

OPEN ACCESS: <http://theislamicculture.com>



The Islamic Culture

Bi-Annual Research & Refereed Journal

Published by

Sheikh Zayed Islamic Centre,
University of Karachi

الثقافة الإسلامية

ISSN (Print) : 1813-775X
ISSN (Online) : 2663-1709

Science of Geography in the Holy Qur'ān

Nadia Mumtaz

*PhD scholar, Islamic Studies, Government
College University, Faisalabad*

Abstract:

Modern writers have drawn maps to highlight individual and tribal geography described in the Holy Qur'ān, for instance, separate maps are drawn to depict the Prophets' journeys to preach true faith. While drawing such maps, sometimes all the places are described, for instance, the Prophet Muhammad's migration to Madina, and Prophet Yusūf's journey to Egypt. Sometimes, some important places are described, and on other times, merely the two places of starting points and destinations are shown, for instance, the map of migration of the Muslims to Abyssinia, & the maps for Prophets Ibrāhīm, Mūsā & Lūt. Not dozens, but scores of books are being written edorned with pictures and maps of the Holy places; these are not mere decoration, rather they facilitate understanding with their visual effects. Ḥajj guides present pictures of Ḥajj places, individual and collective maps of Ḥajj places, highlighting geography of Ḥajj. The present study intend to introduce and evaluate a representative book written to highlight both anthropological and physical geography employed in the Holy Qur'ān.

Key Words: Anthropological, Geography, Human, Geography, Physical Geography, Tribal Geography, Individual Geography.

Science of Geography in the Holy Qur'ān

INTRODUCTION: The *Holy Qur'ān* is revealed chiefly to seek guidance and imbibe inspiration from it. Notwithstanding, the pioneers in the field of geography and exegesis took extraordinary pains to identify the persons and places mentioned in the *Holy Qur'ān* with the historical figures and geographical positions respectively in order to facilitate understanding of the holy verses as well as to establish the truth of *the Holy Qur'ān*. Now, the necessity to authenticate the verses geographically has enhanced many-fold due to the following reasons.

Firstly, the Orientalists like *George Sales*¹, *Noldēkē*² & even *Michael Heart*³ (who is all praise for the Messenger, *Muhammad* ﷺ, for his influence on the successive generations) challenged the divination of the *Holy Qur'ān* repudiating its verses due to many reasons, for example, discrepancies between persons and places mentioned in the *Holy Qur'ān* with the historical personalities and geographical positions. *Noldēkē* has categorically challenged and repudiated the historicity of tribes 'Ād & Thamūd that are mentioned several times the *Holy Qur'ān*. *Sayyad Sulaimān Nadvī* has successfully identified 'Ād and Thamūd mentioned in *Qur'ān* with those of the first and the second Semitic Race mentioned in Greek-o-Roman literature⁴.

Secondly, notwithstanding the fabrication, discrepancies, and tampering of the Bible, the Orientalists have tried to guile the innocent Muslim youths, by diverting their attention from Islam and Islamic sciences to new secular sciences. But, the Muslim geographers & cartographers from *Idrīsī* (who prepared the first to map the known world on a globe)⁵ & *Yāqūt Ḥamvī* (*the writer of "Mu'jam al-Buldān"*--an alphabetical encyclopedia on geography)⁶ down to *Maulānā Maudūdī*⁷ have raised the stature of *the Holy Qur'ān* from being mere a book of concocted tales to the most authentic and reliable scripture containing eternal truths as to modern discipline in general and in geographical sciences in special.

Thirdly, the Orientalists have prepared books and atlases on Land of Bible, that is the geography of the Bible has been composed to rejuvenate the pre historic era to identify

the persons and places mentioned in the Bible. This way the fabricated stories of Bible are being presented in new costume (cartography & geography).

Fourthly, some renown Muslim scholars like *Sayyad Sulaimān Nadvī*, *Hifz al-Rahmān Sayuhārī*⁸, *‘Abd Al-Mājid Daryābādī*⁹, *Dr. Shauqī Abū Khalīl*¹⁰, *Miṣbāh al-Dīn Shakīl*¹¹, *Haddād*, *Muhammad ‘Āsim Haddād*¹² and almost all the modern exegetes like *Maulānā Maudūdī* and *Pīr Muhammad Karam Shāh Al-Azhari*¹³, *Abū al-Kalām Āzād*¹⁴ and so forth, took strenuous pains to expound the geography of the *Holy Qur’ān* furnishing details based on extensive research and intensive studies.

Geography of the *Holy Qur’ān* can be bifurcated into the following offshoots:

A. Geography of the *Holy Qur’ān* vis-a-vis *Sīrah* of the early Prophets

B. Geography of the *Holy Qur’ān* vis-a-vis *Sīrah* of the Holy Prophet

a) The former can be bifurcated into the following categories:

1. The *Qur’ānic* verses describe or mention geography of famous tribes
2. The verses allude to geography in perspective

The following anecdotes can be included in the first category: 1. *Aḥqāf*, the residence of the Prophet *Hūd* and his nation ‘Ād 2. *Madyan*, the abode of the Prophet *Shau‘aib* and his nation 3. *Aika*, the sojourn abode of the Prophet *Shau‘aib* and his nation 4. Land of *Aṣhāb al-Ukhdūd* (The People of Ditch or Trench) 5. *Sabā*, the land of Queen Sheba, 6. The land of *Zulqarnain* and his three expeditions 7. Abode of Prophet *Mūsā* in Egypt and in *Madyan* and his journeys from Egypt to *Madyan* & return journey from *Madyan* through *Tūvā* to Egypt, his journey by the sea in the company of his disciple, exodus of *Banī Isrā’īl*, and their wandering through wilderness & Desert Sinai 8. *Madā’n-i Ṣāleḥ*¹⁵, the residence of Prophet *Ṣāleḥ* and his nation 8. *Sodūm*, the abode of the Prophet *Lūt* and his nation 9. The land of Prophet *Ibrāhīm*’s travels to *Babylon*, *Harrān*, *Jerusalem*, Egypt and Arabia 10. Residence of Prophet *Nūh* before & after Deluge and Land of Deluge 11. Christ and geography of his birth, miracles and Ascension to skies.

Science of Geography in the Holy Qur'ān

b) Geography of the *Holy Qur'ān* vis-a-vis *Sīrah* of the *Holy Prophet* can be bifurcated into the following categories:

1. Geography of revelation or *Land of Wahī* of *the Holy Qur'ān*
2. Geography described in the verses
3. The verses of the *Holy Qur'ān* have geography in perspective.

Land of Wahī (Revelation) of the Holy Qur'ān: *Jalāl al-Dīn Suyyūtī* (d.911 AH), dilated in his book, “*Al-Ittiqān fi 'Ulūm 'l-Qur'ān*” that some verses of the *Holy Qur'ān* are revealed to the Holy Prophet on land, some in the skies when the Holy Prophet was on his journey of ascension.

Though he did not provide the complete list of geography of Revelation of the *Holy Qur'ān*, yet they can be pieced together from different exegeses and commentaries to highlight “*Land of Wahī*”¹⁶.

The following anecdotes fall in the second category:

Land of the Holy Campaigns or Ghazawāt: Geography of Battle of *Badar* is described in chapters (*Āl-i 'Imrān*, 3: 123; *Al-Nisā'*, 4:95; and *Al-Anfāl* 8: 5-8,9-14,17-19,26-30, 42-44, 65,66); geography of Battle of Uhād in (*Āl-i 'Imrān*, 3: 121-175; geography of Battle of Ahzāb (Ditch or Trench) in (*Al-Ahzāb*, 33:9-20); geography of Battle of *Hudaibiyah* Truce in (“*Al-Fatah*”, 48:2-27); geography of Battle of Conquest of Makkah (*Banī Isrā'il*, 17:80); geography of Battle of *Hunain* in “*Al-Taubah*” (9:25-26); *Tabūk* in (*Al-Taubah* 9:92-106). Hiding in the Cave Thaur is sketched in (“*Al-Taubah*” 9:40), conspiracy of Qureish at Dār al-Nadwah in “*Al-Anfāl*” (War Spoils, 8:30), Station of *Prophet Ibrāhīm* (*Āl-i 'Imrān*, 3: 97), demolition of Mosque *Dharrār* (“*Al-Taubah* 9:107-110), the construction of *Qubā Mosque* (“*Al-Taubah*” 9:108), change of *Qiblah* (“*Baqarah*” 2:144), the Farewell Pilgrim is described in (*Al-Mā'idah*, 5:2). Geography of *Hajj* (*Sa'ī- Brisk Walk*), that is *Safā & Marwah*¹⁷ can be highlighted with maps.

Kinds of Geography: Geography is divided into two major categories: physical geography and anthropological or human. Under physical geography researchers study the planet earth, their physical problems and the related issues¹⁸. As for geography employed in the *Holy Qur'ān*, Syria, Egypt, Arabia and Palestine are lands of the *Holy Qur'ān*, because they are frequently referred to in the *Holy Qur'ān*, & because here the beloved Prophets spent their whole lives. Every place whereto they travelled, come into the purview of science of geography of the *Holy Qur'ān*. Human geography is branch of geography that focuses on the study of patterns and processes that shape the human society. It encompasses the human, political, cultural, social & economic aspects¹⁹. All the persons, tribes, who populated the pages of the *Holy Qur'ān* whether or not they co-existed form the human geography or anthropological geography of the *Holy Qur'ān*. For instance, the Prophets, their friends and foes, contemporaries, among individuals or tribes, whether they met once or many times or could not catch their glimpses even once. It is divided into two broad categories:

(a) Individual Anthropological Geography of the Holy Qur'ān: All the companions, commanders, the Migrants and the Helpers, wives, children, enemies of the Prophets can be geographically depicted: where they were born, to which and which lands they travelled, where their holy campaigns were dispatched, where they migrated, and where they were buried. Even six chapters of the *Holy Qur'ān* are named after Prophets, for instance chapter no. 10 on Prophet *Yūnūs*, chapter no. 11 on Prophet *Hūd*, chapter no. 12 on Prophet *Yusūf*, chapter no. 14 on Prophet *Ibrāhīm*, chapter no. 47 on Prophet *Muhammad* ﷺ & chapter no. 71 is on Prophet *Nūh*. The Prophet *Muhammad* ﷺ's companion *Zyad* is mentioned by name, while his wife *Zainab bint-i Jahash* is mentioned with his reference in the following verse.

فَلَمَّا قُضِيَ زَيْدُ مَنَهَا وَطَرَازُ وَجْنَكَهَا...²⁰

(b) Tribal Geography of the Holy Qur'ān: It constitutes all the tribes, which are mentioned in

the Holy Qur'ān, because they can be geographically depicted. For instance, *Āl-i 'Imrān*, *Banī Isrā'īl*, *'Ad and Thamūd*, and so forth. Social geography of *the Holy Qur'ān* expounds customs, languages, standard and modes of living of the Apostle and their companions both the Migrants (who migrated with him) and the Helpers (the people of *Aws and Khazraj*), and their contemporaries, other Prophets. Five nations of the Prophets along with one staunch enemy of *Prophet Mūsā* are mentioned in the the following verses.

كَذَّبُتْ قَبْلَهُمْ قَوْمٌ نُوحٌ وَّ عَادٌ وَّ فَرْعَوْنُ دُوَّا لِّأَوْتَادِ ۝ وَّ ثَمُودُ دُوَّقَوْمٌ لُّوْطٌ وَّ أَصْحَابُ لَنَّيْكَةٍ أُولَئِكَ الْأَحْرَابُ ۝

21 ۝

12. before them (were many who) rejected apostles,- the people of Noah, and 'Ad, and Pharaoh, the Lord of Stakes, 13. and *Thamūd*, and the people of *Lūt*, and the companions of the Wood; - such were the confederates²².

In political geography or Geopolitics, primitive states of Persia or Rome, theirs institutions, departments, confederacies (*Hīrah & Buṣrā*), forms of government, their foreign policy & diplomatic relations of the states described in the *Holy Qur'ān* are discussed. Trade of countries of *'Ad* , *Thamūd* & especially of Arabia, their fairs, markets, mercantile, profession, cost of living, expenditures on wars all were discussed by the writers in their books, drawing maps along with description to highlight the economic activity of pre-Prophetic Eras. These constitute the descriptive and cartographical presentation of economic geography of the States mentioned in the Holy Qur'ān. History, government, religion, economy, & political strife of the pre-Islamic nations are discussed in primitive geography of the Holy Qur'ān.

A lot of books have been written by the Muslims to bear out the *Qur'ānic* truth, both in human and physical geography. The following is the review, introduction, description, and evaluation of a representative book written to highlight anthropological geography employed in the *Holy Qur'ān*.

“ALLĀM AL-QUR’AN (QUR’ĀNIC PERSONALITIES)”

BY DARYĀBĀDĪ, ‘ABD AL-MĀJID²³:

Comprising of 208 pages, the booklet is an alphabetically arranged comprehensive dictionary of *Qur’ānic* Personalities, whether human, angelic or diabolic mentioned in the *Holy Qur’ān* explicitly or implicitly. Thus, it is an excellent book on the human geography of the *Holy Qur’ān*: both individual and tribal geography is furnished.

(a) Anthropological Geography of the Prophets: (i) In individual geography, he furnishes details of whereabouts of all the 26 Prophets mentioned in the *Holy Qur’ān*. He not only presents the contrary views about their location but also prefers one view, for example, describing the opposite views of descent of Prophet *Ādam* either in *Celon (Sirāndīp)* or in Iraq between two waters of *Tigris & Euphrates*, he prefers the later view, but this view is not supported by majority. Secondly, he identifies *Sirāndīp* with *Celon* (modern day *Sri-Lanka*), while the modern geographers opine that *Sirāndīp* is modern day *Maldev Islands*. The latters’ view seems correct when the story of *Rājah Dāhir*, his loot, storm and deviation of the ship bearing the Muslim converts is kept in mind. (ii) While alluding to the Prophets’ abode, he dilates on its present geography & even distance from other cities, for instance, *Prophet Ishāq* dwelt at *Bi’r Shībā*, once a thriving city, near *Kin’ān*, which lies to south of Jerusalem, to the North of *Wādī al-Sabā*, & is 28 miles South West to *Al-Khalīl*. (iii) While describing Prophets & others, he alludes to their relation to different geographical important cities or geographical achievements & areas of their empires, for example, the *Prophet Dā’ūd* made *Hebraum* his capital & then, shifted it to Jerusalem; secondly, *Tubba’*, mentioned in the *Holy Qur’ān*, whose empire lies to the North of Saba Empire, held *Himyar* & *Hadhar Maut* in sway. While his father, says ‘*Abd al-Mājid* on the authority of *Ibn-i Ḥabīb*, got a road constructed from *Madina* to Yemen.

(b) Anthropological Geography of the People: (i) In addition to Prophets, he introduced to good People, for example, *Tubba’*, *Zaid*, *Saul (Tālūt)*. (ii) Vicious People

like *Āzar*, *Jālūt* (*Margoliuth*), *Pharaoh*, *Qārūn*, *Devil*, *Sāmrī*, and so forth are also made familiarized. (iii) Geography of groups like Aiders to Jesus (*Naṣārā*), the companions of Prophet Mūsā, Brothers of Prophet *Yusūf*, idols like *Yā'ūq*, *Yāghūth*, *'Uzzā*, *Lāt*, *Manāt*, *Wad*, *Suvā'*, *Nassar* & *Ba'l*, etc. are geographically delineated. (iv) The geographically represented groups of people like "The People of Ditch", "The People of *Aikah*", "The People of *Hijr*", "The People of Well", "The People of Saturday", "The People of Elephant", "The People of Town", "The People of *Madyan*" & "The People of Cave & *Raqīm*", and so forth, are fully introduced. (v) The people mentioned with attributes instead of names are also elaborately described, for example, "the person whom Allāh has blessed", "the person who was given knowledge", "the person who passed by a person", etc. are introduced to establish their historicity. Thus, geography helps establish the historicity of people & tribes.

(c) Tribal Geography: (i) In tribal geography, he furnishes details regarding *Quraysh*, *Thamūd*, *'Ād*, *Israelites*, *Yagot* (*Yājūj*), *Magot* (*Mājūj*), and so forth. (ii) Progeny of different Prophets is given ample space, for example, progeny of Prophet *Dā'ūd* (*Āl-i Dā'ūd*), progeny of Prophet *Mūsā*, of Prophet *Lūt*, of *Aram*, of Prophet *Ya'qūb*, and so forth.

(d) Anthropological Geography of Women: (i) Women or Feminine geography is also emphasized in the book: (i) wives of Prophets & others, for example, of Prophet *Lūt*, Prophet *Nūh*, *Pharaoh*, *Imrān*, *Azīz*; (ii) mothers like the mother of Prophet *Mūsā* are geographically delineated to assert their historicity. (iii) Some others are expounded by appending possessive cases like his wife, his mother, her mother, and so forth. (iv) *Hārūn*'s sister & Prophet *Lūt*'s daughters are also elaborated.

(e) Non-human Personalities: Non-human personalities like angels (*Gibrā'īl*, *Mikā'īl*, *Hārūt*, *Mārūt*), *Devil or Satan* (*Iblīs*); *idols* (*Lāt*, *Manāt*, etc) are also geographically depicted.

(f) Methodology Adopted by the Author: As for his methodology, not only did he incorporate the number of time a particular personality is mentioned in specific chapter

& *Rukū'*, but also supplemented it with details ransacked from other divinely inspired books, for example, Bible & other scriptures. The exhaustive details are avoided here, because in another book entitled “The Tales of the *Holy Qur'ān*”, he intended to write all these details.

(g) Drawbacks: (i) Unfortunately, the writer did not hail the research conducted by *Sayyad Sulaimān Nadvī* concerning “the People of *Hijr*”. He still regards them as *Thamūdī not Nibṭī as Nadvī* held. He preferred to go with the majority. (ii) The modern researchers discern in *Madā'īn-i Ṣāleḥ* & *Al-Mābiyāt*. The modern researchers opine that *Madā'īn-i Ṣāleḥ* is not the place where the *Prophet Ṣāleḥ* resided. A Turkish researcher committed this blunder and all others followed. The place is attributed to another person by the name *Ṣāleḥ*. The *Prophet Ṣāleḥ* resided not at *Madā'īn-i Ṣāleḥ* rather at *Al-Mābiyāt*, but the author committed error here²⁴.

Conclusion: The booklet introduces to 158 personalities. It is a unique work on this genre, for which the author deserves applause. Along with “*Tafsīr-i Mājidī*” written both in *Urdū* & English, *Daryābādī*, ‘Abd Al-Mājid has authored another excellent book entitled “*Jugrāfiyah Qur'ānī*”, which elaborates physical geography employed in the *Holy Qur'ān*.

The following is the review, introduction, description, and evaluation of a representative book written to highlight physical geography employed in the *Holy Qur'ān*.

“**NISHĀNĀT-I-ARŻ-I-QUR'ĀN**” BY SHAKĪL, MIŞBĀH AL-DĪN²⁵:

It comprises of 273 medium sized pages, more than 150 topics. Out of 26 Prophets mentioned in the *Holy Qur'ān* 25 are introduced geographically. 17 topics related to *Hajj* and the house of Allāh and 37 topics highlight geography of *Sīrah*. This book aims at presenting observational pictorial and geographical presentation of episode or events of the Prophets, nations, tribes, cities, countries and holy campaigns described in

Science of Geography in the Holy Qur'ān

the Holy Qur'ān to facilitate understanding, to strengthen belief, to concretize the *Qur'ānic* spirit, and so forth.

(a) Salient Features of the Book: (i) In the beginning, appreciation of 6 stalwarts among contemporaries is furnished. (ii) The importance of mountains, deserts, and places, caves associated to the Prophets is endorsed by presenting 14 such mountains and caves are given in the margin. (iii) Famous mountains (*Mountain Zaitūn*), group of the People, for instance, the People of Cave and the People of Ditch are described geographically.

(b) Physical Geography of the Holy Qur'ān: Physical geography employed in the Holy Qur'ān is explained with the help of maps. (i) The first map is of the Muslim countries highlighted with green colour. (ii) An excellent map of land of the *Holy Qur'ān* drawn by *Thanā' al-Haq Ṣiddīqī*, highlighting geography of 26 important places mentioned in the *Holy Qur'ān* is furnished. All these 26 places are explained briefly.

(c) Anthropological Geography of the Prophets Enlisted in the Holy Qur'ān

Tales of different Prophets accompany several maps, pictures & charts.

(1) Prophet Ādam: (i) Prophet Ādam's tale as described in *the Holy Qur'ān*, accompanies an old picture of *Ka'bah* when circumambulation used to be performed within railings. (ii) A picture of Prophet Ādam's peak in *Sri Lanka*, pictures of tombs of *Abel* (*Hābīl*) and *Eve* (*Havvāwā*), and almost 20 pictures of *Jeddah* and *Hajj* places are furnished. Although *Muzdalifah* is also mentioned, yet its picture is not given. Perhaps, due to *Eve* (*Havvāwā*), more than dozens old and new pictures of *Jeddah* are furnished, because she is supposed to have descended here after her expulsion from *Eden*, a paradise resided by Ādam and (*Havvāwā*) Eve before their fall. Secondly, she is supposed to be buried here.

(2) Prophet Idrīs: For *Prophet Idrīs*, black and white pictures of lakes in vicinity of the Dead Sea, vase bearing scrolls attributed to him and picture of material used for *Qur'ānic* calligraphy are procured. This Prophet started writing, perhaps this was the cause to furnish the last picture. Script in vogue at *Makkah and Madina* are also referred to.

(3) Prophet Nūh: For *Prophet Nūh*, picture of *Ka'bah* during flood of 1958, pictures of *Mountain Jūdī, Arārāt Range, of Killen at Kufa*, an imaginative sketch of deluge and two maps are furnished. (i) The first colourful map highlights the area of deluge, (ii) while the 2nd black and white map displays area of nation of *Prophet Nūh* and *Mountain Jūdī*.

(4) Prophet Hūd: (i) For *Prophet Hūd*, an aerial view of the Empty Quarter and one picture displaying the buried city of nation of *Prophet Hūd* under sand, and a modern Bedouin tourist are given. (ii) Project of “Shuttle Challenger” of “NASA” for excavation of *Adbar city* bearing out *Qur'ānic* truth is also briefly narrated. (iii) An Arabic and English map of physical geography of the Arabian Peninsula is also furnished along with verbal description of physical geography of Arabia, but *Nafūd* Desert is written *Al-Nafūz*.

(5) Prophet Șāleh: For *Prophet Șāleh*, pictures of *Thamūdī* buildings, the well, *Thamūdī culture* are furnished along with pictures of *Nabataean* palaces. To assert the *Qur'ānic* truth he rejects the Orientalists' research which declare these archaeological monuments Nabataean. But *Sayyed Sulaimān Nadvī* had more beautifully proved *Qur'ānic* truth in the light of modern research in his book, “*Tārīkh-i-Arż al-Qur'ān*”.

(6) Prophet Ibrāhīm: (i) For *Prophet Ibrāhīm*, a map in the Arabic language is furnished highlighting his life long journey. This map seems to be taken thanklessly from *Atlas Sīrah Nabviya of Shauqī Abū Khalīl*. (ii) A dozen of pictures of Ur City, of his tomb, of temple built by Nimrod, 2 dozen old and new pictures of *Mt. Șafā and Marwah*, and three maps of strait path and not straight path of *Şafā and Marwah* are

Science of Geography in the Holy Qur'ān

furnished. (iii) In the third map doors of the Holy Sanctuary and vicinity of *Safā*, *Marwah* are displayed. (iv) For *Zamzam* more than score of pictures are furnished to highlight its chronological changes. (v) For *Zamzam*, four maps are furnished, first map displays real and apparent depth; the 2nd highlights its structure and measurement, the 3rd Arabic map depicts the water course of *Canal Zubaida*; the 4th map displays the underground arrangement of *Zamzam* water within the Holy Mosque. (vi) In *Prophet Ibrāhīm*'s tale, he incorporates 17 topics concerning the Holy Mosque and all of its important parts. (vii) In history of construction of *Ka'bah*, 7 maps are given. The first asserts its being geographically at the center of the earth; the rest of 6 highlight its construction by Prophet *Ibrāhīm*, *Qusay*, *Quraysh*, *'Abdullāh b. Zubair*, *Hajjāj* and by Saudi Government. (viii) In the last, position of pillars, door, ceiling foundation, treasure and Black Stone are highlighted. (ix) In construction and repairing along with 4 imaginative sketches of structure built by Prophet *Ibrāhīm*, *Quraysh*, *Hajjāj* and *Ibn-i Zubair*, two maps are given. The first Arabic map highlights geography of *Hajj*, its ritual and measurement of distance between places, while the 2nd is map of *Makkah*. (x) 2 Urdu and English maps highlight individual and collective expansion of the holy Mosque in history. (xi) For exterior and interior view of *Ka'bah*, two maps for each; for *Prophet Ibrāhīm*'s station, a sketch and one dozen pictures; for Black Stone, pictures for door, lock, key of *Ka'bah* and *Multazim*- 5 pictures for each; for *Haṭīm*, dozens of pictures of holy spout, cover, bath, holy Mosque and of doors are furnished. Hence, a comprehensive pictorial history of the holy sanctuary is incorporated in *Prophet Ibrāhīm*'s tale.

(7) Prophet Lūt: For *Prophet Lūt*, along with more than dozen of pictures, history of discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls is described.

(8) Prophet Ismā'īl: For *Prophet Ismā'īl* pictorial description of contrast of primitive and modern desert life is given.

(9) Prophet Ishāq: For *Prophet Ishāq*, pictures of his tomb and that of Dome of Rock are furnished.

(10) Prophet Ya‘qūb: (i) For *Prophet Ya‘qūb*, pictorial and verbal history of Jerusalem, *Mosque Aqṣā*, Dome of Rock, wailing wall and city *Al-Khalīl* along with half a dozen and more pictures of each are furnished. (ii) For *Prophet Ya‘qūb*’s tale, 2 maps are also furnished. The first map draws respective geography of Palestine and Israel; while 2nd map displays geography of Dome of Rock in Palestine.

(11) Prophet Yusūf: For *Prophet Yusūf*, pictures of his tomb and that of his mother, Rāhīl, pyramid of Egypt and his relics at *Tope Kape* Museum in Turkey and a map highlighting caravan route between Jerusalem and *Mimphe*s are furnished.

(12) Prophet Shu‘aib: For *Prophet Shu‘aib*, pictures of his old and new Mausoleum, Mosque and pictures of burnt *Mosque Aqṣā* are furnished. The last picture is out of place here.

(13) Prophets Ayyūb, Zulqarnain & Hārūn: For *Prophets Ayyūb, Zulqarnain & Hārūn*, pictures of their tombs and of Dome of Rock are furnished.

(14) Prophet Mūsā: (i) For *Prophet Mūsā*, pictures of Pharaoh’s palace, of pyramid sphinx, of *Mountain Tūr*, of well and tree and churches ascribed to him, of Mummy of Pharaoh, of his tomb, of his and Pharaoh’s relics preserved in *Tope Kape* museum, and 2 maps are furnished. (ii) The first map displays the route taken by *Banī Isrā’īl* after exodus from Egypt; while the 2nd highlights the latest research of American researches asserting miraculous safety of Prophet *Mūsā*’s nation from drowning. (iii) 3rd map highlights *Banī Isrā’īl*’s journey to *Rafaidam, Fārān*. He doesn’t discuss issue of geography of *Fārān* in the light of prediction of the Old Testament.

(15) Prophet Dā’ūd: (i) For *Prophet Dā’ūd*, along with pictures of his Mausoleum, adjacent Mosque Dome of Rock, *Dā’ūd*’s Minaret, bulwark, doors, gates and other parts of Mosque *Aqṣā*, a picture of war dress made of Iran and a map of holy environs of Mosque *Aqṣā* is furnished. (ii) The map highlights 52 important parts of *Mosque Aqṣā*.

(16) Prophet Sulaimān: (i) For *Prophet Sulaimān*, picture of Mountain Zion, of ruins of Jerusalem got built by *Prophet Sulaimān*, sketches of model of future structure of temples, picture of Stable attributed to *Prophet Sulaimān*, of old script of Sabā and (ii) an Arabic map of *Prophet Sulaimān*'s Palestine and Ant Valley ('Asqlān) and (iii) a mini map of journey of *Queen Sheba* from *Mu'ārib* to Jerusalem are furnished.

(17) Prophets Ilyās, Al-Yas'a, Dānyāl, Yūnūs, Yahyā & Zakariyyā: For *Prophets Ilyās*, pictures of *Mosque Aqṣā* and *Mt. Tūr*, for *Prophets Al-Yas'a*, pictures of tombs of *Luqmān* and *Prophet Dānyāl* are furnished which are out of place here. For *Prophets Yūnūs, Yahyā & Zakariyyā*, pictures of their Mausoleum are furnished.

(18) Prophets 'Isā: (i) For *Prophet 'Isā* (Jesus), pictures of interior and exterior views of his mother Maryam or Mary's old and new Mausoleum, a picture of place where he dined Passover Dinner, of *Saint Kathrine Church*, of court of Pontis Pilates, pictures of Church of Holy Sepulture and of Deer Saint and Holy Cave are furnished. (ii) Detailed description of Mountain Olives (*Zaitūn*) accompanies its picture and picture of mark of Jesus. (iii) History of the People of Cave and the People of Ditch is also furnished to provide the details of propagation of Christianity. (iv) For the former the map of nation described in the *Holy Qur'ān* is furnished, which also highlights geography of Cave of Seven Sleepers. Pictures of their monument and relics are also procured. (v) For the People of Ditch neither a map is furnished, nor its geography is mentioned in the previous map. (vi) Picture of *Najrān*, its museum, and relics preserved there are furnished.

(19) The Holy Prophet Muḥammad ﷺ: (i) For the *Holy Prophet Muḥammad ﷺ*, pictures of his birth place, of *Khadijah*'s house, of his miraculous signs visible on palace of Chosserose (Khusrū Pervaiz of Persia), of Cave Ḥirā and pedigree tree of his and his wives are furnished. (ii) Calligraphic samples of the *Holy Qur'ān*, Mosque Ṭā'f, Mosque Jinn, Friday Mosque, 'Utabah Garden, interior and exterior views and old and new close ups of all the important parts of the Prophet's Mosque along with a picture of bulwark of *Madina*, and of house of *Abū Ayyūb Anṣārī* are given. (iii) 7 maps are

furnished: the first map represents economy of Arabia in Zenith of Islām, highlighting important cities, ports, sea and land links, markets and intra cities and inter countries routes. (iv) The second map is usual migration map displaying departure of the route taken by *the Holy Prophet Muḥammad* ﷺ from common Caravan Route. (v) 3rd and 4th map show collective and individual step by step expansion of the Prophet's Mosque. (vi) 5th map highlights interior of green Dome, 6th highlights *Madina* and its important places in Prophetic Era. (vii) 7th map highlights trade routes and mercantile. It is an example of economic geography.

(d) Geography of the Holy Wars or Ghazawāt: For important holy campaigns mentioned in the *Holy Qur'ān* separate maps are furnished. (i) The map for *Badr* battlefield highlights geography of the far end, but the near end is not shown, which must have been shown. (ii) The maps for battlefields of *Uhud*, Ditch (*Ahzāb*), and the map used for the conquest of *Makkah* are same as were presented in his book “*Sīrah Ahmad-i Majtabā*”. (iii) For *Miqāt Stations*, a separate map is given. (iv) Another map displays geography of Hejaz, while the mini map presents forts of Khaiber, along with pictures of its forts and ruins. (v) For conquest of *Makkah*, 2nd topographical map highlights the strategy of the Prophet to conquer *Makkah*. Firstly route of the squad led by the Prophet is not shown. Secondly, route of Zubair and Abū 'Ubaidah's armies are interchanged. (vi) Next map is of deputations approaching the Holy Prophet. (vii) For companions the 39 pictures of the companions' Mausoleums are furnished along with map of *Baqī'* Cemetery.

(e) Methodology Adopted by the Author: Methodology adopted by him in this book is as follows: 1. Right after the heading, a fully cited relevant tradition is written down, commenting on the human or physical geography, that is, the Prophets or holy places are mentioned in them. 2. A picture of holy *Ka'bah* in case of the Arabian Prophets, and a close up of the *Mosque Aqṣā* for the Prophets of *Banī Isrā'īl* are furnished. 3. The detailed description of events, narrated briefly in the *Holy Qur'ān* along with

Science of Geography in the Holy Qur'ān

pictures of their Mausoleum and of places attributed to them and of those mentioned directly or indirectly in *the Holy Qur'ān*. 4. The pictures and maps are both coloured and black and white. 5. At the end of every page, relevant couplets are furnished suitable for the description of events narrated above. These couplets show his scholarly, refine poetic taste, extensive reading and remarkable selection.

(f) Errors: Some errors have crept into text. At page 10 *Desert Teyah* is written wrong, at page 13 *Tubb'* and *Zu Nawās* are written *Tubabaya* and *Zutawās*, at page 19 Mountain *Qādsiyūn* is written *Qāsī*.

Conclusion: Traditions in the start, couplets at the end and pictures and maps in between make it an extremely valuable book. Almost 3 scores and 10 traditions and 272 beautiful couplets highlighting Qur'ānic geography are furnished. Pictorial history of construction of the three holy Mosques is also furnished, but it is not comprehensive geography of the Holy Qur'ān. Human figures other than the Prophets are not introduced, secondly, physical geography of non-Arabian cities and sites are not touched, for instance, Rome, bulwark built to stop onslaught of Yājūj and Mājūj, and so forth. Despite this, it is an excellent effort.

Inferences: With the help of all disciplines, geography is no exception, truths and facts described in the *Holy Qur'ān* can be testified in every age. Rather, is the best tool as it facilitates understanding by bearing out truths, by identifying persons and places described in the Holy Qur'ān with historical records. It is merely a start, a lot more can be done in this respect.

In the past, *Jalāl al-Dīn Suyyūtī*'s (d.911) contribution in highlighting *Land of Wahī* (Revelation) of the Holy Qur'ān can never be over emphasized. (ii) Existence of "Science of Geography can be witnessed in the *Holy Qur'ān*. (iii) The Muslim Sīrah writers who have expertise both in human and physical geography of the Arabian Peninsula described in *the Holy Qur'ān*, have successfully countered the fallacious research of the western writers with their correct and superior research. (iv) '*Ād* and

Thamūd tribes have been identified with the first and second generation of Semitic races. (v) Doubts about the divination of the *Holy Qur’ān* can be ended by concretizing every place or geography mentioned in the *Holy Qur’ān* in modern terminology. (vi) Almost all the *Qur’ānic* Personalities have been identified with historical figures, but now more & more maps have been added to establish their historicity.

References

¹ Notorious for his prejudice, *George Sales* translated the *Holy Qur’ān* into English in 1734. He also corrected Arabic New Testament (1726) published by “Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge”.

² *Noldēkē* is a German Orientalist, known for his work, “The History of Qur’ān”.

³ English Orientalist, known for his work, “The Hundred: Ranking of the Most Influential Persons in History”. In this book, he declared the *Prophet Muḥammad* ﷺ, the most influential person in the world history.

⁴ Nadī, Sayyad Sulaimān. 2011. “*Tārīkh-i Arž al-Qur’ān*” (The History of Land of Qur’ān). Karachi: Majlis-i Nashriyat-i Islām. He also testifies the human geography of Qur’ānic Queen of Sabā & Ismā’īl, the eponym of the Qurayshī Tribe; traces the human geography of all the 13 sons of Qaḥṭān & 12 sons of Ismā’īl.

⁵ “Ma’rūf Muslim Scientists”, Urdū Science Board, (Lahore: Urdū Science Board). Idrīsī with the help of other geographers prepared the first map of the world on commandment of Roger II (d.1154 CE). It was embossed map displaying 7 continents, rivers, seas, mountains, parts, gulfs, islands, towns and did physical conditions. He made use of Greek and Arabic sources.

⁶ Ḥamvī, Yāqūt bin ‘Abdullah. n.d. “Mu’jam al-Buldān”. Beirut: Dār al-Fikr.

⁷ Maudūdī, Abū al-Ālā, Maulānā. 1424AH/Oct. 2003CE. “*Taṣḥīḥ al-Qur’ān*”. 3rd ed. Lahore: Idāra’ Tarjamān al-Qur’ān Pvt. Ltd. The maps provided for the Isrā’īlī Prophets by Maulānā Maudūdī, in “*Taṣḥīḥ al-Qur’ān*” are excellent.

⁸ Sayuhārī, Ḥifz al-Rahmān. 1973. “Qīṣāṣ al-Qur’ān (Tales in the Holy Qur’ān)”. 1st ed. Karachi: Dārul Ishā’at. His work on Qur’ānic geography is a land mark in history of Sub-continent.

⁹ Daryābādī, ‘Abd Al-Mājid, “*Tafsīr-i Mājidī*”. It has been published from India both in English and Urdu. It is a representative exegesis on anthropological or human geography as well as physical geography of the *Holy Qur’ān*.

¹⁰ Khalīl, Dr. Shauqī. 2001a/1421H. “*Atlas Al- Qur’ān: Amākin Aqwām and ‘Allām*”. Arabic ed. Damascus: Dār Al-Fikr; Abū Khalīl, Dr. Shauqī. 2003. “*Atlas of the Qur’ān*”. Urdū ed. Lahore: Global Leaders in Islāmic Books. Dr. Shauqī Abū Khalīl has written the following other books on geography. Abū Khalīl, Dr. Shauqī. 2000. “*Atlas Sīrah al-Nabī* ﷺ”. Arabic ed. Damascus: Dār Al-Fikr; Abū Khalīl, Dr. Shauqī. 2008a/1429 H. “*Atlas: Al-Tārīkh al-Arabī al-Islāmī*”. Arabic ed. Damascus: Dār Al-Fikr; Abū Khalīl, Dr. Shauqī. 2008b/1429 H. “*Atlas: Al-Tārīkh al-Arabī al-Islāmī*”. Urdū ed. Damascus: Dār Al-Fikr; Abū Khalīl, Dr. Shauqī. 2009. “*Atlas Al-Hadīth al-Nabvī min al-Kutub-i Ṣīḥah al-Sittah (Amākin, Aqwām)*”. Urdū ed. Lahore: Dār al-Salām. ISBN: 1-59239-148-6; Abū Khalīl, Dr. Shauqī. 2010a/1431 AH. “*Atlas Intishār-i Islāmī*”. Damascus: Dār Al-Fikr; Abū Khalīl, Dr. Shauqī. 2010b/1431 H. “*Atlas Al-Firq wa al-Mazāhib al-Islāmiyah*”. Arabic ed. Damascus: Dār Al-Fikr; Abū Khalīl, Dr. Shauqī. 2001b/1421H. “*Atlas Al-Hadīth al-Nabvī Min Al-Kutub-i Ṣīḥah-i Sittah (Amākin, Aqwām)*”. Arabic ed. Damascus: Dār Al-Fikr; Abū Khalīl, Dr. Shauqī. 2004. “*Atlas Sīrat al-Nabī* ﷺ”. Urdū ed. trans. Ḥāfiẓ M. Amīn, exp. Muḥsin Fārānī. Lahore: Dār al-Salām.

Science of Geography in the Holy Qur'ān

¹¹ Miṣbāḥ al-Dīn Shakīl has written other books on geography of Sīrah: Shakīl, Miṣbāḥ al-Dīn. Shāh. 1988/1408H. “Haram Sē Ḥaram Tak: Special Hajj Number V.14”. Karachi: Pakistan State Oil Review (PSO Review); Shakīl, Miṣbāḥ al-Dīn. Shāh. 1991/1412H. “PSO Review: Special-Sīrah No. 2:5,6,7(May, June, July). ” Karachi: Pakistan State Oil Ltd; Shakīl, Miṣbāḥ al-Dīn. Shāh. 1992/1413H. “Sīrat Album”. Karachi: Pakistan State Oil Company, Ltd; Shakīl, Miṣbāḥ al-Dīn. Shāh. 1996/1417H. “Sīrat Aḥmad-i Mujtabā”. 3rd ed. Karachi: Pakistan State Oil Company Ltd; Shakīl, Miṣbāḥ al-Dīn. Shāh. 2009. “Arż-i Nishānāt-i Nabvī”. 1st ed. Karāchī: Fażalī Sons Pvt. Ltd.

¹² Ḥaddād, Muḥammad ‘Āsim, “The Land of Qur'ān”, (Lahore: Al-Gaisal).

¹³ Al-Azharī, Karam Shāh, Pīr Muḥammad, “Zayā' al-Qur'ān”, (Lahore: Zayā' al-Qur'ān Publications); Al-Azharī, Karam Shāh, Pīr Muḥammad, “Zayā' al-Nabī”, (Lahore: Zayā' al-Qur'ān Publications, 1420H/1999, 4th edition). Both works are masterpieces from geographical point of view.

¹⁴ Āzād, Abū al- Kalām, “Tarjmān al-Qur'ān”; Āzād, Abū al- Kalām, “Anbiya'-i Karām”, edited by Ghulām Rasūl Mahar, (Lahore: Sheikh Ghulām 'Alī and Sons Publishers, 2007); Āzād, Abū al-Kalām, “Rasūl-i Raḥmat”, edited by Ghulām Rasūl Mahar, (Lahore: Isha't-i Nau).

¹⁵ Wrongly ascribed to him. Indeed Prophet Ṣāleḥ and his nation resided at Al-Mābiyāt.

¹⁶ Suyyūtī, “Al-Ittiqān fī 'Ulūm al-Qur'ān”, (Karachi: Dār al-Ashā'ṭ), p-108.

¹⁷ Al-Bū‘ādanī, Faiṣal b. 'Alī, “Hajj and the Messenger's Role”, translated by Muftī Muḥammad An‘ām al-Haq Qāsmī, (Karachi: Jāmi‘ah Al-‘Ulūm-i Islāmiyah, Banūrī Town).

¹⁸ Pidwirny, Dr. Michael; Jones, Scott, "Chapter 1: Introduction to Physical Geography". Physicalgeography.net. University of British Columbia Okanagan. Retrieved 06 Aug. 2013. <http://www.physicalgeography.net/>

¹⁹ Scott, S. P., “History of the Moorish Empire”, (Oxford, Peterson Press,1904), pp.25, 33.

²⁰ Al-Qur'ān, “Al-Aḥzāb” (33:37).

²¹ Al-Qur'ān, “Al-Sād” (38:12-13).

²² Translation by 'Abdullāh Yūsūf 'Alī

²³ Daryābādī, 'Abd Al-Mājid-1982 .“Allām Al-Qur'an (Qur'ānic Personalities)”. 1st ed. Karachi: Nafīs Academy. It is a representative book on anthropological or human geography of the Holy Qur'ān.

²⁴ 'Abd al-Mālik Mujāhid, Muhsin Fārānī, et. el. “Al-Lū'lū' al-Maknūn” (Sīrat Encyclopaedia), (Al-Riyadh: Maktaba Dār al-Salām, 1433H).

²⁵ Shakīl, Miṣbāḥ al-Dīn, Shāh. 2005. “Nishānāt-i Arż-i-Qur'ān”. 1st ed. Karāchī: Fażalī Sons Pvt. Ltd. It is a representative book on physical geography of the Holy Qur'ān, because lands of all the Prophets and important tribes are beautifully mapped herein. Moreover, all the Prophets and important Qur'ānic personalities are geographically described.