Abstract

The case of Imam Hussain has reached all corners of the world because Imam Hussain sacrificed himself and his followers, family and companions, in the Battle of Karbala to stand for all that is noble, sublime, and exalted in the history of humanity, and not only to defend Islamic values. For this reason in particular, it is generally agreed that the aims of his revolution against tyranny, corruption, ignorance, and injustice are not confined to Muslims but they are universal. That is why many worldwidemon-Muslim leaders took Imam Hussain as a model in their struggle and achieved glorious victories against their oppressors. Good example is the Indian political and spiritual leader Mahatma Gandhi. The commemoration of the valiant sacrifice of Imam Hussain takes different forms and patterns. It depends on the levels of comprehension and understanding of the case of Imam Hussain that the people who perform Muharram observances possess. Some Shiite-Muslim communities are fully aware of the essence of Imam Hussain's noble case while the knowledge of others do not even penetrate its shell. Its noticed that western writers concentrate on the latter slice of Shiite-Muslims with little exaggeration and much confusion which gives the western reader a hazy and distorted image of the case of Imam Hussain. It is the general aim of this paper to do an attempt to substitute the misshapen image of Muharram observances in the imagination of its western intended readers by their true image. This aim is particularly achieved through showing the picture that E.M. Forster delineates in his masterpiece A Passage to India of Muharram observances. The paper attempts first to give an accurate definition to Muharram observances which can never be understood unless ideological and historical accounts of the story of Islam are put forth, starting with the death of Prophet Muhammad and ending in Imam Hussain's murder. The paper, then, attempts to juxtapose the Muslim-Shiite scholars' understanding of Muharram observances with that of western writers, giving the western reader a precious opportunity to take knowledge from its original source. Finally, the paper gives a detailed and transparent analysis of the way in which Forster portrays Muharram observances in his A Passage to India.

المبحث

Keywords

Historical Heritage Section ---