in their understanding of the issues in question, while the outsider approach refers to what is believed and advocated by Orientalists in the Western literature consulted.

The assessment of positivity and negativity in *Sīrah* writing involves a qualitative analysis of the: language, tone, and overall portrayal of the Holy Prophet (*Ṣal Allāh-u- 'alaihe wa sallam*) within the works of Tolan and Considine in particular and other scholars in general. Positivity is measured through the authors' emphasis on the Holy Prophet (*Ṣal Allāh-u- 'alaihe wa sallam*) virtues, contributions to humanity, and adherence to ethical principles. Negativity, conversely, is identified in instances where the portrayal leans towards disparagement, misconceptions, or an absence of a balanced perspective.

To enhance the depth of the study, the exploration of concepts like positive and negative is further refined through a thematic analysis, dissecting key themes and motifs within Tolan and Considine's works. Additionally, the study engages with the existing scholarly discourse on *Sīrah* writing, offering a comparative analysis to situate the authors' perspectives within the broader context of

contemporary Western scholarship on the life of the Holy Prophet (*Ṣal Allah-u-‘alaihe wa sallam*).

5. Results

Positivity is measured by scrutinizing the authors' language, tone, and thematic emphasis within their respective works. Instances where Tolan and Considine emphasize the Holy Prophet's (*Ṣal Allah-u-‘alaihe wa sallam*) positive attributes, advocate for a balanced/unbiased understanding, and exhibit a nuanced appreciation for the historical context contribute to the overall positivity assessment. This includes depictions of the Holy Prophet (*Ṣal Allah-u-‘alaihe wa sallam*) that transcend stereotypes, challenge misconceptions, and present a multifaceted view of his character.

To defend the study's outcomes, the defined concept of positivity serves as the benchmark against which Tolan and Considine's narratives are evaluated. By establishing clear criteria for positivity, the study aims to articulate the grounds on which the authors' contributions are appraised, providing a robust foundation for the analysis and interpretation of *Sīrah* writing within the Western scholarly context. This approach ensures transparency in the assessment process and facilitates a more comprehensive understanding of the authors' engagement with the positive dimensions of the life of the Holy Prophet (*Ṣal Allah-u-‘alaihe wa sallam*) in their works.

6. Representation of the Holy Prophet (*Ṣal Allah-u-‘alaihe wa sallam*) in the Western Scholarship: From Medieval to Contemporary Era

Propaganda and polemics from the West against Islam, the holy Qur'an, and the *Sīrah* date back to the early days and have shaped all discourses ever since. The creation of a false and rather repugnant image of the last Prophet (*Ṣal Allah-u-‘alaihe wa sallam*) has been a gradual process in the Western narrative. Both his personal life and the message of Islam were misperceived and misrepresented as the epitome of falsehood and evil. For example, his family background, pre-prophetic life, and career were anticipated with relish, asking how someone who had been pagan in his youth could lay claim to being the Prophet of God.¹⁵ It can be claimed that during medieval times, non-Muslim Western scholars were not capable of giving a balanced account of the Holy Prophet (*Ṣal Allah-u-‘alaihe wa sallam*). In medieval texts like Alexandre du Pont's 13th-century *Roman De Mahomet*, the last Prophet (*Ṣal Allah-u-‘alaihe wa sallam*) is portrayed as (God forbid) an imposter, a brigand, and even the devil incarnate, accused of committing heinous crimes.¹⁶ These negative depictions were common among Crusade historians who often

depicted him as an idol, suggesting that he was worshipped as a false god by the Saracens, a term used to refer to Muslims, particularly Arabs. However, it's crucial to recognize that these portrayals were steeped in religious biases and cultural prejudices prevalent during that period, and Muslims themselves did not use the term "Saracens" to identify themselves.¹⁷ Paradoxically, it was also stressed at the same time that Islam, as fabricated by the Prophet (*Ṣal Allāh-u-‘alaihe wa sallam*), had grown out of Christian faith and practices. Walter of Compiegne, Alexandre du Pont, and Embrico of Mainz "all presuppose that Islam arose in a Christian people."¹⁸ Peter the Venerable (1094–1156) argued that a Prophet, inspired by divinity, must reveal unknown truths. According to this criterion, he deemed Prophet (*Ṣal Allāh-u-‘alaihe wa sallam*) claim to prophethood false because he did not foretell future events. However, it's worth noting that this accusation lacks credibility. In addition, St. Thomas presented another theory a pseudo-prophet might occasionally utter some truths. He thus sought to play down the profundity characterizing the Prophet's message. He insisted the demoniac possession could account for the Prophet's revelation.¹⁹ Roger Bacon drew a distinct line between genuine prophets, viewed as universally accepted, and false prophets. He emphasized that false prophets lead morally flawed lives and propagate untrue teachings. Consequently, he assigned the Prophet to the latter group. The emphasis on the Prophet's falsehood in the works of Pedro Alfonso and Peter the Venerable and his team during Muslim rule in Spain (714–1492 C.E.) is geared towards the same objective — of rejecting his claim to Messengership.²⁰ Kidwai argues in his book *‘Images of the Prophet’* that: "they tried their level best to show that the Prophet (*Ḥaḍrat Muḥammad Rasūlullāh Khātām un Nabīyyīn Ṣallallāhu ‘alaihi wa ‘alā ‘Ālihi wa Aṣḥābihi wa Ṣallam*) did not possess any of these four signs which characterize a Prophet— (i) He must speak the truth. (ii) He must stand out from and above everyone in terms of his goodness and virtues. (iii) He must perform miracles; (iv) He must present holy and righteous law."²¹ Humbert of Romans brought forth a series of allegations against the Prophet, such as the absence of miracles, the promulgation of irrational laws, immoral conduct, lewd behaviour, and deceit. Among these accusations, he placed particular emphasis on sexual sins, seeing them as particularly effective in capturing the attention and stirring the curiosity of the public. Almost every medieval polemical writer took this cue from Humbert.²² In Dante's (1265–1321) *Divine Comedy*, the image of the Prophet (*Ṣal Allāh-u-‘alaihe wa sallam*) was represented as a heretic and as a Sower of discord.²³ Minou Reeves, in his book, *Muhammad in Europe*, remarks on Dante's representation of the Prophet (*Ṣal Allāh-u-‘alaihe wa sallam*):

Dante began the *Divine Comedy* when the last Crusaders' fortress, Acre, in Palestine, had been reconquered by the Muslims who had driven the Crusaders from the region. When Dante painted the obscene depiction of the Prophet (*Ṣal Allah-u-'alaihe wa sallam*) in his *Inferno*, the visions of those wars were still fresh in his memory. Dante believed that Muhammad's (*Ṣal Allah-u-'alaihe wa sallam*) offense had been to spread a "false religion" to provide a heavenly revelation that claimed to supplant Christianity. This had to be viewed as an impious hoax that could do nothing but cause strife in the world.²⁴

The Crusades, with their vehemently anti-Muslim rhetoric, laid the groundwork for unrestricted criticism of Islam and the Prophet (*Ṣal Allah-u-'alaihe wa sallam*).²⁵ An early scholarly contribution to this campaign came from Humphrey Prideaux (1628-1724 CE) – an English priest and scholar. His highly polemical work, "*The True Nature of Imposture Fully Displayed in the Life of Mahomet*,"²⁶ aimed to portray the life of the Prophet (*Ṣal Allah-u-'alaihe wa sallam*) as that of a fraudulent individual who founded a counterfeit religion, seeking to discredit him. This work became a significant and enduring source of information about the Prophet (*Ṣal Allah-u-'alaihe wa sallam*) in subsequent times.²⁷

Several anonymous biographies of the Prophet (*Ṣal Allah-u-'alaihe wa sallam*) continued to incorporate this blend of history and the image of imposture until the middle of the nineteenth century. Prideaux, J.H. Hottinger, and Edward Pococke, distinguished Orientalist scholars of their times, claim that "any country might blush to have produced such a monster."²⁸ In this pursuit, John Tolan states, "There was uniformity in the negative representation of the Prophet (*Ṣal Allah-u-'alaihe wa sallam*) in European Christian thought, from Bibliander's 1543 edition of the Holy Qur'an to Humphry Prideaux's 1697 invective on Islam and Deism."²⁹ Similarly, Minou Reeves argues in his book '*Muhammad in Europe*' that:

When asked what Islam was, mediaeval scholars and churchmen preferred to give the easy answer to the question of what was Islam: that it was the work of a one man, Muhammad [PBUH], and that he was inspired by Satan. There was thus no need to answer awkward questions about the religion; defame its founder and you could forget the rest...It was asserted, for instance, that Muhammad [PBUH], had died not in the year 632 CE but in 666 – the number

of the Beast in the Apocalypse, so he must be the Anti-Christ. With his name corrupted to ‘Mahound,’ Muhammad [PBUH] became the ‘Devil incarnate.’³⁰

Based on what has been said above, one could conclude that it’s safe to claim that no other prominent religious figure has been as wildly misrepresented, misunderstood, and vilified as the Prophet (*Ṣal Allah-u-‘alaihe wa sallam*), albeit there are some exceptions to this record.³¹ Yet, throughout these phases, rare rational voices have bravely expressed dissent, refusing to uncritically accept the official propaganda. During the earlier periods, this was a dangerous endeavour, and those who dared to speak out were severely attacked and often silenced. Many had to circulate their views anonymously for fear of persecution. Later, the dissenting voices became more frequent and more open. In the 17th and 18th centuries, writers critical of the clergy lauded Prophet Muhammad (*Ḥaḍrat Muhammad Rasūlullah Khātam un Nabīyyīn Ṣallallahu ‘alaihi wa ‘alā Ālihi wa Aṣḥābihi wa Ṣallam*) as a reformer who ended the privileges of a corrupt and superstitious clergy. Similarly, in the subsequent 18th and early 19th centuries, there emerged a tendency to regard Prophet (*Ṣal Allah-u-‘alaihe wa sallam*) as an Arab national hero, credited with bringing law, religion, and glory to his people.³²

With time, the works of some brave scholars, translators, and other non-Muslim Western academicians enabled a more accurate assessment of the Prophet (*Ṣal Allah-u-‘alaihe wa sallam*). They started to move away from the political, social, and intellectual burdens, and in full swing to a gradual realization of the truth. To a greater or lesser extent, all these extracts are concerned with moving away from the medieval idea of the Prophet (*Ṣal Allah-u-‘alaihe wa sallam*) as an insecure imposter.³³ This greatly appreciated change is most notably visible after the contribution of Thomas Carlyle (1795–1881), a Scottish essayist and satirist, who saw this as historically incomprehensible in the case of the Prophet (*Ṣal Allah-u-‘alaihe wa sallam*). It was in 1840 that he delivered his revolutionary lecture “The Hero as Prophet (*Ṣal Allah-u-‘alaihe wa sallam*)”, which was influential enough to undermine this as a meaningful or useful question among serious scholars of the Prophet’s life.³⁴

In the 20th century, serious Islamic scholarship in European languages flourished, particularly in its later phases, with contributions from both Muslim and non-Muslim scholars associated with the Western world. Martin Lings (1909-2005), stands out as a notable example, leveraging his literary expertise to explore foundational Islamic texts like the Holy Qur’ān and *Ḥadīth*, alongside key early *Sīrah* sources such as Ibn Ishaq, Ibn Sa‘d, and al-Ṭabari. His renowned work, ‘*Muhammad*,’³⁵ garnered widespread acclaim within the Muslim world and received accolades from governments

like those of Egypt and Pakistan. Karen Armstrong emphasizes the common themes across religions and strives to present the authentic narrative of the Prophet (*Ṣal Allāh-u-‘alaihe wa sallam*), recognizing him as “one of the most extraordinary individuals in history”.³⁶ This evaluation enables her to approach the life of Prophet (*Ṣal Allāh-u-‘alaihe wa sallam*) from a fresh perspective, extracting insights and inspiration to address contemporary issues. Juan Cole’s work delves into exploring peaceful demeanour of Prophet (*Ṣal Allāh-u-‘alaihe wa sallam*) amidst the clash of civilizations, emphasizing his unwavering commitment to peace throughout his life.³⁷

In this intellectual landscape, John Adair,³⁸ a non-Muslim Western scholar, also made a significant contribution by offering a fresh perspective on the *Sīrah* of the Prophet (*Ṣal Allāh-u-‘alaihe wa sallam*) through the lens of leadership.³⁹ At the very outset of his book, he states that it “is not a full biography of” the Prophet Muhammad (*Ḥaḍrat Muhammad Rasūlullah Khātām un Nabīyyīn Ṣallallahu ‘alaihi wa ‘alā ‘Ālihi wa Aṣḥābihi wa Ṣallam*).⁴⁰ Based on his enviable expertise in the field of leadership studies, for him, a “generic quality of universal leaders is humility, which the Prophet (*Ṣal Allāh-u-‘alaihe wa sallam*) had in abundance.”⁴¹ Adair’s assertion that “leadership is a journey concept”⁴² underscores how the role of Prophet (*Ṣal Allāh-u-‘alaihe wa sallam*) as a caravan leader symbolizes the exercise of practical wisdom, unity maintenance, and responsibility for the well-being of the community—a perspective that enriches our understanding of leadership legacy of Prophet (*Ṣal Allāh-u-‘alaihe wa sallam*).

As a visionary leader, he encouraged the Muslim community to take up plentiful tasks, which made them believe in themselves. Adair pays this tribute to his leadership qualities when he states:

“As a result of his leadership, the *Muhājirun* (Emigrants) and the *Anṣār* (Helpers) united together as one—the *Aṣḥāb* (Companions) of the Prophet. And he revived everyone’s faith that their essential needs would be provided.”⁴³

There are several biographies which reflect a significant change in the depiction of the Prophet (*Ṣal Allāh-u-‘alaihe wa sallam*) in the Western scholarship. These writings represent the new tolerant assessment that distinguishes the majesty and splendour of Prophet (*Ṣal Allāh-u-‘alaihe wa sallam*). This type of literature is based on objectivity and is devoid of prejudice and predisposition. Some of the main representatives of this trend are Henry Stubbe, George Sale, Edward Gibbon, Thomas Carlyle, Bosworth Smith, Herbert George Wells, Philip Khuri Hitti, Annemarie Schimmel, Irving M. Zeitlin, Michael Hart, Annie Besant, John Adair, Frederick Quinn, John

Esposito, Norman Daniel, Karen Armstrong, Stephen Burge, Joel Hayward, John V. Tolan, and Craig Considine.

To evaluate the contemporary positive trends in Western scholarship on the *Sīrah* of the Prophet (*Ṣal Allāh-u-‘alaihe wa sallam*), two scholars which are selected for this study are: John V. Tolan’s (*Faces of Muhammad*), and Craig Considine’s (*The Humanity of Muhammad: A Christian View*). Tolan and Considine are both representatives of the positive and comprehensive approach to the *Sīrah* of Prophet Muhammad (*Ḥaḍrat Muhammad Rasūlullah Khātām un Nabīyyīn Ṣallallahu ‘alaihi wa ‘alā ‘Ālihi wa Aṣḥābihi wa Ṣallam*) in contemporary times, and pertinent to this their works are considered as outstanding.

7. John V. Tolan’s Perception and Portrayal of Prophet (*Ṣal Allāh-u-‘alaihe wa sallam*)

John Victor Tolan is a historian of medieval Europe, specializing in the intellectual history, the history of the Crusades, and the history of intercultural relations between the Arab and Latin worlds in the Middle Ages and on the history of religious interaction and conflict between Jews, Christians, and Muslims. He was born on October 27, 1959, in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, USA, and raised in a Catholic family. He obtained his BA in Classics from Yale University in 1981, MA in 1986, and his Ph.D in History from Chicago University in 1990 and the *Ecole des Hautes Etudes en Sciences Sociales* (HDR).

He has taught and lectured at different universities of the world like, in North America, Europe, Africa, and the Middle East, and is currently a Professor Emeritus of History at the *University of Nantes*, France, and a member of the *Academia Europaea* (NGO promoting excellence in scholarly research, estd. 1988) and the *Reial Acadèmia de Bones Lletres de Barcelona* (also known as the Royal Academy of Good Letters of Barcelona, founded in 1729, promotes history, literature, and the humanities).

Tolan has written extensively on the history of intercultural relations in medieval Europe, with a particular focus on the interaction between Christians, Muslims, and Jews. With his research, he has made a significant contribution to the subject under discussion. He is the author of several books including: *Saracens: Islam in the Medieval European Imagination* (2002), *Sons of Ishmael: Muslims through European Eyes in the Middle Ages* (2008), and *Saint Francis and the Sultan: The Curious History of a Christian–Muslim Encounter* (2009). His works have been translated into numerous languages, including French, German, Italian, Spanish, Dutch, Turkish, Arabic, and Chinese. Through these admirable works, Tolan reflects the new tolerant perspective that

acknowledges the greatness and splendour of the Prophet Muhammad (*Ḥaḍrat Muhammad Rasūlullah Khātām un Nabīyyīn Ṣallallahu ‘alaihi wa ‘alā ‘Ālihi wa Aṣḥābihi wa Ṣallam*). Besides that, the bias against Islam and the Prophet (*Ṣal Allah-u-‘alaihi wa sallam*) in Western writings has also been well pointed out by him.

In addition to his academic work, Tolan has also been active in promoting intercultural dialogue and understanding. He has been involved in various initiatives aimed at promoting dialogue between Christians, Muslims, and Jews, and has organized numerous conferences, workshops, and public lectures on these topics. He has also been a regular contributor to various media outlets, including the New York Times, the Guardian, and the BBC, where he has commented on issues related to intercultural relations and the history of the Crusades.

The structure of the book consists of an introduction (pp. 1-18), nine chapters (pp. 19-258), a conclusion (pp. 259–263), a brief notes section (pp. 264–299), and an index (300-309). The topics in the book are discussed under the following headings: 1) Mahomet the Idol; 2) Trickster and Heresiarch; 3) Pseudo-prophet of the Moors; 4) Prophet of the Turks; 5) Republican Revolutionary in Renaissance England; 6) The Enlightenment Prophet: Reformer and Legislator; 7) Lawgiver, Statesman, Hero: The Romantics’ Prophet; 8) A Jewish Muhammad? The View from Jewish Communities of Nineteenth-Century Central Europe; 9) Prophet of an Abrahamic Faith.

The book may be divided into three main sections. The first section focuses on the ‘early Christian and Medieval European perceptions of the Prophet (*Ṣal Allah-u-‘alaihi wa sallam*)’, which were largely negative and portrayed him as a false prophet and an enemy of Christianity. The second section covers the ‘Renaissance and Enlightenment Periods, during which some Western thinkers began to view Prophet (*Ṣal Allah-u-‘alaihi wa sallam*) more positively — as a great religious leader and even a model of ethical behaviour. The final section of the book examines the ‘contemporary Western perceptions of the Prophet (*Ṣal Allah-u-‘alaihi wa sallam*)’, which are often shaped by political and ideological factors.

Through this work, which is under review, Tolan has established himself as possibly the leading expert on European attitudes toward Islam. His *Faces of Muhammad: Western Perceptions of the Prophet of Islam from the Middle Ages to Today*⁴⁴ “is a culmination of his decades-long scholarly effort.”⁴⁵ In his introduction of his book, Tolan describes: “This book is not about Muhammad, Prophet of Islam [*Ṣal Allah-u-‘alaihi wa sallam*], but about “Mahomet,” the character conceived and brought to life by non-Muslim European authors between the twelfth and twenty-first

century.” The central theme of this work is to explore how the “Westerners” have viewed the Prophet Muhammad [*Ḥaḍrat Muhammad Rasūlullah Khātām un Nabīyyīn Ṣallallahu ‘alaihi wa ‘alā ‘Ālihi wa Aṣḥābihi wa Ṣallam*] throughout history, thereby challenging the false impression maintained by scholars alike that these ‘outsider’s views have been invariably negative and monolithic. In this regard, the author claimed that the Western perceptions about the Prophet Muhammad [*Ḥaḍrat Muhammad Rasūlullah Khātām un Nabīyyīn Ṣallallahu ‘alaihi wa ‘alā ‘Ālihi wa Aṣḥābihi wa Ṣallam*] were often equivocal, ambivalent, and interlinked in the sense that earlier modes or traditions of viewing could either persist or motivate divergences among later observers. Thus, Tolan sets out to examine more complex than simply compartmentalized “faces” of Prophet Muhammad [*Ḥaḍrat Muhammad Rasūlullah Khātām un Nabīyyīn Ṣallallahu ‘alaihi wa ‘alā ‘Ālihi wa Aṣḥābihi wa Ṣallam*]. A well-researched and well-documented work, it puts all the highly politicized ways of thinking about the Prophet (*Ṣal Allah-u-‘alaihi wa sallam*), his place and position in the religio-political evolution of Islam and his larger role in world history in a historical context and looking at how they relate to each other.

In the annals of Western literature, the Prophet Muhammad [*Ḥaḍrat Muhammad Rasūlullah Khātām un Nabīyyīn Ṣallallahu ‘alaihi wa ‘alā ‘Ālihi wa Aṣḥābihi wa Ṣallam*] has, lamentably, endured [God forbid] instances of denigration, painted as a heretic, impostor, or even a pagan deity. Nevertheless, Western history also bears witness to alternative portrayals, where he is exalted as an emblematic leader, a harbinger of reform, a sagacious statesman, and a revered arbiter of law. Tolan meticulously scrutinizes these multifaceted and occasionally contradictory representations, offering a scholarly exploration of their significance and impact. He traces the evolution of Western perceptions of the Prophet Muhammad [*Ḥaḍrat Muhammad Rasūlullah Khātām un Nabīyyīn Ṣallallahu ‘alaihi wa ‘alā ‘Ālihi wa Aṣḥābihi wa Ṣallam*] from early calls to join the Crusades against the Saracens, through the Reformation, and Enlightenment, and into the 19th and 20th centuries, continuing up to the present day. Through this thorough historical analysis, Tolan highlights the nuanced and evolving nature of Western views on the life of the Prophet Muhammad [*Ḥaḍrat Muhammad Rasūlullah Khātām un Nabīyyīn Ṣallallahu ‘alaihi wa ‘alā ‘Ālihi wa Aṣḥābihi wa Ṣallam*].

Tolan reveals that there has been a long history of positive representation of the Prophet (*Ṣal Allah-u-‘alaihi wa sallam*) in 17th-century England which many have found quite surprising. For example, he evaluates Henry Stubbe’s positive approach who, for him, presents not only a “glistening portrait of the Prophet of Islam [*Ṣal Allah-u-‘alaihi wa sallam*]”, but indeed “the first wholly

positive biography of Muhammad [*Ḥaḍrat Muhammad Rasūlullah Khātām un Nabīyyīn Ṣallallahu ‘alaihi wa ‘alā ‘Ālihi wa Aṣḥābihi wa Ṣallam*] written by a European Christian,” presenting the “Muslim Prophet [*Ṣal Allah-u-‘alaihi wa sallam*] as a reformer and visionary.”⁴⁶ Contrary to this, Thomas Ross, who is well-known for his *Alcoran* (1649), described the Prophet Muhammad [*Ḥaḍrat Muhammad Rasūlullah Khātām un Nabīyyīn Ṣallallahu ‘alaihi wa ‘alā ‘Ālihi wa Aṣḥābihi wa Ṣallam*] as a “vicious pagan.”⁴⁷ However, it was Stubbe and his description and depiction of the Prophet Muhammad [*Ḥaḍrat Muhammad Rasūlullah Khātām un Nabīyyīn Ṣallallahu ‘alaihi wa ‘alā ‘Ālihi wa Aṣḥābihi wa Ṣallam*] that “transformed the prophet of Islam into a republican revolutionary, and the subsequent writers (Bury, Nye, Toland, and others) would confirm and elaborate upon this transformation.”⁴⁸

The proliferation of Islam was used by Reformation polemicists as proof that the established Church was corrupt, leading them to portray the Prophet Muhammad [*Ḥaḍrat Muhammad Rasūlullah Khātām un Nabīyyīn Ṣallallahu ‘alaihi wa ‘alā ‘Ālihi wa Aṣḥābihi wa Ṣallam*] as a reformer. In early modern England, writers on both sides of the debate compared the Prophet Muhammad [*Ḥaḍrat Muhammad Rasūlullah Khātām un Nabīyyīn Ṣallallahu ‘alaihi wa ‘alā ‘Ālihi wa Aṣḥābihi wa Ṣallam*] to Oliver Cromwell, debating whether the Prophet Muhammad [*Ḥaḍrat Muhammad Rasūlullah Khātām un Nabīyyīn Ṣallallahu ‘alaihi wa ‘alā ‘Ālihi wa Aṣḥābihi wa Ṣallam*] was a rebel against legitimate authority or the founder of a new, just society.⁴⁹ The Prophet Muhammad [*Ḥaḍrat Muhammad Rasūlullah Khātām un Nabīyyīn Ṣallallahu ‘alaihi wa ‘alā ‘Ālihi wa Aṣḥābihi wa Ṣallam*] was initially viewed by Voltaire as an “archetypal religious fanatic” but later asserted that he was an enemy of superstition.⁵⁰ To Napoleon, he was merely “a role model: a brilliant general, orator, and leader.” Fascinated by the Prophet’s “eloquence”, Johann Wolfgang von Goethe saw him “as a poet and a prophet”; dismissing “the traditional Christian polemics against the Prophet [*Ṣal Allah-u-‘alaihi wa sallam*].”⁵¹ Thomas Carlyle, Victor Hugo, Alphonse Lamartine, and others depicted him as a “sincere, virtuous visionary, one of the great figures of history.”⁵²

Numerous writers of the 19th-century Romantic Movement, aside from Napoleon and Goethe, depicted Prophet Muhammad [*Ḥaḍrat Muhammad Rasūlullah Khātām un Nabīyyīn Ṣallallahu ‘alaihi wa ‘alā ‘Ālihi wa Aṣḥābihi wa Ṣallam*] in various ways, echoing the assessments of scholars like Gibbon and Carlyle who regarded him as a “great man” and later called him as “hero.”⁵³ Carlyle, in his *Lectures* of 1840, dismissed the absurd legends of Mahomet as an impostor and instead portrayed him as a hero and the archetype of a prophet.⁵⁴ Similarly, Lamartine characterized the Prophet Muhammad [*Ḥaḍrat Muhammad Rasūlullah Khātām un*

Nabiyyīn Ṣallallahu ‘alaihi wa ‘alā ‘Ālihi wa Aṣḥābihi wa Ṣallam] as “a convinced ecstatic, a visionary of good faith, a political enthusiast”⁵⁵, Tolan claimed that he rejected the notion of him being an impostor and instead recognized him as the greatest of men. Hugo also depicted Prophet Muhammad [*Ḥaḍrat Muhammad Rasūlullah Khātām un Nabiyyīn Ṣallallahu ‘alaihi wa ‘alā ‘Ālihi wa Aṣḥābihi wa Ṣallam*] as a figure of “modesty and asceticism” and — “a pillar of sagacity and justice.”⁵⁶ Tolan concludes that these Romantic writers portrayed Prophet Muhammad [*Ḥaḍrat Muhammad Rasūlullah Khātām un Nabiyyīn Ṣallallahu ‘alaihi wa ‘alā ‘Ālihi wa Aṣḥābihi wa Ṣallam*] in a variety of personas ranging from an “inspired poet, legislator, and genius of the Arab nation, acknowledging his genius and reformatory impact on the Arab people.”⁵⁷

The other distinguished features of Tolan’s work are critical evaluation and comparative analysis of the major religions of the world. In chapter eight of the book, “*A Jewish Muhammad*,” Tolan concludes with these remarks:

.....thinking and writing about Muhammad [PBUH] and Islam is inseparable from thinking and writing about Judaism and Christianity. ... Just as contemporary European Christians looked to Muhammad [PBUH] as a spiritual hero whose piety could serve as a model for disenchanted European romantics, for some nineteenth-century Jews, the Muslim prophet could serve as a heuristic model for reforming Judaism.⁵⁸

No doubt, Tolan is a professor of history at the *University of Nantes*, but his topic is not the Prophet Muhammad [*Ḥaḍrat Muhammad Rasūlullah Khātām un Nabiyyīn Ṣallallahu ‘alaihi wa ‘alā ‘Ālihi wa Aṣḥābihi wa Ṣallam*] in person, but rather “Mahomet,” a fictional character or caricature that was developed and misrepresented by Western writers from Medieval to contemporary times. For this reason, Tolan argued that he made a distinction between Muhammad [*Ḥaḍrat Muhammad Rasūlullah Khātām un Nabiyyīn Ṣallallahu ‘alaihi wa ‘alā ‘Ālihi wa Aṣḥābihi wa Ṣallam*] (which Tolan used to refer to both the historical individual and the figure presented in Muslim traditions) and the different ‘spellings or deformations’ of his name found in European languages, which he has copied verbatim throughout this book.’

Tolan revisits his main points, arguing that throughout the centuries, Westerners have acquired a variety of different perspectives on the Prophet Muhammad [*Ḥaḍrat Muhammad Rasūlullah Khātām un Nabiyyīn Ṣallallahu ‘alaihi wa ‘alā ‘Ālihi wa*

Aṣḥābihi wa Ṣallam] and Islam, and the representation of these two fundamental sources of Muslims has become “integral elements of European culture.”⁵⁹ Besides that, this beautifully written, thoroughly researched, and engrossing book offers a rich and complicated view of how many “faces” of the Prophet Muhammad [*Ḥaḍrat Muhammad Rasūlullah Khātām un Nabīyyīn Ṣallallahu ‘alaihi wa ‘alā Ālihi wa Aṣḥābihi wa Ṣallam*] were created and envisioned ‘for a variety of purposes by generations of Westerners in a self-interested dynamic that will’ undoubtedly continue into the near future. Kecia Ali, the author of *The Lives of Muhammad* aptly described the book:

John Tolan sets aside the historical Muhammad [PBUH] and Muslim portraits of God’s beloved Messenger [PBUH] to focus on Mahomet as European men have depicted him over the centuries. He shows how wildly varied versions of Islam’s [P]rophet emerge and how they make sense within their own social, intellectual, and theological contexts. Nuanced and fascinating, *Faces of Muhammad* is a terrific read.

Tolan finally summarizes his book with the following remarks:

“Jews, Christians, Muslims, and others have, for almost fourteen centuries, portrayed the [P]rophet [PBUH] in a great variety of ways. The historian may struggle to perceive the historical man of seventh-century Arabia behind the many thousands of texts and images that portray him. But no one, Muslim or not, may plausibly claim to have a monopoly of truth about the prophet of Islam. The sheer variety and diversity of portraits of Muhammad [PBUH] have become both major fields of research and important elements in the dialogue of religions and cultures. Much has been written about the innumerable Muslim portraits of the prophet, who appears in differing lights in different historical and cultural circumstances. One could write a book about the Iranian Muhammad [PBUH], the Ottoman Muhammad [PBUH], the Maghrebi Muhammad [PBUH], the Wahhabi Muhammad [PBUH], and so on.”⁶⁰

Each of these portrayals would consist of numerous diverse images, revealing more about the cultures and individuals responsible for them than about the man from seventh-century Arabia. This observation holds true for the analysis presented here,

where the Islamic prophet serves as a reflection for European writers, reflecting their fears, aspirations, and ambitions. He becomes an inseparable aspect of “Western” culture, serving as a subject of fascination and conjecture for writers and artists over centuries. In this way the Prophet Muhammad [*Ḥaḍrat Muhammad Rasūlullah Khātām un Nabīyyīn Ṣallallahu ‘alaihi wa ‘alā ‘Ālihi wa Aṣḥābihi wa Ṣallam*] was moulded by European perspectives.

8. Craig Considine’s Portrayal of, and Views about, Prophet Muhammad (*Ḥaḍrat Muhammad Rasūlullah Khātām un Nabīyyīn Ṣallallahu ‘alaihi wa ‘alā ‘Ālihi wa Aṣḥābihi wa Ṣallam*)

Craig Considine (b. 1985) is an American sociologist, writer, and public speaker who has gained significant attention for his work on interfaith relations and Islamophobia. He is an award-winning professor at *Rice University* and the best-selling author of *The Humanity of Muhammad: A Christian View*.⁶¹ He is regarded as a leading figure in interfaith dialogue because he has written numerous books and multiple articles on Christian-Muslim relations and Islamic studies.⁶² Dr. Considine was born in Needham, Massachusetts, USA on 29 August 1985. He is a practicing Roman Catholic of Irish, Italian, Scottish, and English ancestry. He earned his BA at American University in Washington, DC, MSc at Royal Holloway, the University of London, and PhD at Trinity College Dublin.

Considine’s academic works focus on various topics related to interfaith relations, including Islamophobia, race relations, and social justice. His research explores how religious and cultural identities intersect with issues of power, privilege, and discrimination in contemporary societies. He made a significant contribution to the body of literature on the *Sīrah* of the Prophet [*Ṣal Allah-u- ‘alaihi wa ṣallam*] with his book *The Humanity of Muhammad: A Christian View*. Considine’s writings clarify how drawing lessons from the wise and compassionate teachings of Prophet Muhammad [*Ḥaḍrat Muhammad Rasūlullah Khātām un Nabīyyīn Ṣallallahu ‘alaihi wa ‘alā ‘Ālihi wa Aṣḥābihi wa Ṣallam*] as well as emulating the profound humanity he demonstrated throughout his life, can foster the creation of bridges for interaction and acceptance among different religions.

Considine provides a sociological analysis of the teaching and conduct of Prophet Muhammad [*Ḥaḍrat Muhammad Rasūlullah Khātām un Nabīyyīn Ṣallallahu ‘alaihi wa ‘alā ‘Ālihi wa Aṣḥābihi wa Ṣallam*]. He, in his arguments, effectively highlights the greatness of Prophet Muhammad [*Ḥaḍrat Muhammad Rasūlullah Khātām un Nabīyyīn Ṣallallahu ‘alaihi wa ‘alā ‘Ālihi wa Aṣḥābihi wa Ṣallam*], his innovative role in establishing religious plurality, his concern for

equal rights and opportunities for all, his anti-racism, his emphasis on seeking knowledge for the good of mankind, his emancipation of women who were then suffering from injustice and oppression, his reinforcement of the Prophet Jesus's (peace and blessings on him) fundamental teachings, and his unwavering dedication to the truth. The book stands out on several counts, as it aims to improve relations between the Christian and Muslim communities at a time when Islamophobia is widespread and Islam and Muslims are being unfairly vilified. In his endorsement of Craig's book, Imam Shamsi Ali, Spiritual leader of the Jamaica Muslim Centre and President of the Nusantara Foundation, states, "Dr. Craig demonstrates his openness, inclusiveness, and his sincere and honest view about our Prophet Muhammad [*Ḥaḍrat Muhammad Rasūlullah Khātām un Nabīyyīn Ṣallallahu 'alaihi wa 'alā Ālihi wa Aṣḥābihi wa Ṣallam*]. That Prophet Muhammad [*Ḥaḍrat Muhammad Rasūlullah Khātām un Nabīyyīn Ṣallallahu 'alaihi wa 'alā Ālihi wa Aṣḥābihi wa Ṣallam*] is truly a role model for our pursuit of peace, justice, and happiness for our common humanity."

Considine is involved in fostering inter-religious understanding and firmly believes that greater ties between Muslims and the Christian West may be established via a deeper understanding of the Prophet's life and legacy as well as his pluralistic vision for humanity. His careful examination of the history of Islam and Prophet Muhammad [*Ḥaḍrat Muhammad Rasūlullah Khātām un Nabīyyīn Ṣallallahu 'alaihi wa 'alā Ālihi wa Aṣḥābihi wa Ṣallam*] enriches his audience with greater knowledge and appreciation for pluralism and building bridges of understanding between all people. His work can be considered a much-needed antidote to our time. In the very preface of the book, Considine states:

I wrote this book to build stronger bridges of understanding and peace between Christians and Muslims, to uplift our common humanity, and to defend the honour of Prophet Muhammad [PBUH], who has been depicted by many Christians throughout history as the anti-thesis of Jesus.⁶³

In addition, his admiration for the Prophet Muhammad [*Ḥaḍrat Muhammad Rasūlullah Khātām un Nabīyyīn Ṣallallahu 'alaihi wa 'alā Ālihi wa Aṣḥābihi wa Ṣallam*] was for his advocacy of equality. He states that the Prophet Muhammad [*Ḥaḍrat Muhammad Rasūlullah Khātām un Nabīyyīn Ṣallallahu 'alaihi wa 'alā Ālihi wa Aṣḥābihi wa Ṣallam*] categorically declared in the Last Sermon at Mount Arafat:

"An Arab has no superiority over a non-Arab, nor a non-Arab has any superiority over an Arab... A white

person has no superiority over a black person nor does a black person has any superiority over a white person except by piety and good action.”

He implies from the sermon’s message that it guaranteed freedom for all members of society, and the Prophet’s message of democracy and equality might be considered as a forerunner to the American Constitution, which upholds similar democratic principles, as well as the pluralist worldview of the Founding Fathers, such as George Washington and Benjamin Franklin.⁶⁴

Moreover, he further states that I was influenced by the Prophet Muhammad [*Ḥaḍrat Muhammad Rasūlullah Khātām un Nabīyyīn Ṣallallahu ‘alaihi wa ‘alā ‘Ālihi wa Aṣḥābihi wa Ṣallam*] because he promoted religious tolerance, particularly towards Jews and Christians. In this context, he points out a number of incidents from the *Sīrah* that demonstrate the Prophet’s unwavering commitment to tolerance and peaceful coexistence, including his meeting with the Christian delegation from Najran, his agreement with the Christian monks of Mount Sinai, and the early Muslims’ *hijrah* to the Christian state of Abyssinia.⁶⁵

Considine further illustrates how the Prophet Muhammad [*Ḥaḍrat Muhammad Rasūlullah Khātām un Nabīyyīn Ṣallallahu ‘alaihi wa ‘alā ‘Ālihi wa Aṣḥābihi wa Ṣallam*] supported human rights by spreading religious tolerance to non-Muslims. Women should be free to live the lives they want, according to the Prophet (*Ṣal Allah-u-‘alaihi wa sallam*). This is demonstrated by two of his dearest female Companions. His first spouse, Khadija (*Raḍi Allah ‘anhā*), was a prosperous businesswoman who operated a profitable caravan trade. Another was ‘Āisha (*Raḍi Allah ‘anhā*), the most beloved and intelligent wife of the Prophet Muhammad (*Ḥaḍrat Muhammad Rasūlullah Khātām un Nabīyyīn Ṣallallahu ‘alaihi wa ‘alā ‘Ālihi wa Aṣḥābihi wa Ṣallam*) the first-ever female scholar of Islam and a jurist. Besides that, what I find interesting in the teachings of the Prophet Muhammad (*Ḥaḍrat Muhammad Rasūlullah Khātām un Nabīyyīn Ṣallallahu ‘alaihi wa ‘alā ‘Ālihi wa Aṣḥābihi wa Ṣallam*) apart from ‘equality, religious tolerance, and human rights,’ which makes me appreciate the distinctive features of the Prophet’s [*Ṣal Allah-u-‘alaihi wa sallam*] conduct is his kindness, mercy, and humility.⁶⁶

Critics of Islam targeted Considine, as he recalls, due to his positive writings about Muhammad [*Ḥaḍrat Muhammad Rasūlullah Khātām un Nabīyyīn Ṣallallahu ‘alaihi wa ‘alā ‘Ālihi wa Aṣḥābihi wa Ṣallam*], the Prophet of Islam. They viewed him as a heretic because of his Catholic background and perceived his interfaith efforts as sacrilegious. Contrary to these critics who labelled Islam as

evil and Muhammad [*Ḥaḍrat Muhammad Rasūlullah Khātām un Nabīyyīn Ṣallallahu ‘alaihi wa ‘alā Ālihi wa Aṣḥābihi wa Ṣallam*] as a terrorist, he held a different perspective on Muhammad [*Ḥaḍrat Muhammad Rasūlullah Khātām un Nabīyyīn Ṣallallahu ‘alaihi wa ‘alā Ālihi wa Aṣḥābihi wa Ṣallam*].⁶⁷ Dr. Considine focused his scholarly efforts on this particular area with the actual teachings of Islam from a young age because he was drawn to the long-brewing mutual mistrust between Christians and Muslims. He sees this distrust as “unnecessary as well as antithetical to our shared Abrahamic traditions”, and thus he sets out “to build bridges of understanding and peace.”⁶⁸

According to him, “the bigger challenge” of *The Humanity of Muhammad: A Christian View* “is to effectively reach the hearts and minds of Christians who hold sensational views of the Islamic tradition, Muslims themselves, and the Prophet Muhammad [*Ḥaḍrat Muhammad Rasūlullah Khātām un Nabīyyīn Ṣallallahu ‘alaihi wa ‘alā Ālihi wa Aṣḥābihi wa Ṣallam*]”.⁶⁹

In conclusion, Dr. Considine strongly advocates for friendly relations between Christians and Muslims in the interest of pluralism and peaceful coexistence. (113-118). Overall, “*The Humanity of Muhammad: A Christian View*” is a valuable contribution to the growing body of literature on interfaith relations and the life of the Prophet Muhammad [*Ḥaḍrat Muhammad Rasūlullah Khātām un Nabīyyīn Ṣallallahu ‘alaihi wa ‘alā Ālihi wa Aṣḥābihi wa Ṣallam*]. Through its empathetic and humanizing portrayal of the Prophet Muhammad [*Ḥaḍrat Muhammad Rasūlullah Khātām un Nabīyyīn Ṣallallahu ‘alaihi wa ‘alā Ālihi wa Aṣḥābihi wa Ṣallam*], the book offers a powerful vision of how different faiths can come together in mutual respect and understanding. The five appendices in the work emphasise the commitment of Prophet Muhammad [*Ḥaḍrat Muhammad Rasūlullah Khātām un Nabīyyīn Ṣallallahu ‘alaihi wa ‘alā Ālihi wa Aṣḥābihi wa Ṣallam*] commitment to promote religious harmony and collaboration, as well as his openness to and respect for people of all faiths, especially Jews and Christians. This work includes the following supplementary historical materials: 1. The Constitution of Madinah; 2. The Prophet’s Farewell; 3. The Covenant with the Monks of Mount Sinai; 4. The Treaty of Peace and Friendship between the Bey of Tripoli of Barbary and the USA on 3 Ramadan 1211 A.H. \ 4 November 1796; and 5. Human Fraternity for World Peace and Living Together, the document signed by Pope Francis and the Imam of Al-Azhar, Egypt, Ahmad Al-Tayyeb on 3 February 2019.

9. Conclusion

From the historical perspective, the Prophet Muhammad [*Ḥaḍrat Muhammad Rasūlullah Khātām un Nabīyyīn Ṣallallahu ‘alaihi wa ‘alā ‘Ālihi wa Aṣḥābihi wa Ṣallam*] was undeniably one of the most pivotal figure. The mission and message of the Prophet Muhammad [*Ḥaḍrat Muhammad Rasūlullah Khātām un Nabīyyīn Ṣallallahu ‘alaihi wa ‘alā ‘Ālihi wa Aṣḥābihi wa Ṣallam*] was not directed at a particular nation or territory, but rather it is directed to the entire humanity, and it is as relevant today as it was in the 7th century CE. The entire world now comes under the jurisdiction of his Prophethood and everybody who walks on the globe forms part of his *qawm* (community).⁷⁰

The attacks on Islam in general and its Prophet (*Ṣal Allah-u-‘alaihi wa sallam*) in particular have intensified after the tragic events of 9/11 (11 September, 2001; New York) and 7/7 (7 July 2005; London) notwithstanding, it’s imperative to acknowledge that such assaults have a longstanding history predating these tragic events. Delving into the portrayal of Prophet Muhammad [*Ḥaḍrat Muhammad Rasūlullah Khātām un Nabīyyīn Ṣallallahu ‘alaihi wa ‘alā ‘Ālihi wa Aṣḥābihi wa Ṣallam*] over centuries evokes distress and sorrow. However, the latter part of the 20th century witnessed a notable rise in serious Islamic scholarship in European languages. This emergence brought about a discernible shift towards fairness in Western scholarly works concerning the Prophet’s biography, evident in literary texts and academic publications, particularly within Islamic studies. This recognition underscores the acknowledgment of historical unfairness and hostility in Western perceptions of Prophet Muhammad [*Ḥaḍrat Muhammad Rasūlullah Khātām un Nabīyyīn Ṣallallahu ‘alaihi wa ‘alā ‘Ālihi wa Aṣḥābihi wa Ṣallam*].

The appearance of Tolan’s *Faces of Muhammad* and Considine’s *Humanity of Muhammad*, the two biographies of the Prophet Muhammad [*Ḥaḍrat Muhammad Rasūlullah Khātām un Nabīyyīn Ṣallallahu ‘alaihi wa ‘alā ‘Ālihi wa Aṣḥābihi wa Ṣallam*] by non-Muslim Western scholars published in 2019 and 2020, respectively, received wide acclaim in the Muslim world, as both have done justice, to a large extent, to the Prophet’s genius and his life-ennobling message. Tolan’s *Faces of Muhammad* is a discerning, conscientious, and unprejudiced critical evaluation of the Changing complexes, and contradictory visions of the prophet of Islam in European and Western literary and academic works. In the same way, Considine’s *Humanity of Muhammad* makes it clear how studying the wise and compassionate teachings of the Prophet (*Ṣal Allah-u-‘alaihi wa sallam*) and imitating the great humanity he showed

throughout his life which can help build bridges between religions and make them more open to each other.

From an assessment of the works of Tolan and Considine, it becomes evident that in the post-9/11 era, a number of scholarly works have been produced which highlight the positive and real picture of Islam in general and of the Prophet Muhammad [*Ḥaḍrat Muhammad Rasūlullah Khātām un Nabīyyīn Ṣallallahu ‘alaihi wa ‘alā ‘Ālihi wa Aṣḥābihi wa Ṣallam*] in particular. This trend has gained momentum in contemporary Western scholarship.

Thus, in the context of entire discussion, it is reasonable to emphasize that there is an imperative need for presenting an accurate and unbiased depiction of the life of the Prophet Muhammad [*Ḥaḍrat Muhammad Rasūlullah Khātām un Nabīyyīn Ṣallallahu ‘alaihi wa ‘alā ‘Ālihi wa Aṣḥābihi wa Ṣallam*], devoid of hateful distortions from the past. This effort becomes increasingly crucial in contemporary times, providing an alternative perspective from both the Muslim and Western world on the life of a man who continues to be the most widely discussed figure in human history.

10. Recommendations

Western perceptions of Prophet Muhammad [*Ḥaḍrat Muhammad Rasūlullah Khātām un Nabīyyīn Ṣallallahu ‘alaihi wa ‘alā ‘Ālihi wa Aṣḥābihi wa Ṣallam*] have long been plagued by stereotypes and misrepresentations. However, recent years have shown a notable shift in Western *Sīrah* literature towards more nuanced and empathetic portrayals. Scholars like Tolan and Considine have been instrumental in challenging these stereotypes and offering fresh perspectives on the character and teachings of Prophet Muhammad [*Ḥaḍrat Muhammad Rasūlullah Khātām un Nabīyyīn Ṣallallahu ‘alaihi wa ‘alā ‘Ālihi wa Aṣḥābihi wa Ṣallam*]. Moreover, there is a wealth of literature produced in the 21st century that delves into various dimensions of *Sīrah*, presenting an opportunity for further exploration. These works have not only contributed to a broader understanding of Islam and its rich cultural heritage but have also depicted Prophet Muhammad [*Ḥaḍrat Muhammad Rasūlullah Khātām un Nabīyyīn Ṣallallahu ‘alaihi wa ‘alā ‘Ālihi wa Aṣḥābihi wa Ṣallam*] in a positive and unbiased light, thereby fostering greater dialogue and mutual respect. Furthermore, exploring the potential role of digital media and online platforms in disseminating accurate and empathetic portrayals of Prophet Muhammad [*Ḥaḍrat Muhammad Rasūlullah Khātām un Nabīyyīn Ṣallallahu ‘alaihi wa ‘alā ‘Ālihi wa Aṣḥābihi wa Ṣallam*] could offer new avenues for promoting dialogue and mutual respect on a global scale.

Notes and References

¹ In the aftermath of protests erupting throughout the Muslim world soon after the publication of twelve caricatures of the Prophet Muhammad [*Ḥaḍrat Muhammad Rasūlullāh Khātām un Nabīyyīn Ṣallallāhu ‘alaihi wa ‘alā ‘Ālihi wa Aṣḥābihi wa Ṣallam*] in the Danish newspaper *Jyllands-Posten* on September 30, 2005, and the subsequent reprint of these cartoons in the Danish newspaper *Politiken* on May 28, 2006, many questions were raised concerning the role and status of images in Islam. A vast literature exists regarding the publication of these caricatures, their global impact, and the impassioned debates that ensued. However, the primary reference remains Jytte Klausen, *The Cartoons that Shook the World* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009), and “Why I Published Those Cartoons.” (2006). *Islamic Studies*, 45(1), 130–134. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/20839006>. For the full story of the blasphemous cartoons, among others, see, M. Manazir Ahsan. “With Freedom Comes Responsibility: Blasphemous Cartoons, A Muslim Critique,” *Haj & ‘Umra*, (2006): 20–22, “The Issue of Danish Cartoons.” (2006). *Islamic Studies*, 45(1), 129–130. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/20839005>, Kublitz, A. (2010). “The Cartoon Controversy: Creating Muslims in a Danish Setting.” *Social Analysis: The International Journal of Social and Cultural Practice*, 54(3), 107–125. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/23182158>. (accessed 22 January 2022)

² The 17-minute film by Dutch politician Geert Wilders, posted Thursday, received more than 3 million views before being taken offline. *Fitna* juxtaposes passages from the Islamic holy book with graphic footage of terrorist attacks in the United States and Europe. In one scene, the sound of paper ripping can be seen as a reader pages through the Holy Qur’ān. For more about the visual representation of the Prophet Muhammad [*Ḥaḍrat Muhammad Rasūlullāh Khātām un Nabīyyīn Ṣallallāhu ‘alaihi wa ‘alā ‘Ālihi wa Aṣḥābihi wa Ṣallam*], see Gruber, Christiane and Shalem, Avinoam. “Introduction: Images of the Prophet Muhammad in a Global Context.” *The Image of the Prophet between Ideal and Ideology: A Scholarly Investigation*, edited by Christiane Gruber and Avinoam Shalem, Berlin, München, Boston: De Gruyter, 2014, pp. 1-12. <https://doi.org/10.1515/9783110312546.1> (accessed 24 January 2022)

³ John V. Tolan, *Faces of Muhammad: Western Perceptions of the Prophet of Islam from the Middle Ages to Today* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2019)

⁴ Craig, Considine, *The Humanity of Muhammad: A Christian View* (New Jersey: Blue Dome Press, 2020)

⁵ Matthew, Dimmock, *Mythologies of the Prophet Muhammad in Early Modern English Culture* (Cambridge University Press, 2013), xii

⁶ *Ibid.*, xii

⁷ Tarif, Khalidi, *Images of Muhammad Narratives of the Prophet in Islam Across the Centuries* (New York, London: Doubleday, 2009), 10-13

⁸ Thomas, Carlyle, *On Heroes, Hero-Worship and the Heroic in History*, (London, 1841). In Carlyle’s work “On Heroes, Hero Worship and the Heroic in History,” a collection of six lectures delivered in London around the year 1840, on eleven “heroes.” This work included broad headings such as “The Hero as Divinity”, “The Hero as Poet”, “The Hero as Priest”, and so forth.” From the time of its publication to the present, Carlyle’s portrait of Prophet Muhammad [*Ḥaḍrat Muhammad Rasūlullāh Khātām un Nabīyyīn Ṣallallāhu ‘alaihi wa ‘alā ‘Ālihi wa Aṣḥābihi wa Ṣallam*] is found widely referred to in modern Muslim *Sirah*, where it is cited as an example of a “fair” or “honest” Western voice amidst the prevailing Western anti-Islamic onslaught.

⁹ William, Muir, *The Life of Mahomet* (London: Waterloo Place, 1878)

¹⁰ Bhat, Javid Ahmed. "The Overview of Prominent Sirah Writings of Modern Period: Modern Sirah Writings." *Karachi Islamicus* 2, no. 2 (2022): 28-36.

¹¹ Khalidi (2009), 224-227. Of these, Haykal’s work has received the most attention in the West. For example, see Antonie Wessels, *A Modern Arabic Biography of*

Muhammad: A Critical Study of Muhammad Husayn Haykal's Hayat Muhammad (Leiden: Brill, 1972)

¹² Abdur Raheem, Kidwai, *Images of the Prophet Muhammad in English Literature* (New York: Peterlang Publishing, Inc. 2018), xi-xii

¹³ Karen, Armstrong, *Muhammad: A Biography of the Prophet* (New York: Harper Collins, 1992), 11

¹⁴ Bilal Sambur, "The Insider/Outsider Problem in the Study of Islam", *Islamic Quarterly*, 46, 2002: 95-106.

¹⁵ Kidwai, 21

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 4

¹⁷ The term "Saracens" was commonly used in medieval Europe to refer to Muslims, particularly Arabs. It originated from Greek and Latin sources and was often used pejoratively to depict Muslims as enemies of Christianity. The characterization of Prophet Muhammad [*Ḥaḍrat Muhammad Rasūlullah Khātām un Nabīyyīn Ṣallallahu 'alaihi wa 'alā 'Ālihi wa Aṣḥābihi wa Ṣallam*] as a "false god" reflects the Christian belief that Islam was a false religion.

¹⁸ Norman, Daniel, *Islam and the West: Making of an Image* (Oxford: Oneworld, 2009)

¹⁹ Kidwai., 14

²⁰ Peter the Venerable, who served as the abbot of Cluny in Burgundy, played a central role in orchestrating the creation of polemical and fabricated material against Islam and the Prophet. He initiated the Toledan Collection project in 1142 CE, based in Spain and assisted by three translators: Robert of Ketton, Herman of Dalmatta, and Peter of Toledo. For many centuries, the productions of this project, including Robert of Ketton's translation of the Holy Qur'ān, remained the primary source for Western studies on Islam. Additionally, Peter himself authored two polemical works on the subject: *Liber contra sectam Saracenorum* and *Summa totius Heresis Saracenorum*.

²¹ *Ibid.*, 14

²² *Ibid.*,

²³ Saunders, J. J. "Mohammed In Europe: A Note on Western Interpretations of the Life of the Prophet." *History* 39, no. 135/136 (1954): 14–25. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/24402794>. (assessed on 15 January 2024)

²⁴ Ravees, Minou, *Muhammad in Europe: A Thousand Years of Western Myth-Making* (UK: Reading, Garnet, 2000), 93-94

²⁵ The misunderstandings surrounding Islam and Prophet Muhammad [*Ḥaḍrat Muhammad Rasūlullah Khātām un Nabīyyīn Ṣallallahu 'alaihi wa 'alā 'Ālihi wa Aṣḥābihi wa Ṣallam*] originated from the Crusades and were perpetuated by Christians and other authorities. Throughout the Middle Ages, Christianity perceived Islam as a constant menace. Consequently, Western depictions sought to deter and instil fear, leading to the enduring presence of caricatures and stereotypes, evident even today, such as in Salman Rushdie's "*The Satanic Verses*". In 12th to 14th century Europe\West, "Muhammad, or Mahound," was depicted as a pagan idol worshipped by Arabs, sometimes even equated with the Devil himself, while Muslims were portrayed as agents of *Satan* on Earth. Even Dante's "*Divine Comedy*" and the works of the French 'humanist' François Rabelais in "*Pantagruel*" offered derogatory portrayals of the Prophet Muhammad [*Ḥaḍrat Muhammad Rasūlullah Khātām un Nabīyyīn Ṣallallahu 'alaihi wa 'alā 'Ālihi wa Aṣḥābihi wa Ṣallam*]. Martin Luther viewed Prophet Muhammad [*Ḥaḍrat Muhammad Rasūlullah Khātām un Nabīyyīn Ṣallallahu 'alaihi wa 'alā 'Ālihi wa Aṣḥābihi wa Ṣallam*] as the Anti-Christ, and even Enlightenment intellectuals like Voltaire fell prey to anti-Islamic sentiments. For more details about the Satanic Verses see "*Be Careful with Muhammad! Salman Rushdie and The Battle for Free Speech*", by Shabbir Akhtar (2nd Edition). (Jakarta: BIJAK Publishing, 2020)

²⁶ Humphrey, Prideaux, *The True Nature of Imposture Fully Displayed in the Life of Mahomet* (London, 1697). He strongly asserts that Prophet Muhammad [*Ḥaḍrat Muhammad Rasūlullah Khātām un Nabīyyīn Ṣallallahu 'alaihi wa 'alā 'Ālihi wa Aṣḥābihi wa Ṣallam*] sought pleasure and power, while portraying his followers as 'rude and illiterate Barbarians'. He characterizes Islam as a deceitful religion

spread through aggression, and describes the Holy Qur'ān as a book filled with 'fighting, bloodshed, and conquest.' p. 41. For more details about his views see: Brouwer, Lot. "Adriaan Reland's Legacy as a Scholar of Islam." In *The Orient in Utrecht: Adriaan Reland (1676-1718), Arabist, Cartographer, Antiquarian and Scholar of Comparative Religion*, edited by Bart Jaski, Christian Lange, Anna Pytlowany, and Henk J. van Rinsum, 44–64. Brill, 2021. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.1163/j.ctv1v7zb8g.8>. (assessed on 20 February 2024)

²⁷ Almond, Philip, "Western Images of Islam, 1700-1900". *The Australian Journal of Politics and History* 49, No. 3 (2003): 412-424. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-8497.00295> (accessed 22 January 2022)

²⁸ *Ibid.*, 413

²⁹ John, Tolan, (2010). "European Accounts of Muhammad's life". In *The Cambridge Companion to Muhammad*, ed. Jonathan E. Brockopp (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 226-250

³⁰ Ravees. 3

³¹ See also, Kidwai, *Images of the Prophet Muhammad in English Literature*. Ahmad, Gunny, *The Prophet Muhammad in French and English Literature, 1650 to the Present* (UK, Leicester: The Islamic Foundation, 2010). Abdelwahab El-Affendi, *About Muhammad the other Western Perceptive on the Prophet of Islam a short Anthology of Western Writings on the Prophet Muhammad: From the 18th Century to the Present* (London: Legacy Publishing Ltd, 2010)

³² Tolan (2019), 3

³³ Kidwai, 121

³⁴ Tarif Khalidi explores how Carlyle's portrayal of Prophet Muhammad [*Ḥaḍrat Muhammad Rasūlullah Khātām un Nabīyyīn Ṣallallahu 'alaihi wa 'alā 'Ālihi wa Aṣḥābihi wa Ṣallam*] as a heroic figure influenced Western perceptions of Islam and Muslims, challenging prevailing stereotypes and prejudices. The lecture sparked widespread interest in Prophet Muhammad [*Ḥaḍrat Muhammad Rasūlullah Khātām un Nabīyyīn Ṣallallahu 'alaihi wa 'alā 'Ālihi wa Aṣḥābihi wa Ṣallam*] among Western intellectuals and contributed to a more nuanced understanding of Islam in the West. Khalidi's analysis sheds light on the cultural and intellectual shifts that occurred as a result of Carlyle's influential lecture and its lasting impact on Western interpretations of life and legacy of Prophet Muhammad [*Ḥaḍrat Muhammad Rasūlullah Khātām un Nabīyyīn Ṣallallahu 'alaihi wa 'alā 'Ālihi wa Aṣḥābihi wa Ṣallam*]. See for example Khalidi. 218.

³⁵ Martin Lings, also known as Abu Bakr Siraj Ad-Din, was an Englishman who converted to Islam and became a notable figure in Islamic scholarship. Educated in public schools, Lings spent many years as the keeper of oriental manuscripts and printed books at the British Museum. However, he is perhaps best known as the author of "*Muhammad: His Life Based on the Earliest Sources*," published by the Islamic Texts Society in the United Kingdom in 1991. This seminal work delves into the life of Prophet Muhammad [*Ḥaḍrat Muhammad Rasūlullah Khātām un Nabīyyīn Ṣallallahu 'alaihi wa 'alā 'Ālihi wa Aṣḥābihi wa Ṣallam*] drawing from the earliest and most authentic sources available, providing readers with a comprehensive and meticulously researched account of the Prophet's life and teachings. Lings' background in Islamic studies and his dedication to scholarly research contributed to the widespread recognition and acclaim that his biography of Prophet Muhammad [*Ḥaḍrat Muhammad Rasūlullah Khātām un Nabīyyīn Ṣallallahu 'alaihi wa 'alā 'Ālihi wa Aṣḥābihi wa Ṣallam*] received within the Muslim community and beyond.

³⁶ Karen Armstrong, *Muhammad, A Western Attempt to Understand Islam* (London: Orion, 1991), pp. 11-12

³⁷ Juan Cole, *Muhammad: Prophet of Peace Amid the Clash of Empires* (New York: Nation Books, 2018)

³⁸ John Adair, the world's first Professor of Leadership Studies at the *University of Surrey*, UK, and presently Chair of Leadership Studies, United Nations System Staff College, Turin

³⁹ John Adair, *The Leadership of Muhammad* (London: Kogan Page, 2010)

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 1

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 15

⁴² *Ibid.*, 32

⁴³ *Ibid.*, 107

⁴⁴ John V. Tolan, *Faces of Muhammad: Western Perceptions of the Prophet of Islam from the Middle Ages to Today* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2019)

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, xi

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 133

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 137

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 154

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 13

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 168

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 184

⁵² *Ibid.*, 185

⁵³ *Ibid.*, 202

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 203

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 206

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 207

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 208

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 232

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 261

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 264

⁶¹ Craig, Considine, *The Humanity of Muhammad: A Christian View*. (New Jersey: Blue Dome Press, 2020)

⁶² Craig, Considine *Muslims in America: Examining the Facts*. (2018); *Muslims in America: Exploring the Issues* (2019); *People of the Book: Prophet Muhammad's Encounters with Christians*. (2021)

⁶³ Considine (2020), 13

⁶⁴ Craig, Considine. "Why I Admire Muhammad: A Response to Islamophobes," *The Huffington Post*, March 10, 2015. http://www.huffingtonpost.com/craig-considine/why-i-admire-muhammad-a-r_b_6830050.html (accessed on 07 January 2022)

⁶⁵ Considine (2020), 29-48

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, 97-112

⁶⁷ Craig, Considine. "Why I Admire Muhammad: A Response to Islamophobes," *The Huffington Post*, March 10, 2015. http://www.huffingtonpost.com/craig-considine/why-i-admire-muhammad-a-r_b_6830050.html (last accessed on 07 January 2022)

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*,

⁶⁹ Considine (2020), 13-14

⁷⁰ See, the Holy Qur'ān 5: 3; 7: 157; 33: 40