

# Methodology of Regis Blachere (1900-1973) Regarding Quran: A Critical Analysis

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## ABSTRACT

The Orientalist movement is seen as a movement of science and research as well as targeting the purpose of doubt and confusion of Muslims. This study revolves around Western orientalist Regis Blachere about his involvement in the world of orientalism. The problem of study is to study the background of Regis Blachere's orientalist who has a lot of influence on current orientalist thought. In addition, this study looks at the field of study and the arguments given by Regis Blachere in the field of interpretation of the Qur'an. Then the question of judging the thoughts and methods in writing used by Regis Blachere to criticize the interpretation of the Koran. Another question is the finding of Regis Blachere's differences in the thinking of Islamic figures in addressing issues related to Islam, especially in the field of the Quran. The objective of this study is to identify the background, education, and corpus of Regis Blachere. Secondly, relates the field of study with arguments based on the thought of orientalist Regis Blachere. Third analyzes the concept of thinking and method of writing Regis Blachere in the field of Orientalism. The fourth is to distinguish Regis Blachere's orientalist thinking from Islamic thinkers. This study is more qualitative by using the facts, reviews, perceptions, and concepts in explaining the submissions. This research is based on a literature study through journals, articles, scientific books, and website. The solidity of Regis Blachere in the field of orientalist became the world's attention after he published a piece writing of Islam. He was also seen as an orientalist who dared to criticize the compilation of the Qur'an and succeeded in producing some works that gave a detailed argument about the Qur'an. He was an orientalist who studied the history of the Qur'an based on his history and made the reformation of the rasm of Utsmani. His thoughts are seen based on criticisms of the rasm Utsmani compiled by 'Uthman bin' Affan.

**Keywords:** Regis Blachere, Orientalist, Methodology, Quran, Islam

## INTRODUCTION

In its estimation, orientalism comes from a word orient and isme. In English, the word orient means the direction of rising sun and according to French means the East. The word isme means flow, establishment, knowledge, understanding, beliefs, and systems (Prod. Dr. Idri. M. Ag 2017). Terminally Edward Said (1994) categorized the three basic foundations of origins, which are a means of arrival relating to the Eastern nations based on the special Eastern and Western experiences of Europe, a style of thought based on Western anthology and epistemology in general, and a western style for dominate, rebuild, and have power over the east. Indeed, it is understandable that Orientalists are the supporters of the Orientalism movement who study the Eastern sciences of the Western scholarship of scientific knowledge or political and religious motives.

The meaning of orientalism according to Arabic, is taken from the word istisyraq taken from the isyraq word which means to claim to the light or instructions arising from the East. Thus, the meaning of this Arabic language is the opinion that orientalism is those who study about the East in the history, literature, custom, economy, religion, politics, society, and many others related to it. Western opinion on the word Orientalism is explained by A.J. Arberry where the original orientalist evidence was discovered in 1638 submitted by a church member in the East or Greek (Mohd Fikri Che Hussain 2011).

Explanation of the word orientalis has a variety of views and intentions. According to Edward W. Said (2014) the word orientalist refers to anyone, especially the West who teaches, writes, or studies the affairs of the orientalist world. The Orientalist movement involves the study of civilization, religion, art, literature, languages, and culture (Mohd Fikri Che Hussain 2011). According to Mohd Fikri Che Hussain (2011) in his book explains that the orientalis term only appears in France in the first case according to the allegation of an orientalist Maxim Rodinson and this term appears abruptly for the first two reasons the need to establish faculty of oriental study in the East. Secondly, they need scholars and experts to administer the process of publishing magazines, intellectual discourse, and academic studies.

Historically, these orientalists are aimed at distorting the teachings of Islam from their adherents. Also to increase doubts in the Muslim mind against Islamic teachings. This effort is based on academic studies, in addition to injecting racial and cultural differences that are more inclined towards Western Christianity than Eastern Islam (Ahmad Abdul Hamid Ghurab 1991).

Orientalist engagements have the various fields they search and study Among them are religious areas, which have mostly distorted the true teachings of Islam with the work, the derivation and influence of the orientalists themselves. Among the fields studied by some orientalis are the study of the Qur'an whether the study of the Qur'anic texts, the composition of the Quran and the laws in the Qur'an, and the interpretation of Quranic verses. The oriental figures involved in the study of the Qur'an include Theodore Noldeke-Frederick Schwally, Richard Bell, Arthur Jeffery, John Burton, and Regis Blachere. Their studies are more about the history of the Qur'anic verse and so with Regis Blachere who criticized the order of the Qur'an and the revelation of revelation.

Regis Blachere has an interesting background in the field of Arabic literature. He also published works mainly in the field of Quranic studies. He also analyzes the Qur'an with its own method of compiling the Qur'an based on the history of revelation.

## BIOGRAPHY

Regis Blachere is an orientalist known for his involvement in analyzing the Qur'an with details on the history and the composition of the Quran. He is also an expert in Arabic language, and be able to study the history of Arabic either writing or reading history. Regis Blachere was born on June 30, 1900 C.E in Paris, France. He moved to Morocco in 1915 following his father serving as an administrative officer there.

After graduating, he became a translator and at the same time his talent became a lecturer, and was assigned to be a school supervisor at Madrasah Maula Yusuf in Rabat, Morocco. Subsequently, he pursued a bachelor's degree at the Algeria University in 1922. He also earned a bachelor's degree in 1924. He returned to his home by teaching at Madrasah Maula Yusuf in Rabat and became a teaching staff.

With his great career and education, he was offered a teaching director at the Institute of des Hautes Etudes Marocaines by E. Levi Provencal until 1935. At the same time, he succeeded in producing two doctoral theses at the Sorbonne University of France which was to study the great 11th century Syrian poet , Abu Thayyib al-Mutannabi and translates the book Tabaqat al-Umam by the great philosopher Toledo, Sa'id al-Andalusi from Arabic to French. Because he specializes in Arabic Fushah, he was awarded the title of an Arabic expert at the Ecole Nationale des langues Orientales.

In 1950, he was crowned professor of Philology and Medieval Arabic Literature at the University of Sorbonne. Prior to that in 1942, he had replaced his teacher William Marcais at the Ecole Pratique des Hautes Etudes. In addition, R. Blachere was also the director of the Institute des Etudes Islamiques in Academic de Paris in 1956 until 1965. In 1972, he was also the director of the Center de Lexicographie Arabe and the vice president of the association for the development of Islamic studies . He died a year later on August 7, 1973 (Abdurrahman Badawi: 2003).

## THINKING AND WRITING METHODS

Regis Blachere argues that knowing literary can only deepen the Arab civilization, so he tries to reveal more deeply to know the center of Arab history by studying the Qur'an and the Prophet Muhammad. Blachere's thinking is more influenced by the study of the history of the Koran and the Prophet Muhammad as well as being influenced by some of the studies of other orientalist figures. With his expertise in Arabic, he saw the result of writing Theodore Neldoke had opened his mind to understanding Arab civilization. From then on, Blachere began to venture into the field of historical study, in addition to mastering the fields of literature and religion.

His thoughts can be seen through the writing of the results of the study that have been recorded as in *Le Coran*, *Introduction Au Coran* or *Le Probleme de Mohemet* and several other books. These three books are among the well-known findings of criticizing the compilation of Rasm 'Uthmani's mushaf and the history of revelation during the revelation of revelation. Most orientalists study the Koran by taking several methods in their writing, namely the Critical of Historical method derived from the method of criticism of the Bible.

The purity of the Qur'an is not like other scriptures they imagine such as the Bible that is exposed to the very basic questions such as the text, the original text, the different text versions, the text editor, the textual style of the text and the beginning of the text (Abdul Karim 2013). Thus, studies that criticized Bibles such as Philological study, Literary criticism, Textual criticism, and Redaction criticism.

Regis Blachere's view of the Qur'an is like criticizing the weakness of the Bible. Although he was not as resolute as the other orientalists, he was also influenced in studying the Qur'an criticizing rational facts. Seeing the influence of Blachere's works leads to the study of the Quran and the prophet Muhammad. Thus, explanations in his writing method are based on the description of thought and writing in his work.

So, what can be seen through the purpose of writing Blachere's work is to criticize the structure of the collection of the Quranic texts. Blachere discovers duplications and differences between history and other narratives (Andar Nobowo 2015). According to Subhi al-Shalih (1988) in the context of the history of the collection of the Qur'an, the history explains that from Ibn Syihab al-Zuhri of Anas bin Malik is the most popular and dominant document to observe the construction of the history of the collection of the Qur'an in which there is a history:

Hudzaifah b al-Yaman is facing utsman. he is presiding over the Syrian and Iraqi people in a military expedition to Armenia and Azerbaijan (30H / 650M). Hudzaifah was worried by their quarrels (Syrians and Iraqis) about the recitation of the Koran. Hudzaifah then told Utsman "O dear believer, save this people before they dispute about the Book of Allah as it has been with the Jews and Christians in the past." Then Utsman sent a messenger to Hafshah with the message "Send us the suhuf which is in your hands, so that it can be reproduced and copied into some mushaf and then will be returned to you". Hafshah sent his suhuf to Utsman who later called Zaid ibn Tsabit, 'Abd Allah b al-Zubair, Sa'id b al-'Ashsh and 'Abd al-Rahman b al-Haris, and ordered them to copy into some mushaf. Utsman said to the three Qurais (in the group), "If you disagree with Zaid on the Qur'an, then write in the Quraish dialect, as the Qur'an is revealed in their language". They followed the order, and after successfully copying the suhuf into some mushaf, Utsman returned it to Hafshah. Mushaf copies are then sent back and ordered to be burned.

With the story of the collection of the Qur'anic verses above, it can be clearly understood in the context of Islamic history. From here, Blachere disputes how to destroy the objects of the revelation note, the animal skeleton, the camel bone and many more. In addition, Blachere also poses an issue for the results of his research on the differences in history that mention the names of members involved besides the names most of which are in the history of Zaid bin Tsabit, 'Abd Allah b. al-Zubair, Sa'id b al-'Ashsh and 'Abd al-Rahman b al-Harits. He argues that there are other names that are also involved in members of the collection of the Qur'an in a minority history but are not taken seriously (Regis Blachere 1977).

Furthermore, Regis Blachere also criticized the history of saying 'Ali b Abi Talib is merely a fictitious design in complying with Khalifah' Uthman for his actions. He also stated that Ibn Mas'ud disagreed and opposed

'Uthman b Affan (Andar Nobowo 2015).

Regis Blachere was inspired by various questions behind the collection of the Mushaf of the Quran especially against the Caliph 'Uthman b Affan with the questions of what Uthman's hidden intentions and motives moved to collect the Qur'an. What is the difference between the Mushaf of Uthman and the Mushaf of Abu Bakr while the two are the personal mushaf. Blachere argued that ancient or ancient works have given an illustration of imaginations, inventions, imitators and authors so that they cannot be identified and at least little information is available.

Therefore, for Blachere what needs to be done is to look at the text by associating social groups, how they are born, their ideas, and how their reflections are. The theories he uses are external historicalism applied to the Bible tradition by revealing external factors of the work or text. The factors such as narrator personality, community environment, historical evidence, and specific circumstances, the process of composing a text (Muhammad Sa'id Jamal al-Din) Thus, the relation from here, he saw 'Uthman b Affan used its influence which is powerful for collecting the Qur'an on the basis of power and selecting members involved in the factors of residence and societal factors by naming it as a Mecca of Quraish aristocracy.

From these criticisms, Blachere gives his views on historical events and has some of his works such as *Le Coran* and *Introduction Au Coran*. In this corpus, he produced a sequence of chronology of the suras of the Qur'an based on the period divided into three namely the period of Early Mecca, Middle Mecca, and Mecca. This period is different in the form of history according to the revelation of the prophet Muhammad. For Regis, to put the order of letters need to look at the prophet's revelation and necessarily have to study the life span of the prophet Muhammad's life. There are several diagrams that prove the arrangement made by Regis Blachere in deciding the arrangement of the suras based on the time or period of revelation in Mecca (Taufik Adnan Amal 2013).

The order of surahs when the first Mecca was shorter. His verses were also short and rhyming. Often the sura has an oath, as well as beautiful and poetic language.

Surahs in the middle or second period of Mecca are more longest and prose-shaped, but still have a poetic language. It is a transition between the early and late Mecca periods. The signs of the Almighty God are emphasized in nature and divine nature as rahmah, about heaven and hell and the stories of the prophets before the prophet Muhammad.

Surahs in the period are more Long and prose-shaped. According to Noeldeke-Schwally the use of al-rahman as the name of God's self ends in this third period. Whereas the story of the story and the manuscript mentioned in the previous period are described in more detail in the third period.

## CRITICAL ANALYSIS

Orientalists when studying the history of the Qur'an tend to be negative. This is because their world view when studying the history of the Qur'an is more dominated by their ideology and theology. Many of the fictitious expressions they make when studying the history of the Qur'an. This is seen in the Regis Blachere's view of the Qur'an as it criticizes the weakness of the Bible. The Qur'an has a very big difference from the Bible and has the features of eternal prosperity throughout the ages. In contrast to the Bible, the Qur'an is of the nature of Godliness that all the laws, pronounces, and rules come from God alone. There is nothing to do with the culture and customs experienced by men, now and beyond.

The Qur'an is universal or global that can be felt by all human beings. For non-Muslims can also feel the same pleasure if the Islamic jurisprudence is implemented. In addition, the Qur'an is comprehensive in keeping with the welfare and importance of human capital so that all people can live comfortably, peacefully, and harmoniously when all the laws in the Qur'an become a living element. The Quran is characterized as contemporary as is the principle and fundamental of Islam that proves the Qur'an in line with current developments. Equality among men is also emphasized in the Qur'an that it is only seen in piety, not on the color, appearance, race, race, rank, and rank (Daud Ismail, Asyraf Ab Rahman 2013).



Contrary to the much-fancied Bible goes vague in explaining something in the text. It also contains doubts about quality and most of them have intercepted the writing of the Bible to be in line with the will of their lives. In addition, Blachere also disputes how to destroy the objects of the revelation note, the animal skeleton, the camel bone, and others. In the history of Islamic manuscript, al-Bukhari explains that the method of abolition of manuscripts by burning aims to erode and remove text and reading differences caused by non-official typing from submerging it into the water. Among the manuscripts were written during the reign of Caliph Abu Bakr Al-Siddiq (Daud Ismail, Asyraf Ab Rahman 2013).

In addition, Blachere also poses an issue for the results of his research on the differences in history that mention the names of members involved besides the names most of which are in the history of Zaid bin Tsabit, 'Abd Allah b. al-Zubair, Sa'id b al-'Ashsh and 'Abd al-Rahman b al-Harits. He argues that there are other names that are also involved in members of the collection of the Qur'an in a minority history but are not taken seriously.

In Islam, it is not a major problem that has been discussed as Muslims have accepted that there is a difference in opinion in expressing the number of those involved in the gathering of the Quran. Referring to Islamic history, al-Bukhari mentions four persons, there is another narration called two persons, there are also an increase of up to five or seven but we do not reject it firmly (Ali b Sulaiman Al-'Abid -)

Regis Blachere also criticized the history of saying 'Ali b Abi Talib is merely a fictitious design in complying with Khalifah' Uthman for his actions. Ali b Abi Talib as a companion has expressed his view of his consent to collect the Qur'an. Behind this story there is a history that Blachere does not regard as its history:

Suwaid b Gafrah, Ali B Abi Thalib said, "Do not you think of Utsman b Affan except for his goodness, for God he does not do what he does in the works except in accordance with our agreement" then he says "what do you think of this qiraah? ". Some say "My reading is better than yours." and it almost causes mutual compromise. Then we say "what do you think?" he said "I think that men agree on one mushaf, and there should be no division and disagreement", Then we say "What you see is the best"

Based on this narration, it is evident that Uthman also met 'Ali b Abi Talib before collecting the Qur'an. Before he made this criticism, Blechere made a mistake by saying that he did not get enough information to illustrate the abusive attitude of the companions of Ali ibn Abi Talib (Andar Nobowo 2015).

He also stated that Ibn Mas'ud disagreed and opposed 'Uthman b Affan. In this case, he also took the history of Ibn Dawud for which he saw a tendency, but he did not state what the tendency was behind the emergence of the narrative. For Muslim scholars, there is indeed a contradiction of Ibn Mas'ud in the action of Utsmani 'Uthman who made mushaf' and destroys his mushaf. Ibn Mas'ud's attitude gave another wisdom and finally confirmed it with the blessing of Allah and Ibn Mas'ud to agree (Subhi al-Shalih 1988).

Regis Blachere sees' Uthman b Affan using his powerful influence to collect the Qur'an on the basis of power and choose members involved in the factors of residence and societal factors by naming it as a Mecca of Quraish aristocracy. However, despite this accusation, 'Uthman bin' Affan was a great Caliph of Islam who could not make it a matter of self-interest except for religion and God alone. Proof to answer the allegations that 'Uthman used the influence by taking the Meccans only and the family members can be explained by the view of the authority of each companion involved in this collection process.

As Zaid bin Tsabit was known as hafiz, the Prophet's secretary, the Al-Quran collector during the reign of Abu Bakr As-Siddiq, known as an honest, devout, trustworthy, intelligent, and referring to religious affairs during the reigns of 'Umar and' Uthman. Whereas Abd Allah b. al-Zubair is one of the best-known friends of Century, because of the depth of knowledge his possesses and memorization of the al-Quran. Next Sa'id bin 'Ashsh was a fluent speaker among the Quraish and his closest dialect with the prophet Muhammad. Abd Al-Rahman bin Al-Harits is the most noble Qurayish, his childhood was raised by 'Umar b Al-Kattab and married the daughter' of Uthman b Affan. While Zubair was not born in Mecca but in Medina (Andar Nobowo 2015).

Based on the result of the order of surahs made by Regis Blachere gives a different view from the way the sura

order follows experts in Islam. Among the well-known arrangements taken by experts are the chronology of Ibn Abbas and also the chronology of Egypt. This is because the order of chronology of the Qur'anic verses given to Ibn Abbas is widely accepted and is an official view of the Islamic Orthodox. The narrative included 85 Surahs in the Makkiyah period and 28 other Surahs in the Madaniyyah period. There followed a slight change by al-Quran editor of the Egyptian issue by setting 86 Surahs in the Makkiyah period by including surah 1 into it and the rest in the Madaniyyah period (Taufik Adnan Amal 2013).

## CONCLUSION

It can be concluded that Regis Blachere turns out to be a figure of orientalist, which bring thought to the West. His involvement in the Arab world has led to critical thinking on the knowledge of Arab civilization. Though his thoughts were to interfere with the highly respected Qur'anic structure of the Muslims, he pointed out that his attraction and mastery attracted deeply into the study. Regarding the historical method used to study the history behind the compilation of the Qur'an and lay the order of the surah according to the revelation period. Although his determination is deep in Utsmani's rasm of research, his research findings are not the source of the Muslims. This is because his study is based only on external historical information and personal point of views on the Quran.

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