

Khalifa Ali bin Abu Talib - Assessment of Ali by Western Scholars

Edward Gibbon

In his book *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, Edward Gibbon observes as follows, about the assassination of Othman and the succession of Ali: "A tumultuous anarchy of five days after the martyrdom of Othman was appeased by the inauguration of Ali, his refusal would have provoked a general massacre. In this painful situation he supported the becoming pride of the chief of the Hashimites; declared that he would rather serve than reign, rebuked the presumption of the strangers and required the formal, if not the voluntary, assent of the chiefs of the nation. He has never been accused of promoting the assassination of Othman, though Persia indirectly and secretly celebrates the festivals of that holy martyr. The quarrel between Othman and his subjects was assuaged by the early mediation of Ali, and Hasan the eldest of his sons, was insulted and wounded in the defense of the Caliph".

While commenting on the failure of Ali in matters pertaining to statecraft, Gibbon observes as follows: "A life of prayer and contemplation had not chilled the martial activity of Ali, but in a mature age, after a long experience of mankind, he still betrayed in his conduct the rashness and indiscretion of youth".

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Source : *Alim.org-Ali bin Abu Talib History*