

## Revisionist School of Islamic Studies and Patricia Crone

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### Keywords:

Islam,  
historiography,  
orientalism,  
revisionism,  
Patricia Crone.

**Abstract:** *Throughout the centuries, scholars around the world were interested in studying Islam. Its rapid growth from its emergence was always remained a question mark for the Western studies. In 1970, a new movement "The Revisionist School of Islamic Studies" emerged to study Islamic narrations. Their main hypotheses was to researched and reconstruct the traditional Islamic accounts on the basis of the alternate sources i.e., non-Arabic literature of that time and the relevant archaeological evidences. They state that religion "Islam" started upbringing as a monotheistic movement in Arabian Peninsula near to Byzantine and Persian Empires and later-on adopt the name of Islam. They used "source-critical" and "historical-critical" approaches to study the sources of Islam and present the accounts contradictory to the Islamic original sources about the rise of Islam and the Arab conquests. They do not accept the words of Qu'rān, Ḥadīth and Sira of the Holy Prophet Muḥammad (ﷺ) because they claim that these all were written 150 to 200 years after the death of the Prophet of Islam. This school which was originated by John Wansbrough was further established by his disciples, such as, Norman Calder, G. R. Hawting, Andrew Rippin, Patricia Crone, and Michael Cook, as well as Yehuda D. Nevo, Günter Lüling, and Christoph Luxenberg. Among them Patricia Crone was a prominent figure. The current study has done to see Patricia Cron's work on the Islamic Origin and her place in academia and how it effects on the work of the contemporary scholars in the West?*

Ammara and Bilal Ahmad (2022).  
Revisionist School of Islamic Studies and Patricia Crone  
Al-'Ulūm Journal of Islamic Studies, 3(2)

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## Introduction

Islam started spreading in seventh and eighth century and conquered several cultures and lands. The non-Muslim forces became worried over the situation. They not only want to know about its origin and teachings but also how it interacts with other civilizations without affecting its own identity. To overcome the collective fear of Islam<sup>1</sup>, they studied Orient<sup>2</sup> with different back-hand motives i.e., missionary, diplomatic, scientific, commercial, and academic with deep-rooted animosity.<sup>3</sup> which might be consist of psychological complexities to bestir the forgotten fear of Arab-Islamic past in Medieval period as describe by R. W. Southern (1912-2001) in his work "*Western View of Islam in the Middle Ages*".<sup>4</sup> They considered Muslims as a retrograde nation and have associated every kind of paucity to Islam and its prophet based on speculations and the information without evidence.<sup>5</sup> They tried to reshape Islamic history, by belittling it and presenting it as insignificant. They established the links of early Islam with the Abrahamic faiths i.e., Judaism and Christianity as both were present in Arabia at the time of advent of Islam.

## Introduction of Revisionist School of Islamic Studies

Having same objectives, some of the contemporary Orientalists have started working as a movement i.e., "Revisionist School of Islamic Studies" which has started in 1970. The word 'Revisionist' used for the specific group of Orientalists who considered that Islamic traditions are incredible so, should be critically analyzed. Though the main ideology of this movement was linked back to Ibrahim Geiger<sup>6</sup> (1810-1874) and

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- <sup>1</sup> U.A.B. Razia Akter Banu, "Fundamentalist Islam: A Threat To The West?," *Islamic Studies* 32, no. Spring (1993), <https://www.jstor.org/stable/20840112>; A. L. Tibawi, "English Speaking Orientalists A Critique of Their Approach to Islam and Arab Nationalism," accessed March 17, 2022, [https://www.muslim-library.com/dl/books/English\\_English\\_Speaking\\_Orientalists.pdf](https://www.muslim-library.com/dl/books/English_English_Speaking_Orientalists.pdf).p.113.
  - <sup>2</sup> The Eastern regions of the world or the countries lies in the East and Southeast Asia.
  - <sup>3</sup> "English Speaking Orientalists A Critique of Their Approach to Islam and Arab Nationalism."p.9.
  - <sup>4</sup> R. W. Southern, *Western Views of Islam in the Middle Ages* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1978).pp.13-29.
  - <sup>5</sup> "English Speaking Orientalists A Critique of Their Approach to Islam and Arab Nationalism."p.14.
  - <sup>6</sup> Yousef Meri, "Reviewed Work: Jews, Christians, and the Abode of Islam: Modern Scholarship, Medieval Realities by Jacob Lassner," ed. Jacob Lassner, *Speculum* 90, no. 4 (2015): 1141-43, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/43884084>.

Ignac Goldziher (1850-1921) who states that Qu'rānic text is taken from Rabbinic literature and early Islamic historical traditions written 150 to 200 years after the Holy Prophet Muḥammad (ﷺ) so, are highly questionable and should be researched through historical critical method.

This new movement coined at the SOAS<sup>7</sup>, University of London through two publications of John Wansbrough: *The Sectarian Milieu* (1978) and *Qu'rānic Studies* (1977). His new approach towards Islam took forward by his students Norman Calder (1950-1998), Andrew Rippin (1950-2016), Michael Cook (b. 1940) and Patricia Crone. Among them, Cook and Crone got maximal attention in academia because of their book on Hagarism (1977). Other than these orientalists who are associated with this movement are: Carlos Andres Segovia (b. 1970), Guillaume Dye (b. 1974), Edouard-Marie Gallez (b. 1957), Martin Hinds (1941-1988), Christoph Luxenberg, Gerald Hawting (b. 1944) and Robert G. Hoyland, Fred Donner (b. 1945), Tom Holland (b. 1996) on early period of Islam.

### Revisionists Main Thesis

Revisionist started rewriting Islamic history because they are sceptic about early Islamic traditions/documentations. They did research on the bases of data lies outside the Islamic historical records and conclude that Islamic civilization is an amalgamation of other civilization and plagiarized to legitimate their rule over others and to make their supremacy over other cultures and civilizations. Their main thesis on Islam is highlighted hereunder:

Among those who did critique on the Qu'rānic text are Gunter Luling (1928-2014) and Gerd-Rüdiger Puin (b. 1940). They said that Qu'rānic manuscript is not the same as it was revealed, there is small deviations in it.<sup>8</sup> James A. Bellamy (1925-2015) gave proposal that there are errors in traditional text of the Qu'rān which should be corrected. According to Karl-Heinz Ohlig (b. 1938), it is not clear that how many parts of the Qu'rān, revealed on Muḥammad's (ﷺ) own time.<sup>9</sup> He and

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<sup>7</sup>- School of Oriental and African Studies.

<sup>8</sup>- John Wansbrough, *Qu'rānic Studies: Sources and Methods of Scriptural Interpretation*, (New York: Prometheus Books 2004), <http://www.almuslih.org/Library/Wansbrough,%20J%20-%20Qu'rānic%20Studies.pdf>. P.43 ff.; Gerd-Rüdiger Puin, *Observations on Early Qur'an Manuscripts in San'a'* (Leiden: Brill, 1966). pp. 107-111.

<sup>9</sup>- Yehuda D. Nevo, *Crossroads to Islam: The Origins of the Arab Religion and the Arab State* (2003).ff. Herbert Berg, "Review on Early Islam: A Critical Reconstruction Based on Contemporary Sources. By Karl-Heinz Ohlig, "

Christoph Luxenberg said that Syriac language has influence over Arabic language of the Qu' rān, so its Arabic is not pure.<sup>10</sup>

Christoph Luxenberg presented the theory that there is no need for Muḥammad (ﷺ) as an Islamic historical person. Whereas Hans Jansen (1942–2015) presented in his work that accounts on Muḥammad (ﷺ) is only a legend. Yehuda D. Nevo (1932–1992) rejects the historical authenticity of Muḥammad (ﷺ) in his work *Crossroads to Islam: The Origins of the Arab Religion and the Arab State*, (2003).

Gerald Hawting and Fred Donner said that Arab infidels were not polytheist but monotheist, actually they were slightly deviate from monotheism.<sup>11</sup> Michael Cook and Patricia Crone said that the geographical picture of Mecca in Islamic tradition is not correct, it was existed another place in north-western Arabia, e.g., Petra in Jordan.<sup>12</sup> Fred Donner and Hans Jansen said that Jews too were considered the part of Muslim Ummah in Muḥammad's (ﷺ) period. Anti-jewish account of slaughtering Banū Qurayḍa (Jewish tribe) was added after Muḥammad (ﷺ).<sup>13</sup> According to Robert G. Hoyland the Islamic expansion has not any religious motivation but of Secular-Arab motivation.<sup>14</sup> Michael Cook, Patricia Crone, and Karl-Heinz Ohlig alleged that initially, Muslims just called "believers"<sup>15</sup>, the word

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*Journal of the American Academy of Religion* 83(2015),  
<https://doi.org/10.1093/jaarel/lfv045>.

<sup>10</sup>- "Review on Early Islam: A Critical Reconstruction Based on Contemporary Sources. By Karl-Heinz Ohlig, ".pp.868–872, ff.; Christoph Luxenberg, *The Syro-Aramaic Reading of the Koran, A Contribution to the Decoding of the Koran*, (2007), <https://archive.org/details/ChristophLuxenberg>.

<sup>11</sup>- G. R. Hawting, *The Idea of Idolatry and the Rise of Islam: From Polemic to History* (1999).; Fred Donner, *Muḥammad and the Believers. At the Origins of Islam* (2010). p. 59.

<sup>12</sup>- Patricia Crone, *Hagarism: The Making of the Islamic World*.pp. 22-24, ff.; Patricia Crone, *Meccan Trade and the Rise of Islam*, 1st Gorgias ed (Piscataway, NY: Gorgias Press, 2004).

<sup>13</sup>- Fred Donner, *Muḥammad and the Believers. At the Origins of Islam*, (London: Harvard University Press, 2010), <https://archive.org/details/MuhammadAndTheBelieversByFredM.Donner>.pp. 68 ff.; cf. Hans Jansen, *Mohammed: Eine Biographie* (Beck C. H, 2008).pp. 311-317.

<sup>14</sup>- Robert G. Hoyland, *In God's Path: The Arab Conquests and the Creation of an Islamic Empire*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015). P.5.

<sup>15</sup>- Patricia Crone, *Hagarism: The Making of the Islamic World*.p. 29; Nevo, *Crossroads to Islam: The Origins of the Arab Religion and the Arab State*.pp. 410-413; Berg, "Review on Early Islam: A Critical Reconstruction Based on Contemporary Sources. By Karl-Heinz Ohlig, ".pp. 868–872

“Islam” introduced in Abdul Malik bin Marwan’s period. Also, Muslims reworked on Qu’rān in his time. Patricia Crone, and Robert Spencer (1962) held that the Islamic traditions about the origin of Islam was written in the Abbasid period to legitimize their rule. So, it is a state-religion.<sup>16</sup>

Despite criticism, revisionists’ project remained the part of vast western scholarship on Islamic origins with new theoretical tools to revisit old problems. In his article “*Orientalism and Islamic Philosophy*”, Ubai Nouruddin criticizes on them in these words: “Western scholars, who are more interested in finding something new in the Islamic sciences than in attempting to understand the transmission of the corpus of human knowledge from one people to another.”<sup>17</sup> Among this group of revisionist Patricia Crone has a prominent place who put immense effect on the western scholarship.

### **Patricia Crone’s Introduction**

Patricia Crone was born in Kyndelose, Denmark in 1945. She was the daughter of Thomas Georg Lonborg Crone and Vibeke Scheel, nee Richter. She took preliminary exam at the University of Copenhagen and study the Medieval European history at King’s College in London. She took her bachelor’s degree in 1969 at the School of Oriental and African Studies and did her PhD on “*The Mawali in the Umayyad Period*” in 1974 under the supervision of Bernard Lewis, at the University of London.<sup>18</sup> She was awarded the senior research fellowship at Warburg Institute, University of London, from 1974 till 1977. She became a Lecturer in Islamic History and a fellow of Jesus College at Oxford in 1977. She became an Assistant Lecturer in Islamic studies and a fellow of Gonville and Caius College at Cambridge in 1990 to 1994, where she also served as a Reader in Islamic History. In 1997, she worked with the title of Andrew W. Mellon Professor in the School of Historical Studies at the Institute for Advance Study in

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<sup>16</sup>- Patricia Crone, *Slaves on Horses. The Evolution of the Islamic Polity*, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1980),

[https://delong.typepad.com/files/slaves\\_on\\_horses.pdf](https://delong.typepad.com/files/slaves_on_horses.pdf), pp. 7, 12, 15.

<sup>17</sup>- Muḥammad Ali Khalidi, "Orientalism in the interpretation of Islamic philosophy," *Radical Philosophy* January/February(2006), 29.

<sup>18</sup>- Dominique Akhoun-Schwarb, "Distinguished historian of Islam and SOAS Alumna: Patricia Crone," *Ancient Near East, Semitics and Judaica, History, Middle East, Central Asia & Islamica, Religions*(2015), <https://blogs.soas.ac.uk/librariannews/2015/07/16/distinguished-historian-of-islam-and-soas-alumna-patricia-crone/>.

Princeton.<sup>19</sup> In 2002 till her death in 2015, she worked for the journal of Social Evolution and History as a member of the Editorial Board.<sup>20</sup> At the age of 70 she died of cancer<sup>21</sup> on July 11, 2015.<sup>22</sup>

### **Crone's Contributions in Studies**

As, being the historian of Islam, she widely contributed to the Near and the Middle Eastern studies, which can be represented through her several publications and a well-known record of mentoring her students and colleagues. After achieving her Ph.D. in 1974 from University of London, where she became senior research fellow, she accepted the position of Lecturer at University of Oxford and worked for thirteen years. Further, she gave her services of Lectureship to the University of Cambridge. On her work she has achieved many distinctions, including book awards, medals, and honorary doctorates i.e., the doctorate from the University of Copenhagen (2009), Leiden University (2013) and the Hebrew University of Jerusalem (2014).

Her innovative approach towards studying the Islamic History brought long-term changes in the field. With her adventures nature she critically put insight to the religious, intellectual, and cultural history of Islam. Her influence can easily be felt at the Institute for Advance Study which she further established as a recognize center of studying Islam with the help of her one of the colleagues, Oleg Grabar (1929–2011).<sup>23</sup> In 2014, she was succeeded by a historian Sabine Schmidtke (b. 1964), who is also recognized as an Islamic intellectual. He did further advancement in the scholarship of Islamic culture and history. Schmidtke acknowledged crone's contributions in these words "Patricia's professional accomplishments, her publications, and their immense impact on the field speak to her exceptional value as a

<sup>19</sup>- "Patricia Crone Islamic History Andrew W. Mellon Professor ", <https://web.archive.org/web/20070304142029/http://www.ias.edu/about/faculty-and-emeriti/crone>.

<sup>20</sup>- *Social Evolution & History*, [http://www.socionauki.ru/journal/seh\\_en](http://www.socionauki.ru/journal/seh_en).

<sup>21</sup>- Judith Herrin, "Patricia Crone: memoir of a superb Islamic scholar," <https://www.opendemocracy.net/judith-herrin/patricia-crone-brief-memoir>.

<sup>22</sup>- Adam J. Silverstein, Patricia Crone (1945–2015), <https://doi.org/10.1093/odnb/9780198614128.013.111862>.  
"Patricia Crone, The influential, pioneering scholar," [https://www.ias.edu/sites/default/files/hs/Schmidtke/Patricia\\_Crone\\_Influential\\_Pioneering\\_Scholar.pdf](https://www.ias.edu/sites/default/files/hs/Schmidtke/Patricia_Crone_Influential_Pioneering_Scholar.pdf).

<sup>23</sup>- "Patricia Crone Islamic History Andrew W. Mellon Professor," n.d., <https://web.archive.org/web/20070304142029/http://www.ias.edu/about/faculty-and-emeriti/crone>.

scholar."<sup>24</sup> Nicola Di Cosmo (b. 1957) who is the Professor in East Asian Studies at the School of Historical Studies said about crone's work as, "Patricia's work on Islam has been a brilliant example of fiercely creative, deeply probing, and unfailingly farsighted research. She pushed the boundaries of historical knowledge and imagination, and in so doing defied accepted wisdom and opened doors to hidden truths."<sup>25</sup>

### **The Honors and Awards Given to Crone**

Crone bestowed by several honors especially for serving in the field of medieval and middle Eastern studies, such as *the Giorgio Levi Della Vida Medal for Excellence in Islamic Studies* (2013) and *the Middle East Medievalists Lifetime Achievement Award* (2013). She has received an honorary doctorate from different universities such as in 2009 she received from the University of Copenhagen, in 2013 from Leiden University and in 2014 from 'The Hebrew University of Jerusalem'. She was also given the 'Corresponding Fellowship at British Academy' and the membership of 'the American Philosophical Society'.

### **Her Major Publications**

Patricia's pioneer work which she did with her co-author Michael Cook was *Hagarism: The Making of the Islamic World*.<sup>26</sup> The book challenged the traditional narratives of early development of Islam and tend to rise the issue of the subjectivity with the early sources used by the historians of Islam and Muslim traditionalists.<sup>27</sup> Deviate from the previous studies of Ignaz Goldziher, Joseph Schacht and John Wansbrough on the canonization of the Holy Qu'rān and the traditions of the Prophet Muḥammad (ﷺ).<sup>28</sup> The authors challenged the historical value of Muslim sources and used instead the non- Muslim accounts which were written in Greek, Syriac, Armenian, Persian and Coptic languages about the formative period of Islam. They also used the contemporary archaeological findings to give answers to their queries.<sup>29</sup>

The book became well praised and considered as a milestone in the modern Western scholarship for revisioning the early history of

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<sup>24</sup>- <https://www.ias.edu/news/patricia-crone-obituary>.

<sup>25</sup>- "Patricia Crone, The influential, pioneering scholar"., p.10.

<sup>26</sup>- P. Crone and M. Cook, *Hagarism: The Making of the Islamic World* (Cambridge University Press, 1980), <https://books.google.com.pk/books?id=fHd6PwAACAAJ>.

<sup>27</sup>- Silverstein, *Patricia Crone (1945–2015)*.

<sup>28</sup>- "Patricia Crone, The influential, pioneering scholar".

<sup>29</sup>- Herrin, "Patricia Crone: memoir of a superb Islamic scholar".

Islam. Though, it was generally ill-received and considered as a controversial text in the scholarly circles due to her claims which were based on theories and assumptions on Islamic traditions. It received harsh criticism as it reconstructs Islamic history based on non-Arab sources. Even, *Crone and Cook* became a term for unacceptable 'revisionism'.<sup>30</sup>

While doing job in Cambridge, she produced two other writings; *Slave on Horses: The Evolution of Islamic Polity*<sup>31</sup> and *Roman, Provincial and Islamic Law*<sup>32</sup> which were published from Cambridge University Press. The first one was close related to the first chapter of her doctoral research work and the second was related to the second chapter of her thesis. In which she discovered the tribal system of Islam and their close connection with the Roman, Jewish and Near Eastern legal system. Furthermore, she discussed in it that how the slaves got the higher authorities in Islamic society which became distinguished from medieval and traditional antique societies.<sup>33</sup> Crone challenged in her writing *Meccan Trade and the Rise of Islam*<sup>34</sup> the general view about the Mecca as international trade center at the time of advent of Islam. She argued that Muslim accounts didn't explain Quraysh's power and wealth in Mecca is due to its center for spice trade which later on become the cause of spreading Islam.<sup>35</sup>

In 2005, Crone received the British-Kuwait Friendship Prize on writing the book *God's Rule: Government and Islam; Six Centuries of Medieval Islamic Political Thought*<sup>36</sup> in which she did survey of first six centuries of Islamic politic. As she has a prominent name among secular scholars due to her revisionist approach of studying pre-Islamic Persia and Arab history which she presented in her book *The*

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<sup>30</sup>\_ Ibid.

<sup>31</sup>\_ Patricia Crone, *Slaves on Horses. The Evolution of the Islamic Polity* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1980), [https://delong.typepad.com/files/slaves\\_on\\_horses.pdf](https://delong.typepad.com/files/slaves_on_horses.pdf).

<sup>32</sup>\_ Patricia Crone, *Roman, Provincial and Islamic Law: The Origins of the Islamic Patronate*, 1. paperback ed, Cambridge Studies in Islamic Civilization (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002).

<sup>33</sup>\_ Ibid., *Islamic Cultures, Islamic Contexts, Essays in Honor of Professor Patricia Crone*, (Brill 2015), p. xvi.

<sup>34</sup>\_ Crone, *Meccan Trade and the Rise of Islam*.

<sup>35</sup>\_ Fred M. Donner, *Narratives of Islamic Origins (the Beginnings of Islamic Historical Writing)*, Studies in Late Antiquity and Early Islam (Princeton, New Jersey: The Darwin Press, 1998), p. 20.

<sup>36</sup>\_ Patricia Crone, *God's Rule: Government and Islam ; [Six Centuries of Medieval Islamic Political Thought]*, 1. publ (New York, NY: Columbia Univ. Press, 2004), p. 20.



*Nativist Prophets of Early Islamic Iran: Rural Revolt and local Zoroastrianism*<sup>37</sup>. The book put immense influence on scholars of Islam as it describes Iranian views about penetration of Islamic beliefs in Iranian countryside. The book considered as an outstanding work written on the Middle Eastern studies, so she got four awards. The first one award which is given to her is *the Albert Hourani Book Award*. The second award titled *the Houshang Pourshariati Iranian Studies Book Award* was given to her due to the superb writing in Iranian studies. The third award of *the Central Eurasian Studies Society Book Award* was given for doing marvelous contributions to the Central Eurasian studies. And the fourth award of "the James Henry Breasted Prize" was given due to the best writing in English language, this award was given to her by the American Historical Society as it was the excellent writing on history prior to 1000 C.E.<sup>38</sup>

Another book which she wrote with a co-author 'Martin Hind' was *God's Caliph: Religious Authority in the First Centuries of Islam*<sup>39</sup> in which they explore to whom Islam gives the authority in its early days. Her writing questions the reliability of the primary sources of Islam and distrusts the general opinions. She also challenged both modern and medieval experts through her profound skepticism and was concerned to give answers to the contemporary issues. As on Anthony's suggestion she wrote the detailed article on *What do we actually know about Muḥammad*<sup>40</sup>. To give answers to the questions such as; what is Jihad? Was Islam spread by force? and The religious freedom in Islam?, she wrote the article on *Jihad, Idea and History*<sup>41</sup>. Crone got recognizable position in studying early Islamic history due to her innovative theories in the field.

She also edited and re-write on the historical figures of Islam who plays an important role in different periods of Islamic history till the present day. These personalities were the religious leaders, poets,

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<sup>37</sup>- Patricia Crone, *The Nativist Prophets of Early Islamic Iran Rural Revolt and Local Zoroastrianism*, 2014, pp. vii, 159.  
<https://www.vlebooks.com/vleweb/product/openreader?id=none&isbn=9781139088459>.

<sup>38</sup>- "Patricia Crone, The influential, pioneering scholar".

<sup>39</sup>- Patricia Crone and Martin Hinds, *God's Caliph: Religious Authority in the First Centuries of Islam* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1986),  
<https://ahadithstudies.files.wordpress.com/2013/02/crone-gods-caliph.pdf>.

<sup>40</sup>- Patricia Crone, "What Do We Actually Know about Muḥammad," 2008,  
[https://www.opendemocracy.net/en/mohammed\\_3866jsp/](https://www.opendemocracy.net/en/mohammed_3866jsp/).

<sup>41</sup>- Patricia Crone, "Jihad, Idea and History," 2007, p. 3.  
[https://www.opendemocracy.net/en/jihad\\_4579jsp/](https://www.opendemocracy.net/en/jihad_4579jsp/).

philosophers, generals, and individual rulers etc. She with the help of Novin Doostdar of Oneworld Press rewrite and edited their description in the form of short introductory biographies. Some figures e.g., Caliph Abd al-Malik<sup>42</sup>, Genghis Khan<sup>43</sup>, Abu Nūwas<sup>44</sup> and Nazīra Zayn al-Dīn<sup>45</sup> etc. were written in the form of series consist of 30 volumes titled *Makers of the Muslim World*<sup>46</sup>.

Crone delivered lectures on Islamic history before industrialization of the world which later expanded in the form of book named *Pre-industrial Societies*<sup>47</sup>, on the suggestion of the editor of Blackwell. The book was written for the general readers without footnotes. In this book she did comparison of modern and pre-industrial world and point out the gaps between both periods. She describes that how industrial revolution came into being. Further she explains the specific characteristics of different regions like China and seclusion Japan in Far East, Islamic societies of North Africa and Near East and the Indian sub-continent.

While discussing this, she makes parallels between Muslims and non-Muslim societies that describes that Northern Europe was less organized at that time in comparison to Muslim societies. She also highlights that how religion play an important role in pre-modern societies whether the people belong to any religions of the world such as Hinduism, Islam, Christian and Zoroastrian. Crone goes in further details of the Muslim dynasties, their prophets and Islamic government and make comparison with pagan who stand opponents to the Prophets.

Her one book was published by Brill in 2016, after her death which is consist of three volumes, first volume is, *The Qu'rānic Pagans*

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<sup>42</sup>- Abd al-Malik ibn Marwan ibn al-Hakam was the fifth Umayyad Caliph, ruling from April 685 until his death.

<sup>43</sup>- Genghis Khan (c. 1158 – August 18, 1227), was born in Temüjin. He was the founder of the Mongol Empire.

<sup>44</sup>- Abū Nuwās al-Ḥasan ibn Hānī al-Ḥakamī was famous as a classical Arabic poet. He was the very first representative of the modern poetry which was developed in the early years of the Abbasid Caliphate.

<sup>45</sup>- Nazira Zain al-Din (1908–1976) was a Druze Lebanese scholar. She condemned Arab culture and considered it as “degrading practices” especially for women veiling “head to toe” and thought that it isolates woman in Muslim society.

<sup>46</sup>- Patricia Crone, *Makers of the Muslim World* (Oxford: Oneworld Publications, 2010).

<sup>47</sup>- Patricia Crone, *Pre-Industrial Societies: Anatomy of the Pre -Modern World* (Oneworld Publications, 2015).

and Related Matters: Collected Studies in Three Volumes<sup>48</sup>, the second volume is, *The Iranian Reception of Islam: The Non-Traditionalists Strands: Collected Studies in Three Volumes*<sup>49</sup> and third volume is *Islam, the Ancient Near East and Varieties of Godlessness: Collected Studies in Three Volumes*<sup>50</sup>.

After her death several memoirs has been written to acknowledge her as a great scholar, e.g., *Islamic Cultures, Islamic Contexts: Essays in Honor of Professor Patricia Crone*<sup>51</sup> was written to examined Crone's uncompromising and strong scholarly efforts which did innovative impact on Islamic and Iranian studies. Her sister Diana Crone Frank created a documentary *For the Life of Me: Between Science and the Law*<sup>52</sup> in which she depicts her diagnosis of cancer. She was died on July 11, 2015, due to the cancer in her brain.

### **Patricia Crone on the Origin of Islam**

Historiographical understanding of the origin of Islam was studied by Patricia Crone through this new skeptical or revisionist approach. Which is extensively exposed in her writings, questioning the reliability of the Muslim traditions and their rejection based on the assumptions that these are fabricated mostly in late seventh and eighth century. Islamic sources are unreliable so non-Islamic sources should be study to see the reality.<sup>53</sup> She followed the techniques of source-criticism, some of the claims which she raised are:

She states that Islam has absorbed religious, political, and philosophical doctrines and ideas from other civilizations i.e., Greek, Iranian and Berbers etc.<sup>54</sup> which where pre-exist at the time of advent of Islam. In result of this synthesis, sectarian conflicts have started among Muslims, i.e., Samaritan concepts of priesthood developed in Shi'ism. This adaptation results in the form of strong confrontation from Muslim scholars such as Ibn al-Ḥambal's resistance against the

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<sup>48</sup> Patricia Crone, *The Qu'rānic Pagans and Related Matters: Collected Studies in Three Volumes*, vol. 1 (Brill, 2016).

<sup>49</sup> Patricia Crone, *The Iranian Reception of Islam: The Non-Traditionalists Strands: Collected Studies in Three Volumes*, vol. 2 (Brill, 2016).

<sup>50</sup> Patricia Crone, *Islam, the Ancient Near East and Varieties of Godlessness: Collected Studies in Three Volumes*, vol. 3 (Brill, 2016).

<sup>51</sup> Patricia Crone et al., eds., *Islamic Cultures, Islamic Contexts: Essays in Honor of Professor Patricia Crone, Islamic History and Civilization : Studies and Texts*, volume 114 (Leiden: Brill, 2015).

<sup>52</sup> *For the Life of Me: Between Science and the Law*, 2016, <https://youtu.be/IPPZDMHJzQY>.

<sup>53</sup> Chase F. Robinson, "Crone and the end of Orientalism," <http://www.almuslih.com/Library/Robinson,%20C%20-%20Crone%20and%20Orientalism.pdf>. 6.

<sup>54</sup> Robinson, "Crone and the end of Orientalism" 11.

amalgamation of Greek philosophical ideas in Islamic traditions. The discrepancy among historical sources shows that nothing is true, and things are fabricated.<sup>55</sup> Crone further wrote that Islamic traditions shows the description about various historical events which became lengthy over time.

She considers Muslims as a heretical branch of Judaism because they were the descendants of 'Hagar' (هاجره عليها السلام) the wife of Abraham (عليه السلام). Due to this reason, they have called 'Hagarnees'. According to her the 'exodus' (*Hijrah*) was the central duty of faith for these 'Hagarnees', same as done by Mosa (عليه السلام) through Red Sea. These Hagarnees replaced the term 'Hijra' with 'Islam' and became 'Muslims' from 'Hagarnees'. This all they did to have distinction from other children of Ibrahim; 'Jews' and 'Christians'.<sup>56</sup> In the early period of 7<sup>th</sup> century, Jews and Hagarnees were united into faith to recover the Holy Land from the Byzantine Christians. Giving evidence on this claim, she said that Muḥammad (صلى الله عليه وسلم) was the military leader, and his expedition was actually to conquer Jerusalem and his hijra was the journey from Arabia to that city to fulfill his aim.

To make the foundation of their religion Muslims adopted the concept of sacred scripture Qu'rān from Jewish Torah. There is no evidence on the existence of Qu'rān before the last decades of seventh century, it was actually compiled by 'Uthman on the basis of various materials<sup>57</sup> from Judeo-Christian and Middle Eastern sources.<sup>58</sup> Furthermore, these Hagarnees have taken the concept of prophet from the Judeo-Christian belief of Messianism, which is written in the Bible and they reinterpreted him as the Prophet of Arabia.<sup>59</sup> The concept of holy city of Makkah, adjacent to the holy mountain like Jerusalem is also the adopted from Judaism. These Hagarnees have established Islamic concepts by using Judaic language such as they have taken the idea of 'ulama' from 'rabbis'. Later, these Hagarnees split from Judaic practices and beliefs to create new religious identity and for getting

<sup>55</sup>- Crone, *Meccan Trade and the Rise of Islam*. pp. 223-224.

<sup>56</sup>- Patricia Crone, *Hagarism: The Making of the Islamic World*. 20.

<sup>57</sup>- Patricia Crone, *Hagarism: The Making of the Islamic World*. 17.

<sup>58</sup>- Liaquat Ali Khan, "Hagarism: The Story of a Book Written by infidels for infidels," (2006), <http://baltimorechronicle.com/2006/042606AliKhan.shtml>.

<sup>59</sup>- Ibid. pp.11-12.

theological legitimacy on a new version of Abrahamic monotheistic faith, recognized as Islam.<sup>60</sup>

### Criticism on Patricia Crone's Work in Academia

Her new approach to study Islam inspired many who studied Islamic history. However, it also received internal and external scholarly critique. Robert Hoyland is one among her students who took forward the contribution of his teacher. He wrote his Ph.D. dissertation *Seeing Islam as Others Saw It*<sup>61</sup> under her supervision. Daniel Pipes (b. 1949) an American historian, is also among those who gives reference of 'Hagarism' in his works to support his arguments.<sup>62</sup> In Western scholarship her work also considered as a blatant attack on Islam which had dropped of the veil of anti-Orient motives in intellectual academic inquiry, put on from centuries. Edward Said responded to her work 'Hagarism' and articulate that it is an attempt of anti-Arab polemics<sup>63</sup>. Toby Lester<sup>64</sup> says that her book 'Hagarism' is the most notorious work of her in which she has made radical arguments against the origins of Islam and the Islamic history. He further says that though 'Hagarism' faced a lot of criticism from Muslims and non-Muslims alike, but Crone continued challenging orthodox views, which reflects in her other writings, such as *Meccan Trade and the Rise of Islam* and *Slaves on Horses*.<sup>65</sup> Chase F. Robinson wrote in his article *Crone and the end of orientalism* that Crone's work was consist of series of assaults on the orthodox views which has settled the consensus of early Islamic history.<sup>66</sup> Even though, Michael A. Cook the co-author of the book 'Hagarism', changed his tack when he realized that he went in wrong

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<sup>60</sup>- Jose Luis Dizon, "Watt Vs. Crone on Historical Sources: A Short Analysis," n.d., [https://www.academia.edu/30900539/Watt\\_vs.\\_Crone\\_on\\_Islamic\\_Sources](https://www.academia.edu/30900539/Watt_vs._Crone_on_Islamic_Sources).

<sup>61</sup>- Robert G. Hoyland, *Seeing Islam as Others Saw It A Survey And Evaluation Of Christian, Jewish And Zoroastrian Writings On Early Islam* (New Jersey: The Darwin Press, Inc. Princeton, 1997).

<sup>62</sup>- Wright, "At the Limits of Orientalism: The Politics and Problems of Labelling in the Career of Michael A. Cook ". 2.

<sup>63</sup>- Stephanie Wright, "At the Limits of Orientalism: The Politics and Problems of Labelling in the Career of Michael A. Cook," n.d., <https://www.religiousstudiesproject.com/persons/stephanie-wright/.ff>. Ben Ali to Hammonda, 2011, <http://hammonda.net/?919>.

<sup>64</sup>- Toby Lester, "What is the Koran?," (1999), <https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/1999/01/what-is-the-koran/304024/> 4.

<sup>65</sup>- Ibid. 10.

<sup>66</sup>- Chase F. Robinson, "Crone and the End of Orientalism," n.d., <http://www.almuslih.org/Library/Robinson,%20C%20-%20Crone%20and%20Orientalism.pdf>.

direction in this book and considered it as a 'youthful idea'<sup>67</sup> and said "I thought the argument of *Hagarism* to be wrong".<sup>68</sup> On Revisionism, Marchand wrote in her book *German Orientalism in the Age of Empire: Religion, Race and Scholarship* that "Looking at things in new ways is very hard, much harder than our garden-variety histories of scholarship".<sup>69</sup> Robert Bertram Serjeant, the lecturer of Islamic history at Cambridge was also among those who was against the methodology adopted by Crone. John Wansbrough who was the predecessor for Crone's pragmatic skeptical approach, made clear statements on her work '*Hagarism*' that "a discrete collection of literary stereotypes composed by alien and mostly hostile observers...."<sup>70</sup> Fred M. Donner said that even though there are a lot of differences in religious matters among Muslims but they became agree on many points when they talk about historical accounts of Islam.<sup>71</sup> Like Donner there are some other scholars who stands in the middle to judge Islam as well Crone's methodology, i.e. Gregor Schoeler (b. 1944) and Harris Birkeland (1904–1961), Harold Motzki (1948–2019), Herbert Berg, etc. In opposite to Crone there is another approach called sanguine approach through which scholars studies Islam in a positive way, among those scholars who have adopted it are; Nabia Abbott (1897-1981), Fuat Sezgin (1924-2018), Muḥammad Mustafa Al-A'zami (1930-2017) etc.

Contrary to Crone, Nabia Abbott who was an American scholar of Islam and Papyrologist. She said that *Aḥadīth* were written and preserved by companions of the Holy Prophet Muḥammad (ﷺ) in his

<sup>67</sup>- Wright, "At the Limits of Orientalism: The Politics and Problems of Labelling in the Career of Michael A. Cook " 1.

<sup>68</sup>- Michael A. Cook, "RE: A Student's Query," 2011, <https://mail.yahoo.com/d/folders/1/messages/9745?.src=fp>.

<sup>69</sup>- G. Fowden, "German Orientalism in the Age of Empire: Religion, Race, and Scholarship, by Suzanne L. Marchand \* German Orientalism: The Study of the Middle East and Islam from 1800 to 1945, by Ursula Wokoeck," *The English Historical Review* CXXVI, no. 518 (February 1, 2011): 209–12, <https://doi.org/10.1093/ehr/ceq407>.

<sup>70</sup>- J. Wansbrough, "Patricia Crone and Michael Cook: Hagarism: the making of the Islamic world.," *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies*(2009), <https://www.cambridge.org/core/journals/bulletin-of-the-school-of-oriental-and-african-studies/article/patricia-crone-and-michael-cook-hagarism-the-making-of-the-islamic-world-ix-268-pp-cambridge-etc-cambridge-university-press-1977-750/AF49BDF120B5B15C89DE167D13CA8B3D>.

<sup>71</sup>- Donner, Fred M. *Narratives of Islamic Origins (the Beginnings of Islamic Historical Writing)*. Studies in Late Antiquity and Early Islam. Princeton, New Jersey: The Darwin Press, 1998, pp 26-27.

life with great care so that they can get further guidance in their lives after Prophet's death.<sup>72</sup> According to her Muḥammad (ﷺ) laid the foundation of such a community which played an important role in history. Their religious book contains the stories of past nations and prophets, means their religion starts with the evidence on the preservation of history. Their prophet has provided guidance and warning to humanity in such a way that his followers preserved the Holy Qu'rān and the words of their Prophet in the form of *Sunnah* and *Ḥadīth*. In early decades the historical traditions or preservation of *Aḥadīth* were not consider as separate discipline. These sources helped in understanding Qu'rānic text and was the record of life of Muḥammad (ﷺ). The early chronicles were preserved by 'Abdullah Ibn 'Umar, Ka'ab al-Aḥbār, Wahab Ibn al-Munabbayh, 'Urwah Ibn al-Zubayr. Later, Tabqāt Ibn al-Sa'd, Sīrah Ibn Ishaq and Sīrah Ibn al-Hash'ām were the earliest documentaries, which describes the life of the companions of the Prophet Muḥammad (ﷺ).<sup>73</sup>

Sir Hamilton Alexander Rosskeen Gibb (1895-1971) was among those scholars who has chosen the middle way to study Islam. He was a Scottish historian and orientalist. He was not skeptic nor credulous, but he did a worthy work on Islamic historiography.<sup>74</sup> Harald Motzki (1948-2019) and Gregor Schoeler are German scholars of Islam. They did not reject *Ḥadīth* literature entirely as Crone did but accept them with reasoning that if exact version of events is not available even then the transformation of information reaches back to the generation who were contemporaries of the Prophet Muḥammad (ﷺ).<sup>75</sup> Gregor Schoeler who is a German scholar of Islam, said in his book *The Biography of Muḥammad, nature and authenticity*<sup>76</sup> and Harald Motzki said in his book *The Biography of Muḥammad the issue of the sources*<sup>77</sup> that even though *Ḥadīth* literature is written two or three centuries after

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<sup>72</sup>- Abbott, *Studies in Arabic Literary Papyri*, 1. pp.6-7.

<sup>73</sup>- Nabia Abbott, *Studies in Arabic Literary Papyri-I*, vol. 1 (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1957).pp.6-8.

<sup>74</sup>- Nabia Abbott. 6.

<sup>75</sup>- Bilal Ahmad, "Harald Motzki and Hadith, an Overview," *Fikr o Nazr*, no. 56 (n.d.). pp.114-115.

<sup>76</sup>- Gregor Schoeler, Uwe Vagelpohl, and James E. Montgomery, *The Biography of Muhammed: Nature and Authenticity*, Routledge Studies in Classical Islam 1 (New York, NY: Routledge, 2011). P.90.

<sup>77</sup>- Harald Motzki, *The Biography of Muhammad: The Issue of the Sources*, 2000, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1163/9789004452909>. 11.

death of Holy Prophet even then we can understand what really happened in early period of Islam.

Contrary to Crone, there are also those western scholars who acknowledged the authenticity of Islamic sources, *Aḥadīth* and traditions. Among those are Johann Fueck (d. 1974) a German Orientalist, who produces many studies on the early history of Islam. He was against the skeptical approach of his fellow orientalists and believed that there are many authentic traditions which linked back to the second century. He was among those scholars who gave response to the orientalist's writings which were written against Islam.<sup>78</sup> Andrew Lawrence Rippin (1950-2016) a Canadian orientalist and Scholar of early period of Islam. He did several works on Qu'rān and its early interpretation and on Muslims, on their religious believes and practices. The sociologist Ernst Gellner (1925-1995), who is a British-Czech philosopher and social anthropologist, has considered Islamic features as highly congruent, compatible with modern world, its believers have strict scripturalism and law observance.

Among Muslims who gave response to the orientalists' writings are Fuat Sezgin a Turkish orientalist, a scholar of history and Islamic science. He established museums in Frankfurt and Istanbul where replicas of ancient Arabic-Islamic scientific instruments, tools and maps has placed. He is renowned scholar for his 17 volume *Geschichte des Arabischen Schrifttums*<sup>79</sup> a standard reference book on the history of science and technology in the Islamic world. Through his PhD thesis, titled *Buhari'nin Kaynakları*<sup>80</sup> (The Sources of al-Bukhari) he established the proofs over authenticity of *Aḥadīth* that these were dating back to the 7th century and refuted the notions of European orientalists. Muḥammad Mustafa Al-Azami (1930-2017) was a well-known Indian scholar of *Ḥadīth* and famous for his critique on his contemporary orientalists' theories such as Ignac Goldziher, David Margoliouth and Joseph Schacht. Muḥammad Feroz-ud-Din Shah wrote his Ph. D. thesis on *Orientalist Research Methodology Towards the Qur'anic Text (Analytical*

<sup>78</sup>- Aayesha Rafiq, "Western Scholarship on 'Origins' of Islamic Law: An Analytical and Critical Study" (Doctor of Philosophy In Islamic Studies, Islamabad, National University of Modern Language, Islamabad, 2013), 19.

<sup>79</sup>- Fuat Sezgin, *Geschichte des arabischen Schrifttums. 2: Poesie - bis ca. 430 H* (Leiden: Brill, 1975). See online: "Sezgin Online: A Bio-Bibliography for the Arabic Literary Tradition," n.d., <https://brill.com/view/db/sezo>.

<sup>80</sup>- M.Fuad SEZGİN, "Buhari'nin Kaynakları Hakkında Araştırmalar, Ankara Üniversitesi İlahiyat Fakültesi" (ANKARA, Ankara Üniversitesi İlahiyat Fakültesi, 1956).



*Study*)<sup>81</sup> in which he did analysis of Western scholars of past and modern era and mentioned Crone among them, who claim that Qu'rānic Text has not divine originality rather, it is formed through Jewish Canon, composed, and fabricated by prophet of Islam. The attempt has been made to show the deficiencies of western scholars in studying the Qu'rānic text and its historiography. Furthermore, the research reveals that how these scholars looted Islamic manuscripts to distorting the facts. The so-called scientific methodologies of Westerners are also exposed in Islamic criticism.<sup>82</sup> Aayesha Rafiq in her Ph. D. dissertation *Western Scholarship on 'Origin' of Islamic Law: An Analytical and Critical Study*<sup>83</sup> did study on the approaches and trends adopted by Western scholars of twenty first century i.e. (1910-2010) such as Harald Motzki, Jonathan Brown (b. 1977), Wael Hallaq, Patricia Crone and a few more, to judge the originality of Islamic law. The researcher did analysis of the claims put-up by Western scholars that Islamic law is developed after influence of Jewish and pre-Islamic practices of local customs and doctrines. Furthermore, Qu'rān and *Hadith* have not divine origin. In her study the researcher observed that Western scholarship on Islam is concerned to its political hegemony over the Muslim world by presenting Islam as stereotype. The researcher also mentioned the Muslims response against Western scholars' biasness. Muḥammad Mohar Ali wrote on *Sīrat Al-Nabi and the Orientalists with Special Reference to the Writings of the William Muir, D. S. Margoliouth and W. Montgomery Watt*.<sup>84</sup> In which he studied the orientalist's views on *Sīrah* of the Holy Prophet Muḥammad (ﷺ), the work of the three Western scholars has been selected: William Muir (1819-1905), D.S. Margoliouth (1858-1940) and W. Montgomery Watt (1909-2006). The writer critically refuted the claims of the three who discredited the personality and life of the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) and considered him as a false Prophet. The writings of these orientalist which covers the one and a half century from mid of the nineteenth

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<sup>81</sup>- Muḥammad Feroz-ud-Din Shah, "Orientalist Research Methodology Towards the Qur'anic Text (Analytical Study)" (University of the Punjab, Lahore, 2005). Pp. 171-172.

<sup>82</sup>- Herbert Berg, *The Development of Exegesis in Early Islam: The Authenticity of Muslim Literature from the Formative Period*, 0 ed. (Routledge, 2013), <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203036969>.

<sup>83</sup>- , p. iv.

<sup>84</sup>- Muḥammad Mohar Ali, "Sīrat Al-Nabi and the Orientalists with Special Reference to the Writings of the William Muir, D. S. Margoliouth and W. Montgomery Watt" (Madina, Saudi Arabia, King Fahad Complex, 1997)., see its preface., pp. 20-27.

century to the end of the twentieth century shows that the plot against the personality of Holy Prophet Muḥammad (ﷺ) remained same. Conspires and efforts against Islam and its Prophet has not changed over time.

### **Conclusion**

The study concludes that Patricia Crone's work on early Islamic history was based on bigotry. As part of the 'Revisionist School of Islamic Studies', she refuted the originality of traditional Islamic sources and relied on non-Muslim documentation to rewrite Islamic history. The historian who does not give value to the customs, traditions, culture, beliefs, ideologies and customs of any religion or civilization certainly builds up a building that cannot be sustained on surface of the earth. The knowledge without knowing of its origin is incomplete, as Ibn Khaldun points out in '*Muqaddimah*'. For examining the events it is essential to get the clear knowledge of its principles and gives regard to its values, only speculations cannot work to reveal the truth. In general, people distressed something which they do not observe therefore, they lost themselves in the desserts of baseless assumptions and errors and strayed from the truth. This style is clearly seen in Crone's writings. The importance and uniqueness of Islam certainly proved by the fact that the characteristics which Islam has instilled in its societies does not appear in the non-Islamic societies i.e., the Arabian Peninsula, Buddhism, Christianity, and Byzantine.

### **Recommendations**

Although Patricia Crone's methodology has been the subject of numerous research, it is still necessary to reexamine her methods in a neutral and scientific manner. The information she utilized to create the history of Islam has to be evaluated. It is also necessary to draw attention to the absence of knowledge in Crone's work regarding Islamic origin. Numerous Muslim and non-Muslim scholars have worked on the history of Islam, including Nabia Abbott, Fuet Sizgen, and A. A. Azmi, among others. Many of them were Patricia's contemporaries, and some of them had already investigated the veracity of Islamic texts at the time Crone was writing about Islam. To reveal the reality in front of the public, a comparison of their works with Crone is essential.

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