

## *Review of geographical Sīrah written for children*

**Nadia Muntaz**

Ph.D Candidate at GCUF

**Dr. Farid ud Din Tariq**

Assistant professor, The university of Azad Jammu and Kashmir, Muzaffarabad.

### **Abstract**

*“Modern Sīrah writers have drawn maps to highlight geographical Sīrah of the Holy Prophet. The maps drawn for adults are loaded with names of almost all the important places, while the maps meant for the children merely display the two places of starting points and destinations, but they’re more colourful & accompany coloured pictures, hand sketches, for instance, the maps of migration of the Muslims to Abyssinia and to Madīnah. The present article defines Geographical Sīrah written for children dilating on the salient features of the maps meant for the children, highlights its importance in the modern times and reviews a few books written on this topic in detail. While reviewing these books, emphasis is laid on the use of geography (both anthropological geography and physical geography) employed in these corpuses to establish their status in the Islamic literature generally, and in literature on Sīrah for children especially.”*

**Key Words:** *Sīrah, Anthropological Geography, Human Geography, Physical Geography, Holy Campaigns (Ghazawāt), Holy Expeditions (Sarāyā).*

### **INTRODUCTION :**

Children are future of nations. Every religious faction pays special heed to their mental growth along with proper physical upbringing. In the past the Christians used portraits of the Jesus Christ, Marry, and different saints not only to propagate Christianity to non-Christians, but also to teach the Christian children. In modern age, animated movies are made for children to make them familiar with their heroes.

### **Geography Is The Best Tool To Teach Sīrah To The Children:**

In *Islām*, sculptures, animated movies and portraits of *Islāmīc* figures are forbidden, as they are equated to idols. In the absence of these arts, geography is the best way not only to educate the children, but also to compete the non-Muslims and finally beat them. Geography is not a new tool, it was successfully employed by the Muslim geographers in the past along



with calligraphy of *Qur'ānic* verses. Now, geography has gained boost. Along with the Holy *Qur'ān and Ḥadīth*, *Sīrah* must be taught to the Muslim children. Its importance can never be over emphasized. As for *Sīrah*, children geography means the *Sīrah* written for the kids, using maps, sketches, photographs and other visual impacts. Maps prepared for the children are quite different from the ordinary maps. In *Muḥāẓrat-i Sīrat*<sup>(1)</sup> (Lectures on *Sīrah*) Dr. Maḥmūd Aḥmad Ghāzī<sup>(2)</sup> (1950-2010) wrote, “*Sīrah* is the landscape of the Prophetic career. It is not the life history of a person but a biography of the whole nation and civilization. It is a tale of evolution of divine Call right from its very inception to the time when it touched zenith or acme of heights<sup>(3)</sup>.”

In Christianity, terms used for *Sīrah* are Biography, Hagiography, Hagiology, or Life, which refers to the biographies of saints and ecclesiastical leaders. Christian hagiographies focus on the lives, and notably the miracles of men and women canonized by the church. Sikhism also creates and maintains hagiographical texts (such as the *Sikh Janamsākshīs*) concerning *guruṣ* believed to be imbued with sacred power<sup>(4)</sup>. In the past the Hindus used sculptures and portraits of their men-gods like *Rām*, *Krishan*, goddesses like *Lakshmi* and *Pārbatī*, and different *Pandats* to teach children. The portraits carved on the walls of Caves of *Alora and Ajāntā*, idols and huge sculpture carved on mountains are clear proof of it. In modern age, animated cartoon movies of *Krishan* are made for children, wherein he is shown playing among *Gopies* (his play mates) in his childhood, guiding *Arjun* (one of the Pando brothers) during campaign of “*Mahā Bhārat*”. Thus, the *Hindus* have tried to give their children an impression that mythological anecdotes of their gods are historical facts. But the truth is other way round. In recent times, *Dr. Shauqī Abū Khalīl*<sup>(5)</sup>, *Muḥsin Fārānī*<sup>(6)</sup> and team of *Dār al-Salām*<sup>(7)</sup>, *Shah Miṣbah al-Dīn Shakīl*<sup>(8)</sup> have prepared excellent maps, while *Abū Muḥammad ‘Abdul*<sup>(9)</sup>, *Dr. Muḥammad Ilyās ‘Abd al-Ghanī*<sup>(10)</sup> and *Arslān bin Akhtar*<sup>(11)</sup> have introduced a new element that is visual effect by adding pictures accompanying maps.

### **Salient Features of the Maps Prepared for the Children:**

- 1: Bright and eye-catching colours are used for maps drawn for kids.
- 2: Instead of labeling the places on maps, pictures of important Mosques are affixed on maps.
- 3: Either the light linking to the skies or a kind of Halo is created for the Holy Prophet to discern him from the rest of people.
- 4: *Islāmic* culture and rituals are introduced to the children pictorially through maps and hand-made sketches.
- 5: Teachings of *Islāmic* tenets (Prayers, fasts, charity, and *Hajj*) are communicated firstly through maps, and then by presenting the pictures of the Muslims’ performing them.
- 6: Various obligations (prayer and ablution) are taught through series

of steps.

7: Difficult abstract concepts like Faith, Muslim Unity, *Islāmic* solidarity and charity are made known to them through maps and pictures.

8: Both old and new pictures accompany maps to make the children discern the ancient and modern *Islāmic* World.

9: The Anthropological Geography or Human Geography, Physical Geography of "Land of *Sīrah* " at the time the Holy Prophet (PBUH) as well as at the subsequent years are highlighted in the maps meant for the children.

10: Description of each and every incident accompany maps, hand sketches and pictures with highest visual impact, so that details of *Islāmic* events of *Sīrah* should make long-lasting, indelible and un-amalgamated imprints on children's innocent minds.

11: Some important tribes and groups of the Muslims, which existed in Arabia in the Prophet's time, are geographically depicted, as *Quraysh* and the Muslim Migrants (*Muhājirīn*) are shown residing *Makkah*, while the Helpers (*Anṣār*) are shown dwelling *Madīnah*.

12: Maps meant for children are simple. They are not loaded with names of places. Only a few important places are shown. For the map of migration to *Madīnah*, only *Makkah* and *Madīnah* are shown; for map of ascension *Ka'bah* and *Mosque Aqṣā* and for flight to skies halo of light is shown.

In his article, "Sīrah Writing for Children in Pakistan, Evaluation of its Propagation, Needs, Significance and Demands", *Dr. Muḥammad 'Abd Allāh* has furnished the list of *Sīrah* literature written for the children<sup>(12)</sup>. Geographical review of a few representative books written for children is as follows.

**(1) "PAIGHAMBER-I A'ZAM KE TARIKHI SAFAR" (HISTORICAL JOURNEYS OF THE HOLY PROPHET) BY 'ABD AL-RA'UF, DR.:**

The author is a highly qualified person. He is a Ph.D. (London), B.A. Hons. Arabic, M.A. Philosophy and Psychology, and has got diplomas in I.S. in French, and so forth. The book is meant both for children and adults. Title cover shows *Thamūdī* houses built in mountains. The book comprises of 24 chapters, dilating on different journeys undertaken by the Holy Prophet. In introduction, he divides the Holy Prophet's journeys into 11 categories. Educational (to *Hirā Mount*), trade journeys, journeys to protect himself from enemy's attack, journeys to propagate *Islam*, defense oriented journeys, those meant to curb diabolic forces, journeys to seek peace, to chase devils and rustics, to approach the Creator (*Allah Almighty*) and the last journey to Hereafter. Afterwards, he dilates on the various routes the Holy Prophet has employed and places he treaded upon. He also introduced to those who accompanied him.

**Salient Features of the Book:**

As the title of the book shows, it furnishes details on *Sīrah* by dividing

it into journeys. The good point is that the whole *Sīrah* is told in these journeys. Separate foot notes or end notes are not furnished. Stray in-text references are available, and biography is produced at the end. It does not throw much light to each and every place, the *Holy Prophet* passed through during his journeys, but all important places where the Holy Prophet travelled are introduced.

1-4: The very first journey is the child *Muḥammad's* journey to area of *Banū Sa'd bin Bakar* of *Hawāzin* tribe. Consecrating him by creating a halo linked directly to the skies, shown on the camel or donkey on which the Holy Prophet is supposed to ride. He did not draw any sketch for the Holy Prophet, since it is not allowed in *Islām*, rather he hallowed him throughout the book to discern the Holy Prophet from the other riders. The first four journeys are towards *Shuḥṭah* (*Ḥalīmah Sa'diyah's* residence) and away from it. While going to *Shuḥṭah*, this donkey accompanied a camel, while in return journey from *Shuḥṭah* to *Makkah* there is only one camel, which implies that the child Holy Prophet was left there. The 3<sup>rd</sup> journey is again to *Shuḥṭah*, and the 4<sup>th</sup> is back to *Makkah*. Coloured pictures are furnished with background of *Ka'bah* without its cover. It shows that the tradition of covering *Ka'bah* with black cloth decorated with verses of the *Holy Qur'ān* has not yet been started.

5: The Holy Prophet's journey to *Madīnah* after the demise of his father is shown. Three camels are shown. One is of the Holy Prophet, whereon he sat with his mother. The second was of *Umm-i Ayman's* and the third was of his grandfather's. The camels are shown with their backs to *Ka'bah* showing their destination, that is, away from *Makkah* and towards *Madīnah*. 6: Sixth journey "From *Madīnah* to *Abwā'*" was sorrowful, as he lost his mother at *Abwā'*, 23 miles away from *Juḥfah*. The good and bad memories related to these journeys are supplemented herewith<sup>(13)</sup>.

7: In seventh trade journey to Syria, his camel is shown sitting under a tree opposite to Church. His experiences during this journey are elaborated under three categories: comparative analysis of landscape, exchange of ideas and observation of ruins of *Madyan*, *Wādī al-Qurrā'* and areas of *Thamu'd*. These details are preceded by an introduction to the Christian hermit, and *Buḥayrah's* disclosure. The writer did not discern that *Buḥayrah* was title not name of the hermit or recluse. His name was *Jargīs* which was omitted. *Buḥayrah's* conversation with the *Holy Prophet* is given in long dialogue form vouchsafing signs of his Prophet-hood. This event is followed by the Jewish conspiracy to take the life of the Holy Prophet and author's answer to baseless Christian propaganda vis-a-vis *Buḥayrah* and this journey.

A journey of the *Holy Prophet* in company of his uncle 'Abbās or *Zubayr*, two trade journeys to Yemen as an emissary for *Khadijah* up to *Jurash*, Yemen are described; his journeys to *Baḥrayn* are also asserted. Maps of Yemen and *Baḥrayn* are furnished, which are neither standardized, nor scaled. In map of *Baḥrayn*, north is shown towards west, while in the map of Yemen no direction is mentioned. Secondly, *Baḥrayn* lies to the east of *Hijāz*, not to the

west as the author has asserted. <sup>(14)</sup> . Next is the Holy Prophet's journey to Syria, his stay at *Buṣra* and meeting with *Khadijah*. <sup>(15)</sup>

Chapter 10 dilates on his spiritual journeys to *Cave Hira*, while chapter 11 expounds his torturous journey to *Ṭā'if* and meeting with Chiefs at *Ṭā'if* and then, with *Jinns* at *Nakhlah*. Next descript is on the celestial journey of Ascension on *Buraq* and all relevant events that took place on the skies and on the earth. Photo showing *Ka'bah* and *Bayt ul-Muqadis* under shower of lights are furnished at the end <sup>(16)</sup>. The author furnishes minute details of migration from *Makkah* to *Madīnah*. A coloured photograph displays his stay at *Cave Thaur*, while a black and white photo shows his stay at tent of *Umm-i Ma'bad*. Although, *Sīrah* writers have elaborately described this journey, the author did neither furnish any detail of places other than *Thaur*, *Qubā* and *Umm-i Ma'bid*'s place, nor supplemented pictures along with it. *Buraydah Aslamī* is wrongly called *Buraydah Suhmī* twice at p-98 <sup>(17)</sup>. Then, he incorporates details of *Badar*, the battle not of journey to *Badar*, with one photo showing *'Arīsh*, which *Sa'd bin Mu'āz* has built for the Holy Prophet <sup>(18)</sup>, while provides details of *Uḥud* Battle, not of journey with one photo showing blood, and broken swords, etc <sup>(19)</sup>. Calumny of *'A'ishah* is discussed with one sketch showing green palanquin on camel <sup>(20)</sup>. For truce of *Hudaybiyah*, a tree beneath which oath was supposed to be taken is displayed <sup>(21)</sup>, and the Conquest of *Khaybar* is elaborated with a photo showing the Jewish fort <sup>(22)</sup>.

The Conquest of *Makkah* is shown with two photos: one of *Ka'bah* and other of tents with hills in background, perhaps at *Marr al-Zahrān* <sup>(23)</sup>. A photo showing mess is displayed to highlight "Journey to *Hunayn*" <sup>(24)</sup>. Next, in a photo, he displays Christian king *Yulmah* presenting gifts, while another photo shows his successful return <sup>(25)</sup>. "Journey of Last *Hajj*" explains the Holy Prophet's last *Hajj* with two photographs, first showing his stay at *Makkah*, and the other is of the stay at *'Arafāt* or *Mina* <sup>(26)</sup>.

Moreover, he describes details of 7 miscellaneous journeys: 1) to *Abwa* 2) to *Badar* 3) to *'Arīz* but author does not call it by the name of place, so he mentions it by *Satto*. 4) to *Ghatafān* 5) to *Ghābah* 6) towards *Makkah* for Lesser *Hajj* and 7) 2<sup>nd</sup> incomplete journey to *Ṭā'if*. These journeys are not given in chronological order <sup>(27)</sup>. Last journey to eternity is displayed with a photo of dug up grave and *Dome of Mosque Nabvī* on it. It is followed by elegies of *Hassān bin Thābit* <sup>(28)</sup>.

### Conclusion:

As it is meant for the children, it is a valuable addition to the few books on the subject on *Sīrah* for children worth the name, because it caters to the requirements of the children seeking guidance from *Sīrah*. Sketches supplemented with it help deepen the impact on their innocent mind. Rural background and dismal experiences are manifested with black and white sketches, while urban perspective and gay experiences are highlighted with bright coloured photos. Powerful imagination coupled with fantasy lends it

charm, while marvelous concept of celestial light surrounding the Holy Prophet begets love and reverence for the *Holy Prophet* in the hearts of the children. On the whole, it is a wonderful book.

**(2) "SIRT AL-NABI (PBUH) QADAM BA QADAM", (SIRAH OF THE MESSENGER STEP BY STEP", BY 'ABD ALLAH FARANI:**

The writer is 60 years old religious person, a novelist and children's writer, who wrote in "*Bachauḥ Kā Islām*", a magazine meant for the children. He wrote four booklets on "*Roshan Sitāre*". The book comprises of two volumes: the first is on *Makkan* period and the second is on *Madinese* period.

**The First Volume:** (i) Furnished with beautiful pictures, the first volume comprises of 53 captions. Digging of *Zamzam Well* is preceded by three pictures, the first showing route to *Zamzam Well*, the second displays upper bulwark of *Zamzam Well*, and the third shows interior of *Ka'bah*. (ii) A map displaying the route taken by *Abrahah* to attack *Makkah* is given. It shows dotted link between *Uksūm*, *Ṭā'if*, *San'a'* and *Makkah*, while the highlighted small map shows their journey from *Khasam* through *Ṭā'if* and *Mughammas* to *Makkah*<sup>(29)</sup>. (iii) While describing birth of the *Holy Prophet*, a picture of the holy gauze of his Mausoleum, a picture of the *Holy Prophet's* birth place, and a picture of *Mosque Ba'iyah* (where 'Aqabah Oath was taken) are furnished. (iv) A picture of *Prophet Ibrāhīm's Station* with two highlighted pictures of its exterior and interior are given in description of *Ḥalīmah's* event. The pictures look out of place here. Week traditions like *Makkan Jewish* scholar's prophesy about the *Holy Prophet's* birth; similar prophesy to *Ḥalīmah* are described uncritically<sup>(30)</sup>. (v) A map showing journey of the *Holy Prophet's* father from *Buṣrā* back to *Madīnah* and his grave at *Madīnah* is furnished. Moreover, his mother's journey from *Madīnah* to *Abwa'* and her grave is also displayed here<sup>(31)</sup>. *Dhū 'l-Majāz* is written as *Zīl Jāz*. Two maps showing location of 'Ukāz Fair and Yemen are given<sup>(32)</sup>.

(vi) Two maps are given, first showing 4 sacrilegious wars fought first between *Kinānah* and *Huwāzin* (shown with sky blue coloured arrow), second between *Quraysh* and *Kinānah* (shown with light green coloured arrow), the third between *Kinānah* and *Nasar* (shown with yellow coloured arrow) and fourth among *Quraysh* and *Kinānah* on one side and *Hawāzin* on the other side (shown with red coloured arrow) <sup>(33)</sup>(vii) Geography of tribes is accurately described with four different coloured arrows. Second map shows his three journeys from *Makkah* to *Ghazah Hāshim*, *Buṣrā* and *Ḥīrah (Iraq)*. The map for sacrilegious wars is detached from its description, which is given after a couple of pages. The first revelation is explained with three pictures of *Mt. Nu'r*, *Cave Ḥirā* and third showing location of *Cave Ḥirā* vis-a-vis *Ka'bah*. Description of early *Islāmic* converts is supplemented with two maps and pictures of early *Islāmic* Centers: "*Mt. Ṣafā'*" and "*Dār-i Arqam*". A picture and a map show position of "*Dār-i Arqam*", while a picture and a model display *Mt. Ṣafā'*. Change of *Qiblah* is shown with three pictures, two of *Mosque Aqṣā* and one of *Ka'bah*, but pictures are detached from their description.

(viii) Miracle of Moon Asunder is supplemented with the pictures of *Janat-i Mu'allā* Cemetery and *Mt. Abu-Qubays and Qu'aq'ān*, where the incident took place. (ix) A map showing first migration to *Abyssinia* and a picture of Mosque built in commemoration of Coquets of *Makkah* are given<sup>(34)</sup>. At the start of the book, pictures of *Ka'bah* and *Mosque Nabvī*, between page 92-93, three pictures of *Ka'bah* showing *Ḥaṭīm*, before and after change of cover are furnished<sup>(35)</sup>. (x) A picture of *Ḥajr-i Aswad* (Black Stone) is furnished. Description of boycott is supplemented with picture of *She'ab-i Abī Ṭalīb* vis-a-vis modern expanded Mosque and a small highlighted portion of *She'ab-i Abī Ṭalīb*<sup>(36)</sup>. (xi) In human geography, *Zammād bin Tha'labah* is introduced with a map of coastal areas of Arabia, highlighting *Najrān*. (xii) The journey to *Ṭā'if* is supported with detailed description of places, where *the Holy Prophet* passed during his journey to *Ṭā'if*. It included *Mosque Khif*, *Muzdalifah*, *Mosque Nimrah*, *'Arafāt*, *Shaddād*, *Kara Hadda* and *Ṭā'if*. (xiii) The map shows new places built after his demise. They actually did not exist at his time, for example, *Mosques Khif and Nimrah*. Hence, it presents the modern situation. Secondly, it is reference-less, and is not supported with authentic traditions. Thirdly, it is the route followed in modern times, while in the past, the route was different and even the distance between *Makkah and Ṭā'if* was different. If accompanied information of Prophetic Era, it would have been the best map of this book. (xiv) The incident of meeting with *elves and jinn* is supplemented with a picture of *Mosque of Jinn* and a map linking *Naṣibayn and Makkah*, but here he describes one of the two meetings, because he omits the incident that took place at *Nakhlah*, and describes that incident which happened at *Ḥajuṇ*, in *Makkah*. (xv) The incident of Ascension is supplemented with a map showing location of *Makkah and Jerusalem* and two pictures of *Ka'bah and Mosque Aqsā* and a picture displaying location of *Mosque Aqsā* vis-a-vis *Dome of Rock*. This is a good map. (xvi) Migration to *Madīnah* is supplemented with pictures of *Mt. Thaur and Dār al-Nadwah* and a model showing location of *Dār al-Nadwah* in *Mosque Bayt al-Ḥaram*.

**2<sup>nd</sup> Volume:** It comprises of 326 pages, 53 topics on his life at *Madīnah*.

(i) After preface, a map of migration to *Madīnah* with pictures of *Ka'abah and Holy Tomb* is furnished. Advent of *Qubā and Madīnah* is described with two latest pictures, presenting exterior and interior view of *Mosque Qubā* followed by two pictures each of *Jum'ah Mosque and Mosque Qiblatayn* and four pictures of exterior and interior of *Mosque Nabvī*. (ii) Under heading "*Early Ghazawāt*", he furnishes a map displaying locations of *Badar, Ḥudaybiyah, Ṭā'if, Hunayn* and Conquest of *Makkah* with arrows showing journeys of *the Holy Prophet*. But, here he errs, as these are not early *Ghazawāt* rather *Abwā', Buwāṭ, Ghazawāt Dhu'l-Ushayrah* are early holy campaigns. (iii) The map is followed by four pictures of swords used by the Holy Prophet and companions during the wars. Names of swords and museum, where they are preserved as relics are not mentioned.

(iv) *Badar* campaign is expounded with a comprehensive standardized

map of battle field, highlighting location of armies, prior and during war, the early challengers, their army, route of fleeing soldiers, and so forth. While a small map highlights location of *Badar* and a picture of epitaph of *Badar* martyrs and another presenting *Mosque 'Arīsh with Badar Plain* in front are given. Under heading "The First Encounter with the Jews", he discusses *Ghazwah Qaynuqā'*, but the map shows all the four wars fought with them, for example, *Battles of Qaynuqā', Nazīr, Qurayzah and Khaybar*.

(v) Description of *Uḥud* is supplemented with a picture of Green Tomb of Prophet, a comprehensive map of Battle field, displaying array of armies and their deployment, but routes of fleeing Muslims are omitted perhaps to avoid belittling the Muslim soldiers in the children's esteem. Four pictures of Aerial views of *Uḥud Plain* and a picture each for the sword, cemetery of martyrs, *Mosque Ḥamzah* and two pictures of cave of refuge are also furnished. (vi) Almost all the incidents highlighting sacrifices and love of the companions are included to teach the children, for example, eternal life of martyrs. (vii) Description of *Ghazwah of Aḥzāb* is shown with a comprehensive map of ditch, battlefield, position of army's tribal squads, a picture of *Mosque Nabvī* and two of *Hepta Mosques (7 Mosques)* built in commemoration of victory. (viii) Consequence of *Khaybar* is explained with two maps: one smaller showing all *Ghazawāt*, highlighting *Khaybar, Fadak and Taymā'* expeditions, while the bigger and more comprehensive map displays not only the route to *Khaybar*, but also exact location of the *Jewish forts* and Muslim assaults from different directions. (ix) Details of the Conquest of *Makkah* accompanied a map of *Makkah*, its mountains and routes of five Muslim squads. (x) *Ghazwah Hunayn* is expounded with three maps, one smaller map of the *Arabian Peninsula* and the smallest displaying "Location of *Makkah*" and the third of battlefield and routes of warring parties. (xi) A map for *Tabūk* is furnished at the last page. (xii) After *Tabūk*, incidents of *Rajī' and Bi'r Ma'ūnah* are described, although they took place after *Uḥud* not after *Tabūk*. A map of tribes and places displays their location, but *Makkah* is nowhere mentioned in map. (xiii) At the end, a picture of sword "*Al-Māthūr*" (the Holy Prophet received as heritage) is furnished. (xiv) A picture of a nameless letter is furnished under heading "Call, Letters to the Emperors", while in description some parts of incident of *Bi'r Ma'ūnah* are incorporated which are important but out of place here. (xv) The last part includes pictures of different parts of Mosque of the Holy Prophet, for example, *Rauzāt al-Jannah, Pulpit, Arch, Holy Gauze, aerial view of Baqī' Cemetery, Uthmān's grave* and inner of *Dome Nabvī*.

### Conclusion:

(i) The book is reference-less not even a single citation is furnished, yet it is valuable and worth reading book, as it provides a lot of good maps and clear pictures. (ii) All the maps are coloured and fine, usually a map shows three or four holy expeditions, which are described on different pages, which are mentioned on the map. (iii) Some maps are detached, for example,



the map for *Ghazwah Tabūk*, so are details of events: A part of *Bi'r Ma'ūnah* incident is included in "Call ,Letters". (iv) Although it is a reference-less book, yet most of the incidents are authentic, and maps are detailed. (v) Names of companions are usually supplemented carefully though in some adult books they are omitted. (vi) Composing and proof reading is fairly wonderful, because despite being the first edition, there are a few mistakes, for example, *Naṭāṭ Fort of Khaybar* is written as *Fuṭāṭt* <sup>(37)</sup>, and *Abū Qatādah* is written *Qatādah* <sup>(38)</sup>, in map, Petra is written as Para <sup>(39)</sup>. (vii) Maps included in the book can be found in other books. It implies that they are not based on his observation or self-research, yet in their selection meticulous care is taken.

### (3) "THE LIFE OF THE PROPHET MUḤAMMAD (SAW) " BY LEILA AZZAM AND AISHA GOUVERNEUR:

It comprises of 135 pages of large sized books and 30 topics. Main sources of the book are *Ibn-i Ishaq's "The Sīrat Rasūl Allāh"* and *Dr. Martin Lings' "Muḥammad : His Life Based on the Earliest Soruces"*. It is written for children to have access to accurate and beautiful books on the fundamentals of *Islām*, and to provide them with the necessary educational and cultural background. The other conscientious work on *Sīrah* sadly reflects minor role played by religion, while, through its children's series, "*The Islāmīc Texts Society*" hopes to place religion at the center of the child's life rather than at its periphery. (i) It is a pictorial biography, which ensues from *Prophet Ibrāhīm's* tale at *Ur* displayed with 3 hand sketched painting with paint colours. In the 1<sup>st</sup> picture, *Prophet Ibrāhīm's* localities are shown, the 2<sup>nd</sup> picture shows the broken idols, while the biggest idol is left intact, the 3<sup>rd</sup> picture shows a distant camel man (*Prophet Ibrāhīm*) amid mountains migrating from *Ur to Palestine* <sup>(40)</sup>. (ii) Pictures are not labeled in the 2<sup>nd</sup> chapter- "*The Children of Ismā'īl*". In one picture Uncle *Muṭalib* of the Holy Prophet's grand-father, '*Abd al-Muṭalib*', is shown bringing back his nephew, *Shaybah*, the Holy Prophet's grand-father, '*Abd al-Muṭalib*'. The men are shown far away, or turning back or side-ways, so that their faces may not be visible, but their presence is felt <sup>(41)</sup>. (iii) A picture of an old woman diviner in *Yathrib* is furnished, whom '*Abd al-Muṭalib*' approached to seek advice, if any, to save '*Abd Allāh*' from sacrifice. Her face is visible <sup>(42)</sup>. (iv) A big picture of two pages is exhibited to show *Abrahah* and his army with visible uncovered faces and how his elephant has knelt down. Faces of *Abrahah* and his army are blackened <sup>(43)</sup>. (v) 2 pictures are given: The first shows a hermit in the desert, prophesying the *Holy Prophet's* birth to the Arab travelers. In the 2<sup>nd</sup> picture, a man draped in grey is shown, praying with turning back on reader. The text provided does not discern who the man is. As the face is not shown, he must be '*Abd al-Muṭalib*' thanking God for *the Holy Prophet's* birth, but the holy sanctuary is not shown, rather he faces towards the only star visible in the sky. The star must be "*Vesper*", the evening star, which is symbolic of the short life span of *the Holy Prophet* with everlasting effect behind. As vesper appears for a short time,

when the sun has set and the stars have not appeared yet<sup>(44)</sup>.

(vi) A picture of goats and sheep grazing is furnished to highlight the mode of the Holy Prophet's living<sup>(45)</sup>. (vii) The Holy Prophet's meeting with *Buḥayrah Monk* is asserted. In the picture, the faces of *Monk Buḥayrah* and all other Arabs are clearly seen, while *Abū Ṭalīb* is shown sitting before him, but his face is not shown. At a distance, camels with luggage are shown sitting under the palm trees. Feast was in progress<sup>(46)</sup>. (viii) A picture of the people meeting and greeting each other is furnished<sup>(47)</sup>. (ix) An imaginary *Mount Hira'* is shown, but instead of it, a real picture should have been furnished<sup>(48)</sup>. (x) The next 3 chapters "The First Muslim", "The Troubles Begin", and "The King Who Believed" abound in human geography. The 13<sup>th</sup> chapter- "The Cruelty of *Quraysh*", the picture depicts the uneaten part of boycott document which reads "*Bismaka Allahummah*" to assert to the children that everything perishes except *Allah and His name*. Everything is materialized in the children's innocent mind and imagination. (xi) He describes his journey to *Ṭā'if*, hence, a picture of a bunch of grapes is shown to concretized hospitality of *'Utabah and Shaybah* and meeting with *'Addās*. Name of the two brothers are omitted not to burden the children's mind with so many names<sup>(49)</sup>. (xii) The 15<sup>th</sup> chapter "The Night Journey and the Ascent to Heaven" is elaborated with a beautiful map. Instead of names of places, the pictures of temples and mosques are shown on the map to highlight their geography. Pictures of the holy *Ka'bah*, the *Prophet's Mosque* and *Mosque Aqṣā* are affixed on the map, which make the map more attractive even for the adults. A separate picture of *Mosque Aqṣā* is also shown. (xiii) A picture of the Helpers is furnished with covered faces. They are shown heading towards *Ka'bah*, if the *Ka'bah* had been shown it would have confirmed their coming or return journey, but, anyhow, without it, it is understandable<sup>(50)</sup>. (xiv) In 17<sup>th</sup> chapter, "*Al-Hijrah*", the picture shows miracles of the *Holy Prophet* during journey, for instance, cave, spider net, a pair of pigeon and their nest, and so forth. (xv) A decorated she camel, *Quswā*, is shown sitting under a palm tree, while her bridle is shown before him to assert her sitting under God's command<sup>(51)</sup>. (xvi) 19<sup>th</sup> chapter "The Battle *Badar*" is descriptive, without any picture, while the 20<sup>th</sup> chapter, "*Uḥud- Defeat Come From Disobedience*", indirectly projects children's obedience to the *Holy Prophet* with a picture that shows how *Waḥshī* martyred *Ḥamzah* with his spear. In the picture *Waḥshī's* back and spear are shown, while back of *Ḥamzah* and of his horse are shown, but faces are not shown. (xvii) The author exhibits 2 pictures. The first picture highlights the trench, garden and *Mt. Uḥud*, while the second shows the deserted camps of *Quraysh* after storm<sup>(52)</sup>. (xviii) 22<sup>nd</sup> chapter "Treaty of *Hudaybiyah*" is descriptive, while 23<sup>rd</sup> chapter "The Invitation" exhibits four horsemen with covered faces directed to various directions. A beautiful map is furnished displaying the *Prophet's Mosque* and the same four rolled invitation paper at four different places: *Egypt, Syria, Persia and Abyssinia*, and so forth. It shows the spread of *Islām* from *Madīnah* to all the four corners of the world. (xix) 24<sup>th</sup> chapter "The

Entry into *Makkah*" provides 2 pictures. In the first picture spanning two pages, small fires are shown burning on mountains, which shows the strength of the Muslim army, when they headed to conquer Makkah. In the 2<sup>nd</sup> picture, the Quraishite people are shown with downcast heads and repenting gestures. (xx) 25<sup>th</sup> chapter "The Lesson of Pride at the Valley of Hunayn" is descriptive without a picture. 26<sup>th</sup> chapter "*Tabuk*- the Test of Faith" shows a picture of so many tents encamped in the desert. (xxi) He shows a big picture spanning 2 pages of a lot of the Muslims clad in "*Ihrām*" on Mt. *Raḥmah*. A picture of *Ka'bah* is also furnished<sup>(53)</sup>. (xxii) 28<sup>th</sup> chapter "The Prophet's Death" shows a picture of "Green Dome", 29<sup>th</sup> chapter "A Collection of *Hadīth* from "*Al-Shumā'il-i Al-Tirmazī*" by *Abū 'Tsā Muḥammad bin 'Tsā Tirmazī* throws light on the *Holy Prophet's* salient feature, appearance and the attributes. (xxiii) While the last, that is the 30<sup>th</sup> chapter introduces to "The Prophet's Family", his wives, their tribal affiliation and time of marriage along with description of his daughters, and their marriage.

#### Conclusion:

Bedecked with good maps and a lot of pictures, the book is a valuable addition on the the topic.

#### (4) "CHILDREN'S BOOK ON ISLAM AND THE LAST PROPHET OF GOD, MUḤAMMAD" BY OLIVER TOTO:

Photography is done by famous Muslim photographer, *S. M. Amīn* : front and back covers of the book show *Ka'bah* and its portico thronged with the People. It comprises of 200 large sized fine pages and 24 important topics and photographs. It is written for children of 12 years age or even younger.

(i) The author makes the children familiar with the *Holy Prophet, Islām* and Lord by asking and then answering 50 questions of interest about *Islām*. Picture of a new born baby is furnished to highlight that he is not born sinful<sup>(54)</sup>. (ii) "Ablution" or washing before prayers is taught to the children with 16 photos of different actions involved in ablution. A small boy, younger than 12, is shot in these 16 actions by *Frīdah Khān* to highlight the concept with visual presentations<sup>(55)</sup>. (iii) 3<sup>rd</sup> chapter "The *Azān*" introduces the children with call to prayer and then actual performance of prayer with 11 pictures, exhibiting 8 positions and then A, B, C Actions for the prayer. After that the full Arabic of prayer, with its English transliteration, translation, brief explanation and photographic presentation of position sequence in prayer is provided. At the end, prayer chart, showing names of prayers and obligatory prayers, their timing, and divisions, and so forth, are shown. (iv) In 4<sup>th</sup> chapter, "The Birth of Baby ", that is, of *Muḥammad* and in 5<sup>th</sup> chapter "The Story of *Islām*" is narrated pictorially with a view of Mt. *Al-Nuṛ*, of hilly or mountainous areas, picture of street of *Madīnah* (this is not of place, as this city has not yet been introduced), 6 pictures of the Dome of Rock. (v) Chapter 6, 7, 9 and 11 describe 4 wars *Badar, Uḥud, Conquest of Makkah and Hunayn* respectively

with explanation of *Islāmic* philosophy of *Jihād* in defense. For the first two standardized, small maps of battlefields (fully labeled), and for the 3<sup>rd</sup> map of *Makkah* and for *Hunayn* no map is furnished. (vi) 8<sup>th</sup> chapter is on cultural geography, highlighting “Two Important Festivals in Islām”: 2 Eids. (vii) 10<sup>th</sup> chapter “:The Pilgrimage to *Makkah*” describes the *Hajj* regulations, conditions, basic rules, delegations, and the traditional rites of *Hajj*. It accompanies 3 maps, 2 photos of water carrier and fruit sellers and an excellent photographic history of the making of the covering of the *Ka’bah* with 7 pictures depicting its different stages and 4 pictures of its portico. The first map sketch is of *Ka’bah* and its important parts; while 2<sup>nd</sup> depicts the pilgrims’ route from *Makkah* to ‘*Arafāt*. Two third of the map displays *Makkah*, being at the center of the populated world with 16 directions to highlight how from all corners, the People thronged there. (viii) *Abū Sufyān*’s wife, that is, *Hindā*’s tale of receiving forgiveness is narrated in “Forgiveness”, while begging is a bad habit is narrated in the next two chapters. (ix) Next, two poems on *Islām* and *the Holy Prophet* preceded prosaic description of them. The children are also told about “The Commemoration of the 1400<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Revelation of *the Holy Qur’ān*”, about his last days. (x) Account of gates of solid gold, fable of two brother and sister to become pilgrims, introduction to the camel- one of the greatest marvels of nature, importance of *Bismillāh* and evolution of Kingdom of *Sa’ūdī Arabia* and other fables, highlighting love of *the Holy Prophet* are furnished. (xi) The last part from page 129–200 is named “Illustrated Section”, which presents a pictorial view of *Islāmic* countries and the Muslims in non-*Islāmic* countries performing different *Islāmic* rituals. Their monuments or architectural specimens bearing *Islāmic* stamp are presented, for Instance, typical scenes of Muslim Afghanistan (3 pictures), *Al-Azhar* Mosque and pyramids of Egypt, *Tāj Palace* in India, Mosques and shrines in Indonesia, Iran, Iraq, Kuwait, Libya, Malaysia, (13 pictures) are furnished. (xii) Pictures of tombs of Prophet in Jordan, monuments and children of Morocco, Nigeria, Pakistan, Crafts and Mosques of *Philippines* (7 pictures), *Sa’ūdī Arabia* (10 pictures), Sudan (2 pictures), Syria, (1 picture), Tunis (3 pictures), Turkey (4 pictures), Yugoslavia (4 pictures), the People and ritual of Chinese Muslims (8 pictures), monuments of South Africa (3 pictures), Spain (6 pictures) are furnished. (xiii) This section presents practices of *Islām* in all over the world to make children realize the popularity and wide spread of *Islām*. (xiv) Its standardized maps, excellent black and white pictures of the Muslims of different countries make it equally informative for adults, as its pictorial teaching of ablution, prayer make it an excellent book for children.

### Conclusion:

1: It presents a pictorial view of *Islāmic* rituals, *Islāmic* monuments or architectural specimens bearing *Islāmic* stamp in the *Islāmic* countries. 2: Different rituals are explained in easiest possible language. 3: It also

accompanied poetic presentations, which double the effect of prose and enhance the visual effect to many folds.

#### INFERENCES FROM THE DISCUSSION:

The *Sīrah* writers have not neglected the future of the *Muslim Ummah*, as they have communicated geographical *Sīrah* to the children. For it, they deserve the greatest applause. P.K. Hitty has rightly said in "History of the Arabs (From the Earliest Time to the Present)": "Muḥammad (SAW) was born in the full light of history" (56). Realizing the onus of their responsibilities, modern *Sīrah* writers like Muḥsin Fārānī<sup>(57)</sup>, Sayyid Sulaymān Nadwī<sup>(58)</sup>, 'Abd al-Malik Mujaḥid<sup>(59)</sup>, Dr. Ḥamīd Allāh<sup>(60)</sup> and Brig. Gulzār Aḥmad<sup>(61)</sup> have proved it true by writing Geographical *Sīrah* for adults, while the above said authors bore out the truth by writing *Sīrah* bedecked with maps for the children. In the absence of sculptures, animated movies and portraits of *Islāmic* figures, geography is the best way not only to educate the children, but also to compete the non-Muslims and and finally beat them. Along with calligraphy of *Qur'ānic* verses, geography can successfully be employed by the Muslim geographers as was used in the past. Along with *the Holy Qur'ān and Ḥadīth*, *Sīrah* must be taught to the Muslim children. Its importance can never be over emphasized.



This work is licensed under a [Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/).

#### References

1. Ghāzī, Maḥmūd Aḥmad, Dr., "Muḥāzrat-i Sīrat" (Lectures on Sīrah), (Lahore: Al-Faiṣal Nāshraṅ, 2007). P-25. ISBN is 969-503-514-2.
2. Dr. Maḥmūd Aḥmad Ghāzī has written "Muḥāzrat-i Qur'ānī", "Muḥāzrat-i Ḥadīth" "Muḥāzrat-i Fiqh", "Muḥāzrat-i Sīrat" and "Muḥāzrat-i Shar'iat" - excellent lectures on the respective topics.
3. Ghāzī, "Muḥāzrat-i Sīrat", p.15.
4. Davies, S, "Hagiography", (Routledge, New York: David A. King, 2008).
5. Dr. Shauqī Abū Khalīl has written books: "Atlas Intishar-i Islāmī", "Atlas Sīrah al-Nabī", "Atlas Sīrat al-Nabī", trans. Ḥāfiẓ M. Amīn, exp. Muḥsin Fārānī, "Atlas Al- Qur'ān: Amākin Aqwām and 'Allām", "Atlas Al-Firq wa al-Mazāhib al-Islāmiyah", "Atlas Al-Ḥadīth al-Nabvī min al-Kutub-i Ṣiḥāḥ al-Sittah (Amākin, Aqwām)", "Atlas: Al-Tārīkh al-Arabī al-Islāmī".
6. Muḥsin Fārānī explained and corrected Dr. Shauqī Abū Khalīl's "Atlas Sīrat al-Nabī", trans. Ḥāfiẓ M. Amīn.
7. A publishing institution in Damascus, which published all the books written by Dr. Shauqī Abū Khalīl.
8. Shaḥ Miṣbah al-Dīn Shakīl was awarded a special Presidential Award in Sīrah

- Book Competition held in 1991 for his book: “Sīrat Aḥmad-i Muḡtabā”. Miṣbaḥ al-Dīn Shakīl has also written “Arz-i Nishānāt-i Nabvī”, “Ḥaram Sē Ḥaram Tak”- Special Ḥajj Number- “Nishānāt-i Arz-i Qur’ān”, “Sīrat Album”, PSO Review (Special-Sīrah No.). All the books are bedecked with maps.
- 9 . ‘Abdul, Abū Muḡammad, “Naqūsh-i-Pa’ē Muṣṭafa” (Marks of the Foot Prints of the Messenger), (Karachi: Graphics Colour Services, Jan 2011, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition).
  - 10 . Dr. M. Ilyās ‘Abd al-Ghanī wrote “Madina Munawwarah ki Tārīkhī Masājīd”, “Masjad-i-Nabvī Sharīf (History, Conduct and Attributes)”, “Tārīkh-i Madina Munawwarah”, “Tārīkh-i Makkah Mukarimah” and “Masjad-i-Nabvī kē Pās Ṣaḡābah kē Makānāt”, translated by Rizwān al-Raḡmān, Al-Qaṣmī, (Al-Madina, Al-Munawwarah: Matba‘ Al-Rashīd, 2003CE /1424H, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition).
  - 11 . Arslān bin Akhtar Mayman wrote “Islāmī Ziyārat kā Tasvīrī Album”, “Masjad-i Nabvī kā Tārīkhī Album”, “The Historical Places of Baitullah and Makkah”, “Athār-i Nabvī kā Tasvīrī Album”, “Holy Relics of the Pious Caliphs”, “Holy Wells and Mountains Attributed to the Apostle”, “Pictorial Album of Relics of the Prophets: (Tabarkāt-i Anbiya’) Relics of Prophets”, “Tabarkāt-i Nabvī kā Tasvīrī Album”.
  - 12 . ‘Abd Allāh, Dr. Muḡammad, “Sīrah Writing for Children in Pakistan, Evaluation of its Propagation, Needs, Significance and Demands”, 2007.
  - 13 . ‘Abd al-Ra’ūf, Dr., “Paighamber-i A’zam kē Tārīkhī Safar”, “Historical Journeys of the Holy Prophet”, (Lahore: Fairuz Sons Ltd., 2010), chap.5.
  - 14 . ibid, chap.8.
  - 15 . ibid, chap.9.
  - 16 . ibid, chap.12.
  - 17 . ibid, chap.13.
  - 18 . ibid, chap.14.
  - 19 . ibid, chap.15.
  - 20 . ibid, chap.16.
  - 21 . ibid, chap.17.
  - 22 . ibid, chap.18.
  - 23 . ibid, chap.19.
  - 24 . ibid, chap.20.
  - 25 . ibid, chap.21.
  - 26 . ibid, chap.22.
  - 27 . ibid, chap.23.
  - 28 . ibid, chap.24.
  - 29 . ‘Abd Allāh Fārānī, “Sīrt al-Nabī (PBUH) Qadam ba Qadam”, (Sīrah of the Messenger Step by Step”, (Karachi: M.I.S Publishers, Ramzān 1429AH/ Sep. 2008 CE), p.29.
  - 30 . Ibid, p.40.
  - 31 . Ibid, p.41.
  - 32 . Ibid, p.48, 50.
  - 33 . Ibid, pp. 68-69.
  - 34 . Ibid, pp. 208-209.
  - 35 . Ibid, pp. 92-93.
  - 36 . Ibid, pp. 96-97.
  - 37 . Ibid, p.205.
  - 38 . Ibid, p.179.

- <sup>39</sup> . Ibid, p.280.
- <sup>40</sup> . Leila Azzam and Aisha Gouverneur, "The Life of the Prophet Muḥammad (SAW)", (London: The Islāmīc Texts Society). ISBN 0-946621-01-2 hard back, ISBN 0-946621-2-0 , (Ch:1, "How It All Begin")
- <sup>41</sup> . Ibid, (Ch:2, "The Children of *Isma'īl*").
- <sup>42</sup> . Ibid, (Ch:3, "The Promise at *Zamzam*")
- <sup>43</sup> . Ibid, (Ch:4, "The Elephant Refuses to Move").
- <sup>44</sup> . Ibid, (Ch:5, "The Prophet Is Born").
- <sup>45</sup> . Ibid, (Ch:6, "A Time with Ḥalīmah").
- <sup>46</sup> . Ibid, (Ch:7, "The Orphan's Childhood").
- <sup>47</sup> . Ibid, (Ch:8, "The Prophet's Marriage").
- <sup>48</sup> . Ibid, (Ch:9, "The Coming of the Archangel Gabriel").
- <sup>49</sup> . Ibid, (Ch:14, "The Year of Sorrow" ).
- <sup>50</sup> . Ibid, (Ch:16, "The Treaty of 'Aqabah").
- <sup>51</sup> . Ibid, (Ch: 18, "Arrival in Yathirb").
- <sup>52</sup> . Ibid, (Ch: 21, "The Battle of the Trench").
- <sup>53</sup> . Ibid, (Ch:27, "Farewell Pilgrimage").
- <sup>54</sup> . Olive Toto, "Children's Book on Islam and the Last Prophet of God, Muhammad", (Wimbeldon, England: Aurora Press), (Ch:1).
- <sup>55</sup> . Ibid, (Ch:2).
- <sup>56</sup> . Hitty, P.K., "History of the Arabs (From the Earliest Time to the Present)", (London: Macmillan and Co. Ltd, 1961).
- <sup>57</sup> . Muḥsin Fārānī, "Atlas Sīrat al-Nabī", trans. Ḥafīz M. Amīn, (Lahore: Dār al-Salam, 2004).
- <sup>58</sup> . Nadvī, Sayyid Sulaymān, "Tārīkh-i Arz al-Qur'ān" (The History of Land of Qur'ān), (Karachi: Majlis-i Nashriyat-i Islām, 2011 CE). Based on the historical research of modern European researchers and on archaeological discoveries, the book is a masterpiece and one of the best in this genre (Geography of Qur'ān).
- <sup>59</sup> . 'Abd al-Malik Mujahid, Muḥsin Fārānī, Ḥafīz M. Ibrāhīm Ṭāhīr Kailānī, Maulānā Tanvīr Aḥmad, Ḥafīz 'Abdullah Nāsir Madanī, Ḥafīz Iqbal Siddīqī and Ḥafīz Abū Bakar Aḥmad Khawājah, Maulānā Irshād al-Haq Athāri, Prof. M. Yahya and Maulānā M. Khalid Saif, "Al-Lu'lu' al-Maknu'n" (Sīrat Encyclopaedia), (Al-Riyad: Maktaba Dār al-Salām, 1433H).
- <sup>60</sup> . Dr. Ḥamīd Allāh is called Mujadid-i Sīrah" by Dr. Maḥmūd Aḥmad Ghāzī in "Muḥāzra't-i Sīrah" (Lectures on Sīrah). Muḥammad bin Ishāq's "Sīrah Rasūl Allāh" was edited by Prof. Dr. Ḥamīd Allāh and was published Muḥammad Ṭufayl Ḥāshimī in "Naqūsh Rasūl Number", (Lahore: Idara' Farōgh-i-Urdu). He also wrote "The Holy Prophet of Islām, Life and Achievements", trans. Prof. Khalid Pervez, (Lahore: Beacon Books, 2005CE).
- <sup>61</sup> . Brig. Gulzār Aḥmad has proved successfully that all the geographical statements of Muḥammad bin Ishāq, Al-Wāqdi and Imām Bukhārī are correct at the same time. He utilizes his personal observation and Dr. Ḥamīd Ullah's scholarly opinions to describe the geography of Uḥud correctly. He also wrote: "Tazkirah Ḥijāz", (Rawalpindi: Maktabah al Mukhtār, Jamadi-ul-Awwal 1982/1402AH)