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*Special Issue*

on

**Qur'anic Studies-I**

**The Indian Journal of Arabic and Islamic Studies**  
Special Issue on **Qur'anic Studies-I**

**Maulana Azad Ideal Educational Trust**

Bolpur, West Bengal, India (Reg. No. IV01697/14)





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## The Indian Journal of Arabic and Islamic Studies

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## Editor's Note

The blessed eagerly awaited work on the Qur'ān has, finally, by the grace of God, accomplished which we are going to publish as the first special issue of the journal on the Qur'ān. We regret any inconvenience of the writers and readers who have been anxiously waiting for it to read. This issue is a four-set series that spans the time from July 2017 to June 2018 means it covers four issues as a whole. This issue contains seventy research papers on different aspects of the Qur'ān.

The Qur'ān is a divine book revealed in Arabic on the Prophet of Islam Muḥammad bin 'Abdullāh (PBUH) to guide the whole mankind. It took twenty three years to complete the process of its revelation. The Prophet continued to arrange it in an order as well as he busied himself to convey this divine message to his fellow companions. Apart from teaching this Book to his followers he kept on training some of his selected companions 'how to teach it' to other followers and 'how to ponder upon it' to find out its inner meanings and secrets these divine verses contained.

During the course of time a selected number of companions emerged to expertise over the Qur'ān. These companions not only indicated to its inner meanings they also propagated this message and trained a group of their pupils who continued to ponder upon the Qur'ān viz-a-viz to instruct some persons who transmitted this pious work and passed on this process to the coming generations who later compiled these findings as the book form.

Since revelation of the Qur'ān its addressees were divided into two groups-one accepted its teachings while the other

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opposed it. Then later on these opponents were divided into two categories one of them tried to refute it from any possible way while the other party did not oppose it though they did not embrace it. The same situation is here today save the opponents have organized their attempts. But Allah will never let His message to be refuted (وَاللَّهُ مُتِمُّ نُورِهِ وَلَوْ كَرِهَ الْكَافِرُونَ).

There was a third mention-worthy challenge which the Qur'ān faced, and that was contemporary science/sciences. At the time of its revelation the Qur'ān faced previous heavenly books and baseless objections of the pagans, then it faced the Greek and other strange sciences, thereafter the era of modern sciences came followed by different non-Arabic and un-Islamic thoughts and view-points which this divine book faced and it always successfully overcame them challenging each one and finally establishing its eternal philosophy of result-oriented teachings and thoughts.

The special issue on Qur'ān in your hands, is a glimpse of all these discussions involved. You will find here how it was written and calligraphed, what was the development of its sciences and studies, who contributed to this pious discipline, how this book challenged all sciences old and modern and in which way it remained intact before the multifaceted attacks of the opponents especially orientlists (إِنَّا نَحْنُ نَزَّلْنَا الذِّكْرَ وَإِنَّا لَهُ لَحَافِظُونَ).

At the end I wish to express my gratitude to all those who encouraged me and extended their help and support in preparation and publication of this issue including the members of the advisory, editorial and review boards of the Journal. It will be injustice if I do not offer my thanks to those who selflessly contributed their important articles to accomplish the missionary task involved. May Allah bestow

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upon us more and more desire and courage to serve the Qur'ān! I specially pray to Allah to bestow upon us 'rewards' in its return here and hereafter (وَأَخِرُ دَعْوَاهُمْ أَنْ الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ).

**Dr. Aurang Zeb A'zmī**

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## Qur'ānic Calligraphy in Medieval India

✎...Prof. Zafarul Islām<sup>1</sup>

Tr.: Dr. Moḥsin 'Atīq Khān<sup>2</sup>

The Qur'ān is an exalted divine book so whoever reads it or memorizes it is supposed to be blessed. In fact, any way to benefit from the knowledge of this holy book is not empty of blessings and benefits. One of the features of the Qur'ān is that it is not only the source of guidance, knowledge and science, rather a means through which various sciences and arts came into existence, including the art of writing, which rose up and was defined as "the art of calligraphy". There is no doubt that this book is read and printed more than any other book in the world, and is known by the two famous names 'the Qur'ān' and 'the Book', which appeared in the Qur'ān repeatedly. The word "Qur'ān" appeared for the first time in the chapter al-Muzzammil, which is the third chapter in terms of revelation. Allah says, ﴿ وَرَتِّلِ الْقُرْآنَ تَرْتِيلاً ﴾ (Tr.: And recite the Qur'ān well. al-Muzzammil: 04) and ﴿ فَأَقْرَأُوا مَا تيسَّرَ مِنْهُ ﴾ (Tr.: Recite the Qur'ān as much as possible. al-Muzzammil: 20). The significance of the Qur'ān mentioned in the beginning of the chapter al-Baqarah is that it is a book in which there is no doubt ﴿ أَلَمْ نَكْتُبْ لَكَ رَبِّبٌ ﴾ " فِيهِ". The important thing is that the mention of two words appears together in some of the chapters, as in the chapter al-Hijr: ﴿ أَلِفٌ لَامٌ رَاءٌ ﴾ (Tr.: Alif Lām Rā. These are the verses of the divine book and the clear reading. al-Hijr: 01) And in

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<sup>1</sup> Professor, Department of Islamic Studies, 'Aligarh Muslim University, 'Aligarh

<sup>2</sup> The translator did Ph. D in Arabic Jāmia Millia Islāmia, New Delhi

the chapter al-Naml: طَسَّ تِلْكَ آيَاتِ الْقُرْآنِ وَكِتَابٍ مُبِينٍ ﴿١﴾ (Tr.: Tā Sīn. These are the verses of the Qur'ān and the clear book. al-Naml: 01). These verses indicate that the reading and writing have a fundamental relationship with the Qur'ān, which was preserved in the tablet as a document, as the Qur'ān itself states: إِنَّهُ لَقُرْآنٌ كَرِيمٌ ﴿٧٧﴾ فِي كِتَابٍ مَّكْنُونٍ ﴿٧٨﴾ لَا يَمَسُّهُ إِلَّا الْمُطَهَّرُونَ ﴿٧٩﴾ (Tr.: This is indeed a Qur'ān most honorable, in a book well-guarded, which none shall touch but those who are clean. al-Wāqī'ah: 77-79).

The reading and writing of the Qur'ān started with the revelation of the Qur'ān itself, and in this way a relationship between the Qur'ān and the writing style and its causes began and continued until the recent era without interruption. In the chapter al-'Alaq, which is considered the first chapter in terms of the revelation, God the Almighty ordered the Prophet (PBUH) and his *ummah* to read the Qur'ān: أَقْرَأْ بِالْأَسْمِ الَّذِي خَلَقَ ﴿١﴾ خَلَقَ الْإِنْسَانَ مِنْ عَلَقٍ ﴿٢﴾ أَقْرَأْ ﴿٣﴾ وَرَبُّكَ الْأَكْرَمُ ﴿٤﴾ (Tr.: Proclaim with the name of your Lord Who has created (the man). (He) created him with the clotted blood like leech. Proclaim and your Lord is the Most Gracious Proclaim). In the interpretation of this verse, the author of the book 'Tafhīm-ul-Qur'ān explains:

"This is the grace of God that he made man the owner of knowledge, the greatest attribute of the creature of God, and not only that, but God taught him how to use the pen for writing which became a means of spreading knowledge and science at the greatest level and a means for the survival of knowledge and its preservation by generation after generations".<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Ibn 'Abd al-Barr, Jāmi' Bayān al-'Ilm wa Faḍluhu, Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmīyah al-Ḥadīthah, Cairo, 1975, P. 91

God Almighty ordered the believers to write the matters of loan, especially when they take the loan or exchange the loan as he said: 282- *يَتَأْتِيهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا إِذَا تَدَايَنْتُمْ بِدَيْنٍ إِلَىٰ أَجَلٍ مُّسَمًّى فَاكْتُبُوهُ* (Tr.: O Believers, when you contract a debt for a fixed term, you should put it in writing) while the greatest teacher of humanity, Prophet Muḥammad (PBUH), said: “safeguard the knowledge by pen.”<sup>1</sup> Moreover, we find the mention of the writing devices, its reasons and causes in the Qur’ān at various places, including pen, book, board, paper, and the booklets. Now read the first verse of the chapter “al-Qalam” (ن وَالْقَلَمِ وَمَا يَسْطُرُونَ ﴿١﴾) which says “Nūn, by the pen and what the scribes write”. In the interpretation of this verse, the celebrated interpretor Mujāhid was quoted as saying “That the pen meant here the one that was used to write the Dhikr, and the Dhikr means here the Qur’ān”.<sup>2</sup> This clarifies that the thing that was written is the Qur’ān. In Sunan al-Tirmidhī, the Prophet (PBUH) said: “The first thing that God Almighty created was the pen, He said to it to write,”<sup>3</sup> so to sum up, the art of writing is an old art, and it flourished in the Muslim community because of the relationship of the Muslims with the Qur’ān, and their efforts in decorating and writing the Qur’ān. In the era of the Prophet (PUBH), companions were very much concerned with the writing of the verses so that these might not be lost. Then the writing of the Qur’ān continued to be flourished among the public, and thus it spread among the Muslims. It is important to note that the people of different periods took up the profession of writing the

<sup>1</sup> Ibid, P. 91

<sup>2</sup> Al-Ṭabarī (Ibn-i-Jarīr), *Tafsīr al-Ṭabarī*, Dār al-Fikr, Beirut, 1978, 12/29 and Ibn Kathīr, *Tafsīr Ibn Kathīr*, Dār Iḥyā’ al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyyah, Egypt, n.d. 4/402

<sup>3</sup> Jāmi’ al-Tirmidhī, *Abwāb al-Qadr*, Bāb mā Jā’a fī al-Raḍā bi al-Qaḍā. Tirmidhī stated that this Ḥadīth is *Gharīb*. Al-Khaṭīb Abū al-Faḍl Kazūnī wrote a treatise with the title of ‘al-Risālah al-Qalamīyyah’. Ḥājī Khalīfah, *Kaṣhif al-Ḍunūn*, Istanbul, 1941, 1/884



Qur'ān as they considered it holy and sacred deed, and other opted it as an art and innovation and named it the art of calligraphy. And writing and calligraphy are among the most important arts which were created and invented by the Muslims, but it has become common trend among the educated circles that the Muslims have taken interest in the art of calligraphy and longed for it because Islam has forbidden the art of pictures and drawing, or because the art of writing is one of the arts that showed their longing and desire to a large extent. But in fact this view was presented by some orientlists and accepted by some Muslim scholars. And the writing of the Qur'ān and the endeavors of the scribes in the presentation of verses of the Qur'ān in the most beautiful forms resulted in the creation of this art that developed and prospered through the history.

We must know that the writing of the verses of the Qur'ān in the era of the Prophet (PBUH) was in the Kūfī style on various things such as skin, paper, etc., and in the era of the Caliph Abū Bakr (MABPWH) the collection of the Qur'ān and its codification in this style was done, and in the era of the caliph 'Uthmān (MABPWH) several copies of the Qur'ān were prepared in the Kūfī style to remove differences and conflicts in the reading of the Qur'ān. This style continued up to the end of the third century AH, but there have been some changes in its form, as it was decorated with points and expressions to facilitate reading of the non-Arabs during the Umayyad period.<sup>1</sup> The other styles invented by the Muslims at the end of the third century to write the Qur'ān, such as the

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<sup>1</sup> See for detail: al-Zarkashī (Badruddīn), *al-Burhān fī 'Ulūm al-Qur'ān*, 'Īsā al-Bābī al-Ḥalbī and Associates, 1057, PP. 250-251, Muḥammad 'Abdul 'Azīm al-Zarqānī, *Manāhil al-'Irfān fī 'Ulūm al-Qur'ān*, Dār Iḥyā' al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyyah, Egypt, 1372H, PP. 399-400 and al-Bilgrāmī (Mazharuddīn), *'Uyūn al-'Irfān fī 'Ulūm al-Qur'ān*, 'Alīgarh, 1980, PP. 104-108

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styles of Ruqa', Tauqī', Naskh, Ta'alīq, and Nasta'līq all were derived from the Kūfī style, and were similar to it in one form or the other. According to a well-known tradition, Ibn Maqla (d. 328 AH) developed the Kūfī style into another style that came to be known as Badī' and Muḥaqqiq. Then his pupil Ibn Bawwāb (d. 403 AH) made a further decoration and refinement to create another style known as the Naskh as it superseded others by its beauty. In the same century, Ḥassan bin 'Alī al-Fārsī, who was one of the contemporaries of the Sulṭān 'Imād al-Dailamī, invented another style by merging Ruqa' and Tauqī' and that came to be known as the Ta'alīq. Then, in the seventh century, a new style was invented by mixing Naskh and Ta'alīq and that was first known as the "Naskh wa Ta'alīq" but with the passage of time it got corrupted into "Nasta'līq" due to its excess use, and the credit for its invention goes to Amīr 'Alī Tabrezī who lived during the reign of Sulṭān Taimūr Lane (1331-1405).<sup>1</sup> In conclusion, if we review the various stages of the development of the art of calligraphy, we will find that what led to the great development in this art is the desire of Muslims and their desire to deliver the divine message in the form of the most beautiful images and in the characters and the styles of writing that pleased the eyes, so it is not correct to attribute the evolution of this art to the prohibition of filming in Islam, or the supervision of the sultans and kings, instead, the hope of the people to get rewarded by Allah for this work contributed to the development of the noble demand for reward. There is no doubt that the desire of some princes and

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<sup>1</sup> See for detail: Ghulām Muḥammad Haft Qalamī, *Nadhr-i-Khushnawīsā* +,- Asiatic Society of Bengāl, Kolkātā, 1910, PP. 18-26 and Iḥtirāmuddīn Aḥmad Shāghil, *Ṣaḥīfah-i-Khushnawīsān*, Anjuman Taraqqī Urdu Hind, 'Alīgarh, 1963, PP. 32-48

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kings in this art encouraged them to contribute to the development and promotion of this art, and in fact this blessed art was never in need of this type of assistance as will be clear from the following statements.

At the beginning of the thirteenth century, Muslims established a state in northern India, known as the "Sultanate of Delhi", and when the Sultanate reached its end, another state was established on its ruins in the form of Mughal Empire, which continued in one form or the other until 1857. In this era, various sciences and arts, including calligraphy spread across India and among the scholars and artisans who migrated to India during this period from Central Asia were also calligraphers.<sup>1</sup> There would have been hardly a ruler who did not have a calligrapher. The kings appreciated them and conferred on them gifts, and they enjoyed a high status as most kings loved to collect books and establish personal libraries and would buy excellent calligraphy models and encourage calligraphers, and others who were interested in calligraphy.<sup>2</sup> There was an established system of practice and instruction for the art of calligraphy. In fact, the process of teaching and learning was not considered complete without it, so it was necessary for the scholars to be familiar with the calligraphy, which was an important part of the syllabus of the higher schools.<sup>3</sup> The kings were particularly interested in teaching this art to their children and daughters, and this is demonstrated by the skills of Khusrau Parvez, Dārā Shikoh, Shujā', Gulbadan

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<sup>1</sup> Barnī (Diyā'uddīn), Tārīkh Fīroz Shāhī, Kolkātā, 1862, P. 365

<sup>2</sup> Sa'īd Aḥmad Rafīq, Islāmī Nizām-i-Ta'līm, Karāchī, 1956, PP. 5-34 and also see for detail: Dr. Zafar-ul-Islām Iṣlāḥī, 'Ahd-i-Islāmī ke Hindustān men A'alā Ta'līm ke Dharā'i', Taḥqīqāt-i-Islāmī, 13/1 (Jan-March, 1994), PP. 57-58

<sup>3</sup> Sīrat Fīroz Shāhī, Copy: 111, University Collection, Maulānā Āzād Library, 'Alīgarh Muslim University, P. 147 and Shāh Mu'īnuddīn Nadwī, Taimūrī Daur ki Khattātī aur Mashhūr Khattāt, Ma'ārif, 29/2 (August, 1963), P. 85

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Begum, Jahān Ārā, and Zaibun Nisā' in this art.<sup>1</sup> Among the kings themselves, Sulṭān Naṣiruddīn Maḥmūd, Muḥammad bin Tuḡhlaq, Bābar, and Aurangzeb were fond of this art.<sup>2</sup>

So the environment was very favorable for the art of calligraphy and many a great calligrapher appeared on the scene and showed their skills. During Muḡhal period, many artists showed their skills not only in seven famous styles of this art,<sup>3</sup> but also they developed other styles, including the styles of *Khatt-i-Gulzār*, *Ṭā'ūs*, *Zulf 'Arūs*, *Sunbul*, *Ra'anā*, *Ghubār*, *Bahār*, *Hilālī*, *Māhī*, *Makus* and others.<sup>4</sup> But what made this art popular among the masses and brought it to the peak of glory and ultimate development was its use for the writing of Qur'ān beautifully, and the desire of skilled artists to present its verses in fascinating and attractive manuscripts. The calligraphers considered the writing of the Qur'ān to be a profession that leads to happiness and blessing. And many of those who did not find opportunities to earn a living because of their preoccupation with government positions and yet did not see it appropriate to take their salaries from the Bait-ul-Māl (Government Treasury), opted to write the Qur'ān to make a living. The love of people is evidenced by the preoccupation of

<sup>1</sup> Tadhkirah *Khushnawīsān*, PP. 58, 59, 91, 95 and *Ṣāḥabzādah Shaukat 'Alī Khān*, *Islāmī Hind men Fann-i-Khattātī: Imtiyāzāt wa Khushūṣiyyāt*, Arabic and Persian Research Institute, Rājasthān, Tonk, 1982, P. 18

<sup>2</sup> *Shihābuddīn al-'Umrī*, *Masālik-ul-Amṣār* (Arabic text in *Tārīkh-i-Hind per ek Na'ī Roshnī ek Qalamī Kitāb se* by *Khurshīd Aḥmad Fāriq*), *Nadwat-ul-Muṣannifin*, Delhi, n.d. P. 38, *l'jāz Rāhī*, op.cit. PP. 145-150 and 'Abd-ul-Majīd Sālik, *Muslim Thaqāfat Hindustān men*, *Idārah Thaqāfat-i-Islāmīyyah*, Lāhore, n.d. PP. 398-401

<sup>3</sup> All famous seven styles of calligraphy are *Muḥaqqaq*, *Tauqī'*, *Ruqa'*, *Raiḥān*, *Thuluth*, *Naskh* and *Ta'līq*. All are Persian and the person who mastered all these was called as 'Haft Qalam'. *Shaukat 'Alī Khān*, op.cit. PP. 13-14

<sup>4</sup> *Shaukat 'Alī Khān*, op.cit. PP. 13-14

a number of people - who did not have knowledge of this art-to correct the copies of the Qur'ān, and they considered it a source of happiness.<sup>1</sup> This was not confined to scholars and sheikhs, but some sultans and princes also showed their interest in this art as we will mention in the following lines.

We are surprised to find that the earliest models of calligraphy with the kings and sultans. Sulṭān Ibrāhīm Ghaznawī, the nephew of Sulṭān Maḥmūd Ghaznawī and the son of Sulṭān Mas'ūd Shāh was among the princes of the Ghaznavid sultanate in Lāhore, and was known for his love of calligraphy and was famous for the title "Māhir-i-Haft Qalam" e.i. the master of the seven styles of calligraphy. He had a special desire to write the Qur'ān, and each year he would prepare two copies, one was sent to Makkah and the other to Madīnah. Five hundred years later, the famous Indian historian Abū al-Qāsim Farisṭah mentioned that a number of copies of the Qur'ān written by Sulṭān Ibrāhīm al-Ghaznawī are still available in the library of Ḥaḍrat Risālat Panāh Muḥammadī.<sup>2</sup> It is appropriate to point out here that there was a madrasah curriculum in Lāhore since the reign of Sulṭān Maḥmūd Ghaznawī, in which the calligraphy was taught along with other arts and sciences, and in that era a number of calligraphers from outside India participated in the promotion of calligraphy.<sup>3</sup> Sulṭān Nāṣiruddīn Maḥmūd (1224-1265) was the most famous sultan of Delhi in the field of writing the glorious Qur'ān. He was one of the kings who chose

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<sup>1</sup> Ghulām 'Alī Āzād Bilgirāmī, Ma'āthir-ul-Kirām, Mufīd-i-'Ām Press, Āgrah, 1910, P. 280 and Raḥmān 'Alī Khān, Tadhkirah 'Ulamā'-i-Hind, Naval Kishore, 1914, P. 144

<sup>2</sup> Abul Qāsim Hindu Shāh Farisṭah, Tārīkh-i-Farisṭah, Naval Kishore, 1864, 1/48 but it is not clear what Farisṭah meant of 'Maktabah Ḥaḍrat Risālat Panāh Muḥammadī' and see: Nuzhat-ul-Khawāṭir, Ḥyderabad, 1962, 1/51

<sup>3</sup> I'ijāz Rāhī, P. 145

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the writing of the Qur'ān to earn a living. He did not take even a single penny from the Bait-ul-Māl (Government Treasury) to spend on himself. The popular historian Ḍiyā'uddīn Barnī, who was one of the contemporaries of the sultan, stated that he used to write the Muṣḥaf (Qur'ān).<sup>1</sup> The historian al-'Usāmī mentioned the same thing in his epic.<sup>2</sup>

The Sultan wrote the Qur'ān for 19 years, and each year he completed two copies.<sup>3</sup> He would not accept the price of his copy of Qur'ān more than the market-price even sometimes he took less than the market-price, and he also never liked his name to appear on his copies so that the copy should not be sold on higher prices. Once a government official found a copy of it and bought it at an expensive price. The Sultan did not like that as he did not want to reveal his name in the market while selling his copy, so that the value of the copy is not more than the market-price.<sup>4</sup> He would think that if his name is revealed on his copy and sold at an expensive price, it would not be considered *ḥalāl* money.<sup>5</sup> It appears from the copies of the Qur'ān available from that era that the name of the author of the copy was shown on the cover of the book, and this is confirmed by some copies of the Sultan found after his death. The famous tourists Ibn Baṭṭūṭah, who visited India during the reign of Sulṭān Muḥammad bin Tuḡhlaq, hundred years later

<sup>1</sup> Barnī (Ḍiyā'uddīn), *Tārīkh-i-Fīroz Shāhī*, 'Alīgarh, 1957, P. 31

<sup>2</sup> 'Uṣāmī, *Futūḥ al-Buldān*, Madras, 1948, P. 156

<sup>3</sup> *Tārīkh-i-Fariṣṭah*, 1/74

<sup>4</sup> 'Abd-ul-Qādir Badāyūnī, *Muntakhab al-Tawārīkh*, Kolkātā, 1869, 1/89-90, Niẓāmuddīn Aḥmad Bakhshī, *Ṭabaqāt-i-Akbarī*, Kolkātā, 1927, 1/77, Mīr Khurd Kirmānī, *Siyar-ul-Auliya'*, Lāhore, 1978, P. 109 and *Tārīkh-i-Fariṣṭah*, 1/74

<sup>5</sup> Subḥān Roy Bandarī, *Khulāṣah al-Tawārīkh*, Delhi, 1918, P. 196 and Ghulām Ḥussain Ṭabāṭabā'ī, *Siyar-ul-Muta'akhhirīn*, Naval Kishore, n.d. 1/109

after Sulṭān Nāṣiruddīn, wrote in his travelogue that he saw a copy of the Qur'ān written by Sulṭān Nāṣiruddīn with Qāḍī Kamāl al-Dīn Dehlawī, and it was in a good style.<sup>1</sup> According to I'jāz Rāhī, the author of the book "Tārīkh-i-Khaṭṭātī", the copies of the Qur'ān of Sulṭān Nāṣiruddīn are still available and preserved in German museums.<sup>2</sup>

Although Sulṭān Balban, who inherited the rule from Sulṭān Nāṣiruddīn or any other government official, did not work on writing the Qur'ān. Prince Faḫruddīn, one of the relatives of Sulṭān Nāṣiruddīn, was famous for his care of scholars and artists and bestower of gifts on them. According to the historian Ḍiyā'uddīn Barnī, when anyone would present his copy of Qur'ān to the Sulṭān, he would feel happy to present gifts and then gave it to those who wanted to read or memorize the Qur'ān.<sup>3</sup> It should be pointed out here that what Dr. Najm Raḥmānī attributed to Ghayāthuddīn Balban regarding the respect of scholars and writers, does not hold any ground.<sup>4</sup>

After the sultans of Delhi, writing of the Qur'ān continued during the Muḡhal period as well, and the princes of the ruling family were particularly learning the art of calligraphy. It is noteworthy that we find some examples of Qur'ān-writing of the members of the Taimūride family to which the Muḡhal kings belonged before their rule in India. The granddaughter of the King Taimūr Lane, Shāh Khānem bint Muḡammad Sulṭān was not only engaged in the art of calligraphy, but was expert in it. She wrote a copy of the Qur'ān in the Raiḡhān style, and wrote her name and family tree at its end, and the ambassador

<sup>1</sup> Ibn Baṭṭūtah, Riḡlah Ibn Baṭṭūtah, al-Maṭba'ah al-Azharīyyah, Egypt, 1928, 2/12

<sup>2</sup> I'jāz Rāhī, Tārīkh-i-Khaṭṭātī, P. 146

<sup>3</sup> Ḍiyā'uddīn Barnī, P. 138 ('Aligarh Edition)

<sup>4</sup> Anjum Raḥmānī, Barr-i-Ṣaḡhīr men Muslim Khaṭṭātī, Ma'ārif, March-April, 1986, P. 64

of Shāh Jahān, Turbit Khān, when returned to India from Balkh brought this copy along with him as a gift to the king.<sup>1</sup> Sheikh Munāzīr Aḥsan Gīlānī while reviewing this copy of the Qurʾān says: “This indicates that the art of calligraphy reached its pinnacle among the ladies of the ruling families, but the fact is that we are now not even familiar with these terms which seem strange for us.”<sup>2</sup> In the Taimūride family, Mirzā Ibrāhīm Sulṭān bin Shāh Rukh was a skilled calligrapher and he showed his love for writing the Qurʾān as well. He is credited with a copy of the Qurʾān that was two cubits long and two cubits wide and he offered it on the grave of Sheikh Bābā ‘Imāduddīn in Shīrāz.<sup>3</sup>

The founder of Mughal state in India, King Zahīruddīn Muḥammad Bābar, is known for his love of calligraphy and is the inventor of a new style of writing known as the Bābrī script.<sup>4</sup> In the opinion of some historians, this style was invented by decorating the circles of the *thuluth* style of writing and by some changes in the *Ṣughhrā* style.<sup>5</sup> The King Bābar used this style to write the Qurʾān and had sent a copy of the Qurʾān written in the Bābīi script to Makkah.<sup>6</sup> This version is available in the library of Astana, Quds Maṣḥad.<sup>7</sup>

There are other kings of the Mughal family who have contributed to the propagation of calligraphy, but most notable are King Shāh Jahān and King Aurangzeb. Shāh Jahān was aware of the art of calligraphy and contributed to its

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<sup>1</sup> Ghulām Ḥusain Ṭabāṭabā’ī, op.cit. 1/263

<sup>2</sup> Munāzīr Aḥsan Gīlānī, *Hindustān men Musalmānon ka Niṣām-i-Ta’līm wa Tarbiyat*, Nadwat-ul-Muṣannifin, Delhi, 1/78

<sup>3</sup> Qādī Aḥmad Qummī, op.cit. PP. 69-71

<sup>4</sup> Badāyūnī, 1/327 and 343, Munāzīr Aḥsan Gīlānī, 1/79 and *l’ijāz Rāhī*, P. 148

<sup>5</sup> Shaukat ‘Alī Khān, op.cit. P. 18

<sup>6</sup> Badāyūnī, 1/343

<sup>7</sup> Anjum Raḥmānī, op.cit. P. 67

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dissemination. He did not write any copy of the Qur'ān, but encouraged calligraphers, supervised them and gave them prizes and titles. The famous calligrapher 'Abd-ul-Bāqī al-Ḥaddād was named "Yāqūt Raqam" by Shāh Jahān when he presented a copy of the Qur'ān in the Naskh style, in the same way; some other writers were also conferred with titles such as "Jauhar Raqam" and "Zerīn Raqam".<sup>1</sup> From the city of Balkh came a copy of the Qur'ān written by the granddaughter of King Taimūr, and when this version was presented to the king, he rejoiced greatly.<sup>2</sup>

The successor to the emperor Shāh Jahān was the emperor Aurangzeb, who was engaged in the art of calligraphy, and had the expertise in Naskh and Nasta'liq styles of writing.<sup>3</sup> He has learnt this art particularly from 'Abd-ul-Bāqī al-Ḥaddād and Mīr 'Alī Khān al-Ḥussainī.<sup>4</sup> When Muḥammad 'Ārif, who was expert in Naskh and Thuluth styles,<sup>5</sup> presented his model to the sulṭān Aurangzeb, the sulṭān called him "Yāqūt Raqam Thānī",<sup>6</sup> in the same way, when Mirzā Muḥammad appeared before him in 1665 after copying a rare version of the Qur'ān from Munghī Patan, the king gave him thousands of Rupees.<sup>7</sup> In 1704, when Mīr Khān presented him with a copy of the famous calligrapher Yāqūt, the king immediately told him, "I have been offered a

<sup>1</sup> Shaukat 'Alī Khān, P. 22 and 'Abdul Ḥamīd Sālik, P. 401

<sup>2</sup> Ghulām Ḥussain Ṭabāṭabā'ī, 1/263

<sup>3</sup> Munshī Muḥammad Kāzim, 'Ālamgīr Nāmah, Kolkātā, 1868, PP. 893-894 and Sāqī Musta'id Khān, Ma'āthir 'Ālamgīrī, Kolkātā, 1871, P. 532

<sup>4</sup> Tadhkirah Khushnawīsān, P. 59, I'ijāz Rāhī, P. 158, Ṣahīfah Khushnawīsān, P. 123 and 'Abdul Majīd Sālik, P. 401

<sup>5</sup> See for detailed introduction of these types of calligraphy: Sayyid 'Abdullāh Bāqī, Fann-i-Khaṭṭātī, Dā'irah Ma'ārif-i-Islāmīyyah, 15/963 and Ṣahīfah Khushnawīsān, P. 32

<sup>6</sup> Ṣahīfah Khushnawīsān, op.cit. P. 161 and I'ijāz Rāhī, P. 158

<sup>7</sup> Sāqī Musta'id Khān, op.cit. P. 270

copy which is the best in this world”, and gave him an elephant in gift.<sup>1</sup> The emperor Aurangzeb’s interest played a great role in spreading the calligraphy during his reign and according to the historian Munshī Muḥammad Kāzim, who lived in his reign, the king was engaged in writing the Qur’ān before inheriting the rule, and the copy that he prepared before ascending the throne was sent to Makkah with great gifts and valuables. Even after succeeding the throne, he continued writing the Qur’ān and completed a second copy using his skill in the art of calligraphy.<sup>2</sup> Another historian, Sāqī Khān, who lived in his time, mentions that the writing of the Qur’ān was one of the daily works of the king. He prepared two copies of the Qur’ān and made them gilded at a cost of seven thousand Rupees and then sent them to Madīnah with valuable gifts.<sup>3</sup> A copy of the Qur’ān by Sulṭān Aurangzeb’s hand is available with Persian translation at Maulānā Āzād Library at the Muslim University of Alīgarh and the year of his writing is 1087 AH (1676 AD).

Other than the sultans of Delhi and the Mughal kings, some other independent rulers were also known for their care of calligraphy and writing the Qur’ān. Among the Sultans of Deccan, King Fīroz Shāh Bahmanī (1397-1422 AD) was known for his interest in writing the Qur’ān and making it a way of earning his livelihood.<sup>4</sup> The independent Sulṭān of Gujarāt Muẓaffar Shāh was also known for his passion for the art of calligraphy and had great expertise over Naskh, Thuluth and

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<sup>1</sup> Op.cit. P. 489

<sup>2</sup> Munshī Muḥammad Kāzim, PP. 1092-1093

<sup>3</sup> Sāqī Mustā’id Khān, P. 532. And some historians say that the king sent the copy which he prepared before occupying the throne to Madīnah while he sent the copy he prepared after occupying the throne to Makkah, Anjum Nu’mānī, op.cit article, P. 72

<sup>4</sup> Tārikh-i-Fariṣhtah, 1/112, Rafī’uddīn Shīrāzī, Tadhkirat-ul-Mulūk, Manuscript of Āṣafīyyah Library, Hyderābād, Page: 9

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Ruqa' styles. It is mentioned in "Tārīkh-i-Fariṣhtah" that he was engaged in writing the Qur'ān, and when he completed a copy of the Qur'ān, he would send it to the two holy mosques, seeking the blessings of God.<sup>1</sup>

The calligraphy received a general acceptance and popularity among the princes and princesses during the Muḡhal era. Some of them liked the writing of the Qur'ān and used their skills in calligraphy. Prince Pervez, son of the Sulṭān Jahāngīr, had good knowledge of Arabic and Persian. He loved writing the Qur'ān from childhood and stayed on until the end of his life.<sup>2</sup> It is noteworthy that Sulṭān Jahāngīr used to recite the copy of the Qur'ān prepared by Prince Pervez.<sup>3</sup> Prince Dārāshīkoh loved the art of calligraphy and he is well-known for this among the scholars.<sup>4</sup> He would also write the Qur'ān, and a copy of his hand is preserved in 'Azīz Bāgh Library in Hyderābād, and its letters are golden from the start to the end. There is another copy by his hand containing five chapters in the library of Victoria Memorial Hall in Kolkātā.<sup>5</sup> A mention is made of a copy prepared by him which he would recite. According to Maulānā Maḡhar 'Alīm (one of the friends of Maulānā Munāzīr Aḡsan Gīlānī), the Nawāb Ḥosām Ḥaider, the Head of Camille (Benglādesḡ), had a gold and gilded version of the Qur'ān and he attributed it to Prince Dārā Shīkoh and said that it was Prince's personal copy, and he bought this copy from an European lady.<sup>6</sup> Among the princesses, the Princess Jahān Ārā bint Shāh Jahān and Zaibun Nisā' bint Auangzeb

<sup>1</sup> Tārīkh-i-Fariṣhtah, 2/212 and Sa'īd Aḡmad Rafīq, op.cit. P. 114

<sup>2</sup> Tadhkirah Khushnawīsān, PP. 94-95 and Munāzīr Aḡsan Gīlānī, 1/79

<sup>3</sup> I'ijāz Rāhī, P. 156

<sup>4</sup> Tadhkirah Khushnawīsān, PP. 94-95

<sup>5</sup> Sayyid Ṣabāḡuddīn 'Abdur Raḡmān, Bazm-i-Taimūriyyah, Maṡbah Ma'ārif, 1948, P. 417

<sup>6</sup> Munāzīr Aḡsan Gīlānī, op.cit. 1/47 (Footnote) cited from Safarnāmah Maḡharī, P. 58

are famous for their perfection in the art of calligraphy and for their desire to promote it.<sup>1</sup> There is a collection of Qur'ānic verses with Persian translation written by the Princess Jahān Ārā in Maulānā Āzād Library at 'Alīgarh Muslim University and the name of the collection is "Āyāt Bayyināt". This collection comprised of miscellaneous verses and contains 76 pages, and the year of writing is 1073 AH (1662 AD). There is an illustration on the cover of this version attributed to the Princess and states that she wrote this version when her father was confined in the castle of Āgrah. She spent her free time in worship. This version contains the stamp of Sulṭān Aurangzeb and king Amjad 'Alī Shāh.<sup>2</sup>

It is evident from what we mentioned above that the art of calligraphy was popular among the kings and princes. Some of them took interest in writing the glorious Qur'ān with special care and used their skills for it, but the scholars have a significant contribution to the promotion of calligraphy of the Qur'ān and its dissemination in that era through their compilations. It is known that most of the calligraphers of this age were Muslim scholars. According to the well-known accounts, the Muslims started coming to India during the reign of the Rashīdūn Caliphs. It is to be noted that since that time, scholars who settled in the Makrān and Sind regions have been experts in the art of calligraphy. Among these early settlers, Ḥakam bin 'Amr Tha'labī (d. 50 AD), 'Ubaidullāh bin Mu'ammār al-Taimī (d. 29 AH) and Abū Ḥafṣ Muḥaddith al-Baṣrī deserve special mention here. The first one came during the time of 'Umar bin Khaṭṭāb (MABPWH) whereas the second one came during the reign of 'Uthmān bin 'Affān (MABPWH) and both

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<sup>1</sup> I'ijāz Rāhī, P. 157, Shaukat 'Alī Khān, P. 18, Maqālāt-i-Shiblī, Maṭbah Ma'ārif, A'zamgarh, 1993, 5/111

<sup>2</sup> See: al-Āyāt al-Bayyināt, Manuscript of King Collection, Maulānā Āzād Library, 'Alīgarh Muslim University

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settled in Makrān for some time. As for the last one, he came to India during the period of Caliph Mahdī and stayed in Sind.<sup>1</sup>

**Muḥammad bin Idrīs al-Baṣrī:** Muḥammad bin Idrīs al-Baṣrī was one of those who immigrated to India during the reign of Sulṭān Maḥmūd al-Ghaznawī. He was one of the contemporaries of the great scholar Sheikh Muḥammad Ismāʿīl al-Muḥaddith (d. 1056 CE). He first settled in Lāhore and then moved to Delhi. He was skilled in calligraphy and had a desire to write the Qurʾān. He wrote the Qurʾān on the thin skin with gold margins, and chose to write three types of calligraphy. He wrote the names of the lines in the Thuluth, and the text of the Qurʾān in Naskh while he wrote the first word of each verse in the Ruqa Khafif style.<sup>2</sup>

At the beginning of the thirteenth century AD, when the Islamic Sultanate in Delhi was established, migration of the scholars and the artists to India increased, and even arose among the native Indians some who had a desire for the art of calligraphy and writing the Qurʾān, and some chose to write the Qurʾān as a profession and began to charge very little money for their work. Hereby we mention some of those who excelled in this field:

**Fakhruddīn Murūzī:** Sheikh Fakhruddīn Marūzī was a famous Sūfī scholar during the time of the Tughlaq family and during the reign of Sulṭān ʿAlāʿuddīn Khiljī in India and writing the Qurʾān was his hobby indeed. He took the way of mysticism from Sheikh Niẓmuddīn, and loved asceticism and worship. According to Sheikh Chirāgh Dehlawī, "When he would finish writing the Qurʾān, he would ask people about the value of the

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<sup>1</sup> Qāḍī Aṭhar Mubārakpūrī, Khilāfat-i-Rāshidah aur Hindustān, Nadwat-ul-Muṣannifin, Delhi, 1972, PP. 106-110, 116-117, 238-240 and 254 and ʿijāz Rāhī, P. 139

<sup>2</sup> ʿijāz Rāhī, P. 144

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copy in the market, and then sold only at a price lesser than the market-price.<sup>1</sup> And when he could not write because of his old age, Sulṭān 'Alā'uddīn ordered to grant him the stipend of one Rupee a day, but he refused it and accepted only what was equal to the value of writing a copy of the Qur'ān in a day".<sup>2</sup>

**Jalāluddīn Mānākpūrī:** The Sheikh was one of the prominent scholars who belonged to the Chishtiyah series, and apart from teaching and preaching, he was engaged in the writing of the Qur'ān and made it a source of earning for him. He revered the Qur'ān so much that he did not pick up the pen to write it without ablutions. He sent his copy to Delhi where he got five hundred Rupees for a copy,<sup>3</sup> and this indicates that his writing-style was of high standard as the copies of the Qur'ān were available at Rupee one for one copy as mentioned by Qāḍī Burhānuddīn.<sup>4</sup>

**Sheikh Juned al-Ḥiṣārī:** Sheikh Juned was one of the sons of Sheikh Farīduddīn Ganj Shakar. He lived in the city of Ḥissār in Punjāb (presently in Haryānah, India). He was skilled in the art of writing so he liked to write the Qur'ān. According to Sheikh 'Abd al-Ḥaqq Muḥaddith Dehlawī, he wrote the Qur'ān very quickly and completed the entire Qur'ān in three days, and as per the author of the book "Akhbār-ul-Akhyār" this was a miraculous work.<sup>5</sup>

**Sheikh 'Alī Muttaqī Burhānpūrī:** The Sheikh was one of the great scholars of Ḥadīth during his time who completed the

<sup>1</sup> Khair-ul-Majālis, Edt. by Ḥaider Qalandar, corrected by Khalīq Aḥmad Nizāmī, Department of History, 'Alīgarh Muslim University, 'Alīgarh, n.d.

<sup>2</sup> Khair-ul-Majālis, P. 88

<sup>3</sup> Akhbār-ul-Akhyār, P. 178, Tadhkirah 'Ulamā'-i-Hind, P. 41 and Nuzhat-ul-Khawāṭir, 3/49-50

<sup>4</sup> Amīr Ḥasan Sanjarī, Fuwād-ul-Fuwād, corrected by: Muḥammad Laṭīf Malik, Lāhore, 1966, P. 189

<sup>5</sup> Akhbār-ul-Akhyār, PP. 382-383 and Munāẓir Aḥsan Gīlānī, 1/57

study of Ḥadīth in Ḥijāz, where he learnt it from Sheikh Muḥammad bin Muḥammad al-Sakhāwī and Ibn al-Ḥajar al-Makkī. And his works in the Ḥadīth are still appreciated.<sup>1</sup> He liked to write the Qurʾān too. He earned his livelihood by writing different books. However, it is not known whether he earned money by preparing the copies of Qurʾān or not. A very rare copy of the Qurʾān is attributed to him, and ‘Abd-ul-Wahlah Shirānī, the author of the “Ṭabaqāt Kubrā”, mentions that during his meeting with the Sheikh in Makkah, Sheikh told him about copy of the Qurʾān that he prepared in a page only<sup>2</sup> and each line contained one-fourth of a Juz of the Qurʾān, and this was a glorious work.

**Khawājah ‘Abdul Ṣamad Shirānī:** He was one of the well-versed calligraphers who came to India with the Mughal king Zāhīruddīn Bābar. He was one of King Humāyūn's teachers in this field and one of the companions of King Jalāluddīn Akbar. He was a master of calligraphy, especially in the Nasta’līq. He held the post of Chahārsadī under the King Akbar, and was appointed to the position of chief officer in the currency-exchange factory in the city of Fatehpūr Sīkrī. He showed his excellent skill in calligraphy by writing the chapter al-Ikhlāṣ on a poppy seed. When he presented this rare copy to the king, he was greatly rejoiced.<sup>3</sup>

**Ibrāhīm Ustrābādī:** The Sheikh was one of the contemporaries of King Jalāluddīn Akbar, who had skill in both the styles of Naskh and the Nasta’līq.<sup>4</sup> He showed his desire to write the

<sup>1</sup> Akhbār-ul-Akhyār, PP. 257-269 and Ma’āthir-ul-Kirām, PP. 192-194

<sup>2</sup> ‘Abdul Wahhāb al-Shirānī, al-Ṭabaqāt al-Kubrā, Muṣṭafā al-Bābī al-Ḥalbī and Sons, Egypt, 1954, 2/185

<sup>3</sup> Abul Faḍl, Ā’in-i-Akbarī (Corrected by Sir Sayyid Aḥmad Khān), Maṭba Ismā’īlī, Delhi, 1272H, 1/83-84

<sup>4</sup> Ā’in-i-Akbarī, 1/81 and Bazm-i-Taimūrīyyah, P. 126



Qur'ān and wrote a copy in Ghulbar style of writing.<sup>1</sup> A copy of his calligraphy is still available in Delhi Museum, and the year of his writing is 957 AH (1550 AD).<sup>2</sup> This indicates that he wrote this copy of the Qur'ān before the reign of King Akbar (1556-1605), although historians consider him among the calligraphers of the era of King Akbar.

**'Alī Ju Kashmīrī:** He was one of the famous calligraphers and was a student of Mīr 'Alī Khushnawīsh, who emigrated from Irān to Kashmīr during the reign of Sulṭān Ḥussain Shāh (1563-1570). He was also expert in all the seven styles of writing. 'Alī Kashmīrī learnt this science and showed his skill particularly in the Naskh and the Thuluth styles and thus promoted the writing of the Qur'ān in Kashmīr in this style.<sup>3</sup>

**'Abd-ul-Qādir Badāyūnī:** 'Abd-ul-Qādir Badāyūnī who lived during the reign of King Jalāluddīn Akbar, is known as a great historian, but he was also one of those who wrote the Qur'ān with the intention of divine reward and blessing. Besides, when he began to translate the epic of Mahābhāratā into Persian in association with Naqīb Khān on king's order, four months later, a dispute arose between him and the king so he had to face the wrath of the king. Thereby he stopped translation of the epic Mahābhāratā and began to write the Qur'ān, wishing that it would be expiation for the previous work in this world and a reason for intercession in the Hereafter.<sup>4</sup> Badāyūnī said in a place that he prepared this copy of the Qur'ān in the Naskh with Lauḥ and Jadwal and presented it on the tomb of his

<sup>1</sup> See for 'Khatt-i-Ghubār': Shāhīfah Khushnawīsān, PP. 54-55

<sup>2</sup> Shāhīfah Khushnawīsān, P. 77 (Ref.: Zafar Ḥasan, Fihrist Makhtūṭāt, Delhi Museum, English, P. 18)

<sup>3</sup> I'ijāz Rāhī, P. 177

<sup>4</sup> Sheikh Dāwūd Jahnī was one of the students of Sheikh Dāwūd Ḥasanī who belongs to Qādrīyyah Chain, see: Badāyūnī, 3/28

spiritual guide Sheikh Dāwūd Jahnī (1575).<sup>1</sup> The Lauḥ means the designing and beautification of the first page of Qur'ān and Jadwal means drawing lines around each page for beautification. These two things first appeared in the writing of the Qur'ān and then in other books.<sup>2</sup>

**'Abd-ul-Bāqī Ḥaddād:** He was one of the most famous calligraphers during the reign of King Shāh Jahān, and was expert in Naskh and Nasta'liq styles. King Aurangzeb his highness benefited from him in this art. He used to write Qur'ān whose two copies became very famous- one was in thirty pages, and the other in "Chob Qalam". There is a dispute between the historians whether 'Abd-ul-Bāqī presented the first copy to the prince Aurangzeb and obtained the title of "Yāqūt Raqam"<sup>3</sup> or presented it to Shāh Jahān and obtained the same title from him.<sup>4</sup> According to the later historians, he wrote this copy in the "Khafī" style in a way that it is read in "Jalī" style, and he started each line with "Alif". When the king saw this copy, he became greatly rejoiced, and conferred over him the title of "Yāqūt Raqam" and granted him money according to his weight. This copy is preserved in the Museum of the Arabic and Persian Research Foundation in the city of "Tonk" in Rājasthān.<sup>5</sup>

**Muḥammad 'Ārif:** He was a student of 'Abd-ul-Bāqī Ḥaddād, and was famous for the art of calligraphy and the writing of the Qur'ān. He had a special skill in the Naskh and Thuluth styles, and was among the teachers of the sons of Sulṭān

<sup>1</sup> Badāyūnī, 2/94

<sup>2</sup> Munāẓir Aḥsan, 1/82

<sup>3</sup> Tadhkirah Khushnawīsān, P. 125

<sup>4</sup> Shaukat 'Alī Khān, P. 22 and 'Abdul Malik Sālik, P. 401

<sup>5</sup> Shaukat 'Alī Khān, Qaṣr-i-'Ilm Tonk k Kutubkhāney aur Unke Nawādir, Arabic and Persian Research Centre, Rajasthān, n.d. P. 69

Aurangzeb. Two of his copies of the Qur'ān became very famous- the first one was in Naskh style written in golden words, and the second one in the Thuluth style. Sulṭān Aurangzeb called him "Yāqūt Raqam Thānī".<sup>1</sup> A copy of his hand-written Qur'ān is preserved in Delhi museum, and the year of writing is 1080 AH (1669 AD).<sup>2</sup>

**Muḥammad Ṣādiq Ṭabāṭabā'ī:** He was known as Murīd Khān and was a companion of the King Muḥammad Shāh (1719-1747). Along with his political and administrative affairs, he liked to read and write the Qur'ān as well. He had a skill in the Ta'līq, Thuluth and Shikastah styles. He showed his love in writing the Qur'ān for which he chose different ways in preparing copies of the Qur'ān. The author of the book "Tadhkirah-i-Khushnawīsān" mentioned that he saw a number of handwritten copies of Muḥammad Ṣādiq Ṭabāṭabā'ī in Raiḥān, Thuluth and Naskh styles in Lucknow.<sup>3</sup>

**Judge 'Iṣmatullāh Khān:** He lived during the reign of King Shāh 'Ālam II (1759-1788 AD) and was famous for the art of calligraphy. His skill appeared particularly in Naskh style of writing, and according to Ghulām Muḥammad Haft Qalamī, he surpassed in this field on Yāqūt Musta'ṣimī (1298 AD).<sup>4</sup> He wrote the Qur'ān in this style, and he left behind along with the copies of the Qur'ān, some of the Ḥamā'īls as well.<sup>5</sup>

**Pupils of Qāḍī 'Iṣmatullāh Khān:** Many people benefited from this judge, and some showed their desire to write the Qur'ān as well. His brother, Faiḍullāh Khān, and his nephew 'Abdullāh

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<sup>1</sup> Tadhkirah Khushnawīsān, P. 126 and I'ijāz Rāhī, P. 158

<sup>2</sup> Ṣaḥīfah Khushnawīsān, P. 61

<sup>3</sup> Tadhkirah Khushnawīsān, P. 107

<sup>4</sup> Jamāluddīn Yaqūt Musta'ṣimī was one of the students of Ibn Bawwāb and one of the slaves of caliph Musta'ṣim.

<sup>5</sup> Tadhkirah Khushnawīsān, P. 107.

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were famous for writing the Qur'ān. According to the author of the book "Tadhkirah Khushnawīsān", he completed some unfinished copies of the Qur'ān that his uncle had initiated and there was a great similarity between their writing-styles.<sup>1</sup> One of his students of was Mīr Karam 'Alī, who was known for his skill in the Naskh style. He learnt from the Qāḍī to write the Qur'ān in this particular style of writing.<sup>2</sup> One of his pupils, Miyān Muḥammadī chose to write the Qur'ān. While preparing the copies of the Qur'ān he referred to the copy of his teacher.<sup>3</sup>

**Muḥammad Ḥafīz Khān:** Muḥammad Ḥafīz Khān (1780) was a contemporary of King Muḥammad Shāh and was famous in calligraphy. He was first appointed to the Mughal government as the head of the regiment's guard. When he was retired, he engaged in the worship of God. He loved writing the Qur'ān and he did not refrain from it during his job and continued it until the last days of his life. He had the skill of a teacher in Nasta'alīq, Naskh, Shikastah and Thuluth. He had prepared a number of copies of the Qur'ān in the Naskh style, and some copies were gilded and decorated and were presented to the king who appreciated them. The author of the book "Tadhkirah Khushnawīsān" Ghulām Muḥammad Haft Qalamī (1823) was one of those who benefited from Muḥammad Ḥafīz Khān.<sup>4</sup>

It is clear from the above details that Muslims who worked in writing the Qur'ān, they were from different classes like scientists, sheikhs, sultāns, princes, and skilled writers. There was a class of people who chose to write the Qur'ān with the intention of divine reward only and they had other professions to earn their livelihood. Moreover, they prepared copies of

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<sup>1</sup> Tadhkirah Khushnawīsān, P. 127-128

<sup>2</sup> Ibid, P. 128

<sup>3</sup> Ibid, PP. 130-131 and I'ijāz Rāhī, P. 160

<sup>4</sup> Tadhkirah Khushnawīsān, P. 111-112

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the Qur'ān to make a living example and considered it a source of reward, for which they accepted lesser price than the market-price. And writing of the Qur'ān with the intension of the divine reward was common, as there were some who sent their copies to the two holy mosques to get the divine reward for their copies to be recited there. We have already mentioned this about Sultans- Bābar, Aurangzeb and Muẓaffar Ḥalīm Ghujarātī. 'Abd-ul-Qādir Badāyūnī set another example by offering his copy to the tomb of his sheikh. The calligraphy of the Qur'ān in India during the Islamic era was not limited to the general style, but it appeared in different types. The calligraphers in the Mughal era chose different methods of writing the Qur'ān and produced the great and beautiful forms of calligraphy. The Naskh style was the most popular so most of the copies of the Qur'ān were made in it. We have already mentioned that 'Abd-ul-Bāqī Ḥaddād decorated the Naskh style in the era of King Shāh Jahān and derived from it another form known as "Arūs al-Khad", and he wrote the Qur'ān in the Khafī style in a way that it can be read in Jalī style. Other methods chosen by the calligraphers for writing the Qur'ān were Nasta'liq, Thuluth, Ruqa', Bābrī and Ghubār wa Bahār.<sup>1</sup> According to Shaukat 'Alī Khān, the author of the book 'Islāmī Hind men Khaṭṭātī' (The Calligraphy in Muslim India) the copies of the Qur'ān were prepared in Bahār style as well. This indicates that the skilled calligraphers of this age showed their desire to choose different ways of writing the Qur'ān and prepared many rare copies of it. One wrote the chapter "al-Ikhlāṣ" on a seed of poppy, the other wrote a quarter of the chapter Ḥizb in a line to show his superior skill in the art of calligraphy. On one hand, one wrote the Qur'ān in

<sup>1</sup> The Khaṭṭ—Bihār was invented during Medieval India, Dā'irah al-Ma'ārif al-Islāmīyyah, 15/972-973 and Tadhkirah Khushnawīsān, P. 48

thirteen pages in a way that every line starts with “Alif”, on the other hand one did wonders by writing the whole Qur’ān in just three days. There was a great difference between the levels of writing, as a copy was sold in for one Rupee and at the same time another copy was sold for five hundred Rabbis because of the high or low level of writing. It is evident from what we mentioned above that the believers revered this Book to the extent that they considered everything related to the Qur’ān like reading, writing, recitation, thinking, translation and interpretation, as the motives of blessing, reward, remission, mercy and happiness, and that is why we see the people interested in writing the Qur’ān, and there are different models of writing the Qur’ān for the scholars, sheikhs, sultāns, princes and writers.

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## Science of Recitation of the Qur'ān in Medieval India

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The Qur'ān is the greatest source of guidance for mankind, an everlasting treasure of mortal facts and a continuously running fountain of sciences and knowledges. Pondering upon it and trying to understand its meanings and significances opens way to guidance, and its reading and reciting are a source of goodness and blessing. As there are some rules for pondering over it and understanding its meanings and contents, its reading and reciting are also based on some fixed principles. And when this way of conditional recitation becomes a science it is called 'science of recitation'. This science is recognized as reciting the Qur'ān with correct pronunciation in a way that not only the oral beauty of its words remains intact but it seems very much clear to hearing. That's why this science is called as the ornament of recitation and decoration of the Qur'ān.<sup>3</sup> The following saying of the Prophet Muḥammad is enough to prove its importance and priority: One who wants to recite the Qur'ān in the happy condition of the period of revelation, he must

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follow the style of recitation of Ibn Umm-i-'Abd ('Abdullāh bin Mas'ūd) who was bestowed with recitation of the Qur'ān'.<sup>1</sup>

It is also one of the blessings and inspirations of the Qur'ān that several sciences related to it are indebted to it only, and it caused indirectly the development of several sciences and arts. This science is distinguished also due to that its foundation was laid in the period of the Prophet while it developed fully in the later periods and it kept flourishing throughout the ages. To develop it both the ways of teaching and writing were adopted. As far as writing on this science is concerned, the historians' opinions are different. But the issue of difference of the recitations and the issue of the first book written on this science is more serious, for example, Abū 'Ubaidah Qāsim bin Sallām collected different recitations in a book on whose basis some historians consider him the first author on the topic of recitation of the Qur'ān while this book is related to difference in the recitation not to the science of recitation. After all, due to difference of opinions of the historians, those authors who are considered as first authors on this topic are Imām Kusā'i<sup>2</sup> (d. 85H), Yaḥyá bin Ya'mur<sup>3</sup> (d. 89H), Ibbān bin Taghlib<sup>4</sup> (d. 141H), Muqātil bin Sulaimān<sup>5</sup> (d. 150H), Abū 'Amr bin al-'Alā'<sup>6</sup> (d. 155H), Hārūn

<sup>1</sup> Aḥmad bin Ḥanbal, al-Musnad (Edt. Aḥmad Maḥmūd Shākir), Dār al-Ma'ārif, Egypt, 1949, 1/170 (Chapter: 1, N. No. 34)

<sup>2</sup> Muḥammad 'Abdul Ḥalīm Chishtī, Preface of Urdu Translation of al-Itqān fī 'Ulūm al-Qur'ān by al-Suyūṭī, Asaḥḥul Maṭābi', Karāchī, n.d., P. 71

<sup>3</sup> Fuat Sezgin, Geschichte des Arabischen Schrifttums, E.J.Brill, Leiden, 1967, 1/5

<sup>4</sup> Ibn al-Jazrī, Ghāyat al-Nihāyah fī Ṭabaqāt al-Qurrā', Maktabah al-Khānī, Egypt, 1351, 1/4, 'Abdur Raḥīm Chishtī, PP. 70-71

<sup>5</sup> Ibn al-Nadīm, al-Fihrist, al-Maṭba'ah al-Raḥmānīyyah, Egypt, n.d. PP. 253-254, 'Abdul Ḥalīm Chishtī, PP. 70-71

<sup>6</sup> 'Abdul Ḥalīm Chishtī, P. 70 and al-Fihrist by al-Nadīm, P. 52

bin Mūsá<sup>1</sup> (d. 170H), Abū ‘Ubaidah Qāsim bin Sallām<sup>2</sup> (d. 224H), Abū ‘Umar Ḥafṣ bin ‘Umar al-Daurī<sup>3</sup> (d. 246H) and Mūsá bin ‘Ubaidullāh al-Khāqānī<sup>4</sup> (d. 325H). It is proved from these different opinions that the process of writing on this topic started from the end of first century Hijrah. Apart from difference of opinions regarding the first book written on the science of recitation, all have consensus that the experts of this science among the ancestors are Imām Abul Qāsim al-Shāṭḥī<sup>5</sup> (d. 1194H) and Muḥammad bin Muḥammad al-Jazrī<sup>6</sup> (d. 1429H). They not only promoted this science but also they utilized their intellects and abilities to explain and develop it. Among the distinguished names in this field is the scholar of fifth century of Hijrah and commentator of the Qur’ān Makkī bin Abū Ṭālib (d. 437H/1045AD). He has written many books

<sup>1</sup> ‘Abdul Ḥalīm Chishtī wrote referring to Jalāluddīn al-Suyūṭī (Bughyat-ul-Ru’āt) that he considered Hārūn bin Mūsá the first writer on the science of recitation and then he quoted the following sentence: وهو أول من تتبع وجوه القراءات وألفها، ص 71 but it is interesting that the said book states as follows: وهو أول من تتبع وجوه القرآن وألفها، مطبعة السعادة، مصر، 1326هـ، ص 406.

<sup>2</sup> ‘Abdul Ḥalīm Chishtī, P. 71 with reference to Ibn al-Jazrī, Kitāb al-Naṣhṣr fī al-Qira’āt al-‘Ashr, al-Fihrist, P. 52, al-Itqān, op.ct. 1/75 and Kashfuṣ Ḥunūn, 2/1317

<sup>3</sup> Ibn al-Jazrī, Ghāyat al-Nihāyah, 1/255

<sup>4</sup> Ghāyat al-Nihāyah, 2/321, Kashfuṣ Ḥunūn, 1/354, Khairuddīn al-Zirkālī, al-‘Ilām, Dār al-‘Ilm li al-Malāyīn, Beirut, 1974, 7/324-325, Rāghib al-Ṭabbākh, op.ct. 1/222, Sayyid Sulaimān Nadwī, Maqālāt-i-Sulaimān, Dār al-Muṣannifīn, A’zamgarh, 1971, 3/7

<sup>5</sup> Ibn al-Jazrī, Ghāyat al-Nihāyah, 2/20, Tāsh Kubrā Zādah, Miftāḥ al-Sa’ādah wa Miftāḥ al-Siyādah, Maṭba’ah Dā’irah al-Ma’ārif al-Niḥāmīyyah, Hyderābād, 1328, 1/387-389, Aḥmad bin Muḥammad al-Muqrī, Nafḥat Ṭīb, Maṭba’ah Sa’ādah, Egypt, 1949, 2/229-232, al-‘Ilām, 5/180

<sup>6</sup> Muḥammad bin ‘Abdur Raḥmān al-Sakhāwī, al-Ḍau’ al-Lāmī, Maktabah al-Qudsī, Cairo, 1355, 9/255-260, Tāsh Kubrā Zādah, op.ct., 1/292-297, al-‘Ilām, 7/45-46

on this topic the most important among them are 'Ma'ānī al-Qira'āt' and al-Ri'āyah bi Tajwīd al-Qir'ah'.<sup>1</sup>

Apart from being important politically the Medieval India (Muslim period in India) is also known for developing different sciences and arts. The tradition of love for knowledge and its care led by the Muslim rulers throughout Islamic rule all over the world, was not only continued by the rulers of Medieval India but they also promoted it so much that the capital of then India, Delhi, became a shelter for the scholars and knowledgeable persons and a centre for the promotion and development of different sciences and arts. The contemporary historians bear open witness to this glory.<sup>2</sup> These sciences naturally conclude the Qur'ānic sciences as is apparent from detailed study of the writer on the topic.<sup>3</sup> It does not need to be mentioned that the science of recitation of the Qur'ān has a key role and basic importance among the Qur'ānic sciences, and the Medieval period presented several mentionworthy services to promote and develop this science as it will be clear from the coming details.

<sup>1</sup> See for detail: Aṣḥhad Rafiq Nadwī, Makkī bin Abī Ṭālib aur unkī Tafsīrī Khidmāt (Makkī bin 'Arabī and his Services to the Exegesis of the Qur'ān), 'Ulūm-ul-Qur'ān bi-annual, 'Alīgarh, 3/1-2 (Jan-Dec. 1988), PP. 72-80, Muḥammad Ajmal Iṣlāhī, Makkī bin Abī Ṭālib kī Maṭbū'ah Taṣānīf (Publications of Makkī bin Abī Ṭālib), 'Ulūm-ul-Qur'ān bi-annual, 'Alīgarh, 4/2 (July-Dec. 1989), PP. 105-108

<sup>2</sup> Diyā'uddīn Barnī, Tārīkh Fīroz Shāhī, Calcutta, 1862, PP. 352-353, Ibn-i-Baṭṭuṭah, Riḥlat-u-Ibn-i-Baṭṭuṭah, Cairo, 1958, 2/15, Sheikh Nūr-ul-Ḥaqq, Zubdatut Tawārīkh, Rotograph, P. 18, Shihābuddīn al-'Umrī, Masālik-ul-Abṣār fī Mamālik-ul-Amṣār (English translation: Atospace), 'Alīgarh, 1943, PP. 24-25, and 39-44

<sup>3</sup> See: Prof. Zafarul Isāam Iṣlāhī, 'Ilm-i-Qur'ān 'Ahd-i-Sultanate ke Hindustān mein (Qur'ānic Sciences in India during Sultanate Period), 'Ahd-i-Akbarī kī Tafsīrī Khidmāt (Contribution of Akbar's Period to the Exegesis of the Qur'ān) and 'Ilm-i-Qur'ān Sattarahwīn Sadī 'Iswī ke Hindustān mein (The Qur'ānic Studies in India during 17<sup>th</sup> Century), 'Ulūm-ul-Qur'ān bi-annual, ½, PP. 118-131, 1/3, PP. 114-129, 2/1, PP. 74-89

Recitation of the Qur'ān (without understanding) is an integral part of Muslim education system, and every period paid heed towards it. And the Muslim rule in India, in this regard, has no exception. And it is important to mention here that the Muslims of that period paid special attention to read the Qur'ān with utmost care for true pronunciation. This matter is strengthened by the reality that those teachers who were appointed to teach the Qur'ān in the madrasahs were expert of science of recitation and they were called as 'Muqrī'.<sup>1</sup> Similarly, there was another term for those who recited the Qur'ān well e.g. 'Qur'ān Khān'. The general care for the science of recitation of the Qur'ān is also known that some Muslim rulers were also famous with the title of 'Qur'ān Khān' for their best recitation of the Qur'ān. The same title was mentioned by the contemporary historians for the Sulṭān Quṭbuddīn Aibak (1206-1210).<sup>2</sup> Also one renowned governor in the period of 'Ahd-i-Fīroz Shāhī (1351-1388) Malik Qubūl (Governor of Sāmānah and Badāyūn) was famous with this title.<sup>3</sup> So the collection of fatāwā prepared by his order was named as 'Fatāwā-i-Qur'ān

<sup>1</sup> Barnī, P. 355, Mīr Ḥasan Sanjarī, *Fawā'id-ul-Fuwād* (Edt. Muḥammad Laṭīf), Lāhore, 1962, P. 262, Sheikh 'Abdul Ḥaqq Muḥaddith Dehlawī, *Akḥbār-ul-Akhyār*, Maṭba' Muḥammadī, Delhi, 1283, P. 49, Sayyid Muḥammad Kirmānī, *Siyar-ul-Auliyā*, Mu'assasah Intishārāt-i-Islāmī, Lāhore, 1978, PP. 285-286

<sup>2</sup> Tārīkh Fakhruddīn Mubārak Shāh (Edt.: E.D. Ross), Calcutta, 1937, P. 21, The author of 'Tārīkh-i-Hindustān' Maulānā Dhakā'ullāh meant for 'Qur'ān Khān' while mentioning Sulṭān Quṭbuddīn Aibak that he completed memorizing the Qur'ān. (Tārīkh-i-Hindustān, Shams-ul-Maṭābī', Delhi, 1895, 1/372) but meaning memoriser of the Qur'ān by 'Qur'ān Khān' is not appropriate but it may mean 'the person who recites the Qur'ān with a sweet voice' as Prof. Khalīq Aḥmad Nizāmī thinks. (*Salāṭīn-i-Delhī k Madhhabī Rujhānāt*, Nadwat-ul-Muḥannifin, Delhi, 1981, P. 82)

<sup>3</sup> Yaḥya Sirhindī, Tārīkh-i-Mubārak Shāhī, Calcutta, 1931, PP. 134-135, Barnī, P. 527, Shams Sirāj Laṭīf, Tārīkh-i-Fīroz Shāhī, Calcutta, 1890, PP. 454-455

Khān<sup>1</sup> though some cataloguers and modern scholars call it mistakenly with 'Fatāwā-i-Qurākhānī'.<sup>2</sup> There was another word used for those who recite the Qur'ān in a sweat voice e.g. 'Khushkhān' as it was used by Amīr Ḥasan Sanjarī for Maulānā Qāsim the relative of Sheikh Nizāmuddīn Auliya' and expert of recitation of the Qur'ān.<sup>3</sup>

There is much mention of the word 'Muqrī' in contemporary historical books and the biographies. It shows that there was a great number of those who were experts of recitation of the Qur'ān in that period on one hand, and on the other it proves that the Muslims took care of learning and teaching this science. As for the attention of the government to this side, it is clear from the appointment of teachers for teaching the children recitation of the Qur'ān and basics of the language besides their salary which was given from the treasure of the government.<sup>4</sup> Similarly, the Delhi sultans conferred awards and prizes on the scholars including the *muqrīs* who have been mentioned above. The history of Fakhruddīn Mubārak says while mentioning Sulṭān Quṭbuddīn Aibak " إدراراتي ومشاهراتي كه " مستحقان از أهل علم وفقه وقراءت وزهد ومصالحان داشتند آن هم برحال داشتن فرمود".<sup>5</sup> Among the advices given to the Prince Baghrākhān by Sulṭān Ghiyāthuddīn Bulban (1266-1286) was that he would

<sup>1</sup> Fihrist Makḥṭūṭāt-i-Shīrānī, Lāhore, 1969, 2/296, Sheikh Jalāluddīn Thānesarī, Risālah dar Bai'l 'Arādī (Makḥṭūṭah Maulānā Āzād Library, Muslim University, 'Alīgarh), Shaiftah Collection, 24/26, Page: 5B

<sup>2</sup> Fihrist Makḥṭūṭāt-i-Fārsīyyah Asiatic Society Bengāl (English), Calcutta, 1934, 1/160, No. 2671. Also see: Prof. Ṣafarul Isāam Iṣlāhī, Fatāwā Fīrozshāhī as a Source for Economic and Social History of Sultanate Period, *Islamic Culture*, 60/12, April-June, 1986, PP. 98-100

<sup>3</sup> *Fawā'id-ul-Fuwād*, P. 323, Munāzīr Aḥsan Gīlānī, Hindustān men Musalmānon kā Nizām-i-Ta'līm wa Tarbiyat, Nadwat-ul-Muṣannifin, Delhi, 1944, 1/179

<sup>4</sup> Shihābuddīn al-'Umri, op.ct. P. 39

<sup>5</sup> Tārīkh-i-Fakhruddīn Mubārak Shāh, P. 35

enrich his government with the scholars, sufīs, experts of the Qur'ān and Ḥadīth, ḥāfiẓs of the Qur'ān, muqrīs, religious advisors and speakers.<sup>1</sup>

Here one important question arises: why the curricula of that period is lacking the mention of this science despite abundance of muqrīs, a great number of experts of this science and tradition of its learning and teaching in this period. And those modern scholars who have elaborately written on the curricula of that period and development of education therein, their writings are also empty of its mention.<sup>2</sup> It can be interpreted on the following ways:

1. Generally the details of curricula are found at the level of secondary or higher madarasahs while the recitation was put in the primary madrasahs or at lower classes or it was taught in the madrasahs where students were taught how to read and recite the Qur'ān.
2. In that period special classes of the scholars and experts were held in spite of primary schools or madrasahs as we see nowadays. The scholars and experts of the subjects took classes in their houses or in the mosques, and the students visited them as per their requirements and interests.

And it is reality that there was no curriculum for such special classes. That's why it is stated that so and so scholar learnt such and such science or art from so and so expert and it is stated less

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<sup>1</sup> Barnī, *Tārīkh-i-Fīroz Shāhī* (Edt.: Sheikh 'Abdur Rāshid), 'Alīgarh, 1947, P. 128 (Other remaining references are from Calcutta edition)

<sup>2</sup> Sayyid 'Abdul Ḥayy al-Ḥasanī, *al-Thaqāfah al-Islāmīyyah fī al-Hind*, Demuscus, 1958, PP. 11-17, Abul Ḥasanāt Nadwī, *Hindustān kī Qadīm Islāmī Darṣgāhen*, Dār-ul-Muṣannifin, A'zamgarh, 1936, PP. 89-100  
G.M.D. Sūfī, *al-Minhāj* (Being the Evolution of Curriculum in the Muslim Educational Institutions of India), *Idārah Adabīyyāt-i-Dillī*, Delhi, 1977, PP. 1-88

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that so and so scholar learnt such and such science or art from such and such madrasah but it does not mean that the curriculum of any of the madrasahs of that period has no mention of recitation of the Qur'ān. At least the biggest madrasah of the period of Fīroz Shāh<sup>1</sup> has mention of the science of recitation in its curriculum.<sup>2</sup> Here it will be inappropriate to mention that it was stated about the Principal of this madrasah Maulānā Jalāluddīn Rūmī, that he was well-acquainted with the seven qir'ats along with other sciences and arts:

راویء هفت قراءت سند چارده علم شارح پنج سنن مفتیئ مذهب هرچار<sup>3</sup>

It can be easily derived from the above details that the educational institutions of that period also took care of teaching and propagating this science apart from individual services, and it is fact that like the experts of other sciences, the masters of this science were also found in different regions of the sultanate. It can be imagined from the fact that the experts of seven qir'ats were found in some unknown places since the beginning of the Muslim period here. For example, it is written in the biography of Sheikh Bahā'uddīn Zakarīyyā Multānī (1262) that he learnt seven qir'ats in some small places like Kot,<sup>4</sup> and the celebrated Chishtī sufi Sheikh Ḥamīduddīn Nāgorī (1276) who was staying in a small village

<sup>1</sup> For detailed study of this madrasah see: Khalīq Aḥmad Niẓāmī, *Studies in Medieval Indian History* (CH-VI-A Medieval Indian Madrasah), Allāhābād, 1966, PP. 73-79

<sup>2</sup> *Sīrat Fīroz Shāhī*, Copy of manuscript in Oriental Public Library, Bānkīpūr, No. 547, Maulānā Āzād Library, University Collection, No. 111, P. 137

<sup>3</sup> Dr. Waḥīd Mirzā, *Dīwān-i-Maṭuhhar*, Oriental College Magazine (Lāhore), 111/3 (May 1935), PP. 136-137

<sup>4</sup> Maulānā Jāmalī, *Siyar-ul-Ārifīn*, Maṭba' Riḍwī, Delhi, 1311, P. 103, Prof. Khalīq Aḥmad Niẓāmī, *Hindustān men 'Ulūm-i-Qur'ān kā Naṣh-o-Numā aur Islāmī Mu'āsharah par iskā Athar*, Ma'ārif, 144/1, July 1889, P. 5



named 'Siwāl' where the Qur'ān was memorized specially as well as the science of qir'at was focused on, therefore he sent his children to that mosque every Friday so that they might stay there to get acquainted with the style of reciting the Qur'ān and they might observe:

حافظان چگونہ قرآن می خوانند مد وتشدید چگونہ نگاه می دارند<sup>1</sup>

And above all, the person from whom Sheikh Nizāmuddīn Auliya' learnt the Qur'ān was a converted slave named 'Shāri Muqrī' who was well-acquainted with seven qir'ats. He learnt this science from his master who hailed from Lāhore and was famous with the name of 'Khājī Muqrī'.<sup>2</sup>

It will not be inappropriate to mention here that the sufi literature indicates much to learn and teach the science of recitation, which shows that the sufis took special care of this science. They tried to promote this science in their khānqāhs from different ways. We have already pointed out to the interest of Sheikh Bahā'uddīn Zakariyyā Multānī and Sheikh Ḥamīduddīn Nāgorī in this science. Moreover, it is witnessed about Sheikh Farīduddīn Ganj Shakr that he taught his followers the Qur'ān and instructed them to know the principles of reciting the Qur'ān.<sup>3</sup> Similarly, the sayings of Sheikh Nizāmuddīn Auliya' laid emphasis on reciting the Qur'ān with sweat voice and correct pronunciation.<sup>4</sup> It has been already mentioned about the Sheikh that he learnt the Qur'ān from an expert named 'Shādī Muqrī' when he was a

<sup>1</sup> Surūṣ Ṣudūr (Sayings of Sheikh Ḥamīduddīn Nāgorī) Manuscript, Page: 65 (Cit: Afore-quoted Article of Prof. Khalīq Aḥmad Nizāmī, Ma'ārif, 143/6, June 1989, P. 420)

<sup>2</sup> Fawā'id-ul-Fuwād, PP. 261-262

<sup>3</sup> Prof. Khalīq Aḥmad Nizāmī, op.cit. Ma'ārif, June 1989, P. 420

<sup>4</sup> Fawā'id-ul-Fuwād, P. 120, Siyar-ul-Auliya', P. 466

child. But when he joined the shrine of Sheikh Farīduddīn Ganj Shagr, his spiritual guide did not consider it as enough learning so he himself taught him 'how to recite the Qur'ān with correct pronunciation' for which he taught him a total of six parts of the Qur'ān in the light of the principles of recitation.<sup>1</sup>

Moreover, the khānqāh (shrine) of his spiritual guide, as Sheikh Nizāmuddīn Auliya' narrated, was full of the ḥāfiẓs.<sup>2</sup> It shows that his khānqāh was commonly devoted to promote this science. Continuing the tradition of his spiritual guide, Sheikh Nizāmuddīn paid attention to teach this science. He managed to facilitate the children who were under his care, to memorize the Qur'ān, and for this purpose he appointed an expert of the recitation named Maulānā 'Alā'uddīn Indpatī.<sup>3</sup> Some sources state that a short recitation of the Qur'ān was performed in the khānqāh of Sulṭān-ul-Mashā'ikh, before the served food to be eaten so as to please the disciples. And this duty was performed by that person who joined the khānqāh of the Sheikh and learnt reciting the Qur'ān from him. This short recitation was known as the 'Prayer of the Dinning-Table'.<sup>4</sup> Moreover, the religious lessons and speeches of the Muslim scholars in India were generally started with the recitation of some Qur'ānic verses since that period. This tradition promotes recitation of the Qur'ān as well as enjoyment of the audience from it.

Among the experts of the science of recitation found in the mentioned period who contributed to promote and develop it individually or through joining any madrasah or maktab

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<sup>1</sup> Fawā'id-ul-Fuwād, PP. 275-276, Siyar-ul-Auliya', P. 166, Faqīr Muḥammad Jhelmī, Ḥadā'iq-ul-Ḥanfiyyah, Lucknow, 1906, PP. 277-278

<sup>2</sup> Siyar-ul-Auliya', P. 117

<sup>3</sup> Op. cit. P. 326, Munāẓir Aḥsan Gīlānī, op.ct. 2/160-161

<sup>4</sup> Siyar-ul-Auliya', P. 309

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(primary Islamic school) some are worthy to be mentioned here so that we may know the opinions and remarks of the historians and writers about them along with the interest of the Muslims in that period and also to evaluate the ability of the experts of this science in that period.

The first phase of Muslim rule in India which is known as 'Sultanate Period' had several scholars who were famous with the title of 'Muqrī', and among the foremost muqrīs of this period is Maulānā Qāsim who was the contemporary of Sulṭān Ghiyāthuddīn Bulban and disciple of Sheikh Niṣāmuddīn Abul Mu'ayyid. Apart from teaching the science of recitation, he used to please the audience with his recitation at the time of his speech as Sheikh Niṣāmuddīn Auliya' has mentioned the speeches of Sheikh Niṣāmuddīn Abul Mu'ayyid and recitation of Maulānā Qāsim Muqrī which he listened in his childhood.<sup>1</sup> The period of Sulṭān 'Alā'uddīn Khiljī (1296-1316) is known for the development of its culture and civilization. Apart from other sciences, several experts of recitation of the Qur'ān belonged to this period. Among them some were known with the title of 'Muqrī' like 'Alā'uddīn Muqrī, Maulānā Ḥamīd Muqrī and Maulānā Laṭīf Muqrī including Maulānā Jamāluddīn Shāṭbī and Khājah Dhakīyyuddīn Dehlawī who got excellence in this field. Let's note here that we would mention here the experts of the recitation in the period of 'Alā'uddīn who adorned the capital Delhi and continued to benefit others in the field of Qir'at and other sciences. To know their excellence in the science of recitation we quote the famous wordings of their contemporary historian Diyā'uddīn Barnī as he says: Irāq and Khurāsān could not be blessed with such experts".<sup>2</sup> Apart

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<sup>1</sup> Fawā'id-ul-Fuwād, P. 323, Siyar-ul-Auliya', P. 49

<sup>2</sup> Barnī, P. 355

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from them some other scholars got name and fame in promoting this science in the capital e.g. Khājgī Muqrī, Shādī Muqrī, Shihābuddīn Muqrī and 'Alā'uddīn Indpatī. First two of them have been briefly mentioned in the above pages. Similarly, we have stated about 'Alā'uddīn Indpatī that he was assigned to teach the recitation of the Qur'ān and to make them memorize it in the khānqāh of Sheikh Nizāmuddīn Auliya'. Shihābuddīn Muqrī belonged to the period of Tughlaq Sultāns and was the follower of Sheikh Nizāmuddīn Auliya'. He was famous for his expertise over the science of recitation. The author of 'Siyar-ul-Auliya' says, "His voice resembled the melodious voice of Dāwūd, and his recitation made Nizāmuddīn Auliya' shook from inside. For this very quality of his, Sultān-ul-Mashā'ikh assigned him to lead in the prayer which he served till his death<sup>1</sup> Maulānā Jalāluddīn Rūmī, the contemporary of Sultān Fīroz Shāh Tughlaq, was also unprecedented in this field as we have explained about him that he was expert of seven qir'ats.

15<sup>th</sup> century or Ludhis' rule (1451-1517) witnessed the masters of this science e.g. Muḥammad bin Maḥmūd Muqrī and his disciple Rājīḥ bin Dāwūd Aḥmadābādī (d. 1498).<sup>2</sup> As far as the 16<sup>th</sup> century is concerned, there lived two experts of this science in its first half who specially need to be mentioned. They are Sulaimān bin 'Affān Mandawī (d. 1537) and 'Abdul Malik Ghaznawī (d. 1549). First of them was the contemporary of Mughal emperor Humāyūn (1530-1539, 1554-1556) who taught this science to the Chishtī Shābrī spiritual guide Sheikh

<sup>1</sup> Siyar-ul-Auliya', P. 300-301, Muḥammad Ghauthī Shaṭṭārī, Gulzār-i-Abrār, Manuscript of Maulānā Āzād Library, Muslim University, 'Aligarh, Ḥabīb Collection, 22/5, Pages: 46-47, Nuzhat-ul-Khāwaṭir, 4/111

<sup>2</sup> Raḥmān 'Alī, Tadhkirah 'Ulamā'-i-Hind, Naval Kishore, Lucknow, 1910, P. 62, Nuzhat-ul-Khāwaṭir, 4/111

'Abdul Quddūs Gangohī (d. 1538). The author of 'Ak̤hbār-ul-Ak̤hyār' Sheikh 'Abdul Ḥaqq Muḥaddith Dehlawī says: He was unprecedented in the science of recitation of the Qur'ān".<sup>1</sup> 'Abdul Malik Ghaznawī hailed from Ghaznah as it seems from his surname 'Ghaznawī'. He came to India on the request of Sulṭān Sikandar Lodī (1488-1517) the king who loved knowledge. He kept on promoting different sciences and arts till the period of Islām Shāh (1545-1552). Several scholars benefited from him in the science of recitation of the Qur'ān.<sup>2</sup> During the period of Islām Shāh itself Mīr Sayyid Muḥammad Makkī got excellence in the science of recitation. He was well-acquainted with seven styles of the recitation. The great historian-cum-scholar 'Abdul Qādir Badāyūnī learnt recitation of the Qur'ān from him at Sanbhal in 1551.<sup>3</sup> There was another Sindhi scholar and expert of recitation e.g. Qāḍī Qāḍin Bhakkārī (d. 1551) who was very close to his period. Apart from teaching he did service of Qaḍā' (judgment) in Bhakkār. The author of 'Tadhkirah 'Ulamā'-i-Hind' writes about him, "He excelled the scholars of his time. He had many qualities as he memorized the Qur'ān by heart and had mastery over the science of recitation of the Qur'ān".<sup>4</sup>

Among those who mastered this science during Akbar's period (1556-1605) are Sheikh Bhīkan Kākaurwī (d. 1573), Saifuddīn Kākaurwī, Sheikh Hamzah Lucknawī and 'Abdul Qādir Mandawī (d. 1577). The first one memorized the Qur'ān on the seven ways of recitation and he daily taught al-'Shāṭḥbiyyah' the famous book on this science.<sup>5</sup> His fellow-

<sup>1</sup> Ak̤hbār-ul-Ak̤hyār, P. 212, Nuzhat-ul-Khāwaṭir, 4/129

<sup>2</sup> Nuzhat-ul-Khāwaṭir, 4/217

<sup>3</sup> 'Abdul Qādir Badāyūnī, Muntaḥhab al-Tawārīkh, Calcutta, 1865, 27/21

<sup>4</sup> Tadhkirah 'Ulamā'-i-Hind, P. 166, Nuzhat-ul-Khāwaṭir, 4/265-266

<sup>5</sup> Badāyūnī, 3/24

villager Saifuddīn Kākaurwī got fame in this science, and several scholars benefited from him in the concerned field.<sup>1</sup> Sheikh Hamzah Lucknawī was fond of reciting the Qur'ān and was famous for his melodious voice.<sup>2</sup> As for 'Abdul Qādir Mandawī, he was the spiritual guide of Chishtī chain of spirituality and was renowned for his excellence in the science of recitation.<sup>3</sup> But the persons who excelled all these masters in this field among the contemporaries of Akbar were Sheikh Mubārak Nāgorī (d. 1593) and Sheikh Munawwar Lāhorī (d. 1602). It is clearly written about Sheikh Mubārak Nāgorī that he memorized the Qur'ān according to the ten ways of recitation and also he memorized by heart 'Ḥirz-ul-Amānī' (known as al-Shāḥḥīyah by Imām Shāḥḥī) the famous book of this science. Besides it he also used to teach this book.<sup>4</sup> These evidences clearly point out that he had keen interest in this science. Sheikh Munawwar of Lāhore was expert of seven qir'ats. Moreover, he mastered the science of exegesis. To his credit is a book of exegesis named 'Durr al-Tanzīm fī Tartīb al-Āy wa al-Suwar al-Karīmah'. In this commentary he focused on the coherence in the Qur'ān.<sup>5</sup>

Among the great scholars of this science during the Shāhjahān's period (1627-1658) is Sheikh Abul Ma'ālī (d. 1637). As his fame in this field reached the royal court, he was called in to show his mastery over it. Coincidentally there was Ramaḍān so he recited the verse 'شَهْرُ رَمَضَانَ الَّذِي أُنزِلَ فِيهِ الْقُرْآنُ...'. Listening his recitation the

<sup>1</sup> Nuzhat-ul-Khāwaṭir, 4/131-132

<sup>2</sup> Badāyūnī, 3/63

<sup>3</sup> Nuzhat-ul-Khāwaṭir, 4/197

<sup>4</sup> Badāyūnī, 3/4, Tadhkirah 'Ulamā'-i-Hind, P. 174, Ghulām 'Alī Āzād Bilgīrāmī, Ma'āthir-ul-Kirām, Āgrah, 1910, PP. 197-198

<sup>5</sup> Gulzār-i-Abrār, Pages: 230-232, Nuzhat-ul-Khāwaṭir, 5/411-412. Also see: Prof. Zafarul Isāam Iṣlāḥī, 'Ahd-i-Akbarī kī Tafsīrī Khidmāt, op.cit P. 132

emperor got shaken from inside and he was so pleased that he asked him to repeat it. Finally the emperor conferred upon him the title of 'Shams-ul-Qurrā', granted him one village near Bilgrām for his livelihood and then he got him returned.<sup>1</sup> Apart from the mastery of Sheikh Abul Ma'ālī over the science of recitation this event proves that the emperors and sultans also encouraged the melodious reciters of the Qur'ān. No doubt, it helped this science to flourish in the sultanate. As for the period of Aurangzeb 'Ālamgīr (1658-1707), it too enjoyed great reciters of the Qur'ān among whom most mentionworthy are two- Ḥāfiẓ Ibrāhīm and Ḥāfiẓ Ḍiyā'ullāh Bilgirāmī (d. 1697). The first one was one of the teachers of 'Ālamgīr and was great scholar of the Qur'ān and Ḥadīth along with his mastery over the recitation of the Qur'ān. Apart from teaching these sciences he greatly dedicated to promote them.<sup>2</sup> As for Ḥāfiẓ Ḍiyā'ullāh, he was one of the Sādāt of Bilgrām and celebrated scholars of the area. Besides being Ḥāfiẓ and Qārī he was well-versed in Arabic and Persian. He was fond of teaching.<sup>3</sup> His son, Sayyid Aḥmad, too was well-acquainted with this science and was famous for his melodious voice.<sup>4</sup> There was another scholar from Bilgrām i.e. Sayyid 'Abdul Waḥīd (d. 1748) who was master of this science. He was one of the pupils of Sayyid Ṭufail Muḥammad Atraulawī the celebrated scholar of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. His special attachment with the science of recitation is proved by that he memorized 'al-Shaṭbīyyah' by heart.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Ma'āthir-ul-Kirām, PP. 66-67, Munāẓir Aḥsan Gīlānī (op.ct. 1/362) has mentioned his name as Abul Ma'ālī referring to Maulānā Āzād Bilgirāmī while Maulānā Āzād has clearly stated his name as Abul Ma'ānī and his father's name as Abul Ma'ālī.

<sup>2</sup> Bakhtāwar Khān, Mir'āt-ul-'Ālam, Manuscript, page: 309 (With reference of Dr. Shabbīr Aḥmad Qādrī, 'Arabī Zabān-o-Adab 'Ahd-i-Mughalīyyah men), Nizāmī Press, Lucknow, 1982, P. 231

<sup>3</sup> Ma'āthir-ul-Kirām, PP. 239-240, Tadhkirah 'Ulamā'-i-Hind, P. 98

<sup>4</sup> Ma'āthir-ul-Kirām, P. 241

<sup>5</sup> Ma'āthir-ul-Kirām, PP. 289-290, Nuzhat-ul-Khāwaṭir, 6/173

The interest in the science of recitation of the Qur'ān in Medieval India and the services of contemporary scholars in this field were not only confined to teaching and learning this science and deep study of its prescribed books and memorizing some old books on the topic but also its experts promoted it through compilation on this topic. However, it is astonishing that we find no works on it in the first phase of this rule (Sultanate period), so the first book was written in the Mughal period whose credit goes to Sheikh 'Abdul Ḥaqq Muḥaddith Dehlawī (d. 1642). Its title is al-Durr al-Farīd fī al-Qir'at wa al-Tajwīd. But the contemporary history books and biographies do not mention it while the later historians have clearly mentioned it.<sup>1</sup> This period is marked with writing footnotes and commentaries on the famous prescribed books of the sciences and arts. So books prescribed in the science of recitation are not exception as it is written that before writing the above mentioned book a Persian commentary on al-Shāṭbiyyah was written in Akbar's period. Its author was Sheikh Muḥammad Ṣiddīqī Kākaurwī.<sup>2</sup> The author of al-Thaqāfah al-Islāmīyyah fī al-Hind wrote about this commentary that it consisted of about seventy volumes<sup>3</sup> but he did not cite any contemporary or later source. This statement also seems unreasonable while the contemporary writer al-Badāyūnī has written about this book that it was written in about seventy parts. It is interesting that the translator of Muntakhab al-Tawārīkh by Badāyūnī Sir Depew Hag states that it was written in about seventy ram of paper.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Al-Thaqāfah al-Islāmīyyah fī al-Hind, op.ct. P. 173, Nuzhat-ul-Khāwaṭir, 5/206

<sup>2</sup> Badāyūnī, 3/24-25, The year of demise of Sheikh Sa'dī son of Sheikh Muḥammad (1002H/1593-94AD) has been mistakenly attributed to his father (Sheikh Muḥammad) in al-Thaqāfah al-Islāmīyyah, P. 174, See: Badāyūnī, 3/25

<sup>3</sup> Al-Thaqāfah al-Islāmīyyah, P. 174

<sup>4</sup> Badāyūnī, 3/24-25, Also its English Translation published from Patna, 1973, 3/42

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Nūruddīn Muḥammad al-Qārī compiled a book on the topic entitled ‘Maqṣūd al-Qārī’ during Jahāngīr’s period (1605-1627) and attributed it to the emperor.<sup>1</sup> The book written on this topic in Shāhjahān’s period is *Khulāsah al-Qir’ah*. It was authored by Qāsim Jaunpūrī. It is divided into nine chapters and is dedicated to the emperor.<sup>2</sup> Apart from other religious sciences and arts, the period of Aurangzeb ‘Ālamgīr is distinguished from the other periods in this science also. Several books were written in this period on the topic among them four are worth-mentioning *Mufid-ul-Qurrā’*,<sup>3</sup> *Hulyat-ul-Qārī*,<sup>4</sup> *Najāt-ul-Qārī*<sup>5</sup> and *Risālah ‘Ilm-i-Tajwīd*.<sup>6</sup> Their authors are Nī’matullāh Lāhorī (Year of completion 1678), Aḥmad bin Ruknuddīn al-Ḥusainī (Year of completion 1684), Mīr Sayyid ‘Alī al-Hazlānī and Mullā Jīwan (d. 1718). The *Mufid-ul-Qurrā’* needs special appreciation among these four. It contains fourteen chapters, and the first chapter discusses science of recitation and seven qir’ats. *Najāt-ul-Qārī* is important from the aspect that it is dedicated to Aurangzeb. In the same period one Shī’ī scholar *Sheikh* Aḥmad bin Raḍā Ḥyderabadī

<sup>1</sup> D.N. Marshall, *Mughals in India* (Bibliographical Survey), Mumbai, 1967, P. 382, No. 1426, *Fihrist-i-Makḥṭūṭāt-i-Fārsī*, Curzon Collection, Asiatic Society of Bengal, P. 248, No. 331, *Fihrist Makḥṭūṭāt-i-‘Arabī, Fārsī wa Urdu*, Āṣafīyyah Library, Hyderabad, 1900, 1/308, *al-Thaqāfah al-Islāmīyyah*, P. 173

<sup>2</sup> Marshal, op.cit. P. 396, No. 1480, *Fihrist Makḥṭūṭāt-i-Fārsī*, Curzon Collection, op.cit. P. 249, No. 342

<sup>3</sup> Marshal, op.cit. P. 376, No. 1207, *Fihrist Makḥṭūṭāt-i-Fārsī*, India Office Library, op.cit. 1/1370, No. 2705, *Fihrist Makḥṭūṭāt-i-Āṣafīyyah Library*, 1/308

<sup>4</sup> Marshal, op.cit. P. 38, No. 154, *al-Thaqāfah al-Islāmīyyah*, P. 174, *Fihrist Āṣafīyyah Library*, 1/306, *Stewari, Persian Literature*, London, 1927, 1/430, *Fihrist Makḥṭūṭāt-i-Fārsī*, Curzon Collection, P. 249, No. 342, *Makḥṭūṭah Maulānā Āzād Library*, Appendix Subḥānallāh, 397.111/5

<sup>5</sup> Marshal, op.cit. P. 58, No. 198, *Stewari*, 1/44

<sup>6</sup> This pamphlet has been mentioned by Dr. *Shabbīr Aḥmad Qādirī* in his book ‘*Arabī Zabān-o-Adab ‘Ahd-i-Mughalīyyah men’* op.cit. P. 252, but it was not supported by any other source.

wrote a pamphlet entitled 'Risālah fī al-Qir'at' but we could not find his year of demise or year of completion of his book. We find only that he came to India in 1085H/1674AD.<sup>1</sup> The Maulānā had mastery over Ḥadīth and science of its narrators so he authored books on this topic too. Another book was written with the title of 'Ma'rifat-ul-Qir'ah' during Aurangzeb's period. It was authored by 'Abdur Raḥīm bin Yūsuf<sup>2</sup> about whom we could not find any information.

It is evident from the above discussions that the scholars took special interest in the science of recitation of the Qur'ān in the Medieval India and there was a great number of scholars who had expertise over it even there were some who had memorized the Qur'ān according to seven-ten qir'ats. Not only this, there were some others who memorized by heart al-Shāṭḥbiyyah of Imām Shāṭḥbī on the topic. It is also apparent from the above discussions that the contemporary scholars adopted several methods to promote and develop this science like teaching and compiling etc. Apart from individual services the government also took interest in promoting this science. Among the most demanded books of this science prescribed in this period was al-Shāṭḥbiyyah so several scholars wrote commentaries and footnotes on it and some of them were famous in its teaching. The scholars also compiled books and pamphlets on this topic.

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<sup>1</sup> Nuzhat-ul-Khāwaṭir, 5/39

<sup>2</sup> Marshal, op.cit. P. 22, No. 64, Stewari, 1/43, A manuscript of 'Ma'rifat-ul-Qir'ah is preserved in Maulānā Āzād Library (Muslim University, 'Alīgarh), Subḥānallāh Collection (Appendix of Subḥānallāh, 297.111/7). Instead of 'Alīgarh manuscript the name of its author is mentioned as 'Abdur Raḥmān by Marshall and Stewari

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## Traditional and Non-Traditional Methodology of Interpretation of the Qur'ān—A Critical Study

Prof. Alṭāf Aḥmad Azmi<sup>1</sup>

When we survey the classical literature on the commentary of the Qur'ān, we find two kinds of commentaries, namely, Tafsīr-i-Ma'thūr and Tafsīr-i-Ghair Ma'thūr. Tafsīr-i-Ma'thūr is based on the sayings attributed to the Prophet (PBUH) and/or narratives of his companions (Aṣḥāb) and their successors (Tābi'īn). A group of learned men ('Ulamā') regard this type of commentary as the only correct exposition of the Qur'ān. We quote Imām Ibn Taimiyah in this regard:

“We know that Ṣaḥābah, Tābi'īn and Tabā' Tābi'īn read Qur'ān and they understood its meaning more than others and that they were more familiar than others with the truth revealed by God through His Prophet. Therefore, the person who opposes their sayings and writes a commentary contradictory to their narrations, makes a mistake both in regard to the Prophet and the line of argument.”<sup>2</sup>

The commentary written in contrast to Tafsīr-i-Ma'thūr is called Tafsīr-i-Ghair Ma'thūr and/or Tafsīr bi'l Ray (by reason). Imām Ghazālī is regarded as a great champion of this school of thought. He says:

“It has been proved incorrect that one ought to say only what has been said by the exponents of the first century, and that

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<sup>2</sup> Muqaddamah fī Uṣūl al-Tafsīr, P. 91

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they cannot be contradicted. Everybody is free to interpret the Qur'ān in accordance with his mental capability".<sup>1</sup>

This kind of Tafsīr, as evident from the above-mentioned excerpt, is based on reason and language (philology), though it is not oblivious of traditions.<sup>2</sup>

### **Methodology of Tafsīr-i-Ma'thūr**

The methodology adopted by the protagonists of Tafsīr-i-Ma'thūr is based on the following principles: (a) Commentary on the Qur'ān through Qur'ān itself, (b) Commentary on the Qur'ān through Sunnah (traditions). (c) Commentary on the Qur'ān through the sayings of the companions of the Prophet (Āthār-i-Ṣaḥābah). (d) Commentary on the Qur'ān through the sayings of the disciples of Ṣaḥābah (Āthār-i-Tābī'īn).

Elaborating the first principle, viz. the commentary of the Qur'ān by the Qur'ān, Imām Ibn Taimiyah writes:

"The best method is to explain the Qur'ān by the Qur'ān. If there is ambiguity at one place, it has been explained at another place. Likewise, if there is any curtailment (Ijmāl) in one verse, it has been elaborated in another verse".<sup>3</sup>

If the commentary of the Qur'ān is not possible by the Qur'ān, then it should be explained with the help of Sunnah i. e., traditions. Imām Ibn Taimiyah says:

"If the commentary of the Qur'ān by Qur'ān is not possible, the commentator should turn towards the Sunnah for guidance, because, it is the explanation of the Qur'ān. Imām Shāf'ī is reported to have said that "whatever has been said by the Prophet is derived from the Quran".<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Iḥyā 'Ulūm al-Dīn, 1/264. See further, Jawāhir al-Qur'ān 1vth chapter

<sup>2</sup> Muqaddamah fī Uṣūl al-Tafsīr, P. 423

<sup>3</sup> Muqaddamah fī Uṣūl al-Tafsīr, P. 93

<sup>4</sup> Ibid, P. 93

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Third principle, viz the commentary of the Qur'ān by the sayings of the companions of the Prophet is applied in those cases where the above-mentioned two principles failed to explain the meaning of the Qur'ān. Imām Ibn Taimiyah says:

“If the Qur'ān could not be explained by the Qur'ān and Sunnah, one should turn to the sayings of the companions of the Prophet, because, they had the best knowledge of the Qur'ān, as they had witnessed the course of revelation of the Qur'ān and events related to it, and also because, they had the correct knowledge”.<sup>1</sup>

If a commentator is unable to interpret any verse of the Qur'ān by the Qur'ān and Sunnah and sayings of the companions of the Prophet, he is allowed to go to the sayings of the disciples of the Sahabah. Imām Ibn Taimiyah has elaborated this point and said:<sup>2</sup>

“If the interpretation of the Qur'ān is not possible by the Qur'ān, Sunnah and sayings of Ṣaḥābah, many learned men of Islam ('Ulamā') have turned to the sayings of Tabi'īn e.g. Mujāhid b. Jarīr. He had a great status in the realm of Tafsīr”<sup>3</sup>

### **Shortcomings of Traditional Methodology**

After elaborating the basic principles followed by the school of traditional commentary, I would like to state merits and demerits of these principles.

So far as the first principle is concerned i.e, Tafsir al-Qur'ān bi'l Qur'ān, it is the best method for the interpretation of the

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid, P. 95

<sup>2</sup> Ibid

<sup>3</sup> See, Tafsīr al-Ṭabrī, 1/90, Tahdhīb al-Tahdhīb, 10/42 and Mīzān al-I'tidāl, 3/439

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Qur'ān. But I sorrowfully say that not a single commentator has strictly and completely adhered to this principle while interpreting the Qur'ān. At some places where similar verses could be easily found, they have been presented in support of the adopted meaning. At most places they have interpreted the Qur'ān in the light of traditions and sayings of Ṣaḥābah and Tabi'īn.

'Allāmah Ibn Kathīr has written in the preface of his well-known commentary, Tafsīr Ibn Kathīr that the best method of interpretation is Tafsīr al-Qur'ān bi'l Qur'ān.<sup>1</sup> But it is surprising that the greater part of his commentary has been written with the help of traditions and sayings of Ṣaḥābah and Tābi'īn. This attitude demonstrates that to restrict Tafsīr to Tafsīr al-Qur'ān bi'l Qur'ān is not possible.

Before examining the first principle, we should underline the exact connotation of the word Sunnah. Most of the 'Ulamā', have not differentiated between Ḥadīth (Tradition) and Sunnah (Actions of Prophet). But, in my humble opinion, a clear distinction does exist between the two, both with regard to meaning and application. Ḥadīth covers all the sayings of the Prophet, while Sunnah is only the actions of Prophet. Whatever, Prophet has said about the Hereafter (Ma'ād) and future happenings (Akḥbār-i-Mustaqbil) etc, cannot be termed as Sunnah. On account of this connotational difference, we have divided the examination of the above-mentioned principle in two parts: (1) Tafsīr al-Qur'ān bi'l Ḥadīth, (2) Tafsīr al-Qur'ān bil Sunnah.

It is an undeniable historical fact that the Prophet had himself explained only a few verses, because his companions would

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<sup>1</sup> Muqaddamah, Tafsir ibn-i-Kathīr, 1/3



not like to ask many questions from him.<sup>1</sup> The greater part of the traditions mentioned in the books of Tafsīr are Marāsīl (narrated in the name of the Prophet, without giving the name of Ṣaḥābī). Imām Aḥmad b. Ḥambal is reported to have said:<sup>2</sup> “Three things are baseless i.e., Tafsīr, Malāḥim (Epic) and Maghāzī (the wars in which the Prophet participated). Imām Ibn Taimiyah has also said: “Books of Tafsīr have a large number of fabricated traditions”.<sup>3</sup>

So far as the traditions collected in the books of Ḥadīth are concerned especially Bukhārī and Muslim, they contain both Marfū’ (Narrated by a Ṣaḥābī with a reference to the Prophet) and Mauqūf (Narrated without giving a reference to the Prophet). These traditions have not been examined till today on the criteria of Dirāyat (Reason),<sup>4</sup> these have been merely subjected to screening on the basis of Riwayāt<sup>5</sup>. However, if any tradition mentioned in Ṣiḥāḥ-i-Sittah (six books of tradition, considered authentic by Muslim ‘Ulamā’) is proved correct after thorough examination, it can be used in the support of the established meaning of the Qur’ān. Because, Ḥadīth has the status of Fra’ (secondary source) in comparison with the Qur’ān which is Aṣl (Primary and seminal source).

Let me here explain why I have termed the Tradition as Fra’. The well-informed persons know that Mutawātir al-Ma’nī Aḥādīth (traditions narrated by a large number of persons in

<sup>1</sup> Al-Fauz al-Kabīr fī Uṣūl al-Tafsīr, P. 30

<sup>2</sup> Al-Itqān fī ‘Ulūm al-Qur’ān, 2/304

<sup>3</sup> Muqaddamah fī Uṣūl al-Tafsīr, P. 76. See further, al-Takmīl fī Uṣūl al-Ta’wīl (‘Abdul Ḥamīd Farāhī), P. 19

<sup>4</sup> The principles based on reason evolved by ‘ulamā’ to examine the traditions.

<sup>5</sup> The principles concerned with the character and memory of the ru’at (narrators of the traditions)

each age) are not more than three or four. Most of the traditions are of the type of Āḥad (traditions narrated by not more than five or six persons). Uṣulīyyīn (Experts in Islamic jurisprudence) are agreed that any tradition narrated by a few persons not be declared an indisputable and absolutely certain. Imām Ghazālī says: “Khabar-i-Wāḥid does not provide the certificate of truth”.<sup>1</sup> He has also explained the meaning of Khabar-i-Wāḥid:

“Khabar-i-Wāḥid connotes those traditions that do not attain the stage of uninterrupted sequence (succession) which is synonymous with certainly. For instance, a tradition narrated by five or six persons is called Khabar-i-Wāḥid”.<sup>2</sup>

Now, we take Sunnah (actions of the Prophet). From Sunnah we mean the practical application of the verses related to the laws (Aḥkām). It is known to the learned men that various laws pertaining to human life mentioned in the Qur’ān, do not contain necessary details in all respects. If it had been done, the size of the Qur’ān would have increased to an unthinkable extent and thus the object and spirit of Qur’ān would have died down. In addition to this, the practical laws connected with the socio-economic and political conditions of the over changing human society, were bound to change with the passage of time.

If we closely survey the traditions mentioned in Ṣiḥāḥ-i-Sittah, it will be found that all of them come under the category of Khabar-i-Wāḥid. For this reason we have called even the correct traditions as Fra’.

Due to these reasons, God Almighty had entrusted the work of framing bye-laws to the Prophet. Prophet Muḥammad (PBUH)

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<sup>1</sup> Al-Mustaṣfá, P. 14

<sup>2</sup> Ibid, P. 14

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had done this in a commendable manner in accordance with the social, economic and religious conditions of that period obtaining in Arabia. These interpretations of the Prophet (bye-laws) have the status of a precedent for the future.

So far as the third principle i.e, Tafsīr al-Qur'ān bi Aqwāl al-Ṣaḥābah is concerned there cannot be any two opinions that Ṣaḥābah were not only the most knowledgeable men about Qur'ān, but, they were also the pious followers of Qur'ān. Ibn Khaldūn writes:

“The Qur'ān was revealed in their language and style of rhetoric. Therefore, they would understand it in the most perfect manner, whether the words used were simple or compound”.<sup>1</sup>

It is reported that Ṣaḥābah had generally refrained from interpreting Qur'ān. Yazīd b. Abī Yazīd says that Sa'īd b. Musaiyyib was the most learned man among us as far as the knowledge of Qur'ān was concerned. We used to ask him about Ḥarām (prohibited things) and Ḥalāl (permitted things), but, when we would ask him any interpretation from the Qur'ān he kept silent as if he had not heard our question (سكت (كأن لم يسمع).<sup>2</sup>

Mālik says:

إذا سئل عن تفسير من القرآن قال: إنا لا نقول في القرآن شيئاً.

Tr.: When he was asked about the interpretation of a verse from Qur'ān, he would say: We speak nothing about the Qur'ān.<sup>3</sup>

It does not mean that they would not say anything at all about Qur'ān. They would talk about those things only which were

<sup>1</sup> Muqaddamah Ibn Khaldūn, P. 489

<sup>2</sup> Tafsīr-i-Ṭabrī, 1/86

<sup>3</sup> Tafsir Ibn-i-Kathīr, 1/5 and 6

known to them. Ibn Kathīr (with reference to Ibn Jarīr) had written that once a person asked Ibn ‘Abbās the meaning of Yaum (day) in this verse, *فِي يَوْمٍ كَانَ مِقْدَارُهُ خَمْسِينَ أَلْفَ سَنَةٍ*. He said: these are two days mentioned in the Book of God and He knows them best.<sup>1</sup> He did not like to any that was not known to him.<sup>2</sup> فكره أن يقول في كتاب الله ما لم يعلم

Keeping in view this cautious attitude of the companions of the Prophet, it is very difficult to say that all the sayings attributed to them have been uttered by them.

On the basis of the above-mentioned facts, this principles namely, Tafsīr al-Qur’ān bi’l Aqwāl al-Ṣaḥābah cannot be held as a perfect principle for Qur’ānic interpretation.

Now, we take up the fourth principle i.e. Tafsīr al-Qur’ān bi’ Aqwāl al-Tābi’īn.

The ‘Ulamā’ differ about this principle. None of them say that if a saying of a Tābi’ī is not against the saying of another Tābi’ī, it is binding and it cannot be contradicted.<sup>3</sup> But, Imām Abū Ḥanīfah did not accept it as mandatory. He says:

“Whatever has been said by the Prophet is obligatory on us. So far as the sayings of Ṣaḥābah are concerned we have the option to select the best. But the sayings of their successors are not binding, because they were human beings as we are (فهم رجال ونحن رجال).<sup>4</sup>”

It is a fact, that many sayings of Tābi’īn often contradict each other. For instance, we mention here the following verse:

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid

<sup>2</sup> Ibid

<sup>3</sup> Ibid, 1/5. See further, Muqaddamah fī Uṣūl al-Tafsīr, P. 95

<sup>4</sup> Al-Tafsīr wa al-Mufasssīrūn, P. 128

"وَالرِّجَالُ عَلَىٰ نِجَابٍ دَرَجَةٌ وَاللَّهُ عَزِيزٌ حَكِيمٌ ﴿٢٢٨﴾"

Tr.: And men (husbands) have an edge over women (wives). (al-Baqarah: 228)

According to Mujāhid<sup>1</sup> (Tābi'ī) the word *darajah* means all kind of superiority which men hold over women e.g. heritage and Holy war (Jihād) etc. Qatādah,<sup>2</sup> another great Tābi'ī has taken to mean the superiority of men over women. On the other hand, Ibn 'Abbās, a Ṣaḥābī and an unrivalled commentator of Qur'ān, and others like Zaid b. Aslam have understood it differently.<sup>3</sup> It is more surprising that all these meanings of the quoted verse do not cohere with the context (Siyāq wa Sabāq). The more probable connotation of *darajat* is in the context of, the right of divorce and its withdrawal, which right has not been given to women (wives).<sup>4</sup> This interpretation is in complete harmony with the context.

Apart from the above-mentioned shortcomings in the methodology of Tafsīr Ma'thūr, there is another alarming defect in this method, which is generally overlooked. Acceptance of this methodology seems to mean that a halt has been called to thinking and meditating in relation to the Qur'ānic text and interpreting. This would be clearly against teaching of the Qur'ān. Thinking in relation to Qur'ān has been advised in several verses as follows!

"كِتَابٌ أَنْزَلْنَاهُ إِلَيْكَ مُبَارَكٌ لِيَدَّبَّرُوا آيَاتِهِ"

Tr.: A book which we have sent down to you, full of blessings, that the people may think deeply over its verses. (Ṣād: 29)

<sup>1</sup> Tafsir-i-Ṭabrī, 4/533

<sup>2</sup> Ibid, P. 534

<sup>3</sup> Ibid, P. 535

<sup>4</sup> Fī Ṣilāl al-Qur'ān, 1/??

"أَفَلَا يَتَذَكَّرُونَ الْقُرْآنَ أَمْ عَلَى قُلُوبٍ أَقْفَالُهَا ﴿٢٤﴾"

Tr.: Do they not then earnestly seek to understand the Qur'ān, or have they sealed their hearts. (Muḥammad: 24)

These verses unambiguously negate the idea that after the first century no one is allowed to think over the verses of Qur'ān. It may be said that thinking is not prohibited, but, interpretation is forbidden. In that case thinking over the Qur'ān (Tadabbur) becomes meaningless. In fact, thinking and interpretation both are still allowed, but have been subjected to some principles which we would deal with later.

After pointing out the defects in the methodology of Tafsīr-i-Ma'thūr, we would like to throw some light on the defects attendant on Tafsīr-i-Ghair Ma'thūr.

Of course, Tafsīr Ma'thūr, as pointed out above, had blocked the way of thinking over the verses of Qur'ān, but it had also shut the door for unprincipled interpretation of Qur'ān, while Tafsīr-i-Ghair Ma'thūr seems to open the gate for all and sundry to interpret the Qur'ān in the manner they like.

The methodology of Tafsīr-i-Ghair Ma'thūr is based on reason on the one hand and the Arabic language on the other. It has resulted in a chaos in the realm of Tafsīr, Ḥājī Khalīfah writes:

"First of all, the references (sanad) to traditions were shortened, then these references were given up. Hence, all sorts of sayings found a place, and finally every one began to write as he understood without consulting the commentators of the early period".<sup>1</sup>

No body can deny that reason, thinking, and knowledge of Arabic language are not sufficient to interpret the Qur'ān adequately. In

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<sup>1</sup> Kaṣḥf al-Zunūn, 1/431

such a situation mistakes are bound to occur. Some basic principles must be followed while pondering over Qur'ānic verses. These principles should be invariably adhered to.

### **Correct Methodology for the Interpretation of Qur'ān**

After pointing out defects in the methods adopted by supporters of Tafsīr Ma'thūr as well as Tafsīr-i-Ghāir Ma'thūr, it becomes necessary to point out the correct method for the interpretation of the Qur'ān. In my humble opinion the best method is Tafsīr al-Qur'ān bi'l Qur'ān, which has been mentioned as a first principle of Tafsīr-i-Ma'thūr in the foregoing pages. But it requires further explanation and orientation.

It is widely accepted that God has sent Prophets to all nations without any exception. But the scriptures sent down to these Prophets stood altered in due course of time because of wrong interpretation by their followers. Finally, the last book (Qur'ān) was sent by God to mankind through his last Prophet Muḥammad (PBUH). Since all previous books were altered either in meanings or in both meanings and words, God took it upon Himself to protect the Qur'ān from all sorts of distortions and alterations. He declared in the Qur'ān:

"إِنَّا نَحْنُ نَزَّلْنَا الذِّكْرَ وَإِنَّا لَهُ لَحَافِظُونَ ﴿٩﴾"

Tr.: It is We who revealed the Qur'ān and it is We will conserve it. (al-Ḥajr: 9)

The conservation promised in these verses is related to both the text (Matan) and its meaning as well. The last scripture was not handed over for interpretation to 'ulamā' who might again err as happened in the past, but God took to himself to explain it as has been pronounced in the Qur'ān: "إِنَّ عَلَيْنَا بَيَانَهُ" (Tr.: It is for Us to explain it. Al-Qiyāmah: 19)

This verse clearly shows that the Qur'ān has already been explained by God.<sup>1</sup> Now the only task left for the 'Ulamā' is to find out these explanations in the Qur'ān. The method for explanation adopted by God, is called Taṣrīf-i-Āyāt in Qur'ānic terminology. He said:

"أَنْظُرْ كَيْفَ نُصَرِّفُ الْآيَاتِ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَفْقَهُونَ ﴿٦٥﴾"

Tr.: See, how we make plain our revelation that they may understand. (al-An'ām: 65)

The explanation given by God are solely concerned with the basic subjects of Qur'ān, like, Tauḥīd (Unity of God), Risālat (prophethood), Ma'ād (Hereafter), Ma'rūf wa Munkar (good and evil) besides, other laws pertaining to worship and various aspects of individual and collective life of believers. The real meanings and objectives of these fundamentals should be determined and explained in accordance with the context and the precedents in the Qur'ān and nothing else. The correct traditions and the sayings of Ṣaḥābah can be cited only in support of the meaning determined in the light of the explanations contained in the Qur'ān itself.

So far as the practical aspects of the laws like the forms of worship etc. are concerned, these should be defined and shaped according to the practices (Sunnah) of the Prophet.

The problem of language (correct meaning of the words) and grammar should be solved in the light of the context of the verses, correct traditions, sayings of Ṣaḥābah and Tābi'īn and ancient poems (Ash'ār-i-Jāhilīyyat). The historical events particularly those stories which are related to the Prophets of other religions and races especially the Jews and the Christians, should be explained with the help of the Bible

<sup>1</sup> See further, Surah Hūd-1 and Surah Furqān-33



instead of the stories narrated by the Jews (Isrā'īlīyyāt), provided the text demands this explanation.

There are many verses in the Qur'ān about the secrets of Universe and human body. Those verses can also be explained in the context with the help of modern sciences to show the authenticity of the Qur'ān as a word of God. It should always be kept in mind that the Qur'ān is not a book of Science but a book of Guidance, determining the correct relationship between God and man, and man and man.

However, no verse should be interpreted by ignoring the context and precedents in the Qur'ān. This is a most important and basic principle of Tafsīr al-Qur'ān bi'l Qur'ān. In fact, it is the key to the solution of all problems related to the interpretation of the Qur'ān.<sup>1</sup>

In the end I would say that the above-mentioned methodology i.e., Tafsīr al-Qur'ān bi'l Qur'ān should be carried out on a collective basis in the same way as the Fatāwā-i-Ālamgīrī (Book on Islamic Jurisprudence) was compiled by a team of expert 'Ulamā' during the reign of Aurangzeb (d. 1707 A.D.).

No individual, whosoever, can be expected to have full command over all the branches of knowledge which have been dealt with in various ways and purposes in the Qur'ān.

The differences, some of them serious in nature, found among the commentators of the Qur'ān are only due to individual academic exercises. These differences, ultimately, have divided the Muslims all over the world into many conflicting sects. This and other maladies permeating the body of the Ummah can be cured only by the Qur'ān, if we cling to it in the manner mentioned above.

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<sup>1</sup> See for detail, al-Takmīl fi Uṣūl al-Ta'wīl

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## Coherence in the Qur'ān

✎...Maulānā Amīn Aḥsan Iṣlāḥī<sup>1</sup>

Tr.: Maḥmūd 'Āṣim<sup>2</sup>

Students of the Qur'ān mostly seem confused about the coherence (thematic unity) in the Qur'ān even though if they are well-versed with the writings of Maulānā Ḥamīduddīn Farāhī. They assume that Maulānā Farāhī is the only scholar who claims coherence in the Qur'ān. They are of opinion that nobody, among Islamic scholars from Muslim world and across the globe who pondered upon Qur'ānic verses, conceives the same idea as Farāhī does. If coherence does exist in the Qur'ān then this aspect would not remain untouched and unwritten by those great scholars whose connoisseurship and insight are acknowledged by whole *ummah*. Then how we come to believe that a knot which our great ancestors were not able to undo, a man who was born in a time when the door of research and innovation has been closed, can do this miracle?

So, the conclusion is that anybody who claims coherence in the Qur'ān against predecessor scholars, asserts for such a thing that goes totally against the consensus of scholars of Muslim *ummah*. In this regard, the biggest rational and revealed evidence they provide is that the Qur'ān is plain and simple book and it does not require any intellectual endeavor to understand it. This is a book which defines itself with names as Kitāb-i-Mubīn (A book that makes things clear), Sirāj-i-

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<sup>1</sup> Great Indian scholar of the Qur'ānic Studies

<sup>2</sup> Research Scholar, CAAS, SLL&CS, JNU, New Delhi

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Munīr (lamp spreading light) and Nūr (light). Furthermore, the Almighty Allah describes this book in such words that clearly show the plainness and clarity it has. For instance, Allah says:

"وَلَقَدْ يَسَّرْنَا الْقُرْآنَ لِلذِّكْرِ فَهَلْ مِنْ مُدَكِّرٍ ﴿١٧﴾"

Tr.: And We have indeed made the Qur'ān easy to understand and remember; then is there any who will remember (or receive admonition)? (al-Qamar: 17)

There are several verses of the same theme in the Qur'ān. If coherence exists in the Qur'ān as claimed by 'Allāmah Farāhī, it would be very easy to locate. Furthermore, as anybody who does not know Arabic can understand the Qur'ān by its translation simply, in the same way anyone who ponders over coherence can he find this fact with petty efforts. But the reality is otherwise. The way to find coherence is very difficult and the huge efforts of our great ancestors could not conquer this phenomenon and find the reality of this claim. Hence, we must admit that coherence in the Qur'ān is not reality instead it is a phenomenon of allegory. And the whole idea of coherence is created by some discerning and perceptive minds that carried out efforts that are not only prohibited in Islam but also bear no fruits at all.

My teacher Imām Farāhī has written a separate book on this topic titled 'دلائل النظام' (Dalā'ī al-Nizām: Evidences on Coherence in the Qur'ān). In that book he dealt with those apprehensions and brought unequivocal and imperative evidences against all doubts and fears in his own style and principle. But this small piece of writing does not allow citing all the details of this topic. There are few points of Maulānā Farāhī in this regard that remained in the mind from his lectures and I put them below in brief.

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The point should be noted as principal that our main credence in this regard is on the Qur'ān itself. Qur'ān is coherent in best possible way. And this coherence- except few particular places- is evident and obvious for any perspicacious person. And places where this coherence is not oblivious we blame our own insight. We do not rely on external evidences to prove coherence in the Qur'ān but instead we smell this fragrance in the Qur'ān itself. And that was the reason for our first step in this regard but we are not to detail all that here. But apart from the Qur'ān there are also some external evidences that we put here precisely for the satisfaction of perturbed minds.

1. First of all, Imām Farāhī is not alone in claiming the existence of coherence in the Qur'ān. There is a congregation of Islamic scholars who have been of the same view and wrote books on the topic. 'Allāmah Suyūṭī writes in his book 'al-Itqān':

"Allāmah Abū Ja'far bin Zubair the teacher of Abū Ḥayyān has written a particular book on the coherence and named that book as "البرهان في مناسبة ترتيب سور القرآن" (al-Burhān fī Munāsabāt-i-Tartīb-i-Suwar al-Qur'ān). And among contemporary scholars Sheikh Burhānuddīn al-Biqā'ī wrote his commentary entitled "نظم الدرر في تناسب الآي والسور" (Nazmu al-Durar fī Tanāsub al-Āi wa al-Suwar) on the same theme."<sup>1</sup>

Then Suyūṭī mentions one of his own books in which he not only discussed about the coherence in the Qur'ān but also elaborated on causes for Qur'ān's being as miraculous book. Then he writes:

"Knowledge of order and coherence in the Qur'ān is supreme knowledge but exegetes could not pay attention towards this because of ambiguity. Imām Fakhruddīn Rāzī

<sup>1</sup> Al-Suyūṭī, al-Itqān fī 'Ulūm al-Qur'ān, Muṣṭafā al-Bābī, al-Ḥalabī, Egypt, 1978, 2/138

has given much attention to this point and he says that the main treasure of the Qur'ānic subtleties are hidden in the knowledge of order and coherence."<sup>1</sup> Imām Rāzī writes in the commentary of the following verse:

وَلَوْ جَعَلْنَاهُ قُرْءَانًا أَعْجَمِيًّا لَقَالُوا (فصلت: 44)

"People narrate that the background of the revelation of this verse is that pagans, out of wickedness, said that if the Qur'ān is revealed in any language other than Arabic then it would be better. The Almighty Allah has replied to them in this verse. But to me it is extreme obscurity on divine book to give the explanation like this about this verse. This means that there are verses in the Qur'ān that have no interconnection to each others. And this is the biggest scoff about the Qur'ān. This way, apart from believing the Qur'ān as a miraculous book, we hardly can consider it an organized and systematic book. The correct point according to me is that this chapter from the very beginning till the end is very coherent. (then he has written precise commentary on this chapter in 18 lines. Then he writes) "Every writer who has not been habitual of denying the truth will certainly admit that if we do the commentary on this chapter as I did then the whole chapter will reflect one theme and every verse of this chapter will lead to only one truth."<sup>2</sup>

Another great personality of this subject is 'Allāmah Maḥdūm 'Alī Mahā'imī. His commentary revolves around the interconnection and coherence among the verses. This coherence matters him most as he even named his commentary as "تبصير الرحمان وتيسير المنان" (Tabṣīr-ur-Raḥmān wa Taisīr-ul-Mannān). There is another scholar of the same view known as 'Allāmah Walīyyuddīn Malwī. He writes:

<sup>1</sup> Ibid

<sup>2</sup> Faḥruddīn Rāzī, al-Tafsīr al-Kabīr, 27/232

“People who think that the Qur’ān is revealed eclectically according to the situations arose and there is no need to seek coherence and interconnection among the verses, they are basically in illusion. Indeed the Qur’ān was revealed eclectically according to the situations but there lies a super wisdom in the sequence of its verses.”<sup>1</sup>

These are Muslim scholars who have smelled the fragrance of coherence in the Qur’ān. Keep their words and writings in mind. And the same situation is also with ‘Allāmag ibn Jarīr etc. though his main aim was to collect more and more narrations of scholars but most often he gave priority to those narrations that are more close to the coherence and context. And he left those narrations which were not coherent. ‘Allāmah Zamakhsharī has also adopted the same method. He only followed coherence in the Qur’ān methodology instead of hindrances. If in some places he did not exceed favoring *l’itizāl*, then I think his book would be surely very useful for beginners of this topic. Same thing is found in the commentary of Imām Rāzī. He is torch-bearer of *Ash’arīyyat* and most often he goes beyond in the support of his *ash’arī* views.

We have mentioned some of exegetics above and these are actually imāms of exegetics and their books are considered primary source for the exegesis. They all admit existence of coherence in the Qur’ān but because of some reasons-that cannot be mentioned in this article- they could not elaborate and explain it.

As far as Shāh Walīyullāh is concerned that he has refuted coherence in his book “الفوز الكبير” (*al-Fauz al-Kabīr*), it has less importance. Just because of one quote that could be interpreted otherwise, I cannot be skeptical about such a

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<sup>1</sup> Al-Itqān fī ‘Ulūm al-Qur’ān, 2/138

great scholar. He was frontrunner among the Muslim scholars in admitting truth. The divine secrets and wisdoms explained by him in his writings specially in his book “حجة الله البالغة” (Hujjat-ul-lāhi al-Bālighah) provide evidences that he holds high place in regard with the knowledge of coherence in the Qur’ān. Everybody knows his optimistic view about Ibn al-‘Arabī and opinion of Ibn al-‘Arabī on coherence in the Qur’ān is also known to all.<sup>1</sup> So it is necessary that we should interpret his quote about coherence in such a way that suits his stature and views and this is possible easily. Everything he has written on this topic has various aspects and if the concern to be gripped in an irrelevant discussion, we would prove in detail what actually he wanted to say in this regard.

2. Those scholars who deny coherence in the Qur’ān, they actually deny it unwillingly. This opinion relies on the fact that Qur’ān was revealed eclectically according to the situations. The foundation of this argument is very clear as some long and most short Qur’ānic chapters have been revealed in one time. Furthermore, coherence of some chapters is very oblivious. Sayings of the Prophet (PBUH) also prove that the Prophet used to keep in mind the relevance in sequence of verses. Imām Rāzī has said as mentioned above because of these reasons and he openly articulated his apprehension while writing commentary on the chapter al-An’ām.

We believe that scholars who refute coherence in the Qur’ān, they deny it out of their religious sense of honour.

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<sup>1</sup> For the views of Ibn al-‘Arabī see: al-Itqān fī ‘Ulūm al-Qur’ān, 2/138. It should be clear that this is Qāḍī Abū Bakr Ibn al-‘Arabī not Sheikh Muḥiyuddīn Ibn al-‘Arabī.

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They thought that claiming coherence and then admitting that coherence hidden in most of the chapters or in some chapters, will be harmful to the Qur'ān. It will open door of criticism for captious minds and enemies of the Qur'ān. And because of this view they held such opinion that is more harmful than its benefits. But deeds depend on intention and they will be rewarded for their good intentions in life Hereafter.

3. Scholars who pondered upon narrations about compilation and formation know that though Qur'ān was revealed on hiatus basis, sequence of the verses was arranged according to the order of Prophet (PBUH). He dictates the place of verses in chapter and the scribes wrote down the Qur'ānic verses in its specific places. Because of this very fact there is consensus on sequence of verses of being divinely guided among Islamic scholars. If coherence does not exist in the Qur'ān as people say then why did the Prophet order the sequence in this way. If any worth-mentioning wisdom does not lie then there was no need to adopt another new sequence instead of sequence according to revelation. When every verse has been put in its particular place, we should think about reason of that particular place and sequence of every verse. And the only reason that can be stated obviously is the coherence only. Hence those who do not believe in coherence in various themes of one chapter, are not right. 'Allāmah Malwī who has been cited above stated the same thing.

Our view is also endorsed with the fact that wherever abatement of any previous order has been revealed, it has been put always beside the previous teaching. For instance,

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see the verse: *الَّذِينَ خَفَّفَ اللَّهُ عَنْكُمْ وَعَلِمَ أَنَّ فِيكُمْ ضَعْفًا فَإِنْ يَكُنْ مِنْكُمْ مِائَةٌ* *وَإِنْ يَكُنْ مِنْكُمْ أَلْفٌ يَعْلَبُوا بِمِائَتَيْنِ وَإِنْ يَكُنْ مِنْكُمْ أَلْفٌ يَعْلَبُوا بِالْأَلْفِ يَأْذَنُ اللَّهُ وَاللَّهُ مَعَ الصَّادِقِينَ* ١٦٦ was revealed after preceding verse and since this verse contains abatement, it was put in order after that verse only. In the same way, last verse of the chapter al-Muzzammil was revealed after a long period but that was also put after the previous teaching. Same situation is with verse *وَالَّذِينَ يُتَوَفَّوْنَ مِنْكُمْ وَيَذَرُونَ أَزْوَاجًا يَتَرَبَّصْنَ بِأَنْفُسِهِنَّ أَرْبَعَةَ أَشْهُرٍ وَعَشْرًا فَإِذَا بَلَغْنَ أَجَلَهُنَّ فَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْكُمْ* *أُحِلَّ لَكُمْ* and the verse *لَيْلَةَ الصِّيَامِ الرَّفَقْتِ إِلَىٰ نِسَائِكُمْ هُنَّ لِبَاسٌ لَكُمْ وَأَنْتُمْ لِبَاسٌ لَهُنَّ عَلِمَ اللَّهُ أَنَّكُمْ كُنْتُمْ تَخْتَانُونَ أَنْفُسَكُمْ فَتَابَ عَلَيْكُمْ وَعَفَا عَنْكُمْ فَالْقَنَ بُشَيْرٌ مِمَّا وَابْتِغُوا مَا كَتَبَ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ* *وَكُلُوا وَاشْرَبُوا حَتَّىٰ يَبَيِّنَ لَكُمْ الْحَبِطُ الْأَبْيَضُ مِنَ الْحَبِطِ الْأَسْوَدِ مِنَ الْفَجْرِ ثُمَّ أَتُمُوا الصِّيَامَ إِلَىٰ اللَّيْلِ وَلَا تُبْشِرُوا هُنَّ وَأَنْتُمْ عَنْكُمُونَ فِي الْمَسْجِدِ الَّذِي كُنْتُمْ تُبْشِرُونَ كَذَلِكَ يُبَيِّنُ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ آيَاتِهِ لِلنَّاسِ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَتَّقُونَ* ١٧١. There are few places where these rules do not apply but the reason for that is different. At these places the central theme or other prudence and wisdom has been kept in place that need such changes. If anybody is not habitual to these changes, he could not reach from subsidiaries to principles.

4. Putting chapters separately and being long and short chapters also bear evidence of coherence in the Qur'ān. If Qur'ān is unorganized book and without coherence, there is no need to keep the chapters in separate way. This fact is proven that determining of chapters is with divine revelation and there is no rational and revealed evidence against this very fact. Those scholars who oppose this fact, don't have any evidence from the Qur'ān or Ṣaḥīḥ Ḥadīth (proven sayings of the Prophet). So their claim has no basis.

Every rational person can sense that putting separate chapters and dividing them into different sizes give clear cut view that every chapter has a different theme and thematic unity of every chapter distinguished it from other chapters. If this was not the case then people who compiled the Qur'ān took previous collection of the Qur'ān and put the chapters in size accordingly. This order could be easier to recite and memorize the Qur'ān along with other purposes.

5. Existing sequence of the chapters that found in all compilations provides big evidence for existence of coherence in the Qur'ān. To elaborate the point I must say that the sequence in putting chapters prior or later is not without reason. The most favorable thing that could be kept in mind was size of the chapters but as everybody knows that this parameter is not considered in sequence of the chapters in the Qur'ān. As the chapter al-Fātiḥah finds place before the chapters al-Baqarah and al-Kauthar which is the shortest chapter in the Qur'ān has been put in the place before many other big chapter comparatively. This is also fact that this sequence is not as revealed from Allah so it is necessary to find any other reason for this precedence and subservience of chapters. For us coherence can be the only reason for this. There is possibility that someone argues that sequence of chapters kept with opinion of companions of the Prophet and not with the order of the Prophet. But this argument is totally against the Qur'ān and Ṣaḥīḥ Ḥadīths. Our teacher Imām Farāhī has refuted this argument with evidences in his book "تاريخ القرآن" (Tārīkh-ul-Qur'ān). This is not a place to discuss it in detail but even if we assume that this
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sequence and order have been arranged by the companions of the Prophet then how it turns to be proven that they did not care for the coherence and compiled the chapters without any coherence and connection in sequence. Everybody knows that when companions have different opinions about the place to put the chapter Bar'at therein then it was solved with the help of coherence. And keeping in mind its thematic relevance, it was kept after the chapter al-Anfāl. This point was illustrated because of that prevalent view otherwise, in our view as mentioned earlier, the sequence of chapters is also divinely guided. And the Qur'ān proves this claim. Allah says in the chapter al-Qiyāmah:

"إِنَّ عَلَيْنَا جَمْعَهُ وَقُرْآنَهُ ﴿٧﴾ فَإِذَا قَرَأْتَهُ فَاتَّبِعْ قُرْآنَهُ ﴿٨﴾ ثُمَّ إِنَّ عَلَيْنَا بَيَانَهُ ﴿٩﴾"

Tr.: It is for Us to collect it and to give you (O Muḥammad) the ability to recite it (the Qur'ān). And We have recited it to you (O Muḥammad through Gabriel) then follow its (the Qur'ān) recital. Then it is for Us (Allah) to make it clear (to you). (al-Qiyāmah: 17-19)

In the commentary of this verse Imām Farāhī says:

“Three things have been mentioned in this verse. (1) The Qur'ān will be recited to the Prophet in his life in a particular compiled form because if this promise has to be accomplished after Prophet then Prophet won't be instructed to follow the compilation and order. (2) Prophet was instructed to recite the Qur'ān according to this second recitation that was followed after compilation. There is no possibility-rationally or divinely- that Prophet was instructed to obey something and he did not convey that message to Muslim *ummah*. There is a verse in the Qur'ān that states:

يَتَأْتِيهَا الرُّسُولُ بَلِّغْ مَا أُنزِلَ إِلَيْكَ مِنْ رَبِّكَ ۗ وَإِنْ لَمْ تَفْعَلْ فَمَا بَلَّغْتَ رِسَالَتَهُ. This command from Allah requires that the Prophet must convey the Qur'ān to *ummah* according to the last recitation that is preserved in the Lauḥ-i-Maḥfūz (Tablet of Destinies) and the resemblance of last recitation is compulsory with the real recitation. (3) After this compilation, Allah has made generalization and specification along with completion and diminution in teaching of the Qur'ān accordingly. The Qur'ān has gone through all these three phases in the period of the Prophet himself. Because it is known that the Prophet used to recite whole chapters to people sometimes and this is not possible without the fact that the Qur'ān was recited to the Prophet in specific sequence. And with the same sequence Prophet recited the Qur'ān to his companions. Similarly, the Prophet instructed to put verses in particular places and this order was obeyed by his companions. If any explanatory verse was revealed then it was placed in suitable place. When revelation of the whole Qur'ān completed then Gabriel- as mentioned in the proven Prophetic traditions- recited last time the whole Qur'ān to the Prophet. After we come to know this fact, many puzzles of the coherence in the Qur'ān would be solved automatically.”<sup>1</sup>

Conclusion of this explanation tells us that the sequence of the Qur'ān that is found today, was actually done during the Prophet period himself according to divine guidance. But the problem was that the world during that age was not much equipped with requisites of civilization. There were very few literate people and paper was not invented to that time hence for a long time Qur'ān was preserved in the form of palm leaves, bones, wooden boards and people who

<sup>1</sup> Ḥamīduddīn Farāhī, Tafsīr Sūrah al-Qayāmah, Dā'irah Ḥamīdiyyah, Sarā'imīr, n.d., PP. 50-51

memorized it by hearts. Abū Bakr was the first person who collected separate verses in one compilation and then ‘Uthmān made different copies of that compilation and sent it to all big Muslim cities of that time.

6. Sixth aspect is that the spirit of any writing or speech is its coherence. Without this coherence not only that writing loses its few qualities but also becomes meaningless. Any writing that is not coherent, is a sort of nonsense that no rational mind would like to waste even a moment to read it. Everybody knows about the Qur’ān that this book has challenged the Arabs, and Arabs who were proud of their eloquence and rhetoric, were unable to accept this challenge even with a shortest chapter. First thing that should be in the Qur’ān, keeping in view to its eloquence and greatness, is its coherence because any book that is considered most unorganized and incoherent cannot become challenge even for a moment. There is another point we get to know from here that the Qur’ān whenever challenges, it calls for the same book as it is or ten chapters or similar writings or at least one chapter. The Qur’ān never challenged with one verse only. Because one single verse even though if it is brimming with wisdom and greatness cannot pose a challenge. Example of separate verses is like pearls or sweat words that you can spread on a paper and you can be pleased with its colour and fragrance but you cannot pose them as a challenge against any person who strings his pearls and pleasant words into eloquent prose or poetry. Because he has doubled its charm and beauty by just adding sequence and coherence in place of individual and scattered words. For that very
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matter scholars from among the Arabs and across world have consensus that main spirit of any piece of writing is its coherence. And by coherence we can explore all qualities lie in any writing. Any person who hesitates to admit this fact, can take any piece of writing of any great and eloquent writer and put it in incoherent form then at once he can see that every beauty of that writing has gone away. Hence we say that a complete chapter with a thematic unity has two beauties; beauty of its component and beauty of its coherence. نُورٌ عَلَىٰ نُورٍ يَهْدِي اللَّهُ لِنُورِهِ مَن يَشَاءُ.

7. Allah has declared the Prophet and the Qur'ān free from any sort of poetry. "وَمَا عَلَّمْنَاهُ الشِّعْرَ وَمَا يَنْبَغِي لَهُ" (Tr.: And We have not taught him (Muḥammad) poetry, nor is it suitable for him.) (Yāsīn: 69)

In another place the Qur'ān says: (الحاقة: 41) وَمَا هُوَ بِقَوْلِ شَاعِرٍ (Tr.: It is not the word of a poet). The Qur'ān describes the biggest evil in poets saying: (الشعراء: 225) أَنَّهُمْ فِي كُلِّ وَادٍ يَهيمُونَ (الشعراء: 225). See you not that they speak about every subject (praising people-right or wrong) in their poetry. They speak every subject means any idea that comes to their minds they become occupied in that matter. This type of purposeless deliberation is considered characteristic of poets. Allah has declared His Book and His Prophet free from these entire characteristics. So there is no reason to consider the Qur'ān a book without coherence because the word 'haimān' used in the Qur'ān by Allah means incoherent saying. Hence the mistake of those became oblivious who consider the Qur'ān incoherent because of its being similar to the poetry of the Arabs but the fact is that though it has adopted the qualities of the Arabic poetry, it did not pollute itself with its evils.

And we should also keep in minds that writings among the Arabs were not only poetry, it was just a part of their writings. Noble Arabs consider poetry against their nobility and their main interest revolves around speeches. People who are acquainted with this sort of their writings, will surely admit that speeches and sermons of the Arabs were full of beauties of writings. It is our misfortune that most part of it was destroyed and a very little is found today.

8. There are some repeated verses '*tarjī'āt*' in various chapters.

For example, in the chapter al-Raḥmān the verse *فَبِأَيِّ آلَاءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَانِ* has been mentioned repeatedly. Similarly, in the chapters al-Mursalāt and al-Shu'arā' the verses *وَيْلٌ لِّیَوْمِئِذٍ لِّلْمُكَذِّبِیْنَ* and *إِنَّ فِي ذَٰلِكَ لَآیَةً* came repeatedly. Sometimes, in some chapters one verse after few verses has been mentioned repeatedly as opening or last verse of the chapter. For instance, the verse *وَأَنْزَلْنَا فِيهَا آيَاتٍ بَيِّنَاتٍ لِّعَلَّكُمْ تَذَكَّرُونَ* in the chapter al-Nūr has come three times with slight changes. It is astonishing to say that these components are incoherent as it seems very united and coherent in its repetition.

A subtle point in this regard is that address in Qur'ān returns repeatedly to the central theme but keeping in mind the suitability of the context, there occur slight changes in wording that beginners, who are unable to understand this style of the Qur'ān, they lose the connectivity and coherence in the Qur'ān. Here if I won't be blamed for exaggeration, I can say that repetition found in the whole Qur'ān not only just in few chapters. But I say there are two types of repetition in the Qur'ān-verbal and non verbal and we discussed above about the verbal one. As far as non verbal repetition is concerned, we must



know that the knowledge of coherence in the Qur'ān mostly depends on those repetitions but without practice we are not able to find out that link. I must state here that my faith in coherence build up by the verses of repetition. When I recite any chapter that has repetitions, I feel that – even with apparently incoherence- some bowman has spread his arrows from his case and he throws one arrow toward his target with a gap of short span.

9. There are rhyming words in the Qur'ān. This also proves existence of coherence in the Qur'ān. People who ponder upon this point can understand that how much this point can help to reach the secret of coherence. This is not the suitable place to discuss this point but we should keep in mind that even though the Qur'ān was revealed eclectically, there is maintenance of rhyming of words in the Qur'ān and it is totally against the incoherence. Because the basic of rhyming words is coherence and sequence. No rational person can think that the Qur'ān because of being revealed eclectically there exists no coherence and interconnectivity among its components but Allah or Prophet has kept these rhyming words just to maintain the rhythm and melody. But we should know that rhythm and melody in any piece of writings are not the target itself which needs so much space and attention. So if revelation of the Qur'ān eclectically causes incoherence in the Qur'ān as it is assumed, it affects largely on its rhyming of words but the reality is that it is safe and sound in all cases.
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## Tafsīr-Origin and Development (With Special Reference to Modern India)

✎...Maulānā Diyā'uddīn Iṣlāhī<sup>1</sup>

Tr.: Dr. Ṭufail Aḥmad Khān<sup>2</sup> & Dr. Rizwān Aḥmad<sup>3</sup>

The Qur'ān is the last divine message revealed to the Prophet Muḥammad (PBUH) to guide the mankind till Dooms Day. It reminds them of monotheism, justice and truthfulness imbibed in their nature by Almighty God. It has been sent down so as to bring the people out of the darkness of polytheism and to lead them to the light of belief and faith which is the straight path prescribed by Allah: *إِنَّ هَذَا الْقُرْآنَ يَهْدِي* "إِنَّ هَذَا الْقُرْآنَ يَهْدِي لِّلَّتِي هِيَ أَقْوَمُ --- ﴿٩﴾". (Tr.: Verily, this Qur'ān guides to that which is most just and right- al-Isrā': 9)

But since its revelation, a group of people has been opposing it. This group not only wanted to avoid attention to this Book [which eradicated the corruption and called for a peaceful system] but they also prohibited others from paying heed to its call. The Qur'ān says: *وَقَالَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا لَا تَسْمَعُوا لِهَذَا الْقُرْآنِ وَالْغَوْا فِيهِ* "وَقَالَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا لَا تَسْمَعُوا لِهَذَا الْقُرْآنِ وَالْغَوْا فِيهِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٢٦﴾". (Tr.: Those who did not believe say: Listen not to this Qur'ān, but talk at random in the midst of its (reading), that you may gain the upper hand! Ḥā Mīm Sijdah: 26)

But, despite being target of strong opposition, the Qur'ān continued influencing the audience and catching the hearts of

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<sup>1</sup> Great Muslim scholar of India and author of different books on Arabic and Islamic Studies.

<sup>2</sup> The translator did Ph. D. from Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi.

<sup>3</sup> A graduate from Jāmi'a-tul-Falāḥ and a freelance translator

its addressees. This reality can be proved by a number of events the history witnessed and the biography of the Prophet (PBUH) encompassed. But this is not a suitable place to describe it. The fact is that the revolutionary message of the Qur'ān brought radical religious change in the Arab in a very short span awakening them with its clear light.

It is also a historical fact that the Arabs not only became fully attached to the Qur'ān but also this *uncultured* nation dared to call many civilized and cultured nations to this pious message sending their emissaries to the kings and viceroys within Arabia and outside the Arabian Peninsula.

In the twentieth century when the human being is trying to discover planets and other hidden wonders of the universe, it is called the era of knowledge, awakening, inventions, innovation and conquest of science which ratify Qur'ān's divinity thus bringing its eternal realities into light day by day which can be explained by the verse "يَخْلُقُ مَا لَا تَعْلَمُونَ" (Tr.: He (Allah) creates what you do not know, al-Naḥl:8)

In the modern age there also remains a group of people which is severely attacking the Qur'ān, and on the other side, the most civilized nation (Europe) being proud of its power is busy in disgracing the Qur'ān!! In the same way the other civilized nations and developing countries also hatching conspiracies against Qur'ān to be changed what none can do exact the barbarians. Thus, Qur'ān is being fabricated, verses related to jihād are being taken out and contents related to the astray of polytheists, idolaters, Jews and Christians are being omitted. And strange! A man from Kolkātā named Mr. Choprā reached the High Court and suited a case seeking ban on the Holy Qur'ān. Eventually this case was dismissed. Narrating the court proceedings its prosecutor in Kolkata High Court Mr.

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Late Justice Khawājah Muḥammad Yūsuf revealed that during the hearing of this case 'I felt that strange legal points are revealed to me by Almighty Allah'.

As the teachings of the Qur'ān spread in the world during the period of Prophet and his companions, in the twentieth century too serious studies and researches are being carried out despite sever opposition and continuous campaign against it. So not only Muslim but also non-Muslim scholars are trying to publish their papers on topics related to new findings which nobody could even think of in the past centuries.

And it is a fact that how can the lamp lit by the Almighty God be fainted and how can the Book whose preservation has been promised by God be distorted or destroyed. Allah says:

"إِنَّ عَلَيْنَا جَمْعَهُ وَقُرْآنَهُ ﴿١٧﴾ فَإِذَا قُرَأْنَهُ فَاتَّبِعْ قُرْآنَهُ ﴿١٨﴾ ثُمَّ إِنَّ عَلَيْنَا بَيَانَهُ ﴿١٩﴾".

Tr.: It is for Us to collect it and to promulgate it. But when We have promulgated it, follow you its recital (as promulgated) any more, it is for Us to explain it (and make it clear). Al-Qiyāmah: 16-19)

In another place He promised: "إِنَّا نَحْنُ نَزَّلْنَا الذِّكْرَ وَإِنَّا لَهُ لَحَافِظُونَ ﴿٩﴾". (Tr.: We have, without doubt, sent down the Message; and we will assuredly guard it. al-Ḥijr: 9)

In the twentieth century as by observing all the things of nature, new discoveries are coming to the light, the eternal facts of the Qur'ān are also disclosed to us. And that is how the new researches and findings by pondering over the Qur'ān are being carried out day by day.

From the very beginning, Muslims have been very much inclined towards the Qur'ān. The main aim of the Prophet Muḥammad (PBUH) was to recite the verses of the Qur'ān and

to purify the minds of human beings through teaching and instructing its principles and divine directives. That's why when it was revealed, he hurriedly tries to memorize it and preserve it till he was warned by the revelation:

"لَا تُحَرِّكْ بِهِ لِسَانَكَ لِتَعْجَلَ بِهِ ۗ إِنَّ عَلَيْنَا جَمْعَهُ وَقُرْآنَهُ ۗ فَإِذَا قَرَأْتَهُ فَاتَّبِعْ قُرْآنَهُ ۗ ثُمَّ إِنَّ عَلَيْنَا بَيَانَهُ ۗ"

Tr.: Move not your tongue concerning the (Qur'ān) to make haste therewith. It is for Us to collect it and to promulgate it. But when We have promulgated it, follow you its recital (as promulgated): Nay more, it is for Us to explain it (and make it clear). Al-Qiyāmah: 16-19)

There is another verse in the chapter Ṭāha of the same meaning:

--- "وَلَا تَعْجَلْ بِالْقُرْآنِ مِنْ قَبْلِ أَنْ يُقْضَىٰ إِلَيْكَ وَحْيُهُ وَقُل رَّبِّ زِدْنِي عِلْمًا ۗ"

Tr.: Be not in haste with the Qur'ān before its revelation to you is completed but say, my Lord! Advance me in knowledge. (Ṭāha: 114).

The Prophet (PBUH) had entrusted the responsibility of writing the Qur'ān to some of his companions. In the beginning he had prevented writing his commands and sayings lest it could get mixed up with the Holy Qur'ān or any alteration might happen.

The order of the Qur'ān is divine. It means that when the verses were revealed, the Prophet (PBUH) instructed the scribes of the revelation as per the command of Allah to put them in the related chapters and appropriate verses coherently. He revised the revealed portion of the Qur'ān before Gabriel in the month of Ramaḍān. And the year he died, he revised it before Gabriel twice in the month of Ramaḍān. It has been mentioned in the Ṣaḥīḥ of al-Bukhārī.

It shows that the Prophet (PBUH) conveyed the message of the Qur'ān to the people without any deficiency. He spared no efforts in getting the people acquainted with the teachings and guidance of the Qur'ān in rendering their reform and purification. His existence was the practical explanation of the Qur'ān. Once 'Ā'shah (MABPWH) was asked about his manners, she replied: Don't you read the Qur'ān. His manners were the Qur'ān itself."

He used to instruct his companions to learn and teach the Qur'ān. It is he who said: The best of you are those who learn the Qur'ān and teach it." He would feel happy when he sees his companions engrossed in discussing the Qur'ān.

The noble companions themselves were very much interested in the Qur'ān. They would spare no efforts in understanding it and applying its commandments in their lives. They did not have any problem in understanding the aim and purpose of the Qur'ān because it was revealed in their own language and style. 'Allāmah Ibn Khaldūn writes:

"إن القرآن نزل بلغة العرب على أساليب بلاغتهم فكانوا كلهم يفهمونه ويعلمون معانيه في مفرداته وتراكيبه."

Tr.: The Qur'ān was revealed in the language of the Arabs in the styles of their rhetoric, and they all understood it and knew its meanings in its vocabulary and composition".<sup>1</sup>

Some of the companions were not in the pursuit of inner meanings of the Qur'ān, rather they regarded it unnecessary since the Prophet Muḥammad (PBUH) was among them, so whatever they knew from him would suffice to them but all the companions were not the same nor all of them were equal

<sup>1</sup> Muqaddimah Ibn Khaldūn, al-Taqqaddum, Cairo, P. 367

in their understanding the religion. Referring to 'Uthmān and 'Abdullāh bin Mas'ūd etc., Abū 'Abdur Raḥmān Sulmā has stated that when we would have studied ten verses, we would not proceed further unless we knew the academic and practical facts of it. That's why they spent years in the study of only one chapter.' Anas (MABPWH) stated that if any of us learnt chapters al-Baqarah and Āli 'Imrān, he was considered the most revered among us.' It is said about 'Abdullāh Ibn 'Umar (MABPWH) that he spent eight years in pondering over the chapter al-Baqarah.'

The companions who became famous as commentators of the Qur'ān are four guided caliphs, 'Abdullāh Ibn Mas'ūd, Ubayy bin Ka'ab, Zaid bin Thābit and 'Abdullāh bin 'Abbās. Ibn 'Abbās was the youngest among them but due to his correct understanding of the Qur'ān people called him 'Leader of Ummah' and 'Interpreter of the Qur'ān'. The Prophet (PBUH) had prayed for him, 'O Allah give him knowledge in religion and teach him explanation'. 'Umar (MABPWH) would trust him but except 'Alī, 'Abdullāh ibn Mas'ūd and 'Abdullāh bin 'Abbās (MABPWT) exegesis narratives from all companions of this category are less quoted. There are also exegesis narratives from Abū Mūsā Ash'arī, 'Abdullāh bin Zubair, Jābir bin 'Abdullāh, Abū Hurairah, Anas bin Mālik and 'Ā'ishah (MABPWT). However, the commentators of Qur'ān among the companions of the Prophet (PBUH) would think sufficient those meanings which they got from the Prophet (PBUH) because of their due precautions but Ibn Mas'ūd and Ibn 'Abbās (MABPWT) would consider pondering and thoughtfulness necessary for the Qur'ān but they also did not allow to explain it unless the commentator has not reached the depth of the Qur'ān.

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In the era of noble companions, the explanation of verses used to be done with the help of customs and traditions of the pre-Islamic Arabs and events of the period of the Prophet and his sayings and actions. But in this era, Kharjī, Shī'ī, Qādrī and Murji'ī sects had already appeared. They would explain the Qur'ān as per their own faiths and beliefs. Some people had become Muslims after they left their religion- Judaism and Christianity. For example, 'Abdullāh bin Salām, Salmān Fārsī and Tamīm Dārī etc. Since some historical facts like creation of the world, birth of Ādam and Eve and the events of previous prophets and nations have been mentioned briefly as required but it has been mentioned in the Torah in detail. It is the habit of human nature that when it hears something, it desires to know the detail of it. Therefore, some companions would ask the detail of these things. That is how Israeli narratives got penetrated into the exegesis treasure and these stories would create interests in general public.

After the noble companions, their disciples, I mean in the era of followers (Tābi'īn) famous exegesis Imāms were: 'Ikramah, 'Aṭā' bin Rabah, Ḍaḥḥāk bin Muzāḥim, Sa'īd bin Jubair, Mujāhid bin Ḥibr, Ḥasan Baṣarī, Zaid bin Aslam, Qatādah, Abul 'Āliyah, Rabī' bin Anas and 'Aufī etc.

In this era, interest with the Israeli narratives had increased. So the explanation of such things as was overlooked considering it unnecessary in the Qur'ān, was inducted in the exegesis. For example, the measurement of the Prophet Nūḥ's boat, the varieties of pairs kept in the boat, the kind of four birds of Ibrāhīm (PBUH), the dynasty of the tyrant king in the story of Khiḍr and lineage of the boy killed by Khiḍr, the signs and places of the eleven stars which Yūsuf had seen, age of the wife of Mūsá, the period Mūsá had completed with

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Shoib, the names of Seven Sleepers of Aṣḥāb al-Kahf, the colour and race of their dog. This type of research spread on a large scale by the narrations. Its reference was Ka'ab bin Aḥbār and Wahb bin Munabbah who had converted to Islam from Judaism. Cautious 'Ulamā' abstained from reporting this type of narrations which is why such narrations are less found in exegesis of Ibn Jarīr but profoundly existed in Tha'alabī.

In the era of followers of the successors to the Prophet Muḥammad's companions, the number of Ḥadīth narrators increased. Besides 'Aṭā bin Dīnār, Muqātil bin Sulaimān, Sufyān Thaurī, Wakī' bin Jarrāḥ and Sufyān bin 'Uwainah, Ibn Juraiḥ, Ishāq bin Rāhwaiḥ, Ādam bin Iyās, 'Abdul Razzāq and Imām Mālik are considered to be the leaders of this group.

In that period some people also wrote exegesis. For example, Ibn Juraij, Sufyān bin 'Uwainah, Wakī' bin Jarrāḥ, Shu'abah and Abū Bakr bin Shaibah. But these exegeses do no longer exist. Whatever the narrations they had heard from their teachers they had written down. In that period Israeli narrations became the part of the treasure of the exegesis as Dhahbī has quoted some people saying that Ibn Juraij used to fabricate narrations.<sup>1</sup>

The period of followers of the successors of the Prophet's companions ended in the second century Hijri. After that, the period of their disciples begins. In the third century of Hijrah, compilation of the books started on a large scale. The six authentic collections of the Prophet Muḥammad's traditions were compiled in this era. The portion of Kitāb al-Tafsīr was also included in which the exegesis narrations were collected on the order of the chapters. That consists of narrations of the early Muslim writers related to the words and verses of the

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<sup>1</sup> Jalāluddīn Suyūṭī, al-Itqān fī 'Ulūm al-Qur'ān, al-Azharia al-Miṣriya, 1318 H. 176/2

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Qur'ān. But the most narrations of those books are either of the noble companions or their disciples. The narrations reaching up to the Prophet (PBUH) are much less. In addition to it the exegesis chapters of the authentic books (Kutub Şihāḥ) are in concise where narrations related to one or two words of a chapter and one or two verses of a chapter have been incorporated. The Islamic jurists who made pondering over the Qura'nic verse their motto that have been stressed upon in many places in the Qur'ān, the number of such narrations is less and as regards exegesis it is lesser. Imām Suyūṭī has quoted these narrations in the end of 'al-Itqān' which are said to be the Marfū'. However, these are only fifteen narrations<sup>1</sup> and if more search is carried out, the number of quoted narrations of Suyūṭī might be much lesser.

In the third century when Ḥadīth books were compiled, the cross-questioning and criticism on the narrations and narrators started. As a result, a big portion of the exegesis narrations, due to the weakness of narration, became doubtful. Ḍaḥḥāq bin Mazāḥim, Muqātil bin Sulaimān, Abū Şāliḥ Mişrī, Muḥammad bin Saib Kalbī, Sa'dī, Muḥammad bin Marwān, Baṣḥīr bin 'Ammār and 'Aufī etc. who have quoted exegesis narrations frequently are considered to be fabricators.<sup>2</sup>

The number of exegesis narrations of 'Alī (MABPWH) is 686 in which only fifty are correct as per the Ḥadīth Imāms.<sup>3</sup> Likewise, the narrations of 'Abdullāh bin 'Abbās what the author of 'Mirat-ul-Tafsir' has written are 1660.<sup>4</sup> Imām Suyūṭī has said that his narrated Ḥadīths are countless. After

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<sup>1</sup> Shamsuddīn al-Dhahbī, Tadhkirah al-Ḥuffāz, Dā'irat-ul-Ma'ārif, Ḥyderābād, P. 153.

<sup>2</sup> Dhulfiqār Aḥmad Naqwī, Mira'at al-Tafsīr, Mufid-i-Ām, Āgra, 1316H, P. 153.

<sup>3</sup> Ibn Ḥazm, al-Milal wa al-Naḥal, al-Tamaddun, Egypt, 1321H, P. 137.

<sup>4</sup> Mira'at al-Tafsīr, P. 13.

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mentioning the sayings of the Ḥadīth Imāms he then quoted Imām Shāfa'ī as saying: 'لم يثبت عن ابن عباس في التفسير إلا شبيهه بمائة حديث' (Tr.: Among the exegesis narrations of Ibn 'Abbās only hundred are proven to be correct.)<sup>1</sup>

In sum, the fabrication of the Ḥadīth and mix up of Israeli narratives in exegesis narrations started after the Prophet's period. On the basis of this, Imām Aḥmad who is the imām of cross-questioning (and also the teacher of Imām Bukhārī and Imām Muslim) says: there is no originality of three books; Maghāzī, Malāḥim and Tafsīr.

In the last of the third century Hijri and in the fourth century, the trend of writing exegesis of the Qur'ān started. The famous exegeses are; Tafsīr ibn Jarīr (310 AH), Tafsīr ibn Mundhir (318 AH), Tafsīr ibn Abī Ḥātim (327 AH), Tafsīr Imām Ḥākim (359 AH) and Tafsīr ibn Ḥibbān (369 AH). These exegeses consist of narrations of the noble companions, followers and 'Ulamā'. The commentators have not given their opinions. It is only Ḥāfiẓ ibn Jarīr Ṭabrī who has written the meanings of words of verses and sayings and objections of earlier 'Ulamā' as references. Then he has preferred any one of the sayings and mentioned its reasons. He has adopted the same style in explaining the meanings of the verses. In some places he has derived solutions of the issues from it and discussed the reasons of vowel-points.

This exegesis is called as 'Umm al-Tafāsīr' and 'Aḥsan al-Tafāsīr'. It has accommodated all the exegesis treasure before his time but it included all types of narrations without critical cross-questioning. However, it is easy to recognize them as their references have properly been penned down.

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<sup>1</sup> Al-Itqān fī 'Ulūm al-Qur'ān, Maholabala, 189/2.

In the beginning, imitation and narration were overwhelmed on the exegesis but from the era of companions, as there were two groups of Ahl-i-Ray and Ahl-i-Ḥadīth in Islamic jurisprudence, there were two schools of exegesis. One group trusted only on the sayings of the Prophet (PBUH) and narratives of his companions and did not infuse their own opinions into it at all. But the second group derived the solutions of the problems from the verses too. That's why word of ta'wīl came out along with exegesis. The former denotes the sayings and narrations of the Prophet (PBUH) and his companions and people after them too. Ta'wīl is meant what is derived from pondering and exertion.

In the fourth century, different educational movements came into existence among the Muslims. But in the in 'Abbaside period when the compilation of science and arts started, it also left its impacts on exegesis-writing. Thus Grammar, rhetoric, Islamic jurisprudence, rules of Islamic jurisprudence, logic, philosophy, scholastic and mysticism also got influenced by it. The experts of these sciences wrote exegesis on the basis of their own understanding and reason. Moreover, new religious sects came into existence. All of them wrote exegesis as per their faiths and beliefs. That's why the conditions of exegesis changed. Therefore, Zujūj and Kasa'ī who were the experts of Grammar, discussed in their exegesis about words and reasons of vowel-points. Abū 'Ubaid discussed about strange words of the Qur'ān. Abū al-Laith Samarqandī and 'Allāmah Qurṭbī presented verses as a proof on the branches of Islamic jurisprudence. Historians Tha'albī and Ibn Athīr delved into the details of stories. 'Abdul Qāhir Jurjānī etc. explained the witticisms of rhetoric. Ibn al-'Arabī and Wāḥidī talked about mysticism. Shī'a commentators proved their thoughts from the verses of the Qur'ān.

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In this very period emerged a group of Muslim scholastics who reinterpreted the verses of Qur'ān so as to prove Islamic faith. At that time logical interpretation was inevitable to be followed. The people with whom Muslims had to interact were Jews, Christians and Atheists who raised logical objections on the Qur'ān to which Muslim philosophers would have to reply logically. Masters of tradition did not like their style. Eventually, there arose a conflict among them. That's how there appeared two types of exegesis; Manqūlī (traditional) and Ma'qūlī (logical).

Both the exegeses were written in the 'Abbaside period as Ibn Jarīr had accommodated all the available old exegesis but it was devoid of 'ilm-i-kalām (Scholastics) because Ibn Jarīr was Muḥaddith not scholastic. Whatever the exegesis were written after him, they were found to be extract of Ibn Jarīr particularly Ḥāfiẓ Ibn Kathīr who has compiled his exegesis after summarizing it carefully which could not achieve the status of Ibn Jarīr as Maulānā Shiblī says:

"In fact it is the same melody which is played by different instruments. In the wide span of eight years thousands of artists emerged but in all the hearts of their only one spirit is at work".<sup>1</sup>

In that period, Mu'atazalah sect came forward for the service of religion and knowledge. This group gave more importance to logic and wisdom than narration and tradition. They wrote exegesis on logical basis to prove their particular faith and to reply to the objections raised against Islam. In this regard the exegesis of Abū Ḥakam Aṣfahānī, Abul Qāsim Balkhī, 'Abdullāh bin Aḥmad bin Maḥmūd, Abū Bakr Aṣam and Qaffāl are very important but these exegesis are no longer found. Their

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<sup>1</sup> Maqālāt-i-Shiblī, Volume. 4, Ma'ārif Press, A'zamgarh, 1956.

discourses are frequently found in the exegesis of Imām Rāzī. With the help of the above exegesis Maulānā Saʿīd Anṣārī had edited the exegesis of Abū Muslim Aṣfahānī which was published from Dār al-Muṣannifīn (Aʿẓamgarh).

Ashāʾirah also wrote exegesis against Muʿatazalah as per the principles of philosophy and wisdom. The most famous among them are ʿAbdul Karīm Shahristānī (548 AH) and Imām Fakhruddīn Rāzī (606 AH).

Tafsīr Ṭabrī is in forefront and is most important in the sixth century Hijri as it has been mentioned earlier. Besides it there are two more important exegeses. First one is Kashshāf of ʿAllāmah Zamakhsharī which is famous as regards language and literature. He was the master of rhetoric. Despite being Muʿatazalī, people of each and every sect and group got benefits from Zamakhsharī. After that whatever exegesis of that sort were written, were the summary of this commentary. Third one is Tafsīr-i-Kabīr of Imām Rāzī which was popular among the rational ʿUlamāʾ. It bears the same status among the rational exegesis as tafsīr of Ibn Jarir bears among traditional exegesis.

From the seventh century science and arts started to be declined and the period of exertion was over. Suddenly the chain of educational struggle and mental growth that was continued for the centuries came to a standstill. The condition of exegesis and Qurʾānic sciences is more disappointing and painful as Maulānā Abul Kalām writes:

“From the early centuries of Islam to the last decades a number of commentators were born. Their style of writing exegesis is a continuous chain of declined standard of thought. Each link of it is lower than before and each former has been higher than the latter. In this regard, as we move upward, the reality becomes

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clearer, higher and appears in its natural form. But as we move downward, the condition becomes adverse”.<sup>1</sup>

He further says:

“After the fourth century Hijri the exertion period of Islamic sciences ended. The general way of thinking was imitated. Each and every person whoever rose to write exegesis, he would follow his predecessor’s steps and then blindly followed him. If a Qur’ānic commentator has committed a mistake in the third century, it was inevitable that it could be transmitted up to the ninth century as a copy of the earlier version. Nobody deemed it necessary for a moment to examine it properly out of imitation and find out the reality. Gradually, the exegesis-writing was only based on making marginal notes on the current exegesis. See on the margins of Baiḍāwī and Jalālain, you will find that how the power of composing has been wasted in the whitewash of a built house. The bad taste supported the pigheadedness. That’s why we see that in the last decades only those exegeses were accepted for teaching and learning which were devoid of the merits of thinkers of the past. This inappropriate selection of the art continued in all branches of arts which remained in preferring Sakkākī on Jurjānī and Taftāzānī on Sakkākī. In that situation only Baiḍāwī and Jalālain could get acceptance. Look at the current exegeses which has multiple sayings and quotations in its interpretation, you will find that only that quotation is preferred which is the weakest and irrelevant. Those quotations mentioned would have a better one but it will be neglected”.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Abul Kalām Āzād, *Tarjamān al-Qur’ān*, Zamzam Ltd. Lāhore, 9-10/1 (Preface).

<sup>2</sup> *Tarjamān al-Qur’ān*, 14-15/1.

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It is right to say that the achievements of Indian scholars in the field of Islamic sciences are well-established. However, nobody can negate the opinion of Dr. Zubaid Aḥmad that Arabic works are lesser than the Persian works, and the existing works lack originality and innovation. First, the inclination towards rational knowledge did not give much time towards transcribed works. And whatever they did was limited to the foot-notes and margins. Second, when Arabic composition formally started here, the golden period of educational efforts of Islamic countries was over and some Arabic sciences had reached its peak that further progress and development were almost impossible to be done. The required interest in exertion for the promotion and development of sciences what to say about Qur'ānic exegesis, as Nawwāb Ṣiddīqu Ḥasan Khān stated in 'al-Ḥiṭah fī Dhikr-i-al-Ṣiḥāḥ-i-Sittah' that Ḥadīth science in India before Shāh 'Abdul Ḥaq Dehlawī was very much similar to the red sulphur which is rarely found in India.

The works done in the field of Qur'ān and its exegesis before twentieth century can be accessed from the book 'al-Thaqāfah al-Islāmīyyah fī al-Hind' by Maulānā 'Abdul Ḥayy. Here we suffice to point out its quality:

- 1- Many foot-notes and explanations of these tafsīrs were written.
  - 2- The books written in Qur'ānic sciences, art of qir'at and tajwīd are eminent.
  - 3- Complete and incomplete exegeses were written, some also penned down dotless tafsīrs.
  - 4- Some people wrote the exegesis of few chapters and some commented on one or two chapters only.
  - 5- In some exegeses verses related to Islamic jurisprudence were explained.
  - 6- Some people discussed the mysticism.
  - 7- Some concentrated on grammar and vowel-points.
  - 8- In some exegeses verses
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related to a particular topic have been collected and then explained. 9- Shāh Walīyyullāh and his son translated the Qur'ān with marginal notes in Persian and Urdu respectively. 10- Shāh Walīyyullāh also wrote 'al-Fauz al-Kabīr' and 'Fath al-Khabīr' etc. 11- Maulānā Faḍlur Raḥmān Ganj Murādābādī translated the Qur'ān into Bhākā language whereas Sir Sayyid wrote exegesis of half of the Qur'ān.

The twentieth century was distinguished for the academic and interpretative works wherein Europe was a pioneer in the science and art. Due to their influence, the style of writing and composing changed in the East too. Some people got highly influenced by the West, however, the most exegeses of the Qur'ān were like 'خذ ما صفا ودع ما كدر' (Tr.: Take what is right and leave what is wrong.) Creativity and novelty are found in the interpretative works of Sheikh Muḥammad 'Abduh (1905) and his pupils. 'Allāmah Sayyid Raḥīd Riḍā (1354 AH) wanted to complete exegesis of his Sheikh but he could not complete only its half part that he breathed his last. Sheikh Muḥammad Muṣṭafā Murāghī (1945) was also the pupil of Sheikh 'Abduh. The exegesis of Jauharī Ṭanṭawī named 'al-Jawāhir fī al-Qur'ān' has been written considering the Western science in which the discussions of modern and natural sciences are prevailing. Sheikh Ḥasan al-Bannā wrote an introduction to the interpretation of the Qur'ān. Sayyid Quṭb wrote 'Fī Ṣilāl al-Qur'ān' in eight volumes along with some books in the Qur'ānic sciences like 'Maṣhāhid al-Qiyāmah', 'al-Taṣwīr al-Fannī fī al-Qur'ān' etc. The names of Ḥasan Bajouda, Dr. Muḥammad Buwaihī and Muṣṭafā Ṣādiq Rāfi'i are worthy to be mentioned. That latter among them (Muṣṭafā Ṣādiq Rāfi'i) has written 'I'jāz al-Qur'ān wa al-Balāghah al-Nabawīyyah'.

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The collection of the Qur'ānic sciences increased in this century in India but their types are different as well as their standards are. A brief list of some worth-mentioning books is given below:

Muḥammad Ya'qūb Ḥasan Seth (Madrās) wrote three volumes of 'Kitāb al-Hudá' and 'Kaṣhshāf al-Hudá'. 'Kaṣhshāf al-Hudá' is an introduction which deals with the topics regarding the Qur'ānic sciences. In 'Kitāb al-Hudá', he has collected different topics of entire Qur'ān together with the verses under one topic along with their translation. He has also described new researches and quotations of former holy books regarding those topics in the footnotes so that the truthfulness of the Qur'ān and its authenticity could be ascertained through comparing it with the new researches. He has collected verses regarding monotheism, names of Allah and creation of the world and angels in its first part. The second part consists of stories starting from Ādam to Musá. 'Kaṣhshāf al-Hudá' would be in twenty seven volumes as per the writer's draft but the second part was being published till he died on 14<sup>th</sup> Ṣafar 1359 AH.

Among the books of exegesis Tafsīr Waḥīdī by Maulānā Waḥīd al-Zamān, Tafsīr-ul-Qur'ān bi al-Qur'ān (Arabic) and Tafsīr Thanā'ī (Urdu) by Maulānā Thanā'ullāh Amritsarī, Bayān-ul-Qur'ān by Maulānā Aṣhrāf 'Alī Thānwī, Tafsīr Mājidī (Urdu and English) by Maulānā 'Abdul Mājid Daryābādī, Tarjamān-ul-Qur'ān (not completed) by Maulānā Abul Kalām Āzād, Tafhīm-ul-Qur'ān by Maulānā Sayyid Abul A'alā Maudūdī, Ma'ārif-ul-Qur'ān by Maulānā Muftī Ṣhafī', Tadabbur-i-Qur'ān by Maulānā Amīn Aḥsan Iṣlāḥī, Ifādāt TafsīrJawāhir-ul-Qur'ān by Maulānā Ḥusain bin 'Alī, Ma'ārif-ul-Qur'ān by Chaudharī Ghulām Aḥmad Parvez, Tadhkīr-ul-Qur'ān by Maulānā Waḥīduddīn Khān, Da'wat-ul-Qur'ān by Maulānā Ṣhams

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Pīrẓādah and Durūs-ul-Qur’ān by Maulānā Manzūr Nu’mānī are very important.

Among important Urdu translations of the Qur’ān, the names of Deputy Nadhīr Aḥmad, Maulānā Jūnā Garhī, Maulānā Maḥmūd al-Ḥasan, Maulānā Shabbīr Aḥmad, Maulānā Faṭḥ Muḥammad Jālandharī and Maulānā Aḥmad Riḍā Khān are mentionable. The exegeses of Qur’ān, mentioned above, have also translation but Maulānā Akhḷāq Ḥusain Qāsimī thinks that the Persian translation of Shāh Walīyyullāh, the literal Urdu translation of Shāh Rafī’uddīn and the idiomatic Urdu translation of Shāh ‘Abdul Qādir; all three are the primary translations. The later ones have presented their translation by adding or omitting some words according to their thoughts and modern Urdu styles.<sup>1</sup>

Rūḥ-ul-Qur’ān by Maulānā ‘Abdus Salām Qidwā’ī, Miftāḥ-ul-Qur’ān by Maulānā Shabbīr Aḥmad Azhar Mīrathī, the exegesis and Qur’ānic books of Qāḍī Muḥammad Zāhid al-Ḥusainī, the interpretation of the chapter al-‘Aṣr entitled ‘Nizām-i-Islāḥ wa Falāḥ’ by Maulānā ‘Abdul Bārī, Ḥadā’iq al-Bayān by Maulawī ‘Abdul Ghafūr Fārūqī, Fiḥ al-Qur’ān by Maulānā ‘Umar Aḥmad ‘Uthmānī, Qiṣaṣ al-Qur’ān by Maulānā Ḥifzur Raḥmān and Aḥsan al-Bayān fī ‘Ulūm al-Qur’ān by Ḥasan Aḥmad are mention-worthy treasures of this century. Muṣḥkilāt al-Qur’ān by Maulānā Anwar Shāh and ‘Aqīdah al-Islām by Maulānā Anẓar Shāh are also famous in the field of Qur’ānic sciences.

When ‘Allāmah Shiblī was a teacher in ‘Alīgarh he used to teach the Qur’ān in his free times. Maulānā Sa’ūd ‘Ālam has collected his Qur’ānic discourses from among his writings. His pupils Maulānā Sayyid Sulaimān Nadwī and Maulānā ‘Abdus Salām Nadwī have also worked in the field of Qur’ānic

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<sup>1</sup> Tarjamān Dār-ul-‘Ulūm, June 2005, P, 8.

sciences; especially 'Sīrat-un-Nabī' written by consists of Qur'ānic points. Arḍ-ul-Qur'ān is also a work of Sayyid Sulaimān Nadwī deals with the geography of the Qur'ān. A collection of his Qur'ānic articles has also been published.

Maulānā Aslam Jairājpūrī was a distinguished scholar in the field of Qur'ānic understanding. He has described the defect of the interpretations of Qur'ān saying that the method opted in those interpretations, is generally used to explain the human beings' books. It means they start from the chapter al-Fātiḥah and reach till the end through translating the verse and chapter one by one. In that method the meanings of the words and verses of the Qur'ān could be explained but the Qur'ān could not be understood completely because its teachings are not described with the arrangement as human beings' books are described. However, its each teaching has been descended gradually in various verses and chapters so the entire Qur'ānic teachings could never be understood till all the teachings regarding one particular issue could be collected from different places and then could be arranged properly.

So the Qur'ānic teachings cannot be explained through these types of interpretations and translations which are done verse by verse. The nature of those interpretations for understanding the Qur'ān is almost like the books of terminologies for medical science in which the names of medicines, their features, their symptoms and substitutes etc. have been written alphabetically. It is fact that nobody can become a doctor through reading them only. In the same way nobody can become the scholar of the Qur'ān and its exegesis by reading these interpretations and translations only.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Rudād Idārah Ma'ārif Islāmīa, Lāhore, 1-12 April 1936, Lāhore 1938, 25 - 26/2

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On this basis the Maulānā had written a book entitled 'Ta'alimāt-i-Qur'ān'. The exegesis 'Ma'ārif-ul-Qur'ān' by his pupil Chaudharī Ghulām Aḥmad has also been written on the same method. Similarly, the book 'Kunūz-ul-Qur'ān' by Late Qāḍī Maḥaruddīn Balgerāmī [the former teacher of Theology at 'Alīgarh Muslim University] has also been written in the same style, in which he has collected approximately fifty Qur'ānic quotations along with their Urdu and English translations. This book consists of the basic teachings of Islam which deals with different aspects of the individual and social life. This book is also adorned with beneficial footnotes. There are also many books of this style wherein this aspect of the Qur'ān has been discussed.

Maulānā Aslam has proved his relation with the Qur'ān through writing different books like 'Nikāt-i-Qur'ān' and 'Tārīkh-ul-Qur'ān' apart from many Qur'ānic articles. Maulānā 'Abdul Mājīd Daryābādī wrote 'Jughrāfia-i-Qur'ān' and 'A'alām-ul-Qur'ān' in addition to Urdu and English exegesis.

Maulānā Abul A'alā Maudūdī has written the book 'Qur'ān kī Chār Buniyādī Iṣtilāḥen' beside Tafhīm-ul-Qur'ān, which has been translated into Arabic also. His magazine 'Tarjamān-ul-Qur'ān' used to publish special academic articles on the Qur'ān.

Maulānā Ṣadrūddīn Iṣlāḥī wrote an easy exegesis of few chapters of the Qur'ān entitled 'Taisīr-ul-Qur'ān'. He also summarised the exegesis 'Tafhīm-ul-Qur'ān' of Maududi in a big volume. Jamā'at-i-Islāmī has prepared useful literature for the non-Muslims to propagate Islam and then Muḥammad Fārūq Khān has rendered the Qur'ān into Hindi language.

Maulānā Sayyid Abul Ḥasan 'Alī Nadwī had been the teacher of tafsīr for a long period in Nadwat-ul-'Ulamā'. The book 'al-

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Şirā' baina al-Īmān wa al-Māddīyah' is a good collection to study the chapter 'al-Kahf' and to ponder on it.

Maulānā Muḥammad Owais Nadwī Nagrāmī was also the teacher of tafsīr in Dār-ul-'Ulūm Nadwat-ul-'Ulamā'. He has written many articles on the Qur'ānic sciences and brought a special issue of the monthly magazine 'Subḥ-i-Şādiq' on the Qur'ān. He has also published the exegesis of Ibn-i-Qayyim after collecting it from different books of Imām Ibn-i-Qayyim. His lectures on the Qur'ān were also very important from which the modern educated group used to take benefits. Maulānā Sa'id Aḥmad Akbarābādī has authored the books entitled 'Fahm-i-Qur'ān' and 'Waḥy-i-Ilāhī'.

Maulānā Abul Jalāl Nadwī wrote many important articles on the Qur'ānic sciences. He knew Hebrew language. His research papers proved his deep knowledge of the Qur'ān and other holy books.

The lectures of Maulānā Aḥmad 'Alī Lāhaurī on the Qur'ān were also very famous. He also rendered remarkable service to the Qur'ān by translating and interoperating it. Khawājah 'Abdul Ḥayy from Jāmia Millia Islāmia (New Delhi) was special interpreter of Maulānā Lāhaurī who has written many articles on the Qur'ānic sciences.

Maulānā Aḥlāq Ḥusain Qāsimī is also specialized in the Qur'ānic sciences in these days. His researches on the translation of the Qur'ān by Shāh 'Abdul Qādir Dehlawī and his exegesis "Muwaḍḍiḥ-ul-Qur'ān" are also worthy to be mentioned. He is also devoted to translate the Qur'ānic views of Shāh Walīyyullāh as well as he published his study on the Qur'ānic insight of Maulānā Āzād. In this regard, he also pointed out the mistakes and lapses of the common

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translators and interpreters along with highlighting their points of view.

Maulānā Shahābuddīn Nadwī kept himself busy in proving Qur'ānic facts from modern sciences. His articles and books on this topic are very important.

Similarly, there are many more 'Ulamā', scholars and followers of Imāmīyyah and Aḥmadīyyah groups who have worked in the field of Qur'ānic sciences.

The most important work of this century is 'Dā'irah Ḥamīdīyyah' which was established under Madrasat-ul-Iṣlāḥ (Sarā'mīr, A'zamgarh) a madrasah founded to lay focus on the study of the Qur'ān. It aimed at publishing the works of Maulānā Ḥamīduddīn Farāhī and propagating his ideas through its monthly 'al-Iṣlāḥ'. This magazine was edited by Maulānā Amīn Aḥsan Iṣlāḥī and was devoted to the Qur'ānic articles. It published many articles and books of Maulānā Iṣlāḥī along with research papers of his friend Maulānā Akhtar Aḥsan Iṣlāḥī and his pupils Maulānā Badruddīn Iṣlāḥī, Maulānā Ḥāfiẓ 'Abdul Aḥad Iṣlāḥī, Maulānā Abul Laith Iṣlāḥī Nadwī, Maulānā Dāwūd Akbar Iṣlāḥī and other great scholars of the country. Idārah 'Ulūm-ul-Qur'ān has published a collection of Qur'ānic articles published in this magazine. Similarly, the articles of Maulānā Abul Laith have been published in Tarjamān-ul-Qur'ān. Maulānā Dāwūd Akbar has also written articles on the Qur'ān published in Tarjamān-ul-Qur'ān, Ma'ārif and Burhān. The collection of these articles has been published with the title of 'Mushkilāt-ul-Qur'ān'.

A quarterly magazine 'Nizām-ul-Qur'ān' is still being published by this Madrasah. Its graduates have established Idārah 'Ulūm-ul-Qur'ān in 'Alīgarh, which is publishing continuously

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its bi-annual magazine "Ulūm-ul-Qur'ān". Both the magazines are devoted to publish articles on the Qur'ān.

Madrasat-ul-Iṣlāḥ, Dā'ira-i-Ḥamīdiyyah, Idārah 'Ulūm-ul-Qur'ān and Idārah Tadabbur-i-Qur'ān in Pākistān; all are established due to kind efforts of Maulānā Ḥamīduddīn Farāhī who is considered like the sun among the interpreters of the Qur'ān in the twentieth century.

كأنك شمس والملوك كواكب إذا طلعت لم يبد منهن كوكب

Tr.: You are like the sun and kings are (like the) planets. When the sun rises no planet will appear against you.

The diligent taste and opinion, novelty and innovation, inferring and extraction of facts, putting new ideas, God gifted delicacy etc. made Maulānā Ḥamīduddīn Farāhī distinguished from others. His unique characteristic was to create taste of understanding the Qur'ān and pondering over it. He opened a new way to study the Qur'ān and to do researches on it. His style of thinking and pondering was completely different from others.

He has left everlasting foot-steps in the field of Qur'ān and its exegesis and on the basis of these principles it can proudly be said on his behalf:

واني وإن كنت الأخير زمانه لآت بمالم تستطعه الأوائل

Qur'ān was the center of all his thoughts and ideas so he used to ponder on this divine book. As a result, Allah had disclosed to him many secrets of the Qur'ān. Therefore, it would not be inappropriate to deem him as a revivalist of religious sciences. He actually wanted to revive and purify the Islamic sciences and to make the Qur'ān the center of all sciences. He wanted to re-visit the Ḥadīth, Islamic jurisprudence, philosophy, logic, Arabic grammar and rhetoric in its light. His book 'Jamharat-

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ul-Balāghah’ and ‘al-Qā’id ilá ‘Uyūn al-‘Aqā’id’ are the master pieces of his selfless efforts.

Maulānā Ḥamīduddīn Farāhī did not get chance to write the exegesis of whole Qur’ān, but whatever volumes of his exegesis published till now contain the exegesis of last few chapters of the Qur’ān. His other writings on the Qur’ānic sciences are, in fact, a preface of his exegesis. They include ‘al-Ra’y al-Ṣaḥīḥ fī man huwa al-Dhabīḥ’, ‘Im’ān fī Aqsām al-Qur’ān’, ‘al-Takmīl fī Uṣūl al-Ta’wīl’, ‘Dalā’il al-Nizām’, ‘Asālīb al-Qur’ān’, ‘Mufradāt al-Qur’ān’, ‘Fī Malakūt Allāh’, ‘Ḥujaj al-Qur’ān’, ‘Ḥikmat al-Qur’ān’ and many others. He wrote these books in order to avoid repetition if such discussions come again and again. All these treatises and volumes of his exegesis are considered to be the key of the Qur’ān and are enough sufficient to open new ways to ponder upon the Qur’ān and to understand its meanings. All his books and treatises are repository of Qur’ānic sciences, treasury of secrets and a place of facts and realities. None of his treatises and writings is devoid of facts and new findings. It is necessary to study his two books ‘Uṣūl al-Ta’wīl’ and ‘Fātiḥah Tafsīr Nizām-ul-Qur’ān’ in order to completely understand the principles of his exegesis.

Maulānā Farāhī’s services of the Qur’ān are numerous. It is impossible to accommodate all the aspects in this short article. Once his attention was drawn towards translating the Qur’ān into Urdu which he could not complete, thus he could translate the Qur’ān from al-Qiyāmah chapter to the last chapter only. He also expressed some views regarding the methods and principles of translation which are very beneficial. He had done a great and revolutionary service to the Qur’ān in the twentieth century. He deserves that the

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scholars should work on his method to take forward his Qur'ānic scholarship. It will definitely help the readers to understand the Qur'ān correct.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> This key-note address was presented in a seminar on 'Qur'ānic Sciences in 20<sup>th</sup> Century' organized by Idārah 'Ulūm-ul-Qur'ān ('Alīgarh) on 26-27 July 2005. This is a free translation of this address.

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## Contribution of the Sultanate Period to the Qur'ānic Studies

✎...Prof. Zafarul Islām<sup>1</sup>

The period of Muslim rule in India or Medieval India is marked by the academic progress and the development of socio-cultural life. This is generally assumed about the first part of this period (known as the Delhi Sultanate/ 1206-1526) that the fiqh was the most popular subject in those days and that the 'ulamā' and the Sultans took special interest in the promotion of this branch of Islamic learning. But a close scrutiny of the historical sources and biographical account of the contemporary 'ulamā' shows that the contribution of the period to the development of the Qur'ānic studies cannot be overlooked and that the works of 'ulamā' done in this field was no less important than those which were done in other fields. The present study would help to evaluate the contribution of the 'ulamā' and scholars of the Sultanate period in this field and to dispel the misgiving spread in this regard.<sup>2</sup>

The learning of reciting the Qur'ān had always been an essential part of the curriculum under the Muslim educational system in every period and the Delhi Sultanate was no exception. What is important to note is that the special provision was made for teaching of the recitation of the Qur'ān (Nāẓirah) with Fann-i-Tajwīd or *Qir'at*.<sup>3</sup> The teachers

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<sup>2</sup> For development of Ḥadīth in the Sultanate period see 'Ilm-i-Ḥadīth mein Barr-i-A'ẓam Pāk-o-Hind Kā Ḥiṣṣah, Markazī Maktaba Islāmī, Delhi, 1982

<sup>3</sup> Ḍiyā'uddīn Barnī, Tārīkh-i-Fīroz Shāhī, Calcutta, 1862, P. 355; Amīr Ḥasan Sijzi, Fawā'id al-Fuwād, Lāhore, 1966, Sheikh 'Abdul Ḥaq Muḥaddith Dehlawī, Akhbār al-Akhyār, Maṭba'-i-Muḥammadī, Delhi, 1283, AH. P.49.

appointed for the purpose were called *muqrīs* or *Qur'ān Khwān* specialised in *'Ilm-i-Qir'at*. A number of 'ulamā' of the period were known as *muqrīs*. These included 'Alā'uddīn Muqrī, Jamāluddīn *Shāṭibī*, *Khwājah Dhakī'uddīn Dehlawī* and 'Alā'uddīn Nailī. These were famous teachers of Delhi who had a large number of disciples. In view of the contemporary historian *Ḍiyā'uddīn Barnī* they were so much excellent in the *Fann-i-Qir'at* that they had no rival even in *Khurāsān* and 'Irāq.<sup>1</sup> Significantly enough, in those days the specialists of *'Ilm-i-Qir'at* were available in India even in small towns. *Sheikh Bahā'uddīn Zakariyyā* (d. 1262 A.D.) got training of *Qir'at* according to the seven well-known modes of recitation (*Qir'āt-i-Sab'ah*) at Kot Aror, a little known place in *Multān*.<sup>2</sup> The famous *Chishtī* saint *Sheikh Ḥamīduddīn Nāgaurī* (d. 1271 A.D) was residing in Suwal, a village of *Nāgaur* (*Rājasthān*). In the mosque of that village there was a very good arrangement for *Ḥifẓ-i-Qur'ān* (memorisation) and training in *Tajwīd*. *Sheikh Ḥamīduddīn* used to send the children of his house to that mosque specially to see how the *Ḥuffāẓ* (Memorisers of the *Qur'ān*) were reciting the *Qur'ān* and in what way they were taking full care of the principles of *Tajwīd*.<sup>3</sup>

It is also important to note here that even the slaves were given special training in the art of *Qir'at*. *Shādī Muqrī*, the teacher of *Sheikh Niẓāmuddīn Auliyyā'*, was a manumitted slave and he was well-versed in the field of *Qir'at* as his title shows. His master *Khwājagī Muqrī* was also expert of the art of recitation and most probably he would have trained his slave in this field.<sup>4</sup> Qāsim

<sup>1</sup> Barnī, op.cit., P. 355.

<sup>2</sup> Faḍlullāh Jamālī, *Siyar al-'Ārifīn*, Maṭba'-i-Ridwī, Delhi, 1311 AH, P. 103.

<sup>3</sup> Surūr al-Ṣudūr (*Malfūẓāt-i-Sheikh Ḥamīduddīn Nāgaurī*), MS. Ḥabībganj Collection, Maulānā Āzād Library (A.M.U., 'Aligarh), 21/168, f.55.

<sup>4</sup> Fawā'id al-Fuwād, op.cit., pp. 261-262, Manāẓir Aḥsan Gīlānī, Hindustān mein Musalmānon kā Niẓām-i-Ta'līm wa Tarbiyat, Nadwa-tul-Muṣannifīn, Delhi, 1944,1/134.

Muqrī, a contemporary of Ghiyathuddīn Balban was a famous Qārī of the period and he was a regular reciter of the Qur'ān in the mystical assembly of his spiritual mentor Sheikh Nizāmuddīn Abul Muyyid.<sup>1</sup> Sheikh Shihābuddīn Dehlawī, a disciple of Sheikh Nizāmuddīn Auliya' was well known for his excellence in the Qir'at and for the same reason he was directed by his spiritual guide to work as leader of prayer (Imām) which he did till his death.<sup>2</sup> In the last part of the Delhi Sultanate Muḥammad Ibn Maḥmūd<sup>3</sup> and Sulaimān Ibn 'Affān were the notable teachers of the Qir'at. The second had privilege of being teacher of the famous Chishtī Ṣābirī saint Sheikh 'Abdul Quddūs Gangohī. In view of the author of Akḥbār al-Akhyār he had great distinction in this field.<sup>4</sup>

It is also important to note here that in the period of Sultan Fīroz Shāh Tughlaq (1351-1388) hundreds of royal slaves were given education and training in religious learning including ḥifẓ-i-Qur'ān.<sup>5</sup> In the same way in the reign of Ghiyathuddīn Khaljī (1469-1500), an independent Sultan of Mālwa, thousands female slaves of royal palace (Khāzinān-i-Ḥaram) had the privilege of memorising the Qur'ān.<sup>6</sup> Obviously, it would not have been possible without special arrangement by the state administration for the same. Quṭbuddīn Aibak, the first Delhi Sultan of Mālwa, thousands female slaves of royal palace (Khāzinān-i-Ḥaram) had the privilege of memorising the Qur'ān. Obviously, it would not have been possible without

<sup>1</sup> Fawā'id al-Fuwād, P.323, Akḥbār al-Akhyār, P.49.

<sup>2</sup> Siyar al-Auliya', PP. 300-301, Muḥammad Ghauthī Shaṭṭārī, Gulzār-i-Abrār, MS. Ḥabībganj Collection, 22/5, P.46.

<sup>3</sup> Raḥmān 'Alī Tadhkirah 'ulamā'-i-Hind, Nawal Kishore, Lucknow, 1332 AH, P.62. Sayyid 'Abdul Ḥayy Ḥasanī, Nuzhat al-Khawāṭir, Dā'irah Ma'ārif al-Usmāniyyah, Ḥyderabad, 1931, 4/111.

<sup>4</sup> Akḥbār al-Akhyār, P.212.

<sup>5</sup> Shams Sirāj Afif, Tārīkh-i-Fīroz Shāhī, Calcutta, 1890, P.270.

<sup>6</sup> 'Abdul Qāsim Hindū Shāh Farishtah, Tārīkh-i-Farishtah, Nawal Kishore (n.d.) P. 21.

special arrangement by the state administration for the same. Quṭbuddīn Aibak, the first Delhi Sultan (1206-1210) was given the title of “Qur’ān Khwān” as he was well familiar with the art of recitation of the Qur’ān. We are informed by the contemporary sources that as a salve he got educational upbringing under the care of Qāḍī Fakhruddīn Khān, one of the descendants of Imām Abū Ḥanīfah.<sup>1</sup> Sultan Raḍiyah is reported to have been well-acquainted with the methodology of the Qir’at. Zafar Khān, Nā’ib Wazīr (one of the highest officer of Fīroz Shāh’s period) had memorised the Qur’ān and got excellence in the field of the Qir’at<sup>2</sup> as Ḍiyāuddīn Barnī, the contemporary historian has stated.<sup>3</sup>

As for as the development of ‘Ilm-i-Tafsīr (exegesis or science of commentary of the Qur’ān) in the Sultanate period is concerned, first of all, it may be stated that this subject included the courses of studies in madrasahs as well as in the individual centre of learning in those days. It is important to note here that the curriculum of tafsīr was not inferior to that of fiqh as it is generally assumed to be. The courses of studies under the tafsīr consisted of three famous commentaries namely Tafsīr-i-Kashshāf, Tafsīr-i-Baiḍāwī and Madārik-al-Tanzīl. In spite of the fact that Tafsīr-i-Kashshāf represented the Mu’tazilite point of view and on that account it was criticised and condemned, it was considered important for its lexical and literary explanation of verses of the Qur’ān and it is also helped to develop the understanding of the Qur’ān.<sup>4</sup> In

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<sup>1</sup> Fakhr-i-Mudabbir, Tārīkh-i-Fakhruddīn Mubarak Shāh, Calcutta, 1937, P. 21

<sup>2</sup> Tārīkh-i-Fariḡhtah, P.68.

<sup>3</sup> Barnī, P.583.

<sup>4</sup> Siyar al-Auliya’, P. 217, Akhbār al-Akhyār, PP. 94-95; Tadhkirah ‘ulamā’-i-Hind, P. 140, Sayyid ‘Abdul Ḥayy, Nuzhat al-Khwāṭir, Dā’ira-tul-Ma’ārif al-Usmāniyah, Ḥyderābād, 1350 AH.2/71.

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the biographical account of different 'ulamā' of the Sultanate period learning and teaching of the *Kashshāf* is referred to. These included Farīduddīn Shāfi'ī, Naṣīruddīn Maḥmūd Ibn Yaḥyá Awadhī, Shamsuddīn Yaḥyá Awadhī, Sayyid Muḥammad Kirmānī, Qāḍī 'Abdul Muqtadir and Qāḍī Shihābuddīn Daulatābādī. It also found references in mystic literature including the *Malfūzāt-i-Sheikh* Nizāmuddīn Auliya'.<sup>1</sup> It is reported that one of his disciples Ruknuddīn Chaghmar was well known as a calligrapher. He presented a copy of the *Kashshāf* to his Sheikh who accepted it happily.<sup>2</sup> However, *Tafsīr-i-Kashshāf* remained a popular commentary among the 'ulamā' throughout the Sultanate period.

It may be also noted that in the Sultanate period there were a number of 'ulamā' who took keen interest in teaching tafsīr and thus developing the understanding of the Qur'ān. Of them, the well known had been Sheikh Farīduddīn Shāfi'ī, Shihābuddīn Khalīlī, Naṣīruddīn Awadhī, Kamāluddīn Dehlawī, Shamsuddīn Yaḥyá Awadhī, Najmuddīn Damashqī, Qāḍī 'Abdul Muqtadir, Qāḍī Shihābuddīn Daulatābādī, Ḥusāmuddīn Mānakpūrī and Qāḍī Aḥmad Masjid. It is also important to note here that the interest of the 'ulamā' in the Qur'ānic studies originated in India from the days of the Turkish conquest. Sayyid Muḥammad Ismā'īl (d. 1056) was one of the earliest scholars who worked for the propagation of Islam and promotion of tafsīr and other Islamic sciences. He was contemporary of sultan Maḥmud of Ghaznīn (998-1030) and had settled in the Lāhore in 1004 A.D.<sup>3</sup> Sayyid Murtaḍá Kūfī (d. 1194) a contemporary of Sultan Shihābuddīn Ghorī (1175-

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<sup>1</sup> Fawā'id al-Fuwād, PP. 186-188.

<sup>2</sup> Siyar al-Auliya', P.327.

<sup>3</sup> Tadhkirah 'ulamā'-i-Hind, P. 179; Faqīr Muḥammad Jhelamī Ḥadā'iq al-Ḥanafīyyah, Nawal Kīshore Edition, P.194.

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1206) was a famous scholar of Tafsīr and Ḥadīth. His academic excellence particularly his expertise in Islamic science ('Ulūm-i-Islamiah) had endeared him to the Sultan who was very much impressed by his scholarship as well as by his military capability.<sup>1</sup> Maulānā Najmuddīn Damashqī, a contemporary of Sultan Ghiyāthuddīn Balban (1266-1286) was among those distinguished Mufasssīrīn (exegets) who migrated from other countries and settled in India. He was disciple of Imām Rāzī, the author of the well known commentary Tafsīr-i-Kabīr. The Sultan had very high respect for him.<sup>2</sup> The special interest of Najmuddīn Damashqī in the Tafsīr would have, of course, led to the progress of this science in that period. It is also notable here that Ghiyāthuddīn Balban had advised his sons (prince Muḥammad and Maḥmūd) that they should adorn the capital with 'ulamā', sufis, Mufasssīrīn, Muḥaddithīn and other learned persons.<sup>3</sup> The period of Sultan 'Alā'uddīn Khaljī (1296-1316) is well known for academic and cultural development. According to Ḍiyā'uddīn Barnī in this period Delhi had a galaxy of such distinguished scholars of Tafsīr, Ḥadīth and Fiqh that they were considered matchless even in Bukhara, Samarqand, Aṣfahān, Baghdād and Damascus.<sup>4</sup> In this regard the contemporary historian has specially mentioned Maulānā Ḍiyā'uddīn Sunamī and Maulānā Shihābuddīn Khalīlī. The first was quite well known for his scholarship and strict adherence to the sharī'at. He used to give sermon once a week which was attended by thousands of people. He frequently quoted the verses of the Qur'ān while highlighting the importance of

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<sup>1</sup> "Muḥaddithīn-i-Jaunpūr", Ma'ārif, 25/5, May 1930, PP. 346-347.

<sup>2</sup> Barnī, PP. 46, 11, Nūrul Ḥaq Dehlawī, Zubdat al-Tawārīkh, Ratograph, No. 18 (Ms. British Museum), Research Library, Deptt. Of History (A.M.U), f. 17b, Tadhkirah 'ulamā'-i-Hind, P.288.

<sup>3</sup> Barnī, P.103.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., PP. 252-253.

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Islamic teachings and values.<sup>1</sup> His famous work *Niṣāb-al-Iḥtisāb* has frequent references to the Qur'ānic verses and Aḥādīth. In view of the author of *Nuzhat-al-Khawāṭir*, Maulānā Sunamī had excellence in the explanation of the meaning of the Qur'ān and bringing out the delicate points from this Holy Book.<sup>2</sup> Maulānā *Shihābuddīn Khalīlī* was a famous preacher of the period. His speech mainly consisted of interpretation of the verses of the Qur'ān which showed his grasp over the meaning of the Qur'ān as well as his keen interest in the propagation of the Qur'ānic teachings.<sup>3</sup> In the same period, Maulānā *Farīduddīn Shāfi'ī*. Awadhī was a noted scholar of Tafsīr and Arabic literature. Apart from performing his duties as *Shaikh-ul-Islām* of Awadh he used to give lecture on Tafsīr-i-*Kashshāf* which was attended by many 'ulamā' and scholars.<sup>4</sup> Another distinguished scholar of Tafsīr, Ḥadīth and fiqh in the 'Alā'ī period was *Qāḍī Muḥiyuddīn Kāshānī* (d. 1319 AD). On account of his academic contribution through teaching he was popularly called "Ustad-i-Shahar-i-Dehlī" while explaining Aḥādīth in the assembly of *Sheikh Nizāmuddīn Auliya'* he used to make references to the Qur'ānic verses also.<sup>5</sup>

The period of the *Tughlaq* Sultans was also well known for academic activities. Sultan *Muḥammad Tughlaq* (1314-1351) and *Fīroz Shāh Tughlaq* the both showed interest in the promotion of learning particularly Islamic sciences.<sup>6</sup> This period was no less important from the point of view of the development of 'Ilm-i-

<sup>1</sup> Ibid, P.356; *Akḥbār al-Akhyār*, PP. 105-106, Tadhkirah 'ulamā'-i-Hind, PP. 97-98.

<sup>2</sup> *Nuzhat al-Khawāṭir*, 2/97-98.

<sup>3</sup> *Barnī*, P.356; *Akḥbār al-Akhyār*, PP. 105-106.

<sup>4</sup> *Siyar al-Auliya'*, P. 233, *Akḥbār al-Akhyār*, PP. 94-95. Tadhkirah 'ulamā'-i-Hind, PP. 86-87.

<sup>5</sup> *Siyar al-Auliya'*, PP. 111-112, 304-306, *Akḥbār al-Akhyār*, P.95, *Gulzār-i-Abrār* PP. 43-44, 55; Tadhkirah 'ulamā'-i-Hind, PP. 221-222.

<sup>6</sup> *Barnī*, PP. 558-60; *Sīrat-i-Fīruz Shāhī*. Ms. Maulānā Āzād Library, University Collection, Farsia, *Akḥbār*, PP. 11, 147.

Tafsīr and the number of distinguished scholars of this subject. Some of the eminent teachers of Tafsīr<sup>1</sup> were Maulānā Shamsuddīn Muḥammad Ibn Yaḥyá Awadhī (d 1346 AD) Sheikh ‘Alā’uddīn Nailī (d.1361 AD) and Sheikh Naṣīruddīn Maḥmud Ibn Yaḥyá Awadhī (d.1356). The first two were disciples of Maulānā Farīduddīn Shafi’ī who had been expert in teaching Kashshāf. They were occupied with the teaching work in Delhi and got fame as a good teachers of Tafsīr. Sheikh Naṣīruddīn Maḥmud also took up the teaching work in Delhi. His lecture on Kashshāf was attended by many ‘ulamā’ including Qāḍī ‘Abdul Muq̄tadir Dehlawī who had privilege of being teacher of the author of Tafsīr-i-Baḥr-i-Mawwāj (Qāḍī Shihābuddīn Daulatābādī).<sup>2</sup> Sheikh Kamāluddīn ‘Allāmah Dehlawī (d.1356AD) of the same period was well acquainted with Tafsīr and Ḥadīth and his great scholarship in this field earned him the title of *Allama*.<sup>3</sup> In view of the author of Ḥadā’iq al-Ḥanifiyyah Sheikh Yūsuf Dehlawī was a great scholar of Islamic sciences including Tafsīr.<sup>4</sup> Maulānā Jalāluddīn Rūmī, a contemporary of Fīroz Shāh Tughlaq, had excellence in Qur’ānic studies and he was appointed by Sultan as teacher of the most famous madrasah of Delhī (Madarasah Fīroz Shāhī) in those days. He remained occupied with this work and contributed to the development of Tafsīr, Ḥadīth and fiqh as we are informed by Ḍiyā’uddīn Barnī, the contemporary historian.<sup>5</sup> In this period, some of the notable like Tatar Khan also took interest in this subject and constituted a committee of ‘ulamā’ which took up the work of compilation of a

<sup>1</sup> Siyar al-Auliya’, PP.233,235-236,239, Akhbār al-Akhyār, PP. 91, 94, 95, Ghulām ‘Alī Āzād Bilgrāmī, Subḥat al-Marjān, Idārah ‘Ulūm-i-Islāmiah, ‘Alīgarh, 1976, PP. 72-73; Tadhkirah ‘ulamā’-i-Hind, PP. 86-87, 140.

<sup>2</sup> Siyar al-Auliya’, PP. 246-252, Akhbār al-Akhyār, PP. 78-84, 146-147; Gulzār-i-Abrār, PP. 58-59.

<sup>3</sup> Tadhkirah ‘ulamā’-i-Hind, P. 173, Ḥadā’iq al-Ḥanifiyyah, P.288.

<sup>4</sup> Ḥadā’iq al-Ḥanifiyyah, P.294; Tadhkirah ‘ulamā’-i-Hind, P.256.

<sup>5</sup> Barnī, P. 564; Tadhkirah ‘ulamā’-i-Hind, PP.41, 256, Nuzhat al-Khawāṭir, 2/22, 178.

voluminous commentary. At the instance of Tatar Khan the views of earlier mufassirīn with regard to the interpretation of every verse was collected in this work known as Tafsīr-i-Tātārkhānī.<sup>1</sup> Obviously, the compilation of this Tafsīr would not have been possible if a good numbers of scholars of this science were not available in Delhi in those days.

At the end of the Tughlaq's rule, there was anarchy and political instability for sometimes and this had also affected academic activities but with the Lodi Sultan coming to power the situation got changed and the academic activities sprung up particularly under Sultan Sikander Lodi (1498-1517) who was a great patron of learning and was keenly interested in the promotion of Islamic sciences. In the first half of 15<sup>th</sup> century Qāḍī Shihābuddīn Daulatābādī (d 1445 AD) was a great scholar who contributed to the Qur'ānic studies through teaching and writing. He was compiler of an important Persian commentary of the Qur'ān (Bahr-i-Mawwāj). Sultan Ibrāhīm Shāh Sharqī (1401-1440), the famous ruler of the eastern kingdom of Jaunpūr was very much impressed by his scholarship and honoured him with the title of Malik-al-'Ulamā'.<sup>2</sup> Sheikh Husāmuddīn Mānakpūrī (d. 1449 AD), a noted scholar and mystic has a special taste of understanding the Qur'ān. He used to think over the meaning of the Qur'ān and attempted to develop his understanding of the Holy Book. He always kept Tafsīr-i-Madārik with him and whenever he felt any difficulty in understanding the meaning of any verse he used to turn to this Tafsīr. He had a view that reciting the Qur'ān with understanding its meaning gives a special taste.<sup>3</sup> Another 'ālim and mystic of 15<sup>th</sup> century Khwājah Husain Nāgaurī (d.1496 AD)

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<sup>1</sup> Affif, op. cit., P. 392.

<sup>2</sup> Akhbār-al-Akhyār, PP. 173-174, Subhat al-Marjān, PP. 95-96, Gulzār-i-Abrār, PP. 173-174, Tadhkirah 'ulamā'-i-Hind, P. 188.

<sup>3</sup> Akhbār al-Akhyār, pp 169-170, Gulzār-i-Abrār, P.54, Tadhkirah 'Ulamā'-i-Hind, PP. 46-47.

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was also well known for his interest in 'Ilm-i-Tafsīr and teaching the tafsīr books. He remained occupied in Nāgaur with mystic works as well as with the promotion of Islamic sciences. It was his daily routine to give lecture (dars) on the Tafsīr-i-Madārik.<sup>1</sup> His disciple Qāḍī Aḥmad Majd Narnaulwī (d.1521) had also very deep involvement with the Qur'ānic studies. He took special interest in teaching the tafsīr. He belonged to the pedigree of Imām Muḥammad Shhaibānī. Born in Narnaul, he passed major part of his life in Ajmer. It was in this city that for about seventy years he remained busy in studying and teaching of religious books. He used to give lecture on Tafsīr-i-Madārik daily after 'Aṣr prayer and in the morning he taught other books. While referring to the teaching of Tafsīr-i-Madārik, the sources pointed out that giving lecture on this Tafsīr included the routine works of the Chishtī saints.<sup>2</sup> The above details show that many 'ulamā' and sufis were fond of studying and teaching the Tafsīr works and they also attempted to develop the understanding of the Qur'ān. This is also evident from our discussion that in the Sultanate period after Kashshāf the most popular Tafsīr work was Tafsīr-i-Madārik particularly in the mystic circle.

In the period under discussion the interest of the contemporary 'ulamā' in the Qur'ānic studies was not confined only to the teaching work. But they also contributed to the progress of this subject through compiling Tafsīr works or writing commentaries on the Tafsīr works of the classical period, which were included in the courses of studies. These works were produced in Arabic and Persian both the languages. The study of the Tafsīr works of the period shows that their compilers had adopted different methodologies for explaining and interpreting the verses of the Qur'ān such as giving emphasis on legal point, bringing out co-

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<sup>1</sup> Akhbār al-Akhyār, PP. 174-175; Tadhkirah 'ulamā'-i-Hind, PP. 49-50.

<sup>2</sup> Akhbār al-Akhyār, PP 175-177, Gulzār-i-Abrār, PP 114-115.

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relationship between preceding and the following *Surahs* and among the verses of the same *Surah* itself, discussing logical and grammatical aspects of the verses and highlighting mystic ideology in the light of Qur'ān. One of the earliest commentaries of the period is *Gharā'ib-al-Qur'ān wa Raghā'ib al-Furqān* compiled by Ḥasan Ibn Muḥammad (popularly known as Nizām Nīshāpūrī). The compiler originally belonged to Nīshāpūr (Irān) where he started compilation of his work, but a statement at the end of *Surah al-Nisā'* shows that he completed it in Daulatābād in 730 AH/1329 AD. It means that he came to Daulatābād during the period of Sultan Muḥammad Tughlaq and he continued the compilation of his work in this city. This is also notable that in the Iranian edition and in some manuscripts the Persian translation of the verses is also given while whole commentary is in Arabic.<sup>1</sup> The earliest Indian born compiler of a Tafsīr book was Abū Ḥafṣ 'Umar Ibn Ishāq Sirāj al-Hindī (d. 1371 AD). After completing education he settled in Egypt and was appointed as Qāḍī-ul-Quḍāt of Cairo. His teachers included Wajīhuddīn Dehlawī, Sirājuddīn Thaqfī Dehlawī and Ruknuddīn Badaunī. He was author of several works including an Arabic commentary.<sup>2</sup> Another famous commentary of the period was *Laṭā'if al-Tafsīr* compiled by Qāsim Ibn 'Umar Dehlawī, nephew of Sheikh Nizāmuddīn Auliya'.<sup>3</sup> He was born and brought up in Delhi. He had special interest in the Qur'ānic sciences and studied a lot of the Tafsīr work before compiling his own commentary. A special feature of this Tafsīr is that it is useful for

<sup>1</sup> *Gharā'ib al-Qur'ān wa Raghā'ib al-Furqān* (Printed on the margin of *Tafsīr-i-Ṭabarī*), Maṭba'ah-i-Maimanah, Egypt, 1321 AH, 6/39, Irān, 1280 AH; Sayyid Manāẓir Aḥsan Gīlanī, *Hindustān mein Musalmānon ka Nizām-i-Ta'līm wa Tarbiyat*, Nawa-tul-Muṣannifin, Delhi, 1944, P.142, F.No.1.

<sup>2</sup> Ḥājī Khalīfah Chelpi, *Kaṣhf al-Zunūn*, Istanbul, 1941, 1/448; Ḥadā'iq al-Ḥanfīyyah, PP.290-291, 294; Sayyid 'Abdul Ḥayy, *Al-Fawā'id al-Bahīyyah fī Tarājim al-Ḥanfīyyah*, Maṭbah-i-Sa'ādah.

<sup>3</sup> *Siyar al-Auliya'*, PP.215-217, *Nuzhat al-Khawāṭir*, 2/113.

average educated Muslims as well as for the 'ulamā' was observed by the author of *Siyar al-Auliya'*. The *Tafsir-i-Kashshāf*,<sup>1</sup> as stated above, was very popular among the 'ulamā'. A commentary of this *Tafsir* was compiled by Mukhlis Ibn Abdullah Dehlawī (d.1363 AD). It was known as *Kash al-Kashshāf*. A very famous and voluminous commentary of the Sultanate period was *Tafsir-i-Tātārkhānī* which was compiled at the instance of Tatar Khan, a powerful minister of Fīroz Shāh's period. It was compiled by a committee of select 'ulamā' with the instruction by Tātār Khān that it may be quite comprehensive containing the interpretation of earlier mufasssīrīn with regard to each verse. If commentators differed with regard to the interpretation of any verse that may be noted down with reference to the respective commentaries.<sup>2</sup> Unfortunately, this comprehensive Arabic commentary is not available in any form.

One of the earliest commentaries of the 15<sup>th</sup> century was *Nūr Bakhshiyā*. Its author was famous Sufi and 'Ālim Sayyid Ashraf Jahāngīr Samnānī (d. 1405 AD). He originally belonged to Samnān (Irān) and migrated to India in the period of Sultan Muḥammad Tughlaq. While seeking knowledge he remained in the company of different 'ulamā' including Sayyid Jalāluddīn Ḥusain Bukhārī, *Sheikh* 'Alā'uddīn 'Umar Lāhorī and Qāḍī Shihābuddīn Daulatābādī. In the last part of his life he settled in Kachocha (Eastern UP) where he died. In addition to *Tafsir* he was author of many books on other subjects.<sup>3</sup> Maulānā Khwājgī (d. 1406 AD) had compiled a Persian commentary known as *Baḥr al-Ma'ānī*.<sup>4</sup> This commentary takes into account the issues of 'Ilm-i-Kalām.

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<sup>1</sup> *Siyar al-Auliya'*, PP. 215-217, *Nuzhat al-Khawāṭir*, 2/161-162.

<sup>2</sup> Afif, op.cit., P. 392, *Nuzhat al-Khawāṭir*, 2/18-19, Mahdī Ḥusain, *Tughlaq Dynasty*, New Delhi, 1976, PP. 27-28 (Preface)

<sup>3</sup> *Akhbār al-Akhyār*, PP. 160-161; *Gulzār-i-Abrār*, P.74.

<sup>4</sup> *Dā'ira-tul-Ma'ārif* (Urdu Islami Encyclopediadia), 4/532, Sayyid Murtaḍā Ḥussain, "Barr-i-Ṣaghīr men 'Ulamā'-i-Imāmīyyah kī Tafsīren", *Majallah Tauḥīd* (Irān), Feb. April, 1985, P. 159

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According to some scholars this is the summary of *Majma' al-Bayān* compiled by Faḍl Ibn Ḥasan Ṭabrasī (d. 1153 AD).<sup>1</sup> Maulānā Khwājī was a great scholar of Islamic sciences and had privilege of being teacher of Qāḍī Shihābuddīn Daulatābādī, the famous commentator and well known jurist of the 15<sup>th</sup> century. For a long time he remained occupied in Delhi in teaching and promoting Islamic learning.<sup>2</sup> In the same period Sayyid Muḥammad Ibn Yūsuf, popularly known as Gesū Darāz (d. 1424 AD) compiled an Arabic commentary in accordance with mystic ideology and this was called *Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-Karīm*.<sup>3</sup> Sayyid Gesū Darāz was an eminent Chishtī Sufi and a great scholar. His teacher included Maulānā Sharīfuddīn Kathalī, Sheikh Naṣīruddīn Maḥmūd and Qāḍī Abdul Muqtadir. He was well acquainted with *Tafsīr*, Ḥadīth and fiqh. While practising taṣawwuf, he also took up the work of teaching and writing books on different subjects including *Tafsīr*, Ḥadīth, fiqh and taṣawwuf. His works included marginal notes on some parts of *Kaṣhshāf*.<sup>4</sup> After the death of his spiritual mentor Sheikh Naṣīruddīn Maḥmūd he shifted to Deccan and settled in Gulbarga where he died.

*Tafsīr al-Raḥmān wa Taisīr al-Mannān* is a marvellous Arabic commentary of the Sultanate period. Being compiled by Sheikh 'Alī Ibn Aḥmad Mahā'imī (d. 1432 AD), the commentary had distinction from the point of view that this is the first Indian *Tafsīr* which highlights the relationship among the verses of the surah or coherence in the Qur'ān (*Naẓm-i-Qur'ān*) in course of interpretation of the verses. The author belonged to Māhem (then the part of Gujarāt and presently in Mumbai). He was well versed in Islamic sciences particularly *Tafsīr* and in the field of

<sup>1</sup> Sayyid Murtaḍā Ḥussain, op. Cit. P. 159

<sup>2</sup> *Akhbār al-Akhyār*, PP. 139-140, *Nuzhat al-Khawāṭir*, 3/63-64

<sup>3</sup> Muḥammad Sālim Qidwā'ī, *Hindustānī Mufasssīrīn aur unkī 'Arabī Tafsīrain*, Maktabah Jāmia, New Delhi, 1973, PP. 33-33.

<sup>4</sup> *Akhbār al-Akhyār*, PP. 127-132, *Nuzhat al-Khawāṭir*, 3/152-154.

Taşawwuf he was impressed by mystic thought of Ibn ‘Arabī.<sup>1</sup> Maulānā Ḥamīduddīn Farāhī (d. 1930), an eminent mufassir of modern India and great exponent of Naẓm-i-Qur’ān has also appreciated the distinctive feature of Tafsīr-i-Mahā’imī.<sup>2</sup> A unique aspect of this Tafsīr is that in the beginning of every Surah the meaning of *Be Ismillāh al-Raḥmān al-Raḥīm* was given in accordance with the subject matter of that Surah.<sup>3</sup>

The above details show that the significant Tafsīr literature was produced in India during 13<sup>th</sup> & 14<sup>th</sup> centuries. But the Tafsīr works of 15<sup>th</sup> and the first part of the 16<sup>th</sup> centuries cannot be overlooked. The most important Tafsīr work of this period was Baḥr-i-Mawwāj, a Persian commentary compiled by Qāḍī Shahābuddīn Daulatābādī referred to above. This is a voluminous commentary consisting of 3 volumes.<sup>4</sup> The work was dedicated to Sultan Ibrāhīm Shāh Sharqī and its sources included Tafsīr-i-Kabīr, Tafsīr-i-Kaṣhshāf, Tafsīr-i-Abullaith Samarqandī and Madārik al-Tanzīl. While interpreting the verses of the Qur’ān the compiler gave emphasis to the lexical and grammatical explanation. Giving gist of subject matter of each Surah in the beginning and bringing out legal point from the verses are also distinctive features of this Tafsīr. In view of the author of Gulzār-i-Abrār,<sup>5</sup> it may be considered at par with

<sup>1</sup> Akhbār al-Akhyār, P. 172; Gulzār-i-Abrār, P. 72; Subḥat al-Marjān, PP. 97-100; Ḥadā’iq al-Ḥanfiyyah, P.317.

<sup>2</sup> ‘Abdul Ḥamīd (Ḥamīduddīn) Farāhī; Dalā’il-al-Niẓām, Dā’irah Ḥamīdiyyah, Sarā’i Mīr (A’zamgarh), 1388, AH,P.3.

<sup>3</sup> For a detail discussion about Tafsīr-i-Mahā’imī see ‘Abdur Raḥmān Perwāz Iṣlāhī, Makhdūm ‘Alī Mahā’imī- Ḥayāt, Āthār wa Afkār, Mumbai, 1976, PP. 128-160, Muḥammad Sālim Qidwā’ī, *op.cit.*, PP. 36-42.

<sup>4</sup> The manuscripts of the Tafsīr are available in Maulānā Āzād Library (Ḥabībganj Collection, Subḥānallāh Collection & University Ḍamīmah), India office Library, London, Asiatic Society of Bengal, Calcutta & Āṣifiyyah Library, Ḥyderabad.

<sup>5</sup> For a detailed study of this Tafsīr see Muḥammad Sa’ūd ‘Ālam Qāsimī, “‘Ahd-i-Wuṣṭā kī Yeh Farsī Tafsīr Baḥr-i-Mawwāj kā Muṭāla’ah” Bi-annual ‘Ulūm al-Qur’ān, 7/1, Jan-June, 1992, PP. 49-71.



the Kashshāf and that it could not be included in the courses of studies as it was in Persian.<sup>1</sup> Tafsīr Nūr al-Nabī is also an important commentary compiled in the second half of the 15<sup>th</sup> century under the Lodi Sultans. Its compiler Khwājah Ḥusain Nāgaurī, as mentioned above, was a well known scholar of the Qur'ānic sciences. Writing the commentary of each part separately, he has divided his Tafsīr into thirty parts. Lexical explanation of the verses, their detailed interpretation and simple style of discussion had rendered this commentary more useful.<sup>2</sup> The last notable Tafsīr of the Sultanate period was compiled by Sheikh 'Abdul Wahhāb Bukhārī (d. 1525 AD). He belonged to Multān and was one of the descendants of Sayyid Jalāluddīn Bukhārī. In the reign of Sultan Sikander Lodi he shifted to Delhi and was given great respect by the Sultan. He completed his Arabic Tafsīr in 1509 AD. This commentary is unique from the point of view that each verse has been interpreted in such a way that it shows praise (Na't wa Manqabat) for the Prophet Muḥammad (PBUH). In this way, in view of the commentator the whole Qur'ān is full of praise for the Prophet (PBUH).<sup>3</sup> Of course, he was overwhelmed with the love of Prophet ('Ishq-i-Nabawī) so he interpreted each verses in his own unique way, but such kind of Tafsīr cannot be free from misinterpretation. At the end, it also seems pertinent to refer to the marginal notes (Ḥawāshī) on the Tafsīr-i-Madārik which was written by Maulānā Ilāhādād Jaunpūrī. The writer was an eminent scholar of the period and he contributed to the development of Islamic learning through teaching as well as compiling works. He was mainly interested in writing commentaries and marginal notes (Shurūḥ wa

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<sup>1</sup> Gulzār-i-Abrār, P.74.

<sup>2</sup> Akhbār al-Akhyār, PP.174-175, Tadhkirah 'ulamā'-i-Hind, PP. 50; Nuzhat al-Khawāṭir, 4/192.

<sup>3</sup> Akhbār al-Akhyār, PP. 206-207, Gulzār-i-Abrār, P. 115, Tadhkirah 'ulamā'-i-Hind, P. 138, Nuzhat al-Khawāṭir, 4/223-224.

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Ḥawāshī) on books which were included in the courses of studies. He selected the Madārik for writing Ḥawāshī as it was a very popular text book of Tafsīr particularly among the mystic minded 'ulamā'.<sup>1</sup> This Ḥāshiyah is considered important as it very lucidly explains the difficult parts of the Madārik and gives the full text of the Aḥādīth to which only reference is available in the Tafsīr. Moreover, it also gives details about the causes of revelation (Asbāb-i-Nuzūl) of different verses. The writer has supported his statement by referring to the authentic Tafsīr works.<sup>2</sup> These aspects of Maulānā Ilāh Dād's work have rendered it more worthy and useful.

In the light of above discussion, it may be concluded that in the Sultanate period the Qur'ānic studies formed as essential part of curriculum as well as popular subject for academic contribution. There was no dearth of such 'ulamā' in this period who devoted themselves to promotion of the Qur'ānic sciences through teaching and compiling books. It also became quite clear from our deliberations that not only 'ulamā' of the period contributed to the development of 'Ilm-i-Qur'ān but some of the Sultans and noble also showed keen interest in this prime branch of Islamic learning. The Qur'ānic commentaries produced by the contemporary 'ulamā' represented different trends of Tafsīr writing which certainly indicates the development of 'Ilm-i-Tafsīr in the concerned period and suggests that the contribution of the contemporary 'ulamā' to the Qur'ānic studies was of great value.

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<sup>1</sup> The Manuscript of this Ḥāshiyah is available in Maulānā Āzād Library under 'Abdul Ḥayy Collection No.9/8.

<sup>2</sup> Akhbār al-Akhyār, PP. 188-189, Subḥat al-Marjān, P. 105, Ḥadā'iq al-Ḥanfīyyah, PP. 364-365; Nawāb Şiddīque Ḥasan Khān, Abjad al-'Ulūm, Maṭba Şiddīqīyyah, Bhopāl, 1295 AH; 394-895, Nuzhat al-Khawāṭir, 4/41-42.

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## Contribution to the Qur'ānic Science of Tafsīr during the Reign of Akbar [1556-1605]

Prof. Zafarul Islām<sup>1</sup>

There is a common misunderstanding<sup>2</sup> among the general public that during the period of the Delhi Sultanate fiqh was in vogue and that the Muslim jurists and the theologians enjoyed great eminence and power. In like manner there is a common belief that scientific and rational disciplines got an unprecedented effulgence during the Moghul period and rational sciences were in vogue in centres of education and learning as well as in creative and learned writings. The popularization of rational sciences is generally attributed to two members of the same family i.e., Sheikh 'Abd Allāh Tulanbi and Sheikh 'Azīz Allah Tulanbi, who established centres of learning in Delhi and Sambhal respectively<sup>3</sup> during the reign of Sulṭān Sikandar Lodhī [1489-1517]. Likewise, in the period of Akbar, the Great Mughal emperor, the credit for furthering rational studies, is commonly given to Mīr Faṭḥ Allah Shīrāzī who is said to have introduced the works of great masters of these disciplines like Muḥaqqiqi-Dawwānī and Mīr

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<sup>2</sup> The present writer has in his article Qur'ānic learning during the Delhi Sultanate (Bi-annual Journal 'Ulūm al- Qur'ān, vol. 1. Issue No. 2 for January-June, 1981) attempted to remove the misunderstanding.

<sup>3</sup> 'Abd al-Qādir al-Badāyūnī, Muntakhab al-Tawārīkh, Bib. Ind; 1/323-324; Ghulām 'Alī Āzād Bilgrāmī Ma'āthir al-Kirām, Mufid-i-'Ām Press, Āgra, 1910. Daftar 1, PP. 191-192; Islāmī 'Ulūm' wa Funūn Hindustān men by Sayyid 'Abd al-Ḥayy Urdu translation of al-Thaqāfat al-Islāmīyyah fi'l Hind, Ma'ārif Press, A'zamgarh, 1970. PP. 14-15. 28-29. Tulanbi is the nisba of Tulanba, which during that period, was a famous suburb of Multān.

Ṣadr al-Dīn Shīrāzī<sup>1</sup> in India. Indeed a lot of new works on logic and philosophy besides 'Ilm al-Kalām were prescribed as parts of the syllabus in religious educational institutions but it would be incorrect to assume that those additions to the curriculum had any adverse effect on religious studies. It is true that a few changes did take place with regard to the selection of books for the syllabus on subjects such as exegesis of the Qur'ān, traditions of the Prophet and the fiqh but on the whole there was no change whatsoever in the traditional atmosphere that surrounded the teaching and learning of these subjects. There was a definite change no doubt in the teaching of exegesis as *Tafsīr-i-Baiḍāwī* became more popular than *Kashshāf* which had held the field for many centuries. The former replaced the latter as the standard book of reference and study. Later on *al-Jalālīn* was also added to the syllabus.

It however, in no way means that the teaching of the exegesis of the Qur'ān was restricted to only these two books. The fact is that we find references to numerous other exegetical works in the accounts dealing with the personal studies of eminent contemporary scholars as well as of discussions in scholarly gatherings. In this connection *Madārik al-Tanzīl Tafsīr-i-Wāhidī* and '*Arā'is al-Bayān*<sup>2</sup> deserve mention. It would not, however, be proper to base our verdict with regard to the importance or otherwise in the educational syllabus of the time of any particular branch of knowledge but the number of books prescribed for it. Because the major objective of education during that period was not to make available detailed

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<sup>1</sup> *Al-Badāyūnī* op. cit, 3/154-155; *Ma'āthir al-Kirām*, P. 238; *Rūd-i-Kauthar* by Sheikh. Muḥammad Ikrām published by Tāj Office, Karāchī (undated), PP. 81-82.

<sup>2</sup> *Tafsīr-i-Wāhidī* by Abu'l Ḥassan 'Alī bin Aḥmad al-Wāhidī Nishāpūrī and '*Arā'is al-Bayān* by Sheikh Abū Muḥammad Ruzbihān ibn Abī al-Anṣārī (d. 468 A.H.). The letter reflects the sufi point of view.

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information on any and every subject of the study but to create amongst the students a zest for knowledge and to enrich and arouse their intellectual curiosity and stimulate their understanding. Had it been otherwise, it would have been impossible to achieve the end in view even if dozens of books had been available on every subject. The increase in the number of books on rational sciences should be viewed only in this context. Their higher proportion was intended to sharpen mental faculties and the intellectual effort of the students.

Any change in the proportion of exegetic courses apart; if a serious study is undertaken with regard to the interest taken by contemporary 'ulamā' in the science of Qur'ānic exegesis and their involvement in writing and compiling new commentaries on the Qur'ān, the fact will emerge that in this period services were rendered in this field which are in no way less important than the work done in earlier times. Many contemporary scholars were great masters of the science of exegesis and produced a sizeable literature and glosses on ancient exegetic works.

In the pages that follow an evaluation of the reign of Akbar has been undertaken from this point of view which, it is hoped, will present a true picture of the services rendered in this period in the propagation and growth of the Qur'ānic sciences, especially of Tafsīr.

Among the Moghul kings the reign of Akbar stands out for the royal peculiar religious trends and his distinct political policies. But there is another reason which makes it so remarkable -the strength and consolidation of the Moghul rule and the political and administrative unification of the whole of India under one centralized power. And this administrative expansion and progress did prove conducive, indirectly if not directly, to the

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furtherance and promotion of learning and creative activity. Another factor that led to the growth of academic and intellectual activity was the conquest of Gujarāt in 1572 and the consequent consolidation of political ties between Gujarāt and Delhi and the ever increasing cultural exchanges between them.

Being a coastal city Gujarāt had become a unique centre of intellectual activity due to especially Arab religious scholars and thinkers whom it attracted in large numbers. Due to the generous patronage of its Sulṭāns, Gujarāt had become a world famous centre of Islamic learning and arts. After it came under the sway of the Moghuls many of its scholars moved to Northern India and their educational activities and writings gave a new luster to its intellectual environment. Besides it became easier for the Indian students to go to Arabia via Gujarāt and to benefit from the learning of Arabian ‘ulamā’.<sup>1</sup>

The fact is that there occurred no decline during the reign of Akbar in the propagation and promotion of scholastic and creative activity, as got spur in India immediately after the establishment of Muslim rule in the sub-continent. Although Akbar himself was little introduced in the realm of letters but the accounts left by historians and memoir-writers provide ample evidence of his deep interest in academic matters and learning.<sup>2</sup>

In this regard much has been written about the intellectual discussions, held in the royal court, his participation in religious debates and discussions held in the prayer-house,

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<sup>1</sup> For an indepth study of this subject please see: Cultural History of Gujarāt (in Urdu) by Sayyid Abū Ṣafar Nadwī, Ma’ārif Press, A’zamgarh, 1962

<sup>2</sup> For academic interest and cultural activities during Akbar’s time see: al-Badāyūnī’s *Muntakhab al-Tawārīkh*, vol. III; also *Ṭabaqāt-i-Akbarī* by *Khawājah Niẓām al-Dīn*, Calcutta, 1931. Vol II; *Rūd-i-Kauthar*, PP. 81-84 and *Muslim Thaqāfat Hindustān* men published by *Idāra-i-Thaqāfat-i-Islāmīyyah*, Lāhore, PP. 314-320.

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establishment of centres of learning in different parts of the empire, arrangements for translation in Persian of outstanding works on different scientific subjects and arts, and generous patronage of scholars and learning. We may well pass over the Emperor's general academic interest and confine ourselves to the subject under discussion. Authentic evidence is available in historical sources of three Tafsīrs being presented to the King. During his first audience with Akbar, after being attached to the royal court, Abu'l Faḍl presented to his royal patron his exegesis of the Āyat al- Kursī. This brief Tafsīr became famous under the name of Tafsīr-i-Akbarī whose numerical value shows that it was completed in 983 A.H.<sup>1</sup> Al-Badāyānī, the contemporary historian, clearly states that Mirza Muflis presented to the king the Tafsīr of the chapter Muḥammad by Ḥāfiẓ Komkī in 1570.<sup>2</sup>

Some modern historians have proved from references in Abu'l Faḍl's letters that when he was given second audience by the king, the former presented to his master his Tafsīr of chapter Muḥammad. It greatly pleased the king and it brought Abu'l Faḍl even closer to him.<sup>3</sup> Also, there is documentary evidence of the presentation before the king of Abu'l Faiḍ Faiḍī's dot-less Tafsīr (containing only those Arabic letters which have no dot) called Sawāṭi al-Ilhām.<sup>4</sup> The historians also record that the authors of these Tafsīrs invariably received generous rewards from the King and also enjoyed royal patronage.

<sup>1</sup> Al-Badāyūnī, 2/198. Also see: Tadhkira-i-'Ulamā'-i-Hind by Raḥmān 'Alī Newal Kiṣhore Press. Lucknow, 1914, P. 5.

<sup>2</sup> Al-Badāyūnī, 2/187. 3/153-4. Also Raḥmān 'Alī, P. 46.

<sup>3</sup> Religious and Academic History of Muslim during Akbar's Reign by Syed Aṭhar 'Abbās Riḍwī, New Delhi, 1975, P. 172 and Maktūbāt-i-'Allāmī', Delhi, 1846, 3/218-220; also Nuzhat al-Khawāṭir, 5/25.

<sup>4</sup> Ghulām 'Alī Āzād Bilgrāmī, Subḥat al-Marjān, 'Alīgarh, 1976, PP. 118-119; Raḥmān 'Alī, P. 4.

As with earlier kings, the royal library during the reign of Akbar was a treasure-house of literature on different sciences, arts and crafts. It contained a well-stocked section exclusively for exegetical work along with books on Ḥadīth and fiqh. That this library had the latest source material on the science of Tafsīr is borne out by the fact that Jahāngīr, who succeeded Akbar as the sovereign, presented during his reign copies of Tafsīr classics such as *Kashshāf* and *Ḥusainī* to some *Mashā'ikh* of Gujarāt from this hereditary royal library.<sup>1</sup> Historical sources clearly show that besides Akbar, who had profound interest in intellectual matters, many of his leading nobles and dignitaries were also keenly interested in religious thought and literature. Qilich *Khān* was one of the renowned nobles of Akbar's court and served as governor of many provinces one after the other. Along with the performing his official duties conscientiously, he spent much time in reading and acquiring knowledge. During the time when he was governor of Lāhore, it was his daily routine to spend some time in Lāhore's religious madrasa learning Tafsīr, Ḥadīth and fiqh. *Shāhnawāz Khān* the author of *Ma'āthir al-Umarā'* has this to say about him: "He was always active in the acquisition of knowledge and took great interest in the welfare of the student. It is said that he stayed in the madrasa for one third of the day attending the lessons on Tafsīr, Ḥadīth and fiqh and strove to his utmost to promote the various *Sharī'ah* disciplines".<sup>2</sup> Another famous contemporary noble *Sheikh* Farīd *Bukhārī* alias *Nawwāb Murtaḍā Khān* was also deeply interested in the Qur'ān and Ḥadīth and their teachings. Besides occupying the high offices of *Mīr Bakhshī* and *Dīwān-I Tan*, he participated in many

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<sup>1</sup> *Tuzuk-i-Jahāngīrī*, 'Alīgarh, 1864, P. 218.

<sup>2</sup> *Shāhnawāz Khān*, *Ma'āthir al-Umarā'*, Calcutta, 1891, 3/69-74; *Rūd-i-Kauthar*, P. 134.

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military expeditions. He had close association with the great saints and scholars of the day i.e. Ḥaḍrat Mujaddid Alf Thānī, Khawājah Bāqī Billāh and Sheikh ‘Abd al-Ḥaqq Muḥaddith Dehlawī and there was regular exchange of correspondence between him and them. Much of the correspondence was devoted to discussions on basic concepts and problems of fiqh and the teachings of the Qur’ān and Ḥadīth. Some historiographers have written that a Tafsīr in Persian was compiled under the orders of Jahāngīr and it became famous during his reign with the name of Tafsīr-i-Murtaḍawī.<sup>1</sup> These facts are a clear and irrefutable proof of Sheikh Farīd’s deep personal involvement in the knowledge of and the teachings of the Qur’ān and Ḥadīth and his great interest in academic activities. Among the grandees of Akbar’s reign Khān-I Khānān ‘Abd al-Raḥmān Khān was known for his outstanding erudition and his patronage of men of letters, besides his political eminence and influence in the royal court. He had complete command over many languages including Arabic and Persian. Although there is no clear proof of his interest in the science of exegesis yet there is enough evidence to establish the fact that Abu’l ‘Iṣmat Samarqandī dedicated a Tafsīr of the chapter al-Kauthar to Khān-I Khānān.<sup>2</sup> May be this Khān-I Khānān was no other than ‘Abd al-Raḥīm Khān-i Khānān.

A true estimation of the valuable services rendered in the field of Qur’ānic learning during the reign of Akbar can be made by taking into account the multi-dimensional activities of the

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<sup>1</sup> Sayyid ‘Abd al-Ḥayy, *Nuzhat al-Khawāṭir*, Dā’irat al-Ma’ārif, Ḥyderabad, 1954, 5/301-302; *Ma’āthir al-Umarā’*, 2/633-641, *Maktūbāt-i-Imām-i-Rabbānī*, Aḥmadi Press, Delhi, 1/57-62. 68- 70, 79- 81. 191-193. *Rūd-i-Kauthar*, PP. 116-125.

<sup>2</sup> Vide *Catalogue of Persian Manuscripts Asiatic Society of Bengal*, compiled by Ivanow, P. 471-No. 970.

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contemporary religious thinkers in regard to its promotion and propagation. There was no dearth during this period of scholars with special distinction in this field and who became prominent by their writings and rare pedagogic talent. It is quite interesting to note that among these eminent scholars were many who were attached to the royal court in one way or the other, or had revived royal patronage. Among religious scholars who distinguished themselves for their understanding of the Qur'ān and the dedication to the teaching of the Holy Book, Sheikh Burhān Kalpawī (d. 1563) was the most outstanding. 'Abd al-Qādir al-Badāyūnī, the author of Muntakhab al-Tawārīkh makes particular mention of the piety, saintliness and deep devotion to worship of Sheikh Burhān. He also tells of his mastery over the science of Qur'ānic exegesis. Al-Badāyūnī lays great stress on the fact that he visited the Sheikh in 1559 and greatly benefited from him.<sup>1</sup> Another renowned scholar of the same period is Mullā Fīruz Kashmīrī (d. 1565). Besides pedagogic activities, the Mullā was appointed by the King to act as a muftī and give rulings in judicial matters according to the Sharī'ah. According to the Tadhkira-I 'Ulamā' –I Hind,<sup>2</sup> he was distinguished among his contemporaries for his outstanding knowledge of Tafsīr, Ḥadīth, and fiqh. Because of his rare excellence in the knowledge of Islamic Law, Ḥadīth and Tafsīr, he received the honour of being appointed as the Muftī of Kashmīr. Sheikh Aḥmad Fayyāḍ Anbaythawī (d. approximately 1574) had achieved eminence amongst the scholars of Tafsīr in Northern India. He had an unusually strong memory. In addition to having committed the Qur'ān to memory he knew many books, included in the

<sup>1</sup> Al-Badāyūnī, 3/6-7; Nuzhat al-Khawāṭir, 4/54-55; Also see: Akḥbār al-Akhyār by Sheikh 'Abd al-Ḥaqq Muḥaddith Dehlawī. Mujtabā'ī Press, Delhi, 1333 A.H. P. 283.

<sup>2</sup> Raḥmān 'Alī, P. 166; also see: Ḥadā'iq al-Ḥanafīyyah by Faqīr Muḥammad, Newal Kishore Press, Lucknow, 1906, PP. 381-382.

religious syllabus, by heart. Both contemporary and later biographers have stated that he was well conversant with the finer points of Qur'ānic exegesis. In the words of al-Badāyūnī, "he knew very well, indeed Tafsīr, Ḥadīth and the biography of the holy Prophet.<sup>1</sup> Sheikh Ḥāmid Sambhalī (d. 1575) became famous during the time of Akbar as a Mufassir (exegete). He was the contemporary both of Humāyūn and Akbar. There is no mention of his in al-Badāyūnī's history. But Khawajā Niẓām al-Dīn another contemporary historian, has included him with the title (Mufassir) amongst the eminent 'ulamā' of Akbar's reign.<sup>2</sup> Sayyid 'Abd al-Ḥayy, author of *Nuzhat al-Khawāṭir* has thrown light on his exegetic expertise in these words; "He had complete mastery over Qur'ānic exegesis, its exposition before the people and bringing out the teachings of Qur'ān,"<sup>3</sup> In this period Muftī Muḥammad Jamāl Khān Dehlawī (d. 1576) who was a brilliant pupil of the renowned teacher and experienced scholar Sheikh 'Abd Allāh Tulanbī achieved great excellence and expertise in religious disciplines especially Tafsīr and fiqh. He spent all his life in imparting education and played a prominent role in the spread and popularization of religious knowledge.<sup>4</sup> Among the religious scholars of Lāhore, Maulānā Jalāl Tillā<sup>5</sup> took special interest in the Tafsīr discipline. He was one of those few scholars of the periods who had equal mastery over both traditional and rational sciences. He had no peer amongst his contemporaries in pedagogic activities. He elucidated the most complex and subtle problems before his students in such a clear and simple language that they understood them without any difficulty. Besides imparting complete understanding of the Qur'ān to the

<sup>1</sup> Al-Badāyūnī, 3/83-84; Raḥmān 'Alī, PP. 14-15; *Nuzhat al-Khawāṭir*, 4/31.

<sup>2</sup> *Ṭabaqāt-i-Akabarī*, 2/463.

<sup>3</sup> *Nuzhat al-Khawāṭir*, 4/99; also see: Raḥmān 'Alī, PP, 53, 289.

<sup>4</sup> Al-Badāyūnī, 2/324; 3/77, Raḥmān 'Alī, PP. 43-44.

<sup>5</sup> Tilla was the name of Mahalla of ancient Lāhore.

students, he proved his mastery in the exegesis of the Qur'ān by taking a noticeable part in the correction and vetting of Sheikh Faiḍī's *Tafsīr Sawāṭi-al-Ilhām*.<sup>1</sup> Mullā 'Abd Allāh Sulṭānpūrī (d.1582) is the most prominent amongst the 'ulamā' who had special links with royal court during Akbar's reign. He was born in Sulṭānpūr near Jullandpūr which is a suburb of Lāhore. He completed his education in Sirhind and Delhi. He received recognition and achieved position of honour in the Moghul Court in the time of Humāyūn. The titles of Sheikh al-Islām and Makhḍūm al-Mulk were conferred upon him. He was highly honoured in the early period of Akbar's reign also and was appointed to the high office of the dīwān of the royal court but later on he fell a victim to the political intrigues of the Mubārak family and fell in disgrace. The deep erudition of 'Abd Allāh Sulṭānpūrī is quite well-known. He had achieved excellence in religious disciplines, especially in exegesis of the Qur'ān.<sup>2</sup> Among his works 'Iṣmat al-Anbiyā', Minhāj al-Dīn and Sharḥ-i Shamā'il al-Nabī (PBUH) stand out for their excellence and provide an undeniable proof of his deep interest in the Qur'ān and Ḥadīth. Among the 'ulamā' of the royal court special interest in Tafsīr is attributed to Ḥājī Ibrāhīm Sirhindī (d.1586). Besides benefiting from the scholarship of the leading 'ulamā of India he also learnt much from the religious scholars of the Ḥijāz. He had close links with the king and his leading nobles. He served as Ṣadr in Gujarāt for quite some time. His erudition and scholarship find frequent mention in works of history and tadhkiras. But Muḥammad Ghauthī Shaṭṭārī mentions his specialization in the

<sup>1</sup> Al-Badāyūnī, 3/106-107; Raḥmān 'Alī op, cit, P. 43. The writers who corrected Sawāṭi' al-Ilhām read Jamāl Lāhorī instead of Jamāl Tilla and Sheikh Ikrām, Rūd-i-Kauthar, P. 194. Dr. Shabbīr Aḥmad, Arabic Language and Literature during the Moghul Period, Lucknow, 1982, PP. 110-140.

<sup>2</sup> Al-Badāyūnī, 3/70-71, also see: Ṭabaqāt-i-Akbarī, 2/459; Raḥmān 'Alī, P. 103; Nuzhat al-Khawāṭir, 4/207-208.

science of Tafsīr in his *Gulzār-i Abrār*.<sup>1</sup> Ḥajji Ibrāhīm Muḥaddith Qādirī (d. 1593) is among the ‘ulamā’ who did a glorious task in the promotion of Tafsīr and Ḥadīth in India after benefiting from the erudition of the religious luminaries of Central Asia and the Ḥijāz. He was born in Mānakpūr (Allāhābād) and is buried in Āgra. He travelled to Baghdād, Egypt and Mecca in his quest of knowledge and achieved mastery over the disciplines of Tafsīr, Ḥadīth and the fiqh. He taught in religious centres in Egypt for a long time and returned to India in the last phase of his life and spent the rest of his days in teaching Tafsīr and Ḥadīth in Āgra.<sup>2</sup> Another of his contemporary Qāḍī ‘Abd al-Qādir (d.1602) is also known for his love of travel and for his expertise in Tafsīr. He visited many countries and had the privilege of performing many pilgrimages to the Ḥaramain al-Sharīfain and Jerusalem. He also acted as the Qāḍī for some time in Sārangpur (Malwa). According to the author of *Gulzār-i Abrār* Qāḍī ‘Abd al-Qādir had achieved complete mastery over Tafsīr and possessed unprecedented skill in the interpretation of the mutashābihāt, exposition of brief references and delicate nuances of the Qur’ānic verses and in the fixation of the diacritical points. He had special knowledge of nāsikh wa mansūkh and the occasion of the nuzūl of verses of the Qur’ān. Interpretation of the Qur’ānic text in the congregational mosque every Friday was a regular feature of his life.<sup>3</sup>

The great services rendered by Sheikh Aḥmad Sirhindī Mujaddid Alf-i Thānī in the promotion of Islamic disciplines and the projection of the Islamic Sharī’ah are too well-known

<sup>1</sup> Muḥammad Ghauthi Sattārī *Gulzār-i-Abrār* (Urdu translation), Lāhore, 1398 A.H. PP, 384–385; also see: *Al-Badāyūnī*, 2/174-177; *Nuzhat al-Khawāṭir*, 4/5-6.

<sup>2</sup> *Gulzār-i-Abrār*, P. 434; *Raḥmān ‘Alī*, P. 7.

<sup>3</sup> *Gulzār-i-Abrār*, PP. 461-462.

to be recounted Qāḍī Buhlūl Badakhshānī's name occurs among his teachers. The latter scholar was a contemporary of Akbar and teaching was his main occupation. Sheikh Aḥmad Sirhindī learnt from him Tafsīr and Ḥadīth in general and took special lessons in Tafsīr-i Wāḥidī, Baiḍāwī and Shahīḥ al-Bukhārī.<sup>1</sup> This fact is enough to prove that Qāḍī Buhlūl was a leading scholar of Tafsīr and Ḥadīth of his times. Among scholars who had foreign links during the reign of Akbar one who deserves special mention is Muḥammad Ḥusain Yazdī. He had distinguished himself in the Art of Qira'at, Tafsīr and Ḥadīth. Amongst his numerous works is a voluminous and comprehensive commentary of Shamā'il-i-Tirmidhī.<sup>2</sup>

Of the 'ulamā' of Gujarāt Sheikh Jamāl Muḥammad Gujarātī (d. 1589) became famous for his services as a teacher and for his devotion to and promotion of Qur'ānic sciences. He was born and brought up in Gujarāt and journeyed to Ḥaramain al-Sharīfain to complete his religious education. On return to India he took up the work of teaching in Burhānpūr and became famous for his expertise in teaching Tafsīr and Ḥadīth.<sup>3</sup> Two other religious scholars of Gujarāt Malik Maḥmūd Piyaro Gujarātī (d. 1591) and Shāh Faḍl Allāh Burhānpūrī (d.1596) achieved eminence because of their devotion to the occupation of teaching. The first of these two belonged to the Malik family of Gujarāt and was one of those scholars who had close links with the royal court of Akbar. Al-Badāyūnī, the contemporary historian, speaks of his outstanding erudition in Tafsīr and Ḥadīth and the Arabic language.<sup>4</sup> The latter belonged to

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<sup>1</sup> Ḥadā'iq al-Ḥanafīyyah, P. 450, Rūd-i-Kauthar, P. 146. Muslim Thaqafat Hindustan Men, P. 61.

<sup>2</sup> Nuzhat al-Khawāṭir, 4/331.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. 4/79.

<sup>4</sup> Al-Badāyūnī, 3/140; also see Nuzhat al-Khawāṭir, 4/434.

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Jaunpūr but he shifted to Gujarāt and settled down in Burhānpūr. He established a school there where he continued teaching Tafsīr and Ḥadīth and fiqh to the end of life.<sup>1</sup> The ‘ulamā’ of Sind were also very active in the promotion of Qur’ānic learning during the time of Akbar. One of the most renowned amongst them was Sayyid ‘Abd Allāh al-Muttaqī al-Sindī (d.1576). He was born in Sind and after his early education he went to the Ḥijāz where he received education and training from distinguished scholars such as Sheikh ‘Alī bin Ḥussain al-Dīn al-Muttaqī and others. After his return to India he devoted himself completely to the teaching of the Islamic disciplines. According to the author of *Nuzhat al-Khawāṭir* he excelled his contemporary ‘ulamā’ in his knowledge of Tafsīr and Ḥadīth. In his words: “He had no equal during his time in the knowledge of Tafsīr and Ḥadīth.”<sup>2</sup> Among the other scholars of Tafsīr Sheikh ‘Abbās al-Sindī (d.1589) and Nūḥ bin Ni’mat Allāh al-Sindī (d.1589) deserve special mention. They both were well known for their knowledge of Tafsīr and their teaching of this science. During the reign of Akbar of the sufis who evinced keen interest in Tafsīr and took an active part in its promotion the outstanding personality is that of Sheikh ‘Azīz Allāh.<sup>3</sup> He originally belonged to Jaunpūr but migrated to Delhi in his childhood along with his father, Sheikh Ḥasan Tāhir and after completing his education took up the work of teaching in the same city. He belonged to the Chishtī school of mysticism and taught the Tafsīr classic ‘Ara’ is al-Bayān which portrays the sufi view point and the Qur’ān in his daily classes along with

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<sup>1</sup> Raḥmān ‘Alī. P. 162.

<sup>2</sup> *Nuzhat al-Khawāṭir*, 4/205; also see Raḥmān Ali, P. 268; *Hada’iq al-Ḥanfiyya*, P. 388. According the latter sources his year of death is 1587 A.D.

<sup>3</sup> *Nuzhat al-Khawāṭir*, 4/167, 383; *I’jaz al-Haqq Quddus- Tadkhira-I Sufiyya-I Sind Urdu Academy, Sind 1959, PP. 282-159.*

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outstanding sufi works. The historian al-Badāyūnī takes great pride in attending his learned sessions and benefitted from them a great deal.<sup>1</sup> It seems necessary here to state that Sheikh ‘Abd al-Ḥaqq Muḥaddith Dehlawī and Raḥmān ‘Alī both mention the same facts in their accounts of Sheikh ‘Abd al-‘Azīz Dehlawī that al-Badāyūnī has narrated about Sheikh ‘Azīz Allāh in as much as that the names of the fathers of the two and the titles of their works are the same. Apparently this seems to be a mix up in the names.<sup>2</sup> Sheikh Ḍiyā Allāh was another renowned sufi of this Period. He was the successor (Khalīfah) of the great saint of the Shaṭṭārī order Sheikh Muḥammad Ghauth Gawālīārī (d.1563) Sheikh Ḍiyā Allāh was among those scholars who were specially invited by Akbar to participate in the religious debates held in the ‘Ibādat Khānah’. According to al-Badāyūnī Sheikh Ḍiyā’ Allāh possessed special talent in expounding the Tafsīr of the Qur’ān and his sermons were couched in such simple and effective language that they touched the very chords of the soul of the audience and none of them after that felt any need to refer to other works of Tafsīr. Al-Badāyūnī account gives the impression that he often exchanged views with his contemporaries regarding the meanings of the different verses of the holy book.<sup>3</sup>

This was a brief account of those ‘ulama’ and Mashā’ikh who had special interest in the Tafsīr discipline in the time of Akbar and who played a prominent role in the popularization and promotion of Tafsīr through teaching in madrasas and through giving lectures in academic institutions. It does not take into account those scholars who, besides their pedagogic activities, rendered important services in the field of the Qur’ānic

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<sup>1</sup> Al-Badāyūnī, 3/121.

<sup>2</sup> Akhbar al- Akhyar, P. 282. Raḥmān ‘Alī, P. 121.

<sup>3</sup> Al-Badāyūnī, 3/121-125.

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sciences by writing and compiling books. Their work will be evaluated in the following pages in connection with works on the relevant disciplines written during the time of Akbar.

Work done in regard to Tafsīr in the time of Akbar was not confined to reading or teaching Tafsīr classics or giving lectures on Tafsīr in learned meetings by individual 'ulamā'. Much original writing and compilation work was also done. Consequently we come across numerous commentaries and glosses written on ancient Tafsīr classics but also Tafsīr of the whole of the Qur'ān or parts of it by contemporary scholars in both Arabic and Persian. On the basis of the year of its completion the Tafsīr written by Sheikh Muḥammad bin 'Āshiq Chirriyākotī (d.1564) can safely be assumed to be the first work on Tafsīr written during the reign of Akbar. He was born in Chirriyākot (A'zamgarh) and after completing his education under the supervision of local scholars, he started teaching and writing religious books, the most important of which being Tafsīr-i Muḥammadī (in Arabic).<sup>1</sup> Another Tafsīr with the same title was written by Sheikh Ḥasan Muḥammad bin Aḥmad Gujarātī (d.1574).

Sheikh Ḥasan Muḥammad descended from Sheikh Naṣīr al-Dīn Chirāgh Dehlawī and belonged to the Chishtiya order. Tafsīr, fiqh and Taṣawwuf were subjects of special interest to him.<sup>2</sup> His Tafsīr has a special importance after Tabṣīr al-Raḥmān and Taisīr al-Mannān (by Sheikh 'Alī bin Aḥmad al-Mahā'imī d. 1432). It is the second concerted effort in Indian Tafsīr literature to discover the link and conformity between the verses of the Qur'ān in order to correlate them and to bring out the unity and continuity of thought and diction between its chapters. Although the claim of the author is that his first and foremost purpose was to integrate the verses by bringing out their indivisible cohesion. Another

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<sup>1</sup> Nuzhat al-Khawāṭir, 3/302.

<sup>2</sup> Gulzār-i-Abrār. P. 321; Raḥmān 'Alī, P. 214.

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distinct feature of the Tafsīr is the elucidation of legal matters and problems emerging from the exposition and interpretation of Qur'ānic verses.<sup>1</sup> The most detailed and comprehensive of all Tafsīr works produced in the time of Akbar is the Arabic Tafsīr entitled 'Manba'-i Nafā'is al-'Uyūn (or Manba' 'Uyūn al-Ma'ānī). Its author was the most famous scholar of his age Sheikh Mubārak bin Khidr Nāgorī (d.1594). Sheikh Mubārak was one of the pupils of a famous religious commentator, Abul Faḍl al-Quraishī al-Gazrunī who knew the Qur'ān by heart and was the master of ten different styles of the recitation (Qira'at) and had full command over the whole gamut of Islamic learning. He spent most of his life teaching in Agra. Towards the end of his life he almost lost his eye-sight and consequently had to retire and live in solitude. It was during this period that he compiled his comprehensive commentary on the Qur'ān. According to al-Badāyūnī and some other historians this Tafsīr was in four bulky volumes,<sup>2</sup> while Dr. Muḥammad Salim Qidwā'ī who has seen an ancient manuscript of this work says that it comprises five volumes.<sup>3</sup> This Tafsīr is preceded by a long introduction in which the author discusses in full detail the state of Qur'ān's revelation, its total duration, rules of its recitation (Qir'at) and the need and importance of writing Tafsīr. The author while writing the Tafsīr

<sup>1</sup> Tafsīr-i-Muḥammadī's manuscripts are preserved in the India Office Library (Catalogue of Arabic Manuscripts, London 1877, P. 32 No. 103; and Sir Sālār Jung Library Hyderābād (Dn).

<sup>2</sup> Al-Badāyūnī. 3/74; Ṭabaqāt-i-Akbarī, 2/472. Subḥat al-Marjān, P. 117; Raḥmān 'Alī, P. 174; Nuzhat al-Khawāṭir, 5/320-321; al-Badāyūnī and Sayyid 'Abd al-Ḥayy maintain that its name is Manba' Nafa' is al-'Uyūn, whereas in Ṭabaqāt-i-Akbarī its name is given as Manb a-l-'Uyūn, in Subḥat al-Marjān it is called 'Uyūn al-Ma'ānī and in Tadhira-i-'Ulamā' -i-Hind it is written as Manba' al-'Ulūm.

<sup>3</sup> According to the research of Dr. Muḥammad Sālīm Qidwā'ī Indian Commentators and their Arabic Commentaries in Urdu, published by Maktabah Jām'ia , New Delhi 1973, PP. 52-53; its MS. Is preserved in Lucknow in the private Library of the late Sayyid Taqī. It may be that after the death of the author this Tafsīr may have been divided into more parts while making copies of it.

throws light on the lexical composition, the origin and contemporary usage of the words, delicate nuances of meanings and the time and cause of the revelation of the verses and along with it he draws attention on the basis of authentic references to the link between the preceding and following suras.<sup>1</sup> In this context this Tafsīr like the last mentioned work has an excellence which distinguishes it from other similar works. The second achievement of the Mubārak family in the field of Tafsīr is Tafsīr Sawāṭī' 'al-Ilhām, by Abul Faiḍ Faiḍī (d.1595) which contains not a single dotted letter and therefore has a special distinction, all its own. Faiḍī was the elder son of Sheikh Mubārak Nāgorī and the most distinguished poet and men of letters in the entire Moghul period. In addition to absolute mastery over the Persian language and literature, he was an expert of the Arabic language also, the shining proof of this fact being his Mawārid al-Kalim (an Arabic treatise on ethics) and the use of Ṣan'at –i Iḥmāl using only letters which have no dots, besides Sawāṭī'al-Ilhām.<sup>2</sup> Without doubt this Tafsīr is a masterpiece of style and diction and rare literary excellence. It is preceded by an illuminatingly informative foreword, in which the author has, besides recounting his family history and all the academic and intellectual activities of the Moghul Capital, written a masterly dissertation on the psychological state during the revelation, the history of the compilation and arrangement of the Qur'ān, division of abrogating and abrogated verses and the growth and evolution of the Tafsīr discipline. But the use of completely dot-less vocabulary made the work so formal and artificial that it has made it almost unintelligible, which defeated the very purpose for which the Tafsīr was written. But one aspect of the Tafsīr is undoubtedly very commendable.

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<sup>1</sup> For further comments on this Tafsīr see the above mentioned work of Dr Sālim Qidwā'ī, PP. 52-58.

<sup>2</sup> Al-Badāyūnī, 3/300; Ṭabaqāt-i-Akbarī, 2/486- 487, Gulzār-i-Akbar, PP. 453- 454.

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Despite the allegation of free thinking and religious deviation that have been leveled against the author, he has at no place deviated in his interpretation and exposition of the Qur'ānic text from the consensus of the Ummah and the opinions of exegetes in general. Among the contemporary historians al-Badāyūnī in his bitterest critic has been quite blunt and outspoken condemning him,<sup>1</sup> but it is interesting to note that he himself wrote a commendatory note on it and for its date of compilation composed a chronogram in Arabic (أحسن التفاسير بسم (الله الرحيم علم القرآن) which if translated would read "The best of all Tafsīr in the name of Allah the most Merciful the Most Compassionate, who taught the Qur'ān."<sup>2</sup> This is as will be seen its approval and profound appreciation and the language is completely unambiguous and unequivocal. How did other leading contemporary scholars react to this work. This can well be gauged from the fact that at many places during its writing Faiḍī was helped by no less a person than Sheikh Aḥmad Sirhindī Mujaddid Alf-I Thānī,<sup>3</sup> and Maulānā Jalāl al-Dīn Tilla vetted it after its completion.<sup>4</sup> Further more among its admirers and those who wrote commendatory notes on it were eminent 'ulama' such as Miyān Aman Allah Khān Sirhindī, Muḥammad Ḥaidar Mu'amma'i and Qāḍī Nūr Allah Shustarī and above all the teacher and guide of Mujaddid Alf-Thānī Sheikh Ya'qūb Ṣarfī Kashmīrī.<sup>5</sup> Religious scholars and intellectuals of modern times express different views in regard to this Tafsīr.<sup>6</sup> But an important thing to keep in mind is the fact that even

<sup>1</sup> Al-Badāyūnī, 3/300.

<sup>2</sup> Idem, 2/393-394.

<sup>3</sup> Zubdat al-Maqāmat, (ed,) Muḥammad Hāshim Kishmī, Newal Kishore, Press. Kānpūr, 1307 A.H. P. 132.

<sup>4</sup> Al-Badāyūnī, 3/105.

<sup>5</sup> Al-Badāyūnī, 2/393; 3/137; Raḥmān 'Alī, P. 4; Rūd-i-Kauthar, P. 94.

<sup>6</sup> Manāẓir Aḥsan Gīlānī Hindustān Men Musalmānon kā Nizām-i-Ta'līm wa Tarbiyat, Delhi 1944, 2/285-294; Dr. Sālim Qidwā'ī, PP. 61-71.

those critics who maintain that it is meaningless and absurd, do admit that the author is at no place in conflict with generally-held views and beliefs in his interpretation of the verses of the Qur'ān and has now here transgressed the general opinion.<sup>1</sup> Another great merit of this Tafsīr is that despite being couched in a language which contains not a single dotted letter a very serious attempt has been made by the author that it should include all the features that are generally found in Tafsīr. Another Arabic Tafsīr of Akbar's time is unique in its own way i.e., *Durr-al-Tanzīm fi Tartīb al-Āyāt wa'l Suwar al-Karim*. It was composed by Sheikh Munawwar bin 'Abd-al Majīdi bin 'Abd-al-Shakūr (d.1602) who was a leading scholar of his time and was known across the country for devotion to teaching. He kept busy issuing religious ruling and in teaching for half a century. Accordingly at the instance of Akbar he entered the royal service and was appointed –Şadr of Malwa. He had a special talent for Tafsīr, One al-Baiḍāwī's interpretation of verse 124 of the chapter al-Baqarah (إذا ابتلى إبراهيم ربه بكلمات فاتمهن) which according to many 'ulama' was objectionable came under discussion. On their advice Akbar arranged a seminar to discuss it and Qāḍī Şadr al-Dīn Lāhorī was selected to preside over it. During the seminar Sheikh Munawwar defended al-Baiḍāwī's interpretation in such a convincing manner that at the conclusion of the deliberations, the president commended him by saying that had Naşīr al-Dīn Baiḍāwī been alive today and were present in the seminar he would have heartily praised the Sheikh for his hair-splitting and profound understanding of the commentary.<sup>2</sup> The greatest merit of Sheikh Munawwar's Tafsīr is his emphasis on the arrangement and order of the Qur'ānic verses and this is the point of view with which he interprets the whole of the Qur'ān a fact borne out by the title of the work.

<sup>1</sup> 'Allāmah Shiblī, *Shur al-'Ajam*, Ma'ārif Press, A'zamgarh, 1945. 3/51-59.

<sup>2</sup> *Gulzār-i-Abrār*, PP. 472-5475; *Nuzhat al-Khawāṭir*, 5/411-412.

The second outstanding achievement of Sheikh Munawwar in the field of Tafsīr is his translation in Arabic of the Persian Tafsīr by Qādī Shihāb al-Dīn Daulatābādī (d. 1443) entitled *Baḥr-i Mawwāj*.<sup>1</sup> The Sheikh definitely occupied a place of eminence among the exegetes of Akbar's period.

While recognising in full the value and importance of the above mentioned Tafsīr in Arabic, it seems necessary to acknowledge the fact that although there took place much growth and advancement of Persian language and literature as also there was a sizeable number of great scholars and masters of this language in that period, some of them occupying position of honour in the royal court, yet no proof is available of any complete Tafsīr having been written in Persian. Although some historiographers of the modern times attribute the compilation of a Persian Tafsīr *Minhāj-al-Ṣādiqain* without doubt to the famous Shī'a scholar of the period and a distinguished noble (Ṣadr al-Ṣudūr) Faṭḥ Allah Shīrāzī (d. 1588).<sup>2</sup> But no mention of it is found in the works of contemporary and other historians and memoir writers.<sup>3</sup> In various other collections of old manuscripts the same Tafsīr is attributed to Faṭḥ Allah bin Shukr Allah Kashmīrī.<sup>4</sup> Similarly it is said of Jānān Begam, daughter of Khān-i Khānān and wife of

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<sup>1</sup> *Gulzār-i-Abrār*, P. 474. For the introduction of Tafsīr *Baḥr-i-Mawwāj*, see present author's article. 'Aḥd-i-Wuṣṭā men Hindustān kī Fārsī Tafsīren aik Ta'ārufī Mutāla'ah in the Bi-annual Journal, 'Ulūm al-Qur'ān, vol. 1/1. July- December 1985. PP. 128-129.

<sup>2</sup> *Nuzhat al-Khawāṭir*, 4/254-255.

<sup>3</sup> *Al-Badāyūnī*, 2/315-317; 3/154-155; *Ma'āthir al-Kirām*, PP. 236-238; *Ḥadā'iq al-Ḥanafīyyah*, P. 406; *Raḥmān 'Alī*, P. 160.

<sup>4</sup> See *Catalogue of Arabic, Persian, and Urdu Manuscripts*, Āṣafīyyah Library, Hyderābād (Dn). 1900, 1/518; *Catalogue of Persian Manuscripts*, India Office Library, ed. by Ethe. Oxford 1903. Nos 2692-2695; *Catalogue of Persian Manuscripts*, British Museum ed. Ethe. London, 1895-1/12, 3/177; manuscript in the Maulānā Āzād Library Muslim University 'Alīgarh, University Collection Persian, Nos 239- 240, and *Subḥān Allāh* Collection. 297-112/16; also *Raudat al-Jannat fī Aḥwāl al-'Ulamā'* wa *Sādāt*, Tehrān 1347 A.H. P. 484.

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prince Dāniyāl that she had also written a Persian Tafsīr.<sup>1</sup> But this also remains unauthenticated and no solid proof of it has been found to the date. Another Tafsīr in Persian is said to have been written by Sheikh Yāqūb Ṣarfī Kashmīrī (d.1594) during this period. But al-Badāyūnī asserts that Sheikh Ya'qūb died soon after he had started work on it.<sup>2</sup> Hence the Tafsīr remained incomplete and unfinished. Anyhow from the account of this historian the fact emerges that Sheikh Ya'qūb who was among the most eminent and universally known scholars of his times besides being a teacher of Sheikh Ahmad Sirhindi, wanted to compile his Tafsīr-i-Kabīr.

Apart from these complete and incomplete works of Tafsīr written during this period scholars also took interest in writing partial Tafsīr i.e. interpretation of some particular chapter or some individual verses. Amongst such works the most well-known are the Tafsīr of the chapter Wa'l-Tīn<sup>3</sup> (compiled by Sheikh Jalāl al-Dīn Thānesarī (d. 1582),<sup>4</sup> interpretation of Āyat al-Kursī<sup>5</sup> by Abu'l Faḍl, Tafsīr Āyat al-Kursī by Sheikh Muḥammad bin Aḥmad al-Fakihī Gujarati (d.1585)<sup>6</sup> and the Tafsīr of the chapter Muḥammad by Ḥāfiẓ Komkī Tāshkandī.<sup>7</sup> The first two Tafsīrs are in Persian and the rest two are in Arabic. The last

<sup>1</sup> Prof. M.A. Ṣhustarī, outline of Islamic Culture, Bangalore 1954. P. 589; Nuzhat al-Khawāṭir, 5/122-123.

<sup>2</sup> Al-Badāyūnī, 3/260; also Ṭabaqāt-i-Akbarī, 2/464; Subḥat al-Marjān, PP. 123-125; Raḥmān 'Alī, P. 255; Nuzhat al-Khawāṭir, 5/438 Rūd-i-Kauthar, P. 94.

<sup>3</sup> A manuscript of this Tafsīr is preserved in the India Office Library. See Ethe above quoted 1924. Vol. 8 also C.A. Storey, Persian Literature, 1970, 1/17.

<sup>4</sup> For Jalāl al-Dīn Thānesarī's account see al-Badāyūnī, 3/3-4; Raḥmān 'Alī, PP. 40-41 and see Foreword to present writer's unpublished M. Phil. Thesis. Agrarian Law in the Mughal Empire Translation of Tracts of Sheikh Jalāluddīn Thānesarī and Qāḍī Muḥammad 'Alī Thānawī with Introduction and annotations. Āzād Library. Muslim University 'Aligarh.

<sup>5</sup> Al-Badāyūnī, 2/198.

<sup>6</sup> Nuzhat al-Khawāṭir, 4/284-285.

<sup>7</sup> Al-Badāyūnī, 2/187, 3/152, 153; Ṭabaqāt-i-Akbarī, 2/459.

Tafsīr is specially significant as its author was given a reward of Rupees forty thousand by the King, as a mark of appreciation.<sup>1</sup>

A significant feature of writing and compiling books during the medieval period was the writing of commentaries and explanatory notes on classics that were in vogue. It has been mentioned earlier that the popularity of Tafsīr-i-Baiḍāwī among the ancient Tafsīrs kept on increasing since the beginning of the Moghul rule and it became one of the major text-books in the educational syllabus, a large number of ta'liqāt and another proof of its popularity is the large number of commentaries produced during this period on this Tafsīr. The reign of Akbar is by no means an exception to this rule. But its special importance emerges from the fact that ta'liqāt and glosses were written on this work during this period. The writers of these glosses were: Abu'l Fadi al-Quraishī al-Gazarunī,<sup>2</sup> Sheikh Ḥassan Muḥammad Aḥamdābādī (d.1575),<sup>3</sup> Shams al-Dīn Bijāpūrī (d.1568),<sup>4</sup> Sheikh Wajīh al-Dīn 'Alwā'ī Gujarātī (d. 1589),<sup>5</sup> Sayyid Shibhat Allah Gujarātī (d. 1606),<sup>6</sup> Qāḍī Nūr Allah Shustrī (d.1610),<sup>7</sup> Allah Dād Faiḍī Sirhindī<sup>8</sup> and Muṣliḥ al-Dīn Lārī.<sup>9</sup> Among these glosses the one by Sheikh Wajīh al-Dīn Gujarātī deserves special mention. This writer

<sup>1</sup> Al-Badāyūnī, 2/187; Raḥmān 'Alī, P. 46.

<sup>2</sup> Nuzhat al-Khawāṭir, 4/12-13; Gulzār-i-Abrār, P. 243. The manuscript of this ḥāshiyah is preserved in the Khudā Bakhsh Oriental Public Library, Patna. (Catalogue of Persian Manuscripts, vol.18, Part II, No.1387).

<sup>3</sup> Raḥmān 'Alī, P. 214, Nuzhat al-Khawāṭir, 4/87-88.

<sup>4</sup> Nuzhat al-Khawāṭir, 4/140; Gulzār-i-Abrār, PP. 354-356.

<sup>5</sup> Al-Badāyūnī, 3/43-44; Subḥat al-Marjān, PP. 115-117; Raḥmān 'Alī, PP. 249-250.

<sup>6</sup> Nuzhat al-Khawāṭir, 5/175-177.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid., 5/425-427.

<sup>8</sup> Faiḍī Sirhindī, Akbar Nāmāh (Rotograph No. 163. Library of History Department, 'Alīgarh Muslim University, fol. 186b.).

<sup>9</sup> Nuzhat al-Khawāṭir, 4/354-355.

was most distinguished not only among contemporary scholars of Gujarat but across India. He started his career as a teacher in his early youth in Aḥmadābād and continued to do so till his last days. Another important feature of his services in the field of religious learning was that he wrote commentaries and ḥawāshī on approximately 30 books on different subjects included in the curriculum.<sup>1</sup> This is indeed a clear proof of his vast knowledge and his power of writing. His ḥāshiyah on Tafsīr-i Baiḍāwī is important because it is written in a lucid style and in simple language. Consequently it is of considerable help as a guide to Baiḍāwī and makes it possible to grasp its difficult arguments and theses. Its manuscripts are available in various libraries.<sup>2</sup> Besides this ḥāshiyah Sheikh Wajīh al-Dīn has to his credit another work known as al-Risālat al-Alwīyyah. This brief treatise has been written as a rebuttal of Kashshāf's view on the interpretation of (فأما من ثقلت موازينه).<sup>3</sup> This also is a proof of the author's mastery over the science of Tafsīr. In this context it would not be out of place to refer to Shara-i Jawāhir al-Qur'ān. Jawāhir al-Qur'ān written by Imām Ghazālī treats of the basic teachings of the Qur'ān and its jewels. Its commentator Sheikh Sa'd Allah Banī Isrā'īl was one of the courtiers of Akbar. The middle period of his life was spent in waywardness. Then he repented and devoted himself to prayer and ascetic self-discipline. Towards the end of his life, he developed a keen interest in the works of Imam Ghazālī and his teachings as is borne out by this statement of the historians al-Badāyūnī "He made the study of Ghazālī's

<sup>1</sup> Al-Badāyūnī, 3/43-44; Nuzhat al-Khawāṭir, 4/385-386.

<sup>2</sup> Manuscripts of this ḥāshiyah can be seen in the Āṣafīyyah Library Hyderabad, Sir Sālār Jang Museum, Hyderabad and Maulānā Āzād Library (Ḥabīb Ganj Collection Arabic, 4/3.)

<sup>3</sup> Dr. Muḥammad Sālim Qidwā'ī above-quoted, P. 179.

Iḥyā-al-'Ulūm his daily routine and spent all his time in prayer and rigorous self discipline.<sup>1</sup> *Sharḥi Jawāhir al-Qur'ān* throws ample light on his deep love for the holy Qur'ān besides his respect for his humble attachment to Imām Ghazālī.

At the end it seems necessary to point out that in the field of exegesis of the Qur'ān the compiling and composing activities of the contemporary scholars were not confined to writing Tafsīr or arranging commentaries and glosses only. They made the art of writing Tafsīr itself the subject of their activities and dwelt at length on subjects which are regarded as associated with the science of Tafsīr and without acquiring perfection. In those sciences it was impossible in the view of the scholars of the age to undertake writing of Tafsīr with any reasonable perfection in the beginning of some Tafsīr of this period, one comes across lengthy discussions on the revelation of the Qur'ān, its collection and compilation, the reasons for its descent, nāsikh wa mansūkh verses, arrangement of the suras and the need and importance of the Tafsīr discipline. This material is undeniably useful and important. The fact that deserves to be mentioned is that many books were written during this period exclusively and specially on some of these subjects. At least one such books *al-Munzzalāt* is referred to in many books. As is evident from its title it discusses in depth the reasons as well as the occasion of the descent of the Qur'ānic verses. It aims at pinpointing the event and the circumstances with the aid of ancient works of Tafsīr and Ḥadīth which led to the revelation of different verses and suras of the Qur'ān. It also contains explanation and interpretation of relevant verses from this specified point of view. There are different views about the authorship of this

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<sup>1</sup> *Al-Badāyūnī*, 3/53-54; also *Raḥmān 'Alī*, PP. 71-72; *Nuzhat al-Khawāṭir*, 4/124.

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book. Some modern research scholars attribute it to Sheikh 'Alī Muttaqī Burhānpūrī (d.1567).<sup>1</sup> But it seems doubtful because in the manuscript preserved in the India Office Library.<sup>2</sup> The space reserved for the name of the author has been left blank and the name of Sheikh 'Alī Muttaqī is written a little farther on. Usually Sheikh 'Abd al-Wahāb Muttaqī (d.1592) is mentioned as the successor of Sheikh 'Alī Muttaqī. But no book with the title of Shu'un al-Munazzalāt can be attributed to him.<sup>3</sup> It is quite possible that soon after the Khilāfah of the Sheikh Moght have authored it.<sup>4</sup> Despite the fact that has not been possible to find out the name of its author. It is certain that it was written during the reign of Akbar because Sheikh 'Alī Muttaqī died in the beginning of Akbar's reign obviously his Khalīfah the (author of the book) must have live in this period.

It would not be unreasonable to say, in the light of the details given above, that significant services were rendered, in the domain given above, that significant services were rendered, in the domain of the science of Tafsīr, during the reign of Akbar. Contemporary 'uluma' took part in its promotion by many means such as teaching, compiling and writing Tafsīr. But apart from teaching and writing activities, the presence of a good number of men deeply interested in this science is borne out by the fact that problems of Tafsīr came under frequent discussion in seminars and private meetings of individual scholars and ancient works of Tafsīr were often critically examined and evaluated. One important fact that is

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<sup>1</sup> Dr. Shabbīr Aḥmad Qadīrābādī, quoted above, P. 118.

<sup>2</sup> See Catalogue of Arabic Manuscripts, ed, C.A. Storey, 2/50-60, No. 1152.

<sup>3</sup> Akbār al-Akhyār, PP. 269-278. Raḥmān 'Alī, P. 139. Ḥadā'iq al-Ḥanafīyyah, PP. 392-394.

<sup>4</sup> See: Dr. Muḥammad Sālim Qidwa'ī, P. 312.

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noted in Tafsīr writing during Akbar's reign is that attempts were continuously made to write Tafsīrs on the pattern and model of Tafsīr-i Kabīr of Imām Rāzī. It was probably the coming into vogue of rational thinking which had its impact on this discipline also.



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## Science of the Qur'ān in India during 17<sup>th</sup> Century

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Tr.: Dr. 'Aẓmatullāh<sup>2</sup>

India in the 17<sup>th</sup> century was a famous country, since it was ruled by the prominent Mughal emperors like Jahāngīr, Shāh Jahān and Aurangzeb during that period, when the political and administrative institutions were expanded, the profession of teaching and the trend of authoring books were extensively promoted owing to these emperors' generous guidance and knowledge-loving nature. The sciences and arts remained flourishing through the madrasahs. On the other hand, special study-circles' arrangements made by the scholars and clerics helped in the spread of knowledge. The Tafsīr (interpretation of the Qur'ān) among other religious sciences was also essential part of the syllabus which was followed by madrasahs of that period. As for the studies of Qur'ānic science, the books like Jalālain and Baiḍāwī were among the popular books at that time, although the book *Kashshāf* was studied and taught. The popularity of Baiḍāwī can be understood by the situation prevailed there, that in addition to the availability of many versions of Baiḍāwī with explanations and footnotes, some people were memorizing Baiḍāwī by heart along with the Qur'ān during that period.<sup>3</sup>

The governing period of Jahāngīr (1605-1627) was shorter than other emperors, but this short period cannot be neglected due to cultural and scientific activities. Jahāngīr is known for his lavish and

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<sup>3</sup> Raḥmān 'Alī, Tadhkirah 'Ulamā'-i-Hind, Naval Kishore, Lucknow, 1915. P-213.

luxurious life, and very less people are aware of the fact that he had been fond of education as well.<sup>1</sup> The list of his teachers included the master of sciences and arts Abul Faiḍ Faiḍī, author of the book (سواطح الإلهام), and prominent scholar of Ḥadīth Mīr Kalān, therefore, the scientific taste of the emperor got increased due to the guidance and companionship of these brilliant teachers and due to his relations with other scholars as well. Moreover, Jahāngīr's love for knowledge and educations is also more evident that whenever he went on any tour or mission, the royal library would be accompanied with him. He didn't avail of this only but he would present scientific and religious books to the scholars too. According to his autobiography, *Tuzak-i-Jahāngīr*, the emperor gifted copies of the *Tafsīr* of Ḥusainī, *Kashshāf* and *Rauḍat-ul-Aḥbāb*,<sup>2</sup> signed by him, to some clerics during his journey to Gujarāt in 1618. It shows that the royal library had a large number of books of the Qur'ānic sciences. He paid due attention to the resettlement of the old madrasahs and establishment of new madrasahs also. It reflects Jahāngīr's love to the science and knowledge. No doubt that prominent scholars like Mujaddid Alf Thānī, Sheikh 'Abdul Ḥaqq Dehlwī and Mīr Kalān played important role in the promotion of religious sciences at that period, however the endeavors made by the emperor in this regard cannot be ignored.

The period ruled by Shāh Jahān (1627-1658) is called golden period of the Mughal Empire. The glory of throne and crown, architectural development and cultural and scientific activities are seen as important factors which played important roles to mark this period as golden era. Shāh Jahān was brought up and educated under the supervision of Sheikh Wajīhuddīn

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<sup>1</sup> Mu'tamad Khān, *Iqbāl Nāmah-i-Jahāngīrī*, Naval Kishore, 1286H, V.2. See for details: Sayyid Ṣabāḥuddīn 'Abdurrahmān, *Bazm-i-Taimūriyah*, Ma'ārif Press. A'zamgarh, 1367H. PP. 128-150.

<sup>2</sup> *Tuzak-i-Jahāngīrī*, 'Aligarh, 1864, P-218

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Gujarātī, Sheikh Abul Khair and Qāsim Beg Tabrezī. The emperor knew Turkish language in addition to the Arabic and Persian. Indeed, Shāh Jahān had taste of constructions, so this art was developed very well because of his personal interests. But it doesn't mean that this period had no achievements in the field of knowledge. In fact, this period contributed a lot to the spread of arts and sciences. The emperor himself happened to be generous under the patronage of the renowned scholars, so he used to grant rewards to the people, appreciating their scientific achievements. Once when a good reciter namely Skeikh Abul Ma'ālī performed his art in the royal palace, on the demand of the emperor, he enjoyed so much that he granted a village in the outskirts of the Belgarām to the reciter as financial support.<sup>1</sup> Moreover, the tradition of establishing madrasahs and patronising madrasahs continued in the period of Shāh Jahān. Furthermore, the emperor had fixed daily stipend for the students to encourage them in education. Some of his ministers and princes were also very much fond of the arts and sciences, some of them like Afḍal Khān, minister Sa'dullāh Khān, and Dāniṣhmand Khān (Mullā Shafī') Mīr Bakhshī need specially to be mentioned. It was also promoted through their participating in the scientific discussions and debates on the Qur'ānic points. Once when a debate on (إِيَّاكَ نَعْبُدُ وَإِيَّاكَ نَسْتَعِينُ) was held at that time, Mullā 'Abdul Ḥakīm Seyālkotī and Dāmiṣhmand Khān were among its special participants, while therein Sa'dullāh Khān was appointed as its judge, and at the end of the discussion, his feedback was that it is difficult to decide who is more knowledgeable among them.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Mīr Ghulām 'Alī Āzād Bilgrāmī, Ma'āthir-ul-Kirām, Mufīd-i-Ām Press. Āgra, 1910. PP. 66-67.

<sup>2</sup> Shahnawāz Khān, Ma'āthir-ul-Umarā', Kolkata, 1819. 2/1/30-32. See also: Bazmi Taimūriyah, op. cit. P. 226

Aurangzeb 'Ālamgīr (1658-1707) was more educated among all Mughal emperors. He was fond of religious sciences and very much passionate about study. He used to study the standard books related to Qur'ān, Ḥadīth, and jurisprudence,<sup>1</sup> and most of his teachers were Ḥāfiẓ-i-Qur'ān. Some of his teachers who had special interest in Qur'ānic sciences, they were Muḥammad Ḥāshim Gīlānī, Mullā Shāfi' Yezdānī and Mullā Jīwan. His letters and correspondences have many references of the Qur'ānic verses and Ḥadīth, which prove his deep knowledge and affiliation with the Qur'ān and Ḥadīth. Indeed it was his own interest and attachment to the Qur'ān that he continued writing the Qur'ān despite his official engagements.

Moreover, the royal library was full of religious books as there were found some rare copies of Kashshāf.<sup>2</sup> The emperor himself was not only conceived with arts and sciences but he did his best for the spread of knowledge as well. He had issued directions to make good arrangement for the education in every part of the country, and as per his directions, grants were endowed to the teachers, as the scholarships were granted to the students also according to their talents. As a royal decree issued to the Dewand of Gujarāt, shows that the students studying from Mīzān to Kashshāf, were getting scholarships from the government treasure.<sup>3</sup>

The contemporary scholars were key sources behind the spread of knowledge, irrespective of emperors and rulers'

<sup>1</sup> Saqi Musta'ed Khān, Ma'āthir 'Ālamgīrī, Kolkata, 1871. PP. 531-532, Munshī Muḥammad Kāzīm, 'Ālamgīr Nāmah, Calcutta, 1868, 2/1091

<sup>2</sup> D.N. Marshal, Mughals in India, Bibliographical Survey, Mumbai. 1967. PP. 39-115, Fihrist-i-Makḥṭūṭā-i-'Arabi wa Fārsī, Khudā Bakhsh Oriental Public Library, 2/14-16 (No. 1229), 'Ālamgīr Nāmah, 2/1085-1086, Shāhnawāz Khān, Ma'āthir-ul-Umarā', 3/2/639

<sup>3</sup> Ma'āthir 'Ālamgīrī, P-829, 'Ālamgīr Nāmah, 2/1085-1086, Muḥammad 'Alī Khān, Mir'āt-i-Aḥmadī, Calcutta, 1928, 1/258

interest. These scholars who had special interest in this regard, played important roles for the promotion of Qur'ānic sciences. They had also teaching skills in the science of Tafsīr. The scholars who were spreading knowledge by writing books will be also discussed in this paper. And the scholars who are known for their teaching services and skills and who deserve special mention, they are Shāh 'Īsā Jundullāh Burhānpūrī, 'Abdussalām Lāhorī, 'Abdussalām Dewī, Muḥammad Fāḍil Badakhshī, Khwājah Bihārī Lāhorī, Mullā Muḥammad Jaunpūrī, 'Abdul Ḥakīm Seyālkotī, 'Abdul Qayyūm Burhānpūrī, Mīr Ṭufail Muḥammad and Muḥammad Yā'qūb Lāhorī.

Shāh 'Īsā Jundullāh (d. 1622) was originally from Sindh, and belonged to the chain of Shaṭṭārī mystics. He settled down in Burhānpūr in the period of Akbar, wherein he became famous for his intimate affection with this region. He completed his studies in religious sciences under the guidance of his uncle Sheikh Ṭāhir Muḥaddith. He was famous for teaching-skill. Apart from his teaching profession, his special interest in Qur'ānic sciences is evident from the fact that he authored three books on this topic,<sup>1</sup> that will be mentioned later on. 'Abdussalām Lāhorī (d. 1627) was student of Mīr Fatḥullāh Shīrāzī. The Qur'ānic sciences and Fiqh were special fields of his interests. Hence he dedicated around 50 years to render teaching service in this field.<sup>2</sup> Muftī 'Abdussalām Dewī is the best among the students who benefited from him. He became famous thanks to his teaching services and skills. In addition to

<sup>1</sup> Gauthī Shaṭṭārī, Gulzār Abrār, (Urdu Translation), Islāmī Book Foundation, Lāhore, 1395h. PP. 509-515, Tadhkirah Ulamā'-i-Hind, P. 153, Sayyid 'Abdul Ḥayy, Nuzhat-ul-Khawāṭir, Dā'irah al-Ma'ārif, Hyderābād, 1954, 5/295-296, I'jāz-ul-Ḥaqq Qudusī, Tadhkirah Sūfiyā'-i-Sind, Urdu Academy, Sind, 1959, PP. 156-164

<sup>2</sup> Muḥammad Ṣālih Kambo, Lāhorī, 'Amal Ṣālih, Kolkata, 1939, 3/390, See also: Ma'āthir-ul-Kirām, P. 226, Tadhkirah 'Ulamā'-i-Hind, P. 120, Faqīr Muḥammad Jhelmī, al-Ḥadā'iq al-Ḥanfīyyah, Naval Kishore, Lucknow, 1906, P. 406, Nuzhat-ul-Khawāṭir, 5/303

his teaching services, his talents in the field of Qur'ānic sciences came into light by his comments written on the margin of Baiḍāwī.<sup>1</sup> During the period of Shāh Jahān, another scholar Muḥammad Fāḍil Badakhshī was considered among the experts in the field of Qur'ānic sciences. He was very capable on solving complicated words, phrases and difficult contents. He had been on the post of Military Judge since the time of Jahāngīr and adopted teaching profession during last days of his life keeping himself busy till death.<sup>2</sup> Khwājah Bihārī Lāhorī (d. 1650) had special interest in the Qur'ānic sciences and Ḥadīth among the students of Muḥammad Fāḍil.<sup>3</sup>

Shīrāz-i-Hind, Mullā Muḥammad Jaunpūrī (1652) occupies distinguished place among the scholars of Jaunpūr. After having benefited educationally from Muḥammad Afḍal Jaunpūrī, his main profession was teaching and authoring books. He is regarded as an expert of Islamic theology and wisdom, as he is famous as author of *Shamh-ul-Bāzighah*, but he had good command over the explanation of Qur'ānic verses as well.<sup>4</sup> Mullā 'Abdul Ḥakīm Siyālkotī (d. 1656) was a very famous scholar in the field of Qur'ānic sciences, teaching services and explanation of the text-books during the period of Shāh Jahān thanks to his scholarly abilities, Mujaddid Alf Thānī used to call him with the title of *Sun of Punjāb*. According to the contemporary historians' comments, he was

<sup>1</sup> Muḥammad Ṣālih Kambo, Lāhorī, 'Amal Ṣālih, Kolkata, 1939, 3/390, Ma'āthir-ul-Kirām, PP. 235-236, Tadhkirah 'Ulamā'-i-Hind, P. 120, Nuzhat-ul-Khawāṭir, 5/222-223

<sup>2</sup> 'Amal Ṣāleḥ, Kolkata, 1939, 3/390, 'Abdul Ḥamīd Lāhorī, Bādshāh Nāmāh, Calcutta, 1867, 1/2/340, Nuzhat-ul-Khawāṭir, 5/284, Tadhkirah 'Ulamā'-i-Hind, P. 58, al-Ḥadā'iq al-Ḥanfīyyah, P. 412

<sup>3</sup> 'Amal Ṣāleḥ, 30/391, See also: Ghulām 'Alī Āzād Bilgīrāmī, Subḥat-ul-Marjān, 'Alīgarh, 1976, PP. 142-143, Tadhkirah 'Ulamā'-i-Hind, P. 221

<sup>4</sup> 'Amal Ṣālih, 3/391, Tadhkirah 'Ulamā'-i-Hind, P-221, al-Ḥadā'iq al-Ḥanfīyyah, P. 413, Nuzhat-ul-Khawāṭir, 5/397-399

grossly engaged in teaching service for around 60 years.<sup>1</sup> Details of his publications on Qur'ānic sciences would be mentioned later. 'Abdul Qayyūm Burhānpūrī (d. 1665) one of Aurnagzeb's teachers, was famous because of his skills in the religious sciences specially Qur'ānic sciences and jurisprudence, so the emperor had a good appreciation for him and used to call him with respect (اخوند –Mullā). He sought his opinions in many issues.<sup>2</sup> Sayyid Muḥammad Ja'far Badr 'Ālam Gujarātī (1675), contemporary of Aurangzeb, also had good command over the Qur'ānic sciences and Ḥadīth. His expertise in the field of interpretations of the Qur'ān was known in teaching and writings the both, which made him distinguished among his contemporaries.<sup>3</sup> During the era of 'Ālamgīr, another scholar 'Ālam Muḥammad Ya'qūb Bannānī Lāhorī (1686) also had profound knowledge and interest in the fields of Qur'ānic sciences, Ḥadīth and jurisprudence, and he had been on official duties, after that he engaged in teaching of religious sciences. His talents of the Qur'ānic sciences came into light when he wrote books and treatises.<sup>4</sup>

This is a brief description of those scholars who had chief interest in the Qur'ānic sciences, and became famous in teaching this subject, during the periods of Jahāngīr, Shāh Jahān and Aurangzeb. Given to availability of a large number of madrasahs and expansion of study circles at that time, it is not reasonable to say that during this long period of more than one century, the mission of commentary teaching was done by only these scholars. In fact these notes are on the scholars whose references are available in common sources. Otherwise, it's

<sup>1</sup> 'Amal Ṣālih, 3/383, Bādshāh Nāmāh, op. cit. PP. 340-341, Subḥat-ul-Marjān, PP. 170-172, Tadhkirah 'Ulamā'-i-Hind, PP. 110-111, Nuzhat-ul-Khawāṭir, 5/210-211, al-Ḥadā'iq al-Ḥanfiyyah, PP. 414-415

<sup>2</sup> Ma'āthir-ul-Umarā', 1/1/225-227

<sup>3</sup> Tadhkirah 'Ulamā'-i-Hind, P-183., al-Ḥadā'iq al-Ḥanfiyyah, P-142.

<sup>4</sup> 'Amal Ṣālih, 3/392, Nuzhat-ul-Khawāṭir, 5/439-440.

evident that the number of the scholars of Tafsīr, engaged in teaching, might be more than these names. Apart from this, there was another class of the scholars who were engaged in the spread and promotion of the exegesis of the Qur'ān. They made writing and authoring works as their hobbies. Some scholars of this class had written books on the exegesis of the Qur'ān, and some of them had written explanations and long marginal notes, whereas there were some other scholars who did their best on the different aspects of Qur'ānic exegesis. The followings shed lights on that.

Tafsīr-i-Murtaḍawī stands first in terms of sequence of the period, among the books written on the Qur'ānic exegesis during the 17<sup>th</sup> century. It was completed in 1607, by the order of Sayyid Farīd Bukhārī, known as Nawwāb Murtaḍā Khān, who was prominent prince in the period of Jahāngīr. His superior quality was that he was lover of knowledge and great promoter of education. He eagerly got engaged, in the spread of knowledge. The above mentioned book is sense of his scientific interest, since Sheikh Zain-ul-Ābidīn Shīrāzī wrote this book by his order.<sup>1</sup> Second famous book of the exegesis of the Qur'ān during the period of Jahāngīr, is Tafsīr Nizāmī which is in Persian. Sheikh Nizāmuddīn Thānesarī (1637) authored it. The author had good expertise over different sciences, as contrary to general reporter Muḥammad Akram, author of Sawāṭī-'ul-Anwār, named his book as Riyāḍ-ul-Quds.<sup>2</sup> This book has sufi point of views in many places.<sup>3</sup> The

<sup>1</sup> Nuzhat-ul-Khawāṭir, 5/401-403, See also: Ma'āthir-ul-Umarā', 2/2/632-641, Sheikh Muḥammad Ikrām, Rūd-i-Kauthar, Tāj Office, Karāchī, PP. 116-125

<sup>2</sup> Stewari, Persian Literature, 1/18, List of Persian Manuscripts, India office, Oxford (Edt.: Ethe), 1/337 (654)

<sup>3</sup> Sheikh 'Abdul Haqq Muḥaddith Dehlawī, Akhbār-ul-Akhyār, Maṭba' Muḥammadī, 1282H, P. 142, Tadhkirah 'Ulamā'-i-Hind, P-142, al-Ḥadā'iq al-Ḥanfiyyah, PP. 401-402, Nuzhat-ul-Khawāṭir, 5/418-419, Stewari, Persian Literature, London, 1970, 17/18, Muḥammad Miyān, 'Ulamā'-i-Hind kā Shāndār Mādī, Dillī Printing Press, Delhi, PP. 451-454



third important book of the Qur'ānic exegesis during the period of Jahāngīr, is (أنوار الأسرار في حقائق القرآن). This is in Arabic language and consists of three heavy volumes. Its author is Shāh 'Isā Jundullāh Burhānpūrī. His details have been mentioned above.<sup>1</sup> Some other writers have attributed another book to the period of Jahāngīr and Sheikh Ni'matullāh Fīrozpūrī (1662) is known as its author.<sup>2</sup> This was mentioned as the translation of the Qur'ān but was named by Tafsīr-i-Jahāngīrī. The Persian translation of the book (عرائس البيان) authored by Sheikh Abū Muḥammad Rozbhān bin Abū al-Anṣārī, with sufi point of view, also belongs to that period. This was translated by a student of Mujaddid Alf Thānī, Sheikh Badruddīn Sarhindī. He spent around 17 years in the company of Mujaddid Alf Thānī, and studied Baiḍāwī and other books from him. He had special interest in sufism, and chosen this book for Persian translation which was very popular in the circles of Sufis, due to its exegesis based on Sufism.<sup>3</sup>

The book Tafsīr-i-Shāh deserves to be mentioned among the books of the Qur'ānic exegesis, which were written during the period of Shāh Jahān. This book was authored in Persian language, by Shāh Muḥammad bin 'Abd Muḥammad (1663) and was completed in 1647. The author was famous by the title of *Lisānullāh*. He came to India from his home-town Badakhshān in 1614, and stayed for some time in Lāhore, after that he got settled in Kaṣhmīr. He was student of Shāh Muḥammad Sūfī Miyān Mīr who followed the way of Oneness of Allah. Dārā Shikoh and Jahān Ārā both had good faith in

<sup>1</sup> Gulzār-i-Abrār, op. cit. P. 515, Nuzhat-ul-Khawāṭir, 5/295-296, Tadhkirah Sūfiyā'-i-Sind, PP. 156-164

<sup>2</sup> Nuzhat-ul-Khawāṭir, 5/423-424, Sayyid 'Abdul Ḥayy, al-Thaqāfah al-Islāmīyah fī al-Hind, Demuscus, 1958, P. 165. Keeping in view the year of demise of the author, it is not correct to relate it to the period of Jahāngīr.

<sup>3</sup> Nuzhat-ul-Khawāṭir, 5/90

him.<sup>1</sup> The author of Shāh Tafsīr turned away from the approach adopted by general commentators in the explanation and interpretation of the Qur'ānic verses, so he interpreted specially sufi point of views.<sup>2</sup> It seems by description of the story that this book is partially in Arabic and partially in Persian,<sup>3</sup> but as per the study made by Asiatic Society of Bengāl and Khudā Bakhsh Library, it is fully in Persian,<sup>4</sup> while Dr. Muḥammad Sālim Qidwa'ī says that it is fully in Arabic.<sup>5</sup> The second book of Tafsīr written during the period of Shāh Jahān is also in Persian. It was authored by 'Alī Shīrāzī who was an Indian scholar and migrated to Shīrāz in the last days of his life, where he died in 1674.<sup>6</sup> This book interprets ideas and beliefs of Shī'as. Its reference was not found in any list of manuscripts or publications.

The period of 'Ālamgīr is very famous for the publication and spreading of religious arts and sciences. Irrespective of other sciences, the services of this period are very valuable and apparent. This can be estimated by Tafsīr books written in Arabic and Persian during that period. The first book of Tafsīr written in the period of 'Ālamgīr, might be named either (زبدة التفاسیر) or (تفسیر اورنگ زیبی). This is an Arabic Tafsīr, which was completed in 1664, by Sheikh Mu'īnuddīn bin Sirājuddīn Khāwand Shāh (1674). He was the student of 'Abdul Ḥaqq

<sup>1</sup> Ibid, 5/90

<sup>2</sup> See for detail: 'Ulamā'-i-Hind kā Shāndār Mādī. PP. 476-479.

<sup>3</sup> Stewari, Persian Literature. 10-19.

<sup>4</sup> See: List of Persian Manuscript. Asiatic Society of Bengāl. (compiled by Iono) PP. 470-471 and Fihrist Makhtūṭāt-i-'Arabī wa Fārsī, Khudā Bakhsh Oriental Public Library, 30/112-113 (NO. 326)

<sup>5</sup> Dr. Muḥammad Aslam Qidwa'ī, Hindurtānī Mufassirīn aur unkī 'Arabī Tafsīren. Maktabah Jāmia, New Delhi, 1972, PP. 114-115.

<sup>6</sup> See Dā'irat-ul-Ma'ārif, (Urdu Encyclopedia), Dānishgāh Punjāb, Lāhore, 1959, V-4, (Subject. Tafsīr)

Muḥaddith Dehlawī and a prominent Ḥanafī Faqīh of Kaṣhmīr. Apart from the book (زبدة التفاسير), he has written a book on exegesis of the Qurʾān in Persian, which is known as شرح القرآن. His Arabic Tafsīr was written in a comprehensive way. Its one manuscript is available in Asiatic Society of Bengāl.<sup>1</sup>

The second remarkable book of this period is Tafsīr Amīnī, which was compiled by his interest. This is in Persian, and was authored by Muḥammad Amīn Ṣiddīq ʿAlawī. A copy of this book is available in Āṣafīyyah Library, Ḥyderabad.<sup>2</sup> The book (زيب التفاسير) occupies a special importance among the Tafsīr books written in Persian, during the time of ʿĀlamgīr. This was compiled by Ṣafīʾ bin Walī Kaṣhmīrī, on the demand of the princess Zaibunnisāʾ. That is why it was named by Zaibuttafāsīr<sup>3</sup>. زيب التفاسير. It has many volumes, even it is guessed that this Tafsīr has been written in 10 volumes. As its fifth volume was written in 1670 and its last volume was written in 1677, as it was indicated in author's other books.<sup>4</sup> According to the Nuzhat-ul-Khawāṭir and Maʾāthir ʿĀlamgīrī, the book ( زيب التفاسير) is Persian translation of Tafsīr-i-Kabīr written by Imām Rāzī,<sup>5</sup> but the statement of its author shows that this is an

<sup>1</sup> See D.N. Marshal, Op. cit., P-349, see for detail: Dr. Muḥammad Sālim Qidwaʾī, op. cit., PP. 77-81, Fihrist Makḥṭūṭāt-i-ʿArabī, Asiatic Society (Edt.: Hidāyat Ḥussain), Calcutta, 1939, P. 40 (No. 106)

<sup>2</sup> Stewari, op. cit., 1/19. List of Arabic and Persian Manuscript. Āṣafīyyah Librery, Ḥyderabad. 1900,562, 165

<sup>3</sup> Maʾāthir ʿĀlamgīrī, P-539. See for the life and Works of the commentator: Ṣhāh Muʾīnuddīn Nadwī, Anīs-ul-Ḥujjāj, Maʾārif, Aʿzamgarh, 94/1, 5-24 (Jan. 1964)

<sup>4</sup> Ṣafī bin Walī Qazwainī, Anīs-ul-Ḥajj, Copy 93, Manuscript, Dār-ul-Muṣannifin, Aʿzamgarh and Research Library, Department of History, ʿAligarh Muslim University, ʿAligarh, Page: 01

<sup>5</sup> Maʾāthir ʿĀlamgīrī, P-539. Nuzhat-ul-Khawāṭir, 6/93.

independent Tafsīr.<sup>1</sup> Its sources include Tafsīr-i-Niṣhāpūrī, Tafsīr-i-Kabīr, Kashshāf and Baḥr-i-Amwāj. The manuscript of its fifth volume is available in British Museum and Bodleian Library in Oxford, but the first one is old version, written by the author himself.<sup>2</sup> There was another book named (زبدة التفاسير), of that period. It was written in Arabic by Sheikh-ul-Islām bin Qāḍī ‘Abdul Wahhāb (1697). Its author was a famous and prominent scholar during the period of ‘Ālamgīr, who was appointed as Qāḍī (Judge) after his father’s demise.<sup>3</sup> This book is actually the abstract of old Tafsīr that was prepared for the common benefits. Its handwritten copy can be seen in Raḍā Library at Rampur. Tafsīr Shāhiyah is one of the commentaries written in the field of Tafsīr during the period of Aurangzeb, by Gujarātī scholar ‘Ālam Sayyid ‘Ālam Maḥbūb (1700). It has three volumes. Its many interpretations are narrated by Ahl-i-Bait. In addition to this Persian Tafsīr, another book written in Arabic (تفسير القرآن) which has been written on the pattern of the commentary Jalālain,<sup>4</sup> that is attributed to Sayyid ‘Ālam Maḥbūb. During the period of ‘Ālamgīr, another Persian Tafsīr is known in the name of (نعمت عظمى). Its author is Mirzā Nūruddīn alias Ni’mat Khān. This Tafsīr is named after Aurangzeb, which was completed in 1702. A handwritten copy of this commentary is available in Asiatic Society of Bengāl.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Anīs al-Ḥajj, Op. cit. Page: 01

<sup>2</sup> List of Persian manuscript, British Museum (compiled by Reo) 3/980 Ar. No.1686, Fihrist Makḥṭūṭāt-i-Fārsī, Turkī wa Paṣhtū, Bodleian Library (Edit.: Ethe), P. 1044 (No. 1810)

<sup>3</sup> See for the life of the author: Ma’āthir ‘Ālamgīrī, PP. 148-239, Nuzhat-ul-Khawāṭir, 6/111-112

<sup>4</sup> Tadhkirah ‘Ulamā’-i-Hind, P-214-215, Nuzhat-ul-Khawāṭir, 6/257, Sayyid Abū Ḥafar Nadwī, Gujarāt kī Tamaddunī Tārīkh, Ma’ārif Press, 1962, P. 131

<sup>5</sup> List of Persian manuscript, Curzon collections, Kolkata, 1926, P-246, see also: Stewari, Persian Literature, 1/19-20, Dā’irah Ma’ārif Islāmīyah, 4/523

The Arabic and Persian commentaries of the Qur'ān written during the governing period of Aurangzeb included general Tafsīr books, even some of them were applied special approach. The book, Tafsīrāt Aḥmadiyyah written by Mullā Jīvan (d. 1717) is also from this category. Mullā Jīvan was a great scholar and teacher of 'Ālamgīr. He had unique attachment with the Islamic jurisprudence and this can be clearly seen in his commentary. While clarifying and explaining the Qur'ānic verses, he focused specially on Shari'ah rulings. He has selected 450 verses to take juristic matters. In inference of juristic matters from the Qur'ān, he had taken care of chronological order. Additionally, he has mentioned his preferences while explaining the differences of jurists in many matters. He was a great supporter of Ḥanafite thoughts, therefore, this can be sensed in his exegesis. Tafsīr al-Baiḍāwī, al-Tafsīr al-Kabīr, Madārik al-Tanzīl, al-Itqān fī 'Ulūm al-Qur'ān, Hidāyah, Sharḥ-ul-Wiqāyah and Fatāwā Khāniyah,<sup>1</sup> were used for references in this work. This kind of another incomplete Arabic commentary in which special focus was put on the explanation of juristic matters, that is Anwār-ul-Furqān wa Azhār-ul-Qur'ān<sup>2</sup> written by Sheikh Ghulām Naqshbandī Lakḥnawī (d. 1714), in which the commentary of the chapters al-Baqarah and al-An'ām has been done in juristic way. This tafsīr is also known as (تفسير ربع القرآن). The Arabic tafsīr name (ثواقب التنزيل) authored by 'Alī Aṣghar Qannaujī (d. 1728) can also be included in the category of incomplete Qur'ānic commentaries of that period. The writer was among the famous scholars of Qannauj and apart from the teaching duties, he also showed great interest in writing and composing books. This

<sup>1</sup> Subḥat-ul-Marjān, PP. 204-205, Ma'āthir-ul-Kirām, PP. 216-217, Tadhkirah 'Ulamā'-i-Hind, P. 45, al-Ḥadā'iq al-Ḥanfīyyah, 6/19-21

<sup>2</sup> Ma'āthir-ul-Kirām, PP. 213-216, Tadhkirah 'Ulamā'-i-Hind, P. 154, al-Ḥadā'iq al-Ḥanfīyyah, P. 435, Nuzhat-ul-Khawāṭir, 6/212-214

tafsīr has been written on the pattern of famous tafsīr of the Qur'ān namely Jalālīn by dividing the Qur'ān in seven parts. The first covers al-Ḥamd and the second one consists of the commentary of al-Baqarah and Āli-Imrān and with that, this tafsīr comes to an end. The writer has highlighted the importance of the book in the beginning of this tafsīr while commenting on Bismillāh, he has also made a detailed discussion whether it is a part of al-Fātiḥah or not. At the end of first part, he also discussed in detail the conditions of revelation of the Qur'ān and issues of its compilation. One handwritten copy of this tafsīr is available in Raḍā Library, Rāmpūr.<sup>1</sup>

In addition to the complete and incomplete commentaries of the Qur'ān, the tradition of commenting on a particular chapter or verse remained present in that era. Some notable commentaries of this sort are the commentary of the chapter al-Ikh̄lāṣ by Amīr Abul Ma'ālī (d. 1636), commentary of the chapter al-Jāthiyah by Muḥammad Ḥāshim Gīlānī (d. 1650), commentary of the chapter Yūsuf by Muḥammad Ibn Sa'īd Kalpawī (d. 1660), commentary of the chapter al-Baqarah by Sheikh Nūruddīn Aḥmadābādī (d. 1743), commentary of the verse of al-Nūr by Sheikh 'Abdul Ḥaqq Muḥaddith Dehlawī (d. 1642), commentary of some verses by 'Alī bin Sayyid Nūr (an official in the period of 'Ālamgīr) and commentary of the verses of al-Aḥkām by Qāḍī Yazdī (d. 1714).

As far as the comments and footnotes on old books of the Qur'ānic exegesis are concerned, the commentary of Baiḍāwī got the maximum popularity in this category. This was the essential part of curriculum for the Qur'ānic exegesis in that era and the same was also known for difficult text and complicated topics. Therefore, the scholars especially chose this book for

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<sup>1</sup> Tadhkirah 'Ulamā'-i-Hind, PP. 141-142, al-Ḥadā'iq al-Ḥanfīyyah, P. 438, Nuzhat-ul-Khawāṭir, 6/184, Dr. Sālim Qidwā'ī, PP. 85-88

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footnotes and commentaries. Among the notable scholars who wrote the footnotes and comments on the commentary of Baiḍāwī in that era are Mullā ‘Abd al-Salām Lāhorī, Muftī ‘Abd al-Salām Dewī, Sheikh ‘Abdul Ḥaqq Muḥaddith Dehlawī, Muḥammad Ḥāshim Gīlānī, Mīr Ṭayyib Belgrāmī, Sayyid ‘Abdullāh Dehlawī, Mullā ‘Abd al-Ḥakīm Siyālkotī, Mullā Muḥammad Ya’qūb Lāhorī, Nūruddīn Muḥammad Ṣāliḥ Gujarātī and Sayyid Jārullāh Ilāhābādī. Of all these footnotes, the footnote of ‘Abd al-Ḥakīm Siyālkotī is considered the most important. The writer had wide experience in the teaching and he was known for best and influential explanation of the existing curriculum books. This quality of the writer is well reflected in the footnotes of the commentary of Baiḍāwī. Keeping the main aim of footnote-writing in mind, a very simple and clear language has been used in this book and the difficult texts have been explained in short but in a clear way. Moreover, the writer has explored the chain of narratives used by Baiḍāwī and has also put light on kinds of narratives.<sup>1</sup>

As per the previous eras, various aspects of the Qur’ānic science like reading and writing, Nāsikh and Mansūkh, vowel signs and scripts, analyzing the verses and explaining the issues of Islamic jurisprudence, were taken up as topics in writings of the scholars and such issues were highlighted which provide greatest signs of evolution of the exegesis. The writings like *Dastūr al-Mufasssīrīn “Fatḥ Muḥammadī”*, *Hādiyāh Quṭb Shāhī*, *Nujūm al-Furqān* and *Majma’ al-Fawā’id* can be included in this category. *Dastūr al-Mufasssīrīn* has been written by ‘Imāduddīn Muḥammad ‘Ārif (d. 1612) who was generally known as ‘Abd al-Nabī Akbarābādī. This book is dedicated to ‘Abdur Raḥīm Khān-i-khānān who happens to be a Mughal Amīr and a patron of knowledge. The writer was a master of different subjects and disciplines and he authored

<sup>1</sup> ‘Amal Ṣāliḥ, 3/383-384, *Ma’āthir-ul-Kirām*, P. 205, *Tadhkirah ‘Ulamā’-i-Hind*, P. 110, *Nuzhat-ul-Khawāṭir*, 56/261-262

books on various subjects, most of which revolved around the topics of Ḥadīth and Sufism.<sup>1</sup> The above mentioned book of the author is very important in the discipline of the Qur'ānic science. In addition to highlighting the importance and greatness and its principles, the author has dedicated himself to discuss the issue of Nāsikh and Mansūkh and he has strongly recommended in the beginning of the book that a scholar of the Qur'ānic science must be acquainted with the knowledge of Nāsikh and Mansūkh. While supporting his views in course of the detailed discussion on Nāsikh and Mansūkh, he has presented the texts of Ḥadīth and the statements of the previous scholars. Not only various kinds of Nāsikh have been identified in this book but the same have also been clearly explained by examples. Apart from that, the differences between the scholars in the issue of Nāsikh and Mansūkh verses have also found substantial place in this book. While making the detailed discussion on Mansūkh verses, the author has taken care of the serial number of the chapters and in the course of each and every Mansūkh verse; he has mentioned the reason behind its cancellation, covering all other related issues. This book is of the utmost importance in this way that it takes up one important aspect of discipline of the Qur'ānic exegesis in a very profound and short style and it hardly appears in other books, dealing with this aspect. Moreover, the writer has opted a scholarly style and influential mode of establishing the facts from the examples. One rare handwritten copy of this book is available in Maulānā Āzād Library, 'Alīgarh Muslim University. 'Alīgarh.<sup>2</sup>

The book (فتح محمدي) is authored by a famous sufi in Sindh, Sheikh 'Īsā bin Qāsim, which talks about the science of

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<sup>1</sup> See for the life of the author: Tadhkirah 'Ulamā'-i-Hind, PP. 134-135, Nuzhat-ul-Khawāṭir, 5/261-262

<sup>2</sup> 'Abdul Ḥayy Collection, Arabic, 18/41, See for detailed study of this book: Dr. Sālim Qidwa'ī, PP. 217-225

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Qur'ānic exegesis and its relevant issues. Sheikh 'Īsá has written this book for his son Faṭḥ Muḥammad, that is why this was named by Faṭḥ-i-Muḥammadi.<sup>1</sup> And the book (هادية قطب) (شاهي) is an index of the Qur'ānic words,<sup>2</sup> which was prepared by Muḥammad 'Abdullāh Karbalā'ī in 1636, and was named after the ruler of Deccan 'Abdullāh Quṭb Shāh. It is in two volumes, and its manuscripts are available in British Museum, Khudā Bakhsh Library, Patna and Āṣafīyyah Library, Lucknow. It is interesting that its some versions are in Arabic and some are in Persian as well. Dr. Sālim Qidwā'ī says that this collection was written originally in Arabic, and then it was translated into Persian.<sup>3</sup> The book (نجوم الفرقان) compiled by Muṣṭafá bin Muḥammad Sa'īd, is also a book of its own kind, which was named after Aurangzeb, and completed in 1692. This book aims to ease the explanation of the Qur'ānic verses. Another book named (امارات الكلم) on the topic of explanation of the Qur'ānic verses, is also attributed to this author, but it's fact that this book is not different from the first book, so it is guessed that one book is famous by two names.<sup>4</sup> The book (مجمع الفوائد) is a brief book related to the Qur'ānic topics. It sheds light on the linguistic, vowels, full-stops and reading art of (قرأت سبعة). This book was written by Muḥammad Qulī bin Bashad Qulī in the period of 'Ālamgīr. Most of its discussions

<sup>1</sup> Gulzār Abrār, P-515-516. Nuzhat-ul-Khawāṭir, 5/443-444, Tadhkirah Sūfiyā'-i-Sind, PP. 156-164

<sup>2</sup> Its name has been written 'Hadiyah Quṭb Shāhī in some manuscripts, see: British Museum, List of Persian Manuscript, 1/113,

<sup>3</sup> Hindustānī Mufasssīrīn aur unkī 'Arabī Tafsīren, P-246.

<sup>4</sup> Ma'āthir-ul-Umarā', 3/2/638-639, Nuzhat-ul-Khawāṭir, 6/372-373, This book has been registered with the title of 'Alāmāt Nujūm-ul-Furqān' in Fihrist-i-Makhṭūṭāt-i-'Arabī wa Fārsī, Khudā Bakhsh Oriental Public Library, 12/27-28 (No. 1172-1173) while its title has been written 'Nujūm-ul-Furqān' in Fihrist-i- Makhṭūṭāt-i-Fārsī, Asiatic Soceity, Bengāl, No. 474, 977

are made in Persian. Although scholars have different views, its one handwritten copy is available in Maulānā Āzād Library.<sup>1</sup>

The above mentioned details show that the concerned period maintained the old tradition of interest and attachment with the Qur'ānic sciences and the approach of scholars and clerics in order to understand the Qur'ān, was also continued, as this period was not free from the deliberations and discussions on the points of the Qur'ānic sciences, whereas the contemporary scholars participated fully in the activities of the writings and publications related to the Qur'ānic sciences. Moreover, the above mentioned discussions make it clear that the Persian language was adopted mostly to comment on the Qur'ān and related topics during this period, although the Arabic language<sup>2</sup> was preferred in order to write and author some books in the field of the Qur'ānic sciences before that period especially in the era of Akbar. Furthermore, the above mentioned discretions show the aspect of scientific history of medieval India, that governing period of Aurangzeb was much more prominent in terms of promotion and spreading of the Qur'ānic sciences, as the same rejects a concept that the abilities used by contemporary scholars during medieval India in the field of Qur'ānic science, were limited only in the writing of explanations and long marginal notes on the old books of the Tafsīr, and no admirable and remarkable work on the exegesis of the Qur'ān was done during this long period except one or two books of the Tafsīr.

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<sup>1</sup> Subhān Allāh Collection, 111, 2/297

<sup>2</sup> See Prof. Zafarul Islām, 'Ahd-i-Akbarī kī Tafsīrī Khidmāt, 'Ulūm-ul-Qur'ān, 1/3, (July, December, 1986, P-112-129)

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## Persian Commentaries of the Qur'ān during the Medieval Period

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Tr.: Dr. Aurang Zeb A'zmi<sup>2</sup>

Explanation of the meanings of the Qur'ān which is called, in term, as 'علم التفسير' (Science of Exegesis) has priority over all Islamic sciences and arts. This is why it is called as the best and most sacred science. The Muslims kept themselves busy in this science since early period of Islamic history. There was a group of the companions of the Prophet (MABPWT) who were busy in this field since early period of Islam. In the beginning this science was confined to explanation of the Qur'ān orally but at the start of the 2<sup>nd</sup> century of Hijrah these narrations began to be compiled in a book shape and this was called as the beginning point of compilation in this field. In the first phase of this science the commentators adopted the way of tafsīr-i-ma'thūr but in the later period this science got expanded and thus several ways of the commentary came into existence, and apart from explaining the meanings of the Qur'ān they discussed its language, literary beauty, history, geography, fiqh, kalām and other topics. And the strongest proof behind this science's being the most sacred science is that it bears a great importance in all times in all periods of Islamic history. The Muslim rule in India which is called as the Medieval Period cannot be separated from Islamic history. Apart from the political outlines this period after the decline of Baghdād occupied an important place among the Muslims as regards

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culture and civilization and spread of different sciences. After the destruction of the Monghuls in the Central Asia the India of Delhi sultanate proved to be the best shelter for the scholars and artists. Their love for knowledge and sacrifice for it made India a hub of knowledge for the scholars, poets and literary men. And it is obvious that the Sultanate paid much heed to the fiqh and its law science for its administrative purposes and also for the interest of the scholars coming from the Central Asia most of whom were jurists.<sup>1</sup> But it does not mean that they paid no heed to other religious sciences and no books or pamphlets were written or compiled in this field. It is crystal clear from the study of the intellectual history of the Medieval India that there were some scholars who had interest in every science. There were a large number of scholars among the jurists who had equal interest in other sciences as they had in the science of jurisprudence, and it is a fact that the scholars of that period cannot be divided into faculties like modern education system has because scholars of that period were able to write in different fields then how was it assumed that they did not pen down on the Qur'ān while they wrote on the Ḥadīth, Islamic jurisprudence, history, biography, logic, philosophy, grammar, prose and poetry? But the fact of the matter is that they showed their interest in this field too and compiled books on its different branches. The popularity of writing commentary in that period is also known through the keen interest of some Sultans and princes in this field as some commentaries were written on their order while some others (commentaries) were named after them. Due to their interest in exegesis and its science there appeared a considerable number of commentaries which include long foot-notes on the

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<sup>1</sup> See for more details on this topic my article entitled 'A Critical Appreciation of Literature of Islamic jurisprudence in the Sultanate Period', *Burhān* (Delhi), Feb-March, 1985

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commentaries and large and detailed commentaries of the Qur'ān. Moreover, this exegesis literature contains separate books which explain selected verses or their some aspects such as some pamphlets discuss the coherence of the verses while some others deal with the problems of Islamic jurisprudence and literary and rhetorical aspects.<sup>1</sup> Apart from diversity in the styles and contents the exegesis literature of this period has another characteristic—that these commentaries were carried out in Arabic and Persian the both.<sup>2</sup> Some academic circles claim about this period that the scholars ignored the common academic atmosphere and the language of the government and adopted Arabic to compile books on their religious topics and left Persian to express their ideas and thoughts while writing in Persian was the need of time. Unlike this we find a considerable number of commentaries in Persian among the exegesis literature of that period which refute this baseless thought. Among these commentaries of the Medieval India there are some commentaries which have distinctive features that deserve to be studied separately in detail. But it seems better before this discussion that we should introduce those Persian commentaries compiled in the Medieval India. They deserve to be

<sup>1</sup> For example, see for coherence in the Qur'ān 'Tabṣīrur Raḥmān wa Taisīrur Raḥmān of Maḥdūm 'Alī Mahā'imī and 'Tafsīr-i-Muḥammadī' of Muḥammad bin Aḥmad Miyānjī, for Sharī'ah and Islamic jurisprudence 'Tafsīrāt-i-Aḥmadīyyah' of Mullā Jīwan Amethawī and 'Tafsīr-i-Mazāhirī' of Qāḍī Thanā'ullāh Pānīpatī, for philosophical issues 'Baḥrul Ma'ānī' of Muḥammad bin Aḥmad Khwājī, for Sufi thoughts 'Majma'ul Baḥrain' of Sheikh Ṭāhir bin Yūsuf Sindī and 'Tafsīr-i-Nizāmī' of Sheikh Nizāmuddīn Thānesarī, for lingual and literary beauties 'Baḥr-i-Mawwāj' of Qāḍī Shihābuddīn Daulatābādī for undotted exegesis 'Sawāṭī'ul Ilhām' of Abul Faiḍ faiḍī and for utmost detailed explanation 'Tafsīr Tātārkhānī' and 'Zaibut Tafāsīr' of Ṣafī bin Walī Qizwainī Kaṣhmīrī (in several volumes).

<sup>2</sup> See for detailed analysis of the development of exegesis in Arabic 'Hindustānī Mufasssīrīn aur unkī Arabī Tafsīren (Indian Commentators of the Qur'ān and their Arabic Commentaries) by Dr. Sālim Qidwa'ī, Maktabah Jāmi'a, New Delhi, 1973.

mentioned from any point of views so that we should understand the development of the science of exegesis in India particularly Persian exegesis as well as this introduction that shed more lights upon the contribution of this period to the religious sciences.

The exegesis writing in India started from second half of the 8<sup>th</sup> century and the exegesis of Muḥammad bin Aḥmad Khawājī (d. 859H) ‘Baḥr-ul-Ma’ānī’ is considered among the beginning Persian commentaries.<sup>1</sup> The author was expert of philosophy and argument apart from religious sciences. He spent most of his life in Delhi, and he migrated to Kālpī before the attack of Taimūr and died there.<sup>2</sup> This exegesis has been written in short that bears a stamp of argumental style. Some new researchers have observed it as the gist of ‘Majma’-ul-Bayān’ by Faḍl bin Ḥasan Ṭabrī. One copy of its manuscript is preserved in Khudā Bakhsh Public Library, Patna.<sup>3</sup>

No doubt, the exegesis ‘Baḥr-ul-Ma’ānī’ has superiority according to its completion but it could not achieve such

<sup>1</sup> The essayist of Urdu Encyclopedia ‘Dā’irah Ma’ārif Islāmīyah’ opined about the Arabic exegesis ‘Gharā’ibul Qur’ān wa Raghā’ibul Furqān’ that it was completed in Daulatābād in India in 730H and he has also explained that it contains Persian translation of the verses, and thus he tried to express that this is the first Persian translation in India but no sources could strengthen that this exegesis has been written in India, See: Dā’irah Ma’ārif Islāmīyah, Dānishgāh Punjāb, Lāhore, 1969, 4/531 (Exegesis)

<sup>2</sup> Sayyid Murtaḍā Ḥusain mentioned about Maulānā Khawājī in his article ‘Barr-i-Ṣaghīr men ‘Ulamā-i-Imāmīyah kī Tafsīren’ (Commentaries of Imāmī ‘Ulamā in the sub-Continent) that he came to India during the period of Nizām Shāh-i-Deccan and stayed at Bījāpūr, Tauḥīd quarterly, Irān, Feb-April, 1985, P. 159 while it appears from the writings of the historians that he was brought up in Delhi, See: Raḥmān ‘Alī, Tadhkirah ‘Ulamā-i-Hind, Naval Kishore Press, 1914, P. 58 and Sayyid ‘Abdul Ḥayy, Nuzhat-ul-Khawāṭir, Hyderābād, 1951, 3/63-64

<sup>3</sup> See: Catalogue of Arabic and Persian, Khudā Bakhsh Public Library, 14/27, No. 1152



popularity as ‘Baḥr-i-Mawwāj’ did which was written by Qādī Shihābuddīn Daulatābādī one of the pupils of Maulānā Khawājī. Qādī Shihābuddīn of Daulatābād (d. 948H/1445AD) was one of the noted scholars of his time. He had expertise over Islamic jurisprudence. It is said that he authored the book ‘Fatāwā Ibrāhīm Shāhī’. Sultān Ibrāhīm Shāh Sharqī (1401-1440) conferred over him the title of ‘Malik-ul-‘Ulamā’ for his mastery over the Islamic sciences and appointed him the Chief Justice of Jaunpūr.<sup>1</sup> The exegesis ‘Baḥr-i-Mawwāj’ is a comprehensive exegesis and comprises of three huge volumes. It is named after Sultān Ibrāhīm Shāh. While explaining the meanings of the Qur’ān the author discussed its language and grammar as well as he mentioned issues derived from the verses. This exegesis is adorned with the beauty of language and style, and the commentaries the author has mentioned as a source for his exegesis include Tafsīr-i-Zāhidī, Madārik al-Tanzīl, al-Kashshāf, Tafsīr-i-Kabīr and Tafsīr-i-Abul Laith Samarqandī. There are several manuscripts of ‘Baḥr-i-Mawwāj’ preserved in Maulānā Āzād Library (‘Alīgarh Muslim University).<sup>2</sup> Apart from this, its some more manuscripts are found in India Office (London), Asiatic Society (Bengāl), Āṣafiya Library (Hyderābād) and Khudā Bakhsh Oriental Public Library (Patna).<sup>3</sup> It has also been published from Lucknow in 1297H.

The third famous Persian exegesis has been written by Ḥakīm Fatḥullāh Shīrāzī (d. 997H/1588AD) who was the

<sup>1</sup> See for his detailed biography: Sheikh ‘Abdul Ḥaq Muḥaddith Dehlawī, Akḥbār-ul-Akḥyār, Maṭba Muḥammadī, Delhi, 1283H, PP. 173-173, Faqīr Muḥammad Jhalmī, Ḥadā’iq-ul-Ḥanfīyyah, Naval Kishore Press, 1906, P. 319 and Tadhkirah ‘Ulamā-i-Hind, P. 88

<sup>2</sup> See: Ḥabīb Collection (Persian Exegesis), 3/31076, Subḥānallāh Collection, 297.112/1-2, and University Addition, No. 8

<sup>3</sup> Catalogue of Persian Manuscripts, India Office Library, Ethe, 2679, Catalogue of Persian Manuscripts, Asiatic Society, ed. by Ivanov, P. 958, Catalogue of Arabic, Persian and Urdu Manuscripts, Āṣafiyyah Library, Hyderābād, 1900, 1/562 and Catalogue of Khudā Bakhsh Library, 14/1117

celebrated scholar of the 16<sup>th</sup> century. He came to Bījāpūr from Shīrāz on the request of 'Alī 'Ādil Shāh Bījāpūrī and then he migrated to Āgra after his demise. He got well acceptance in the court of Akbar and was given the post of 'Ṣadr' and other prestigious posts. Generally the historians mention his exegesis without title<sup>1</sup> while the author of 'Nuzhat-ul-Khawāṭir' mentioned its title as 'Manhaj al-Ṣādiqīn'<sup>2</sup> but the writer of the catalogue of Āṣafiya Library attributed it to Faṭḥullāh Kāshānī.<sup>3</sup> After all this exegesis represents the Shī'ī view-points. The manuscripts of this exegesis are preserved in Maulānā Āzād Library<sup>4</sup> and Āṣafiya Library.<sup>5</sup> Sayyid 'Abdul Ḥayy<sup>6</sup> and Professor M A Shostrī<sup>7</sup> have attributed a Persian exegesis to Jānān Begum daughter of 'Abdur Raḥīm Khān-i-Khānān and wife of Prince Dāniyāl but it is not mentioned in any other source.

The Mughals ruled in India for more than three centuries. The 17<sup>th</sup> century of their rule is considered more important on both political and civil grounds. During this period three great Mughal Emperors descended the throne e.g. Jahāngīr, Shāh Jahān and Aurangzeb so apart from expansion in the field of politics and administration, the sciences and arts flourished much, and exegesis also developed along with other religious sciences. It is proved by a good number of exegesis books. In this period exegesis flourished specially in Persian language. This is also credited to the interest of the kings and Governors.

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<sup>1</sup> Ḥadā'iq-ul-Ḥanfīyyah, P. 406 and Tadhkirah 'Ulamā-i-Hind, P. 160

<sup>2</sup> Nuzhat-ul-Khawāṭir, 4/254-255

<sup>3</sup> Catalogue of Āṣafiyyah Library, 1/568

<sup>4</sup> Subḥānallāh Collection, 297.112/16 and Catalogue of Āṣafiyyah Library, 1/568

<sup>5</sup> Catalogue of Āṣafiyyah Library, 1/568

<sup>6</sup> Nuzhat-ul-Khawāṭir, 5/122-123

<sup>7</sup> Outline of Islamic Literature, Bangalore, 1954, P. 559

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The first commentary on the Qur'ān in the 16<sup>th</sup> century was written by the order of Nawwāb Murtaḍā Khān Sayyid Farīd Bukhārī (d. 1025H/1616AD) in 1607AD during the rule of Jahāngīr. Its author is Sheikh Zain-ul-'Abidīn Shīrāzī and it was titled 'Tafsīr-i-Murtaḍawī'. Nawwāb Murtaḍā Khān was the nearest Governor of Akbar and Jahāngīr and he occupied the highest posts like 'Mīr Bakhshī' and 'Governor' of Gujarāt. Apart from these great posts he was lover of knowledge and had keen interest in spreading the knowledge.<sup>1</sup> We could not find its manuscript in any of the world libraries nor could we find detailed information about the author. The author of 'al-Thaqāfah al-Islāmīyah fī al-Hind' mentioned a Persian commentary written by order of Jahāngīr whose author is, as he mentioned, Sheikh Ni'matullāh bin 'Aṭā Nārnawī Fīrozpurī and this commentary of his was called as 'Tafsīr-i-Jahāngīrī'. But it is interesting that the author of 'al-Thaqāfah' has pointed out its year of completion 1572H/1662AD<sup>2</sup> which was the beginning period of Emperor Aurangzeb. After all we did not find the mention of 'Tafsīr-i-Jahāngīrī' in any contemporary sources or catalogues of the manuscripts.

Apart from the above mentioned commentaries of the Qur'ān written in the period of Jahāngīr (whose strong proof was not found about their manuscripts), the most famous Persian commentary of that period is 'Tafsīr-i-Nizāmī' written by Sheikh Nizāmuddīn bin 'Abdush Shakūr Thānesarī (d. 1036H/1627AD).<sup>3</sup> Its author was expert of both the rational

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<sup>1</sup> Nuzhat-ul-Khawāṭir, 5/401-403 and see for more details: 'Abdul Mājīd Sālik, Muslim Thaqāfat Hindustan men (Islamic Culture in India), Lāhore, PP. 259-260

<sup>2</sup> Sayyid 'Abdul Ḥayy, al-Thaqāfah al-Islāmīyah fī al-Hind, Damascus, 1958, P. 165

<sup>3</sup> Akhbār-ul-Akhyār, P. 142, Tadhkirah 'Ulamā-i-Hind, P. 241, Ḥadā'iq-ul-Ḥanfiyyah, PP. 401-402, Nuzhat-ul-Khawāṭir, 5/418-419, Stewari, Persian Literature, 1/1/18

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and traditional sciences specially of the Islamic jurisprudence in which he had keen interest. As regards Sufism, he benefitted from Sheikh Jalāl Thānesarī. Due to anger of his contemporary king he left India and migrated to Balkh where he died. In spite of other historians the author of 'Sawāṭi'-ul-Anwār' Muḥammad Akram bin Sheikh Muḥammad 'Alī named it as 'Riyāḍ al-Quds'. This commentary has glimpses of sufi thoughts. One of its manuscripts, as Stewari says, is preserved in India Office Library and it contains the commentary of last part of the Qur'ān.<sup>1</sup> But the famous catalogue-maker of India Office Library Ethe does not mention it.

The worth mentioning commentary of the period of Jahāngīr is 'Tafsīr-i-Shāh'. This has been written by Shāh Muḥammad bin Adb Mahw (d. 1072H/1662AD). It was completed in 1057H/1647AD. The author was one of the famous spiritual leaders of Qādrī Chain. He left his country Badakhshān in 1614 and reached India. First he stayed at Lāhore then settled down in Kashmīr. He had sincere love for Dārā Shikoh and Jahān Ārā. He was known with the title of 'Lisānullāh'.<sup>2</sup> The part of this commentary is in Arabic while the other part is in Persian as Stewari explained.<sup>3</sup> But the cataloguers of Asiatic Society (Bengal) and Khudā Bakhsh Library (Patna) told that it is in Persian totally.<sup>4</sup> On the other hand Dr. Sālim Qidwāī put it among the Arabic commentaries.<sup>5</sup> For the derivation of the year of its completion the author named it as 'Shāh Tafāsīr' as appears from this verse:

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<sup>1</sup> Persian Literature, 1/1/18

<sup>2</sup> Nuzhat-ul-Khawāṭir, 5/164

<sup>3</sup> Persian Literature, 1/1/19

<sup>4</sup> Evenue, Catalogue of Persian Manuscripts, PP. 470-471 (No, 969) and Catalogue of Arabic and Persian Manuscripts, Khudā Bakhsh Library

<sup>5</sup> Hindustānī Mufasssīrīn aur unkī 'Arabī Tafsīren, PP. 114-115

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تفسیر شاہ یکعدد کم آمد      گفت ایس دل من شاہ تفاسیر یگو<sup>1</sup>

Its manuscripts are found in Asiatic Society, Khudā Bakhsh Library and Raḍā Library (Rāmpūr). The oldest among them is that of Asiatic Library which has been caligraphed in 11<sup>th</sup> century of Hijrah.

There is another commentary of the Qur’ān in the Jahāngīr’s period and that is Tafsīr-i-‘Alī Raḍā Shīrāzī. He was an Indian scholar and migrated to Shīrāz in the last days of his life and died there in about 1085H.<sup>2</sup> This commentary represents Shī’a ideas and thoughts but it is not found in any catalogues of the manuscripts.

Along with other religious sciences the exegesis also developed in the period of Emperor Aurangzeb ‘Ālamgīr to which he contributed a lot. So apart from Arabic commentaries several Persian commentaries were written in this period even Muḥammad Amīn Ṣiddīqī ‘Alawī composed a commentary on the order of the Emperor which is known as ‘Tafsīr-i-Amīnī’. Its manuscript is available in Āṣafīyyah Library.<sup>3</sup> The other great work of this period in the Qur’ānic studies is ‘Tafsīr Ni’mat-i-‘Uẓmā’ which is named after the Emperor. It was written by the great chronologist Mirzā Nūruddīn known as ‘Ni’mat Khān-i-‘Ālī’ (d. 1121H/1709AD). This commentary was completed in 1703 comprising of two parts. Part one contains the commentary of 16 chapters while the second part comprises of the commentary of remaining 98 chapters of the Qur’ān. The author has quoted Arabic verses while discussing language and grammar of the Divine Book. One of its manuscripts is found in Curzon Collection

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<sup>1</sup> Ivanov, PP. 470-471

<sup>2</sup> Tauḥīd quarterly, P. 158

<sup>3</sup> Catalogue of Arabic and Persian Manuscripts, 1/562 (No. 165)

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of Asiatic Society (Kolkātā).<sup>1</sup> Another celebrated commentary of the period of Aurangzeb was written by a Gujarātī scholar of Islamic jurisprudence Muḥammad bin Ja'far Ḥusainī (d. 1111H/1679AD).<sup>2</sup> This commentary is not found in the catalogues of renowned manuscripts of the Qur'ānic commentaries.

The most famous commentary of the period of Aurangzeb is 'Zaibut Tafāsīr' which was composed by Ṣafī bin Walī Qizwainī Kashmīrī<sup>3</sup> on the order of the Princess Zaibun Nisā'. This is a detailed exegesis and has been completed in several volumes. Its fifth volume whose manuscript is found in British Museum<sup>4</sup> contains the chapter al-Anfāl to the chapter Yūsuf. It appears from this volume that there might be some three to four volumes of this commentary. The year of composition of this volume is 1081H/1670AD. The author has pointed out in another book (Anīs-ul-Ḥujāj) that he completed its last volume in 1087H/1677AD.<sup>5</sup> The author of 'al-Thaqāfah al-Islāmīyyah fī al-Hind' considered it Persian translation of the commentary of Imām Rāzī<sup>6</sup> but keeping in view its present size we reject this opinion while some other modern scholars have mentioned sources of this commentary including Tafsīr-i-Nīshāpūrī, Tafsīr Fakhruddīn Rāzī, Tafsīr al-Kashshāf, Tafsīr-i-Baidāwī and Tafsīr-i-Baḥr-i-Mawwāj.<sup>7</sup> It appears from that that this is not translation

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<sup>1</sup> Catalogue of Persian Collection, Evenue, Kolkātā, 1926, P. 327 (No. 246) and see from more details: Persian Literature (Story), 1/1/19-20 and Urdu Encyclopedia, P. 533

<sup>2</sup> Nuzhat-ul-Khawāṭir, 6/257 and al-Thaqāfah al-Islāmīyyah fī al-Hind, P. 165

<sup>3</sup> See for the biography of the author article of Shāh Mu'īnuddīn Nadwī entitled 'Anīs-ul-Ḥujjāj', Ma'ārif, Dār-ul-Muṣannifin, A'zamgarh, 93/5 and 25 (1964)

<sup>4</sup> Catalogue of Persian Manuscripts, Ivanov, 3/980 (R 1686)

<sup>5</sup> Anīs-ul-Ḥujjāj, Copy-93, Research Library, Department of History, 'Aligarh Muslim University, Page-Alif

<sup>6</sup> Al-Thaqāfah al-Islāmīyyah fī al-Hind, P. 165

<sup>7</sup> Tauḥīd quarterly, P. 159

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rather it is a separate commentary benefitted from some great commentaries. The manuscript of its fifth volume is also found in Bodleian Library apart from British Library.<sup>1</sup> But the copy of British Museum has been calligraphed in the period of the author itself e.g. 1081H and it is to be noted that this volume was completed in the same year.

It is a brief survey of great and valuable commentaries of the Medieval India. And let's put in our minds that there were some other scholars who took interest in this field and explained some selected chapters or parts of the Qur'ān in Persian and composed pamphlets and treatises too. These small works have also their importance among this treasure of the exegesis and hence, they cannot be ignored. The most mention worthy among them is the commentary of Sheikh Bahā bin Muḥammad Nabīrah Ḥamīduddīn Nāgorī on the chapter of al-Ḍuḥā named as 'Miṣbāḥ-ul-'Āshiqīn', commentary of the chapter al-Tīn by Sheikh Jalāluddīn Thānesarī (d. 1583), the commentary of the chapter al-Wāqī'ah by Sulṭān Sayyid Khawājgī Ḥusain (completed in 1672) and 'Asrār-ul-Fātiḥah' of Mullā Muḥammad Peshāwarī. Moreover, this period is also known for long foot-notes on the Qur'ānic commentaries as several long foot-notes were written on the commentaries of the Qur'ān like they were written on the books of Ḥadīth, Islamic jurisprudence, principles of Islamic jurisprudence, Logic and philosophy. But for such foot-notes only those commentaries were selected that were put in the curricula like Jalālain, al-Kashshāf, Baiḍwī and Madārik.

It can be said in the light of these evidences that the scholars and rulers of the Medieval India took chief interest in the

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<sup>1</sup> Catalogue of Persian, Turkish and Poshtu Manuscripts, Bodleian Library, edt. by Ethe, P. 1044, No. 181

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science of exegesis as they took keen interest in other Islamic sciences, and composed commentaries and pamphlets which still prove to be benefitted from. Moreover, it is crystal clear that the Persian language was also chosen to compose religious sciences specially the Qur'ānic exegesis in it apart from the Arabic so that the maximum readers may take benefits. It is enough to say that for the development of the science of exegesis in this period the scholars not only wrote separate commentaries but they also discussed other related topics. For instance, separate lexicon was prepared for understanding the meanings of difficult words of the Qur'ān, separate books were written on the principles of exegesis-writing and *Nasikh* and *Mansukh*, pamphlets were written on selected Qur'ānic verses and indices were prepared to comprehend exhaustively the required Qur'ānic verses easily. Avoiding the details in this regard we feel necessary to mention one Persian index which is known as 'Hādiyāh Quṭub Shāhī'.<sup>1</sup> It was prepared by Muḥammad 'Abdullāh Karbalā'ī in 1045H/1636 and named it after the Sulṭān of Deccan 'Abdullāh Quṭub Shāh (1035-1083H). It is in two parts. The first part was prepared alphabetically while the second part was made according to the last letter of the words. Thus any verse can be found easily for its first or last letter.

In the light of these books on the Qur'ānic Studies it is right to say that the Persian was not neglected to explain the Qur'ān

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<sup>1</sup> In some of the manuscripts of British Museum, 1/113 (No. D 7600) its title is 'Hadiyah Quṭub Shāhī which looks more appropriate. See also: India Office Library, Persian Library, P. 84. Its manuscripts are preserved in Oriental Public Library (Patna), Āṣafīyyah Library and Nāṣirīyyah Library (Lucknow). Dr. Sālim Qidwa'ī says that its some manuscripts are in Arabic while others are in Persian so he thought that it was first written in Arabic then it was translated into Persian, Hindustānī Mufasssīrīn aur unkī 'Arabī Tafsīren, P. 326

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and its sciences in the Medieval India but in view of being Persian as an official language it can be said that the works on the Qur'ānic studies are less than expected and that's why when Shāh Walīyyullāh presented his Persian translation of the Qur'ān, the Muslim scholars opposed it severely.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Sayyid Şabāḥuddīn 'Abdur Raḥmān says discussing works of scholars of Medieval India:

“--- and it grieves me that Persian translation of the Qur'ān was not done for a long period of the Muslim rule in India though Persian remained their governmental language, and when Persian translation of Shāh Walīyyullāh began to spread in India, the scholars here raised their voices against it as if they the right of understanding and teaching is confined to these scholars only.” *Hindustān k Salāṭīn wa 'Ulamā wa Maṣḥā'ikh per ek Nāzar* (Indian Sultāns, 'Ulamā and Maṣḥā'ikh-A Study), Dār-ul-Muṣannifīn, A'zamgarh, 1970, P. 65

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## Arwi or Arabu-Tamil Commentaries and Translations on the Qur'ān: An Overview

Dr. K.M.A. Ahmed Zubair<sup>1</sup>

### Introduction:

The commentaries and translations of the Qur'ān, is the religious field in which the Tamilian scholars engaged their attention. They had religious consciousness while interpreting the Qur'ān. They always relied on the Qur'ān, the Ḥadīth and the views of the companions of the Prophet while making the interpretation and translation of the Qur'ān. They published their commentaries and translations along with the original text of the Qur'ān. So far more than 25 translations/commentaries were published in *Arabu-Tamil* and Tamil languages. *Arabu-Tamil* means its script is Arabic but the language is Tamil, like *Arabu-Malayalam*. The First commentary was written in *Arabu-Tamil* language not in Tamil language. The Earlier Commentaries in *Arabu-Tamil* language are:

1. *Futhuhatur Rahamaniyyah fi Tarjamathi Tafsiri kalaamir Rabbaniyyah* by Habeeb Mohamed Alim
2. *Fathur Rahman fi Tarjamati Tafsiril Quran* by Sheik Mustafa Wali.

The first Tamil translation of the Qur'ān was made by 'Abdul Ḥamīd Baqavī after a half century from the publication of *Arabu-Tamil* commentaries and translations. This paper aims to study the commentaries/translations written in *Arabu-Tamil* language.

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**Arabu-Tamil and Islam:**

Long before the birth of the Prophet of Islam, there were frequent contacts between Arabia and Tamil Nadu. The Sangam (Classical Period) Tamil literature bears evidence of the Arab contact with the Tamil Nadu. In the literary works like "Paththu Pattu" and "Ettuthogai", the Arabs are called "Yavanars". The rulers of these areas patronized Islam to flourish in Tamil Nadu, and even some of them donated lands to their places of worship. They include the Kings of Chera, Chozha and Pandyas. For the sake of worshipping, Muslims built mosques in various places of this country specially in South India. The first and foremost among such mosques is the one which can be seen even today in Tiruchirapalli, near the Railway Station, though now it is seen in a dilapidated conditions. The Arabic inscription stone available in that mosque, indicates that it was constructed in the year 734 (corresponding 116 AH, Islamic Era), and it was built by Muḥammad bin Ḥāmid bin ‘Abdullāh. With this proof we can conclude that Muslims lived in this region in the eighth century freely with all proprietary rights in this land.

**Origin of Arabu-Tamil:**

پللیا جیم و توی پیجاقت تاتا  
 تالیریم توی تلتا جتکوا یی  
 آقیلاک و ییریا رین و چیلپیت  
 پالی و یومر سقا اب آیلن ایچیلپیت  
 پنتتیرتین تورات آیلن شهودی  
 قنتتم بلول بیت جانی قافلتم مزادی  
 صائی قانوچی صات منول دی توتتم  
 کاسکی نامتی پت قانتتیلین  
 تری جمعاک قتللا کاسل کان  
 شری یوتیا من کاک مہرت تالی  
 خلی غلین سقا کاتاک وانان  
 دلہا ہندوان تلتی یی انعان

*Arabu-Tamil* is resulted in the cultural synthesis between the Arabs and the Tamil speaking Muslims. *Arabu-Tamil* is a combination of Arabic and Tamil, with its script in Arabic. Even during the pre-Islamic period, there was commercial contact between Arabia and India and specially the South India. After the advent of Islam, the Arabs who had already contacts with the coastal regions of Tamil Nadu and Srilanka, some of them who had already settled there in that area, became the representatives of Islam. In course of time, there witnessed converts to Islam, from among the native population. When two communities bound by a common religion but separated by two different languages come into closer contact, and their commercial activities flourish, they feel necessity for a link-language. This necessity made an interaction between Arabic and Tamil Languages, that resulted a new language to be born as *Arabu-Tamil*. The development of *Arabu-Tamil* is due to the Arab impact on the Tamil Muslim. *Arabu-Tamil* is a bi-product dialect of the Arabs' interaction with the local Tamilians written in Arabic script with high contents of Arabic vocabulary or in the other words Tamil in Arabic script is called *Arabu-Tamil*. It is written from right to left like Arabic script. From eighth century to the nineteenth century, this language enjoyed its popularity among Tamil speaking Muslims of Tamil Nadu. The *Arabu-Tamil* which consists of 40 letters, out of which 28 letters are from Arabic, and 12 more letters have been devised by adding some marks and dots to the original Arabic alphabet

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Arwi or Arabu-Tamil Writing of an Islamic work



**Commentary and its Methodology in Arabu-Tamil Language:**

Tafsir is the Arabic word for exegesis or commentary, usually of the Qur'ān. An author of Tafsir is a *mufassir* (Commentator). The four traditional sources for the commentary of the Qur'ān is followed in the *Arabu-Tamil* commentaries namely:

1. The Qur'ān: The highest form of tafsir is when one verse of the Qur'ān is used to explain the other.
  2. The Ḥadīth: The second highest grade of tafsir is where Muḥammad (PBUH) commented on the meaning or phrases of particular verses of the Qur'ān, and those statements have been passed down to us. Many of the great collections of Ḥadīth have separate sections about tafsir.
  3. The reports of the Companions of the Prophet: The Ṣaḥābah, or the companions of Muḥammad, also taught and interpreted the Qur'ān. If nothing is found in the Qur'ān or the Ḥadīth, the commentator has recourse to what these companions reported about various verses.
  4. The reports of the Tābi'ūn, the next generation who learnt from these companions: these people grew up with people who had
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enjoyed everyday interaction with Muḥammad (PBUH), and had often asked about the meanings of verses or circumstances of their revelation.

The standard approach of Tafsīr depends on Interpreting the Qur'ān by it. This was followed by the commentators of the Qur'ān in *Arabu-Tamil* language.

Major Tafsīrs were served as the model and reference sources for the commentaries/translations rendered in Arabu-Tamil and Tamil languages. Such major commentators and major tafsīrs of the Qur'ān are as follows:

1. Muḥammad ibn Jarīr al-Ṭabarī (838-923): *Tafsīr al-Tabarī*.
  2. Ibn Kathīr (1301-1373): *Tafsīr ibn Kathīr*.
  3. Imām Abū 'Abdullāh ibn Aḥmad al-Qurṭubī (1214-1273): *Al-Jāmi' li-Aḥkām al-Qur'ān*
  4. Maḥmūd Ālūsī al-Ḥanafī: *Tafsīr Rūḥ al-Ma'ānī fī Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-'Aẓīm wa al-Saba' al-Mathānī*.
  5. *Ma'ālim al-Tanzīl*- by Ḥasan bin Mas'ūd al-Baghawī (died 510 /1116) also known widely as *Tafsīr al-Baghawī*.
  6. Abū al-Qāsim Maḥmūd ibn 'Umar al-Zamakhsharī (died 1144): *Al-Kashshāf*.
  7. 'Abdullāh bin 'Umar al-Baiḍāwī (died 685 /1286) - *Anwār al-Tanzīl*, also famous as *Tafsīr al-Bayḍāwī*.
  8. *Zād al-Masīr fī 'Ilm al-Tafsīr* - written by Ibn al-Jauzī.
  9. *Tafsīr an-Nasafī* - written by al-Nasafī.
  10. *Tafsīr al-Jalālain* by Jalāluddīn al-Maḥallī (in 1459), and Sheikh Jalāluddīn al-Suyūṭī (died 911 /1505 ).
  11. *Al-Durr al-Manthūr fī al-Tafsīr bi-l-Ma'thūr* also by Jalāluddīn al-Suyūṭī.
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### **Tafsīr in Other Languages:**

Tafsīr was almost always written in Arabic but during the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the need was felt by Muslims to write commentaries in local languages so that those who do not know Arabic can still have access to the meaning of the Qur'ān. Tafsīrs have been written in many foreign and Indian languages namely French, English, Turkish, Uzbek, Tamil, Malayalam, Bengali and other languages. As for the tafsīrs in India, they have been written in most of the Indian Languages while most of these tafsīrs, were written in Urdu. In Urdu more than Twenty Eight tafsīrs are available whereas in Tamil and *Arabu-Tamil* languages more than twenty five commentaries/translations are available. In Indian languages, next to Urdu more number of commentaries/translations are available in Tamil and *Arabu-Tamil* languages.



Tafseer *Fathul Kareem* by Nooh Lebbai  
Published in the year 1292 AH | 1872 AD

### **The Commentaries and Translations in *Arabu-Tamil* Language on the Qur'ān:**

Meaning and explanation of the Qur'ānic verses were written as the commentaries in *Arabu-Tamil* language. This helped

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the Tamil speaking Muslims to understand the Qur'ān in a proper way and to make their life according to the Islamic principles or Qur'ānic principles. A few of the old commentaries composed and written by great scholars are still available today. Among the famous commentaries is the commentary written by Ḥabīb Muḥammad 'Alīm of Kayalpattanam, which was published in the year 1296 AH /1875 AD. Another one by Nūḥ Lebbai 'Alīm of Kayalpattanam, which was published in the year 1292 AH /1872 AD. Similarly in the year 1884 and 1910 AD two other commentaries of the Qur'ān came into existence.

The first Tamil translation of the Qur'ān was published in 1929. i.e. fifty years after the publication of *Arabu-Tamil* commentaries and translations, the Tamil commentaries got published. So there are eight commentators who bestowed their contribution to the Qur'ānic commentary in *Arabu-Tamil* language .They are

1. Sheikh Muṣṭafá 'Alī, Sri Lanka.
2. Si.Ka. Sheikh Ibrāhīm 'Alīm, Tirunelveli, Pettai.
3. Ḥabīb Muḥammad 'Alīm, Kayalpattanam.
4. Nūḥ Lebbai 'Alīm, Kayalpattanam.
5. Syed Muḥammad 'Alīm, Pudu Nagaram.
6. Pa.Ve. Khader Muḥidīn 'Alīm, Ramanathapuram.
7. Sulaimān bin Muḥammad , Sri Lanka.
8. Sheikh Uthmān, Sri Lanka.

Maulānā Si.Ka. Sheikh Ibrāhīm 'Alīm, belonged to the Mela Theru (Upper Street) of Pettai of Tirunelveli. Syed Muḥammad 'Alīm of Pudu Nagaram has written *Arabu-Tamil* Commentary in the year 1342 AH/ 1922 AD. He rendered the first five parts of the Qur'ān. Pa.Ve. Khader Muḥidīn 'Alīm of Ramanathapuram, in the year 1913 AH has rendered the

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*Arabu-Tamil* Commentary entitled *Tafsir Arwi Juz' Amma*, for the last part of the Qur'ān.

### Uniqueness of the *Arabu-Tamil* Commentaries:

Qur'ānic commentary is one of the main fields in which, the *Arabu-Tamil* scholars of Tamilnadu and Sri Lanka engaged their attention for the tasks of commentary and translation. They were conscious of safeguarding themselves from misinterpreting the Qur'ān. They never allowed reasoning and rationalism to cloud their religious and spiritual vision. They relied on the authorities of the Ḥadīth and the explanations, views of the companions of the Prophet in their interpretations of the Qur'ān. And also took the views of the jurists and the leaders of creed (Aqā'id). They always published the translations along with the original Arabic text of the Qur'ān. These scholars felt that publishing translations alone without the original text might end up in the distortion of its meanings. The *Arabu - Tamil* scholars produced six authentic commentaries. These *Arabu -Tamil* scholars, referred their works as the translation of the tafsīr (and not of the Qur'ān). But the Tamil translation made in the middle of the twentieth century was referred as tarjamah (direct translation) of the Qur'ān.

The six commentaries have been published in *Arabu-Tamil* language are as follows.

- 1) Fath-ul-Karīm.
  - 2) Futūḥāt-ur-Raḥmānia fī Tarjamati Tafsīri kalāmir Rabbānia.
  - 3) Fathur Raḥmān fī Tarjamati Tafsīri Qur'ān.
  - 4) Fathur Raḥīm.
  - 5) Raḥmat-ul-Mannān.
  - 6) Fā'idah Qur'ān.
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### **A Study on Arabu-Tamil Commentaries:**

#### **1. Fath-ul-Karīm by Nūḥ Lebbai (published in the year 1292 AH/1872 AD):**

This commentary commences with the following introduction made by Nūḥ Lebbai ‘Alīm, we will see few of its verses. The Arabu-Tamil script is transliterated for the readers’ perusal in English is as follows:

*“Bismillah yenum thirunamam konu thurvakkerreen. Allah Taala, Bismillahi yendru chonnaal, adil Ma’navaagirathu undanathellam yennai konde undaayitru. Undaaga peraathellam yennai konde undaagum undaagum yengirada irukkum ...”*

English Translation:

“I start with Bismillah, meaning of Bismillah is what all existing in this universe is due to Allah, what all going to happen in future also will be due to Allah...”

*“Arindu koll Bismi yagiratuu Qurannukku thiravukolagavum, lawhul mahfooz palagaiyil Qalam yeludinathil mundinadaakavum Adam (AS) peeril erakkapattathil mundinadaakavum irukkum...”*

English Translation:

“Learn that Bismi is a key to open the Quran, Bismi is a first word used by mystic pen on the tablet. And also this was the first word that was revealed on the Adam (AS).”

The commentator of this commentary, Nūḥ Lebbai son of ‘Abdul Qāder of Kayalpattinam, is a descendant of Madiḥur Rasūl Ṣadqatullah Appa. This was printed in two volumes in Bombay (Mumbai) in 1299AH/1881AD. This is more widely read as it is simple and concise. This translation mostly follows the pattern of the famous tafsīr Jalālain by Imām Jalāluddīn Suyūṭī and Imām Jalāluddīn Maḥallī as far as the translation of the verses is concerned.

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But the explanatory notes are on the pattern of the famous earlier tafsīr like of Ibn ‘Abbās and Ibn al-‘Arabī.

**2. Fath-ur-Raḥīm:**

Nūḥ Lebbai also wrote another commentary called Fath-ur-Raḥīm, which is shorter than his own commentary Fath-ul-Karīm, and it mainly deals with mystical aspects. It exists in six parts of 288 pages, printed at Bombay (Mumbai) in 1304 AH.

**3. Futūḥāth-ur-Raḥmānia by Ḥabīb Muḥammad ‘Alīm (published in the year 1296 AH/1875AD):**

This commentary was called as Futūḥāt-ur-Raḥmānia fī Tarjamati Tafsīri kalāmī Rabbānia. This was first printed in Bombay (Mumbai) in Husalnia press, and published in 1296 AH. In this commentary, Qur’ānic Textual verses are printed in bold letters and below those explanations for that text are given in *Arabu-Tamil*.

Besides this, footnotes and side notes were printed on the sides of the each paper of commentary and thus 3/4 of the page is filled with *Arabu-Tamil* explanations of the Qur’ānic text. A copy of this commentary on the Qur’ān is preserved in the Zahira college of Colombo. So it was treasured in its library. The commentator of this commentary “Futūḥāt-ur-Raḥmānia” belonged to Kayalpattanam of Tamilnadu.

**4. Fathur Raḥmān fī Tarjamati Tafsīril Qur’ān:**

The honour of being the first Arabu-Tamil commentary goes to “Fathur Raḥmān fī Tarjamati Tafsīril Qur’ān”. This was written by Sheikh Muṣṭafá Walī (1252-1305AH/1836-1887AD) of Srilanka. He received his education from the scholars, ‘Umar Walī, Palayam Ḥabīb Muḥammad and Mubārak Maulānā (1211-1281AH/1796-1864AD) of Tamilnadu, only five juz’ (parts) of this Tafsīr have been published in the year 1291AH/1874AD in 653 pages. Kumusther Hasana Maricar, son of Kulanthai Maricar of Srilanka encouraged and assisted

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Sheikh Muṣṭafá Walī financially to write this Tafsir in *Arabu-Tamil*.

#### **5. Rahmatul Mannan:**

Sulaimān bin Muḥammad of Srilanka has written a commentary called Raḥma-tul-Mannān, which was printed in Colombo in 1315AH/1897AD.

#### **Translation of the Qur'ān in Parts in *Arabu-Tamil* Language:**

Many *Arabu-Tamil* translations of sūrahs like sūrah Yāsīn and sūrah Raḥmān have been published during the last hundred years by various *Arabu-Tamil* scholars. Sheikh 'Uthmān of Srilanka translated the *Fā'idah Qur'ān* of Imām Shihābuddīn al-Ramlī into *Arabu-Tamil*, and published the same in single volume. It was published in 1280AH/1863AD. And it was considered the earliest translation of Qur'ānic sūrahs into *Arabu-Tamil*.

Pa.Ve. Khader Mohidīn 'Alim has translated the last (30<sup>th</sup>) Juz' in *Arabu-Tamil* language.

#### **Conclusion:**

Qur'ān-the God's final scripture revealed to the mankind is the source of the principles, the way of life, advices, and guidances. The Prophet Muḥammad (PBUH) understood the Qur'ān completely and explained it to all his companions. Twenty five years after the death of Prophet Muḥammad (PBUH), the companions carried Islam to all corners of the world. They began to teach the new generations in Islam, regarding the explanation, understanding and interpretation of the Qur'ān. Thus the knowledge of the tafsīr spread throughout the world, Qur'ānic learning was recognized all over the world. They explained the meaning of verses and the historical context in which the verses were revealed. The companions were taught to seek their understanding of the Qur'ān first from the Qur'ān

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itself, then from the explanations and application of Prophet Muḥammad (PBUH)

The Arabu-Tamil commentaries, translations, interpretations and explanations followed the methodology of the Prophet Muḥammad (PBUH) and his companions. i.e. (1) Tafsīr of the Qur'ān by the Qur'ān (2) Tafsīr of the Qur'ān by the Sunnah.

The Arabu-Tamil tafsīrs served as authentic tafsīrs of the Qur'ān, and the mufassirs followed the correct methodology and attained correct knowledge in the language of the Qur'ān. The Tamil tafsīrs were written by referring the Arabu-Tamil tafsīrs. The Arabu-Tamil tafsīrs referred the commentary on the commentaries of al-Baiḍāwī, and al-Durr al-Manthūr. The Islamic Revivalist Sheikh Ṣadaqathulla Appa (1632-1703) of Tamilnadu has written commentaries on the tafsīr of al-Baiḍāwī and al-Durr al-Manthūr namely, *al-Ḥawāshī 'alá al-Baiḍāwī wa-Durr al-Manthūr*. The first Arabu-Tamil Qur'ānic commentator Sheikh Muṣṭafá Wali was a student of 'Umar Wali. 'Umar Wali is the grandson of Sheikh Ṣadaqathulla Appa. Another Arabu-Tamil commentator Nūḥ Lebbai is a descendant of Sheikh Ṣadaqathulla Appa. Yet another Arabu-Tamil commentator Ḥabīb Muḥammad 'Alim is also a descendant of Sheikh Ṣadaqathulla Appa. So the explanatory commentary on the tafsīr of al-Baiḍāwī and Jalāluddīn al-Suyūṭī served as model for Arabu-Tamil commentaries. Hence the Arabu-Tamil tafsīrs followed the correct methodology.

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## **Commentaries and Translations of the Qur'ān in Tamil Language and Contributions of the Scholars of Tamil Nadu to the Qur'ānic Studies: A Study**

✎...Dr. K.M.A. Ahmed Zubair<sup>1</sup>

### **Abstract**

The Qur'ān is a divine Book that Almighty Allah revealed to the Prophet Muḥammad (PBUH) in Arabic language at different times and contexts, beginning from his age of forty until sixty-three when Allah had taken him back unto Him.

Along with other duties of the Prophet Muḥammad he was assigned to explain the Qur'ān, the duty he (PBUH) fulfilled well. In this way he also trained some of his companions who not only explained the Qur'ān but also they trained some of their followers to teach and explain it to the other Muslims. This golden series continued till our period where as the Muslims served the duty of explaining the Qur'ān orally or in written form.

Our country (India) also competed in this field whereas we find numerous commentaries and translations of the Qur'ān in all Indian languages including the Tamil language. The following paper is a humble effort to shed light on the commentaries and translations of the Qur'ān written in this language.

### **Introduction:**

Among the famous translators of the Qur'ān into English, Marmaduke Pikhthal occupies a high rank. He translated the Qur'ān to have a comparison with the Torah and the Gospel and to know its scientific and literary position through this

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comparison. But when he started this task and reached the heart of the topic, he recognised that the Qur'ān is true, admitted it to be revealed from Almighty and considered it as the complement to its antecedents from the divine books. Thus he believed in the Qur'ān and embraced Islam. In India, there are a number of the Qur'ān translators, who translated it into various Indian languages.

Similarly, in Tamil, we find translations of the Qur'ān recently in more than twenty works. Among them, we find also non-Muslim scholars who translated it for its literary and scientific importance. The term *tafsīr* is the verbal noun of the Arabic verb of the third form *fassara*, *yufassiru* that means to explain, to comment. Thus *tafsīr* means, a commentary or explanation or elucidation. This term was used for commentaries. In Islam, the word *tafsīr* has become a technical term for the commentaries and elucidation of the Qur'ān. This branch of learning is called 'ilm al-Qur'ān wa al-tafsīr' (The Science of the Qur'ān and Exegesis). The *tafsīr* or exegesis is the most important and basic form of interpretive science in Islam, as it is related to the Qur'ān on the one side and the Ḥadīth on the other. It is difficult to point out the exact period of the beginning of the exegetic science. It may, however, be safe to say that the Prophet Muḥammad (PBUH) and later his companions been a debate in the pioneers of this type of genre.

The style of composing the exegesis differed from commentator to commentator. Normally, however, the commentaries wherein the text is explained phrase by phrase or sentence or at times word by word. The mufassir/commentator attempts to explain the verse, beginning from the title of the surah, followed by mentioning the reason for its revelation, and if needed be the reason for the revelation of any particular verse, within the

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surah. He then explains *Bismillah al-Rahmān al-Rahīm*, followed by his comments on the rest of the surah accordingly.

These commentaries are compiled from various points of view like grammar, semantics, law, history, theology, philosophy or Sufi experience and inspirations.

As suggested by Prof. Kidwai,<sup>1</sup> it is rather difficult to trace the beginning of the *tafsīr* literature in India because no work comes down to us; which mentions its history. We may conjecture safely that when the scholars had written work on Ḥadīth and other Islamic subjects, they must have certainly produced *tafsīr* literature also. Many of the earliest commentaries on the Qurʾān may not have come down to us which cannot be the reason to reject the idea that Arabic commentaries on the Qurʾān were written from the earliest times.

Dr. Sālim Kidwai<sup>2</sup> has traced 156 *tafasīr* written in India with 83 traceable in various libraries of India itself, 110 in India Office Library, London, while 63 are left untraceable.

We will mention here few important tafsir written in India.

1. Kāshif al-Ḥaqāʾiq wa Qāmūs al-Daqāʾiq
2. Tafsīr al-Multaqat
3. Sawāṭiʾ al-Ilhām
4. Jubb Shaghab

Most of the Islamic scholars, except Ibn Taimiyah, believe that the holy Prophet (PBUH) interpreted only a portion of the Qurʾān. These are not collected in a book but are included in the books of the traditions of the Prophet (PBUH). In كتاب التفسير of Ṣaḥīḥ al-Buḥārī more than 400 āyats and sūrahs that are explained by the Prophet (PBUH) are included. After the sad

<sup>1</sup> Dr. M. Salim Kidwai, Hindustani Mufassirin Awr Unkiʾ Arabi Tafsirin, pp:15-16.

<sup>2</sup> Dr. M. Salim Kidwai, Hindustani Mufassirin Awr Unkiʾ Arabi Tafsirin, pp: 16.

demise of the Prophet (PBUH), the Companions of the Prophet (PBUH) undertook this responsibility of interpreting the Qur'ān. Among them the four rightly-guided caliphs, Ibn 'Abbās, Ibn Ka'ab, Ibn Thābit, Ibn Zubair and Abū Ash'arī (MABPWT) are notables.<sup>1</sup>

In order to do justice in writing *'Ilm al-Tafsīr*, one must know the methodology of Tafsīr. It includes the knowledge of the Philology, Morphology, al-*Ishtiqāq*, 'Ilm-ul-Ma'ānī, 'Ilm al-Bayān, 'Ilm-ul-Qira'at, 'ilm-ul-'Aqā'id, Uṣūl-al-Fiqh, Asbāb-al-Nuzūl, 'Ilm-al-Naskh, 'Ilm-al-Ḥadīth, 'ilm Ladunnī etc.

Later Theologians who attempted to write interpretation of the Qur'ān, believed to different sects and schools of thought. Their tafasīr were written with their own point of view. For example, the Tafsir Ibn Kathīr was written from Sunni sect's point of view.

Arabic was never the spoken language of India. Still, Arabic scholars of India produced valuable exegesis, commentaries and indices of the Qur'ān. In this short article, it was not possible to cover all the important commentaries of the Qur'ān. Therefore, only a cursory look has been cast on some of the major of the Tamil commentaries of the Qur'ān written by Tamil scholars.

The commentaries and translations of the Qur'ān, is the religious field in which Tamilian scholars engaged their attention. They had religious consciousness while interpreting the Qur'ān. They always relied on the Qur'ān, the Ḥadīth and the views of the companions of the Prophet while making the interpretation and translation of the Qur'ān. They published their commentaries and translations along with the original

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<sup>1</sup> Development of Tafseer Literature in India, Department of Arabic, Osmania University, pp: 415, 2012.

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text of the Qur'ān. So far more than 20 translations / commentaries were published in Tamil language.

The first Tamil translation of the Qur'ān was made by 'Abdul Ḥamīd Baqavī after a half century from the publication of *Arabu-Tamil* commentaries and translations.

### Tamil Tafsirs



### Tamil Tafsirs

1. تبصير الحميد في تفسير القرآن المجيد (**Tabṣīr-ul-Ḥamīd fi Tafsīr al-Qurʾān al-Majīd**): The credit as the first man from Tamil Nadu to write Tafsīr in Tamil goes to Maulānā S.S. ‘Abdul Khādir al-Baqavī (07.01.1901–04.06.1079) of Uthamapaalayam, Tamil Nadu. Maulānā ‘Abdul Khādir al-Baqavī was born as a second son to their parents S. Sahib Rawuther and Haseena Sahiba. He completed his Islamic and Arabic education from Madrasa Bāqiyāt al-Ṣāliḥāt, Vellore in the year 1923. He acted as a sub-translator to A.K. ‘Abdul Ḥamīd al-Baqavī (1876-1955), who translated the first Tamil translation of the meaning of the Qurʾān in the year 1943 namely ترجمة القرآن بألفظ البيان. This commentary under discussion was published in 1937. Maulānā S.S. ‘Abdul Khādir al-Baqavī has written Tamil Tafsīr of the Qurʾān called تبصير الحميد في تفسير القرآن المجيد in seven volumes. Each volume consists of about 1000 pages, and hence this work runs of 7000 pages. This work is based on "تفسير روح البيان". He has also translated Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī and Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim. He acted as the Founder President of the South Indian Jamʿiathul ‘Ulamā’ in Singapore. The first edition of this work was published in 1934, second edition in 1954, third edition in the year 1966 and the fourth edition in the year 2010. The fourth edition got published by the support of the philanthropist al-Ḥājj S.M.M.M.U. Moḥammed Shuʾaib of Kuala Lumpur, Malasiya.
  2. تفسير جواهر القرآن (**Tafsīr Jawāhir al-Qurʾān**): Madrasa Bāqiyāt al-Ṣāliḥāt is considered as the Umm-ul-Madāris (أم المدارس) of not only Tamil Nadu, but of the entire South
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India. A team of Islamic and Arabic 'Ulamā' of Bāqiyāt al-Şāliḥāt started to compile a Tamil tafsīr, they are:

- (1) Maulānā Kamāluddīn al-Baqavī
- (2) Maulānā Zain-ul-'Ābidīn
- (3) Maulānā Şadaqathullāh al-Baqavī, Aathur
- (4) Maulānā Moḥidīn, Tenkasi
- (5) Maulānā Moḥammed Khān al-Baqavī

The above team was headed by Maulānā Kamāluddīn al-Baqavī. Their work was named as تفسیر جواهر القرآن and published by Madrasa Bāqiyāt al-Şāliḥāt, Vellore district, Tamil Nadu. This work was published from 1992 onwards. The first volume of this work consists of 685 pages.

3. **تفسیر ابن کثیر (Tafsīr Ibn-i-Kathīr):** Al-Ḥājj Muşţafá of Chennai has founded "Raḥmath Publication" in the Chennai city, Capital of Tamil Nadu with the intention of translating Islamic source from Arabic into Tamil. Mufassir Imām Ismā'īl bin 'Umar bin Kathīr (1300-1372) of Syria, has written an Arabic commentary on the Qur'ān. A former teacher of Madrasa Bāqiyāt al-Şāliḥāt of Vellore and also one among the translator of تفسیر جواهر القرآن, Maulavī Moḥammed Khān al-Baqavī acted as the chief translator of this commentary تفسیر ابن کثیر. Till today, there are four volumes of تفسیر ابن کثیر in Tamil language got published.
  4. **أنوار القرآن (Anwār al-Qur'ān):** This work is regarded as an important commentarial translation of the Qur'ān in Tamil, comprising of 21 parts, published by Ādam Trust, Koothanallur, Tamil Nadu. The commentator of this work is Maulavī Ḥāfiẓ E.M. 'Abdul Raḥmān Nūriyi Fāqil Baqavī of Tenkasi.
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Chapter Al-Baqara's commentary was published in the year 1966, chapter Āli 'Imrān's commentary was published in the year 1970 and the chapter al-Nisā's commentary was published in the year 1973. In this manner other chapters were also published. In July 2000 the entire volumes of all chapters were published as the first edition. The second edition of the entire chapters of the Qur'ān got published in the year 2007. The first four chapters (al-Fātiḥah, al-Baqarah, Āli 'Imrān and al-Nisā') of about five and half Juz got published as a separate volume (as the first volume). Likewise, seven volumes of this work got published.

### **Tamil Translations on the Qur'ān**

1. **تفسير جواهر القرآن (Tafsīr Jawāhir al-Qur'ān):** Sheikh Yousuf Anṣārī of Kadayanallur of Tamil Nadu has translated twenty two parts (Ju'z) of the Qur'ān in Tamil. This Tamil translation becomes the primary source for تفسير جواهر القرآن in Tamil in the later years.
  2. **ترجمة القرآن بألفاظ البيان (Tarjama-tul-Qur'ān bi Alṭafi al-Bayān):** The first complete Tamil translation of the meanings of the Qur'ān was published in the year 1943, by the effort of Maulānā 'Abdul Ḥamīd Baqavī entitled "ترجمة القرآن بألفاظ البيان". This work was reprinted 25 times since 1943. رابطة العالم الإسلامي has accredited this translation, because of its uniqueness. The translator of this work Maulānā 'Abdul Ḥamīd Baqavī is the father of A.K.A. 'Abdul Ṣamad Ṣāḥib, former Member of Parliament and the president of Indian Union Muslim League Party. Maulānā A.K.A. 'Abdul Ḥamīd Baqavī (1876-1955) was born as a son in Aathoor, Salem in state of Tamil Nadu. In 1966, he completed his Islamic and Arabic education from Madrasa Bāqiyāt al-Ṣāliḥāt, Vellore. On 19-02-1926, after the
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completion of Jum'ah prayer he started this noble task of translating Qur'ān into Tamil. He finished his work on 24-10-1942, i.e. after spending 16 years of tireless work.

3. **قرآن مجید (Qur'ān Majīd):** Cumbum Ṣadaqathullāh 'Alim Baqavī and 'Abdul Wahhāb of Tamil Nadu have translated the English meaning of the translation of the Qur'ān, translated by Yousuf 'Alī into Tamil. This work was published in 1983 by John Trust. There are 20 reprints of this translation published till today.
  4. **قرآن ترجمه (Qur'ān Tarjama):** Maulānā 'Abdul Wahhāb and Maulānā Nizāmuddīn Manbayee translated the meanings of the Qur'ān namely "Qur'ān Tarjamah" قرآن ترجمه in Tamil in the year 1992. This work was printed by Threeyem printers, Chennai.
  5. **Sangai Mikka Qur'ān:** Maulavī Moḥammed Iqbāl al-Madanī as the chief translator and with the members of Islamic Arabic scholars of Sri Lanka, translated the meaning of the glorious Qur'ān as "Sangai Mikka Qur'ān". With the financial support from the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, this work got published in the year 1992.
  6. **Thiru Qur'ān: Moolam, Tamilakkam and Vilakkavurai:** Jamā'at-i-Islāmī did not translate the Qur'ān into Tamil but they translated the translation and interpretation of the Qur'ān by the leader of their movement Sayyid Abul Aa'lā al-Maudūdī from Urdu to Tamil under the same Urdu title. This translation was not an independent one, but its language and style was magnificent. The Islamic Foundation Trust, Chennai has published the translation of the meanings of the Qur'ān namely Thiru Qur'ān: Moolam, Tamilakkam and Vilakkavurai (it means, al-Qur'ān al-Majīd: Source, Rendering into Tamil and Explanatory Notes). This work got published in the year
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1996. This work is based on تفهيم القرآن by Maulānā Abul A'alā al-Maudūdī أبو الأعلى المودودي. Maulavī Quṭbuddīn Aḥmed al-Baqavī, Maulavī Syed Mo'ammed Fāqil al-Baqavī and Maulavī Mastan 'Alī al-Baqavī acted as the translators of the Translation Bureau.

7. **ترجمة القرآن الكريم (Tarjamat al-Qur'ān al-Karīm):** In the year 2002, Al-Bashārath Publishers, Chennai published the translation of the meanings of the Qur'ān in Tamil entitled ترجمة القرآن الكريم. Maulavī Sirājuddīn al-Nūrī of Dindigul, Tamil Nadu did this noble task.
8. **Thiru Qur'ān:** In the year 2002, Moon Publishers published the translation of the meanings of the Qur'ān in Tamil called as "Thiru Qur'ān". The translators of this work are Maulavi Zain-ul-'Ābidīn and Dāwūd Shā.
9. **مواهب القرآن (Mawāhib al-Qur'ān):** It is the work of 'Abdur Raḥmān Baqavī. This work is the translation cum explanatory notes on the two chapters of the Qur'ān.

As for the Tamil and Arabic commentaries, translation of Qur'ān in full or part; the role of the following trusts is of immense value, for the dissemination of كلام الله. These organisations rendered and are rendering yeomen services.

- (1) Ādam Publishers and Trust, Koothanallur, Tamil Nadu
- (2) (John Moḥammed Trust) John Trust, Chennai, Tamil Nadu
- (3) Islamic Foundation Trust, Chennai, Tamil Nadu
- (4) Raḥmath Trust, Chennai, Tamil Nadu

Sheikh Ibrāhīm al-Baqavī of Pettai, Thirunelveli had a desire to publish the meanings of the Qur'ān into Tamil language and he spends his wealth for this noble task, with zeal and

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enthusiasm. He printed and published many authentic translations of the meanings of the Qur'ān.

### **Works on Qur'ānic Studies written in Arabic**

#### **Language**

1. **إعجاز القرآن (Iijāz al-Qur'ān)**: This work was written by Dr. P. Nithār Aḥmed, Former Head, Dept of Arabic, Persian & Urdu, University of Madras, Chennai.
  2. **المسعف في لغة إعراب سورة يوسف (al-Mus'if fī Luġhat l'irāb Sūrat-i-Yūsuf)**: The author of this work is Dr. V. 'Abdul Raḥīm, who served as Professor in Arabic, Islamic University, Madīnah Munawwarah, K.S.A and presently serving as the Director of the Qur'ān Printing Complex of Saudi Arabia. The first non-Arab designated as the Director of this noble work in the Arabian territories. From the chapter of Yūsuf of the Qur'ān, the author describes how to learn the language of the Qur'ān through the method of applied Grammar.
  3. **التبيان لحروف لغة القرآن (al-Tibyān li Ḥurūf-i-Luġhat al-Qur'ān)**: This work is also done by Dr. V. 'Abdul Raḥīm. Some Qur'ānic chapters were added in the later part of the book. A reader can easily grasp the Qur'ānic language through this book.
  4. **البدور الغررة في أسماء القراء العشرة (al-Budūr al-Ghurarah fī Asmā'i al-Qurrā' al-'Ashrah)**: This work belongs to Madar-ul-Umarā' 'Abdul Wahhāb al-Madrāsī of Badruddaulah family. This work deals with the method of Qur'ānic recitation and the lives of 30 persons who were well-versed in reciting well accepted ten different tones of the Qur'ān.
  5. **زجر الأمم عن ترجمة القرآن بلسان العجم (Zajr-ul-Umam 'an Tarjamat al-Qur'ān bī Lisān al-'Ajam)**: This is the work of
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Maulānā Zīā'uddīn Aḥmad Amānī Ḥazrath (died in the year 1967). This work elaborates problems in bringing out the translations of the Qur'ān. He emphasised that the Qur'ān should be published with its primary source (Ummahā-tul-Kutub). This is a useful work for the Qur'ānic translators and research scholars on Qur'ānic studies.

6. **تفسير بعض السور (Tafsīr Ba'ḍ al-Suwar)**: Dr. 'Abdul Qādir has written this work. This work has been serving in the syllabi list of Manonmaniam Sundranar University, Thirunelveli District, Tamil Nadu, for the oriental title (Afḍal-ul-'Ulamā') examination in Arabic.
7. **الصلوات القرآنية (al-Ṣalawāt al-Qur'āniyyah)**: Qāḍī Ubaidullāh al-Madrāsī of Badruddaulah family has carried out this work.
8. **رقوم القرآن (Ruqūm al-Qur'ān)**: Sayyid Tājuddīn Tāj has rendered this work.
9. **مطلب الفرقان (Maṭlab al-Fur'qān)**: Moḥammed Maḥdī Waṣṣāf has undertaken this book.
10. **ترجمة يا أيها الناس (Tarjamat Yā Ayyuhā al-Nās)**: It is the work of Jamīl Bāshā al-Madrāsī.
11. **أوضح البيان في أسامي القرآن (Auḍaḥ al-Bayān fī Asāmī al-Qur'ān)**: It is the work of Syed Abū Turāb al-Madrāsī.
12. **نثر المرجان في رسم نظم القرآن (Nathr-ul-Marjān fī Rasm-i-Naẓm al-Qur'ān)**: It is the work of Maulvī Moḥammad Ghauth Sharaf-ul-Mulk Bahādur (1752-1822). It was divided into a *muqaddimah* and two *maqālās*. In the *Muqaddimah*, he discussed the outline of the art of the script of the Qur'ān. The first *Maqālah* is divided into five chapters in which he discussed the important principles in the Qur'ān. The *Muqaddimah* and the first *Maqālah* consists of 93 pages.

The second *Maqālah* deals with the verses of the Qur’ān, chapter by chapter. It was printed by Osmānī Press and published under the auspices of Majlis-i-Ishā’at-ul-‘Ulūm مجلس اشاعت العلوم, Hyderābād in 7 big volumes. (Vol. I. in 710 pages, Vol. II. in 644 pages, Vol. III. in 510 pages, Vol. IV. in 735 pages, Vol. V. in 600 pages, Vol. VI. in 680 pages and Vol. VII. in 798 pages)

Dr. P. Nithār Aḥmed, Former Professor in Arabic, University of Madras has rendered the translation of the meanings of the Qur’ān for three chapters in English. They are al-Kahf, Yāsīn and al-Rūm.

### Tamil Tafsirs (Inside pages)



## Tamil Tafsirs (Inside pages)



### One and Only Commentary in Arabic on Tafsīr written by the Tamil Scholar

The one and only Arabic commentary cum explanatory notes  
on the Arabic commentaries of the Qur'ān is الحواشي على البيضاوي

والدر المنثور. Sheikh Ṣadaqathullāh Appa al-Qādirī al-Shāfi'ī (1042-1115 A.H. / 1632-1703 A.D) has written this valuable Arabic work on Qur'ānic commentary. This work is an explanatory commentarial Qur'ānic work of (i) Tafsīr Anwār al-Tanzīl wa Asrār al-Ta'wīl تفسير أنوار التنزيل وأسرار التأويل written by Imām al-Baiḍāwī / الإمام البيضاوي (ii) الدر المنثور written by Jalāluddīn al-Suyūṭī / الشيخ جلال الدين السيوطي.

The above mentioned information is available on the page no. 11 of the Arabic quarterly *Thaqafat-ul-Hind* (ثقافة الهند), volume: 54, no. 3-4, 2003, published by the ICCR, Govt. of India, New Delhi.

The writer of this article presented a paper in the International seminar entitled "Role of Sheikh Ṣadaqatullāh Appa in the promotion of Qur'ānic Studies in Tamil Nadu" in the year 2012, conducted by the University of Madras on "Tafsīr Literature in the Modern Period".

The writer of this research article also presented a paper entitled "An Analytical Study on Al-Ḥawāshī 'alā al-Baiḍāwī wa Durr al-Manthūr li Sheikh Ṣadaqatullāh Appa al-Qādirī al-Shāfi'ī" دراسة تحليلية على الحواشي على البيضاوي والدر المنثور للشيخ صدقة "الله أبا القاهري الشافعي" in the year 2012, conducted by the Osmānia University, Hyderābād on "The Role of Tafsīr Literature in the Promotion of Indo-Arab Relations".

### **Seminars on Qur'ān (conducted by the Colleges/Universities)**

1. Dept. of Arabic, Jamāl Moḥammed College, Trichy, Tamil Nadu has conducted one Day UGC sponsored seminar on 20<sup>th</sup> December 2011 on the topic "Qur'ān and Science".
  2. Dept. of Arabic, Persian & Urdu, University of Madras, Chennai, has conducted two Day International seminar on 10<sup>th</sup>
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and 11<sup>th</sup> January 2012 on the topic “Tafsīr Literature in the Modern Period”.

3. Dept. of Arabic, The New College, Chennai has conducted one Day UGC sponsored seminar on the 19<sup>th</sup> February 2013 on the topic “Teaching of Arabic Language through Qur’ān and Ḥadīth”.

### **Works on Qur’ānic Studies in Tamil Language**

Tamil scholars of Tamil Nadu have produced more than three hundred works on Qur’ānic studies. Majority of these works got published from:

1. Kaziar Book Depot, Dindukkal, Tamil Nadu
2. Islāmic Foundation Trust, Chennai
3. Universal Publishers, Chennai
4. Bashārath Publishers, Chennai
5. Threeyem Publishers, Chennai
6. Maahin Printers, Chennai
7. Salāmat Publishers, Chennai
8. Sājidah Publishers, Chennai

Some important works on Qur’ānic studies in Tamil Language are as follows:

1. Al-Qur’ān Atthaatchi (Proof of al-Qur’ān)
  2. Al-Qur’ān Thagaval Kalanjiam (Encyclopaedia on the Qur’ānic Studies)
  3. Al-Qur’ān Vasanangal Arulapatta Kaaranangal (Reasons for the Revelations of Qur’ānic Verses)
  4. Al-Qur’ānil Allah Solvathanna? (What Allah says in the Qur’ān?)
  5. Arputhak kalanjiam Al-Qur’ān (Miraculous Work al-Qur’ān)
  6. Arul Marai Quraanum Ariviyal Kandupidipukalum (Divine Al-Qur’ān and Scientific Discoveries)
  7. Qur’ān Bodhanaigal (Teachings of the Qur’ān)
  8. Qur’ān Koorum Narpathu Vishayangal (Description of
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Forty Matters in the Qur'ān)

9. Qur'ān Koorum Bani Israyeel (Description of Banī Isra'el)
  10. Qur'ān Koorum Christhavam (Description of Christianity in the Qur'ān)
  11. Qur'ān Koorum Nabimaargal Varalaaru (Description of the Stories of the Prophets in the Qur'ān)
  12. Qur'ān Koorum Pengal (Mention of Women in the Qur'ān)
  13. Qur'ān Koorum Seeriya Kudumbam (Description of Ideal Family in the Qur'ān)
  14. Qur'ān Koorum Sorgam Naragam (Mention of Paradise and Hell in the Qur'ān)
  15. Qur'ān Oliyil Vignnaanam (Science in the Light of the Qur'ān)
  16. Qur'ānnum Naveena Vignnaanamum (The Qur'ān and Modern Sciences)
  17. Qur'ānnum Vaaniyalum (The Qur'ān and Astronomy)
  18. Thiru Qur'ān Iyarkai Maruthuvam (Natural Medical Healing in the Qur'ān)
  19. Thiru Qur'ānic Ullatakkam (Contents of the Qur'ān)
  20. Qur'ān Oliyil Bibilum Quraanum (Bible and the Qur'ān in the Qur'ānic Perspective)
  21. Vedavarigalum Thootharmozhigalum (Divine Wordings/the Qur'ān and Sayings of the Prophet/Ḥadīth)
  22. Arul Maraiyin Naangu Aadhaarach Chorgal (Four Chief Words of al-Qur'ān)
  23. Tafsīr Yāsīn
  24. Iraivanai Patri Iraimarai (Mention of God on al-Qur'ān)
  25. Iraimarai Patri Iraimarai (Mention of the Qur'ān in the Qur'ān)
  26. Irai Thoothargal Patri Iraimarai (Mention of the Prophets in the Qur'ān)
  27. Vaanmarai Selvam (Heavenly Qur'ān)
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28. Mikka Melaanavan (Meaning of Translation of Surathul a'alá in Tamil)

**Conclusion:**

In brief, the Qur'ān is the divine Book of Allah who knows the past, the present and the future in complete. There are information and incidents of the past, present and future in the Qur'ān. It consists of commands and interdiction, and internal and external things. Man knows mere what he heard and read of the past and a little from the present.

The human knowledge is not perfect and right unless it is related to Allah. Therefore, it is impossible for one to translate and interpret a book like the Qur'ān that consists of the past, present and future, to any language. The translator should acknowledge that the Qur'ān is the speech of Allah who knows every things of the world internally and externally. Therefore, it may be concluded with the saying of Allah: "Say: If the ocean be the ink for the words of my Lord, sooner the ocean is exhausted than would the words of my Lord, even if we added another ocean like it, for its aid". (al-Kahf: 109)

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## Study of the Qur'ān in Bengali Language (Other than Translations and Commentaries)

Dr. Md. Ashraf Hossain<sup>1</sup>

The study of the Qur'ān began directly in Bengal in the first decade of 19<sup>th</sup> century. In those days the economic, social and political conditions of the Muslim population were extremely critical. Likewise, their religious affairs were also overwhelmed by the deadly misunderstanding and superstitions. To overcome these problems the then Islamic scholars and theologians grabbed deep study of the Qur'ān as one of the important solutions. They thought that without the Qur'ān teaching betterment of the Muslim society in particular would not be possible. Besides this, according to them, the great teaching of Islam, through exercise, would be possible to be saved, and this way the study of the Qur'ān begun.<sup>2</sup> To add the study of the Qur'ān means translation, explanation and science of the Qur'ān including method of the recitation including the articles and books related to the Qur'ān.

In this article only 90 books have been introduced which played great role in the spread of Qur'ānic teaching in Bengal, both West Bengal and Bangladesh for long period and even till now they have been offering great service to promote the Qur'ānic study. However, vast elaboration of those books have not been given rather brief introduction has been propounded with care and caution. It is also worthy to mention that the writings other

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<sup>2</sup> Dr Mujibur Raḥmān, Study of the Holy Qur'ān in Bengali Language, Islamic Foundation, Dhaka, 1986. P. 492.

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than books like articles related to the Qur'ān published in daily, weekly, fortnightly magazines and newspapers have not yet been mentioned here. However, it is immensely expected that the readers may get from this essay an overall picture of the Qur'ānic study done in Bengali language other than translation and vast explanation of the Divine Book. Moreover, we admit humbly that all the books written in the concerned topic could not be mentioned in this brief article. Only it has shed light on those 90 books which are most popular and important as well. These are as bellow:

1. **Qur'ān pather fal:** This is one of the earliest books on the "Faḍīlah" of reciting the Qur'ān. It has only five pages. But writer's name was not mentioned anywhere in this important work. Similarly, the year of its publication is also not found though the writer's account gives clues of its publication before 1800. Here the writer discussed the virtue i'e Faḍīlah of the 30<sup>th</sup> part of the Qur'ān. For instance, he mentioned that our eye power would increase if we recite sūrah Naba three times a day. However, this small book is important and adds something to the existing literature.
  2. **Qur'ān Kalāmullāh wa Khawāṣṣ-ul-Qur'ān:** This is one of the oldest books deals with the faḍīlah of reciting the Qur'ān. Mīr Muḥammad Wāḥid 'Alī is the author of this book. This book was published in 1868. Publisher's name was not given on the title of the book. Therefore, the publisher's name is also unknown to us. Total number of page is 185. At present this book is seen to be preserved in the central library of Chhattagram University of Bangladesh. This book is divided into 115 sections. According to the writer, every sūrah has separate virtue (faḍīlah). So we should give focus upon them so that the readers may get extra spiritual energy which insists upon
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reading the Qur'ān regularly. This is why I discussed them in my loveliest".<sup>1</sup> But it is mention worthy here that many descriptions regarding faḍīlah given in this book are not authentic according to the reliable sources. For example, he proclaimed that if any person, who is suffering from any critical disease, recites this book three hundred and twenty one times for forty days, he must be completely cured by the virtue of this book.<sup>2</sup> Unquestionable, this type of claim is a kind of superstitions because no proof from the Qur'ān and Sunnah is behind these sentences. However, in spite of some irrational descriptions this book has enough value because in maximum cases he tried to unveil the faḍīlah which was not seen earlier in any book.

3. **Khawāṣṣ-ul-Qur'ān:** This book was written by Mīr Wāḥid 'Alī and was published in 1868. The publisher's name is also missing here. Total number of page is 184. This book deals with the faḍīlah of the Qur'ān in poetic shape.
4. **Nimae Qur'ān:** This is an informative book written by Maulānā Naṣīruddīn Aḥmad which was published in 1872 from Kolkātā. This book deals with the faḍīlah of the Qur'ān and merits of specific sūrah.
5. **Zīnat-ul-Qārī:** This book deals with the methodology of reciting the Qur'ān. It was authored by Maulānā Muḥammad Naṣīruddīn and Maulānā Muḥammad Ḥādhiq alais Ṣādiq 'Alī. It was published in 1878 from Jessor city of Bangladesh.
6. **Qur'ān o Ḥadīther Bakhya:** This book deals with the moral teachings of the Devine Book and Prophetic traditions. The writer of this book is Maulānā Sūfī Miyān Jān Kāmalī. This made him famous and established as the Islamic writer all over Bengal. This valuable book was published in 1893 from

<sup>1</sup> Mīr Muḥammad Wāḥid 'Alī, *Khawāṣṣ-ul-Qur'ān*, P.4.

<sup>2</sup>.Ibid, P. 181

Aḥmadia Press of Momenshahi (presently in Bangladesh). Indeed thousands of people quenched their thirst after studying the Islamic moral teachings and practice mentioned in this prolific book. It contains 588 pages. It is to say that hundreds of ulama praised the writer and regarded him as one of the notable writers. It is also true that no such useful book has ever been published in Bengal.

7. **Pabitra Qur'āner Satyata:** Unquestionably this was one of the pioneer books regarding the Qur'ānic exercise in Bengali language. It was published from Dhākā in 1895. Its writer is Sayīd 'Abdul Ghaffār. He tried to prove that all teachings of the Qur'ān were entirely descended by the Almighty.<sup>1</sup> Total number of page of this book is 80. However, it is matter of sadness that this book is not available in the market at present.
8. **Zolekhā:** This book is a fine story book on Zulaikhā based on sūrah Yūsuf. The writer of this book is Munshī 'Abdul Laṭīf Bardhamani. It is the pioneer book in Bengali which deals with the sweet story collecting form. This book was published in 1910 from Kolkātā. It is said that Sir Ashutosh Mukhopādhyā, Former V.C. of Calcutta University appreciated this book.
9. **Qur'āner Upodesh:** Maulānā Muḥammad 'Abdul Wāḥid penned down this valuable book. This book deals with the meanings of those verses which contain moral teachings for the mankind. It was published in 1911 from Noakhali of Bangladesh.
10. **Qāri-ul-Qur'ān:** Perhaps this is the first book published in Bengali which deals completely with the science of the Qur'ān specially the method of reciting the Qur'ān was rightly dealt with. However, this valuable book became so popular that almost all elementary and primary Madrasah

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<sup>1</sup> Muḥammad 'Abdur Razzāq, Islamic Books in Bengali, P. 88.

of Bengal have excluded it in its curriculum. It was published first in 1911 from Imdādiyah Library of Dhākā.

11. **Qur'āner Du'ā:** This is a small book containing the Du'ā (Prayers) of the Qur'ān particularly. It was written by Maulānā Muḥammad 'Uthmān Ghanī and was published in 1914 from Kolkātā. The writer also translated all the verses which he gathered in his book as the Qur'ānic Du'ā so that the readers may get extra interest to chant them.
12. **Tajwīd-ul-Qur'ān:** This small book deals with the furnishing and decorating of the sūrah and verses in the Holy Book with great care and caution. Writer's name is Maulānā Abū Bakr who was a lover of the divine Book. This was published in 1923 from Dhākā. Although the size of this book is not so big as it was completed only within 96 pages, its importance is unimaginable because the subject matter which this book had, has not yet been encompassed by any writer before it in Bengali.<sup>1</sup> Again as the first writer he had to be more cautious to accomplish this book. In fact it was not so easy to deal with it because he did not get any previous knowledge from any relevant Bengali book. However, this book showed a new ray of information regarding the method of reciting the Qur'ān. So the credit of being the pioneer in the concerned subject must go to the writer of this book. Till now many editions have been published which is, undoubtedly, a testimonial of its popularity.
13. **Qur'āner Mahā Shiksha:** This is a very informative book in all aspects. The writer of this book is Muḥammad Idrīs 'Alī. He was a graduate in formal education. But he bore keen interest in Islamic learning. So, he learnt Arabic, Persian, and Urdu very well. Besides, he acquired sufficient knowledge of English too. Even he could translate the Qur'ān and Sunnah

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<sup>1</sup> Study of the Qur'ān in Bengali Language (Dr. Mujībūr Raḥmān). P. 53.

from the original Arabic text into Bengali. In this book he presented the nice translation of sūrah Fātiḥah, then he discussed the basic teachings of Islam like Prayer, Fasting, Pilgrimage to Makkah, Zakāt, good ethics etc. in the light of the Qur’ān and Prophetic traditions. In short if anybody wants to know the Islamic teaching at a glance, he may consult this book. According to the reliable sources this book is nothing but a treatise. It was divided into three volumes. For the first time, it was published from Rājshāhī of Bangladesh in 1923. This book was so prolific that it got good response just after publication that can be justified in a word that within very short period all copies were sold. So, it was demanded to be published in 1927. Again in 1934 its third edition was brought into light with addition of a new part entitled “Ḥadīth Prokrito Shiksha”. This edition was made in 1948 in which the preface was written by prominent scholar Dr. Muḥammad Shahīdullāh, the then Professor of Dhākā University.

14. **Tartīb-ul-Qur’ān:** This book was written by Maulānā Muḥammad Ḥabībullah which deals with the method of reading the Qur’ān through brief discussion with great care and caution. It was published in 1923 from Barishal of Bangladesh.
15. **Qur’āner Du’ā:** Before this book nobody compiled a book on Qur’ānic the Du’ās in Bengali language. Maulwī Naqībuddīn did it for the first time in Bengal. This valuable book was published in 1925 from Kolkātā. It has four volumes. Till now about fifteen editions have been made which, without any doubt, is the clear acknowledgement of its excellence and vast popularity of both Bengals.<sup>1</sup>
16. **Qur’ān Tataya:** It is a wonderful work on the Qur’ānic studies. It was written by Mr. Mubīnuddīn Aḥmad. Though

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<sup>1</sup> Bengal Library Catalogue, Year 1925.



he did not get the Islamic learning in any madrasah, he had good knowledge of the Qur'ān and the prophetic traditions. He learnt Arabic, Persian, and Urdu privately. His house was like a library containing thousands of books of different topics. However, he completed this book in six volumes which was published in 1925. The first volume deals with the mystery of world creation, history of ancient prophets and their valuable exemplary activities. The writer discussed in the second volume the Israelite prophets and their significant advices to their apostles. Beside, the news of advent of the last prophet Muḥammad has been given by previous prophets, was also described in this volume. In the third volume the idealistic teachings of the Prophet were mentioned. Several Ḥadīths were also included to it which are related to the common teachings. In the 4th volume the writer gave the history of Islam focusing on the lives and history of pious caliphs and specific Muslim dynasties. In the 5th volume the right Islamic rituals i.e. Ṣalāh, Ṣaum, Ḥajj, Zakāt etc. were discussed. In the 6<sup>th</sup> and last volume the writer described the Qur'ānic orders and prohibitions with original Arabic text. It is note-worthy that the writer Mr. Mubīnuddīn Aḥmad was not led by emotion rather he finished this voluminous work humbly and sincerely.

17. **Qur'āne-o-Ḥadīther Upodeshaboli:** This very book was written by prominent Islamic theologian Maulānā Sheikh 'Abdur Raḥīm. The Qur'ānic and the prophetic aspects towards the good works are discussed beautifully in this book. It was published in 1926 from Makhdūmī Library of Kolkātā. Though it is not available in the market.<sup>1</sup>
18. **Shams-ul-Qur'ān:** This book deals with the method and grammar of reading the Qur'ān. Though it is very small in

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<sup>1</sup> Mumtāzur Raḥmān Tarafdar, Books of Sheikh 'Abdur Raḥīm, Dhāka, P. 260.

size having 80 pages merely, its significance is understood. Because when it was published in 1926 ninety per cent Bengali Muslims were in dark from the light of learning the Tajwīd-ul-Qur'ān. Only a few persons paid their attention to this sector. As a result correct reading and recitation were not followed properly. Having considered this deadly situation, some writers penned down some books on this subject. No doubt, this book added a new flavor to this series. However, this book was published from Kumilla (presently in Bangladesh).

19. **Qur'āner Du'ā:** This book was written by famous Islamic writer Maulānā Muḥammad Badruddoja Chowdhury who devoted himself to serve the learning. This book contains blessing and gracing chants of the Qur'ān with Bengali translation which got popularity just after it was published in 1926 from Chattagram of Bangladesh. This is very small book in size as it has only 14 pages.<sup>1</sup>
20. **Qur'āne Narir Mullo:** The Qur'ān gives rational and real value of the women. But being biased or ignorant many others try to blacken Islam not to give the women their right to freedom rather Islam compels them to follow the comments of their partners. So according to them Islam is nothing but oppressive parts for women. Maulānā 'Abdul Majīd proved in this book that Islam preserves the women's various rights as right of economic, right of education, right of thinking, right of opinion etc.. This book was published in 1927 from Kolkātā. Undoubtedly this book succeeded to stare up the Bengali people because it opened the new doors of their thinking regarding the Islamic views of women.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Monthly Sadhana-July-1929. P. 144.

<sup>2</sup> Dr. Anīsuzzamān, Literary Magazines of Bengali Muslims, PP. 442.

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21. **Al-Qur'ān:** This is also a praiseworthy effort of Maulānā Shahādat Hussain Farrokh. This book contains translation of the concerned verses from the Qur'ān. It was published in 1928 from Muḥammadi Press of Kolkātā. It was not complete translation of the Qur'ān, rather he collected different verses concerning the selected topics then he made their translation. Prominent Islamic scholar Maulwī Muḥammad Rūḥul Amīn said, 'His language is artistic and comprehensible for people of all levels. He tried to produce the Qur'ānic ideology before the people through comprehensive ways which resulted in this unprecedented effort.'<sup>1</sup> This book covers 13 topics which are 'the authenticity', 'Faith and Good doing', 'Unfaith and its Punishment', 'Following of Allah and His Messenger', 'Unity', 'Ṣalāh', 'Zakāh', 'Fasting', 'Pilgrimage', 'Taking usury', 'Charity', 'Marriage', 'Purdah', 'Endurance and its reward' etc.
22. **Qur'ān Sharīfer Upodesh:** This book deals with the verses and events, including stories on the moral teachings. Maulānā Muḥammad Sulaimān is the writer of this valuable book that contains only 96 pages. It was published in 1928 from Dhākā. The writer left no stones unturned to make this book as informative and qualitative. Though it is not outwardly big in size, it has succeeded to quench the thirst of learning about the concerned subject. Indeed in those days the maximum Muslims faced numerous superstitions which they were unknowingly practicing in the name of Islam. Maulānā Muhammed Sulaimān tried his best to show them the correct Islamic teachings. This book is the praise worthy endeavor of his thinking and long labor.

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<sup>1</sup> Monthly, April 1930.

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23. **Qur'āner Galpo Guchho:** This valuable book was written by Maulānā Muḥammad 'Ābid 'Alī who was an Inspector of Kumilla School Board. He took both the formal and religious education simultaneously. It was published in 1931 from Bagura of Bangladesh which contains 138 pages. It is true that Maulānā 'Ābid 'Alī succeeded to give beautiful present of the Qur'ānic stories. His language is very simple and artistic. The expression is praiseworthy. This book was published three times within 20 years after its first edition appeared in 1931.
24. **Qur'āner Alo:** This book was written by famous Islamic scholar Maulānā Muḥammad Azharuddīn. It was published in 1931 from Farīdpūr of Bangladesh. Total number of page is 156. In fact the writer tried to focus on those topics which are needed for the human society. He said in its preface that 'I am not a literary man and I have not any intention to make me famous among the people, I only want to search the core teachings of the Qur'ān. So that the people can be able to make their daily life free from disquieted situation and to make it peaceful'.<sup>1</sup>
25. **Qur'ān-O-Ḥadīther Upodeshabali:** This prolific book was written by prominent Islamic researcher Khān Bahādur Aḥsānullāh in 1931 from Kolkātā. According to him, 'I wanted to understand the Islamic Knowledge deeply in the light of the Qur'ān. Besides it, our sacred duty to show the people immortality of Islamic teachings as the divine one. So, I have penned down this book.'<sup>2</sup> The writer took 49 pages to finish this important book. This is an unprecedented book as the writer tried his best to make it widely acceptable to the people irrespective of casts and

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<sup>1</sup> Maulānā Azharuddīn. Preface of Qur'āner Alo.

<sup>2</sup> Preface - Qur'ān-O-Ḥadiser Upodeshaboly.

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creeds. Markedly, Khān Bahādur Aḥsānullāh was highly educated in formal learning. He was Assistant Director of Education in undivided Bengal. So, he had the clear concept about the people of various sectors of the society. He wrote this book considering the request of those people. This is why it is considered a significant and prominent book to make the people acquainted with the Qur'ānic learning in the concerned field.<sup>1</sup>

26. **Qur'āner Mangal:** This book was written by Maulānā Sayyid Abul Maṣūf and was published in 1935 from Kolkātā. It was a good compilation of moral teachings mentioned in the Qur'ān in its different parts. He wrote on the object of writing this book that 'my intention is to break up the long lasting deadly sleep of the nation'. According to him this small book must be successful remedy for the Muslim's uncountable historical problems.<sup>2</sup>
27. **Qur'ān-o-Rajnity:** This is a significant book that deals with the political aspects of the Qur'ān. The writer also successfully tried to prove through this book that the politics of Islam is superior to any other theory plasticized in the world. This book was written by eminent Muslim reformist Maulānā Muḥammad Munīruzzamān Islāmābādī who had mastery over Arabic, Persian, Urdu and Bengali. He joined as a freedom-fighter too after finishing his formal education from Alia Madrasah of Kolkātā. However, he was an original thinker as was considered as a motivational and most powerful leader of the then Bengali Muslim. His column was published in al-Ahrām of Egypt and al-Manār. Moreover, the book "Qur'ān-o-Rajnity" was published in 1935 from Kolkātā

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<sup>1</sup> Khān Bahādur Mubārak 'Alī – An Introduction Khān Bahādur Aḥsānullāh, PP. 10–11.

<sup>2</sup> Preface, Qur'ān Mangal.

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which succeeded to open a new door before the modern educated society of Bengal. Because none could show the strong and authentic political theory particularly in Bengal before Maulānā Munīruzzamān Islāmābādī.

28. **Qur'āner Kathā:** This book was a significant work which succeeded to capture the attentions of a good number of Bengali readers from all corners. It was written by Maulānā Muḥammad 'Abdul Wahhāb Ṣiddīq who was a successful writer of about one dozen Islamic books. This book was published in 1935 from Makhdūmī Library of Kolkātā. It contains 59 pages. It deals with the interesting occurrences of many prophets mentioned in the Qur'ān. The writer himself said that he used to recite the divine book regularly. Besides, there are invaluable teachings in those events which are more useful for the human beings. This is why the Islamic scholars should pen down those teachings full of true stories for the people. These thinkings led him to write down this beautiful book.<sup>1</sup> This book contains 8 stories. However, it was very popular among the Bengali Muslims for which it was repeatedly published after its first edition appeared in 1935.
29. **Qur'āner Bani:** This book was written by Maulānā Ra'īsuddīn who versified the main teachings of the Qur'ān nicely. It was published in 1935. He mentioned there important teachings and then he translated it into poetic form. It was brought out from Kolkātā. Excluding six pages of preface it contains 69 pages. In fact, this book bore the best result of his laborious endeavour and studious practice in Qur'ān.
30. **Mī'rāj Nāmāh:** This book was written by famous writer Maulānā Muḥammad Abū Bakr. This was published in 1936

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<sup>1</sup> Abul Wahhāb Ṣiddīq - In the sea bank of the memories, P. 7.

from Kolkātā. In this book the writer collected all the verses in which the events of Mi'rāj was described. Then he translated them into poetic form. The Bengali readers got interested into it because the method of expression was very attractive. And the impact of this book was long lasting into the hearts of Bengali Muslims. Therefore, they used to recite the lines and stanzas of this very book. But it is the matter of sorrow that at present this book is not available in any library.

31. **Qur'āner Abhidhan:** This valuable book was written by Maulānā Muḥammad 'Ābid 'Alī. Perhaps this is one of the pioneer writings in the concerned topics in Bengali. It was published in 1938. He gathered important and tough words of the Qur'ān in this book. Then he turned them into Bengali language. Near about three thousand words were placed in this book. The value of this book can be estimated that the students and teachers of Arabic literature and Islamic theology welcomed its publication. This work reflects his deep love for the Qur'ānic study.
  32. **Qur'āner Sār:** This is the third invaluable book of Khān Bahādur Aḥsānullāh which contains the topical decoration of the Qur'ānic verses correctly. Islamic theory of domestic life, social theory, religious theory and many other necessary theories were discussed through the light of the Qur'ān directly. Apart from it the seasoned writer included the history of various prophets who were mentioned in the Qur'ān with their teachings. The Islamic laws of inheritance were discussed elaborately during the discussion of sūrah Nisā'. It was another distinction that the then Minister of Education of Bengal Government A.K. Fazlul Ḥaq wrote a beautiful preface in English which increased the wide acceptance of this book. Then a prolonged preface in Bengali was written by Shamsul 'Ulamā' Maulānā Maḥzar,
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former Principal of Kolkātā Aliah Madrasah. Again the final manuscript was reviewed by prominent theologian Maulānā ‘Abdul Wahhāb Şiddīqī. This short book became a prolific source of Qur’ānic knowledge. It may be rightly said that if anyone wants to know Islamic fundamentals shortly without reading all parts of the Qur’ān, he must consult it. However, it contains 284 pages and it was published for the first time in 1938.<sup>1</sup>

33. **Qur’ān Prosongo:** This was undoubtedly a radiant work of Dr. Muḥammad Shahīdullah, ever first Asian who got the Doctoral Award in Sanskrit and Prakrit language. It is said that he got M.A. degree in 18 Languages specially Arabic, Urdu, Sanskrit, Bengali, French, German and Persian that were well-known to him. Even he became the General Secretary of Karachi Urdu Development Board in 1938. The available sources state that he was allowed to be admitted to Calcutta University as M.A. student of Sanskrit Pandits of Bengali. The then prominent Professors in Sanskrit Satyabroto Sama Sroyee and Bahuballaver Shastri and many others strictly denied to teach him because, according to their opinion, Shahīdullāh was a non-Hindu student, he was a Jabon. The sacred Veda would be unholy through him. As a result, the then V.C. Sir Ashutos Mukhopadhyaya advised him to sit in M.A. examination as Private candidate but, Shahīdullāh refused to be a private candidate. This is why he had to leave this University for Shorbon University of Paris taking scholarship for his high degree in Sanskrit.<sup>2</sup> After finishing his study he became Professor of Bengali and Sanskrit in Dhākā University. Probably above-said discussion

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<sup>1</sup> Souvenir on Ḥaḍrat Khān Bahādur Aḥsānullāh, Dhākā, 1971, PP. 16 - 20 .

<sup>2</sup> Dr.Suniti Kumar Chattapadhyaya - Remembrance of Great Man Kolkātā, P. 172.

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would be irrelevant but it is possible to think the lair of quality of his works. It is his fortune that despite academic background he succeeded to be a successful author and wrote the book "Qur'ān Proshongo" which was published in 1970 from Dhākā. Total number of its pages is 143. This book contains 14 invaluable topics which are: (1) The Qur'ān and Science (2) The Qur'ān and Astronomy (3) The Qur'ān and Rebirth (4) Reality of Sorrows in the Qur'ān (5) The Qur'ān and War System (6) The Descending Date of the Qur'ān and Shab-i-Qur'ān (7) The Punishment of the Hell in the Qur'ān (8) Translation of Qur'ān (9) Qur'ān the Garden of Knowledge (10) The Number of Qur'ānic Verses (11) Greatness of the Qur'ān (12) Translating Method of the Qur'ān (13) Nāsikh and Mansūkh in the Qur'ān (14) Morality of the Qur'ān. Its long preface was written by Former Head Maulānā of Kolkātā Aliah Madrasah Shams-ul-Ulamā' Maulānā Belait Ḥossain. In fact this book is like a mine of Qur'ānic Knowledge. Each article bears complete solution of concerned matters.

34. **Qur'āne Shadhinotar Bani:** This book was written by Maulānā Munīruzzamān Islāmābādī. The verses in which the theory of various kinds of freedom is discussed have been placed in this book. It was published in 1939 from Kolkātā. No doubt it was an unprecedented work in the concerned topic. It must be said that this book reflects deep Islamic formal knowledge of the writer.
35. **Qur'ān Parichoy:** This book was written by Maulānā Sheikh Abū Aḥmad and was brought out in 1940 from Kolkātā. This is a unique book according to the age. The writer described in it the subject matter of each Rukū' which are most relevant. Besides he included a complete content in which we get the number and page of
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discussing subject. Moreover, the principles of Tajwīd were also discussed with great caution and care. It was first published in 1940. It contains 92 pages.<sup>1</sup>

36. **Qur'āner Alo:** This book was written by a prominent Islamic scholar Maulānā Muḥammad Mīzānur Raḥmān. It deals with essence of the Qur'ān as regards moral teachings of Islam. It was published in 1944 from Kolkātā. Total number of its page excluding the preface and advertisement is 112. It is worthy to mention here that the writer used enormous Urdu, Hindi, Persian and Arabic words in this book. Though he offered apology for it, he said, 'assimilation of words of other language is not the name of weakness but it is the marks of diversity'.<sup>2</sup> Perhaps this remark is true but it will not be denied that this hotchpotch type mixing of many languages in elaborating the Qur'ān is not more suitable for the ordinary readers. However, in spite of some demerits, this book had a lot to spread the Islamic knowledge.
37. **Pabitra Qur'āner Puto Kathat:** It was written by Dr. Quḍrat-i-Kḥudā and was published in 1945 from Kolkātā. It contains 84 pages. This book deals with the importance of Tasfīr in the light of modern science. According to the reliable source, Dr. Quḍrat-i-Kḥudā was not Madrasah educated author. So he possessed little knowledge of Arabic language. As a result, some times he could not follow the way of previous Islamic chapters. Allah (the Almighty), Messengers and Prophet including prophetic activities. In every line he kept the marks of his independent thinking. According to him, if we explain the Qur'ānic verses considering the present social aspect then

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<sup>1</sup> Bengal Library Catalogue, 1940.

<sup>2</sup> Preface - Qur'āner Alo.

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the people can get more benefits from it. So we should not need to follow our previous books every moment. But the result of his open-thinking was not favourable for Islamic readers as was explained. As in different places he made many blunders which may harm our faith if we support and follow his opinions. For instance, he said, 'Satan Iblis has no independent existence and the theory of his aliveness till the Day of Judgment is not true rather it's unjust according to our rational argument. Because on animal can be immortal for such long period.<sup>1</sup> He also claimed in his book that the angle Gabriel did not come to the Prophet in the shape of a man.<sup>2</sup> Thus, in spite of his laborious and studious efforts, this book went in vain to impress the Muslims of Bengal.

38. **Qur'āner Shiksha:** This is the fourth book of Khān Bahādur Aḥsānullāh which also got vast popularity among the Bengali Muslims in particular. It was published in 1947 from Dhākā. It contains 80 pages. This book is useful to know various moral teachings from the Divine Book.<sup>3</sup>
39. **Qur'āner Bani-o-Ekottobad:** This book was written by Khān Bahādur Aḥsānullāh. The first edition was published in 1947 from Kolkātā. The writer explained the monotheism chiefly in the light of the Qur'ān. This was appraisable effort in the concerned subject. It got the wide circulation among the Bengali people.
40. **Qur'āner Kahini:** It was written by Maulānā Ishāq and was published in 1949 from Rājsāhī of Bangladesh containing two volumes in approximately 310 pages. This book great impact on the readers. This book is now available only in some libraries and personal collections.

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<sup>1</sup> Pabitra Qur'āner Put-O-Katha, P. 16.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid, P. 46.

<sup>3</sup> Souvenir on Ḥaḍrat Khān Bahadur Aḥsānullāh, Dhākā, 1971, P. 17.

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41. **Qur'āner Kathā:** It was written by the prominent Islamic thinker Maulānā Abū Ḍuḥá Nūr Aḥmad which was published in 1951. It contains 50 pages. Its several editions were printed which prove the popularity of this book.<sup>1</sup>
42. **Qur'āner Sankhptosar:** This book is really a glorious work done by eminent Islamic scholar Maulānā Muḥammad Anīsur Raḥmān. He gave a brief summary of 114 sūrahs of the Qur'ān in it. He also discussed the central theme of each 'Rukū' and many important verses. When Dr. Muḥammad Mujībūr Raḥmān undertook a long research in this field he said that no one did write such a book in Bengali before Maulānā Anīsur Raḥmān. This is why he is the champion of his age. Again the content is also interesting enough.<sup>2</sup> This was published in 1955 from Momen Sahi of Bangladesh. It contains 91 pages excluding 8 pages of the preface and publishing details. Let it also be said that the writer Maulānā Anīsur Raḥmān was the obedient disciple of Maulānā Aḥmad 'Alī Lāhorī who was the most famous Mufassir of Indian sub-continent to complete this book. Maulānā Anīsur Raḥmān took maximum help from this teacher while he was writing this book. He covered short notes delivered by Maulānā Lāhorī to enrich the value and acceptance of this book. This book is really an index of the Qur'ān so it was accepted by the Muslims across Bengal.
43. **Qur'āner Bani-o-Paramhanser Ukti:** This small book was also written by Khān Bahādur Aḥsānullāh which contains only 38 pages subjecting the most valuable teachings of the Book and moral sayings of the Prophet Muḥammad (PBUH). It was first published from Dhākā in 1956. According to Dr. Md. Mujībūr Raḥmān, around half a

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<sup>1</sup> Islām in Bengali Literature, P. 959.

<sup>2</sup> The Study of the Holy Qur'ān in Bengali Language, P. 385.

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dozen books were written by Khān Bahādur Aḥsānullāh subjecting the Qur'ānic study. All though it is not to be denied that the literary and artistic value of his writing is not so high, it has immense contribution in spreading the Qur'ānic learning among the Bengali speaking people chiefly when the books based on the Qur'ān were insufficient. Perhaps this unavailability of concerned books, in sufficient number, was the main cause behind the popularity of Khān Bahādur Aḥsānullāh's books.<sup>1</sup>

44. **Qur'ān Charcha Sahai:** This is a valuable book in the Qur'ānic study series which deals with the method and science through which the Qur'ān could be learnt easily and correctly. It was written by Maulānā Sheikh Abū Aḥmad and was published in 1966 from Dhākā. It contains a total of 92 pages.
45. **Qiṣaṣ-ul-Qur'ān:** This book is another colorful feather of the crown of Qur'ānic Study in Bengali language. This book was written by Maulānā Nūruddīn Aḥmad and was published in 1967 from Barishal of Banglādesḥ. We have no further information about it.
46. **Qur'ān Paker Suchi:** The central theme of this book reflects in its name. It was written by Maulānā Khurshīd 'Alī which was published 1974 from Bagura of Bangladesḥ. Total number of its pages is 123.
47. **Qur'ān Prochar:** This is a monthly magazine which was started in 1967 from Kolkātā. Maulānā A.T.M. Rafīqul Ḥasan was the Editor-in-chief and Founder of this historical magazine. Some years ago he died but his sons continue printing this magazine. From the beginning, this magazine has been playing a great role in the spread of the Qur'ānic knowledge in Bengal. It publishes only research

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<sup>1</sup> Dr. Mujībūr Raḥmān, Study of the Total Qur'ān in Bengali Language, P. 341.

articles. So this magazine got wide popularity as it contains special features and qualities on the Holy Book which are rarely found in any other magazine. But now-a-days its owners face critical financial crisis.

48. **Pabitra Qur'āner Ayat-O-Manusher Jibon:** This is an excellent production of Maulānā Badruddoja Chowdhury. It deals with the solutions of Divine Book regarding critical problems of human beings. It was published in 1977 from Dhākā. It is also true that no such useful book has ever been published in Bengal so far.
49. **Qur'āner Jiyoti:** It was written by Maulānā Badruddoja Chowdhuri who already had become well-known as the contributor of Qur'ānic studies. This book was published in 1979 from Dhākā. It was published from Islamic Foundation of Bangladesh a famous publisher of Islamic books. This organization does not publish any less important or less qualitative book. The writer here tried his best to discuss elaborately the core teachings of the Qur'ān through simple method. If anybody wants to know the Islamic teachings at a glance, he may consult this book.<sup>1</sup>
50. **Pabitro Qur'āner Sar Sankhep:** This book was written by the prolific Islamic writer Maulānā Mohiyuddīn Khān and was published by Islamic Foundation of Dhākā in 1980. Maulānā Khān mainly followed the book of famous Muffassir Maulānā Muḥammad 'Allāmah Yār Khān "Khulāsat-ul-Qur'ān". Perhaps this book was the principal source. The total number of its pages is 128. Maulānā Khān was an experienced writer. As a result, a huge response was seen just after its publication in 1980. Its more than 20 editions were published after the first edition which is the

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<sup>1</sup> Study of the Holy Qur'ān in Bengali Language (Dr. Muḥammad Mujībūr Raḥmān), P. 299.

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vivid testimonial of its value among many books in the series of Qur'ānic literature of Bengal.<sup>1</sup>

51. **Qur'ān-o-Tafsirer Itibritta:** This is undoubtedly a pioneer book in the Qur'ānic literature written in Bengali language. It was written by famous Islamic writer of Bengal Prof. Sheikh Ainul Bārī Aliawī and was published in 1980 from Kolkātā containing 148 pages. He dedicated this valuable book to one of his great teachers 'Allāmah 'Ubaidullāh Raḥmānī the Asia's legend Muḥaddiths of A'zamgarh, as a mark of deep love and affection. Maulānā Ainul Bārī Aliawī contributed a lot to the development of Tafsīr literature.
52. **Musalmander Nikot al-Qur'āner Dabi:** In fact, it is the Bengali translation of Urdu book named "Musalmānu Par Qur'ān-i-Majīd ki Huqūq" written by renowned Islamic scholar of Pākistān Dr. Isrār Aḥmad. This book has 61 pages which deals with the duty and responsibility of Muslims regarding the Qur'ān. This valuable translation was done by Abū Tāhir Muḥammad Ṣāliḥ. This Bengali translation was first published in 1985 from Professor's Book Corner of Dhākā. The writer finished this book basing it on five topics which are according to him the main commandments of the Qur'ān to the Muslims and those are – 1) Faith and Honor .2) Recitation. 3) Discussion and Thinking. 4) Orders and Establishment and 5) Preaching among the mankind. Without any doubt we must get a new horizon regarding the study of the Qur'ān through this invaluable book. Till now more than two editions were made.
53. **Sūrah Fātiḥar Moulik Shiksha:** This small book deals with the main teachings of the sūrah Fātiḥah. It was written by Khondokar Abul Khair who got wide fame and popularity as the creative Islamic writer in Bengali. It was first published

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid, P. 385.

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in 1987 from Khondokar Prokashoni of Dhākā. Total number of its pages is 56 excluding preface. To know the wide popularity of this book it is enough that till 2006 fifteen editions were done to fulfill the demands of the readers. His style of writing and excellent method of dealing unveiled to us many new sides. One example is mentioned here. He said- only this sūrah is mandatory for reading in every Ṣalāh. Even without this sūrah no Ṣalāh will be correct. Besides each word of this sūrah has a lot of significances. This is why this sūrah is the subject of regular prayer.<sup>1</sup>

54. **Qur'ān-o-Tafsirer Itibritto:** This prolific book is in Bengali language regarding Qur'ānic science and its history as no reliable book was written in Bengali before it. The writer of this valuable book is Ḥāfiẓ Sheikh Ainul Bārī Aliawī who is, in fact, a researcher throughout his life. He is well-known for his excellent teaching in Alia Madrasah of Kolkātā. In 1990 this book was first published from Sufia Prakashani of Kolkātā. Till now many editions have been printed which are a strong testimonial of its wide acceptance. The writer<sup>2</sup> has described the meaning and kinds of 'Waḥī', the history of preservation of the Holly Book and the necessity and usefulness of the Tafsīr in the light of the Qur'ān and the Prophetic traditions. Besides, the biographies of celebrated Mufassir from the first century Hijri to the 4<sup>th</sup> century Hijri were given great importance. Moreover, their contribution to the field of Tafsīr literature, brief introduction of their books containing the explanation of the Qur'ān were described which helped this book to be a mini Encyclopedia of the divine Book.

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<sup>1</sup> Preface, Sura Fatihar Moulik Shiksha.

<sup>2</sup> Sheikh Ainul Bārī Aliawī, Qur'ān o Tafsirer Itibritto, P. 2.

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Finally, it is to say that this valuable book enriched the Tafsīri literature of Bengali language. It is also worthy to mention that the writer provided a fresh list of bibliography which contains detailed description of 94 books from which the data and information were taken

55. **Qur'ān Vittik Swamaj Bayabosta:** This is a unique treatise in the concerned topic. It was written by eminent Islamic scholar of Bengal Muḥammad Nūrul Islām Khān. It was published from The Bangla Islami Prokashoni Trust of Kolkātā in 1991. It contains 18 pages and deals with the real solution of various big problems of human being.<sup>1</sup> In fact this book is benevolent example of being a proof as only solution of the world dissension.
56. **Sura Qadorer Moulik Shiksha:** This is a glorious work on the Qur'ānic studies in Bengali. It was written by the renowned writer Khondokar Abul Khair. It was first published in 1992 from Khondokar Prokashoni of Dhākā. The second edition was printed in 2003. This book deals with the real meaning and teaching of sūrah Qadr. Besides the writer also tried in this book to eliminate the superstitions practiced by Bengali Muslims in particular. In fact he showed that the Qur'ān is merely bless of the Almighty upon mankind. And the result of this bless is seen all over the world either directly or indirectly. To prove this he condemned the 'Sati' practice of the Hindus. It was banned by the British Government after a long struggle of Raja Rammohon Roy who, in all aspects, got influenced by the Qur'ānic teaching of humanity.<sup>2</sup> However, by using such type of many vivid descriptions, the writer made this book a refulgent treatise.
57. **Pabitra Qur'ān-o-Dalit Swamaj:** This book is an effort of the Qur'ānic study from which we can get several benefits

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<sup>1</sup> Preface ,Qur'ān Vittik Swamaj Bayabostha.

<sup>2</sup> Sura Qadarer Moulik Shiksha, P. 25.

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regarding religion and socio-politics. Even this book may be the valuable asset for those who try to make joint venture for the unity of Indian Muslims and Dalit. It was written by Sheikh Naṣīr Aḥmad and was published from Kolkātā in 1992. It discussed that all the prophets tried to give importance to the Dalits i.e backward classes of the society especially the Qur'ān played incentive role in this regard. The writer proved through many examples that the Qur'ān is full of vivid records of glorious achievements to make the oppressed and down trodden free from all difficulties. In this context he mentioned many events of previous Prophets who made indomitable contribution for the benevolent and welfare of the oppressed and weak classes of the society. However, it is a great work because no Bengali writer tried to prove that the Qur'ān is a distinguished provision for the weak lairs of the world. It contains 50 pages.

58. **Al-Qur'āner Bishoy Abhidhan:** This book is one of the worthwhile works regarding the Qur'ān. It contains elaboration of the central theme of the Qur'ān. Maulānā Asad bin Ḥāfiẓ compiled and edited it after a long contemplation.

It is worthy to say that this is a pioneer book as no such book was written in Bengali before it. In fact it is more useful to the common readers, students, teachers and Islamic writers because it helps in getting complete quotation or getting any verse related to the concerned subject. This book contains 352 pages and was published in 1992 from the Priti Prokashon of Dhākā.

59. **Qur'ān Parichity:** This book is a colorful feather added to the Qur'ānic crown of the Bengali books. Perhaps no such prolific book was published ever before. This book was

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published in 1995. It was edited by the Editorial Board of Islamic Encyclopedia Bangladesh. The matters discussed in the Qur'ān have been focused on. The writers discussed the subject matters within eight chapters collectively which took five hundred pages to be concluded. The basic introduction of the Qur'ān like waḥī, number of sūrah, āyat and rukū' and letters etc was discussed in the first chapter. The second chapter contains core objects of the Qur'ān like the qualities of Allah, tauḥīd, risālat etc. In the third chapter they focused on the ways and the distinction of the Qur'ān. It is worthy to mention here that they used only the relevant Ḥadīths to discuss this chapter which made this book authentic to the readers. In the fourth chapter the "I'jāz-ul-Qur'ān" was put up in a rationalistic way. Besides a research and most valuable list of those books deal with the I'jāz-ul-Qur'ān which add new flavor to this book.

Again the stories of the Qur'ān (Qīṣaṣ-ul-Qur'ān) were written in the fifth chapter. Here description of some thirty prophets has been given so nicely that the readers may get magnetic taste from those divine stories. The sixth chapter deals with the science of the Qur'ān and history of tafsīr through the historical authenticity. Before the end of this chapter, a vivid description of the books including the 'Ulūm-ul-Qur'ān (Sciences of the Qur'ān) with great care and exactitude has been added.

In the seventh chapter the prolific writer provided elaborated description of the long lasting influences of the Qur'ān among the human being in the world. In spite of it, some other valuable matters were also discussed which are mandatory for world peace and happiness, social equality, human rights, justice, spread of education, respect to the other religions etc are among them. In the last chapter the

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writers gave a fresh data of the translations of the Holy Book in different languages including brief criticism regarding their qualitative values.

Their book is nothing but a solution of many problems. Shortly it is an encyclopedia of the Qur'ān.

60. **Qur'āner Kahini:** This book was written by Maulānā Muḥammad Ṭāhir who was an honorable teacher of Madrash Aliah of Kolkātā. It was published in 1995 from Kolkātā. It has two volumes. Total number of pages of first volume is 112 and the second volume has 115 pages. In fact the writer wanted to present the valuable Qur'ānic learning before the Bengali Muslims. The writer was very much worried about the inequality of cultural background of Bengali Muslim because, particularly their children are very much affected by the un-Islamic literature. As a result of which many Muslim youth disagree to accept the Islamic sprit rather they are ready to accept the Western culture. This matter was observed by him. So he tried through his laborious work to present the Islamic story to build children's minds through religious frame-work. For this purpose, the stories of previous prophets were discussed in this book. Besides the writer successfully showed the bad consequences of the wrong-doers. Moreover, it was also mentioned that the winning position is always for the honest persons in every time and place. This is why this book not only deals with the Qur'ānic stories but also a doctrine of moral teachings for constructing the building of the people's morality. According to the reliable source, its many editions have been printed till now.

61. **Computer-o-al-Qur'ān:** This is a wonderful book on the Qur'ānic studeis in Bengali. The learned writer Dr.

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Khondokar 'Abdul Mannān tried to prove in this book the eternity and truthfulness of the Qur'ān in the light of the computer science. It was published in 1996 from the Ishate Islam Kutubkhana of Dhākā. Total number of its page is 198 excluding a short preface. It proclaims that the Qur'ān is full of different knowledges and valuable speeches and all of them are absolutely true according to the computer science. The writer quoted in this context the research done by Dr. Rashīd Khalīfah in which he showed us that according to the computerized observation, the Qur'ān is surely a divine book. He said that there is found in the Qur'ān mathematical counting which proves its being the correct book in all aspects.<sup>1</sup>

More than three editions of this book have been printed till now which prove its wide popularity among the Bengali readers.

62. **Qur'ān-o-Hadiser Alope Shahid Kara:** Maulānā 'Abdul Matīn Bikrompuri tried to prove real martyrs through the help of the Qur'ānic verses and prophetic traditions. It was published from Adhunik Prokashoni of Dhākā in 1996. According to the writer, now-a-days many of us use this word wrongly even this sacred word 'Shahīd' is applied to non-Muslims. But those who are certified by the Qur'ān are real 'Shahīd' because this word is mainly the word of the Qur'ān. This book contains 47 pages.
63. **Sūrah Fatihar Boygganic Tatta:** This is a valuable treatise on the Qur'ānic studies and it is an unprecedented book in analyzing the Holy Book as no such book has ever been published in Bengal so far. It was written by Sa'īd Firdous 'Alī Bakhsh who worked as a successful scientist in Bhābā Nuclear Center of Mumbai for long period. Perhaps he got

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<sup>1</sup> Computer-O-Al-Qur'ān, PP. 10,11.

the misprision to make the scientific elaboration of the Qur'ān during his work in that research center. This book was published by Bani Prokash in 1996 from Kolkātā. It contains 191 pages. The writer showed us its usefulness in practicing the teaching laid in sūrah Fātiḥah. He shed the light on scientific discussion of each word and emphasized that the people absolutely will be perfect if they will obey the teachings of the sūrah Fātiḥah. The person having faith in the religion other than Islam may get benefitted if he follows the eternal guidance of sūrah Fātiḥah. However, for instance, he said that the very first word of this sūrah is 'al-Ḥamd' which means praise. The writer also said in this context that if the subordinates show their obedience to the Lord then he will be merciful upon them. So, if we want to ensure our peace and success then we must express our praise before our Lord.<sup>1</sup> Thus the writer went ahead to show us the inner teachings for human beings given by the Almighty in sūrah Fātiḥah. However, it is mention-worthy to say that this book may not be suitable for the ordinary people as this is full of research.

64. **Qiṣaṣ-ul-Qur'ān:** The title of this book reflects the subject matter of its own. It was written by Qāḍī. A.F. Muḥiḍuddīn Aḥmad. It had two volumes containing 592 pages and was published in 1996 from Kumilla of Bangladesh.
65. **Al-Qur'ān the Challenge:** This book was written by Muḥammad Borjahān that deals with the scientific discussion of the Qur'ān. In fact it is very useful for the readers who have some knowledge on physical and life science including geography. Because many matters related to the earth, the space and ocean etc were discussed in it. The writer tried his best to prove that the

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<sup>1</sup> Sayyid Firdous 'Alī Baksh, Sūrah Fātiḥah Boygganic Tatta, P. 12.

Divine Book is not merely a religious book rather it shed the light on each matter of the world. In fact the Qur'ān is the source of all sciences. Muḥammad Barjahān proved in it that all laws of the universe had truly been discussed hundreds years ago. Interestingly this matter has been proved through abundant innovation of modern science. The learned writer intended to proclaim that the Qur'ān is a unique book which deals with various matters rationally and scientifically. It was published in 1997 from Kolkātā which contains 250 pages.

66. **Qiṣaṣ-ul-Qur'ān:** Originally it is a translated work from Urdu written by Maulānā Ḥifẓur Raḥmān. Maulānā Nūrur Raḥmān translated it into Bengali. It was published in 1997 from the Bangla Islamic Academy of Delhi. It has 269 pages. In it the writer discussed all main events of all prophets from Ādam to the last messenger Muḥammad. His intention was to present the Qur'ānic events truly because there are many books in this field which are nothing but a mix of Israeli narrations. To save the real faith of the people regarding the Qur'ānic description he furnished this book with great care and caution which got wide popularity among the Bengalis. Till now many editions were printed after its first edition.
67. **Al-Qur'āner Shailpik Soundorjo:** Originally it is Bengali translation of the world famous book on the Qur'ān entitled 'al-Taswīr-ul-Fannī fī al-Qur'ān' written by the genius Islamic theologian Sayyid Quṭb of Egypt. It was published in 1997 from Adhunik Prokashoni of Dhākā. It contains 336 pages and deals with different significances of the Qur'ān. According to the writer, the Qur'ān has huge power of hypnotism for which each person becomes impressed. The method of dealing, excellent use of similes,
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irrefutable arguments, and scientific description of universe made the Qur'ān unequal and amazing book. Again the vivid description of ancient events compels its readers to be influenced and hence they start to think in its favor. Moreover, the Qur'ān is full of bright teaching as a guide for human beings. Even this picture is vividly seen in all stories relating previous prophets and others. For example, we may propound anyone of them. One is given here and that is the story of Yūsuf which is one of the most attractive events presented in the Qur'ān. People must get teachings and inspirations to be honest and chaste from the sin of adultery. Thus the writer did not leave any chance to make this book a prolific one. This luminous book was translated into Bengali by Muḥammad Khalīlur Raḥmān Mumin. Its second edition was printed in 2001.

68. **Tafsīr Shastro Parichity**: This is a valuable book in Tafsīr literature written by Maulānā Shams-ul-Ḥaq Dowlatpūrī. It was first published in 1999 from Islamic Foundation of Bangladesh. It contains 76 pages dealing with the science of Tafsīr including the history and development of Tafsīr with great care and caution. In the last part of the book he gave long introductions to most of Tafsīrs and their writers which increased the importance of this small book. It is to say that there are many relevant books in the market which deal with the concerned topic. But among all of them it has an attractive expression. For example, he said, in the context of describing the importance of Tafsīr that main and all correct Tafsīrs of the Qur'ān must be evaluated so that one may understand the correct message of the Lord who has the intimate relation with him. And without any doubt the Prophet Muḥammad was that person who had the deepest relation with the
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Almighty. This is why the right meaning and illustration of the Qur'ān must be gained from him. In this way Maulānā Shamsul Ḥaq Daulatpūrī went on in all his writing. This book became an unprecedented sort of writings.

69. **Ke Aso Upodesh Grohoner Jonno:** In fact it is a compilation of the Qur'ānic teaching on the morality. It was compiled by Muḥammad Muḥarrar Ḥossain who did not get religious education from any madrasah, rather he quenched his thirst of Islamic education from self study. Really he had endless thirst of Islamic learning as a result of which he tried to take pen in his hand to over the Qur'ān. It was published in 2000 from Kadambagachhi, a suburb town near Kolkātā. It contains 68 pages excluding a long preface written by the prominent Islamic scholar Dr. Muḥammad Shahīdullah, Former Principal of Kolkātā Aliah Madrasah. Twenty topics have been discussed in brief. The writer tried to highlight the valuable Qur'ānic advises in some pages. Moreover, the writer gave the Bengali meanings of all names of total 114 sūras of the Qur'ān. In the last page he put a glossary of some important words of the Qur'ān which helps the readers to understand the explanation of the Qur'ānic meaning. It is to say that although it is a small book but it paid great role to the spread of the Qur'ānic studies in West Bengal in particular.
70. **Qur'āner Shiksha-o-Sonskriti:** It is a treatise on Qur'ānic studies. This book was written by 'Abdul Matīn Jalalabadi and was first published in 2001 from Adhunik Prokashoni of Dhākā. It contains 471 pages. In the first chapter, the writer gave a brief but informative introduction of the Qur'ān. Then he described the basic teachings of the Qur'ān. Here he gave detailed introductions on Islam which are perhaps enough to know Islam at a glance. Then he produced before
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the readers the concept of the pious companion of the Prophet. Their dignity, contribution and devotion to the truth etc were focused on. Moral teachings of the Qur'an have also been mentioned in it so that this book may be a full Islamic guide. Besides great honor of the pious companions of the Prophet was focused on elaborately. So this book is an encyclopedia of the Qur'an.

71. **Qur'an Mazider 24ti Ayater Biruddhe Avijog Otar Jawab:**

This small book is an everlasting benevolent effort against the complainers who constantly accuse that the Qur'an insists its followers to agitate against non-Muslims. This book was published on behalf of Bengal Islami Prokashoni Trust of Kolkātā in 2002. Writer's name was not mentioned. It contains 24 pages. It deals with the true explanation of those verses in which some matters regarding the non-Muslims are discussed. It has 24 pages. Those are -1) 5th verse of sūrah Taubah. 2) 28<sup>th</sup> verse of sūrah Taubah. 3) 101 number verse of sūrah Nisā'. 4) 123 number verse of sūrah Taubah. 5) 56<sup>th</sup> number verse of sūrah Nisā'. 6) 23<sup>rd</sup> number verse of sūrah Taubah. 7) 37<sup>th</sup> verse of sūrah Taubah. 8) 57<sup>th</sup> verse of sūrah Mā'idah. 9) 61<sup>th</sup> verse of sūrah Aḥzāb. 10) 98<sup>th</sup> verse of sūrah Ambiyā'. 11) 22<sup>th</sup> verse of sūrah Sajdah. 12) 20<sup>th</sup> verse of sūrah Faṭḥ. 13) 69<sup>th</sup> verse of sūrah Anfāl. 14) 9<sup>th</sup> verse of sūrah Taḥrīm. 15) 27<sup>th</sup> verse of sūrah Ḥā Mīm Sajdah. 16) 28<sup>th</sup> verse of sūrah Ḥā Mīm Sajdah. 17) 111 verse of sūrah Taubah. 18) 68<sup>th</sup> verse of sūrah Taubah. 19) 65<sup>th</sup> verse of sūrah Anfāl. 20) 51<sup>st</sup> verse of sūrah Mā'idah. 21) 29<sup>th</sup> verse of sūrah Taubah. 22) 14<sup>th</sup> verse of sūrah Mā'idah. 23) 89<sup>th</sup> verse of sūrah Nisā'. 24) 14<sup>th</sup> verse of sūrah Taubah. It is well-known to all that many times it has been claimed that those verses are big obstacle to establish world peace. In fact this is the consequence of misunderstanding of those verses. In this

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book, a praise-worthy effort was done with great care and caution to unveil the real meanings of those verses. So it is a valuable means for all Islamic scholars chiefly those who are working in the field of preaching Islam (Da'wah).

72. **Bishoy Vittik Qur'ān-o-Hadis Shanchayaon:** This book is like philosopher's stone for strayed people who face several obstacles in their right way. Two great scholars collected and compiled this book. They are Maulānā Muḥammad Muḥiḍul Islām and Maulānā Muḥammad Abul Kaushem. This book was published from The Barna Prokash of Dhaka in 2003. It contains 400 pages. It discusses many important matters like civil matters and social matters in the light of the Qur'ān and Prophetic traditions.
73. **Chhotoder Qur'ān Kahini:** This is a significant book written for the children specially that it contains the stories of the Qur'ān. It was written by A. Hussain and was translated into Bengali by Sheikh Elāhi Bakhsh and Salmah Khātun. It was published from the Mallick Brothers of Kolkātā in 2003. Six big stories have been described: 1. Followers of Sabbath (Saturday). 2. People of Cave 3. Three real Faithfull Persons 4. Fire of Hollow 5. First Man and 6. Soldiers of Elephant. The writer tried to focus through these stories on moral teachings of the Divine Book. Its style and language are simple for it was prepared for the children specially. It contains 108 pages.<sup>1</sup>
74. **Al-Qur'ān-i-Arthonity:** This book deals with the economic aspects of the Qur'ān. A number of researchers and writers edited this valuable work. It was published by Islamic Foundation of Bangladesh in 2003 containing 664 pages. This book aims at acquiring the Muslims with Qur'ānic concept of economics as well as with Islamic

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<sup>1</sup> Chhotoder Qur'ān Kahini, P. 6.

Shrī'ah. And also today's world is looking towards Islamic economics. It is a balanced approach discussing merits and demerits of modern economics specially usury-based financial system was severely criticized. This is a voluminous work followed by an appendix.

75. **Al-Fauz-ul-Kabīr fī Uṣūlit Tafsīr:** It is the Bangla translation of al-Fauz-ul-Kabīr written by Shāh Walīyyullāh Muḥaddith of Delhi who is considered as the pioneer thinker of undivided India. According to the reliable sources 43 invaluable books were written by him. Although Al-Itqān of 'Allāmah Suyūṭī is fore-runner in this concern, al-Fauz-ul-Kabīr is a concise work to the students in particular. As a result, this book is widely seen in all madrasah and Islamic educational institutions. It was translated by Ḥāfiẓ Maulānā Muḥammad Walīyyullāh and was edited by Maulānā Ḥifīẓur Raḥmān Joshori. It was published from al-Aksa Library of Dhākā in 2005 containing 224 pages. It is the most popular book in both the Bengals.
76. **Qur'ān Hardies Ma:** This is a valuable book edited by A.S.M. Azīzul Ḥaq Anṣārī. It deals with the duty of off-springs to their mothers. It contains seven chapters in 396 pages. The writer gave several examples in discussing the concerned topic. It was published in 2005 from Solemania Book House of Dhākā. Many beautiful short stories of previous great genius persons were given during any discussion. Its language is easy and simple so that the common readers may enjoy it. It has quality papers which add to its beauty. At last duties of both the spouses have been given. This book is a useful and attractive work.
77. **'Ulūm-ul-Qur'ān and Uṣūlut Tafsīr:** This is a Bangla translation of the book of Maulānā Taqī 'Uthmānī. The translation was done by Maulānā Ḥasan 'Abdul Khāliq. It was published in 2005 from the
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Madīna Publication of Dhākā. It contains 408 pages excluding three prefaces written by ‘Allāmah Sayyid Maulānā Muḥammad Yūsuf Binnauri, Muftī Muḥammad Shafī’ and Maulānā Taqī ‘Uthmānī. It deals with the sciences of the Qur’ān and discusses the principles of tafsīr and requirements of a mufassir. So it is a unique book ever written or translated in Bengali.

78. **Darse Qur’ān: Niti-o-Pantha:** This is a unique book in the series of studying the Qur’ān in Bengali language. It was written by Sheikh Nizāmuddīn who is well-known as the rational writer on Islamic theology. It was published in 2006 from Ideal Book Syndicate of Raigachhi in Kolkātā. It contains 37 pages. This book deals with the correct method of reading the Qur’ān. According to the writer, we should read the Qur’ān through an organized way so that main object is to be fulfilled. In fact main object of the Divine Book is to establish the rule of the Almighty in the earth. And it will be possible only when united effort will be made.<sup>1</sup> This book opened a new window before us that we must follow a certain method during recitation of the Qur’ān. Till now many editions have been printed which are a fresh example of its wide popularity.

79. **Bigganer Alope Qur’ān and the Bible:** This is a valuable speech of the Islamic scholar Dr. Dhākir Naike which was delivered in U.S.A. during a debate with Dr. William Campbell regarding the scientific aspects of the Qur’ān and the Bible in different matters. It was written first in English by A.R. Ugunby. Muḥammad ‘Abdur Raqīb translated it into Bengali. It was published from the Mallick Brothers of Kolkātā in 2008 containing 104 pages. In the first chapter, the writer discussed the Qur’ān and the Bible in the light of science. It is a comparative discussion,

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<sup>1</sup> Preface, Darse Qur’ān :Niti OPantha.

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because the speech of Dr. Campbell was also mentioned in this book. Here the writer seems unbiased where he compared and proved that the Qur'ān is more scientific than the Bible. The book proves that the Qur'ān and the Bible both discuss the system and steps of creating and developing the human body in the womb. Here the writer succeeded to show that the research of the Qur'ān is more reasonable than the Bible. Besides, many natural matters have also been discussed in this book. The both said that the cause of this unscientific discussion in the Bible is that the present Bible is not the words of God. In the 11<sup>th</sup> chapter entitled "The Bible and the Ingil", the writer clearly proved that "The Inzil" mentioned in the Qur'ān is not the present Bible. He said that, 'Though the present Bible contains some sayings of the Almighty, there are many sayings of historians, Prophets and priests. So several fake and irrational sentences were infused in it. Thus uncountable unscientific theories were included in the name of God.<sup>1</sup> To prove this the writer quoted numerous evidences from the Bible in which there are enormous incoherencies. Dr. Dhākir boldly said that if the present Bible was descended by the Almighty then these types of problems are not seen at all. Thus this is a very nice book to the uniqueness of the Qur'ān. Till now its several editions have been printed.

80. **Pabitro Qur'āner Shashoto Bani:** This book also a great work on the Qur'ānic studies in Bengali language which was written by Prof. Dr. Şābir Khān. It contains 98 pages excluding long preface written by Dr. Muḥammad Shahīdullāh, Formar Principle of the Aliah Madrasah of Kolkātā. It was published in 2008 from Indo-Arab Culture of

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<sup>1</sup>The Qur'ān and the Bible, PP> 47-48.

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Kolkātā. The author focused that the Holy Book is a complete and perfect guide for the whole mankind. It begins with the topic “National Integration” in which he successfully proved that the Qur’ānic thinking in this regard is perfect and fit. Because a nation which had no idea of real nationality they could get the genuine teaching of national integration from the divine Book. Even they could succeed in being united through the Qur’ānic teachings within short period while they were divided into hundred branches.<sup>1</sup> Thus this book deals with all the requirements of mankind as the social creature like benevolent politics, education, usury, economical thought etc.

81. **Qur’ān Porun Artha Bujhe:** It was originally written by Dr. Dhākir Nā’ik. Dr. Sirājul Islam translated it into Bengali. It was published in 2009 from Lekha Prokashoni of Kolkātā. It contains 63 pages. The writer chiefly tried to shed the light on the utility and necessity of understanding the Qur’ān. In fact the Qur’ān uplifts its followers and makes them civilized. But without its correct meanings how can they benefit?<sup>2</sup> The writer said that the Muslim population in the world is more than hundred cror and Arabic is the mother tongue of only 15% them. The rest of them have to learn Arabic to understand the Qur’ān.<sup>3</sup> In this regard the book also demands that –we should create such atmosphere in which non-Muslims may easily know the Qur’ān. Because the Qur’ān is a guide book for all mankind. So all the people have right to know this divine book whereas the main object of the Qur’ān must be fulfilled. As it happened in the case of Dr. Moris Bukaie who was a renowned scientist and physician of

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<sup>1</sup> Pobitro Qur’āner Shshoto Bani, PP. 14-15.

<sup>2</sup> Qur’ān Porun Artho Bujhe. PP. 13-14.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid, P. 15.

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France. He saw some contradictories in the Bible with Science. So, he was keenly interested in knowing the real picture of the Qur'ān in connection with this context. As a result, he began to learn Arabic when he reached fifty years of his age. However, he succeeded in this praise-worthy effort and became able to understand the meanings of the Qur'ān. The consequence of this studiousness brought very sad result as he wrote the revolutionary book "The Bible, the Qur'ān and Science". Through this valuable book of Dr. Bukaie showed that the Qur'ān has no contradiction with Science rather the Qur'ān is based on scientific way. This is why we should always try to recite the Qur'ān through understanding its correct meaning.

82. **Bishoy Bhattik al-Qur'āner Avidhan:** This is one of the peerless books which deals with the subject-wise glossary of the Qur'ān. It was written by Maulānā Rafīqul Islām. It was published in 2009 from Peace Publication of Dhākā. A reader can get two benefits from it as he can know subject-wise Qur'ānic introduction and the meaning of the difficult and important words of the relevant sūrah. It contains 205 pages. Till now more than one edition was printed according to the demand of the readers. Finally, Maulānā Rafīqul Islām fulfilled the demand of the Bengali Muslims regarding the Qur'ān through his benevolent and studious effort.
83. **Bishoy Bhattik Qur'ān-o-Hadis Sankalon:** This is a great work on the Qur'ān and Ḥadīth having 663 pages excluding the preface. This book was written by Muḥammad Rafīqul Islām and Maulānā Shafīqul Islām Khān the two great scholars of Islamic studies. It was edited by two scholars namely Muftī Muḥammad Abul Qāsim Gāzī and Ḥāfiẓ Maulānā 'Ārif Ḥossain. It was first published in 2011 from Peace Publication of Dhākā. In the first part of this book the
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writers discussed about the introduction of the Qur'ān, its main teaching, and science of its recitation. The writers showed, in the light of the Qur'ān and the Prophetic traditions, that the way of success and freedom of mankind found place in divine Book.

84. **Faḍā'il-i-Qur'ān:** This is one of the wide-read books in Bengal. In fact it is the Bengali translation of Urdu book written by Maulānā Muḥammad Dhakariya. It was published from Dhākā in 2012. Maulānā Muḥammad Sakhawatullah performed this rendering. He was well-versed in Islamic studies and a researcher in Islamic theology. It contains 80 pages excluding a long preface. Undoubtedly this translation is a benevolent effort of the translator. He used standard language in this book. It is worthy to say that the original Urdu book was written in the light of the Qur'ān and prophetic traditions. As a result, it got a wide-spread acceptance just after it was published. Till now several editions have been made which are testimonial to its wide popularity. It is not a matter of exaggeration that this book is regularly read in thousands mosques of both the Bengals. So it must be said that this book is playing a great role in the spread of the Qur'ānic knowledge among the Bengali Muslims.
85. **Tarikhut Tafsīr:** This book has been written by prominent Islamic writer Maulānā Nūrul Amīn which deals with the origin and development of Tafsīr literature with reliable sources. It was published in 2013 and its first edition was over within a year following the second edition. In the first part the writer penned down about the necessity and origin of the tafsīr. The writer took 150 pages to finish the first part. The second part contains the biographies of the scholars who contributed a lot to the field of Qur'ānic study from the early
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period of Islam till the end of the 21th century. Moreover, the books written by them have also been introduced. Now-a-days this book is read widely in the whole Bengal because it covers the prescribed syllabus of the Madrash Education Board of West Bengal including the degree and master courses of Aliah Univesity. The writer is conscious about using the complicated words. He always used the common and simple words and also small sentences so that the book would not be a burden to any reader. It is considered an outstanding work in the concerned subject.<sup>1</sup>

86. **Al-Qur'āner Shrestho Kahini:** This is like a pearl in the necklace of the Qur'ānic study in Bengali language. Because the writer made this book as an example of an attentive and auspicious effort. It was compiled and edited by renowned Islamic theologian Maulānā Muftī Zain-ul-'Ābidīn. It was published from Rabea Book House of Dhākā in 2013. It contains 380 pages. The Qur'ān, as the writer says, is the source of all benevolent knowledges and guidances. So each word of the Divine Book is full of refulgent and beneficent for mankind. This is why we utterly need to unveil those eternal and sound knowledges. Chiefly the events and history of previous prophets and kings narrated in the Book by the Almighty have cosmopolitan teaching. If the human beings can apply these invaluable teachings they must be happy and prosperous throughout their life.<sup>2</sup>
87. **Qur'āner Āyīn:** Unquestionably this book is one of the colored feathers of the valuable crown of Qur'ānic study in Bengali during the first part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. It was written by Maulānā Shahādat Hossain Farrokh. He finished

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<sup>1</sup> Md. Nūrul Amīn, Tārikhut Tafsīr.

<sup>2</sup> Preface, Al-Qur'āner Shrestho Kahini.

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this book when he was only a student of Aliah Madrasah of Kolkātā. It contains 33 pages. Maulānā Farrokh attained in it all the fundamental laws concerning the Islamic Laws of Inheritance. It is well-known to all of us that the law of Muslim succession is pivoted by the particular laws of the Qur’ān. But the persons who involve in this field had to face critical stumbles due to the proper book. Having realized this critical problem Maulānā Farrokh penned down this book. Externally it was small book but it was so well furnished. Dr. Mujībūr Raḥmān mentioned that though he (Maulānā Farrokh) belonged to a poor family, he did not get financial help from them. But his thirst of learning was severe. As a result he did not give up his hope for learning. So he got admitted in Madrasah Aliah. The book “Qur’āner Āyīn” fulfilled that need. He got enough money from the publisher through which he bore his educational expenses which clearly proves the excellence and wide popularity of this small book”.<sup>1</sup> (It is worthy to mention here that this book was selected as the text-book of ‘Ālamīyyat (10<sup>th</sup> class) of the Bengal Madrasah Board. This book had distinction as its language is very simple so that the ordinary people can easily understand the laws of inheritance which is generally considered as complicated. In a word the total work was worthy to capture the attention of the Bengali scholars and Islamic theologians. The then famous and high circulated Bengali monthly “Ḥanafī” published a long description about it and appreciated it.<sup>2</sup>

88. **Pabitra Qur’āner Fadhīlat:** In fact it is the Bengali translation of famous Urdu book “Amal-i- Qur’ān” written by Maulānā Ashraf ‘Alī Thānwī. Translator’s name is

<sup>1</sup> Study of the Holy Qur’ān in Bengali Language. P. 312.

<sup>2</sup> Monthly Hanafi, April, 1930, Kolkātā.

Maulānā Akhtar Choudhuri who tried his best to keep the main sprit of the original Urdu book. It was published in Chhagram of Bangladesh. It is worthy to say here that the translator had profound knowledge in both languages.

89. **Qur'ān Gaponi:** This is a very small book containing 20 pages. It was published from Bardowan of West Bengal. It has no mention of year of its publication. It was written by Maulānā Qāḍī 'Ubaidullāh. This book has no content. It deals with the faḍīlah of the Qur'ān. In the beginning of this book the writer mentioned the rules of reciting the Qur'ān. Then he started to discuss its main theme. The writer is a de facto Islamic Theologian. This is why he sought help from the Prophetic traditions. Besides some 'masalah' have also been given in this book. Faḍīlat of 18 sūrahs have been mentioned. It is also mention-worthy here that the writer divided this book into two parts. In the second part some information on important events and the teachings of the Qur'ān have been provided.
90. **Tafsirul Ushril Akhir:** It is indeed not a tafsīr but it deals with main teachings of Islam elaborating the Qur'ānic verses and Prophetic Traditions. It is worthy to mention here that neither the names of the writer nor the publisher have been given anywhere in this book. Similarly, the year of publishing has not been mentioned at all. But in the light of its contents and language it is thought that this book was published from K.S.A. It contains more than one hundred Du'ās too which were taken from the Qur'ān and Ḥadīths.

**Conclusion:** It is apparent from the above discussion that the study of the Qur'ān in Bengali language began late in comparison with other language like Urdu etc but Bengali scholars tried their level best to span this learning in the land

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of Bengal. In fact multifarious studies of the Qur'ān in Bengali were blameworthy for a long because Bengali language is considered as the daughter of Sanskrit language.<sup>1</sup> So, this language is full of Vedic ideology. As a result, till the last part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century the staunch Muslim scholars carefully tried to avoid the exercise of the Divine Book (Qur'ān) in Bengali language. This is the main reason behind the delay in the study of the Qur'ān in this language. In spite of those critical problems the praise-worthy endeavor in this valuable sector started gradually and now the present picture of this effort is enough hopeful.

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<sup>1</sup>.Dr. Promeswar Shaw-General Linguistics and Bengali Language . Kolkātā, 1996. P. 78.

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## Kifāyat al-Tafsīr of Nishāpūrī: A Rare Manuscript

✍ M. A. Sattār<sup>1</sup>

### Introduction:

Abū ‘Abd al-Rahmān Ismā‘īl bin Aḥmad bin ‘Abd-Allāh al-Ḥīrī al-Darīr al-Nishāpūrī,<sup>2</sup> or Nisābūrī or Maisābūrī<sup>3</sup> (361-431/971-1038), was one of the most outstanding commentators on the Qur’ān in 4<sup>th</sup>/5<sup>th</sup> century Hijrah. He wrote many books on Islamic sciences,<sup>4</sup> especially in the field of Tafsīr (Exegesis of the Qur’ān) and Ḥadīth<sup>5</sup> (Traditions of the Prophet). A voluminous work of this savant, under the title of Kifāyat al-Tafsīr<sup>6</sup> (Sufficiency of the Commentary), is a proof of his great

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<sup>2</sup> For his biography see Khaṭīb Baghdādī, *Tārīkh Baghdād* (Cairo, 1931), vol. vi, P.313. Ibn Makula, *Ikmāl*, vol iii, PP. 42-44 (Hyderābād, 1963); (‘Abd al-Ghāfir), *Fārisī, Muntaḥab min al-Siyāq li-Tārīkh Nīsābūr*, selected by Sarifinī, f27b, Koprulu Library, MS. No. 1152, Istanbul (facsimile, London, 1965); Subkī, *Ṭabaqāt*, iv, 265-6 (Cairo, 1965); GAL, S, i, 729; SA, 8-85.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Sam’ānī, *Ansāb f574a-b* (facsimile, London, 1912); Yāqūt, *Buldān*, viii, P. 356 (Leipzig, 1866-73); Ibn Kathīr, *Bidāyah*, xii, 47 (Cairo, 1932 & c.); Ibn al-Jauzī, *Muntaẓam*, vol. viii, P. 105 (Hyderābād, 1938 &c.); HW, f4a; KM, ii, 260; SA, 46-52.

<sup>4</sup> For his works, Ḥājī Khalīfah, *Kashf al-Zunūn*, i, 442, ii, 1948 (Tehrān, 1967); Dhahabī, *‘Ibar*, iii, 171 (Kuwait, 1960); Ibn al-‘Imād, *Shadharai*, iii, 245 (Cairo, 1931); Şafadi, *Nukāt al-Himayan*, i, 119 (Cairo, 1911); Yaqāt, *Mu’jam al-‘Ubāda*, ii, 256 (London, 1970-26); GAL, S, i, 729; SA 86-177.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. *Suyūṭī, Ṭabaqāt al-Mufasssīrīn*, i, 7 (Tehrān, 1960); Dhahabī, *Tadhkirah*, iii, 1097 (Hyderābād, 1958); Ziriklī, *A’lam*, i, 303 (Cairo, 1927); Isnawī, *Ṭabaqāt, f120b* (Cambridge University Library, MS. Or. 842); Baghdādī, *Īdāh al-Maknūn*, i, 209-10 (Tehrān, 1958); KM, ii, 260; Khaṭīb, vi, 313, SA, 69-73, 93-126.

<sup>6</sup> Ḥājī Khalīfah, i, 442, ii, 1498; Subkī, *Ṭabaqāt*, iv, 265-6; Suyūṭī, *Ṭabaqāt*, i, 7; Dhahabī, *Mushtabah*, i, 185 (Cairo, 1963); KM, ii, 260; GAL, S, i, 729; SA, 93-126.

erudition and profound knowledge of Qur'ānic hermeneutics. Unfortunately, this Tafsīr exists, at least partly, in a rare manuscript but no study, so far as is known, has yet been made on it. Naturally, this work merits our special attention as it was originally written about one thousand years ago and still exists today as one of the earliest manuscripts. In the following paragraphs, we have endeavored to examine it, comparing it, where required, with the Tafsīr of Ṭabarī<sup>1</sup> on certain points, to judge the standing of the author, Ḥirī, in the field of Tafsīr. Ṭabarī's work is chosen for the purpose of comparison because it is the only easily available, comprehensive and authentic commentary before Ḥirī.

### **Description of the Manuscript:**

The title, Kifāyat al-Tafsīr, speaks for itself that it is an "exhaustive" and "sufficient" commentary on the Qur'ān. It is difficult to ascertain if any complete copy of the work survive; however, a considerable portion of it is preserved in the Istanbul University Library, No. 350A 1787, under the aforementioned title and also under Tafsīr al-Nisābūrī.<sup>2</sup> Fortunately, we have obtained a microfilm of this unique copy from the said library. According to Brockelmann,<sup>3</sup> a copy of the work is preserved in the Astane Chods Library at Meshhed, Irān, under the No. "Mesh. III, 56, 75," W. Ahlwardt<sup>4</sup> records that a copy of the Tafsīr is also to be found in the Berlin Library, No. 939(3), under the title al-Kifāyah by Ismā'īl bin

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<sup>1</sup> Muḥammad bin Jarīr al-Ṭabarī (310/922). *Jāmi 'al-Bayān fī Tafsīr al-Qur'ān* (Cairo, 30 parts, 1321/1923) (or ed. *Shākir*, 15 vols. continued, 1374/1955).

<sup>2</sup> Karatay (Fehmi), *Istanbul University Kutup, Arapca Yazmalar Katalogu*, Cilt, I, Tefsirler, ii, 148 (Istanbul, 1953).

<sup>3</sup> *Geschichte der Arabischen Litteratur*, suppl. I, 729.

<sup>4</sup> *Koniglichen Bibliothek, Arabischen*, i, 377 (Berlin, 1887).

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'Abd-Allāh al-Ḥīrī al-Nisābūrī. Unfortunately, the authorities of these latter two libraries were unable to confirm its existence.

As mentioned, we have with us a large number of chapters from the latter portion of this Tafsīr, from the chapter "Ṣād" up to the end of "al-Nās," the last chapter of the Qur'ān. The Istanbul MS (Manuscripts) starts thus:<sup>1</sup>

عن ضعف ملكي أن يدخل علي بغير إذني وغضب ولم يعلم أنهما ملكان فزع منهما قالوا  
يعني الملكين اللذين دخلا عليه لا تخف يا داؤد خصمان أي نحن خصمان قال بعض ---

It is apparent that the MS. (manuscript) beings at a point in the commentary on the 22<sup>nd</sup> verse of the chapter "Ṣād," the XXXVIII chapter of the Qur'ān. It is, however, not complete from here on, because a cursory glance at the work shows that some chapters are missing here and there. For instance, one finds that in folio 20a chapter "al-Dukhān"<sup>2</sup> ends and in the same folio chapter "Muḥammad"<sup>3</sup> begins, and in between two chapters<sup>4</sup> are missing. In addition to the commentary on the large part of the "Ṣād," altogether there are 65 chapters, along with the commentary, to be found in the present copy.

The MS. in its present state comprises 193 folios, 280x17mm, 19 lines to the page. The transcript, in a scholar's naskh, is undated; and the name of the scribe is also not mentioned. Obviously the MS. has no title-page, because it is the last portion of the whole work and more than two-thirds of the commentary is missing from the beginning. The arrangement of the chapters in some particular folios<sup>5</sup> shows that the

<sup>1</sup> HK, f1a; Karatay (Fehmi), Katalohu, i, 148 (Istanbul, 1953).

<sup>2</sup> Chapter No. XLIV.

<sup>3</sup> Chapter No. XLVII.

<sup>4</sup> "Al-Jāthiyah" and "al-Ahqāf" (No. XLV and XLVI respectively).

<sup>5</sup> Cf. HK, ff. 12b, 20a, etc. ("al-Fath" and "ah-Ḥujurāt" are omitted, also see other folios.)



missing chapters, subsequent to “Ṣād,” are intentionally omitted, because there are no gaps, or signs of missing folios, between existing or non-existing chapters. It appears that the MS. originally was not paginated and the present pagination is presumably by a cataloguer. He has numbered the folios serially and sometimes in a haphazard manner.

As a whole the work is legible though in places it is obscure and puzzling. It is not carefully copied and is replete with errors. Sometimes the diacritical points are not properly used. Occasionally a later hand has inserted vowels or made a correction on the margin, not always properly. To mark the distinction between commentary and verses the copyist has transcribed the former in small letters and the latter in over-lined thick letters. In folio 193a, the author or the scribe has inserted many lines of poetry, in alphabetical order, which seem to have no connection with the particular chapter, but generally offering advice to the readers. At the end of the MS. we have the following colophon:<sup>1</sup>

وهذا آخر تفسير أبي عبد الرحمن إسماعيل بن أحمد النيسابوري الضريير الحيري رحمة الله عليه رحمة واسعة الحمد لله رب العلمين وصلواته على محمد وآله وصحبه أجمعين.

So, it is certain that the book originally was written by our author, Ḥīrī. From what he says in the preface to his work *Wujūh al-Qur’ān*,<sup>2</sup> it appears that he finished this *Tafsīr* before composing the former. It may be added that though the MS. is not carefully copied, we can still form a general idea about it and put forward some comments on it. We shall now proceed to evaluate the contribution of the author in this book. With this aim, a general review of the work, with short citations on certain points, and then two longer examples, with comments and comparison, will be presented.

<sup>1</sup> See f193b; Sattār, *al-Ḥīrī’s Life and Works*, 102.

<sup>2</sup> This book is edited by the present writer (Camb. U. Library).

### An Estimation and Review of the Work:

We notice that, by and large, there were three categories of commentaries in circulation during our author's time – (1) Traditional commentary (Tafsīr bi'l-Ma'thūr) with Isnād (or Sanad, the chain of authorities on which a Tradition is based), (2) Traditional Tafsīr without Isnād, and (3) Rational commentary (Tafsīr bi'l-Ra'y).<sup>1</sup> Ḥīrī's exegesis falls under the second and the third headings. It is traditional, we believe, because he offers the relevant commentaries from the Prophet, if any, his companions, the followers of the companions, the followers of the followers of the companions (Tab' al-Tābi'īn), etc. There may be a dozen authorities or more for a single difficult word or phrase.<sup>2</sup> At some points the sources differ, and when this is the case, the author, after expounding the opposing view and giving the supporting statements, puts forward his own view and the reason for it. Let us examine some aspects of his traditional commentary:

(1) *Asbāb al-Nuzūl (Occasions of the Revelation)*: This has an important bearing on understanding the Qur'ān. Without the knowledge of a particular occasion on which a particular verse was revealed, it becomes difficult to follow the real sense of the Qur'ān. In this commentary the author narrates the reliable *Asbāb al-Nuzūl*.<sup>3</sup> In other words, the background of a chapter (or parts thereof) is

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Dhahabī (Muḥammad bin Ḥusain), *al-Tafsīr wa al-Mufasssīrīn*, I, 153-157 (Cairo, 1382/1961); Ibn Khāladūn, *Muqaddimah*, 437-440 (Cairo, n.d.); Suyūṭī, *Itqān*, ii, 190-91 (Cairo, 1951); Qāsim al-Qaisī, *Tārīkh al-Tafsīr*, 20-23, 49-55, 122-144 (Baghdād, 1966); Ibn Taimiyah, *Muqaddimah fī Uṣūl al-Tafsīr*, 93-114 (Kuwait, 1971); Qaṭṭān, 'Ulūm al-Qur'ān 173-91 (Makkah); Shāh Walīyyullāh, *al-Fauz al-Kabīr*, 107-117 (tr. Lāhore, n.d.).

<sup>2</sup> Cf. HK, f188a, f. 190b, etc.; Sattār, 103.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. HK, ff. 55a, 56b, 65b, 70a, etc.

recorded in its proper place. His presentation discloses the view that the Qur'ān was not revealed for a particular occasion only, but for all time, the particular occasion is now past. His chief interest is to see how it can be a guide for all time to come.

- (2) *The Qur'ānic Stories are Important for the Purpose of Guidance, and Interesting from a Historical Point of View:* In some cases the stories are briefly mentioned: in this connection the author has collected ample material from the early sources to establish the purpose of the Qur'ān.
- (3) *In Tafsīr Literature, a Special Place is given to the Science of the Recitation of the Qur'ān ('Ilm al-Qira'ah):*<sup>1</sup> In his commentary, the author records the various ways of reading (certain words) and gives preference to one possible reading over another. He also gives the variation of punctuation, vowels, etc. He quotes from the earliest authorities and the seven famous Qur'ān readers. Among them Abū 'Amr (d.154/770), 'Āṣim (d.158/774) and Hamzah (d.156/772) are frequently mentioned.<sup>2</sup> We may present two citations of variant readings.<sup>3</sup>

إذا نودى للصلاة من يوم الجمعة فاسعوا، أي فامشوا وقيل: فامضوا، وقرئ به قال عمر بن الخطاب رضي الله عنه: "القراءة فامضوا إلى ذكر الله، أحب إلي من قراءة "فاسعوا إلى ذكر الله" لأن "فاسعوا" من السعي و"فامضوا" من الماضي بالسكينة" وقال قتادة: "فاسعوا بالنية" وقال بعض: "فاسعوا بالقلب" وقيل "فاسعوا بالسكينة والوقار". إلى ذكر الله، إلى الخطبة وصلاة الجمعة وذروا البيع، واركعوا البيع بعد الأذان وهو الأذان الآخر ولو باع لكان ذلك مكروهاً والأمر الأول "فاسعوا إلى ذكر البيع" أمر للوجوب.

<sup>1</sup> See Suyūṭī, Itqān, i, 99 ; Qāsim al-Qaisī, 86; Sattār, 76-78.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. HK, ff, 12a, 61a, 190b, etc.; GAL, S.i, 177-8; SA, 190-91

<sup>3</sup> This piece of commentary is quoted from his Tafsīr of chapter "al-Jumu'ah", No.LXII, verse 9, HK, f76a; SA, 104.

In this passage the author provides us with different readings of Fa's'au (hasten) and records the opinions of 'Umar bin al-Khaṭṭāb and Qatādah (d.117/735), the authorities on the interpretation of the Qur'ān. The second quotation reads:<sup>123</sup>

كي لا يكون دولة، وقرئ دُولَة بالرفع والفتح وقيل: هما لغتان بمعنى واحد وقيل من  
قرأ برفع الدال فهو على الاسم ومن قرأ بنصب الدال فهو على المصدر، قال  
أبو عمرو رضي الله عنه: برفع الدال الشيء الذي يتناول من أيدي الناس وينصب  
الدال الظفر "كي لا يكون دولة" أي بين الأغنياء منكم.

In this passage the author furnishes us with variant readings of the word Dulah (a change of time or fortune) and the opinion of Abū 'Amr, s leading authority on the Qur'ān-reading.

- (4) *According to their Origin, the Chapters are in their Titles denoted as Makkan or Madinan:* This chronological grouping, already carried through by the earliest commentators, is merely followed by him. Under the title he puts the number of verses, words, and even letters. If there is any difference of opinion with regard to these points he records it without fail.<sup>2</sup>
- (5) *If Any Chapter has Some Excellent Quality, mentioned by the Prophet, he records it in a Proper Place:* The above points entirely depend on Traditions, and nobody can exercise his own intellect in regard to them. The author has collected this kind of material from Traditions; so we may call his commentary partly Tafsīr bi'l Ma'thūr (Commentary by the Transmitted Traditions).

<sup>1</sup> HK. F61a (Chapter "al-Ḥaṣhr," LIX:7); in the verse, the word Dūlah also means "a thing that is taken by turns" and Daulah – "predominance, mastery, victory," see LL, iii, 934f.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. ff.12b, 55a, 65b, 70a, 188a, etc.

Besides being a traditional commentary his *Kifāyah* maybe called partly a ratio-juristic commentary in the sense that the author explains questions of jurisprudence, the principle of *fiqh*, topics of scholastic theology, grammatical matters, etc. The following points may be presented to clarify this view:

- (1) With regard to the philological and linguistic matters, Ḥīrī follows a simple process. His main purpose seems to explain the Qur'ān in an easy manner so that the meaning could be readily understood. He always offers philological, grammatical and rhetorical explanations of difficult words and phrases; and if necessary refers to the relevant authorities. He always points out the meaning of hard terms in his own simple words. He quotes from poetry, occasionally, in support of his explanation and discusses other essential elements connected with the Tafsīr.
- (2) It is known that the text of the Qur'ān is not systematically arranged like a regular book; for this reason he explains the text verse by verse pointing to bring home to his reader the realization that the object of the Qur'ānic message is to purify human beings and guide them to the right path.
- (3) One important characteristic of his exegesis is that, being a Shāfi'ī jurist,<sup>1</sup> he appears to have defended the arguments of his own school of law. He deals in some detail with those from which commandments and prohibitions are deduced. He quotes the opinions of Abū Ḥanīfah and Shāfi'ī, and finally gives his own in favour of the Shāfi'ī school of thought.
- (4) With regard to the scholastic theology (*Kalām*), he refutes the Ma'tazilites' view and supports the Ash'arites' view. The former considered the Qur'ān to be created, and the

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<sup>1</sup> Subkī, *Ṭabaqāt al-Shāfi'īyah*, iv, 265-66; SA, 73-75.

later believe that it is uncreated.<sup>1</sup> On this point our author's view is expressed thus:<sup>2</sup>

الرحمن علّم القرآن. فيه ثلاثة أقاويل: أحدها الرحمن علّم القرآن جبريل وجبريل محمدًا ومحمد أمته، والثاني: الرحمن علّم محمدًا التوحيد بالقرآن.....، والثالث: علّم القرآن أي باطن القرآن وتأويله وتفسيره ومعانيه بالإلهام، خلق الإنسان فيه دليل على أن القرآن غير مخلوق لأنه خصّ القرآن بالتعليم وخصّ الإنسان بالخلق فلو كان مخلوقًا لقال خلق القرآن. خلق الإنسان فيه ثلاثة أقاويل.

[“The merciful (Allah) taught the Qur’ān” – On this (verse) there are three views: the first is that the Merciful taught Jibrā’īl the Qur’ān and Jibrā’īl taught Muḥammad, and Muḥammad taught his community; the second is that the Merciful taught Muḥammad the Unity of Allah through the Qur’ān;..... the third is that “He taught the Qur’ān” means the inner meaning of the Qur’ān, its explanation, interpretation, and meanings by inspiration. “He created man” – in this (verse) there is an indication that the Qur’ān is uncreated, because He specified the Qur’ān as being taught and specified man as being created. If it were created He would have said “He created the Qur’ān.”]

With this interpretation the author tries to prove that the Qur’ān is not created. It is to be noted that in the matter of theology and jurisprudence, he seems to be careful. He discusses these points occasionally and avoids unnecessary controversies. His primary concern, as mentioned earlier, is an illustration of the Qur’ān and all the rest is secondary. It is obvious from the above points that the author uses his intellect in his commentary and in his sense his work falls partly under the head of Tafsīr bi’l-Ra’y (Commentary by the Opinion).

<sup>1</sup> *Shahrastānī*, Milal, 29-31 (London, 1842-46 ; Abū Manṣūr al-Baḡhdādī, *al-Farq Baina al-Firāq*, tr. by Seelye, 116f (New York, 1966).

<sup>2</sup> HK, f41a (from his Tafsīr of Chapter “al-Raḥmān,” LV: 1, 2).

### Some Other Features:

He invariably paraphrases the *basmalah* at the beginning of each chapter in accordance with its subject matter. In the support of this point, we may quote the following line:<sup>1</sup>

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ إِخ. بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الْمَلِكِ الْقُدُّوسِ الَّذِي يُثَبِّتُ الْمَصَلِّينَ عَلَى الْحُضُورِ وَيُعَاقِبُ  
الْكَافِرِينَ عَلَى الْجُحُودِ.

Following theme of the chapter, he explains the *basmalah* thus: “In the name of Allah, the Sovereign King, the Holy One, Who makes the worshippers steadfast in their attendance (at the prayers) and punishes the unbelievers for their denial (of the prayers).”

Another citation from his commentary reads thus:<sup>2</sup>

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ بِسْمِ رَبِّ الْخَلَائِقِ أَجْمَعِينَ الَّذِي يَنْهَى عَنِ مَتَابَعَتِهِ الشَّيْطَانَ الرَّجِيمِ.

Following the subject matter of chapter “al-Nās,” where the men are taught to seek refuge in Allah from the evil whisperings of the slinking (Devil), the author paraphrases *basmalah* thus: “In the name of the Lord of the whole universe, Who forbids the following of the Devil, the stoned.”

A notable method of Ḥīrī which may also be stated is that he does not record the chain of narrators (sanad) for the Traditions, but only refers to the final authorities. This was a common practice during his time among scholars; because the authenticity of Ḥadīth, through the systematic arrangement of both sanad and matn (text), had already been established earlier by the famous *muḥaddithun* (Traditionists).

His style of presentation can be judged from the following oft-repeated phrases throughout the work: Fīhi qiṣṣah is an

<sup>1</sup> HK. F74b (cited from his Tafsīr of Chapter “al-Jumu’ah.” LXII).

<sup>2</sup> HK. F192a (quoted from his Tafsīr of Chapter “al-Nās.” CXIV).

introduction to a story. In other words, it means that the mufassir (commentator) is going to record a story or some historical background for the passage concerned. Fīhi su'āl means that there is a controversy on the point under consideration. Al-Jawāb means "the following would be the answer to the problem." Ikh̄ṭalafū fīhi indicates that there is a difference of opinions among the authorities. Hādha ṣaḥīḥ means "this is the genuine one." The phrase Qad marra dhikruhu fī sūrat kadhā is used for the purpose of the reference, which means that he never repeats a point if it has once been discussed. Faḍl al-Sūrah means that the author is going to state the excellent quality of the chapter concerned. Now it may be proper to examine two longer passages:

### **Example 1**

لهذه السورة اسمان: الدخان والبطش. وهي كلها مكية وعدد حروفها ألف وأربعمائة وواحد وثلاثون حرفاً. وعدد كلماتها ثلاثمائة وست وأربعون كلمة، وعدد آياتها خمسون وتسع آيات، وروى أبي بن كعب رضي الله عنه عن النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم أنه قال: من قرأ حمّ الدخان في ليلة الجمعة غفر له.

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

بسم الله العزيز الرحيم الذي بيّن في الذكر الحكيم أنّ المغفرة لمن يعود إليه بقلب سليم. قوله تبارك وتعالى: حمّ قسم وجوابه "إنا أنزلناه". حمّ أي قاضٍ لما هو كائن. والكتاب المبين فأقسم بالكتاب المبين وقد مضى تفسيره حم والكتاب المبين... عن ابن عباس رضي الله عنه والكتاب المبين يعني بيّن فيه حلاله وحرامه وأمره ونهيه، قال مقاتل بن سليمان: "والكتاب المبين" يعني أنه عزيز بيّن. قوله تعالى "إنا أنزلناه" أي إنا أنزلنا القرآن في ليلة مباركة، وذلك أن جبريل عليه السلام يأتي في الليلة المباركة بجميع ما يوحى إليه إلى النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم من القرآن من اللوح المحفوظ إلى السماء السادسة وأملاه على صف من الملائكة في بيت يقال له بيت العزة وسمي أولئك القوم من الملائكة السفرة والكتبة ولم ينزل جبريل عليه السلام



بشيء منه إلى النبي صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ من القرآن إلا بعد الأمر من الله تعالى. نزل به في عشرين سنة ويقال في ثلاثة وعشرين سنة....قوله "في ليلة مباركة" وهي ليلة القدر السبع والعشرين من شهر رمضان وجميع المفسرين على هذا إلا عكرمة فإنه قال في ليلة مباركة "ليلة النصف من شعبان" وتفرد بهذا القول. البركة الثبات والدوام والزيادة وقيل أصل البركة إنما هو الخير. وأصل الشؤم إنما هو الشر. أعوذ بالله منه.

واختلفوا فيه لم سمي "ليلة القدر" "ليلة المباركة"؟ فروي عن الشعبي رضي الله عنه أنه قال: البركة فيها نزول جبريل عليه السلام والملائكة واستغفارهم ودعائهم للمؤمنين. قال الزهري: البركة المنصوبة إلى الليل لتزول القرآن فيها والتفسير الذي أودعه الله تعالى في القرآن. وقال سفيان ابن عيينة: البركة فيها أن الله تعالى لا يقضي البلاء والشدة في سائر الليالي إلا فيها وقيل سمي مباركا لما فيها من الأمن والخير.....

### Example II

#### سورة المجادلة

جملة هذه السورة مدنية وعدد آياتها اثنتان وعشرون آية.....وعدد كلماتها أربعمائة وثلاث وسبعون كلمة وعدد حروفها ألف وسبعمائة واثنان وتسعون حرفاً.

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

وبه نستعين. بسم الله السميع البصير الذي يسمع الأنين ويرزق الضعيف قوله تبارك وتعالى: قد سمع الله قول التي تجادلك في زوجها نزلت في خولة بنت ثعلبة بن مالك وزوجها أوس بن الصامت أخي عبادة بن الصامت وذلك أنهما تخاصما وتشاجرا وجرى بينهما ظهار وكان الظهار في الجاهلية طلاقاً حتى جاء الإسلام ولفظ الظهار أن يقول الرجل لامرأته "أنت علي كظهر أمي" فتخاصما وتشاجرا في ذلك وتحاكما إلى النبي صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ ليحكم بينهما فجلس أوس بقرب النبي صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ وجلست خولة بقرب عائشة والنبي صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ بتوسط. فسارت خولة مع عائشة وحدثت معها في السر شيئاً فأنزل الله تعالى في الساعة "قد سمع الله قول التي تجادلك في زوجها". فتعجبت عائشة لسرعة نزول هذه الآية فقالت عائشة للنبي صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قد سمع الله هذه المرأة التي حدثت معي في السر"...."تجادلك" يعني تخاصمك

وتشاحرك يعني خولة "في زوجها" يعني في شأن زوجها. وتشتكي وتضرع إلى الله والله يسمع تحاوركما أي مكالمتكما ومراجعتكما أن الله سميع بمكالمتهما بصير بأمرها.

الذين يظهرون منكم من نساءهم أي محرمون نساءهم بلفظ الظهار وهي طلاق الجاهلية وهو أن يقول الرجل لامرأته أنت عليّ كظهر أمي ما هن أمهاتهم أي ما النساء أمهاتهم. إن أمهاتهم إلا اللاني ولدنهم وقيل أرضعهم وأنهم ليقولون يعني الأزواج منكر أي قبيحاً قال لامرأته "أنت عليّ كظهر أمي". قال ابن عباس "المنكر الذي لا يعرف في الشريعة ولا في السنة". من القول في الظهار وزوراً كذباً وإن الله لعفو متجاوز إذا لم يعاقب بتحريم ما أحلّ الله له غفور بعد توبة وندامة ثم ذكر كفارة الظهار والذين يظهرون من نساءهم أي محرمون نساءهم بلفظ الظهار ثم يعودون من التحريم إلى التحليل والتحريم لفظ الظهار والتحليل ترك الطلاق لما قالوا، والعود عند الشافعي رضي الله عنه هو أن يقول الرجل: لامرأته أنت عليّ كظهر أمي فإذا أمكن في الساعة أن يطلقها في عقيب الظهار فولا كفارة عليه وحرمت عليه المرأة وعند أبي حنيفة رضي الله عنه العود أن يجامع الرجل فذلك العود ولزم عليه الكفارة وحلت له المرأة وإذا طلّقها في عقيب الظهار فلا كفارة عليه وحرمت عليه المرأة وعند أبي حنيفة رضي الله عنه العود أن يجامع الرجل فذلك العود ولزمت عليه الكفارة وحلت له المرأة وإذا لم يجامع امرأته بعد الظهار لا يكون عوداً حتى يجامع ولم يلزمه الكفارة وحلت له المرأة.....

The above two examples are cited from Ḥīrī's tafsīr,<sup>1</sup> ff.12b-13a and 55a-55b respectively. These are clear enough to present the nature of his contribution; so, a word for word translation seems unnecessary. Comments, however, on some important points, giving comparison, as mentioned earlier, with Ṭabarī's Tafsīr will be useful here to estimate the value of Ḥīrī's work. Before we embark upon this delicate task, it should be noted that as the subject matter and the sources of commentary are the same, basically Ṭabarī and Ḥīrī have some common grounds and a similar approach; but in some aspects naturally they have different methods of presentation.

The main difference between them is with regard to the sanad. While transmitting the Traditions, Ṭabarī includes the entire

<sup>1</sup> Chapter "al-Dukhān" XLIV : 1: Chapter 'al-Mujādilah," LVIII : 1. 2.

chain of narrators from himself up to the final authority – while Ḥīrī records the final authority or only the substance of the Traditions. Briefly, Ṭabarī's commentary is based on direct Traditions, while Ḥīrī uses both Traditions (directly or indirectly) and intellect. On some points, Ṭabarī transmits a large number of Traditions and Ḥīrī quotes a few, or vice versa.

### **Comments on Example I (Chapter “al-Dukhān”):**

Under the title of the chapter, Ḥīrī includes, as usual, an introduction mentioning the essential elements of the chapter; while Ṭabarī, perhaps considering it to be common knowledge, remains silent. According to his constant method, Ḥīrī paraphrases *basmalah* at the commencement of this chapter, but Ṭabarī does not feel the necessity of doing so.

With regard to al-Ḥurūf al-Muqāṭṭa'āt<sup>1</sup> (mysterious letters), Ḥīrī always tries to give a meaning of his own. For instance, in the present chapter, Ḥā-Mīm are interpreted thus; “Allah is the judge of all existing things.” Ṭabarī,<sup>2</sup> however, does not record any meaning for these particular letters; but on other occasions he presents some kind of meaning. For example, in connection with Alif-Lām-Mīm, at the beginning of the second chapter, Ṭabarī records<sup>3</sup> many opinions of early commentators, but not his own. Very often he remains silent on this point.

Lailah Mubārakah: The first verse evidently points that the Qur'ān was revealed on a “Blessed Night”. Which particular

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<sup>1</sup> The abbreviated letters at the commencement of several chapters, 29 in all. Ṭabarī (New ed. i, 67-73, 205-9) and Rāzī (Mafātīḥ al-Gḥaib well-known as al-Tafsīr al-Kabīr, i, 153-60, Cairo, 1890-92) both record a narration from Abū Bakr who is reported to have said that Allah has mystery in all His books, and the mystery of the Qur'ān is the isolated letters in the beginning of some chapters. See Zamakhsharī, al-Kashshāf, i, 18-20; Bell's Introduction to the Qur'ān, ed. Watt, 61-65.

<sup>2</sup> Jāmi' al-Bayān, xxv, 58-60 (old ed.)

<sup>3</sup> Also see Jāmi' al-Bayān, i, 205-9 (new ed.)

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night in the year is meant? On this there is some difference of opinions among the authorities. Most of them maintain that it was Lailat al-Qadr (the Night of Divine Decree), the Night between the 26<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup> of Ramaḍān. On the contrary, one of them says that Lailah Mubārakah in this verse means “the night between the 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> of Sha’bān.” Presenting both opinions, Ḥīrī says that all commentators agree that it was Lailat-al-Qadr, but ‘Ikrimah (d.105/723) disagrees with this view. He considers that it was Lailat-al-Niṣf min Sha’bān, and he is alone in maintaining this.

In respect to the above point, Ṭabarī’s Tafsīr is better documented than Ḥīrī’s. Ṭabarī<sup>1</sup> quotes from three authorities that the “Blessed Night” means the Lailat-al-Qadr in which the Qur’ān was revealed. Briefly, Ṭabarī confines himself to recording the commentaries of his predecessors who were authorities on the subject and adds little of his own. For the second opinion he offers no particular reference. On the other hand, Ḥīrī gives the text or substance of the Traditions and adds further views of his own.

### Comments on Example II:

Here is chapter “al-Mujādilah,” after presenting the usual introduction. Ḥīrī records the occasions of the revelation of the first few verses. The event, according to Ḥīrī, was that once ‘Aus bin al-Ṣāmit (brother of ‘Ubādah bin al-Ṣāmit) and his wife Khaulah (bint Tha’labah bin Mālik) quarrelled violently, and as a result a Ḍihār took place. ‘Aus said to his wife Anti ‘alayya ka ḏahri ummī<sup>2</sup> (You are to me like my

<sup>1</sup> The same book, xxv, 58-60 (old ed.); Ṭabarsī, *Majma’ al-Bayān*, v, 60-63.

<sup>2</sup> Ṭabarsī, *Majma’ al-Bayān*, v, 245-48 (Beirut, 1959); *Zamakhsharī*, *al-Kashshāf*, iv, 484f (Beirut, new ed. n. d.); *Qudūrī*, *al-Mukhtaṣar*, 206-208 (Kānpur, India, n. d.); LL, v, 1926-1930.

mother's back). This practise was called *Ẓihār*, a form of divorce in pre-Islamic days. After a painful controversy they put the matter before the Prophet for final judgement. On this occasion the first few verses were revealed as a solution to the problem. It is remarkable in Ḥīrī's statement that he does not record any direct Traditions; but the summary of the incident is given in his own words.

Ṭabarī's commentary here also is better documented and fully based on Traditions. He records, for the same incident, more than a dozen Traditions.<sup>1</sup> Different versions of the name and lineage of the woman (*Khaulah*) are cited by him, but Ḥīrī's account of her is short. Various readings of the word *yuzāhirūn* are given by Ṭabarī; whereas Ḥīrī does not give any variant readings of it. Ḥīrī, however, gives a different reading of *waladnāhum* as *arda 'nahum*. This is not his own opinion but he records another opinion, indicating this with the word *qīla* (it is said). According to Ḥīrī *munkar* means *qabīḥ* (disgraceful thing), i.e. the *Ẓihār* is an ugly utterance. He quotes the explanation of 'Abd-Allāh bin 'Abbās (d.68/687), the *Ra'īs al-Mufasssīrīn*, that *munkar* is something which is not recognized by the *Sunnah* and *Sharī'ah*.

Both Ṭabarī and Ḥīrī give different meanings of 'aud.<sup>2</sup> Ḥīrī says that 'aud means return from *taḥrīm* to *taḥlīl*. *Taḥrīm* means the utterance of the words of *Ẓihār* and *taḥlīl* means refraining from the final divorce after the *Ẓihār*. Then Ḥīrī puts the opinion of Imām *Shāfi'ī*: 'aud means that a man says to his wife : "You are to me like my mother's back," but after saying this, he stops for while during which he could divorce her, nevertheless, he does not do so, and his practise is 'aud. Now

<sup>1</sup> *Jāmi' al-Bayān*, xxviii, 2-6 (old ed.); also see *Rāzī*, viii, 108-25.

<sup>2</sup> *LL*, v, 2188-2192; *HK*, f55a-56b; *Ṭabarī*, xxviii, 2-6.

if the husband gives the obligatory Kaffārah (penance – viz, either freeing a slave, or two months' fast, or feeding sixty poor persons) then his wife is ḥalāl (lawful) for him; but if he divorces her after the Ḍihār, no Kaffārah is required and the woman ultimately becomes ḥarām (unlawful) for him.

According to Abū Ḥanīfah, as Ḥīrī puts it 'aud means that the man has sexual intercourse with her. Ḥīrī's presentation of Abū Ḥanīfah's opinion is far from clear. Ṭabarsī<sup>1</sup> (9<sup>th</sup> author of *Majma' al-Bayān fī Tafsīr al-Qur'ān*), however, clearly records the view of Abū Ḥanīfah as thus; al-'Azm 'alā waṭ'ihā, i.e. if the husband, after uttering the words of Ḍihār, wants to take her back and to resume the conjugal life, he should have firm sexual desire for her. When he does so, expiation must be paid before sexual intercourse in order to restore a normal relationship.<sup>2</sup>

Ṭabarī also provides us with a similar opinion on the meaning of 'aud, but with different words. He does not mention Abū Ḥanīfah or *Shāfi'ī* by name for the point at issue, but refers to other early authorities.<sup>3</sup>

With the above estimation in mind we have reached the end of our present investigation. Other points regarding Ḥīrī's *Tafsīr* might be considered, but for the purpose at hand foregoing evaluation, we believe, is sufficient; since it serves to indicate the contribution of our author.

### Conclusion:

We conclude with a final remark that Ismā'īl bin Aḥmad bin 'Abd-Allāh al-Darīr al-Nīsābūrī al-Ḥīrī's *Kifāyat al-Tafsīr* may be

<sup>1</sup> Ṭabarsī, v, 247-48; Ibn al-Jauzī, *Zād al-Masīr*, viii, 183 (Beirut 1967); Qudūrī, 206-208.

<sup>2</sup> See Marghīnānī, tr. C. Hamilton, *Hidāyah*, 117-123 (Lāhore, 1957).

<sup>3</sup> Ṭabarī, *Jāmi' al-Bayān*, xxviii, 2-6 (old ed.).

regarded as a rich repository in the field of Qur'ānic exegesis without being crowded with subsidiary matters. We consider that this early commentator, by digesting the works of his predecessors and enriching them with his own studies, left a lasting mark on the subsequent development of Tafsīr literature.

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  6. Ḥājī *Khalīfah*, *Kashf al-Zunūn*, Tehrān, 1967
  7. Ibn al-'Imād, *Shadharai*, Cairo, 1931
  8. Ibn al-Jauzī, *Muntaẓam*, Ḥyderābād, 1938
  9. Ibn al-Jauzī, *Zād al-Masīr*, Beirut 1967
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  15. *Koniglichen Bibliothek, Arabischen*, Berlin, 1887
  16. *Marghīnānī*, *Hidāyah (Tr.)*, Lāhore, 1957
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  19. Qaṭṭān, *'Ulūm al-Qur'ān*, Makkah, n.d.
  20. Qudūrī, *al-Mukhtaṣar*, Kānpur, India, n. d.
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  22. *Shāh Walīyyullāh*, *al-Fauz al-Kabīr*, Lāhore, n.d.
  23. *Shahrastānī*, *Milal*, London, 1842-46
  24. *Suyūṭī*, *Itqān*, Cairo, 1951
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25. Suyūṭī, Ṭabaqāt al-Mufasssīrīn, Tehrān, 1960
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### Abbreviations

Gal=brockelmann. Geschichte der Arabischen Litteratur, with Supplementband, 5 vols., Leiden, 1943,  
HK=Ismā'īl bin Aḥmad al-Nīsābūrī al-Ḥīrī, Kifāyat al-Tafsīr, Istanbul University Library, MS. No. 350A 1787 (Karatay, F., Ist. U. Kutup Arapca Yazamlar Katalogu, Cilt, I, Tafsirler, Istanbul, 1953).

HW=the same author, Wujūh al-Qur'ān, Cambridge University Library. MS. Or. 1283 (Arberry, A second suppl. Hand-list of the Muḥammadan MSS., Cambridge, 1952).

KM=Kaḥḥālah ('Umar Riḍā), Mu'jam al-Mu'allifīn, 15 vols., Damascus, 1957-61.

LL=Lane (E.W.), Arabic-English Lexicon, 8 vols., Beirut, 1968

SA=Dr. Muḥammad 'Abdus Sattār, al-Ḥīrī's life and works with an edition of his Wujūh al-Qur'ān, Ph.D. Dissertation, Cambridge University Library, 1974.

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## Tafsīr-i-Mājidī and Tadabbur-i-Qur'ān (A Comparative Study)

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On the Qur'ānic systems of knowledge and craftsmanship, intellectual circles have in unambiguous terms appreciated the depth of knowledge of Maulānā Ḥamīduddīn Farāhī. Arabs and non-Arabs alike have appreciated his service to the Qur'ān. Innumerable researchers from A'zamgarh, 'Alīgarh, Karāchī, Allāhābād, and Ḥyderābād have benefited from him. Among the beneficiaries, two are Maulānā 'Abdul Mājid Daryābādī (1892-1977 AD) and Maulānā 'Amīn Aḥsan Işlāhī (1903-97 AD).<sup>2</sup> Both of them have noted at various places the Maulānā's approach to the Qur'ānic studies. Maulānā Daryābādī says, "The Maulānā was a great lover of the Qur'ān. He was a true lover of both the Qur'ān and the scholastics. With the acquisition of knowledge and with the highest excellence of learning and insight, he cherished the long hours of the day and the silences of the night devoted to the service of Qur'ān. This interest was always there, but he had given his time to this completely during the last 10-12 years of his life. Constant study of Arabic literature, particularly pre-Islamic literature had taken full control of his tongue and habit. Whatever he wrote was in Arabic; and perhaps, he even conceived thoughts and ideas in Arabic. He intended to write a complete exegesis on the Qur'ān in such a manner that not only the relationship of each chapter with the other, each

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<sup>2</sup> Zikr-i-Farāhī by Dr. Sharfuddīn Işlāhī, Dā'irah Ḥamīdiyyah, Madrasah al-Işlāh, Sarā'imīr, A'zamgarh, 2001, PP. 468-84

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paragraph with another and each verse with another, but even the relationship of the words of a verse becomes clear and distinct from one another. The will of God did not allow success to the will of his devotee.”<sup>1</sup>

In the same way at other places, Maulānā Daryābādī has credited Maulānā Farāhī as the pioneer of the Qur’ānic dictionary.<sup>2</sup> Thus, at the time of English translation of the Qur’ān, he remembers Maulānā Farāhī for the help that could be sought from him on various difficulties.<sup>3</sup> Writing the foreword to his commentary, the Maulānā says, “The writer of these lines had the fortune of temporary association with the Tafsir-i-Nizām al-Qur’ān by Maulānā Ḥamīduddīn Farāhī sāḥeb and the Bayān al-Qur’ān by Maulānā Thānawī sāḥeb.”<sup>4</sup> Similarly, in the arrangement of his exegetical writing, those exegetical writings and dictionaries which have been mentioned for the help therein included the Tafsīr Nizām al-Qur’ān and Mufradāt al-Qur’ān of the Maulānā.<sup>5</sup>

Like Maulānā Daryābādī, Maulānā Amīn Aḥsan in his writings and exegesis also notes the occasional benefits from Maulānā Farāhī and ascribes his exegesis to the thoughts of Farāhī.

Maulānā Iṣlāḥī is like a chieftain among the pupils of Farāhī. He studied Qur’ān from the Maulānā. He writes about his exegesis: “Whatever is in this book is the benefit from the late

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<sup>1</sup> Autobiography.

<sup>2</sup> “Ḥazrat Farāhī” (an unpublished article). Ḥamīduddīn Farāhī, the grandson of Maulānā Farāhī, had once planned to publish articles written by renowned scholars but it was not completed. This article is from that collection. See Zikr-i-Farāhī, P. 795

<sup>3</sup> Autobiography

<sup>4</sup> Tafsīr-i-Mājidī by ‘Abdul Mājid Daryābādī, Sidqejadeed Books, Majinisi Kachehri Road, Lucknow.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid, PP. 8-9.

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teacher because this is the real truth; but I shun this claim lest any of my mistakes is directed towards him.”<sup>1</sup>

From the above, it is fully evident that Maulānā Daryābādī and Maulānā Iṣlāḥī both benefited from the noble thoughts of ‘Allāmah Farāhī; though Maulānā Daryābādī much less than Maulānā Iṣlāḥī, since Maulānā Farāhī taught Maulānā Iṣlāḥī the Qur’ān chapter by chapter and satisfactorily cleared his various doubts. Maulānā Iṣlāḥī declared his exegesis *Tadabbur-i-Qur’ān*, similar to the thoughts of Farāhī. Intellectual circles also hold *Tadabbur-i-Qur’ān*, as a legacy of Farāhī. The reason is that *Tadabbur-i-Qur’ān* here and there echoes the thoughts of Farāhī whereas in *Tafsīr-i-Mājidī*, there is nothing as such. Truly speaking, this exegesis is a collection of different old and new exegeses and a free copying from various exegeses and books pertaining to syntactical formations, literary points, exegesis of Qur’ānic verses and discussion on Islamic Laws in the Qur’ān. No indication is given of a personal view-point. Maulānā Thānavī’s statements are repeatedly copied due to which the readers feel worried. In the same way, regarding the exegesis on verses, many sayings of the mystic (sufis) have been presented out of which most are irrelevant and out of context. As regards some aspects and statements, his researches are praiseworthy. In respect of the exegesis of verses special benefits are from the Torah, the psalms and the Bible. Thus benefit from Western literature is the essential feature of this exegesis. The failure and mistakes of orientalisists have been seriously taken into account. This aspect is totally absent in other exegeses in Urdu. Similarly, the Western intemperance has been countered by the Western literature. This characteristic feature of the Maulānā is absent in order exegeses. This is the only aspect which accords this exegesis a prominent position. In *Tafsīr-i-Mājidī* along with the

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<sup>1</sup> *Tadabbur-i-Qur’ān* by Amīn Aḥsan Iṣlāḥī.

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exegesis of the Qur'ānic verses, history of nations, the geography and the animals in the Qur'ān have been made subjects of discussion and valuable light is thrown on signs of recognition in the Qur'ān.

These are the broad features of Tafsīr-i-Mājidī. Now a brief survey of the exegesis, Tadabbur-i-Qur'ān by Maulānā Amīn Aḥsan Iṣlāḥī will be presented. The basic characteristic of this work is that the exegesis of the Qur'ān has been done keeping in view the present relationship between appropriateness of the chapters and verses. In Tafsīr-i-Mājidī the claim has definitely been made that "The Holy Qur'ān from the standpoint of meaning is the highly arranged and orderly book".<sup>1</sup> But orderliness of the Qur'ān has not been treated from this point of view in Tafsīr-i-Mājidī. Amongst all exegeses in the world, only Tadabbur-i-Qur'ān has this distinction. The chief feature of this exegesis is that help has been taken from pre-Islamic literature and Arab poetry in determining the sense and the meaning of the Qur'ānic verses. In Tafsīr-i-Mājidī, it has certainly been said with the help of other exegeses that "this meaning is as such in the Arab poetry"; but the poetry itself has not been quoted to support the argument. Another feature of Tadabbur-i-Qur'ān is that a clear picture of the exegesis of the Qur'ān through the Qur'ān is available in the exegesis. In the Tafsīr-i-Mājidī, scant attention is paid to this point of view. The author of Tadabbur-i-Qur'ān has accorded due place to the constant practice of the Prophet (Sunnat-i-Mutawātirah) in the chapter dealing with the exegesis of the verse. Surely, in the chapter on the tradition of the Prophet Muḥammad (Ḥadīth) and the traditions of the companions of the Prophet (Āthār-i-Ṣaḥābah), a critical approach has been taken; and in respect of their reliability, the authority of the texts of the traditions of the

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<sup>1</sup> Tafsīr-i-Mājidī, Foreword, P. 6

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Prophet has been subjected to research and examination. Maulānā Iṣlāḥī has made use of the entire collection of the traditions of the Prophet and has taken full advantage of these in the context of the exegesis of the verses. But in respect of the traditions of the Prophet which are in contradiction with the verses, the Maulānā has shown restraint. In the Tafsīr-i-Mājidī, the tradition of the Prophet have certainly been copied, but ignoring the criticism and the narrative, only those traditions of the Prophet have been considered sufficient which are present in the exegeses.

In the Tadabbur-i-Qur'ān, not much attention has been paid to the occasions of revelation (Sha'n-i-Nuzūl) because several reasonings have been given for the occasion of revelation of a single verse. The Maulānā has, therefore, put greater stress on the central theme of each chapter than to the occasion of revelation, since this is one such aspect through which all difficulties of exegesis of the verse are removed. On the occasion of revelation, the Maulānā has adopted the following approach to his teacher: "The revelation should be determined from within the Qur'ān and only those things should be taken from the traditions of the Prophet and the traditions of the companions of the Prophet which are in support of the arrangement of the Qur'ān and not which destroy its complete arrangement.<sup>1</sup> Maulānā Amīn Aḥsan Iṣlāḥī in his exegesis has benefited very little from the book of exegesis because, while in Tadabbur-i-Qur'ān, the exegesis is done in the light of words in the verses, their context, the arrangement of the Qur'ān and other precedents and evidences in the Qur'ān, in Tafsīr-i-Mājidī, this method is not adopted.

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<sup>1</sup> Muqaddamah Tafsīr Nizām-ul-Qur'ān by 'Allāmah Ḥamīduddīn Farāhī, Dā'irah Ḥamīdiyyah, A'zamgarh, 1990, P. 38

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Benefit has been drawn from ancient revealed books in both *Tafsīr-i-Mājidī* and *Tadabbur-i-Qur'ān*. It is rather more prominent in the former and frequent references to the Torah, the psalms and the Bible are apparent. In the chapter on revealed books, Maulānā Iṣlāḥī says, "If a person reads this, the fact becomes abundantly true to him that the fountain-heads of these revealed books are undoubtedly the same as the one for the Qur'ān. After repeatedly reading them, I express this opinion that to understand the wisdom of the Qur'ān the help which comes through these revealed books is hardly available from any other thing. When you read in particular the Psalms, the Bible, etc., you will get that strength to the faith which is from none else than the Qur'ān and the Ḥadīth surprisingly, nations which possess these revealed books remain deprived of the teaching of the last Prophet Muḥammad (PBUH)."<sup>1</sup>

In the chapter on the history of the Arabs, Maulānā Iṣlāḥī depended largely on the Qur'ān. The leaders of earlier peoples, viz. the 'Ād, the Thamūd and the Lūṭ (Lot) mentioned in the Qur'ān, have also been made the subject of discussion. The sacrifice, the call and the construction of the House of God (Baitullāh) at Mecca in Arabia by Ibrāhīm (Abraham) and Ismā'īl (Ishmael) are described in the Qur'ān. Similarly, all events such as the manner in which the Quraysh mutilated the religion of Ibrāhīm and converted the House of God into a place of idol-worship are given in the Qur'ān. The Maulānā was content with this information in the Qur'ān, because no authentic history of this period is available. Surely, the Maulānā has taken help from the available indications in Arabic poetry; but to him such historical traditions are worth-accepting which are supported and approved by the Qur'ān.<sup>2</sup> In *Tafsīr-i-Mājidī* benefit is

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<sup>1</sup> *Tadabbur-i-Qur'ān*, Foreword.

<sup>2</sup> For details, see *Tadabbur-i-Qur'ān* (Foreword)

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derived from modern historical literature since Maulānā Daryābādī was well acquainted with English literature and the works of oriental scholars pertaining to Islamics. Maulānā Iṣlāḥī's study in this respect is more limited.

On the aspect of determinates in the Qur'ān (Muqarrarāt-i-Qur'ān), Maulānā Iṣlāḥī has presented a wonderful discussion. He has taken great pains in determining the meaning in the light of Arab poetry and the dictionary. In this regard, trust has not been put on the opinions of commentators. In fact, in the light of his own research, he controverts the opinion of commentators. The Tafsīr-i-Mājidī appears devoid of such research in the chapter on determinates and strange things. Dependence has been placed on the opinion of commentators and lexicographers. Maulānā Daryābādī, quoting various statements, does not give his own opinion.

In the translation of Tafsīr-i-Mājidī, appreciable attempt to create extraordinary simplicity and fluency has been made by taking full care of the scope of words; e.g. in chapter *alam Nashrah*, the translation of the first verse is as follows:<sup>1</sup>

Alam nashrah laka sadrak?

Have we not opened for thee thy breast?

In *Tadabbur-i-Qur'ān* the translation is:<sup>2</sup>

Is it not I who opened up your chest?

The author of the later has not taken care of the scope of the "Laka"; whereas in the former, keeping in view the scope of 'laka', a successful attempt is made to produce fluency. The translation of the second verse is as follows:

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<sup>1</sup> For detail see, Tafsīr-i-Mājidī, Tāj Company Ltd, Lāhore, Karāchi, Decca; Undated, 7/1200-1201

<sup>2</sup> For details see, *Tadabbur-i-Qur'ān* by Amīn Aḥsan Iṣlāḥī, First Edition, Tāj Company, Delhi, 1980, 9/465.

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Wa waḍ'anā 'anka wizrak alladhī 'anqaḍa ḡahrak

And we have taken off thee thy burden, which weighed down thy back.

In Tadabbur-i-Qur'ān, the translation of these two verses is:

And the burden which was breaking your waist; had not [1] removed from upon you.

In Tafsīr-i-Mājidī, "Wa waḍ'anā" is not regarded as related to "alam Nashrah" since "Lam" occurs in the aorist tense and not in the past tense. The author of Tadabbur-i-Qur'ān seems to consider it as related to alam Nashrah by a conjunction, as is evident from the translation. This is not reasonable.

The translation of the fourth verse is as follows:

Wa rafa'nā laka dhikrak.

And We have exalted thy fame.

The author of Tadabbur-i-Qur'ān, translated this as:

And did [1] not heighten your reputation.

Here two things are worthy of consideration. First, to regard it related to alam Nashrah, is unreasonable. Second, here the scope of "Laka" has not been adhered to. In Tafsīr-i-Mājidī, however, both the intricacies have been taken care of.

The translation of the fifth and the sixth verses in the Tafsīr-i-Mājidī is like this:

Fa-innā ma' al-'usri yusra. Inna ma'a al-'usri yusra.

Verily, then along with hardships takes place ease. Verily along with every hardship is ease.

In the Tadabbur-i-Qur'ān, is thus:

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So ease is with every hardship. Verily along with every hardship is ease.

By all means the translation of Tadabbur-i-Qur'ān is reasonable; whereas, in Tafsīr-i- Mājidī, for "al-'usra" the translation is "hardship" which is not reasonable. Likewise, in the translation "to take place" is an addition.

The translation of last two verses is:

Fa idhā faraghta fanṣab, wa ilā Rabbika farghab

Toil then when thou art relieved, and attend thou to thy Lord.

In Tadabbur-i-Qur'ān, the translation is:

So when you are free, tighten up the lions and be in communion with your Lord.

In the Tafsīr-i- Mājidī, the translation "exert" is given for "fanṣab" so that, through this, room may be made for endeavour and the special daily round of prayers and avocations of great mystics. Essentially, Maulānā Aṣhraf 'Alī Thānavī's thought has been expressed through this translation. In the translation, Maulānā Thānavī has used "to it" instead of "exert".<sup>1</sup> Both words reflect a particular direction. The author of Tadabbur-i-Qur'ān, has used the phrase "tighten up the loins" by which to great extent the sense of "fanṣab" is expressed.

Taking into account the translation of the above chapter in the two exegeses, it can be said about the translation of Tafsīr-i- Mājidī that an attempt has been made to produce lucidity with restricted use of words. The translator has tried to use language representative of the thoughts of great mystics. Thus

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<sup>1</sup> Bayān al-Qur'ān by Maulānā Aṣhraf 'Alī, Kutb Khānah Raḥīmīyyah, Deoband, UP, 12/107

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in the translation of Tafsīr-i- Mājidī, the influence of Bayān al-Qur’ān is evident. Contrary to this, in Tadabbur-i-Qur’ān, the liberal use of words is less apparent. In this translation, the complete flavour of Urdu language and literature is present, free from the influences of all other translations. It may be attributed to the personal endeavour of Maulānā Iṣlāḥī.

### **The Exegesis of the Qur’ānic Verses**

An attempt is made to bring to the fore the style of exegesis by comparing the manner in which the verse, “Mālike yaum al-Dīn” of the chapter al-Fātiḥah has been explained in Tafsīr-i-Mājidī and in Tadabbur-i-Qur’ān. In this respect Maulānā Daryābādī writes:<sup>1</sup>

Mālik: Howsoever extensive an authority is possessed by a Ḥākim or Qāḍī, yet his authority is limited and he is compelled to award punishment to an offender according to code. That is to say, the code or law reigns on the Ḥākim itself. Contrary to this, the Mālik is the one who commands full authority to either punish or pardon an offender. None is to question him and be a Ḥākim over him. A Ḥadīth found in Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim, says: Lā Mālik Illā al-Allāh (Except Allah none is the Mālik). So also pronounces the researcher: to call anyone else the Mālik except Allah is not justified.

Some of the famous thinkers of India believe that even God cannot go against the legitimate retributive action (Karmā in Hindi terminology) and cannot excuse any wrongdoer. Christian also believe that God is bound to do justice and therefore, to demonstrate the nature of mercy. He had to offer His only son for the expiation of all sinners. The single word Mālik of the Qur’ān is the refutation of all these false beliefs. He has the

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<sup>1</sup> Tafsīr-i-Mājidī, 1/7-8

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absolute right to punish anyone deserving punishment and, if He wishes, can completely forgive the offender either after this is recommended or without any recommendation.

Yaum al-Dīn: Several meanings of *dīn* are available in the dictionary. Al-Dīn: al-Jazā' wal-Ḥisāb (Majvz). Al-Dīn: al-Ḥisāb, al-Dīn al-Jazā' (Kitāb al-Ajnās). It is due to this that Doomsday is also called the day of recompense. It will be the day of complete accounting and retribution for all actions. Here, Yaum al-Dīn means the day of resurrection as well. Let us see how Maulānā Iṣlāḥī has presented the exegetical discussion of the verse, Mālik Yaum al-Dīn.<sup>1</sup>

In the Qur'ān the word *din* has been used in several meanings:

1. For the meaning “religion and divine law”: (أَفَعَبَّرَ دِينَ اللَّهِ يَبْغُونَ) (Tr.: Do they seek religion other than the religion sent down by God.) (Āl-i-‘Imrān: 83)
2. For the meaning “Law of the land”: (مَا كَانَ لِيَأْخُذَ أَخَاهُ فِي دِينٍ) (Tr.: According to king’s ordinance, he had no right to detain his brother.) (Yūsuf: 76)
3. For the meaning “obedience”. (وَلَقَدْ بَعَثْنَا فِي كُلِّ أُمَّةٍ رَسُولًا أَنِ اعْبُدُوا) (Tr.: And We did raise among every people a Messenger, preaching: Worship Allah and shun the Evil one’ then among them were some whom Allah guided and among them were some who became deserving of ruin, so travel through the earth and see what was the end of those who denied the messengers) (al-Naḥl: 36)

<sup>1</sup> Tadabbur-i-Qur’ān, I/13-14

4. For the meaning “recompense”: (إِنَّمَا نُوعِدُونَ لَصَادِقٌ ۖ وَإِنَّ الَّذِينَ لَوَقِعُوا) (Tr.: The thing for which you are being warned is true and recompense and punishment has to take place.) (al-Zāriyāt: 5-6)

“Reward for good action” as well as “punishment for evil act”, both are intended by the word “recompense”. For this reason in the translation along with “recompense”, I have added the word “punishment”.

His being an unchallenged master of the day of recompense and punishment means that the entire power and authority would be available to Him alone. Before Him everyone will be humble and with bowed head. None will have the audacity to open his mouth without His permission. He alone will decide all matters. (لَمَنِ الْمُلْكُ الْيَوْمَ لِلَّهِ )

(الْوَحِيدِ الْقَهَّارِ ۝) “Whose sovereignty is it today? It is only of God, the One and the Controller.” (Ghāfir: 16)

Scrutinizing the excerpts from both exegeses, the following result are mentioned:

The basic difference between Tafsīr-i-Mājidī and Tadabbur-i-Qur’ān, is that in the former the exegesis is done in the light of the book of exegesis while in Tadabbur-i-Qur’ān the exegesis is done on the basis of the Qur’ān through the Qur’ān, and in determining the established meanings help from the verse is sought. This is because the Qur’ān is brief at some places and detailed at the others on the same issue, depending on the suitability of the situation and aptness. This is called Tafsīr-i-Āyat in the language of the Qur’ān. This is the reason that Maulānā Iṣlāhī has determined four meanings of *dīn* from the verse of the Qur’ān. In the same way, the meaning of Mālik is fixed in the light of the Qur’ān.

In contrast to this, in Tafsīr-i-Mājidī, full help has been taken from the exegeses and various books in the chapter on “limitation of purpose” (Taḥdīd-i-Maṭālib), for example for the explanation of “Mālik” support and confirmation has been obtained from the exegeses, Aḥkām al-Qur’ān (Qurṭabī), Anwār al-Tanzīl (Baiḍāwī), Tafsīr Majāz, al-Qur’ān (Abū ‘Ubaidah Mua’mmar), Kitāb al-Ajnās (Abū ‘Ubaid Qāsim bin Salām al-Baḡhdādī), al-Tafsīr al-Qayyim (Ibn Qayyim) and Tafsīr Kabīr (Rāzī) instead of the Qur’ān itself. This method of the exegesis of verses has been adopted in the entire Tafsīr-i-Mājidī and the author’s own pronouncements have been made with reference to various modern and past exegeses. Maulānā Daryābādī has provided a list of those exegeses used by him as sources in his foreword.

### **Arabic Poetry**

Another basic difference between Tafsīr-i-Mājidī and Tadabbur-i-Qur’ān is that in the context of elucidation of “uncompounded or single words”, it has been repeatedly said in the former, with reference to various commentators that this very sense is in Arab poetry. Discussing the word “Rizq”, it is said with reference to Tafsīr-i-Kabīr that “Rizq” is inclusive of all divine blessings. It is of wide connotation.<sup>1</sup> In the same way, the word, “Qurá” means “an identified age” or “fixed period”.<sup>2</sup> Again with reference to Ibn Qutaibah and Ibn ‘Arabī, it has been explained that it is “Asl al-Qurá fī Kalām al-‘Arab al-Waqt” but no proof of this claim has been adduced whence it is necessary to quote the text of Arab poetry for the reasoning. Here two objections arise. First mentioning Arab poetry and not quoting the verse is very surprising. Second Arab poetry ought to be handled directly instead of through

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<sup>1</sup> Tafsīr-i-Mājidī, 1/21

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., 1/426

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an exegesis. The Maulānā in his exegesis has made it incumbent upon commentators to be acquainted with Arab poetry and Arab oratories.<sup>1</sup> In the Tafsīr-i-Mājidī, however, there is a total absence of reasoning from Arab poetry.

In Tadabbur-i-Qur’ān, much emphasis has been put on the gain from the Arab poetry. Maulānā Amīn Aḥsan Iṣlāḥī inherited this interest from his great teacher Maulānā Ḥamīduddīn Farāhī. In the exegeses, Nizām al-Qur’ān and Mufradāt-i-Qur’ān by Maulānā Farāhī vivid example from Arab poetry are abundantly available. Maulānā Amīn Aḥsan Iṣlāḥī in his exegeses has also put much emphasis on Arab poetry from his reasoning referring to it as an authority. He terms it as a fundamental need of an exegesis.<sup>2</sup> Maulānā Iṣlāḥī says, “Due to this, for a person who wants to appreciate the brevity and the marvel of the Qur’ān, it is essential to develop interest in understanding the good qualities and traditions of the composition of Arab literary personalities and poets of pre-Islamic period. Without this, one can neither appreciate what a great example of good quality of Arabic Language the Qur’ān is, nor can one understand the enchantment of it which has made all eloquent persons and exaggerations helpless and miserable forever”.<sup>3</sup>

Maulānā Iṣlāḥī, in his exegesis Tadabbur-i-Qur’ān, produced evidence from Arab poetry to give the meaning of “Ṣabr”. The original meaning of “Ṣabr” is “protection”. Remaining steadfast to one’s stand and protecting oneself from disappointment is called “Ṣabr”. The Qur’ānic meaning of it is to be steadfast to

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<sup>1</sup> Tafsīr-i-Mājidī, ed. ‘Abdul Mājid Daryābādī, Nāmī Press, Lucknow, undated, 2/6

<sup>2</sup> For details, see “Advantages from Arab Poetry in Tadabbur-i-Qur’ān” by Abū Sufiyan Iṣlāḥī, Taḥqīqāt-i-Islāmī, ‘Alīgarh, January–March 2002, 21/1, PP. 47-68

<sup>3</sup> Tadabbur-i-Qur’ān, 1/15

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God's covenant with peace of mind despite all difficulties and opportunities. Ordinarily, the sense of "Ṣabr" is considered to be submission and humility which is not correct on the basis of Arabic dictionary and Qur'ānic usage.<sup>1</sup>

### **Traditions of the Prophet (Ḥadīths)**

In Tafsīr-i-Mājidī, as well as the exegesis Tadabbur-i-Qur'ān, reasoning is from the tradition of the Prophet. In the former, one may find here and there the traditions of the Prophet taken from Kutub-i-Tafsir. For this reason it may be said that the traditions of the Prophet have not been quoted after extensive search; instead greater dependence has been on commentators. Throwing light on the connotation of the word "wust", Maulānā Daryābādī states, in respect of the meaning of this word, "We can say that it is comprising of all praiseworthy qualities; meaning thereby such adherents who possess all spiritual and ethical values."<sup>2</sup> In the traditions of the Prophet, the explanation of "Wust" is from "Adl" (equity). This tradition of the Prophet is quoted from Ibn Kathīr and Tafsīr-i-Kabīr, instead of copying directly. In Tadabbur-i-Qur'ān, very little of the traditions of the Prophet is to be found. Before copying the traditions of the Prophet, Maulānā examines the same on the principle of higher criticism and narration and presents the correct traditions of the Prophet for the exegesis of the Qur'ānic verses. Traditions of the Prophet in opposition to the Āyāt-i-Karīmah are not included in Tadabbur-i-Qur'ān. Maulānā Iṣlāḥī has clarified his view thus: "Among manuscripts, the most distinguished and purest is the Zakhīra-i-Aḥdīth wa Āthār. Had there been full satisfaction about its reliability, it would have had the same importance in the

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<sup>1</sup> Tafsīr Tafsīr Nizām-ul-Qur'ān by 'Allāmah Ḥamīduddīn Farāhī, Dā'irah Ḥamīdiyyah, A'zamgarh, 1990, P. 345

<sup>2</sup> Tafsīr-i-Mājidī, 1/250

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exegesis as has been said about *Sunnat-i-Mutwātirah*. Since that very satisfaction could not be obtained, so the gain from it could only be to the extent they agree to those decisive principles described above. Those who accord such importance to the traditions of the Prophet and the heritage, make them superior to the Qur'ān. They neither do justice to the status of the Qur'ān nor to the traditions of the Prophet,"

### **The Revealed Books**

In *Tafsīr-i- Mājidī* and the exegesis *Tadabbur-i-Qur'ān*, help from the Torah, the Psalms and the Bible is taken for the exegesis of Qur'ānic verses and explanation of meanings. In the Qur'ān these revealed books have not only been mentioned but also attested. The Prophet Muḥammad (PBUH), too, did not forbid their recitation.<sup>1</sup>

In *Tafsīr-i-Mājidī*, frequent references are made to the three revealed books. This shows that the Maulānā had good command over these revealed books. In this respect, *Tafsīr-i-Mājidī* has eminence among Urdu exegeses as, due to this, many exegetical intricacies are solved. Mention is also made to *The Dictionary of the Bible* which is part of this process.

In the 24<sup>th</sup> verse of the chapter *Baqarah* occurs the word "al-Nār". Commenting on it, Maulānā Daryābādī writes:

"It is a fire not earthly but of the Hell. It is far more intense than the fire of the earth and causes burning as much that in some of the traditions of the Prophet, it is described to be seventy-times more intense. The fire torment of the next world is also mentioned in the Torah (see Yasa'yah: 14/33 and 24/66).

The teaching of the Bible is considered to be entirely of compassion, tolerance (Ḥilm) pardoning and ignoring fault:

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<sup>1</sup> Bahawalpur Lectures

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but the mention of the fire of Hell is also found in the dispassionate teaching of Jesus Christ (see Matir: 18/9)

The drowning of the Pharaoh is mentioned in the chapter *Baqarah*. Its further details are provided by Maulānā Daryābādī from the Torah. The parting of river Nile into two is mentioned in the Qur'ān as follows:

(وَإِذْ فَرَقْنَا بِكُمُ الْبَحْرَ) (Tr.: And when We had divided the sea with you.) (al-Baqarah: 50)

The mention of this event in the Torah is as follows:

“And Mūsá (Moses) out-stretched his hand again and the Lord, despite the massive storm, made the river flow the entire night and dried up the river and divided the water into two parts and the children of Israel (Banī Isrā'īl) cross over the dry land within the river and to their left and right was wall of water.” (Exode 14/22-29).

Maulānā Daryābādī has quoted other excerpts from the Torah related to this aspect.<sup>1</sup>

In short in Tafsīr-i-Mājidī obtaining Qur'ānic connotation and sense is greatly facilitated by excerpts from the Torah, the Psalms and the Bible.

In Tadabbur-i-Qur'ān references to revealed books are found, and for exegesis of the Qur'ān they have been reckoned as an important source since they are also the books of God as the Qur'ān is. Despite all the interpolations in them, even today, such guidance and wisdom is there which plays an effective role in revealing the Qur'ānic wisdom. After the Qur'ān and the Traditions of the Holy Prophet Maulānā Iṣlāhī has declared the revealed books as an important fountainhead in understanding

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<sup>1</sup> Tafsīr-i-Mājidī, 1/100

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the *Qur'ān*. In *Tadabbur-i- Qur'ān*, benefit from revealed books has not been derived to the extent as in *Tafsīr-i-Mājidī*.

It is written in the *Qur'ān* that after Mūsá (Moses) climbed up the Mount Sinai, his followers got involved in cow-worship. Mūsá (Moses) ascribed this as surrender of their selves to cruelty and violence. The details of this have been copied by Maulānā Iṣlāḥī from the Torah.

And when the people saw Mūsá (Moses) delaying his coming down from the mount, they assembled around Hārūn (Aaron) and called him. "Get up; make a deity for us who may lead us because we do not know what has happened to this fellow Mūsá (Moses) who had brought us out of Egypt." Then the Lord said to Mūsá (Moses) "Go down because your followers whom you brought out from Egypt have gone astray from the path that I ordered them they have turned around too soon. They made a calf in the cast of gold and worshipped it and offered sacrifice to it and also said, 'O sons of Israel, it is that deity which took you out from Egypt.'" And the Lord said to Mūsá (Moses), I see this nation as a slaughterer. Therefore, you give Me free rein so that My wrath rages upon them and I turn them into ashes." (32/1-7)

Those who committed the crime of cow-worship and encouraged revolt of the apostates, for them God commanded his sincere slaves: "*Faqtulū anfusakum*", from amongst you put to sword such people. From the reading of the Torah, as well, the same view point occurs on account of the omnipresence of God.<sup>1</sup>

Furthering this aspect, we can see the following verse of the chapter of al-Baqarah:

And recall when Mūsá (Moses) entreated for his followers thereupon I commanded, "Strike your staff on the stone."

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<sup>1</sup> Torah, chapter 32, verses 25-30

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From this flowed twelve springs. Each faction chose their own place for drawing water. Eat and drink from the subsistence provided by God and do not become trouble makers on the land. (al-Baqarah: 60)

The details of this are available in the Torah from which we know that Mūsá (Moses) made this invocation for water in the desert of Sinai (20).

These few examples are quoted from *Tadabbur-i-Qur'ān*. Beside these, in nine other volumes of *Tadabbur-i-Qur'ān*, many examples of this nature are available.

### **Uncompounded or Single Words in the Qur'ān** **(Mufradāt al-Qur'ān)**

In both the exegeses much attention has been given to the explanation of a commentary on determinates in the Qur'ān. Maulānā Iṣlāḥī has taken guidance from the Qur'ān, Arabic poetry and the dictionaries to find out the truth of determinates. Besides this, he makes a personal effort to set to the bottom of strange things. Making a survey of research on determinates in *Tadabbur-i-Qur'ān* one sees that after the Qur'ān, he depends mostly on his own mental exercise. This method of research he received from his great teacher Maulānā Farāhī. In contrast to this, in *Tafsīr-i-Mājidī*, the research on determinates entirely depends on the books of exegesis and dictionaries. The Maulānā himself has not fulfilled the principles of reasoning in research; whereas, this aspect is exceptionally strong in *Tadabbur-i-Qur'ān*.

A detailed discussion on the word “Shayāṭīn” is available in *Tafsīr-i-Mājidī* but the entire argument is based on books of exegesis and dictionaries. The root of this word is “Shaṭan”,

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which means to be devoid of well being and equity. The word “Shaiṭān” bears an extensive connotation, and is applied to both spirits (evil jins) and human beings. In the tradition of the Prophet, a lone traveler is called “Shaiṭān”. Even social maladies are identified with “Shaiṭān” in the Traditions of the Prophet.<sup>1</sup> All the above views are adopted from *Tāj-al-Urūs, Mufradāt-al-Qur’ān of al-Rāghib, Tafsīr Majāz al-Qur’ān, Lisān al-Arab, al-Nihāyah fī Ḡharīb al-Ḥadīth wa al-Tanzīl*.

The Author of Tadabbur has presented this aspect with the utmost brevity as follows: “The ‘shaṭ’ of ‘Shaiṭān’ is an extended inflexion from “Yashīṭ” in measure similar ‘fa’lān’. The meaning of this is ‘hasty, intemperate, of enraged disposition and mischievous and rebellious’. Possessed of these qualities are both spirits and human beings. Here this word has been used for those leaders of the Jews who were guiding the entire activities of mischief on earth.”<sup>2</sup>

From both excerpts it is evident that Maulānā Daryābādī has laid the foundation of his research on secondary sources while Maulānā Iṣlāḥī himself has gone through the stages of research.

In respect of the word “Ṣalāt”, arguments of both the commentators are as follows: “The literal meaning of ‘Ṣalāt’ is ‘invocation’. In the conventional phraseology of divine law, it means devotion of specific nature and this is because invocation is the exceptional part of this devotion.”<sup>3</sup> This notion is adopted from Imām Rāghib Iṣfahānī.

In Tadabbur-i-Qur’ān, the opinion on “Ṣalāt” is as follows: “In the dictionary, the word ‘Ṣalāt’ originally is given for heeding to any entreating person. Here, this word is taken to mean

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<sup>1</sup> Tafsīr-i-Mājidī, 1/?.

<sup>2</sup> Tadabbur-i-Qur’ān, 1/120

<sup>3</sup> Tafsīr-i-Mājidī, 1/21.

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‘genuflexion’ and later to mean ‘reverence’, ‘supplication’ and ‘invocation’.” The research of Maulānā Ḥamīduddīn Farāhī is this: “This word in the meaning of ‘devotion’ is very ancient. In the meaning of ‘invocation and supplication’, this has been used in Chaldean and in the meaning ‘genuflexion and prayers’ in Hebrew. In the Qur’ān, this word is used as a technical term which is detailed in the Qur’ān and also in the practice of the Prophet (Sunnah). Thereafter the oral and practical continuity of the adherents has preserved its form and nature and its timings. If there is any difference in its component, it is just of a minor nature due to which there is no impact on its reality.”<sup>1</sup>

In Tafsīr-i-Mājidī the literal meaning of “Ṣalāt” is given as “invocation” whence its literal sense is “heeding someone”. In fact, this is the source of the application in the sense of “invocation”. Maulānā Iṣlāḥī has outlined the historical sequence of this, which is highly valuable, with reference to his great teacher. In Tafsīr-i-Mājidī, the connotation of “inclined to” is mentioned without any research; but that too is correct.

As regard the word, “ẓann”, valuable discussion has been presented and it has been pointed out that the meaning “ẓann” is “surmise” and “belief”. Maulānā Daryābādī, according to his mode of research, has adopted all ideas from Ibn Jarīr, Ma’ālim al-Tanzīl, al-Nahr al-Laḳit and al-Baḥr al-Muḥīt. Maulānā Drayābādī also claims that ideas are available in Arab poetry; but he has not adduced any proof.<sup>2</sup>

The author of Tadabbur has taken help first from the Qur’ān to elaborate the connotation of “ẓann”. For the senses, “surmise” and “doubt” of this word, see the verse, ( *إِنْ تَنْظُرْ إِلَّا ظَنًّا وَمَا نَحْنُ* )

<sup>1</sup> Tadabbur-i-Qur’ān, 1/93.

<sup>2</sup> Tafsīr-i-Mājidī, 1/92-93

(بِمُسْتَقِينٍ) “I am simply surmising and am not to believe” (al-Jāthiyah: 32).

In pointing out the two meanings of the word “ẓann”, as authentic and appealing, Maulānā Iṣlāḥī has benefited from the Qur’ān and Arabic poetry; whereas in the exegesis of Maulānā Daryābādī, both these basic things are missing.

### **Mysticism (Taṣawwuf)**

In Tafsīr-i-Mājidī, saying of the Sufis are found in abundance. Especially with reference to Maulānā Thānavī, innumerable examples of Sufi exegesis may be found. The exegesis “Bayān al-Qur’ān” by Maulānā Thānavī is referred to nearly every second or third page. This is against Qur’ānic thoughtfulness, and causes readers to feel put off. The exegesis Tadabbur-i-Qur’ān is free from Sufi exegesis.

The Sufi saints in the light of their daily round of prayer and practice and mystic initiation and way of life, present such an exegesis of the Qur’ān that the same may be attributed to “*Tafsīr bil Ra’y*”. In the context of the exegesis of different Qur’ānic verses. Maulānā Daryābādī has presented the idea of Sufis in the exegeses of the verse “*fasum waja allah*”, Maulānā Daryābādī writes, “Some Sufis have said that we too cast a look like this on anything in the universe and just see the manifestation of the splendour of God”.<sup>1</sup> This concept of Sufis is attributed to “non-Islamic thought” which when given acceptance, everything in the world is God. This idea is entirely un-Qur’ānic.

In the exegesis of the Qur’ānic verse “Inna Allāha Wāsi’un ‘Alīm”, the Maulānā writes, ‘He himself is of immeasurable expanse. The

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<sup>1</sup> Tafsīr-i-Mājidī, 1/203

greatest of all expanses itself is included to it. Well, can anyone have room for Him in it? In the largest of all vessels and spaces can He have accommodation? Every direction and every side itself is His creation. Well, in which limited direction and side can that limitless be bounded?"

In the exegesis of the Qur'ānic verse "*falanu linaka qablah tarzaha*" Maulānā Daryābādī quotes the following exegesis of Maulānā Thanvi –It is this Qur'ānic verse which is the genesis of the terminology in use for attaining the objective and becoming the favourite among followers of the mystic way of life.

What exhilaration is of this high status; that God may become the seeker of the wish of His devotee? Beyond this no other status can be imagined. Iqbāl has elucidated this very status.<sup>1</sup>

Raise high the self-consciousness so much that at the commencement of the writing of every fate, God Himself may ask his devotee, "Say, what is your wish?"

In the exegesis of Qur'ānic verse "*wa innallah rajjuun*", Maulānā Thānavī states that *Raja'un is kalmia-i-istraja*. It is the remedy for all troubles and it also includes *Qabz*, which is encountered frequently by mystic novices.<sup>2</sup>

Making popular things related to God's manifestation and guidance is spoken of in the 159<sup>th</sup> verse the chapter *al-Baqarah*. In this very context, the idea of Maulānā Thānavī has also been quoted: that a spiritual guide cannot hide the knowledge of divine law from his disciples because he has entered into the generality of "*Mā Anzala-Allāh*", though the rule about the sciences of apocalypse is a different one and not the goal. Sometimes there is the fear of mischief, too, in expressing them.

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid, 1/254.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid, 1/273.

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From the above excerpt, it is evident that besides the sciences of divine law are also the sciences of apocalypse which is different from the former. Among Sufis, a common conception is that the correction of carnal life is not possible by the sciences of divine law alone.

Such notions are abundant in *Tafsīr-i-Mājidī*. In contrast, the exegesis *Tadabbur-i-Qur'ān* is free from such “supernatural notions” since, to Maulānā Iṣlāḥī, mysticism is an order parallel to Islam. The self-devised acts and manner of devotion of Sufi saints have no relationship with Islam because in the eye of Sufi saints the science of divine law is meaningless in contrast to the knowledge of the inner condition. Maulānā Iṣlāḥī explains the notion of Sufi saints as follows: “Though this is the fact that the great Sufis do not openly disdain the divine law, yet, its relevance in their eye is simply that of ‘the knowledge of outward condition’ and to them this knowledge of outward condition is not comparable to the knowledge of the inner condition which they consider as real knowledge and regarding this their claim is that it is totally different from the divine law. This is, therefore, the reason that some of the Sufis in exhilaration used such language regarding the divine law by which it is evident that in contrast to their “knowledge of the inner condition’, they give no special merit to it.”<sup>1</sup> For example, a mystic saint says: “We are gaining our knowledge from such an entity which is alive and is never to die; and you are gaining your knowledge from such an alive one which has, however to die one day.”

### History

A notable feature of *Tafsīr-i-Mājidī* is its excessive on the history of ancient nations and the Arabs. Maulānā Daryābādī,

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<sup>1</sup> Purification of Mind (*Tazkiah Nafs*), by Maulānā Amīn Aḥsan Iṣlāḥī, First edition, Markazi Maktaba Islāmī, Delhi, 1999, P. 60.

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in the course of his exegesis of Qur'ānic verse, has quoted such event from the history of nations of olden days and the Arabs, by which many exegetical problems become easy. The Maulānā had a deep insight into world history. In *Tafsīr-i-Mājidī*, enough information is available in respect of the children of Israel (*Banī Isrā'īl*). The historical significance of Jews, Christian and the Sabaens has been narrated. Particularly, noteworthy is the research on the Christian.<sup>1</sup> Similarly, the historical significance of *Ibrāhīm* (Abraham), Bait- Allah, and the *Maqām-i-Ibrāhīm* are narrated.<sup>2</sup> In the same way the historical significance of *Şafā* and *Marwah* has been presented in an appealing manner.<sup>3</sup>

In the exegesis, *Tdabbur-i-Qur'ān*, history of nations and Arabs' history, too, have been made the subject of discussion; but the details and elucidation of historical events are not found in the latter as much as in the former. For example, the account of *Ibrāhīm* (Abraham) has been presented in the briefest manner.<sup>4</sup> Likewise, in narrating the history of Jews and Christian, brevity has been adopted.<sup>5</sup> Maulānā Işlāhī has not written anything on *Şafā* and *Marwah*.<sup>6</sup> As compared to *Tafsīr-i-Mājidī*, very little attention has been paid to historical events in *Tadabbur-i-Qur'ān*. Perhaps one reason for this is the author's concern that in paying too much attention to history, many exegetical compulsions may be left unfulfilled and the attention of a student of the Qur'ān may be distracted from real purpose.

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<sup>1</sup> For details, see *Tafsīr-i-Mājidī*, 1/123-26.

<sup>2</sup> For details see *Ibid.*, 1/218-24

<sup>3</sup> For details see *Ibid.*, 1/273-74

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, 1/225-26

<sup>5</sup> For details, see *Tadabbur-i-Qur'ān*

<sup>6</sup> For details see *Ibid.*, 1/383-84

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### **Islamic Law (Fiqh)**

In *Tafsīr-i-Mājidī*, opinion with much detailed exposition has been given on problems of Islamic Law, and different scholars have been quoted on the issue. For example, on the different aspects of *Nikāḥ*, *Mualānā Daryābādī* has discussed in a greatly scholarly manner as to what Islamic injunctions are in respect of women following the revealed book slave-girls, Hindu women and women worshipping fire. Answers to these are available in this exegesis. In the *Qur'ān* women are likened to agricultural fields. On this issue, views of great Muslims Jurists have been presented. Islamic law regarding months of impurities and divorce obtained on a wife's initiative have been taken up for discussion. In the chapter of Usury, the Islamic view-point has been presented. The area of the Islamic law of this exegesis is also extremely important. In the exegesis *Tadabbur-i-Qur'ān*, some fundamental issues related to Islamic law have been discussed, but Islamic law as such has not been given any particular attention.<sup>1</sup>

### **Syntax**

The issue of syntax has been discussed at various places in *Tafsīr-i-Mājidī*. Not much importance is given to this aspect in *Tadabbur-i-Qur'ān*, because by getting involved in such issues a person gets distracted from the objectives of the *Qur'ān*. No doubt some issues related to syntax have been raised so that the literary wonder of the *Qur'ān* may be brought to the fore.

### **Sign of Recognition in the Qur'ān (A'alām al-Qur'ān)**

A remarkable aspect of *Tafsīr-i-Mājidī* is the praise worthy discussion on sign of recognition in the *Qur'ān*. On this topic

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<sup>1</sup>For details see *Tafsīr-i-Mājidī*, 1/413-19

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the Maulānā deserves to be credited with breadth of vision. With reference to sacred books, the Qur'ān, Islamic and English literature this topic is discussed comprehensively in a lively manner. One of the big gains of this discussion is that, after being informed about the personalities in the Qur'ān, it becomes easy to understand the pros and cons of Qur'ānic narration another issue of the Qur'ān. Views on some of the signs of recognition in the Qur'ān have been given in *Tadabbur-i-Qur'ān*, but not with the same diligence as in *Tafsīr-i-Mājidī*. A book of this topic with a title "A'lām al-Qur'ān" is also written by Maulānā Daryābādī has made a full-length discussion on Ibrāhīm (Abraham).<sup>1</sup> Along with the biographical sketch events of his life have also been described. The word "Ibrāhīm" is syriac. Arab lexicographers have adopted in their own language to mean "Ibrāhīm" because he showed extreme affection and compassion to children. Regarding him, it is stated in the tradition of the Prophet that the maintenance (*Khifālat*) and training (*Tarbiyat*) of the Muslim children from the time of their death till the day of Resurrection would be in the charge of Ibrāhīm. In *Tadabbur-i-Qur'ān* no discussion is found on the word "Ibrāhīm".

The meaning of the word "Iblīs"<sup>2</sup> is afflicted with despair. The Maulānā has presented this meaning in the light of the Qur'ān.<sup>3</sup> In the Qur'ān occurs "yabi'as al-Mujrimūn" ('culprits will be in despair') and "fazahum Mublisūn" ("and he was taken aback"). The Maulānā also informs us regarding "Iblīs" that it is popularly understood as an angel, whereas it is actually a spirit (jinn). The Qur'ān says, "Kāna min al-Jinn" (He is from the jinn) and it was not of light but made of fire—

<sup>1</sup> A'lām al-Qur'ān, by 'Abdul Mājid Daryābādī, *Shāhī Barqī Press*, Lucknow, P. 270

<sup>2</sup> *Tafsīr-i-Mājidī*, 1/215

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, 1/75

“*Khalaqnī min Nār*” (You have created me from fire). In *Tadabbur-i-Qur’ān*, research on the word “*Iblīs*” being based on dictionaries only has been presented.<sup>1</sup>

In *Tadabbur-i-Qur’ān*, a complete but short genealogical table of the children of Israel (*Banī Isrā’īl*) has been presented and their history has been penned.<sup>2</sup> As compared to *Tafsīr-i-Mājidī*, such discussion in *Tadabbur-i-Qur’ān* is slight. *Maulānā Iṣlāhī* with reference to *Maulānā Farāhī* informs us that *Isrā’īl* is the title of *Yāqūb* (Jacob). In Hebrew, a devotee (‘*Abd*) is *Isr* and ‘*il* is the God (Allah). In this way, the meaning of *Isrā’īl* is “*At’ullah*”.<sup>3</sup>

Introducing *Sulaimān* (Solomon), *Maulānā Daryābādī* has described the four boundaries of his rule. He says, “Besides Syria and Palestine, the boundary of his rule in Eastward direction was up to the bank of river Euphrates in Iraq and Westward the boundary extended up to Egypt,”<sup>4</sup> In his exegesis, the *Maulānā* is silent about *Sulaimān*.

The title of *‘Īsā* (Jesus) was *Masīḥ*. This is debatable. Be it originally Arabic or an Arabic from any Hebrew word, its meaning in Urdu is ‘*مبارك*’ (auspicious).<sup>5</sup> Further information regarding the personality of *Masīḥ* is available in *Tafsīr-i-Mājidī*. The author of *Tadabbur-i-Qur’ān* has also discussed this in details, and with regard to the title “*Masīḥ*”, he states, “From the profile given of him in the ‘*Buḫhārī*’, it appears that his head seemed as if oil was dripping from it. Possibly due to this feature, he may have been accorded the appellation ‘*Masīḥ*’. The phrase *Masīḥ* of God is also used for in the Bible.”<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> *Tadabbur-e-Qur’ān*, 1/?

<sup>2</sup> *Tafsīr-i-Mājidī*, 1/85-86

<sup>3</sup> *Tadabbur-i-Qur’ān*, 1/132

<sup>4</sup> *Tafsīr-i-Mājidī*. 1/175

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, 1/578

<sup>6</sup> *Tadabbur-i-Qur’ān*, 1/193-94

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In the light of the few foregoing examples, the aim is to point out of that in Tafsīr-i-Mājidī, special attention has been paid to signs of recognition in the Qur'ān and worthwhile information has been provided. Maulānā Daryābādī had a firm grip on the signs of recognition in the Qur'ān. In exegeses in Urdu, such research methodology on this topic is not found. In Tadabbur-i-Qur'ān, this topic remains insubstantial.

### **The Geography in the Qur'ān**

Another feature of Tafsīr-i-Mājidī worth mentioning is the study of the geography in the Qur'ān. Maulānā Daryābādī was an expert of the geography in the Qur'ān. In his exegesis he initiated a new direction by providing maps of different towns and habitations. Besides this, many verses in the Qur'ān are such that if the geographical details are before us several exegetical strata get unfolded. This portion has not at all been touched upon in the exegesis Tadabbur-i-Qur'ān. In the sphere of Qur'ānic study, these services of Maulānā Daryābādī are viewed with respect.

Noting the geographical importance of the word “Umm al-Qurá”, Maulānā Daryābādī says, “All are agreed that by this the city of Mecca is intended.” A reason for calling it “Umm al-Qurá” is that the spiritual leadership of all countries was from here. Another reason is that it is located just in the middle of the earth. Besides this, it is the point of convergence of all cultures of the world. Again, highways leading to the three continents emanate from the coast of Hijāz. In his exegesis, the Maulānā has further expressed his view on the greatness and eminence of “Umm al-Qurá”.<sup>1</sup> In Tadabbur-i-Qur'ān, the reality of “Umm al-Qurá” has certainly been brought to the fore but not its geographical significance.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Tafsīr-i-Mājidī, by 'Abdul Mājid Daryābādī, Sidqajadeed Book Agency, Lucknow, undated, 2/421

<sup>2</sup> Tadabbur-e-Qur'ān, Amīn Aḥsan Iṣlāḥī, First Edition, Tāj Company, Delhi, 3/110

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In the 58<sup>th</sup> verse of al-Baqarah occurs the word, “Al-Qāriyah”. The majority of exegetical writers hold the view that it is the well known city “Ariha” of Palestine. The same view is also held by Tafsīr-i-Mājidī and the exegesis Tadabbur-i-Qur’ān. Maulānā Drayābādī says that it is situated five miles away from the northern shores of the Dead Sea. The Israelites, after the demise of Mūsá (Moses), conquered this during the days of Yusha. During the days when the children of Israel (Banī Isrā’īl) were masters of the desert, this city was their frontier post. In Arabic it is called “Wādī al-Nār” and also “Wādī sati harim”.<sup>1</sup> All these details are not available in Tadabbur-I-Qur’ān.<sup>2</sup>

On Babul (Babel) an extremely intellectual and research based attitude has been adopted in Tafsīr-i-Mājidī. In fact “Babul” is, in modern day, Iraq. This city was situated on the bank of the river Euphrates. Its second name is “Kildania”. The Jews view this city with respect. The Babylonian religion is all of types and kinds of sorcery and sooth saying. The Maulānā has collected more details about Babul.<sup>3</sup>

In Tadabuur-I-Qur’ān not a single line appears in respect of Babul.

In respect of place “Badr”, invaluable research data has been provided in brief. “It is the name of an encampment and a market some 20 miles away to the southwest of Madīna and the stage of journey from the shores of the Red Sea. This place has not only been a tri-junction of roads from Syria, Mecca and Madīna but the trade caravan of ‘Quraish’ also passed through this. It has importance also because here water was in abundance and it was big thing for the Arabs.”<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Tafsīr-i-Mājidī, 1/111

<sup>2</sup> Tadabbur-i-Qur’ān, 1/219

<sup>3</sup> For details, see Tafsīr-i-Mājidī, 1/180-81.

<sup>4</sup> Tafsīr-i-Mājidī, 1/638.

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In Tafsīr-i-Mājidī, discussion regarding the land of the Qurʾān (Arḍ al-Qurʾān) are in respect of countries, towns, building, fields and some other places which number up to 129. At a later stage, the Maulānā has written in edition a complete book on this topic under the title “Arḍ-al-Qurʾān’ or Geographiya Qurʾāni” which is full of precious information. This book is valuable for those pursuing studies of the Qurʾān.

### **The Animals in the Qurʾān**

Among several features of Tafsīr-i-Mājidī, one that is evident is the interesting manner in which light has been thrown on the animal mentioned in the Qurʾān. It is a topic worthy of attention in modern time. Muslim intellectual and researchers have bequeathed us abundant materials of this topic. Though complete books have been written and chapters in books have been devoted to views on the animals in the Qurʾān, treating this in a scholarly manner is a new venture and a supreme service to the Qurʾān. In his exegesis, Maulānā Drayābādī has taken up this topic gracefully and has written a complete book with the title, “Ḥaiwānāt-i-Qurʾānī”. The details about animal in the Qurʾān which Maulānā Daryābādī has provided in his book Ḥaiwānāt-i-Qurʾānī may not be available in Tafsīr-i-Mājidī. The book is an invaluable gift to the scholarly world. In both exegesis and book, details about animals have been presented. For this work, however highly the Maulānā is praised, it is too little. While discussing animal in the Qurʾān, if any problem related to Islamic Law crops up, the Maulānā presents that too in the light of opinions of various great Muslim jurists. For example, giving the view on “pork” he has made a survey of opinions of Muslim Jurists on its various constituents. From this point of view, the exegesis Tadabbur-i-Qurʾān has made no worthwhile contribution. Truly speaking

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in Tafsīr-i-Mājidī modern topic has been touched upon more; whereas in Tadabbur-i-Qur'ān opinions have not been given on modern topics.<sup>1</sup>

### **Sources and Reflection**

Among exegesis in Urdu the only exegesis in which considerable benefit is drawn from the present day literature in the English language concerning Islamic and Qur'ānic studies is Tafsīr-i-Mājidī. It has no parallel in any other exegesis in Urdu. From this one may get an idea of Maulānā Daryābādī's extra ordinary acquaintance with English literature. The scholarly and investigative quality of Tafsīr-i-Mājidī is such that, on the basis of it, the objection of orientalist have been countered; and by collecting material from the very world of oriental writings the opponents of Qur'ānic studies have been given a crushing reply. In the exegesis Tadabbur-i-Qur'ān, none of these scholarly exercises are present. Amongst the books in English which have been used as original source in Tafsīr-i-Mājidī, are those listed below. They illustrate the scholarly value of Tafsīr-i-Mājidī.

1. (Dictionary of the Bible) (Bestinger); 2- History of Jews (Mill Mann); 3- Jewish Encyclopedia; 4- Siani and Palestine (Din Stanley); 5- Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics; 6- Religion of Babylonia and Assyria (Rogers); 7- Chadia (Regozin); 8- Encyclopedia of Britannica; 9- On Mohammad and Mohammadanism (Bosworth Smith); 10- Life of Mohamamd (Sir William Muir); 11- Social Laws of the Qur'ān (Dr. Robert Roberts); 12- History of European Moral (Lecky); 13- Encyclopedia Biblica; 14- Everyman's Library Series (Dr. Kohen).

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<sup>1</sup> For details, see Al-Majma' al-'Ilmī al-Hindī, by Majahsul Mamani, June, 1986, 11/1-2, PP.42-46.

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A glance at the above books of English referred to in *Tafsīr-i-Mājidī* proves beyond doubt that Maulānā Daryābādī has benefited from high standards of Western scholarship and research. In *Tafsīr-i-Mājidī*, no benefit is drawn from those references in English which are of secondary nature. In *Tadabbur-i-Qurʾān*, no benefit is drawn from recent material on Islam and the Qurʾān in the English language. No doubt *Tadabbur-i-Qurʾān* is an exegesis of high order, but no mention is found in it of present day modern research.

The objective of foregoing discussion is to show that *Tafsīr-i-Mājidī* is the collection of thoughts of various modern and ancient commentators. In his foreword, mention of the benefit from the author's close association with Maulānā Thānavī and Maulānā Farāhī is made. In the exegesis of the Qurʾān frequent references are made to the exegetical verdict of Maulānā Thānavī; but evidence of benefit from the exegetical of principles Maulānā Farāhī is non existence. Maulānā Daryābādī has depended on exegeses in the commentary on the Qurʾānic verse, the explanation of determinates and arguments from traditions of the Prophet, and support and elucidation from Arabic poetry.

Similarly, on syntactical issues he has quoted the verdict of grammarians, and on many issues of Islamic law views of Muslim Jurists have been put forth, instead of giving his own opinion. In the entire exegesis, the Maulānā's own ideas and feelings are to be found only occasionally. In this exegesis, traces of reflection and deliberation can hardly be found. By repeatedly penetrating deep into the verses of the Qurʾān and in the wonders of the universe, the search for God has been emphasized. The Qurʾān lays stress on the devotees of God reflecting and deliberating instead of quoting the verdicts of exegetical writers.

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"أَنْظُرْ كَيْفَ نُصَرِّفُ الْآيَاتِ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَفْقَهُونَ ﴿٦٥﴾" (Tr.: I state the verse from different angles so that they may understand.) (al-An'ām: 65). Elsewhere, the words of the Creator are:

"وَسِعَ رَبِّي كُلَّ شَيْءٍ عِلْمًا أَفَلَا تَتَذَكَّرُونَ ﴿٨٠﴾" (Tr.: My creator's knowing is all-pervasive, so do you people not contemplate.) (al-An'ām: 80) Again:

"كِتَابٌ أَنْزَلْنَاهُ إِلَيْكَ مُبَارَكٌ لِيَدَّبَّرُوا آيَاتِهِ وَلِيَتَذَكَّرَ أُولُو الْأَلْبَابِ ﴿٢٩﴾" (Tr.: The book is an auspicious book which I have sent down upon Muḥammad so that people reflect on its verses and for the intelligent to take counsel.) (Şād: 29)

In the above quoted Qur'ānic verses, an invitation has been extended to ponder on the Qur'ānic verses dealing with the entire terrestrial globe and living beings. In the exegesis *Tadabbur-i-Qur'ān*, examples of a high order of reflection and deliberation are available. Maulānā Işlāhī has expressed his views about them in the following words:

I have spent days together on each chapter, contemplating on each Qur'ānic verse and finding the solution to each word and each literary or syntactical formation; I have tried to lift each stone beneath which I expect to find any clue; and I openly declare that I have never felt tired or dejected in this work, rather, had the feeling of intense pleasure and profound joy.<sup>1</sup>

Every reader of the exegesis *Tadabbur-i-Qur'ān* will approve of the Maulānā's words because the concept of Qur'ānic discipline is not the name of quoting exegetical verdict; instead, it signifies contemplation on the Qur'ānic verses (*Tafakkur fī āyat*). This concept is the name of quest and resolution, the prime example of which is the exegesis

<sup>1</sup>Tadabbur-i-Qur'ān, 1/41.

Tadabbur-i-Qur'ān. For the exegesis of the Qur'ān, help has been sought from the Qur'ān, the Traditions of the Prophet, Arabic poetry and dictionaries. Other books of exegesis have not been reckoned as real sources.

This is the fundamental difference between the two exeges. Tafsīr-i-Mājidī certainly has an edge over Tadabbur-i-Qur'ān as it benefits from the modern sciences and modern literature. Maulānā Iṣlāḥī was not as acquainted with modern sciences and the world of oriental writing as Maulānā Daryābādī was. However, things have no fundamental role in the principle of exegesis. In Tadabbur-i-Qur'ān the fundamental requisites of the principle of exegesis have been taken care of properly.

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## Translating the Meanings of the Qur'ān

Dr. Şāleḥ Al-Blūshī<sup>1</sup>

### Introduction

Muslims believe that Allah revealed the Psalms, Torah and Gospel to David, Moses and Jesus respectively. It is furthermore believed by Muslims that Allah revealed His last message (Qur'ān) to Prophet Muḥammad (while he was worshipping Him in the cave of Ghār Ḥirā on the outskirts of Makkah during the month of Ramaḍān). The Qur'ān was revealed in classical Arabic a highly refined form of Arabic from which modern standard Arabic, a living language spoken by millions of people, stems. The vast majority of Muslims however are non-Arabic speakers and although they might be able to recite the Qur'ān in Arabic, they tend to use translations of the Qur'ān in order to understand it. Since the second half of last century, numerous translations of the meanings of the Qur'ān have been produced. Both Muslims and non-Muslims carried out these translations. The aim of this paper is to shed light on issues related to translating the meanings of the Qur'ān.

### The Qur'ān:

The word "Qur'ān" in Arabic is synonymous with 'reading' or 'reciting'. It is stated in the Qur'ān "It is for us to collect and recite it. But when we have recited it follow you its recital as promulgated" (al -Qiyāmah: 17-18). Due to the sublimity of the Qur'ān, Allah honored it with six names that are mentioned in its verses: "Ramaḍān is the month in which the Qur'ān was set down as a source of guidance for mankind (al-Baqarah: 185); al-

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Furqān in “Blessed is He Who sent down the Criterion to His Servant, that it may be an admonition to all creatures” (al-Furqān: 1); in al-Kitāb is written “This is the book; it is guidance, without doubt to those who fear God” (al-Baqarah: 2); in al-Dhikr “We have, without doubt, sent down the message; and we will assuredly guard it (from corruption )” (al-Hijr: 9); in al-Wahy “Say, I do but warn you according to revelation: but the deaf will not hear the call, (even) when they are warned!” (al-Anbiyā’: 45); in al-Rūḥ “And thus have we, by our command, sent inspiration to thee” (al-Shu’arā’: 52).

The Qur’ān and its “directness, naturalness and simplicity which could be understood even by the unlettered Arabs” (Sayyidain, 1950-40), the language therein has a massive impact on Arab and Muslim aspects of life namely the social, religious, political and intellectual.

### **Translating the Meaning of the Qur’ān:**

It is believed by Muslims that when the Prophet Muḥammed was in Makkah, Allah revealed many verses ordering him to pass on Islamic instruction to everyone. “Let there arise among you a community, enjoying what is right and admonishing against what is wrong; such are those that prosper” (Āli ‘Imrān: 104). First he disclosed the divine message to his family members then among his clan, Quraish, as well as other tribes particularly during the Ḥajj (pilgrimage). When he and his followers emigrated to Madīnah and thereafter when they established state, messengers were sent with sealed letters to the rulers of the important empires such as the Emperor of Byzantium, King of Persia, Negus of Abyssinia and others calling upon them to embrace Islam. The letters included several verses of the Qur’ān and each messenger had mastered the language of the country to which he was delegated. In other

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words, the letters of the Prophet were either interpreted by the delegate carrying the letters or by men from among the courtiers of the rulers to whom these letters were sent.

Muslims respected the Qur'ān and exerted all efforts to protect it from distortion. Therefore, they believed that the Qur'ān should not be changed or translated into any language. This was the opinion of Imām Aḥmad bin Ḥanbal, Imām Mālik, Imām al-Shāfi'ī and the students of Imām Abū Ḥanīfah. Muslim scholars believe and adhere to the Imāms' opinion for over one thousand years believing that translating the meanings of the Qur'ān may lead to negative consequences. But, Christians translated the Qur'ān into their languages. This resulted in incorrect translations that do not convey the true words of Allah and the principles of Islam such as the translations of Sale, Rodwell, Palmer and others. In an attempt to refute such false propaganda, Muslim scholars permitted the translation of the meanings of the Qur'ān into languages other than the Arabic language. The first Muslim translation was the Qur'ān carried out by Muḥammad Abul Ḥakīm Khān in 1905 published in India. The later known translation was the Qur'ān. A new translation was carried out by Muḥammad 'Abdul Ḥalīm in 2005 published in London.

It should be taken into account that when translating a text that language allows for more than one meaning for different lexical items and expressions. Translators ultimately translate their understanding of the source text. The quality of a translation is based on a translator's competence in both languages. Naturally, a translator cannot make readers understand what they themselves do not understand. Translating a sacred text, like the Qur'ān for instance, is completely different from translating any other text. The

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translator must possess “bilingual polysemic competence” and “two other discriminatory kinds of competence: grammatical and idiomatic” (Ali 1992: 490). The qualifications of the Qur’ān translator are addressed with details in this study.

Unlike the English language, Arabic is a language in which masculine and feminine features are reflected on almost all of the content words. It strictly observes gender differentiation. In many verses in several chapters of the Qur’ān (as in al-Shu’arā’: 42 and al-A’rāf: 7) there is an intentional deviation from this norm. Therefore, the translator should not ignore them, otherwise, the intended meaning will be affected. Moreover, the translator must observe the personal or relative pronoun having different antecedents in one and the same verse and the sudden transition in the Arabic text from the singular form of the verb to the plural (as in Tāha: 88 and al-Mu’minūn: 23). Based on this the singular form is to be translated as singular and the plural form is to be translated as plural. This is not possible so for the sake of honesty and accuracy, such linguistic deviation is to be mentioned in a footnote preferably without any comment. The translator must always consider never moving directly from the source language to the target language. Instead they are to understand the meaning of the source language and then the whole idea is to be rethought in terms of the target language. If the native speaker of Arabic, for example, understands from the Arabic text the same or equivalent to what the native speaker of English understands from the English translation then the translation is good. But if the native speaker of either language understands differently then the translation is no good sort. As any two native speakers will often differ in their interpretation of a text we see here how the idea of a perfect translation becomes a goal on the horizon which one strives after but may never achieve.

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### **Supporters and Opponents of Translating Meanings of the Qur'ān:**

Most supporters and opponents of the translations of the Qur'ān agree that the Qur'ān when is translated, should not be called Qur'ān as the translated words are not the words of Allah. A declaration issued by Al-Azhar in Bayānun Lin Nās (1994: 284) points out that the scholars agree that the translations of the Qur'ān are not equal to the Qur'ān in its rules, such as the reward for reciting it. Few Muslim scholars like Sheikh Muḥammed Sulaimān, the Vice President of the Supreme Religious Court in Egypt in 1936, support using the second title. Meanwhile, the majority of scholars like Sheikh Muṣṭafá al-Muraghī, the then Grand Sheikh of Al-Azhar, use first title. It must be stated that the first group did not object to the rendering of the meanings of the Qur'ān.

Here we must ask ourselves what is the difference between 'to translate' and 'to interpret'. The Cambridge International Dictionary of English (1996.744) gives several definitions. Amongst them is "to render in another language". Meanwhile, the meaning of 'to interpret' was given as "to decide the intended meaning of something" (ibid, 1996, 744). The American heritage Dictionary of the English language 2000, (Electronic version) states the meaning as "to explain the meaning of", "to conceive the significance of" and "to translate orally". On the other hand, Trask defines translation as "Taking a written text in one language and constructing an equivalent text in another language" (1997, 744). He defines interpretation as "Assigning a meaning to something you hear or read" (1997, 116). Based on these definitions, it may be said that in some verses, translation may be adequate to convey the meanings of

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the Qur'ān, while in other verses translation and interpretation be used to transmit the meaning.

The Qur'ān was revealed in Arabic and most Arabs understand its words, still, in some cases they tend to have the verse explained to them before understanding it. Therefore, translation and interpretation are vital to understanding the Qur'ān (Ḥamīdullāh, 1975, 60).

There is no doubt that the translation of the meanings of the Qur'ān is fully dependant on personal efforts of the translator as he renders the meaning of the Qur'ān into the target language. In this case risks may rise as the translator may depend on a particular interpretation. Moreover, some commentators on the Qur'ān have certain attitudes and doctrines and give their own comments. It must be mentioned that it would be an extremely difficult task to translate all the interpreted books into the targeted languages. If it happened, then it would put at risk the real meanings of the Qur'ān. Depending on just one interpretation will express the translator's singular view.

The most acceptable solution to this problem would be to select a group of faithful and dependable scholars who will provide a collective and unified interpretation of the Qur'ān based on authentic sources. Having verified this interpretation, a group of faithful and dependable translators, who should be native Arabs and native speakers of the target language, are asked to translate the interpretations. In this regard, there are several issues that are to be highlighted such as:

- Arabic and English languages are completely different. The names of Allah in Arabic reflect the derivative capacity of the Arabic language, a feature that is untranslatable as such into English.
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- The vast majority of Arabic words (with a few exceptions such as the words “from or there” can be analyzed into a root and a pattern. Understanding roots and patterns is a vital issue to the use of Arabic lexicons and in understanding the meaning of the derivative capacity of the language. Let us examine the following example: he wrote كَتَبَ (katab), book كِتَاب (kitāb), writer كَاتِب (kātib), written مَكْتُوب (maktūb) library or bookshop مَكْتَبَة (maktabah). These words have various vowels and affixes in various arrangements which affect their meanings. Also, there are some words that have other consonants but they share the consonants *ktb* which in a certain order are known as the root. The individual consonants of a root are called radicals.
- The native Arab speaker uses the form فَعَلَ (to do) that runs through the whole paradigm. For example, he wrote كَتَبَ /he made فَعَلَ he kept up فَاغَلَ. Each word has a different meaning as each form has a different emotional wave length which the native speakers of Arabic can experience.

### **Language:**

Language is a “social reality” (Sapir, 1992, 7) it is not just a method for expressing and communicating with others; it is also an “instrument of experiencing, thinking and feeling” (Marlowe, 2004: 9). It plays a vital role in human beings, life as it is “the only social institution without which no other social institution can function” (Karamanian, 2002, 1). In addition, it is a binding factor, O’Donnell (1984: 26) points out that Bengali (Bengla, the language of virtually all of the people of Bangladesh) is the silken cord binding their culture and nationhood”.

Many linguists gave language various definitions. For example Bloch and Trager (1942) define it as symbols of arbitrary vocal

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systems through which, social groups interact. Others like Beaugrande and Dressler (1981: 13,35) view it as a structure that is a “set of elements functioning together” where each element has a function that contributes to the whole, Halliday (1985:4-6,48) supports this view. Meanwhile, Crystal (1992:193) points out that language is a “concrete act of speaking, writing or singing --- in a given situation. Malmkjaer (2002:253) sees it as a “vehicle for the expression or exchanging of thoughts, concepts, knowledge and information as well as the fixing and transmission of experience and knowledge”. In this regard, Muller (1964: 10) points out that all languages undergo continuous changes in vocabulary, meaning, pronunciation and grammar. In other words, language is a human process that aims to convey ideas and emotions through producing symbols between the members of a society. This process is governed by a set of rules of grammar that may change over time.

The written records of the Semitic languages date back to approximately five thousand years and the spoken language probably spoken before that as there is no definite evidence when languages were used. Throughout history Arabic speakers contacted other nations; subsequently the interaction affected the vocabulary of their language and in some cases the Arabic “morphosyntactic structure” Versteegh (1997: 226). When the speakers of two languages contact each other the “direction of the influence and its nature” are determined by the relative prestige of both languages and by the history of their cohabitation (ibid, 1997:226). Meanwhile, Greenberg says that “the semantic map of each language is different from those of all other languages” (1963: 142).

Arabic, a sematic language related to Hebrew and Aramaic languages, is one of the world’s major languages that is the

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mother tongue of approximately 230 million people (Katzner, 2002) living in the Arabian Peninsular, Fertile Crescent, and North Africa and Arab minorities living in non-Arab countries like Iran and Turkey. It is the official language in 22 Arab countries. Muslim conquests in the seventh century succeeded in carrying the language beyond its original borders to vast areas in the old world such as, Afghanistan, India and as far as Spain in the west. Due to its religious importance, hundreds of millions of non-natives came into contact with it as it is the liturgical language of Islam.

The Qur'ān was revealed in Arabic and Muslims throughout the world are encouraged to learn at least some of it to recite while performing the daily prayers. Al-Ghazzālī (1933:245) narrated that Imām Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal said "I saw the Almighty in a dream and asked 'O Lord, what is the best way to manage to be near you. He replied, 'My word, O Aḥmad; I inquired, with understanding or without understanding. He said, 'With or without understanding'. Moreover, the importance of Arabic in religious life is articulated by Professor Smith (1957:94). "It was the Arabic language which God chose for his supreme" revelation to mankind and which anyone must study who would clearly know God's will. Unlike the Bible, the original text of Qur'ān remained unchanged since it was revealed. On the contrary, Gospel translation face serious problems as no one has the original manuscript and the available texts are just "copies of copies of copies" (Chatzitheodorou, 2001:1) resulting in the production of several versions that are, in some cases, extremely different from each other.

Other factors, beside religion, played a major role in spreading the language beyond its original borders Ehrlich (1999: ix) mentions four factors that played a vital role in spreading English around the globe. A series of invasions and occupations

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of Britain by foreign armies brought a mixture of foreign words that soon made their way into the English language. An increase in trade with other nations required many British citizens to travel overseas. The running of government scientific and technical advancements meant a mixing of some words from different language. Finally the increasing cultural and social development of speakers of English produced an increasing need for new methods to express thoughts.

The role of Arabic was not restricted to facilitating the communication between natives only. It played other major roles as it is “like only a very few language of the word. It is also a vehicle for a renowned culture and civilization” (Bakalla, 1981:7). During the middle Ages it became a widespread language reflecting the places it occupied in history and the important role it played. This was due to the advancement of the sciences achieved by Arabs and Muslims. The Qur’ān “has existed without major change since the seventh century AD and the continuous literary output of this long period is one of the greatest achievements of civilized man” (Smart 1986: 1).

In countries where Islam is main religion of the inhabitants, religious instructions involve a certain amount of Arabic words that are to be recited. Moreover, it is the liturgical language of all Muslims who are expected to know at least some of the basic passages from chapters when performing their daily rituals. It contributed significantly to several Eastern languages in areas that lacked semitic linguistic background such as Irān, Afghānistān and Indian subcontinent influencing their languages and literature. Furthermore, it left remarkable effects on languages that came under its influence such as Bahasa, Urdu, Turkish and languages spoken by Muslims in Central Asia and other parts of the world. For example,

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Persian is written in Arabic scripts and 30% of the Persian vocabulary is of Arabic origin.

Before the advent of Islam, Arabs lacked any written literary tradition; instead they used literary verbal communication at their gatherings in particular Hajj season or annual markets. Arabic “flew across the desert faster than arrows” (Nicholson. 1953:73) influencing the life of the people, molding their minds, and giving immediacy to an ideal of Arab virtue” (ibid 1953:72). Further to poetry, Arabs were known for delicate eloquence which was considered an essential feature of a mature man and a sign of wisdom. It was used to express oneself and address others in brief but influential words. Therefore, finding a few words in a poem brings a second or even a third class into existence. Moreover, some poets were paid to do so while many languages have single words for each item, we find Arabic has hundred; eight hundred words for “sword” five hundred for “lion” two hundred for “snake” and so on” (Ibn Fāris, 1961: 12).

It is also important to understand how Arabic as a language is viewed by Arabic speakers. Al-Suyūṭī (1998) claims that Arabic is the master of all, some Arab scholars attribute a divine origin of Arabic based on the verse, and “He taught Ādam the names of all things” (al-Baqarah, 2:31). This was often cited as evidence as to the divine nature of the language. Meanwhile, Ibn Fāris says that it was Allah who handed down the language gradually in accordance to the needs. He “gave Ādam what he needed to know, taught succeeding prophets and finally He bestowed upon the prophet Muḥammad (PBUH) things never before given to anyone (Chejne, 1969:10). Furthermore, Ibn Manẓūr states in his introduction of *Lisān al-‘Arab* a Ḥadīth of prophet Muḥammad that the Qur’ān is Arabic and the language

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of the people of Paradise is Arabic.” This gave a spiritual, moral and religious motive to non-Arabs to learn and master Arabic.

Throughout history, Allah revealed his messages to people in their own languages. Naturally, the Qur’ān was revealed to Prophet Muḥammed in Arabic so that he could pass it on to his people. It was revealed in a language that is easily understood by everyone speaking Arabic. It is often stated that Allah challenged the Arabs to produce a similar Qur’ān or even just one verse of it. They failed despite their linguistic fluency. This is mentioned in several verses of the Qur’ān like Ibrāhīm: 4, Yūsuf: 2 and al-Shu’arā’: 195.

It is known that language, change over time to the extent that some words lose their original meaning. Classical Arabic has become Modern Standard Arabic. Classical Arabic is preserved in the Qur’ān with the morphology, style and syntax of Arabic as spoken at the time of Muḥammed (PBUH).

### **Conclusion:**

The Qur’ān, the words of Allah, cannot be translated by human beings. In fact the non-Arab Muslims all over the world face difficulties in understanding their holy book Qur’ān therefore they required it to be translated into their native languages. Muslim translators have done their best to convey the meaning of the source language, Arabic, into different languages, but still on many occasions they provided poor translation. This paper has shown that difficulties arise in translating texts because of two major reasons: language structure and the social nature of language. Firstly, due to the different grammatical structures which exist in Arabic much of the poetry, word play and style of the Qur’ān is lost in translation. A lexical item may be semantically associated with

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a set of concepts in Arabic that are not associated with an equivalent lexical item in English – as such many associations and therefore meanings of a phrase, sentence or expression are lost. Secondly language is a social institution that binds a community through their common interpretive practices. When we translate a text we are relating a message to a new audience who may have different “readings” of the symbolism, imagery and rhetorical style used in the source text. If we assume, however, that translation is a difficult but necessary task, we must accept that translated texts can only ever hope to approach but never embody the meanings of a source text and in this case will never fully reproduce the meanings of the Qur’ān.

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## English Translation of the Qur'ān: Some Trends

✎ Prof. 'Abdur Raḥeem Kidwai<sup>1</sup>

A critical study of English translations is a largely neglected field of study. At many levels, nonetheless, it is a fascinating area of study. On the one hand, it mirrors the main contours of the misconceptions and perceptions about the Qur'ān and Islam in the West, as reflected in most of the Orientalist versions of the Qur'ān, namely those by Ross, Sale, Rodwell, Palmer, Bell and Jones. On the other, it is illustrative of the gradual, steady Muslim intellectual response, rather rejoinder to the Orientalists' attacks on the Qur'ān. At yet another, it points to the increasing sectarian bias in some of the recent Muslim translations of the Qur'ān. Summarised below are the striking trends in the field:

- Corresponding to the steep increase in both the number and editions of the translations by Muslims is the marked decline in the Orientalist forays in the field. From 1649 until 1920s the field was dominated by the Orientalists. Muslims engaged in this activity initially in order to counter the Orientalist and Christian missionary offensive aimed at prejudicing unsuspecting readers against the Qur'ān. The earliest Muslim translations by Abul Faḍl (1911) and Hairat Dihlawī (1916) bear out the above point. Gradually, however, the activity which started as a defensive move has blossomed into a positive, rewarding

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enterprise which has not only helped millions of English-speaking Muslims and their subsequent generations derive divine guidance but has also enabled many well-meaning, sincere non-Muslims to gain acquaintance with the true meaning and message of Islam. From 1956 there has not been a single new English translation by a non-Muslim, with the only exception of Alan Jones's in 2007. Does it signal that the days of Orientalists' tendentious forays into the field are over? What is nonetheless most gratifying is to see Muslims introducing and interpreting their Holy Book in accordance with the articles of their faith.

- With the increasing number of the new Muslims in the West, opting for Islam in preference to their ancestral faith in Judaism and Christianity, a noteworthy trend is that there have appeared some English translations of the Qur'ān by these newly converted Muslims – Muḥammad Marmaduke Pickthall (Christian/British/1930); Muḥammad Asad (Austrian/Jew/1980); T.B. Irving (Canadian/Christian/1985) and 'Ā'isha and 'Abdalhaqq Bewley (American/Christian/1998). That their interpretation of certain Qur'ānic issues has not been largely endorsed by mainstream Muslims is an altogether different issue which needs further probing and discussion.
  - The twentieth century, which witnessed the appearance of a large number of translations by Muslims, coincided with Westernization and colonialism in the world of Islam. Egypt and the Indian sub-continent stand out as the most telling examples in point. Little wonder then that some Muslim translators appear to have been overwhelmed by pseudo-rationalism and apologia in interpreting the Qur'ān, especially those verses which deal with al-Gḥaib (the realm
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beyond the human sense perceptions), miracles, and joys and punishment of Paradise and Hell. ‘Abdullāh Yūsuf ‘Alī, (1934-37), Muḥammad Asad (1980) and Aḥmed ‘Alī (1984) betray this regrettable tendency which often leads to obfuscating the message of the Qur’ān.

- Apart from the Orientalists and pseudo-rationalist apologists, Qadyani translators of the Qur’ān, e.g. Muḥammad ‘Abdul Ḥakīm Khān (1905). Muḥammad ‘Alī (1917), Mirzā Bashīrruddīn Maḥmūd Aḥmad (1947-1963), Sher ‘Alī (1955) Malik Ghulām Farīd (1969) Muḥammad Zafrullah Khān (1971), and Omars (2005) have played havoc with the meaning and message of the Qur’ān. At the behest of the founder of Qadyanism, Mirzā Ghulām Aḥmad (1835-1908), a band of Qadyani activists, headed by Muḥammad ‘Alī, Sher ‘Alī and assisted by Malik Ghulām Farīd and others, devoted themselves to producing English translations of the Qur’ān, which were circulated at a very wide scale with a missionary spirit in the English-speaking world with a view to winning over unsuspecting readers to Qadyanism. These translations are vitiated by the garbling of the Qur’ānic text by investing a blatantly Qadyani biased sectarian colour to such major articles of Islam faith as the finality of Prophet Muḥammad (PBUH) as God’s Last Messenger and Prophet Jesus’s crucifixion. Brazenly these works parade Mirzā Ghulām Aḥmad as “the Promised Messiah”. For years these Qadyani translations, bearing Muslim names, were the only available English translations by non-Orientalists. Many naïve Muslim readers, not aware of their Qadyani credentials, were misled by these. Thanks to the vigorous Da’wah work, the Qadyanis now stand exposed.
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- Another significant development in the field is the recent appearance of some English translations with a distinctly marked sectarian bias, namely Shī'a and Barelwī interpretations of the Qur'ān. The former is represented by S.V. Mīr Aḥmad 'Alī (1964), M.H. Shākir (1968) Bāqir Behbudī (1997) and 'Alī Qulī Qarāī (2004) and the latter by Shāh Farīdul Ḥaq (1988) and Auolakh (1994). The former translations seek to vindicate and sanctify on the authority of Qur'ānic verses such beliefs which are peculiar to the Shī'a sect – the concept of the infallible Imam, mut'ah (temporarily contracted marriage), insistence on 'Alī as the Prophet's immediate successor, taqiyyah (concealment of faith in unfavourable circumstances), mourning in the month of Muḥarram, and annual commemoration of Ḥussain's martyrdom, etc. The latter group owes allegiance to Aḥmad Raḍā Khān Barelwī (1858-1921). The two above-mentioned works as representative of this sect are English versions of Aḥmad Raḍā Khān's Urdu commentary on the Qur'ān, *Kanz al-Īmān*, published in 1910. In this work and his other writings on Islam, Khān seeks to exalt disproportionately Prophet Muḥammad's status. However, Khān attracted a large following in the Indian sub-continent. These translations cater for this particular constituency of English-speaking Muslims in the West.
  - Swayed by the astounding advances in science and technology and their ever-growing importance in life, a few Muslim translators, e.g. Nūrī (1964), 'Arafāt (1990) and the Zidans (1991), are seen reading the current scientific theories and practices in the Qur'ān. Their zeal for bringing out the excellence of the Qur'ān on the ground that it anticipates scientific developments, which have come to public knowledge only recently, is utterly misplaced since
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these theories are yet to be scientifically established. The fondness for scientific exegesis is, however, shared by only a small number of Muslim translators.

- Worse, in some instances the translators have used the pretext of Qur'ān translation for giving vent to their whimsical notions which have nothing to do with the Qur'ānic text. Take, for example, Ashfāq Ḥussain (1991), English translator of Maḥmūdūl Ḥasan's and Shabbīr Aḥmad 'Usmānī's original work in Urdu. He heaps condemnation on the Pakistani political administration of the day. Going a step further than this and transgressing the limits set by the norms and craft of translation, Rashād Khalīfah (1978) M.A.K. Pathān (1993) and Edip Yuksel (2007) notwithstanding their Muslim sounding names have the audacity of calling into question all that is sacred in Islam—the authenticity of the Qur'ānic text, Ḥadīth and Sunnah. Since these outrageous opinions appear in the works presented as the translation of the Qur'ān, some unsuspecting readers, unable to distinguish between the Word of God and it's not even remotely related commentary by such persons as Khalīfah, Pathān and Yuksel are liable to be badly misled.
  - Another reprehensible tendency is some translators' unacknowledged borrowings from the earlier translations of 'Abdullāh Yūsuf 'Alī and M.M. Pickthal. Without regard for intellectual property rights, they are found borrowing *ad verbatim* from their predecessors. Any plagiarism is all the more ignoble in the context of such a pious and noble venture as the translation of the Book of guidance for humanity.
  - Besides independent translations done by a host of scholars, there has been a growing demand recently on
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the part of the readers for a comprehensive tafsīr (exegesis) work, containing some selections from classical commentaries. This would enable them to appreciate how the Qur'ān was understood in the early history of Islam. Needless to add, classical tafsīr works are held in high esteem by Muslims. In response to the same need al-Hilālī and Muḥsin Khān (1977) produced an English summary of Ibn Kathīr's tafsīr, supplemented by selections from other authentic works on tafsīr and Ḥadīth. During the last decade this translation, somewhat representative of the genre of anthology, has won wide acclaim. At least twenty-five editions of this work have appeared and been received well all over the world. Another on-going project in a similar vein is Tafsīr Ishrāq al-Ma'ānī compiled by Syed Iqbāl Zaheer, of which several volumes have appeared from Bangalore, India.

- Often do authors bring out revised, up-to-date editions of their works, which is a perfectly legitimate, acceptable practice in the academic world. In the field of the English translations of the Qur'ān, however, this practice has taken a bizarre turn. There have appeared posthumous revised editions of the English translations of 'Abdullāh Yūsuf 'Alī, M.M. Pickthal, S.V. Mīr Aḥmad 'Alī, and Sher 'Alī. Such revision activity, often carried out many years after the author's demise, raises more questions than it answers. How can certain views be ascribed to the author who did not profess them? Many of 'Abdullāh Yūsuf 'Alī's views, which are, no doubt, erroneous, have been expunged and replaced with the new ones. Moreover, his translation has been expurgated, abridged and rendered into modern English. At times, it is unrecognizable in relation to the original. In the revised edition of 1997 of
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Sher 'Alī who had died in 1947, as many as 910 changes have been incorporated.

Although this exercise has its own merits, instead of changing an author's position, fresh, independent works should be produced.

- A somewhat different instance of revision by the author himself is N. J. Dawood's revised edition of 1990. In the original edition, the translator had followed his fanciful chronological Surah order and the Qur'ānic text in Arabic was not included. Since 1990, however, its bilingual editions, incorporating the Arabic text, have come out. More significantly, the traditional, received Surah order has been restored, which Muslims have followed down the ages as an article of faith. For them, changing it is out of the question. Yet Dawood's work retains trenchant, offensive remarks against both the Qur'ān and Prophet Muḥammad (PBUH).
  - Since 1970 a trend worthy of mention in the field is the emergence of English versions of some of translations originally rendered and published in Urdu. Instances of this indirect translation activity are the publications of the English versions of the following Qur'ān scholars of the Indian subcontinent: Abul Kalām Āzād, Aḥmad Raḍā Khān Barelwī, Saiyyid Abul 'Alā Maudūdī, Muftī Muḥammad Shafī, Maḥamoodul Ḥasan and Shabbīr Aḥmad 'Usmānī, Amīn Aḥsan Iṣlāḥī and Waḥīduddīn Khān. The increasing number of English-speaking readers in the West of Indo-Pakistani descent and an inclination for interpreting the Qur'ān strictly in line with the stance of particular schools of thought are the main reasons for the emergence and growing popularity of this trend. Most of the above authors wrote in Urdu in the first half of the twentieth century and earned fame for their
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cogent, well-articulated Islamic response to the twin challenges of secularism and materialism faced more acutely by Muslims in the British colonial Indian subcontinent than in the rest of the Muslim world. This explains the compelling reason behind re-issuing these works in English, so that new generations of Muslims, born and brought up in the West, may draw upon them for gaining true faith in Islam, just as these works in their original Urdu had helped an earlier generation about a half a century ago. The presence of millions of Muslims of the sub-continental origin in the West is the main stimulus for such publications. It nonetheless amounts to importing a local culture into alien lands. Moreover, these works, representative as they are of certain schools of Muslim thought, are both born of and reinforce a narrow, rigid interpretation of the Qur'ān, often at the expense of neglecting larger, contemporary issues. Being concerned only with vindicating the supremacy of their own school of fiqh (jurisprudence) and thought or with the local issues which raged at the time of their composition, these works largely represent a partial, lop-sided meaning and message of the Qur'ān. Another uncondonable feature of these translations is the low level of their presentation – language, style and line of argument. It is compounded further by the translators' lack of familiarity with the nuances of standard, idiomatic English. As a result, far from helping the readers gain a better understanding of the Qur'ān, some of these poorly produced works might even put readers off.

- In sum, the field of English translations of the Qur'ān is beset with many problems. Granted that Muslims now dominate the field, with the Orientalists and Qadyanis being exposed and relegated to the periphery, a standard, widely acceptable English translation of the Qur'ān is yet to see the
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light of the day. It should be characterized, at least, by the following features:

- An easy to understand English translation of the Qur'ānic text in chaste, idiomatic English.
  - It should avoid both the extremes of a strictly literal translation which may fail to convey meaning, and of a loose paraphrase, incorporating such material which is not supported by the Qur'ānic text.
  - It should provide brief background information about the contextual setting of Qur'ānic chapters and their themes, placing these in the context of the Prophet's life. This historical material should be, however, put across with a view to guiding readers to appreciate the universal message of the Qur'ān, as applicable to present times and conditions.
  - Qur'ānic terms and allusions should be explained concisely and briefly. A discussion on their etymology and their widely differing interpretations should be taken up in another scholarly work. Those interested in a detailed academic discussion should be directed to consult standard works on tafsīr and lexicon.
  - Divine guidance embodied in the Qur'ān for earning Allah's pleasure, for growing as a better Muslim and for leading life in accordance with Allah's directives in the present times should be brought out in full. However, this should not be mixed up with citing detailed fiqh rulings. Since Muslims follow different schools of fiqh, insistence on one particular fiqh school may alienate the followers of other schools. Once again, standard works on fiqh might be listed for further reading.
  - Explanatory notes should be kept to a necessary minimum. For these might distract readers' attention from the message of the Qur'ān. Those contributing extensive notes
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in their translations of the Qur'ān are more liable to giving a particular slant to their work—mysticism, pseudo-rationalism, scientific exegesis or fiqh rulings. Principles of tafsīr, as laid down by classical authorities, should be strictly followed. The Qur'ān is its own best interpreter. Authentic Ḥadīths are the next important source for elucidating what the Qur'ān means. A pointed reference to the Prophet's practice is another reliable and illuminating means for elucidating the import of the Qur'ān.

- Every effort should be made for producing a presentable translation of the Qur'ān, following the idiom, usage and stylistic features of English. For the target audience, notwithstanding their pious desire, cannot use profitably a translation betraying the lack of familiarity with the norms of their language. Without losing elegance of style, simplicity and directness should be pursued in the translation. Quaint words, or expressions readily bringing to mind Biblical connotations and jargon should not find their way into the translation. An extensive glossary covering major Qur'ānic terms and concepts should be appended. Likewise, the translation should be prefaced with a synoptic account of Islam, its articles of faith, the Prophet's role model and hallmarks of the Qur'ān. This would go a long way in making readers more receptive to the message of the Qur'ān. The sooner an English translation is brought out along the above lines, the better it would be for the cause of conveying the Word of God to the English-speaking readers, a religious duty incumbent on us as Muslims.
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## **Qur'ān Translation: Problems and Solutions**

✍...Md. Quamruddīn<sup>1</sup>

### **The Holy Qur'ān**

The Qur'ān is the Word of Allah, the Book of guidance, an immortal linguistic miracle and an inimitable piece of writing which cannot be reproduced by any creature. From the very beginning it challenged the human kind and the jinn to produce a piece which could match It.<sup>2</sup> But despite the fact that the Arabs, among whom it was revealed and who were at the peak of their linguistic homogeneity and competence and were the acknowledged masters of the art and the related disciplines, failed to take the challenge. Finally, they admitted the fact that “had it been from other than Lord, there would surely have found therein much discrepancy”.<sup>3</sup>

**Translatability of the Qur'ān:** As far as the translation of the Qur'ān is concerned, it has been the topic of debate among 'Ulamā' and scholars. The scholars who are against lawfulness of the translation of the Qur'ān they too say that the Qur'ān is Allah's Words in His exact words in a perfect Arabic language, with its miraculous nature, so it is impossible to render the depth of the meaning of the Qur'ān into any other language. It's because translation with its demerits cannot fully grasp the meanings and no translation can justify to retain the exact message of the Qur'ān save that the conceptual meaning of the message is possible which is permitted by the Islamic jurists.

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<sup>1</sup> Guest Lecturer, Zākir Husain Delhi College, University of Delhi, Delhi

<sup>2</sup> See the Holy Qur'ān: 2:23-24, 10:38, 11:13,17:88, 52:33-34.

<sup>3</sup> The Holy Qur'ān: 4:82.

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On the other hand, majority of the 'Ulamā' and scholars are of the opinion that the translation of the meanings of the Qur'ān is not only the need of the time, but also the necessity to make the divine message accessible to the whole mankind. Because, the Qur'ān is not only for the Arabic speakers and the Muslims, rather it is a message of guidance from Allah which must reach every individual of the mankind. Therefore, it would be necessary to translate the Qur'ān into different languages of the world. One of the major tasks of the Prophet Muḥammad (PBUH) was to explain the Qur'ān to the human kind as well.<sup>1</sup>

Those who permit the translation of the Qur'ān, they divide the art of translation into two categories: (1) "word-to-word translation" and (2) "translation by meaning". They allow only the second type of translation that is "translation by meaning" (ترجمة تفسيرية). Providing the reason, Ekmeleddin Ihsanoglu, in his preface of *World Bibliography of Translations of the Qur'ān*, writes:

"Word by word translation of the Qur'ān identical to the original text is impossible. Anyone who has some experience of translation knows that the translation of any book does not measure up to its original. How much more so the Revealed Book which is inimitable both in meaning and composition!"<sup>2</sup>

**Translation and its Theories:** The art of translation is one of the most important and challenging tasks. It is essentially the business of making the closer natural correspondence or equivalence or approximation of the source language in the target language, first in terms of sense and meaning and then in terms of structure and style. The Concise Oxford English Dictionary defines 'translation' in the following words:

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid: 16:44

<sup>2</sup> World Bibliography of Translations of the Holy Qur'ān, P. xxviii.

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“Translation *n.* 1 the act or an instance of translating. 2. a written or spoken expression of the meaning of a word, speech, book, etc. in another language.

**Equivalence or Approximation:** Scholars are of the opinion that every translation laps in fulfillment of the meaning of the source language text. In terms of the semantic mapping, each language is different from other languages, and no two languages are identical. They only express fifty to seventy per cent of the real text. Some scholars say that translation is equivalence, but again “there has been no unanimous agreement among translation theorists as to what the concept of equivalence in translation means”.<sup>1</sup>

According to Catford equivalence “is the replacement of textual material in one language (source language) by equivalent textual material in another language (target language).”<sup>2</sup> But this cannot be validated for languages like Arabic and European languages. There are other definitions of equivalence too. Nida talks about formal and dynamic equivalence. “Formal equivalence” corresponds to “metaphrase”, and “dynamic equivalence” to “paraphrase”. “Dynamic equivalence” (or “functional equivalence”) conveys the essential thoughts expressed in a source text, while “formal equivalence” attempts to render the text literally, or “word for word”. There is, however, no sharp boundary between functional and formal equivalence. Each is used at various times and in various contexts by the same translator.

According to some other scholars it is not suitable to use the term ‘equivalence’, because complete equivalence is not possible. They, instead, use the term ‘approximation’ which the

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<sup>1</sup> Qur’ān Translation Discourse Texture and Exegesis, P. 5.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid, P. 5.

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translator should try to achieve because there are no such things as identical equivalents. Therefore, Newmrak is of the opinion that “since the concept of an ideal or perfect translation is illusory, the concept of translation equivalence can only be an approximation”.<sup>1</sup>

And since there is lack of equivalence among languages at various grounds including lexical, textual, grammatical and pragmatic grounds, and since there is no fix definition of ‘equivalence’, Raouf writes that: “A translator who aspires to achieve total lexical and/or textual equivalence is chasing a mirage: total equivalence at any level is impossible, relative equivalence at any level is possible.”<sup>2</sup>

Since languages differ considerably from one another stylistically, semantically and pragmatically, no exact equivalence in translation can be achieved. This fact led Ḥussain ‘Abdur Ra’ūf to say that “The Natural Semantic Metalanguage (cf. Myhill 1997:207) suggests that only about fifty per cent of words have translation equivalents in all or almost all of the languages of the world, and all other words do not necessarily have equivalents in other languages.”<sup>3</sup>

Elaborating the issue of non-equivalence and that too in the context of the Qur’ānic translation, Ḥussain ‘Abdur Ra’ūf writes:

“The intrinsic syntactic, semantic and pragmatic differences in languages lead to cases of both non-equivalence and untranslatability between languages; we are, therefore, shackled by these limitations. The translator, however, has to free himself/ herself of these shackles in order to achieve an acceptable, informative and effective translation by observing

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid, P. 6.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid, P. 7.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid, P. 9.

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the target language's linguistic and cultural norms. Thus the source text suffers structural changes which are inevitable in any process of translation. However, for a sacred and highly sensitive text like the Qur'ān the translation, magnum opus or otherwise cannot escape the trap of exegetical inaccuracies. A translated Qur'ān will, of course, have new structural, textural rhetorical features ad hoc to the target language."<sup>1</sup>

Everything of a source language is not possible to be translated in a target language but "The sense may be translated, while the form often cannot. And the point where form begins to contribute to sense is where we approach untranslatability. This clearly is most likely to be in poetry, song, advertising, punning and so on, where sound and rhyme and double meaning are unlikely to be recreated in the TL."<sup>2</sup>

These were the concept of equivalence and approximation in the work of translation but the issue of translatability becomes more serious when it comes to the Divine Book; the Qur'ān. However, despite the languages differences and questions of translatability there is a severe need of translation and at least the obvious meaning can still be expressed. According to Basil Hatim and Jeremy Munday, "Translatability is a relative notion and has to do with the extent to which, despite obvious differences in linguistic structure (grammar, vocabulary, etc.), meaning can still be adequately expressed across the languages."<sup>3</sup>

**The Task of a Translator:** The translation process involves analysis, transferring and re-structuring. Thus a translator first analyses the SL message into its simplest and structurally clearest forms, then, he transfers the message at kernel level

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid, P. 9.

<sup>2</sup> Translation an advanced resource book, P. 10.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid, P.15.

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and re-structures the message in the TL to the level which is the most appropriate for the audience addressed.<sup>1</sup>

In other words, the first task of a translator is to understand the text thoroughly, analyze it fully, and it is the work of translation theory to suggest the criteria for this analysis method. A translator has to understand the intention of a text, the intention of the author, has to take in his mind the readers' understanding level, and has to weigh the quality of writing and authenticity of the text.

A translator has to understand the message of the author and the people to whom the message has actually been given. "Accuracy of content should not be judged primarily in terms of "being true" to the author, but in not causing misunderstanding of the message by those for whom the translation is intended."<sup>2</sup>

A translator needs to understand and cover many disciplines and theories of a text of a source language, which are associated with the meaning of a text, so that he may be true to the text and the real intended meaning of the author. "An increasing number of disciplines are concerned with meaning, for example, communication theory, information theory, sociology, semiotics, psychology, philology, linguistics, sociolinguistics, hermeneutics, and aesthetics."<sup>3</sup>

It is the fact that all languages reflect the culture of their own. It is also another fact that all languages and cultures are continuously in the process of change, and such changes have impact on the languages. That is why one of the most required disciplines and theories to be understood by a translator is the

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<sup>1</sup> For detail see 'Translation an advanced resource book, P. 45.

<sup>2</sup> Contexts in Translating, P. 3.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid, P. 5.

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impact of culture on a language in translation process. "Language also constitutes the most distinctive feature of a culture, which may be described in a simplistic manner as the totality of the beliefs and practices of a society. And although a language may be regarded as a relatively small part of a culture, it is indispensable for both the functioning and the perpetuation of the culture. Accordingly, competent translators are always aware that ultimately words only have meaning in terms of the corresponding culture. But while a language can usually be acquired within a period of ten years, it takes a lifetime to understand and become an integral part of a culture."<sup>1</sup>

**Problems associated with Translation of the Qur'ān:** The Qur'ān is in Arabic language and Arabic is a very rich language. Arabic words have many shades and layers of meanings, especially the Qur'ānic text. The words of different languages are not identical in other languages. They differ in many features including lexical, grammatical and syntactical features. Translation of a word in another language is nothing but a shade of the meaning. In the case of translation of the Qur'ān, a translator only narrows down the meaning of the Qur'ān to specific concepts in a foreign language. A translator expresses only the essential element of the source language. He first analyses the Qur'ānic message and then expresses it into the simplest and structurally clearest forms of the target language. Many Qur'ānic text constructions contain subtle shades of meanings which cannot be expressed in translations.

In the process of translation, a translator attempts to express the thematic value, because in any case equivalence is impossible. And since Arabic, the language of the Qur'ān, is

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid, P. 13.

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the only semantic language which remained unchanged for more than fourteen centuries, it is, therefore, different from other languages in many respects, that is why in case of the translation of the Qur'ān it becomes further impossible, for, Qur'ān claims to be matchless. No human expression can anywhere come close to the Qur'ānic stylistic expression.

There are many grounds at which a translator faces problems. These include syntactic problems, lexical issues, rhetorical and semantic problems, stylistic mechanism of stress, word order, syntactic and semantic ambiguity, historical facts, geographical facts, ecological words, metaphors, idiomatic phrases, cultural expressions, legal and instructional discourses, abrogating and abrogated structures, intertextuality, religious terms, scientific facts, cryptic letters, euphemism, parables, elliptical structures, evocative names, emotive Qur'ānic expressions, morphological patterns and many more.

**Views of the Scholars regarding Translatability of the**

**Qur'ān:** Due to the above-mentioned difficulties (and problems which would be mentioned later) many scholars expressed their views that the Qur'ān' translation is a challenging task. Maulānā 'Abdul Mājīd Daryābādī is of the opinion that "Arabic is not at all easy to translate into a language so widely and radically differing from it in structure and genius as English, unless it be with the aid of loose periphrasis and lax paraphrase".<sup>1</sup>

Muḥammad Asad writes, about the challenges of translation of the Qur'ān, in the foreword of his valuable translation of the Qur'ān, "The Message of the Qur'ān":

"Unlike any other book, its [of Qur'ān] meaning and its linguistic presentation form one unbreakable whole. The position of

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<sup>1</sup> Tafsir-ul-Qur'ān (English translation and tafsir of Qur'ān), Preface.

individual words in a sentence, the rhythm and sound of its phrases and their syntactic construction, the manner in which a metaphor flows almost imperceptibly into a pragmatic statement, the use of acoustic stress not merely in the service of rhetoric but as a means of alluding to unspoken but clearly implied ideas: all this makes the Qur'ān in the last resort, unique and untranslatable, a fact that has been pointed out by many earlier translators and by all Arab scholars."<sup>1</sup>

A modern translator of the Qur'ān, Arthur J. Arberry, shares his experience about the challenges of translation of the Qur'ān:

"Having spent many years in studying the problems of translation, I know all too well that, within my own experience, no piece of fine writing has ever been done full justice to in any translation".<sup>2</sup>

A renowned Muslim translator, Marmaduke Pickthall, observes that "The Koran cannot be translated. That is the belief of old-fashioned sheykhs and the view of the present writer. The book is here rendered almost literally and every effort has been made to choose befitting language. But the result is not the Glorious Koran, that inimitable symphony, the very sounds of which move men to tears and ecstasy. It is only an attempt to present the meaning of the Koran – and peradventure something of the charm-in English. It can never take place of the Koran in Arabic, nor is it meant to do so."<sup>3</sup>

Regarding his own translation of the Qur'ān, Muḥammad Asad says: "I am fully aware that my rendering does not and could not really 'do justice' to the Qur'ān and the layers upon layers of its meaning."<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> The Message of the Qur'ān, Foreword.

<sup>2</sup> The Holy Koran an Introduction with Selections, P. 28.

<sup>3</sup>The Meaning of the Glorious Koran: An Explanatory Translation, Foreword.

<sup>4</sup> The Message of the Qur'ān, Foreword.

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According to a modern writer Ḍiyā'uddīn Sardār, many things get lost in the translation of the Qur'ān.<sup>1</sup> To Dr. Muḥammad Khalīfah: "Comparing any translation with the original Arabic is like comparing a thumbnail sketch with the natural view of a splendid landscape rich in colour, light and shade, and sonorous in melody. The Arabic vocabulary as used in the Qur'ān conveys a wealth of ideas with various subtle shades and colours impossible to express in full with a finite number of words in any other language".<sup>2</sup>

Ḥussain 'Abdul Ra'ūf writes: "One cannot expect a translation into another language to be able to achieve equivalence; approximation is the most we can hope for. In the case of translating the book of God, the Qur'ān, Muslim scholars' objection to calling the translated Qur'ān a 'Qur'ān' is justified; 'Translation of the meanings of the Qur'ān' is what they want to call the translated version."<sup>3</sup> He further elaborates: "I have finally reached an independent conclusion based on translation theory and linguistic analysis that Qur'ānic discourse is inimitable and cannot be reproduced into a target language."<sup>4</sup>

**Need of the Translations:** Despite all the above-mentioned problems and difficulties, the work of the translation of the Qur'ān is the need of the entire humanity because the Qur'ān was revealed for three main purposes: (1) that it may be the guidance for the human being and the jinn, (2) that it may be the sign and l'jāz to prove and support the Prophet Muḥammad

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<sup>1</sup> For his full article read: The Hindu, daily, Sunday, June 08, 2008, issued from India:

<http://www.hindu.com/mag/2008/06/08/stories/2008060850090400.htm>

<sup>2</sup> The Sublime Qur'ān and Orientalism, P. 66.

<sup>3</sup> Qur'ān Translation Discourse Texture and Exegesis, P. 13.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid, P. 3.

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(PBUH), for this purpose Allah has challenged the entire humanity to produce anything like the Qur'ān, and the Qur'ān is and will remain l'jāz forever. Thus, Allah proved the prophethood of Muḥammad (PBUH) and strengthened his mission, that (3) the human being may worship Allah by reciting the Qur'ānic text. This purpose can only be gained through recitation of the Qur'ān. The same point has been stated by Zarqānī in his book 'Manāhil al-'Irfān':

"...فإننا نقفك على أنّ لله تعالى في إنزال كتابه العزيز ثلاثة مقاصد رئيسية: أن يكون هداية للثقلين، وأن يقوم آية لتأييد النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم، وأن يتعبد الله خلقه بتلاوة هذا الطراز الأعلى من كلامه المقدس."<sup>1</sup>

To achieve the first purpose it is inevitable to convey the message of the Qur'ān through various means including its translation into the languages of the world.

**Lack of Competency:** In the lines below some major issues and problems are pointed out with some examples wherein the translators face problems in the process of translation. It should be kept in mind that the Qur'ān is the full and final Book which is free from any error or defect. It is the human incapability and inability that they face such problems. The problems arise from the lack of competence in Arabic syntax, morphology, semantics, from the failure to capture the stylistic, pragmatic, figurative and other aspects of the Qur'ānic language and from the lack of divine insight.

**Problems at Semantic Level:** The translators face many semantic problems when they translate the Qur'ān into English or other languages. A word in a language can be semantically more specific than in the other languages. Also,

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<sup>1</sup> Manahil ul-'Irfan, 2/423.

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it happens frequently that a word has several explanations which are adopted according to the context. Here a translator gets baffled as which meaning suits the specific place. At such points he is advised to prefer the preferred meaning and mention other choices in footnote or in brackets.

**Problems at Rhetorical Level:** Rhetorical image is one of the most challenging elements which pose difficulty in translating the Qur'ānic text. Qur'ān is replete with many rhetorical images. That is why the Qur'ān is considered as one of the masterpieces of literature too. Sayyid Quṭb is one of pioneers who penned down a book on the literary beauty named: "al-Taṣwīr al-Fannī fī al-Qur'ān al-Karīm". Some rhetorical images are so common and universally known that their translation is not a difficult task. The concept of the word (الحجارة) in the Qur'ānic verse of the chapter al-Baqarah *ثُمَّ قَسَتْ فُلُوبِكُمْ مِنْ بَعْدِ كَالْحِجَارَةِ أَوْ أَشَدُّ قَسْوَةً* (74) is found almost in every language. See the different translations of this verse.

The likening of the heart with al-Ḥijārah which symbolizes the hardness, stiffness and rigidity is something which is very clear and known does not pose difficulty in understanding.

Besides, there are some other rhetorical images which pose great difficulty in the process of translation. These are the images which are clearly understood in their own culture for the specific meaning but when they are transformed in another language and culture they sometimes lose their intended meaning. The translation of the Qur'ānic verse of the chapter al-Isrā': *وَلَا تَجْعَلْ يَدَكَ مَغْلُولَةً إِلَىٰ عُنُقِكَ وَلَا تَبْسُطْهَا كُلَّ الْبَسْطِ فَتَقْعُدَ*: (Tr.: And do not keep your hand tied to your

(29) مَلُومًا مَحْسُورًا

neck, nor extend it to the full extent, lest you should be sitting reproached, empty-handed”<sup>1</sup> would have been meaningless for the English readers, had it not been explained in footnote by the translator.<sup>2</sup> The translator has explained in the footnote: “‘keeping hands tied to the neck’ is an expression that stands for miserliness. The verse means that one should neither be miserly, nor extravagant. In the latter case, one may sit empty-handed, reproaching oneself for overspending his wealth”. In this verse the metonymy is clear for the Arabic readers but the same image is difficult for the English readers.

In such cases a translator should not consider words of the several images separately rather he should take them all together and then transform them into the target language keeping in mind the respective culture of that language.

In brief, the rhetorical features of the Qur’ān challenge the translators to convey the intended meaning of the Qur’ānic verses. Rhetorical expression of a language is impossible to render in any other language especially of the Qur’ān. The words of the Qur’ān are lexically conditioned by connotation, collocation, grammatically by syntax and phonetically by assonance and alliteration etc<sup>3</sup>. For example: يَا أَيُّهَا الْمُدَّثِّرُ ﴿١﴾ قُمْ

فَأَنْذِرْ ﴿٢﴾ وَرَبَّكَ فَكَبِّرْ ﴿٣﴾ وَثِيَابَكَ فَطَهِّرْ ﴿٤﴾<sup>4</sup>

**Cultural Differences:** Some words are ‘culture-specific’. They represent their own culture; the culture wherein they grew up. When they are translated in another language of another culture they become strange for the target readers. The culture of a target language is very different from the culture of the source

<sup>1</sup> The Meanings of the Noble Qur’ān, 1/521

<sup>2</sup> Qur’ān Translation Discourse, Texture and Exegesis, P. 27

<sup>3</sup> For detail see ‘Contexts in Translating, PP. 78-79.

<sup>4</sup> The Holy Qur’ān: 74: 1-4.

language and this automatically makes it difficult to find lexical equivalents. Ultimately this mismatch compels a translator to make many adjustments in the process of translation.<sup>1</sup>

In the case of Qur'ān translation also, a translator too is compelled to make adjustments at various grounds. He needs to be fully aware of the Arabs' culture wherein the Arabic language flourished. He needs to be aware of the pre-Islamic culture as well as post-Islamic culture. The Qur'ānic phrase *فُرَّةَ أَعْيُنٍ* in the chapter al-Furqān *وَالَّذِينَ يَقُولُونَ رَبَّنَا هَبْ لَنَا مِنْ أَزْوَاجِنَا وَذُرِّيَّاتِنَا فُرَّةَ أَعْيُنٍ وَاجْعَلْنَا لِلْمُتَّقِينَ إِمَامًا (74)* literally means 'coldness of the eyes'. The atmosphere of the Arab is hot and warm which feels relief when it receives coldness. This explanation makes it clear that the expression '*فُرَّةَ أَعْيُنٍ*' is well-expressed for the audience of its specific culture.<sup>2</sup> But the same Arabic expression if it is translated literally in English it would not convey the intended meaning as English speaking people feel relief when they receive heat and hotness. Here a translator needs to understand the cultural background and idiom of the language and thus he has to convey the intended meaning in the target language. Now, the appropriate translation of the verse would be: "and those who say, "Our Lord, Give us, from our spouses and our children, *comfort of eyes*, and make us heads of the God-fearing".

Hussain 'Abdul-Ra'ūf, elaborating the challenges in translation and translatability, writes:

"In the translation of the Qur'ān, language and culture-bound linguistic and rhetorical features are simply 'inimitable' and 'unproduceable' into other languages to a satisfactory level that can create an equivalent mystical effect on the target audience similar

<sup>1</sup> Qur'ān Translation Discourse, Texture and Exegesis, P. 12

<sup>2</sup> *ibid.* 91

to that on source language readers. These Qur'ānic intricacies have no equivalents in the target language and they represent unique examples of linguistic and cultural untranslatability. Languages achieve stylistic effect through ad hoc linguistic mechanisms like word order shift, clefting, etc. or through the employment of deliberately chosen rhetorical devices".<sup>1</sup>

**Synonymous Words with Subtle Differences in Meaning:** A word cannot be synonym of another word in its full concept and connotations. A slight, minute and subtle difference in the meaning does exist. In Arabic (الأكمه) is used for the person who is 'born-blind', while (الأعمى) means a 'blind' in general. Keeping in mind this explanation, translation of the Qur'ānic verse of the chapter al-Mā'idah: وَتُبْرِئُ الْأَكْمَةَ وَالْأَبْرَصَ بِإِذْنِي with "And you heal *the blind* and the leper" would be a wrong translation and many translators have committed this mistake. In such case, a translator needs to understand the source word with its full conceptual background then only he will be able to do justice.

**One Word with Opposite Meanings:** Rarely some words have opposite meanings. In such cases a translator should mention one preferred meaning and should put other meaning in footnote or endnote. The Qur'ānic word قُرُوءٍ in the chapter al-Baqarah: 228: وَالْمُطَلَّقَاتُ يَتَرَبَّصْنَ بِأَنْفُسِهِنَّ ثَلَاثَةَ قُرُوءٍ means both menstrual period and purity period.

**Islamic Terms and Rites:** There are three kinds of terms used in the Qur'ān: (1) terms which were used and known even before the revelation of the Qur'ān and they remained with their old meanings and concepts, i.e. the Qur'ān

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid, P, 12.



approved their prevailing concepts. These terms include al-jizyah (الجزية), al-Khirāj (الخراج), etc. (2) terms which were used and known before revelation of the Qur'ān and they had their own specific concepts but when the Qur'ān appeared it changed their concepts, i.e. the Qur'ān provided new concepts and meanings to them. These terms include al-Ṣalāh (الصلاة), al-Ṣiyām (الصيام), al-Ḥajj (الحج), al-Du'ā' (الدعاء), al-'Ibādah (العبادة), al-Ṭahārah (الطهارة) and so on. (3) terms which were brought by the Qur'ān only and were not used or known before the revelation of the Qur'ān. These terms include Islām (الإسلام), al-Jihād (الجهاد), al-Adhān (الأذان), al-Zakāh (الزكاة), etc.

Terms of any language are difficult to be translated and the difficulty increases when the case is with the Qur'ānic terms. The Qur'ānic terms are the difficult areas where translators knowingly or unknowingly commit mistakes in conveying the intended meaning and concept. If we attempt to transfer the Qur'ānic terms into another target language, it will lose those their specific connotations. Since terms in the source and target languages will have different cultural and environmental roots, it is not possible for two languages to exhibit total correspondence and thus cannot be substitute for each other. Hence, it is necessary for a translator to be aware of the concepts and meanings of the Qur'ān. He must endeavor to find the possible equivalent, and if not so, he should use the Qur'ānic terms (in transliteration), should paraphrase or explain the terms in brackets, footnotes or in a separate glossary. If there is any Qur'ānic term which has two meanings, both of equal importance, then one meaning should be mentioned in translation text and the other in bracket or in footnote. The Qur'ānic word (الزكاة) has its own

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background and cultural concept so its translation with 'alms' would be wrong.

**Contextual Problems:** Sometimes the meaning of a word used in a context is not that which is mentioned in the dictionary. Context changes the meaning also. It should be kept in mind that the Qur'ān is 'one whole discourse',<sup>1</sup> and interrelated and interwoven book. All the chapters and verses depend on each other in understanding and reaching a conclusion. One verse is explained by another verse at another place.<sup>2</sup> The Qur'ānic word (ظلم) in the chapter al-An'ām: (82) الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَلَمْ يَلْبِسُوا إِيمَانَهُمْ بِظُلْمٍ أُولَئِكَ لَهُمُ الْأَمْنُ وَهُمْ مُهْتَدُونَ literally means 'cruelty' but almost all the major exegetes agreed that in this verse the word (ظلم) means 'association with Allah'. Exegetes 'establish this meaning through intertextuality by reference to other Qur'ānic structures which can illuminate the semantic ambiguity of a given Qur'ānic expression. They have referred to the Qur'ānic verse: "يَا بُعَيَّ لَا" <sup>3</sup> تَشْرِكُ بِاللَّهِ إِنَّ الشِّرْكَ لَظُلْمٌ عَظِيمٌ". Now, it became clear that the meaning of a word sometimes changes according to the context and intertextual demands. Thus, at such points a translator has to think over the issue and should adopt the meaning which suits in the context.

**Problems at the Ground of 'Anthropomorphic Images':** The Qur'ān is full of many attributes and epithets which portray the Divine Entity by the words which portray the human being. Take for examples: الرَّحْمَنُ عَلَى الْعَرْشِ اسْتَوَى , يَدُ اللَّهِ فَوْقَ أَيْدِيهِمْ and

<sup>1</sup> Ibid, P. 161-162. For detail see: Maulana Ashraf Ali Thanvi's 'Sabqul Ghayaat fi Nasq-il- Aayaat and Shah Waliullah Dehlavi's 'Al-Fauzul Kabeer.

<sup>2</sup> Qur'ān Translation Discourse, Texture and Exegesis. 160

<sup>3</sup> Ibid, P. 29

many others. Here the word *يَد* and *اسْتَوَى* portray the human attributes which have been used to portray the Divine Entity. But it should be kept in mind that such attributes have been used in the Qur'ān only to make the human mind closer to the Qur'ānic text so that they may understand it. The Qur'ān has used such attributes and epithets in human's own style so that they may understand. In such case, a translator should explain such words in brackets or in footnotes.

**Problems at the Ground of Abstract Nouns and Root-cognates:** Abstract nouns and root-cognates are one of the major areas where translators feel difficulty in translation. Thus, they mistranslate or do not maintain accuracy in conveying the intended meaning. Some translators do not differentiate between *الرحمة*, *الرحمن*, *الرحيم*, *مرحمة* and so on. If we talk about the words *الرحمن* and *الرحيم* then we can simply translate them “as (most gracious, most merciful) where both have taken the superlative particle (most). In the source text, the first epithet only (*الرحمن*) expresses *hyperbole* but not the second and it is for this particular reason that it occurs first....”<sup>1</sup> At such places translator reluctantly uses more words to express the multiple meaning.

**Grammatical Gap:** Not two languages are identical for each other. Arabic, too, is not identical for the English language. Grammatical gap poses a greater difficulty in conveying the true meaning of the source language. The Modern English does not have the dual forms of noun and verb. At this juncture a translator is perplexed as what to do with the dual forms of the nouns and verbs used in the Qur'ān. A very beautiful Qur'ānic repeated verse in the chapter al-Raḥman

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid, P. 41

فِي أَيِّ آلاءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَانِ consists of the dual form and the meaning hidden in it is neglected by the majority of the translators.

**Grammatical Parallelism:** Grammatical parallelism or parallel structure or parallel construction is the similarity of structure and construction in a pair or series of related words, phrases, or clauses. In other word it “is the repetition of a syntactic pattern where assonance and euphony can be achieved”.<sup>1</sup> The application of parallelism improves writing style and readability. This parallelism provides two major benefits: it makes the concept of the structure easier to understand and creates cadence. Cadence “is rhythm in sound or rise and fall of the voice when a text is read aloud...it is through cadence that the Qur’ān achieves euphony. Assonance and consonance also contribute to achieve cadence”.<sup>2</sup> The Qur’ān enjoys this parallelism at many places as we see in the chapter al-Infīṭār: إِنَّ الْأُبْرَارَ لَفِي نَعِيمٍ ﴿٣٣﴾ وَإِنَّ الْفُجَّارَ لَفِي وَأَلْعَدِيدَتِ صُبْحًا ﴿١﴾ فَأَلْمُورِيَّتِ قَدَحًا وَأَلْمُغِيرَتِ صُبْحًا ﴿٢﴾. فَأَلْمُغِيرَتِ صُبْحًا ﴿٣﴾.

At such places, due to morpho-syntactic differences among different languages, a translator is perplexed as how to convey the pattern of the structure or grammatical parallelism into the target language to create the same pattern and music. Pointing out to this difficulty Ḥussain ‘Abdul Ra’ūf writes: “The Qur’ān is extensively fortified with linguistic and rhetorical devices which constitute its texture. It is the textural component of the source text that will suffer most at the hands of the translator. Therefore, the Qur’ān itself will be lost when translated; its unique linguistic architecture, rhetorical

<sup>1</sup> Ibid, P. 86

<sup>2</sup> Ibid, P. 119

beauty, music, and prototypical texture will be wasted.”<sup>1</sup> He further writes: “In the translation of the Qur’ān, we sacrifice the flow of sound to sense while in the Qur’ān sound and sense are interrelated... Cadence is a Qur’ānic attraction through which Qur’ānic discourse manages to achieve euphony. Cadence is the most prominent Qur’ānic prototypical phonetic feature that is translation-resistant; it is achieved through the unique Qur’ānic lexico-phonetic system and is usually demonstrated through parallelistic structures...”<sup>2</sup>

In such cases a translator should maintain balance between translation and grammatical parallelism. He should maintain accuracy in translation and should keep the grammatical parallelism effect on the readers and the listeners. He should try his best to follow the source language structure pattern and transfer it into the target language discourse as much as he can.

**Problems at the Ground of Pronouns:** Pronouns exhibit a grave misunderstanding among the exegetes. Ultimately they pose difficulty in the process of translation also. Such mistake has occurred by Rodwell when he translated the Qur’ānic verses of the chapter al-Muddaththir: كَلَّا إِنَّهُ تَذَكَّرٌ ﴿٥١﴾ فَمَنْ شَاءَ ذَكَّرْهُ ﴿٥٢﴾. He translates: “For this Koran is warming enough. And whose will, it warneth him”. The pronoun هُ in ذَكَّرْهُ is misunderstood by him and thus he has mistranslated it. Plenty of such mistakes occur in translating the pronouns of the Qur’ān.

**Problem at the Ground of Prepositions:** Arabic prepositions represent various subtle rhetorical and connotative meanings as per the demands of the contexts. That is why they pose a great difficulty in the process of

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid, P. 40

<sup>2</sup> Ibid, P. 58

translation. To express the meaning of 'walk on the earth' the Qur'ān uses two prepositions: *عَلَى* and *فِي* and thus the Qur'ān says: *وَعِبَادُ الرَّحْمَنِ الَّذِينَ يَمْشُونَ عَلَى الْأَرْضِ هَوْنًا* and *وَلَا تَمْشِي فِي الْأَرْضِ مَرَحًا*. But it should be kept in mind that the concepts of both the verses are different. Human being is the part of the dust; he will go inside it and hence referring to this subtle concept the Qur'ān addresses those who walk on the earth with insolence and pride with the preposition *فِي* which indicates the low position. Those who are pious, humble and true slave of Allah they are respected being on the earth hence referring to this concept the Qur'ān has used the preposition *عَلَى* which indicates the high position.<sup>1</sup> At such points a translator has to keep in his mind the deep conceptual differences.

**Syntactical Problems:** The differences between Arabic and English languages, for example, cause various syntactic problems when translating the Qur'ān. Tense is an obvious syntactic problem that translators usually encounter in translating the Arabic text of the Qur'ān. But, anyhow, the translator, when translating the Qur'ān, considers overall context. In the Qur'ān, there is, sometimes, a shift from the past tense to the imperfect tense to achieve an effect, which can pose some problems in translation.

On the syntactic level there exists category shifts also. They include *intra-system* shift in which, sometimes, a singular/plural lexical item is shifted into a plural/singular from in a target language, *Class shift* in which a source language item which belongs to a grammatical class adopts a different grammatical class in the target text, *Structure shift*

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<sup>1</sup> For other example and exhaustive discussion see: Qur'ān Translation Discourse, Texture and Exegesis, PP. 48,49.

which involves shifting of one grammatical structure/word order to another structure in the target language, and *Unit shift* which shifts a single source language item into a phrase in the target language.<sup>1</sup>

**Problems at the Ground of the Tenses:** Tenses pose a great difficulty in the process of translation and this is because the English tenses are more than the Arabic tenses. Arabic has perfect verb (الماضي)- which tells about something which happened in the past- and imperfect verb (المضارع)- which tells about something which is happening at present or will happen in the future-. But in the English language there are three major verbs: (1) past with its four tenses, (2) present with its four tenses and (3) future with its four tenses. Here a translator gets baffled in conveying the meaning. The problem manifolds when a Qur'ānic past tense needs to be translated in the present form such as: وَكَانَ اللَّهُ عَلِيمًا حَكِيمًا. At such point a translator needs to take help from the exegesis and to consider the context of the Qur'ānic syntactic structure.<sup>2</sup>

**Syntactic Ambiguity:** Syntactic ambiguity in the Qur'ānic discourse is one of the major problems for a translator. This can clearly be seen in misunderstanding the conjunction present in the verse of the chapter Āli 'Imrān: وَمَا يَعْلَمُ تَأْوِيلَهُ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَالرَّاسِخُونَ فِي الْعِلْمِ يَقُولُونَ آمَنَّا بِهِ كُلٌّ مِنْ عِنْدِ رَبِّنَا. For the accurate and authentic meaning the syntactic break should be after the word الله, but if this verse is taken as one whole structure

<sup>1</sup> For detail see: Qur'ān Translation Discourse Texture and Exegesis, PP. 10 - 11 and 77-80.

<sup>2</sup> See for detail: Translation Made Easy by Md Quamruddin.

without dividing it into two chunks then it is a wrong understanding.<sup>1</sup>

**Semantic Ambiguity:** Existence of different translations of a particular word or sentence is the result of ambiguity in the text. This ambiguity, in the chapter al-A'rāf حَتَّىٰ يَلِجَ الْجَمَلُ فِي سَمِّ الْخَيْطِ for example, has led some translators for mistranslation. The right accurate meaning of the word الجملة is 'camel', whereas it has been mistranslated by some as 'twisted ropes'.<sup>2</sup>

**Lexical Compression:** There are many words in the Qur'ān which can be termed as 'Islamic terms' or 'culture-specific'. They have their own lengthy semantic features and backgrounds but when they are translated their meanings are compressed in a single word. That is why it is recommended to make their 'transliteration' and explain them separately in footnote or in a glossary. A very famous word (الوضوء) is enough to understand it. This word is translated as 'ablution' whereas it has its limited meaning and does not reflect the whole semantic features of the Islamic term (الوضوء).

**Language Change:** It often happens that the meaning of a particular word of a language gets changed when it is used in another language and leads to the way of different understanding. Thus, a same lexicon has one meaning in one language and another meaning in another language. A word of the Urdu language, for example, is more specific in its meaning, whereas in Arabic, for example, the meaning of the same word may be more broadly construed and vice versa.

**Legal Texts:** The Qur'ānic verses related to injunctions have some unique features that challenge the translators. A part

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<sup>1</sup> Qur'ān Translation Discourse, Texture and Exegesis, PP. 32, 169

<sup>2</sup> Ibid, P. 32

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from command of both Qur'ānic language and the target language a translator must be well-versed in some related sciences also. A translator must possess good knowledge of the traditions (السُّنَّة) of the Prophet Muḥammad (PBUH), because Sunnah is the explanation of the Qur'ān and the job of the Prophet was to explain the Qur'ān too.<sup>1</sup>

A translator must also be well-versed in Islamic jurisprudence (الفقه الإسلامي), current issues and objectives of the Islamic law (مقاصد الشريعة). He must also be aware of the context of the verse, subject of the verse, historical background of the verse and so on.

In this case too, translators commit mistakes and this is due to their incompetency. Take for example the verse of the chapter al-Baqarah: نِسَاؤُكُمْ حَرْثٌ لَّكُمْ فَأَتُوا حَرْثَكُمْ أَنَّى شِئْتُمْ. This verse is generally not translated in its full concept. The verse allows sex with wife in whatever 'mode' and 'time' a husband chooses. There are many legal words too in the Qur'ān which are not translated with accuracy.

**Metaphor:** Metaphor reflects culture of a language. That is why metaphor stands out as one of the most challenging areas to be translated into another language. In translation of a metaphor a translator does not deal only with a language as a means of communication but also with a culture as its integral entity. A translator needs not to bind himself within the grammatical structure and the denotative meaning, but to dig beyond the first meaning instead. Use of metaphor is very common in the Qur'ān. Some common examples of the Qur'ānic metaphor include the references to unbelievers that they are 'unable to hear or see', meaning that they are incapable of discerning the

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<sup>1</sup> The Holy Qur'ān: 16:44.

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truth and they have 'veils over their hearts, heaviness in their ears'<sup>1</sup> or they are 'covered in darkness'.<sup>2</sup>

The Qur'ān enjoys a unique status, hence, translating its metaphors pose a challenge to its translator. Translating the Qur'ānic metaphors is more likely to reduce to the sense than to create a new one in the target language. A translator of the Qur'ānic metaphors has to communicate the meaning being faithful to the Qur'ānic text, with utmost possible approximation in the target language, expressing the purpose of the Qur'ān; therefore a translator needs full reliance upon the tafsīrs of the Qur'ān which deal specially with the rhetorical aspects. In the verse, هُنَّ لِيَاسٍ لَّكُمْ وَأَنْتُمْ لِيَاسٍ لَّهُنَّ, a strong relationship between husband and wife has been described. The Qur'ān has used the word لباس to draw an image of close relation between husband and wife. Husband and wife are one entity and they mutually give comfort to each other, like cloth which gives comfort to the wearer and there are other benefits of the clothes too. Ibn Kathīr describes:

"...يعني هن سكن لكم، وأنتم سكن لهن، وقال الربيع بن أنس: هن لحاف لكم وأنتم لحاف لهن، وحاصله أن الرجل والمرأة كل منهما يخالط الآخر ويمارسه ويضاجعه..."<sup>3</sup>

Here, keeping this subtle meaning of strong relation between the husband and the wife it would be very appreciable if we translate the verse as "...they are your *clothes* (comfort) and you are their *clothes* (due to the strong closeness between the spouses)".

**Idioms:** The Qur'ān uses abundance of idioms, of which some may be translated literally and an English-speaking person can understand the intended meaning easily. Some idioms are

<sup>1</sup> The Holy Qur'ān: 18:57.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid: 10:27.

<sup>3</sup> Ibn Kathir, 1/255.

unintelligible if they are translated literally and these are generally paraphrased in an appropriate manner, while some idioms of the Qur'ān may be substituted with English idioms to reach the maximum intended meaning of the Qur'ān.

In translating the Qur'ānic idioms, the main purpose should be to produce in the target language a text which can express the same message of the Qur'ān, and in doing so a translator should first search for an equivalent idiom if found, or should translate literally if it is easy to be understood or should state the Qur'ānic intended message with the help of paraphrasing or footnote. Take for example the verse<sup>1</sup> فَضْرَبْنَا عَلَىٰ آذَانِهِمْ فِي الْكَهْفِ سِنِينَ عَدَدًا. The literal translation of this idiomatic phrase would not benefit as the real the meaning of the sentence ( فضربنا على آذانهم ) is 'to make them sleep'. Thus, the preferred translation would be "We sealed their ears [with sleep] in the cave for some countable years". Al-Kash.shāf writes:

"أي ضربنا علمها حجاباً من أن تسمع يعني: أنمناهم أنامة ثقيلة لا تنهيم فيما الأصوات كما نرى المستثقل في نومه يصاح به فلا يسمع ولا يستنبه".<sup>2</sup>

**Ideal Approach in Translation:** Much has been discussed as which approach is the best to translate the Qur'ān. As for the 'word for word or literal translation', which focuses on the source text, so it has been outrightly rejected by the majority of the 'Ulamā' and scholars as it lacks the purpose of the translation and reduces the status of the Qur'ān. The second and much preferred option suggested by the 'Ulamā' and scholars is 'translation by meaning or communicative translation'<sup>3</sup> in which the focus is on the production of the message of the Qur'ān and

<sup>1</sup> The Holy Qur'ān:18:11

<sup>2</sup> Al-Kash-shaf, P. 618.

<sup>3</sup> Qur'ān Translation Discourse Texture and Exegesis, P. 182

to make it easily understandable and accessible to the mass. However, there is another third approach, which seems better to me too, is 'functional translation'. This approach requires a translator to be flexible in adopting the method during the process of translation. Translator is needed to choose one method at one place and another one at another place. He should choose the method according to the context and need. Some place needs word for word translation while some other needs communicative translation and some other requires both the two methods. By this way a translator tries to convey the intended meaning of a verse and its purpose and he manages between the source and the target language culture. Perhaps the same "functional approach" was suggested, long before, by a great Islamic scholar and reformist of India, Shāh Waliyyullāh Dehlawī, known as Muḥaddith Dehlawī. He was against the two kinds of translation-Word-to-Word and the Translation by Meaning. He was also against those who adopt the third way of translation, that is combining between both word for word and 'translation by meaning' i.e. firstly word by word translation and then explanation.

Dehlawī was against the first method of translation-word-to-word, because, it is obvious that, this method cannot express even the apparent meanings of the Qur'ān and it is prohibited unanimously by all the Islamic scholars. He was against the second method-the Translation by Meaning' also, because the Qur'ānic words often have more than one meanings and in this method the translator expresses only one meaning and thus the other meanings are left untouched. The previous divine Books, such as Taurāt, Zabār and Injīl were, perhaps, distorted because of this only reason that these Books were translated, the partial meanings were adopted and the meanings of the divine texts were narrowed by the translators.

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Dehlawī was against the third method-mixing up both the first and the second methods-too, because this method would drag the readers to heavy confusion and burden to first read the word for word translation and then read the explanation.

Dehlawī created his own way to translate the meanings of the Qur'ān. He is of the opinion that the best translation is that which is according to the proportion of the Qur'ān's Arabic words and structure that could be named as 'functional approach'. According to this approach the translation should be precise and concise, very parallel to the Qur'ānic text, based on the appropriate words and structures. The translation should be according to the style and understanding level of the readers, the words should be plain, lucid and clear, archaic language should not be used, only the current in use words should be placed, the unnecessary events should be avoided, instead of many unnecessary explanations, only the translation should be offered, and the translation should be in a way that everyone can understand it easily.

Shāh Walīyullāh Dehlawī, in the preface of his Persian translation 'Fathur-Rahmān' of the Qur'ān, writes:

"ودرین زمانه که مادر آنیم، ودرین اقلیم که ما ساکن آنیم، نصیحت مسلمانان اقتضاء می کند که ترجمه قرآن بزبان فارسی سلیس، روز مره، متداول، بی تکلف فضیلت نمائی و بی تصنع عبارت آرائی، بغیر تعرض قصص مناسبه، بغیر ایراد توجهات منشعبه تحریر کرده شود، تاخواص وعوام همه یکسان فهم کنند، و صغار و کبار بیک وضع ادراک نمایند" <sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Preface of Fathur Rahmān, the Persian Translation of the Holy Qur'ān. NOTE: Dehlawī had written a booklet on the translation methodology of the Qur'ān namely 'المقدمة في قوانين الترجمة'. In this booklet Dehlawī had penned down very exhaustively the appropriate method of translations of the Qur'ān. The booklet is in Persian language and the manuscript is

**Conclusion:** It is necessary to translate the meanings of the Qur'ān in different languages of the world in order to convey the message of Allah to those who do not know Arabic or do not understand the Qur'ānic message. But, the translation of the Qur'ān can never substitute the real Qur'ān which is in Arabic, because translation is not the words of Allah.

Word-to-word translation of the Qur'ān is not permissible, because any language cannot deliver the polysemy of the style of the Qur'ān. There are many words in the Qur'ān which have multiple meanings, thus, in word-to-word translation, if the translator chooses one meaning of one Qur'ānic word then the translation would not be able to deliver the whole meaning the Qur'ānic word has.

Translation by meaning is permissible rather necessary at some times. Figurative words of the Qur'ān cannot be translated in word for word translation. It should be kept in mind that the translation of the meanings of the Qur'ān, no matter how effective or expressive it may be, cannot take place of the Qur'ān in terms of beauty, effectiveness and miraculousness. The translation of the Qur'ān is not in fact the

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available in the library of Dār-ul-'Ulūm, Nadwat-ul-'Ulamā', Lucknow and other places. The Persian text along with its Urdu translation, rendered by Mualānā Ḥifẓur Raḥmān Seuhārī, was first published in the 'monthly Burhān Dehlī' in the issues of October-November, 1945. Later on, it was published in 'Islām aur 'Aṣr-i-Jadīd Dehli, July-October, 2010. For more information about this booklet and viewpoints of Shāh Waliyyullāh Dehlawī regarding translation of the Qur'ān please read the Urdu monthly magazine issued from Dār-ul-'Ulūm Deoband, named 'Dār-ul-'Ulūm, August- September & October-November issues of 2012. The article is in Urdu under the title 'Qur'ān-i Ḥakīm ke Tarjame ke Uṣūl wa Qawānīn aur Tarjamah Nigārī kī Riwayāt ka Tasalsul, written by Muftī 'Abdul Khaliq Āzād, Sheikh-ul-Ḥadīth & Tafsīr, Idārah Raḥīmīyyah 'Ulūm-i-Qur'ānīyyah, Lāhore, Pākistān.

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translation of the Qur'ān; rather it is only the limited understanding by an interpreter or a translator. The title of the translation should not be 'Translation', rather 'Translation of the meanings of the Qur'ān'. The same idea has been expressed by Ḥussain 'Abdul Ra'ūf. He writes:

"...what is important is that the target language reader should be kept informed that what he/she is reading is simply a crude approximation of the Qur'ān. The target reader needs to be aware of the fact that the translation of the Qur'ān he/she is reading is merely an aid which enables him/her to read and understand the Qur'ān but not a substitution."<sup>1</sup>

The Prophet Muḥammad (PBUH) was the best who understood and interpreted the Qur'ān, then his followers then his followers, so any translator has to depend upon the explanations and exegeses rendered by the Prophet, in shape of Sunnah, and Companions and Tābi'īn, in shape of their reports, and the other experts in this field. The importance of science of tafsīr and its role in translation can be understood from the words of Ḥussain 'Abdul Ra'ūf. He writes:

"In the translation of the Qur'ān where accessibility and intelligibility of the target text are of paramount importance to other translation criteria, we believe that the translator, as facilitator of communication, has no option but to opt for exegetical footnotes or commentaries in order to compensate for semantic voids or to explicate ambiguities."<sup>2</sup>

In brief, 'Ulamā' and scholars are of the opinion that the translations of the meanings of the Qur'ān must be added with necessary footnotes and explanations. This will facilitate

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<sup>1</sup> Qur'ān Translation Discourse Texture and Exegesis, PP. 2-3.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid, P.139.

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the non-Arabic readers to illuminate the various thematic, linguistics, rhetorical, historical, geographical, socio-cultural and other aspects of the Qur'ān.



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## Translation of Islamic (Qur'ānic & Ḥadīth) Terminology, Problems and Solutions

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### Introduction

The Islamic term or expression in Arabic language originates from the Qur'ān and the Sunnah of the Prophet Muḥammad and Islamic jurisprudence. It includes three types of terms in the language:

1. **First Type:** New terms which were not part of the vocabulary of Arabic language originally, such as, Zakāh, Jihād, al-Qur'ān al-Karīm, al-Shahādah, al-Istishhād, and the terms of al-Qiyāmah, al-Jannah, al-Nār, and Manāsik al-Ḥajj etc.
2. **Second Type:** Terms already exist in Arabic but now have a new concept or a new meaning, such as al-Ṣalāh, al-Ṣaum, al-Ḥajj, Awqātuṣ-Ṣalāh, al-Khums, al-Tahārah, al-Waḍu, al-'Ibādah, al-Du'ā', al-Ṭawāf, al-Sā'ī, al-Ṣadaqah, al-Gazwah, al-Shariya, and al-Shirk, etc.
3. **Third Type:** Islamic terms that have been used in Arabic language as they are in their form and content, such as al-Ka'bah, al-Jiziyah, al-Ḥarb, al-Silm, al-Khirāj, al-'Adhāb, al-'Iqāb, al-Munāfiq, al-Mu'min, and al-Kāfir, etc.

### Feasibility of Islamic Terminology for Translation

Islamic terminology, like other lexical terms, can also be translated. However, it is a belief that cultural, literary and

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populist terms are not translatable; there exist a general rule that nothing in the language can be translated. It is used as in its original form. It is because while doing the translation, the accuracy of the term of a particular language is lost.

The following discussion explains the above stated argument. For example, if we consider the Arabic term "Zakāh" and then examine the length of English language in order to find English synonyms for the given term, we will realize that the only meanings that come out are "alms" and "charity". These words do not completely justify the meaning of the term "Zakāh", hence it can be said that all the words are not always exactly translatable or even acceptable. It has to be then believed that, in order to bring out the exact meaning of a term, it is required to add more words from the language into which the translation is done. In this case it is required to add word like "compulsory" to "charity" or "alms" and therefore make it "compulsory charity" or "compulsory alms" which then truly justify the complete meaning of the Arabic word "Zakāh". The requirement in translation is that of accuracy of meaning and not just simple translation of the words.

### **Is it Translation or Explanation?**

This is an appropriate question and the answer is that along with the translation, an explanation is also required in the language into which translation is done. Following examples may elaborate the above discussion:

Murābaḥah (resale with a stated profit), Imghāl (to bring forth a child every year), Jihād (Holy war), Mughramūn (left with debts for nothing), Qiblah-(prayer direction) and al-Masjid al-Jāmi' (the mosque where Friday congregational prayer is conducted).

Some do state that these explanations are clarifications and not mere translations. This is true but one needs to

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understand that translation is done along with the explanation in order to get the exact possible meaning and context for the original term.

The question still remains whether our translation of an Islamic term is a translation or an explanation especially when translation has to be done for Islamic terminologies such as al-Ka'bah al-Muṣḥrafah, Maqāmi Ibrāhīm, al-Sa'iy, al-I'tikāf, Qiyām-i-Ramḍān, al-Zihār, Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī, al-Sunnah, al-Shiya, Ahl-ul-Jamā'ati, Zakāti al-Fiṭr, al-Tābi'ūn, al-Muhājirūn, and al-Anṣār, ect. as these may require explanation in order to convey to the reader their actual meaning.

The question becomes more complicated when the explanation goes on to reach several lines or pages, under the pretext of clarifying the Islamic term in the target language. For example, providing a detailed explanation of Zakāh, Ṣiyām, Ḥajj, Manāsik, al-Ṭalāq al-Bā'n, al-Ṭalāq al-Raja'ī, and al-Waqf al-Islāmī etc. In such cases, it may be that the translation is no longer a translation but an explanation and so the place of such explanation is not in the main page itself, rather is in the footnotes or appendix. Now, if there is a need to clarify the difference between translation and explanation, it can be said that the translation can be of maximum two to three words and not more than that.

### **Types of Synonyms of Islamic Terms**

In the midst of the research of the translators about the suitable synonym for the Islamic term in the foreign language, the question arises about the type of the used synonym i.e. functional, descriptive, cultural, religious, indicative, or suggestive etc. The following examples are helpful to clarify these types:

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1. The Functional Synonym: al-Qiblah (the prayer direction).
2. The Descriptive Synonym: al-Masjid al-Ḥarām (The Holy Mosque wherein the Ka'bah exists).
3. The Cultural Synonym: Zakāh (tax)
4. The Religious Synonym: al-Bait al-Ḥarām (The Holy House of God; Ka'bah)
5. The Indicative Synonym: Fatwá (Verdict)
6. The Suggestive Synonym: Bait al-Ṭa'a (Husband's House)

Most of the used synonyms in the translation of Islamic terms are descriptive or explanatory followed by the functional, indicative, religious, suggestive, then the cultural. This is related to a reason about the accuracy, explicitness, easiness, and the simplicity. But this is not a fixed general rule that we can follow in the translation of these terms, as the paragraph which is about the methods of the translation of the Islamic terms.

### **The Standard of understanding the Translated Islamic Term**

The standard of understanding the Islamic term varies from person to person. It depends on his knowledge of Islam and Arabic language the both. An Arab Muslim has the abilities to understand these terms better than a non-Arab Muslim, and a non-Arab Muslim understands them better than a non-Arab non-Muslim.

However, the first group of readers i.e. the Arab Muslim is not the target audience for these terms, he understands the translation into foreign languages more than the other two groups of readers for whom the translation is done. This does not prevent the two groups from doing the translation of these terms and being creative in those, as it happens to many translators such as 'Abdullāh Yūsuf 'Alī, Muḥammad Marmduke and many others.

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The main issue here is how well the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> group understands these Islamic Terms. This is what the translator should keep in his mind, so that these readers may understand it in the best possible way. For this he should have these two basic things:

1. Accurate understanding of the term he is translates.
2. Assuming that the reader of the translated terms does not know anything about this term as well as Islam. While translating, he should feel like he is addressing a non-Arab non-Muslim who knows nothing about Islam.

This will give him an opportunity to give up his previous beliefs of the terms he is translating. Perhaps these beliefs and incompetence of the translator to find the appropriate synonym in foreign languages or his ease to copy the Arabic term from the Latin words, these things cause him to rush into changing many of the terms and portraying it the same as in foreign language without any significant change. Sometimes he translates it into another language without using a synonym or explaining or describing it in brackets. Sometimes it gets worse for some translators as they copy common terms into the foreign language exactly the way they are, for example, Faqīr, Miskīn, Ummah, Sūrah, Āyah, Munāfiqūn, Muttaqūn, Shaitān, Sakīnah, al-Ṣalāh, and many more. This way of translation is pathetic as it is difficult to understand, and very ambiguous. So why cannot we translate these common terms as poor, needy, nation, chapter, verse, hypocrites, the righteous, Satan/Devil, tranquility, prayer etc?

Aren't these terms understandable and easy? Why this ambiguity and reluctance to use it? Even if the translated terms were explained in brackets or the purpose of the copying was to promote foreign language so that they can be included later in their vocabulary. Though it is a noble cause,

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it cannot be achieved by this method because it is not simple to include a term into a new language. The natives are the one who include or exclude a term from their vocabulary. When they decide to include a new term into their vocabulary, they include a unique term which they do not find direct term, or at least get confused with another term in its meaning. There is no doubt that we praise the translator who invests in the terms that entered the foreign language, specifically English. There are many such words like Jihād, Ḥajj, Zakāh, Ṣalāh. But it must be explained within brackets (). Though they are available in few English dictionaries such as Webster and Collins etc, but they are not known among the common people. Anyway, the gate is always open, and we should encourage that the Islamic terms should be specific in their meanings.

### **Efforts Undertaken in this Regard**

Many scholars and translators, especially in the last twenty years, have been translating the meaning of the Qur'ān and the primary resources of Ḥadīth and Islamic jurisprudence like Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī, al-Lu'lu' wa al-Marjān Fīmā'ttafaqa 'alaihi al-Shaiḫhān, Fiqh-us-Sunnah, Riyāḍ-us-Ṣāliḥīn and other books into English language. One of the most prominent efforts- and I did not claim here a complete survey of all the efforts of the work of the translator 'Abdullāh Yūsuf 'Alī of the Qur'ān in 1934 and this is the famous work although the translation of Moḥammed Marmaduke was done four years ago in 1930.

The third translation has been completed and published in this complex, King Fahd Complex for Printing of the Holy Qur'ān in 1419H/1998AD. These efforts made in the service of the Book of God (Allah), Islam and the Muslims are great efforts and worth rewarding. Each of these translations has its unique

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features and characteristics, which express the viewpoint of the translators in their continuous attempt to get as close as possible to the meaning, and to achieve as much accuracy as possible in translation. But in my personal opinion they are still far from their goals. It will remain so until God inherits the earth and the land. The words of God are so superior that the words of human being could not reach that level either in meaning, language, style, grammar, expression, rhythm, or sound. These characteristics and advantages are not the subject of research here.

These three translations are characterized as literal translation of each word and term in the Qur'ān, whether it was mentioned or not, that is called in the terms of translation 'the filling of verbal vulva' which is not similar in these three translations. For example, in the beginning of the chapter al-Baqarah Allah says: "ذلك الكتاب" (al-Baqarah: 02) was translated by Yūsuf 'Alī and Marmduke, as "Book" and "Scripture" respectively, without any additions, while in the translation of the Fahad Complex, "The Qur'ān," was added after "the book" between the brackets.

And Allah said: (والذين يؤمنون بما أنزل إليك) "to you" it is explained by (Muḥammad, PBUH) in the translation of Marmaduke and the 'Complex', but Yūsuf 'Alī did not do so.

The Fahad Complex translation was characterized by the large number of verbal details in the Qur'ān, perhaps to the degree of exaggeration, whether clear or not, perhaps in terms of unwanted clarification of the words, which I do not think necessary.

What distinguishes Yūsuf 'Alī and Marmaduke also is their use of English words that are now old and not part of the vocabulary of modern English, for example, hath, thine, thee, etc. These words are from Shakespeare's era, which is the beginning of modern English. Perhaps this is an attempt to use

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the language of Angel, which was supposed to be ancient English. But on the other hand it causes mystery, strangeness and difficulty in understanding. This reason is the reason that the translators of King Fahd Complex were urged to abandon the use of old English and replace it with modern simplified English, and they were entitled to do so.

On the other hand, Yūsuf ‘Alī and the edition of the Complex tend to explain and interpret more than Marmaduke’s. The Fahad Complex has used more verbal transcription of Arabic words that have a direct meaning/synonym in English. Sometimes, he gave detailed explanation in the translated text which transformed a good part of the translation into an explanation. For example, the (المتقون) "pious", in the second verse of the chapter al-Baqarah, is explained in detail and in a basic structure and is not translated in the sense of the usual meaning of translation as follows:

[--- the pious believers of Islamic monotheism who fear Allah much (abstain from all kinds of sins and evil deeds which He has forbidden) and love Allah much (perform all kinds of good deeds which He has ordained).]

A very long explanation, a needless part of the text at least, perhaps the word “pious” or believers+righteous give the meaning without this long explanation that originally needed to clarify the term.

As for the terms proposed in English in the three translations, some are similar, others are different. For example, (iqāmat-uṣ-Ṣalāh) in the third verse of the chapter al-Baqarah, has been translated a direct translation into English as: “Steadfast in prayer” or “establish prayer” in Yūsuf ‘Alī’s translation, but it was translated into the general word by Marmaduke. The translation of the ‘Complex’ was kept in Latin characters with

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a footnote at the bottom of the page explaining it. Each one has its own argument. The use of Yūsuf ‘Alī for the term "prayer" is closer to the general understanding of the term of Islam among non-Muslims in particular. But although it is a reference to worship in general, it is most often used to refer to prayer in the Church among the Christians and others. But the maintenance of the prayer in the translation of the ‘Complex’ may have been due to the recognition that the term is known to the Arabs and other Muslims, and try to include them in English language as well as to explain them extensively in the footnote at the bottom of the page.

The last point in these translations concerns to consistency in the use of English term itself, whether the Islamic term is achieved or not, in the translation. Everyone is trying to do this, but they have not all succeeded in the same way. For example, Marmaduke is translating al-Ṣalāh by worship one time and then as prayer another time. And iqāmat-uṣ-Ṣalāh by “establish worship” and second time as “consistency of prayer”. But he always translates Zakāh as “poor due”. On the other hand Yūsuf ‘Alī translated the "iqāmat-uṣ-Ṣalāh" as “steadfast in prayer” or as “establish regular prayers” or “regular prayer” but he translated Zakāh as “regular charity” or “charity”. As for the ‘Complex’, it is consistent in terms of terminology, especially as it maintains such terms as they are in Arabic in Latin characters and explains them directly in bracket or in a footnote.

Other major efforts have been made in the compilation of Islamic glossaries, of which I will mention here, four for example:

- 1- Mu’jam Lughat al-Fuqahā’ (Dictionary of the Language of the Jurists): Arabic-English-French with an English-Arabic-French
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- scout, by Muḥammad Ruwūs Qala G, Hamed Quneibi and Quṭb Sanu, published by Dār al-Nafā'is, Riyāḍ, 1996.
- 2- Mu'jam al-Muṣṭalaḥāt al-Dīnīyyah (Glossary of Religious Terminologies): Arabic-English/English-Arabic by 'Abdullāh Abū Ashi al-Mālikī and 'Abdul Laṭīf al-Sheikh Ibrāhīm, published by Obeikan Library, 1997.
  - 3- Mu'jam al-Alfāz al-Islāmīyyah (Dictionary of Islamic Words): Arabic-English/English-Arabic, by Muḥammad al-Khaulī, Omān, 1989.
  - 4- Qāmūs al-Muṣṭalaḥāt al-Islāmīyyah (Dictionary of Islamic Terminologies): Arabic-English, by Shahdah Farāe and Ibrāhīm Abū Arqoub, Omān, 1997.

These works are valuable and serve a great deal for the Islamic term. But the most important amongst these is the first lexicon, Mu'jam Lughat al-Fuqahā', which is in more than 650 pages, provides a clear explanation of each Islamic term, and then gives its English and French equivalent accurately in brief. It is a typical and reliable reference to the Islamic terminologies.

The English and French terms are best used, but sometimes it is ignored to mention the Islamic term which are converted and fixed in both the languages. While "jihād" and "Zakāh" were reported in English, he did not say "jurisprudence" or "Sharī'ah" for example. Another feature of this excellent lexicon is that it is limited to one term synonymous with the foreign language most often. And two terms in a few cases if necessary and would have the same meaning.

The second dictionary "Mu'jam al-Muṣṭalaḥāt al-Dīnīyyah" which is spread over 325 pages in English and Arabic, is confined only to giving synonyms in English and Arabic with multiple synonyms, like other dictionaries of this sort. It provides a good number of terms and synonyms in both the

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languages. It is very much dependant on giving the synonym and its explanation in English. The editor has tried his best in compiling this dictionary, amongst its features the two annexures. The first is a brief but useful entitled "Phrases and Sayings" in which I found the words but I did not find the words spoken, rather there are supplications and Ḥadīths of the Prophet (PBUH). Therefore, we hope that the title will be "famous words of conscience" or something similar to its content and its title in English. Annex second is the most important, in which there is a detailed and precise explanation of a set of important religious terms in English. This is a good effort, thanks to him and his companions.

The dictionary "Mu'jam al-Alfāz al-Islāmīyyah" which is spread over 260 pages is a good effort of Dr. Muḥammad al-Khawlī where he tried to give exact direct synonym as closer to the Islamic term. This is a good and useful contribution. But it should be used with keeping in mind the choice of appropriate term in the case of multiple English synonyms of Islamic terms. For example, "al-Farāḍ" has been translated into "enjoined duties" or "obligation", and as "laws of inheritance+prescribed shares of inheritance". While the first two terms concern the obligation of Islam in general, and in particular the two pillars, the latter two are related to the laws of inheritance. Only those contexts that are not mentioned in the dictionary are separated.

The fourth dictionary, Qāmūs al-Muṣṭalaḥāt al-Islāmīyyah, is very similar to the previous dictionary and gives a good set of synonyms of Islamic terms in English with focus on the term in English and then synonymous with Arabic. It is abbreviated and lacks accuracy in some places as in example "Du'ā" is translated as "Invocation Prayer", although it is a good effort

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by authors in which he enriches the translation of Islamic term from and to English.

Three important points remain about these dictionaries:

The first point is the difference between these dictionaries in translating one term. This is a general fact, especially in an individual effort. But this does not diminish it at all. These differences also become advantage if we understand, as it gives us a good space to choose between multiple synonyms instead of just one synonym. This is much less harmful than if the Islamic term was not translated at all. The problem was the worst then.

The second point about these lexicons is its inability to meet all the Islamic terms, and this is also normal. It's because these terms are beyond our thoughts, and their full comprehension is not easy. This is not a fault. On the contrary, this is a testimony to it and to its compilers with their great efforts that provided good solutions to the problem of translating most of the Islamic terms into English in particular. Any effort in this regard is valuable and has its impact and divine reward.

The third and last point on these dictionaries is the failure of English term in expression of exact implications of the Islamic meanings of the terms of worship in particular and how to perform. I will provide further details on this point soon in the following paragraph.

Perhaps one of the great contributions to the translation of the Islamic term is the translations that have been made or proposed for some Ḥadīth and Fiqh books such as Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī, Fiqh-us-Sunnah, Riyād al-Ṣāliḥīn and others, including what was published here in Saudi Arabia, Egypt, India, Pākistān and other Muslim countries. Their interpreters have

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expanded and succeeded in my belief with great success. There is no doubt that they differed in the way they deal with Islamic terminology as well as in their translations. But they agreed on more than one point. All relied on the conversion of the Islamic term as it is in Latin characters first, and then gave its direct literal meaning, and then explained the context contained in the translated book, without the need for footnotes and notes. So these terms were clearer in English for the Muslims and other English readers. This, of course, has helped to improve the accuracy of the translation and the nature of the books of jurisprudence, which gives the translator opportunity to clarify and explain any vague term through the text itself.

However, there is a fact about these good efforts and other efforts in this field, that the translation of any Islamic term is an approximate translation that is limited in its meaning to contain the exact and complete dimensions of the term as they are meant for in Islam and are understood. This is same for both the non-Arab Muslims and non-Muslims, unless the Muslim reader of the foreign text does not know the correct meaning of the religious term. In this case it becomes the same between him and non-Muslim who knows nothing about Islam. I mean by all this that the meaning of the Islamic term is not the meaning of the term translated into foreign language especially if the reader is a Christian, a Jewish or a pagan. The word “al-Ṣalāh” (prayer) in English is not for everyone, i.e, the Christian prayer is not like the prayer of the Jew or of the pagan. All of these are completely different from our concept of prayer. So the English term is a near term that brings it closer to the minds of non-Muslims, that is, they understand that the Muslims have a prayer, but how? This is what the English term can't contain.

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The same applies to Ḥajj. The Christians, the Jews, and even the Hindus perform Ḥajj. But there is a difference between their concept and our concept of pilgrimage. Therefore, the term pilgrimage is a comprehensive program, and its meaning has nothing to do with its Islamic meaning. It is a general term referring to the fact that Muslims perform it. This refers to the term "jurisprudence", which is usually used to translate "jurisprudence". It is not directly related to the concept of jurisprudence in Islam. Its accurate English meaning is "Science or Philosophy of the Law". The dictionary, *al-Maurid English/Arabic*, one of the most famous and oldest dictionaries, also did not specify the meaning of jurisprudence for this term even in its modern editions. Al-Shari'ah is also translated by "Islamic law", not exactly as Shari'ah. Also the term fasting (al-Ṣiyām) does not have the meaning of fasting in Islam. Neither the term "al-Dhikr" (remembrance) refers to the concept of the remembrance of God in our true religion. No one who is not Muslim and knows nothing about Islam, nor about these prayers can understand exactly the meaning of the morning prayer of Fajr, and the prayers of Ḥuḥr, 'Aṣr, Maghrib and 'Ishā'. Let the number of rak'ahs for each one, and what do we read? And how do we do it? And the Sunnah in each of them, and the Sunan Rawātib and so on.

This is the case of the translation of Islamic terminology in general. We do not understand the actual meaning of these terms in foreign language until and unless the reader is a Muslim and familiar with the matters of religion. Otherwise, they are approximate synonyms that give a general idea of the concept of Islam. There is no doubt that the explanation and elaboration can provide more details and clarify the main implications. However, these interpretations and clarifications remain, not the translations on the one hand, do not reach so

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close to fulfill conformity with the Islamic terms, and do not reach 100 percent in any form. In any case, the translator is not required to reach 100% but 70-80% ratio.

### **The Most Frequent Difficulties during Translation of Islamic Terminology**

These difficulties could be summarized in the following:

1. *Absence of Islamic Terminology in Target Language which makes the Translation of Terms more Difficult: As "Zakāh"* which is not charity and this English term denotes charity which is voluntarily. While Zakāh is compulsory and a Muslim does not have any choice in it and this term is not found in English, so the addition of word "compulsory" or "obligatory" to the word "charity" which makes it is closer to concept of Zakāh in Islam. Though this is correct, sometime it may not be possible for them to present the finest of their knowledge. But compulsory charity seems to be contrary to English reader, as compulsory charity is missing from English literature. Charity is always voluntarily for an English reader, but it doesn't prevent the reader from having a generalist understanding of strange term "compulsory charity" which fulfills the purpose. Same applies to other Islamic terminologies which are not words of other languages and their concepts and concepts of other religions, like Jihād, Ḥadīth Sharīf and terms related to Ḥadīth al-Isnād, Taḫrīj, Ḥadīth's classification and its types, al-Bait-ul-Ḥarām, Manāsik al-Ḥajj, Zakāt-ul-Fiṭr and Qiyām and many more.
  2. *Exclusiveness of Islamic Terminology in Meaning, Performance and Special Religious Emotions attached to these Terms:* We have quoted one example in last paragraph of Ṣalāh, Sharī'ah Islāmīa, Ṣiyām, Fiḡh and many
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more. But these equivalents don't carry the exclusiveness of Islamic terminology which accompanies religious and spiritual features. Ṣalāh (Prayer) is not a prayer only, offered in a particular way with a counted numbers of Raka'at at specified times, but it is standing before Allah firstly and lastly with submission and supplication to Him. However, it doesn't mean that the translation is wrong or not acceptable in these examples, but we wanted to highlight that this can reflect the original language in everything and it is correct if we consider it transferring of view, but exclusiveness is missing from this translation.

3. *Difficulty of Expression of Islamic Terminology in Other Language:* And this is because of absence of any tradition of that sort in target language. Let us take "al-l'tikāf" as an example. Is it a "Prayer in Seclusion"? Seclusion in the mosque with the intention of worshipping Allah only? Or retiring into mosque for worship, especially in the last ten days of Ramaḍān? This applies to many other terminologies, difficult to express them in English, as: Maqām-u-lbrāhīm, Ṣaḥīḥ al-Buḫārī, al-Ẓihār, Iḥrām, Mīqāt, Tayammum, etc. There is a zero doubt that a translator finds himself in trouble while translating these terminologies. But he is obliged to convey the Islamic term in possible fewer words, and if needed, he should use the footnotes at the end of page or end of text. There is no other way out. This is an accepted way out provided he doesn't exaggerate in it.
  4. *Conflicts of Synonyms with the Islamic Term:* Term of Ta'addud al-Zaujāt could be the finest example of this. When we refer specialized dictionaries, we come to know that this term has been wrongly translated with bigamy or polygamy, since both the terms are negative and used to express crime
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of having several wives or husbands in western societies. Following definition is mentioned in Webster's encyclopedic dictionary's edition of 1996 for term of bigamy: 'The crime of marrying while one has wife or husband still living, from which no valid divorce has been effected.'

In short: it is crime to marry with more than one wives or husbands. Will any of us accept that having multiple wives is crime? In other words how a term could be used in English equal between having multiple wives or husbands? Thus this term is rejected because of two strong reasons, not related to Islamic Shari'ah. Concept of having several wives is described in English as polygamy. However, none of these terms transfer the meaning of having multiple wives in Islam. Perhaps the suitable term will be polymarriage/multi marriage, though it is uncommon in English or addition of Legal for term of polygamy may work and can convey the general meaning of Islamic term of multiple legal or lawful marriages. Though there is a conflict between two English terms for an English reader at first sight, it can explain that this polygamy is lawful.

5. *Cultural Conflict*: There are non-Arabic terms in conflict with their Islamic synonyms; we must be careful while translating them. For example, "Zakāh" is translated and explained in English dictionaries of Webster, Collins and others as tax. This is unacceptable in our concept of Zakāh in Islam. Just now we have mentioned the suitable term for this. Also translation of Jihād with war or Futūḥāt Islāmia with Islamic Colonization and similar one are not acceptable at all. Jihād is not only war but fight in the way of Allah or holy war to say the least. Also Islamic conquests are not colonization in any form, but is a jihād in the cause
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of Allah and an opening for the country to spread Islam the religion of mercy and justice. So the accepted term in English is conquests.

### **Methods of Translation of Islamic Terminology and Proposed Solutions**

These methods tell or explain how to deal with the translation of Islamic term and the method(s) to be followed to overcome the problems of translating the Islamic terminology, which is ranked according to the preference and applicability of the quality of the translated Islamic text.

1. Direct Literal Translation: The Book/ Scripture.
  2. The Explanatory Word: The type of word that you describe because of the possibility of 'unclear' to the reader of English, e.g. Fasting of the month of Ramaḍān. The word "month" is added here to mention Ramaḍān.
  3. Direct Synonyms: Ṣalāh (Prayer), 'Ibādah (worship), Ṣiyām (fasting), etc.
  4. Direct Literal Translation with Explanation: When literal translations do not meet the need and require more clarification. For example, Al-Ṭawāf, (circumambulation around the Ka'bah). The phrase "Ḥaula al-Ka'bah" is added to determine the ṭawāf about what as worship. There is another example- "al-Ḥajr al-Aswad" (the black stone) a phrase is added "al-Ḥajr al-Muqaddas (the holy stone niched in the Ka'bah).
  5. The Explanation: When there is no direct or indirect synonym for the Islamic term, and there is no literal translation, the translator writes a brief explanation whenever possible, e.g. "Zakāt-ul-Fiṭr" (a compulsory charity to be delivered by every Muslim towards the end of Ramaḍān, the month of fasting).
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6. Transliteration with Explanation: In case of the complete absence of the Islamic term in the target language, the translator may write Arabic words in Latin characters completely which are pronounced in Arabic language, (What is called in English, prescription/transliteration), then explain it in foreign language, e.g. (Ka'bah: the House of Allah and the Direction of Prayers) and this translation method is required even in case of recognition in transliteration of Arab-Islamic term and include it into foreign language, for the simple reason that it may not be known to a broad of readers. We have mentioned above many examples of such a kind of terminology, e.g. Fiqh, Shari'ah, Zakāh, Ṣalāh, Ḥajj, 'Umrah, etc.

These measures and suggested solutions to translate the Islamic terms are at the same time stages of its translation and steps can be followed by the translator according to its order and priority. But, it is important to take into consideration the type of text and the nature of the required translation. For instance, the brief translation that is taken from the holy book (Qur'ān) and which is limited in the direct synonyms about its meanings, requires to follow these stages carefully. However, the long interpretive translation about the book of God may be given priority to the direct literal translation followed by the explanation, and to the verbal frame with the detailed or brief explanation. While in the translation of the books of Jurisprudence (al-Fiqh), the priority may be given to the latter at the last stage because the nature of the translated text permits that as the context explains the transformed term in Latin letters. But in case the translation of short text like the detecting grades of university recommendation from the college of the Shari'ah or the Du'ā' and the religion basics, the shortcut way is needed. Hence,

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priority will be given either to the direct synonym, the brief literal translation or to draw verbal of the Latin term accompanying with at least two explaining words.

### **Conclusion:**

The translation of the Islamic terminology represents one of the most important challenges and necessities. It requires constant care, especially facing it with scientific basis, accuracy and coordination with more than what exists between Islamic institutions such as gleaner of the King Fahd Complex for the Printing of the Holy Qur'ān. It is renowned institution because of the strong and quick spread of the Islamic religion in across the world with the increase of demand everyday in order to know this religion with all different global languages not only in English as we showed in this research . It is possible to deal with the problems of the translation of Islamic terminology through different ways and clear scientific stages. All the exerted great efforts in this field are a proof of the possibility of the translation of these terms in spite of its complexity. Despite its complications, most of them were translated even with little relative translations. They have been great and accepted service. Perhaps what is being done of efforts now and in the future is a proof of putting an organized scientific method in order to translate these terms and achieve the biggest number of its translation through translating the basic works of the Jurisprudence (al-Fiqh), the commentary (al-Tafsīr) and the modern science whether it is now or in future. Finally, we hope that this article may be an instrumental to more researches on the translation of Islamic terminologies if God wills.

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## English Translations of the Qur'ān throughout Ages- An Introduction

✎...Dr. Aurang Zeb A'ẓmī<sup>1</sup>

Tr.: Abū Ādam Farīd bin 'Abdul Ḥafīẓ al-Hindī<sup>2</sup>

A brief historical survey of English translations of Qur'ān is dedicated in this sub-chapter.<sup>3</sup> The detail discussions have been left untouched. These translations are categorized into three kinds which are as follows:

- 1- Qur'ān Translations by Muslims
- 2- Qur'ān Translations by the Qādiyānis
- 3- Qur'ān Translations by non-Muslims especially Jews and Christians

All the above holy translations are described chronologically as per their publications:

### First: Holy English Translations by the Muslims

**1- The Divine Qur'ān:** This translation was rendered by S.M. 'Abd-ul-Ḥamīd. It was first published from Dhakā (presently capital of Bangladesh) in 1866 AD. It is a very

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<sup>3</sup> See for more details of these translations:

1. The Qur'ān and Interpreters
  2. World Bibliography of Translations of the Meanings of the Holy Qur'ān
  3. Bibliography of Translations of the Qur'ān into European Languages, in Arabic Literature to the end of Umayyad Period
  4. A Guide to English Translations of the Qur'ān
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simple sort of translation which bears brief explanatory notes. Its three editions have been printed so far.

- 2- **The Koran:** It was performed by a well-educated Muslim whose name is yet unknown. Its first edition appeared from Siālkot in 1899. It also contains Urdu and Persian translations in its sorts which innumerably was seen to be published till now.
  - 3- **The Holy Qur'ān:** It was translated by Muḥammad 'Abd-ul-Ḥakīm Khān. This translation was printed from Patiāla in 1905. A. Ḥakīm Khān was a Qādyānī physician in the first phase of his life then he left Qādyānī faith apparently in order to attain honour and glory of Islam through his confused English translation. Though he avoided the fable narrations and inter-faith differences, his translation is regarded unauthentic. It contains explanatory notes and remarks that do not reach its real sense and unlike this the reader gets confused and wanders in the vally of darkness wherein he does not find the way to be guided.
  - 4- **The Qur'ān, Arabic Text and English Translation:** It was rendered by Mirzā Abul Faḍl. Its first edition appeared from Allāhābād in 1911. It is the English translation with Arabic text. The translator has quoted Gospel so as to answer to the objections raised by the orientalisists on the Qur'ān. And the mode and style of its translation is of academic genre. Its four editions have been printed yet.
  - 5- **The Qur'ān:** This translation was carried out by Mirzā Ḥairat Dehlawī with the assistance of a number of orientalisists in 1916. Its language is unsatisfactory and seems imperfect apart from some mistakes happened in the numbers of the verses and arrangement of the chapters. He classified it into parts without mentioning its chapters.
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It bears the thoughts of the orientalist and their criticism on Islam. It has till now been printed twice.

- 6- The Meaning of the Glorious Koran:** It was undertaken in 1930 by an English man, Moḥammad Marmaduck Pickhtal, who converted to Islam after studying the Qur'ān and Prophetic traditions. Its one edition has appeared as yet. Although this translation is considered fine and glorious production, it is not free from lingual blunders. And therefore, there emerged a number of Islamic scholars who undertook the responsibility to correct mistakes and slips happened in it, one of whom who first initiated this task, is F.H Anṣārī. He corrected Pikhtal's translation entitled 'Correction of Errors in Pickhtal's Translation of the Glorious Qur'ān' and many other such scholars also carried out this holy task.
- 7- The Holy Qur'ān, an Interpretation in Englihs:** It was done by a celebreted translator 'Abdullāh Yousuf 'Alī in Lāhore (presently part of Pākistān). It was first published in 1934 and thenceforth several editions came out till the Saudi Govt. patronised its publication under its expanses. Thereafter it was possibly seen in the hands of common Muslims across the glob. Its language is regarded sort of literary genre in the form of rhymed prose save that some explanations were found to be doubted<sup>1</sup> and mingled with mysticism and rationalism but they were correted later on.
- 8- Al-Qur'ān:** It was translated by S.M.A al-Ja'farī and it was published from Shimla in 1935. It contains Arabic text along with consise explanation of some difficult and complicated contents of the Qur'ān. Its several editions got printed.

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<sup>1</sup> It was criticized by the scholars e.g. the Council of South Africa which prepared a book entitled 'A Discussion of Errors of Yusuf Ali' and Q. Arafat who wrote a book with the title of 'Incorrect Equivalent Chosen by Yusuf Ali in his Translation of the Qur'ān'.

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**9- The Holy Qur'ān:** It was performed by 'Abd-ul-Mājid Daryābādī in Lāhore. Its first edition came out in 1941. It consists of complete exegesis of the Qur'ān along with translation with simple language. The exegist cum translator Daryābādī quoted Prophetic sayings and former revealed scriptures and then he answered to all the objections raised by the orientalis and missionaries. This translation meets the requirements of the modern age on which entire 'ulamā' and scholars rely. It is indeed an authentic exegesis and moderate and well-accepted translation.<sup>1</sup> It appears from the contents that it gets grossly influenced from the legend exegist of India Ashraf 'Alī Thānwī.<sup>2</sup>

**10- Translation of the Glorious Holy Qur'ān:** It was carried out by 'Alī Aḥmad Khān Jālandharī in Lāhore. Its first edition appeared in 1962. It is the best translation for Brelawi sect that is the sect of heretical doctrine gets inclined towards particular thoughts other than core philosophy of Islam. It concludes such contents whose most parts do not match with the Qur'ān. The translator has deliberately intended to distort the Qur'ānic message changing its core meaning.

**11- The Holy Qur'ān with English Translation and Commentary:** It was performed by Mīr Aḥmad 'Alī in 1964. He intends to support the thought of 'Ahlil Bait' (the Prophet's family), followers of 'Muta' (Temporary Marriage), 'Taqiya' (hidden intentions) and the Right of 'Alī (2<sup>nd</sup> Caliph of early Islam) to lead the Muslim Ummah which are of the Shī'itic ideology. Hence the translator has

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<sup>1</sup> See the detailed article of Abdur Rahim Qidwai on him, Hamdard Islamicus, 2/7/63-70

<sup>2</sup> He himself says:

"In exegetical and explanatory notes I have found Maulana Ashraf Ali Thanawī's Urdu 'Bayan-ul-Qur'ān (12vols.) of invaluable help..." (Preface, 1/6)

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benefited from the thoughts of the Shī'a follower Āyatullāh Āghā al-Ḥājj Mirzā Mahdī Boya Yazdi. Its four publications have come out as yet.

**12- The Holy Qur'ān: Rendered into English:** It was performed by Ṭāriq 'Abd-ur-Raḥmān and Ḍiyā'uddīn al-Ghīlānī in Lāhore in 1966. It dicusses traditional tafsir but its style is not good sort of expression which causes doubt about the thought of the translator. Its only one edition has appeared yet.

**13- The Meaning of the Qur'ān:** It was rendred by Sayyid Abū al-A'alā Maudūdī in Lāhore in 1967. Sometimes its style of expression seems far away from the importance of the Qur'ān and its suprem value indeed. Its language is not that good as expected. Hence Islamic Leicester Foundation revised its translation in 1988 afterwards it was found to be free of this imperfection whose several editions have come out till now.

**14- Holy Qur'ān:** It was done by M.H. Shākir in 1968. Though it does not contain explanatory notes, the content used in the end of the translation indicates that it seems to get influenced by Shī'itic thought because it has included in it few things like al-Mut'ah, al-Taqiya, al-Imāmah and al-'Iṣmah and the like. Its more than four volumes have been printed yet.

**15- Al-Qur'ān: Rendered into English:** It was performed by Mr. 'Abd-ul-Laṭīf Ḥyderābādī in 1969. This translation contains both the text and translation. Its only one edition proved to be published.

**16- The Meaning of the Qur'ān:** It was carried out by Moḥammad Akbar which consists the exegesis of eight volumes. Its first edition appeared from Lāhore in 1970.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Majallah 'Ulūm-i-Islāmīyyah, 1/2-3/181

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- 17- The Wonderful Qur'ān:** It was rendered by Pīr Ṣalāḥuddīn. Its only one edition was printed from Pākistān in 1971.<sup>1</sup>
- 18- The Message of the Qur'ān:** It was undertaken by Aṭher Ḥusain. Its first edition came out from Karāchī in 1974. We could not find sufficient information about it.
- 19- The Message of the Qur'ān presented in Perspective:** It was performed by Hāshim 'Āmir 'Alī. Its first edition appeared from Tokyo in 1974. It is a good sort of translation from lingual point of view save that the translator has innovatively classified the verses of the Qur'ān into five parts named 'Book'. The first part consists of the first chapter al-Fātiḥah which is called 'The Portal'. The second part contains Makki chapter from beginning of the revealed part is named 'Enlightment', the third part includes Makki chapter from beginning of the revealed part is called 'Guidance' and the fourth part consists of Makki chapter from the later revealed Makki chapters is entitled 'The Book'. As for the fifth part that includes the Madni chapters is named 'The Balance' in which sub-sections have been classified that contains 558 *rukus*. Its only one edition has come out as yet.
- 20- Holy Qur'ān:** It was done by Dr. Taqīyuddīn Hilālī and Dr. Moḥammad Moḥsin Khān. Its first edition was printed in 1974. This translation is based on Ṭibrī and Ibn Kathīr's exegesises while they are based on traditional tafsir. Its language is also good. It was revised in 1993.<sup>2</sup> Its three editions have appeared yet.
- 21- The Qur'ān:** al-Qur'ān al-Mufassir: It was rendered by Moḥammad Mufassir Khān. Its ealrly edition was printed from London in 1979. Among its big mistakes he mixes his

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid, P. 180

<sup>2</sup> It was reviewed by 'Abdul Rahim Qidwai, MWBR, 4/23/38-41

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thoughts with the translation of the Qur'ān in the garb of observation, as he translates the word 'al-Ghuyūb' used in the Qur'ān with the consequences of one's own deeds among the people which is in fact a grave mistake that is unpardonable. As a result of which it is regarded unauthentic translation whose only one edition has come out.

**22- The Holy Qur'ān:** It was undertaken by Moḥammad Aḥmad. Its first edition was printed from London in 1979.<sup>1</sup>

**23- The Qur'ān:** An English Translation of the Meaning of the Qur'ān: It was performed by Mr. Moḥammad I. Zayd from Beirut. It got accomplished in 1980 which was printed in the same year. It is indeed a good form of translation that of N. J. Dawood. The translator also has repeated the blunders what are found in the former translations but it does not differentiates between the faith of Ahle Sunnah wa al-Jamā'ah and Shī'a faiths. Its only one edition has appeared.

**24- The Message of Qur'ān:** This translation was undertaken by Moḥammad Asad in 1980. Its first edition was published from Jabal Ṭāriq in 1984. Asad was a Jew first then he embraced Islam but his Jew mind and intellectual perception did not change that is why his opinion in holy translation goes often against the fundamental thought of the Qur'ān as he does not believe in putting Prophet Ibrāhīm (Abraham) in fire and meeting of Prophet Mūsá (Moses) with Khiḍr and other such important beliefs. And thus he bears negative approach for writing the Qur'ān too. Its language is good.<sup>2</sup>

**25- The Holy Qur'ān:** Arabic text and English Translation: It was rendered by Muḥammad Sarwar. Its first edition got

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<sup>1</sup> Majallah 'Ulūm-i-Islāmīyyah, Ibid, P. 179

<sup>2</sup> The Message of the Qur'ān (Preface)

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printed from Elmhurst in 1981. This is a good endeavor to present the Qur'ān in a simple language save that it requires remarks to be noted down and it did not revise the previous holy English translations. Its only one edition has come out yet.

**26- Al-Mizan:** This holy translation was performed by Muḥammad Ḥusain Ṭabāṭabā'ī. Its first edition surfaced in 1983 from Ṭehrān. Its Persian translation was carried out by Sa'īd Akhtar Riḍwī. It supports the Shī'itic thought such as 'Muta' and 'Wilāya' (succession to holy leadership). It is, in fact, full of abuses against the Umayyad caliphs. It ends with the list of the names of twelve holy Imāms (leaders) of Shī'a faith.

**27- Al-Qur'ān: A Commentary Translation:** It was done by Aḥmad 'Alī from Karāchī which got completed in 1984 and got published in the same year. Till now its three editions were printed. This translation is based on the denial of miracles and the like excepting that it underwent through few mistakes compared to the mistakes happened in the translations of Asad 'Alī and Muḥammad 'Alī.

**28- The Qur'ān: The First American Version:** It was performed by Irwing from Rutlan in 1985. Its more than three editions have appeared yet. Among its special features is that it bears the abstracts of the chapters in the beginning unlike this it is full of lingual mistakes and slips.<sup>1</sup> Even though it was later revised in 1992, it is still regarded to be incomplete revision.<sup>2</sup>

**29- The Qur'ān:** It was done by Muḥmūd Yaḥyá Zā'id. Its first edition came out from Beirut in 1980.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> It was reviewed by Prevez Mansur, MWBR, 7/4/72-75

<sup>2</sup> Ibid, 13/2/5-7

<sup>3</sup> Majallah 'Ulūm-i-Islāmīyyah, Ibid, P. 181

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**30- Holy Qur'ān:** It was rendered by H. Fāṭmī from Lāhore. This is the English translation of the Urdu holy translation of 'Allāmah Aḥmad Raḍā Khān Brelawī which completed in 1985 and was printed in the same year. It is based on the biased thought and imagination indeed. Its only one edition has appeared.

**31- The Bounteous Qur'ān:** It was carried out by M.M. Khaṭīb from London which got published in 1986. It is regarded the most authentic holy English translation. It does not have any wrong notions and biased opinions. Its language seems quite simple. However, there found few lingual mistakes and slips apart from some meanings that seem to get deleted. Its forty editions were printed yet.<sup>1</sup>

**32- The Holy Qur'ān:** Arabic Text and Translation in English: It was performed by Ḥusain Nahaboo from Mauritius whose first edition appeared in 1987. The translator seems totally to be depended on the holy translation of Muḥammad Yousuf 'Alī save that its remarks are too short. He carried out this noble holy task for the sake of English readers only.<sup>2</sup>

**33- The Holy Qur'ān:** An English Translation from 'Kanz-ul-Īmān': It was undertaken by Shāh Farīd Ḥaq. Its first edition was published from Karāchī in 1988. It is the English translation of holy Urdu translation of Aḥmad Raḍā Brelawī. Its language is not good indeed. It is full of blunders and factional biasedness whose only one edition came out as yet.<sup>3</sup>

**34- The Qur'ān:** The Conclusive Word of God: It was carried out by 'Arafāt from Lester in 1991. It is very good sort of translation which is considered authentic in respect of

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<sup>1</sup> It was reviewed by G. Eaton, *Islamic Quarterly*, 1987, PP. 57-61

<sup>2</sup> See, *MWBR*, 13/1/9-10

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid*, 17/3/9-10

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correct scientific thought of the Qur'ān in the light of Prophetic sayings. Its only one edition has appeared yet.<sup>1</sup>

**35- Noble Qur'ān: Tafsīr-i-'Uthmānī Presented in English:** It was done by Mr. Moḥammad Ḥasan and Mr. Aḥmad. Its first first edition was printed from Karāchī in 1991. It is an English holy translation of Urdu translation and commentary of the Qur'ān by a renowned Indian Islamic scholar of Deobandi ideology. Its language needs to be revised. Its only one edition has appeared yet.

**36- Translation of the Glorious Qur'ān:** It was performed by Aḥmad and Dina Zaydan in London in 1991. This is essentially based on the holy translation of Moḥammad Yousuf 'Alī without notes. Its only one edition has surfaced yet.<sup>2</sup>

**37- The Holy Qur'ān with an English Translation:** It was performed by Ozek et al in Istanbul. Its first edition got printed in 1992. It was accomplished by the assistance of a council of four Turks, therefore, it is considered a good endeavour which is based on the holy translation of Moḥammad Marmaduck Pickthal. Till now its only one edition has come out.<sup>3</sup>

**38- Instructive Translation of the Holy Qur'ān:** It was undertaken by Abū Muḥammad from Ḥayderābād whose first edition was brought out in around 1992. This is the only available amount of information about it.

**39- The Qur'ān in Plain English:** It was done by an unknown translator whose name was not found to be printed anywhere on this available edition which was first seen to be published in 1993 from Lester.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid, 13/1/14-15

<sup>2</sup> Ibid, PP. 10-13

<sup>3</sup> Ibid, 15/3/3-11

<sup>4</sup> Majallah 'Ulūm-i-Islāmīyyah, Ibid, P. 180

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**40- The Qur'ān in Plain English:** It was carried out by Bh. A. K. Pathan in 1993 in Pune. It is a failure attempt to distort the meanings of Glorious Qur'ān. It is indeed full of unnecessary openions and objections raised on the rightly guided caliphs of the Prophetic narrations. It is an unauthentic translation which surves not to understand the true meaning of Qur'ān. Its one edition has been printed yet.<sup>1</sup>

**41- The Qur'ān: A Modern English Version:** It was done by Mājīd Fakhrī in 1995 in United Kingdom. It is also a futile and failure excercise to interpolate and concox the meanings of the Qur'ān, to defame Prophet's glory, Holy Ka'bah and other Islamic identities. Its only one edition was seen to be brought out. Its revised version was published in 2001 with the title of 'An Interpretation of the Qur'ān: English Translation of the Meanings'.<sup>2</sup>

**42- An Enlightening Commentry into the Light of the Holy Qur'ān:** It was done by Mr. 'Abbās Ṣadar Āmlī. It supports the thoughts of the followers of heretic doctrine. Its language is also of no good sort whose first and last edition was seen to be published in 1997 from Aṣṣfahān.<sup>3</sup>

**43- The Qur'ān: A New Interpretation:** It was performed by Bh.M. Bāqar Bahbūdī with the sole assistance of Colin Turner in 1997. It too supports the thoughts of the followers of heretic doctrine and intends to get befitted by the glory of rightly-guided caliphs. Its first and last edition was printed in the same year in which the translation got completed.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> MWBR, 18/2/15-16

<sup>2</sup> Ibid, 18/1/15-17

<sup>3</sup> Ibid, 18/3/16-18

<sup>4</sup> Ibid, 19/3/13-15

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- 44- The Noble Qur'ān: A New Rendering of its Meaning in English:** It was made by 'Abd-ul-Ḥaḡ Bewley and 'Ā'isha Bewley in 1999. Both of them rendered this pious holy service under the auspicious guidance of their spiritual guide Sheikh Abū al-Qādir al-Sūfī. Its first edition appeared in the year in which it got accomplished. It is worthy-mention that it is regarded the authentic translation indeed.<sup>1</sup>
- 45- In the Shade of the Qur'ān:** It is the English translation of the Arabic commentary 'Fī Ṣilāl al-Qur'ān' by Sayyid Quṭb – which was performed by Bh. M. A. Ṣalāḡī and A.A. Shamsī. Its first edition was printed from Islamic Foundation in 1999.<sup>2</sup>
- 46- The Noble Qur'ān: Accompanied by Tafsīr-i-'Uthmānī by 'Allāmah Shabbīr Aḡmad 'Uthmānī:** This is another endeavour to transmit the Urdu holy translation of Sheikh Maḡmūd Ḥasan and the commentary of Sheikh Shabbīr Aḡmad 'Uthmānī into English what Muḡammad Aṣḡfāḡ Aḡmad performed. Its first edition was brought out from Dār-ul-Iṣḡāḡ, Urdu Bāzār Karāchī, Pākistān in 1999. Its commentary has been placed in the margin. While in its 'preface' Mr. Aṣḡfāḡ has penned the fundamentals of Islam indeed.
- 47- Towards Understanding the Ever-Glorious Qur'ān:** It was undertaken by Moḡammad Maḡmūd Ḡhali from Egypt. Its first edition was published in 2001 from the Cairo Press of the universities. The translator has benefited from the existing exegeses and preferbally preferred to retain the exact Arabic names used in the Qur'ān such as Mūsá instead of Moses and the like. This is the authentic sort of translation indeed.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid, 20/3/14-17

<sup>2</sup> Majallah 'Ulūm-i-Islāmīyyah, P. 181

<sup>3</sup> Al-Ahrām, 20/414-73

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**48- English Translation of the Qur'ān, the Guidance to Mankind:** It was rendered by Muḥammad Fārūq A'zam Malik. Its first edition was printed from Texas, U.S.A. in 2001. The translator has sketched in its 'preface' the biography of Prophet Moḥammad (BPUH), the history of compilation of the Qur'ān besides the mention of the holy chapters and he tried his best to transmit exact expression of Arabic into English.<sup>1</sup>

**49- Qur'ān the Living Truth:** It was performed by Bashīr Aḥmad Muḥiyuddīn from Kerala, India. He initiated this holy task in 1976 and accomplished it in about twenty years. Then its first edition was brought out from Lahoti Fine Arts Press in 2003. In its preface Bashīr Aḥmad has written the accounts of revelation of the Qur'ān and overall perspectives of its Makki and Madani chapters, its being big miracle, its contents and the significances of its recitation and then the rewards for those who read it or recite it. He has deliberately avoided the blunders committed by 'Abdullāh Yousuf 'Alī and 'Abd-ul-Mājid Daryābādī. And its second edition which surfaced in 2004, is the best example of its well-accepted readership.<sup>2</sup>

**50- The Qur'ān: A New Translation:** It was rendered by 'Abd-ul-Ḥalīm, Professor of Islamic Studies, University of London. The translator dedicated almost five years to present the holy production in modern English as he translated the word 'Allah' as 'God'. Its first edition came out in 2005 from London.

**51- A New Translation of the Qur'ān in English:** This translation was done by Sayyid 'Alī Qār'ī, Chief Editor of the quarterly English periodical 'al-Tauḥīd' after he was

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<sup>1</sup> Preface

<sup>2</sup> Qur'ān, the Living Truth, PP. 13-19

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advised by Centre of Translation of the Holy Qur'ān in Foreign Languages in Iran. The translator has endeavored greatly to transmit the Qur'ān into modern English on the basis of famous exegises particularly of the Prophet's family being far away from inter-school faiths. He has prepared a brief list of terms and complicated phrases and the like what Muḥammad Mājid al-Asadī specially mentioned in a special issue of the magazine 'al-Rashād' on Qur'ān Sept. 2005 that it is soon to be published in which the translator has spent almost five years.<sup>1</sup>

**52- A Running Commentry of the Holy Qur'ān:** This is translation and consise commentary of the Qur'ān in English which was performed by Kamāluddīn Nadhīr Aḥmad. Its first edition got printed from London but the year of its publication is not mentioned anywhere at all.<sup>2</sup>

**53- The Holy Qur'ān:** It was done by Muḥammad 'Alī Ḥabīb whose first edition appeared from Karachī but the year of its publication is not mentioned anywhere.<sup>3</sup>

**54- The Qur'ān Interpreted:** It was renderd by Professor Muḥammad Ayyūb. Its first publication came out from Bristin whose year of publication is not mentioned.<sup>4</sup>

**55- Holy Qur'ān:** Though this translation with brief commentrey was initated by Professor 'Abd-ul-Mughnī, his untimely death could not make it possible to be published.<sup>5</sup>

**56- Holy Qur'ān:** Althoug it was rendered by 'Farīdah Khānam' into English which I personally have seen, is still a manuscript without publication. Its translation to me, is free from lingual blunders.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Al-Rashād, Issue no. 4, 2005, PP. 120-121

<sup>2</sup> Majallah 'Ulūm-i-Islāmīyyah, Ibid, P. 179

<sup>3</sup> Ibid, P. 179

<sup>4</sup> Ibid, P. 180

<sup>5</sup> Da'wat weekly, 55/1/7

<sup>6</sup> It has been published

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### **Second: Holy Translations by Qādyānis**

- 57- The Holy Qur'ān:** This translation was undertaken by Muḥammad 'Alī whose first edition came out in 1917 from Woking and now its editions exceeded ten. It bears remarks on footnotes. It follows Qādyānī faith. It opposes what came in the exegises of Ahle Sunnah the hardliner and other core groups of Islam such as the finality of prophethood on Muḥammad, the break of river by hitting of Mūsá's stick and stone pelting on Abraha's army by the Abābil birds.
- 58- The Holy Qur'ān:** It was carried out by Ghulām Sarwar. Its first edition was published from Singapore in 1928. Its more than nine publications have appeared yet. Even though it is known that it is void of explanatory notes and remarks and its translator is a Qādyānī, his inclination towards Muḥammad 'Alī the new pious Muslim and American boxer and great converter into Islam proves that he is among his followers, though he was not. He criticises the holy translations of both Sale and Palmer.
- 59- The Holy Qur'ān with English Translation and Commentary:** Though name of this translation is unknown, its first edition appeared from Rabwah in 1947. Furthermore, it was printed by Mirzā Baṣhīruddīn Maḥmūd Aḥmad President of Aḥmadiya Organization. Its more than thirteen editions have been brought out yet.
- 60- The Holy Qur'ān:** It was done by Sher 'Alī which was first published from Rabwah in 1955. It is a well-accepted and well-known holy translation among Qādyānī sects. Its innumerable editions have come out yet.
- 61- The Wonderful Qur'ān:** This holy translation was made by Ṣalāḥuddīn. Its first edition got printed in 1960. It is too based on Qādyānī thoughts and ideology but it could not
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achieve that readership popularity as other Qādyānī holy translations did.

**62- The Holy Qur'ān: English Translation and Commentary:** It was performed by Ghulām Farīd whose publication was first brought out from Rabwah in 1969. It is the English translation of holy Urdu translation of the President of Qādyānī sects. It was published by Mirzā Naṣīr Aḥmad the third follower of Maṣīḥ Mau'ūd (Returning Christ) and the President of Aḥmadiya Movement. It upholds the Qādyānī approaches about Qur'ān's primary principles. Its two editions have surfaced yet.

**63- The Qur'ān: Qur'ān Majīd:** It was performed by Muḥammad Ṣafrullāh Khān. Its first edition came out from London in 1971. This is free translation of the Qur'ān which bears Aḥmadiya ideological faith. In this translation Khan declares the denial of Muḥammad as the final messenger. It is second class translation among Qādyānī sects. Its innumerable publications have appeared yet.

**64- The Running Commentary of the Holy Qur'ān:** It was done by Khādīm Raḥmān Nūrī. Its first edition got printed from Shilong in 1974. Although it supports the holy translation of Muḥammad 'Alī (the American boxer new converted to Islam), it does not distort Qur'ānic meaning .... It is word to word translation so it does not convey in numerous places full meaning of what Allah wants to convey in His Arabic words. It contains a long list of connotative terms and phrases.

**Third: Holy Translations by non-Muslims especially  
Jews and Christians**

**65- The Holy Qur'ān:** This is the early holy translation into English which was rendered by Ross in 1949. It is based on the French translation of the Qur'ān that got completed in 1947. It is the worst and dirty sample of holy translation

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which is available in the library of oriental and missionary studies. Ross warned his people that this book is very dangerous and we must be careful about it. As for the value of translation, it could be known by the statement of Zwemer he says: “Ross was utterly unacquainted with Arabic, and was not a through scholar, therefore his translation is faulty in the exteme”

**66- The Koran:** It was performed by George Sale in 1749. It is the well-accepted and moderate translation among westerners. Its several other editions have appeared in 1775. Its long preface in which George Sale has described fundamentals of Islam but in the language of orientalist and opponents of Islam, therefore it has such opinions that do not match with the directives of Islam. This translation is not authentic that is because the translator distorted the meaning of Qur’ānic expressions as he translates – يا أيها الناس – ‘O People of Mecca’ and ‘الغيبوب’ ‘Secret History’ as he left translation of many verses untouched.

**67- A Comprehensive Commentary on the Qur’ān, Comprising Sale’s Translation:** This detailed commentary was rendered by Y.M. Wherry in 1852 whose first edition came out from London. It consists of four volumes and it is based on the holy English translation of Sale as it appears from its contents. As of now its more than seven editions have been printed.

**68- The Koran:** It was carried out by Rodwell in 1849 which was published from London in the same year. It contains the arrangements of revelation of the Qur’ān and abusive words about prophet Muḥammed and his companions. Rodwell assures that the Qur’ān is the adoption of former scriptures of Jews, Christians and Zorasts. The translator has intended through it to distort meanings of the Qur’ān and interpolate its true understanding as he translates what

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the Qur'ān does not mean to convey such as he translates: 'فَصَلِّ لِرَبِّكَ وَأُخْرُ' (Pray therefore the Lord and slay the Victims). Its more than three editions have been printed.

**69- The Qur'ān:** This holy translation was performed by Y.H. Palmer in 1880 in order to complete the serial task 'Sacred Books of the East' which F. Max Muller had accomplished whilst Bilmar is one of the alumunus of Cambridge who did holy translation but he committed numerous blunders in his translation as he translates 'ربك' 'Their lord'.<sup>1</sup> Its more than fifteen editions have come out yet.

**70- The Qur'ān: Translated with a Critical re-arrangement of the Sūrahs:** It was done by Richard Bell in 1937. Its first edition appeared from Edinburgh. It is futile exercise which he made so as to arrange the Qur'ān from new order. Besides it Bell claims that Muḥammad the unlettered is the scribe of glorious Qur'ān. Hence, he made mistakes as he made arrangement of the contents according to his will claiming that it is the rearrangement as per modern approach what you would find in every page of his translation. As of now its fifteen editions have been brought out.

**71- The Qur'ān Interpreted:** This translation was undertaken by Arberery the just celebrated orientalist in 1955. Its first edition appeared in London. It is free of hatefull remarks what the opponents of Islam generally orientlists and missionaries do on Qur'ān. It has a beautiful preface having eloquent English. Its seveal editions have come out yet.<sup>2</sup>

**72- The Qur'ān:** It was rendered by N. J. Daood in 1956 from Harmondsworth. The translator assures that Muḥammad himself is the writer of the Qur'ān and moreover he claims saying that Muḥammad has benefited from previous

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<sup>1</sup> See for its mistakes, American Sociey Journal, Issue no. 56, 1936, PP. 77-84

<sup>2</sup> See for details on it, Hamdradr Islamicus, 1/3/71-75

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heavenly scriptures so he committed mistakes in many places while he rendered correction in many others. His translation is full of blunders related to hetrad and specific thoughts as he translates 'بني آدم' 'Children of Allah'.<sup>1</sup> Its more that twelve editions have been brought out yet.

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<sup>1</sup> MWBR, 13/2/3-6

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## **Contribution of the Indian Muslim Scholars to the English Translations of the Meanings of the Qur'ān**

✎...Md. Quamruddīn<sup>1</sup>

### **The Early Translations**

The Qur'ān, though in Arabic was revealed to the Prophet Muḥammad for his ummah, it addresses the whole mankind. So its message is virtually meant for the entire world. In order to transmit this scriptural divine addresses the Prophet (PBUH) invited all the people to the Qur'ānic message and thus he wrote several letters and sent messengers with them to the rulers of numerous foreign countries, as he wrote letters to Negus of Abyssinia, to Muqawqas, the Governor of Egypt, to the Emperor of Byzantium and to the others.

The letters of the Prophet Muḥammad (PBUH) to the then rulers included several verses of the Qur'ān, and the messengers who were sent by him were all masters of the languages of the countries to which they were delegated.<sup>2</sup>

It indicates that the work of interpreting and translating the meanings of the Qur'ān had started even during the life times of the Prophet (PBUH). But since this was translation of only some verses, quoted in the letters, we cannot say that this work of translation had started as a profession of art. However, it gives us the starting point of this noble task.

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<sup>1</sup> Guest Lecturer, Zākir Ḥusain Delhi College, University of Delhi, Delhi

<sup>2</sup> Al-Raḥīq al-Makḥtūm, PP.320-330.

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History witnesses that one of the Companions of the Prophet, Salmān al-Fārsī (d.35/656) translated the first chapter of the Qur'ān, consisting of seven verses, into Persian<sup>1</sup>

Syriac holy translations were also rendered by non-Muslims, in the second part of the first century AH- in the period of Ḥajjāj bin Yūsuf (d. 95 AH). A Berber translation is also said to be possibly found which was written in 127 A.H while a Persian oral translation was made by Mūsá bin Sayyār al-Aswārī before 225 AH.<sup>2</sup> According to T.W. Arnold, a Chinese translation also possibly existed.<sup>3</sup>

It must be kept in mind that the history does not give us ample information about these translations; nonetheless, all these traces provide enough proofs that the early people had keen interest in interpretation and translation of the Qur'ān.

In the 4<sup>th</sup> century of Hijra calendar, the first written Persian translation appeared in the time of the Samanid king, Abū Ṣūliḥ Maṣṣūr bin Nūḥ (348-364 AH).<sup>4</sup> Ekmeleddin Ihsanoglu, in "World Bibliography of Translations of the Holy Qur'ān", writes:

"The early extant translation of the Qur'ān is in Persian; it was done at the time of the Samanid Prince Maṣṣūr b. Nūḥ (348-364 A.H. / 961-976 A.D.) in 345 A.H. / 956 A.D."<sup>5</sup>

In 270 A.H. the Qur'ān was also translated in perhaps Hindi/Sindhi or in Multani. This information has been recorded by Bazurg Shahr Yār in his book 'Ajā'b-ul-Hind wa al-Sind'.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> The Qur'ān An Introduction, PP. 120 -121.

<sup>2</sup> Al-Bayān wa al-Tabyīn, 1/196.

<sup>3</sup> For detail see his book: The Preaching of Islam.

<sup>4</sup> The Qur'ān An Introduction, P. 123 / Jā'za-i-Tarājīm Qur'ānī, P.12/ WBTO, P. xxiii & xxix.

<sup>5</sup> World Bibliography of Translations of the Qur'ān, P. xxiii.

<sup>6</sup> Mu'jam Muṣannafāt al-Qur'ān al-Karīm, 2/12./ also: Jā'za-i-Tarājīm-i Qur'ānī.

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Ekmeleddin Ihsanoglu, in World Bibliography of Translations of the Qur'ān, has precisely written that it was Hindi:

“The oldest Hindi translation is reported to have been done in 270 A.H. / 883 A.D. at the request of “Raja Mahrook” of Punjab and Kashmir. The Raja had requested the translation from the Muslim ruler of Sind, Abdullah ibn Umar, and an Iraqi scholar was found for the job. The translation, however, did not go beyond Surat “Yasin”.<sup>1</sup>

**English Translations in the World:** The first English translation of the Qur'ān appeared in 1648 and it was rendered by Scottish author Alexander Ross (1592-1654) with the title: *The Alcoran of Mahomet translated out of Arabique into French, by the Sieur Du Ryer...And newly Englished, for the satisfaction of all that desire to look into the Turkish vanities (London, 1649).*<sup>2</sup> Since Ross didn't know Arabic, he had to rely grossly on French translations of the Qur'ān by Andrew Du Ryer whose own translation was found to be faulty. In the opinion of Hussein Abdul-Raof, the “first English translation by Ross was virtually nothing more than a crib on Du Ryer's French translation of 1647”.<sup>3</sup> Ross did not know Arabic and his intension behind this mistranslation is apparent from the title of the translation and mispronunciation of the name of Prophet Muḥammad (PBUH).

After Ross's translation, appeared the translation of the English jurist and Orientalist, George Sale' (d. 1736), first edition appeared in 1734. Later on, Rodwell's translation was published first in 1861, which gives an example of an anti-Muslim writer gunning on Islam. After a decade, E.H. Palmer's translation was published which fails on account of

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<sup>1</sup> World Bibliography of Translations of the Holy Qu'rān, P. xxxii.

<sup>2</sup> The Qur'ān An Introduction, P. 122.

<sup>3</sup> Qur'ān Translation Discourse Texture and Exegesis, P. 20.

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unsuccessful-attempt to translate the Qur'ān into colloquial English. In 1937, Richard Bell published his translation of the Qur'ān in English.<sup>1</sup>

It is an irony that the most of the western translations were undertaken by the translators having sound knowledge of Islam as a religion to guide and govern the people, Arabic and exegesis as a source science. On the other hand, their intention was to answer Christian polemic, therefore their works do not reflect any intellectual depth.

**Tafsīr and Translations by the Indians:** Since the Qur'ān is the book of guidance for the entire mankind, it has always been the centre of attention in the whole world. India has also greatly contributed to translating and interpreting the meanings of the Qur'ān. It contributed to every branch of knowledge that helps to understand the Qur'ān.

The history of translation of the Qur'ān in India is very old. Bazurg bin Shahr Yār has mentioned in his book "Ajā'b-ul-Hind" that in the closing 3<sup>rd</sup> century of Hijrah calendar, a translation of the Qur'ān was rendered. Shahr Yār has written that on the request of the King of Kashmir: *Mehruk*, 'Abdullāh bin 'Umar had sent an 'Ālim (scholar) to preach Islamic teachings. This 'Ālim had written tafsīr (commentary) of the Qur'ān in Hindi language till the chapter Yasīn.<sup>2</sup>

But the translation could not reach us. It can be said that the translation of the Qur'ān into an Indian language even precedes the Persian language which is called to be the first language in which the translation of the Qur'ān was rendered. If Indian language is not the first one in which the Qur'ān was translated then it can surely be said that after Persian, Indian

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid, P. 20.

<sup>2</sup> Jā'za-i-Tarājim-i-Qur'ānī, PP. 11-12.

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language was the second language in which translation of the Qur'ān was performed.<sup>1</sup>

Tafsīr Murādiyāh (تفسیر مرادیہ) is considered to be the first tafsīr which was written by Shah Murādullāh Sanbhalī Anṣārī Naqshbandī. But this tafsīr comprises of only the chapter *al-Fātiḥah* and the third part of the Qur'ān. This tafsīr was completed in 1185 A.H. and was firstly published in 1247 A.H. from Kolkata. Then several other editions were printed from Mumbai also.<sup>2</sup>

It is not known exactly that when and who performed the first translation in India, but it is supposed that the first tafsīr in Arabic language in India is '*Kāshif-ul-Ḥaqā'iq wa Qāmūs al-Daqā'iq*' (کاشف الحقائق وقاموس الدقائق). The writer of this tafsīr is Sheikh Muḥammad bin Aḥmad Shureḥī al-Thānesrī Gujrātī (d: 674). Professor Zubair Aḥmad Fārūqī has recorded that The writer of this tafsīr was an 'Ālim of the era of Sultan Ghayāthuddīn Balban<sup>3</sup>.

The first complete tafsīr in Urdu language is *Muḍīḥ-i-Qur'ān* (موضح قرآن) which was written by Shah 'Abdul Qādir Dehlawī. It was completed twenty years after *Tafsīr-i-Murādiyāh*, i.e. in 1205 AH.<sup>4</sup>

In addition to it, many tafsīrs and translations appeared which include *Faṭḥur-Raḥmān*, a Persian translation rendered by Shāh Walīullah Muḥaddith Dehlawī (d: 1174 AH), *Faṭḥul-'Azīz*, (also known as *Tafsīr-i-'Azīzī*), a tafsīr in Persian was written by Shāh 'Abdul 'Azīz, whereas *Tarjama-i-Qur'ān*, was written by Shāh Rafī'uddīn in Urdu language.

<sup>1</sup> Gist from 'Ulāma-i-Hind Ki Aḥam Qur'ānī *Khidmāt*, PP. 8-9-194.

<sup>2</sup> Gist from 'Ulāma-i-Hind Ki Aḥam Qur'ānī *Khidmāt*, p. 9.

<sup>3</sup> Taṭawwur-u-'Ilm-il-Tafsīr fī-al-Hind, PP, 14-15.

<sup>4</sup> 'Ulamā-i-Hind ki Aḥam Qur'ānī *Khidmāt*, P. 10.

And the first tafsīr printed in the Persian language was '*al-Mawāhib al-'Alīyya*' known as *Tafsīr-i-Husainī*, which was published in 1837 CE in Kolkata, India.<sup>1</sup> The first complete Urdu translation of the Qur'ān was rendered by Shāh Rafī'uddīn (the son of Shāh Walīullah Dehlawī), in 1190 A.H. (1776 A.D.). Its first edition was published in Kolkata in 1840. Then his brother Shāh 'Abdul Qādir followed up with his translation in 1205 A.H (1790 AD). Its first edition was published in Delhi in 1829 A.D.<sup>2</sup> thereafter with the passage of time, many Urdu translations appeared.

Thus we find a series of translation works of the Qur'ān. It was translated in almost all the major languages of India, like Urdu, Persian, Hindī, Bengālī, Gujarātī, Kashmirī, Sindhī, Tamil, Punjābī, Malayālam, Telugu, Kannada etc.<sup>3</sup>

Here I present a brief account of some English translations of the Qur'ān. It is not a final and complete list. Whatever I am going to present is only the clue to spark the interest of the Indian Muslim scholars in the translation of the Qur'ān.

### **The English Translations made by the Indian Muslims**

- 1. The Qur'ān (1911) by Mirzā Abul Faḍl:** This is the first English translation of the Qur'ān along with the Arabic Qur'ānic text, was performed by a Muslim; Abul Faḍl, and this is its only notable feature. The translator Mirzā Abul Faḍl (1865-1956), was a native of East Bengāl, (presently Banglādesh), later on he moved to Allāhābād, India.

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<sup>1</sup> World Bibliography of Translations of the Holy Qur'ān, P. xxix

<sup>2</sup> Ibid, PP. xxx-xxxī.

<sup>3</sup> For detail see, Encyclopaedia of the Qur'ān, PP. 1508-1526.

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The translation work is of poor standard in terms of its conception, execution and poor presentation. The translator has arranged the chapters in the chronological orders and thus he deviated from the traditional order.<sup>1</sup>

2. **The Qur'ān (1916) by Ḥairat Dehlawī:** This translation was rendered by Ḥairat Dehlawī, with his team of 'Oriental Learned Scholars'. It was published two times but the copy of this translation seems unavailable till now.

In his translation work, Ḥairat Dehlawī has tried his best to refute the attacks of the orientalist against the Qur'ān. One of the main features of this translation is that it is among the earliest translations rendered by a Muslim. It has no explanatory notes and language is archaic and biblical.

3. **The Qur'ān (1920) by Ghulām Sarwar:** The translation was rendered by Ghulām Sarwar. It was first published in 1920. Later on, it got many publications. The main features of this translation are 'clearness, ease and accuracy'. But it also suffers from absence of explanatory notes. And "One of the most valuable elements of Sarwar's work is his exhaustive, around fifty pages long critique of Sale's, Rodwell's, Palmer's, and Muḥammad 'Alī's English translations of the Qur'ān".<sup>2</sup>

4. **The Qur'ān: English Translation and Commentary (1934-1937) by 'Abdullāh Yūsuf 'Alī:** This translation appeared in 1934. It is now among the most commonly used translations of the Qur'ān. Yūsuf 'Alī was a Muslim

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<sup>1</sup> Translating the Untranslatable, PP. 3, 4.

<sup>2</sup> Bibliography of the Translations of the Meanings of the Glorious Qur'ān into English, P. 421.

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scholar who had a good command of both the Arabic and English languages. His translation was free from the grave misinterpretations found in other translations made by the Muslims. This is a rather free translation, in which the translator has attempted to make a literary masterpiece capturing the beauty of the original. He has also provided summaries and was regarded as the best available translation by a committee of Saudi Arabia. They, however, recognized that it had serious flaws, so the King Fahd Glorious Qur'ān Printing Press published it after a revision in Madīnah in 1985.

'Abdullāh Yūsuf 'Alī is its translator. He is originally from Sūrāt in India. He got higher education in India and abroad. The translation got accepted at large level, whose more than 200 editions have come into appearance and it is one of the best translations rendered by any Muslim.

The translator has used idiomatic English with useful copious and explanatory notes to clarify and illustrate the Qur'ānic meanings. However, his renderings, sometimes, are contrary to the conventional understanding of the Qur'ān which is found in the classical tafsīrs. Besides, there are many flaws in his translation, including his views on the Qur'ānic eschatology. Some books have been written to correct his errors.<sup>1</sup>

**5. The Qur'ān (1957) by Maulānā 'Abdul Mājīd Daryābādī:**

Maulānā 'Abdul Mājīd Daryābādī (1892-1977), a graduate of University of Lucknow in Philosophy in 1912, had completed the translation of the Qur'ān into English in

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<sup>1</sup> For more detail see: Bibliography of the Translations of the Meanings of the Glorious Qur'ān into English, P. 6 and Translating the Untranslatable, PP. 16-34.

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1940s but it could come out only in 1957. It was published many times. An abridged version got published in 2001 by Islamic Foundation, Leicester, UK.

The main features of his English translation are that he, being well versed in both Islamic sciences and comparative studies; vindicate the veracity of the Qur'ān and its teachings. In his translation, Daryābādī is sincere and faithful to the Qur'ānic text. His ideas do not contradict the earlier translators or commentators.

Daryābādī was born in a dignified Islamic family, got both Islamic and modern education. Besides the English translation of the Qur'ān, he also authored '*Tafsīr-i-Mājidī*' in Urdu. He made thorough comparative study of religions, especially the Christianity. He used explanatory notes which are the gist of the classical Muslim scholars on tafsīr and lexicography.

6. **The Message of the Qur'ān presented in Perspective (1970s) by Hāshim Amīr 'Alī:** Inspired by his teacher Mirzā Abul Faḍl (1865-1956), Hāshim Amīr 'Alī (d. 1970s) translated the Qur'ān. Following the foot steps of his teacher, Hāshim Amīr 'Alī changed the order of Surahs of the Qur'ān and arranged the Quranic text into the five Books, contrary to the divine order of the Qur'ān; also his translation is not supplemented with explanatory notes. His translation got published only once.
  7. **Al-Qur'ān: A Contemporary Translation (1984) by Aḥmed 'Alī:** The translator of this work is Aḥmed 'Alī (1908-1994), a famous literary figure in the Indian subcontinent; initially published his translation in Karāchī in 1984, later on, it got published several times by different publishers.
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In this work, the translator followed the steps of Syed Aḥmad Khān, Muḥammad ‘Alī, ‘Abdullāh Yūsuf ‘Alī, Muḥammad Asad and others. The translator has twisted the meanings at many places, rejected the facts of miracles, adopted illogical liberty with the Qur’ānic text, used archaic and obsolete language and has expressed unconventional views. As a whole the translation is not recommendable to the readers.<sup>1</sup>

8. **English Translation of the Meaning of the Qur’ān (2005) by Syed Vickār Aḥamad:** The work was rendered by Syed Vickār Aḥmad. The work in the words of A. R. Kidwai is “blatant instance of plagiarism” and the translator is “so-called translator”.<sup>2</sup>
9. **‘What is in the Qur’ān? Message of the Qur’ān in Simple English’ (2013) by ‘Abdur Raḥeem Kidwai:** ‘What is in the Qur’ān? Message of the Qur’ān in Simple English’ is the translation work made by Professor ‘Abdur Raḥeem Kidwai which got published in India in 2013.

Professor ‘Abdur Raḥeem Kidwai (b. 21/10/1956) teaches at the Department of English in ‘Alīgarh Muslim University, India. He is one of the well-known authors of the time and has authored many works on the Qur’ān and Islam. He has written extensively on the English translations of the Qur’ān.

The language of the work is easy and simple, supplemented with brief explanatory notes. The translation is preceded by a “Preface”. It also contains some notes, a bibliography, and an Index.

### **English Translations of the Qur’ān made from Urdu**

Some English translations were rendered from Urdu language, not directly from the Arabic text of the Qur’ān.

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<sup>1</sup> For detail see: *Translating the Untranslatable*, PP. 78-84.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid*, PP. 136-139.

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Among them are the English translation of the Urdu version rendered by Maulānā Abul Kalām Āzād, Aḥmad Raḍā Khān Barelwī, Abul A'alā Maudūdī, Muftī Muḥammad Shafī, Maulānā Maḥmūd Ḥasan Deobandī, 'Allāmah Shabbīr Aḥmad 'Usmānī, Amīn Aḥsan Iṣlāḥī and Waḥīduddīn Khān.

**10. The Meaning of the Qur'ān (1967-1988) by Syed Abul**

**A'alā Maudūdī:** Originally, the translation was performed in Urdu by Syed Abul A'alā Maudūdī (1903-1979), later on, the Urdu translation (*Tafhīm-ul-Qur'ān*) was made into English by Chaudhary Muḥammad Akbar in 1967, and after his death, 'Abdul 'Aẓīm Kamāl became the Head of the Translators' Board. A translation of some parts has also been done by Dr. Ḥafīz Isḥāq Anṣārī.

Maudūdī is one of distinguished Muslim scholars and thinkers. He had knowledge of both classical and modern sciences. His translation is considered one of the popular ones.

About this work Kidwai writes: "...it offers a lucid, fluent paraphrasing of the Qur'ānic text, without deviating from the original. It is thus much better than those scrupulously literal translations which are often not comprehensible to the uninitiated readers of the Qur'ān".<sup>1</sup>

**11. The Qur'ān: An English Translation from Kanzul Īmān (1988) by Maulānā Aḥmad Raḍā Khān Barelwī:**

This work is the English translation from the Urdu translation and commentary of the Qur'ān rendered by Maulānā Aḥmad Raḍā Khān Barelwī (1856-1921). The translation had appeared firstly in 1910 with the title "*Kanzul Īmān*", and in 1970s the Urdu version was translated firstly by Dr. Ḥanīf Akhtar Fāṭmī. This is another translation performed

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<sup>1</sup> Translating the Untranslatable, P. 45.

in English by Farīdul Ḥaḳue in 1988.

To comment on this work in the words of A. R. Kidwai: “The level of Ḥaḳue’s translation is pitiably low, betraying the translator’s poor knowledge of the target language-English. The work is further marred by typographical errors. Far from a blatantly sectarian translation and interpretation of the Qur’ān, which garbles the meaning and message of the Qur’ān and confounds average readers, there is a pressing need for translations which enable readers to gain sound understanding of the life-giving message of the Qur’ān”.<sup>1</sup>

**12. The Noble Qur’ān: Tafsīr-i-Usmānī (1991) by Sheikh-ul-Hind Maulānā Maḥmūd Ḥasan and ‘Allāmah Shabbīr Aḥmad ‘Usmānī:**

This translation and tafsīr of the Qur’ān was basically rendered in Urdu language by two great Indian ‘Ulama Sheikh-ul-Hind Maulānā Maḥmūd Ḥasan Deobandī (1851-1920), and ‘Allāmah Shabbīr Aḥmad ‘Usmānī (1887-1949). The former translated the Qur’ān and the latter wrote its exhaustive tafsīr. Later on, this translation and tafsīr were translated in English by a Pakistani translator Muḥammad Ashfāq Ḥussain (b.1931). The real Urdu work is excellent and authentic. It was appreciated widely, got printed by King Fahd Qur’ān Printing Complex, Madīna in 1989 and was distributed by the Department of Religious Affairs, Government of Saudi Arabia. But its English translation needs revision to reach its high standard; nonetheless it provides the fair message and spirit to reach to the real Qur’ānic text.

**13. The Qur’ān (2009) by Maulānā Waḥīduddīn Khān:**

The work has been rendered by Maulānā Waḥīduddīn Khān (b. 1925), an Indian scholar and edited by his daughter Prof. Farīda Khānam in department of Islamic

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<sup>1</sup> Translating the Untranslatable, P.187.

Studies, Jamia Millia Islamia, New Delhi. The work has been carried out for the purpose of Da'wah, thus the translation bears simply the apparent message and has been avoided any detail or references.

**Conclusion:** These are the brief and introductory accounts. The details are available with various books and bibliographies.

The number of the translations of the complete Qur'ān is increasing day by day. Dr. Muḥammad Ḥamīdullāh (Hyderābād, India) has assembled the details of translations of the Qur'ān in different languages of the world in his book namely 'Al-Qur'ān fī Kull-i-Lisān'.

On the bibliography of the Qur'ān's translation into world languages 'World Bibliography of the Translation of the Qur'ān, (Istanbul)' is one of the best resource books. It contains 2672 entries, and gives introduction to the translations of the Qur'ān in world's 65 languages, including Asian, African and European languages. But this bibliography contains only the translation works which were made during 1515-1980.

Professor 'Abdur Raḥeem Kidwai, of 'Alīgarh Muslim University, India, has also written a book entitled 'Translating the Untranslatable'. He has provided the details of 60 English translations with reviews and comments.

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## Bengali Translations of the Qur'ān

✍...Dr. Md. Ashraf Hossain<sup>1</sup>

Islam, according to the reliable historical sources, entered into Bengal through the preachers and Arabian traders during 8<sup>th</sup> century. It is also said that a pious companion of the Prophet (PBUH), named Abū 'Ukās Mālik ibn Wāhib was a trader who used to visit foreign countries for his business. Once he was on the way to Chaina through Bengal,<sup>2</sup> and he was accompanied with by many persons, they endeavoured to preach Islam in this area. As a result of their sincere efforts, many Bengalis embraced Islam. And thus ray of Islam got into Bengal. Although this is the most reliable source that the Muslims entered Bengal in the period of caliph Hārūn between 782-809 A.D, some currencies were found in Rājshāhī, Komillā and in some other areas having the name of caliph Hārūn with the mention of his age. We can say without any doubt that the first footstep of Muslims marked in Bengal during the Hārūn's rule. But in that period Islam did not flourish widely among the Bengali people. In fact the rapid spread of Islam began after the establishment of Muslim rule in Bengal in 1203 A.D.

But it is worthy to mention here that the translation of the Qur'ān into Bengali began much later. As, the most of the Bengali Muslims till 18<sup>th</sup> century thought that translating of the Qur'ān into Bengali is nothing but defamation of the Holy Book.<sup>3</sup> Secondly, perhaps during this long period no scholastic

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<sup>2</sup> The Modina Month, P. 404. Also Dukhūl al-Islam fī Banglādes̄h, PP. 20-21.

<sup>3</sup> Exercise of the Qur'ān in Bengali, P. 9.

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person might be seen in Bengal who could have command over both the languages – Arabic and Bengali. Thirdly, till 18<sup>th</sup> century the Bengali language was in a changing period. As a result of which translating of the Holy Book into this changing language was very difficult to be rendered. Therefore, movement of translation of the Qur’ān in Bengali started later in comparison to other languages like Urdu etc. However, this article will cover the following holy translations in Bengali:

1. Translation of the 30<sup>th</sup> part of the Qur’ān.
2. Translation of other parts of the Qur’ān.
3. Complete Translation and Vast illustration of the Qur’ān.

### **Translation of the 30<sup>th</sup> Part of the Qur’ān**

There are many scholastic persons in Bengal who played great role particularly for the translation of the 30<sup>th</sup> part of the Qur’ān. We may get more than 50 translations of this important part. They are as follows:

- 1) Translation of Maulānā Akbar ‘Alī: It was published in 1868 from Aḥmadīyyah Publishers.
  - 2) Banglā Ampārā: The translator of this part is Maulānā Ghulām Akbar Alabī who was a famous poet also. His translation is in poetic form. This was one of the oldest translations of the Qur’ān in Bengali. It was published in 1868 from Tantibāgān of Kolkātā.
  - 3) Niama-i-Khudā: This is the translation of the 30<sup>th</sup> part of the Qur’ān. It is also considered as the fine work on the Qur’ān. Maulānā Naṣīruddīn Aḥmad is its translator. He not only translated but also tried to include all the related matters like Faḍīlah of the Qur’ān, descending background etc with great care and exactitude. It was published in 1872 from Calcutta Press.
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- 4) Amparar Saral Anubād (Simple Translation of the 30<sup>th</sup> Part of the Qur'ān): The translator of this work is Maulānā Muḥammad Samīruddīn Aḥamad. He tried his level best to use very simple and randomly used words so that the common people might read and understand the meanings of the verses. The genuine illustration was also included according to the prominent tafsīr of that age which made it more and more acceptable to the readers. This was published in 1904 from Cotton Press of Kolkātā.
- 5) Kiron Gopal Singh: He was a Hindu by faith. He translated the 30<sup>th</sup> part of the Qur'ān which was published in 1908 from Kolkātā. It was translated in poetic shape published from Banik Union Press of Kolkātā. This translation has some distinctions. The translator made his copy corrected by some Muslim scholars to avoid the errors. Among these scholars are Maulānā Muḥammad Aḥmad and Shams-ul-'Ulamā' Maulānā Muḥammad Belaet Ḥossain. These scholars are more mention-worthy and they were the teachers of the then 'Āliyah Madrasah of Kolkātā. Besides, famous Qur'ān translator of Bengal Maulānā 'Abbās 'Alī revised it finally and he made the necessary correction so that this copy would be more authentic to the Muslim readers in particular.

However, none among the non-Muslim translators did such effort before him to make his book corrected and authentic. Again he used many foot-notes and commentaries to clear up the meanings of particular words which needed more illustration. Besides, before translating every chapter he gave its brief description and the reason behind its revelation which are very helpful for the readers. In spite of those aspects, some blunders were also committed by him. For example, "he wrote in

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appendix that the Holy Qur'ān was not compiled in the life of the Prophet (PBUH), rather it was compiled after one year of his death by Abū Bakr and 'Umar and it was kept with the custody of Abū Bakr for ten years".<sup>1</sup>

But every reader of Islamic history knows that this information is not correct because the duration of his rule as caliph Abū Bakr (MABPWH) was only two years, three months and ten or eleven days.<sup>2</sup>

- 6) Translation of Muḥammad Karīm Bakḥshā: This is one of the praise-worthy efforts regarding the translation of the Qur'ān. It was published from Noakhālī of Banglādesh in 1914.
- 7) Amparar Gadyānubād (Prosical Translation of the 30<sup>th</sup> Part of the Qur'ān): This work was done by the then Islamic Scholar of Banglādesh Maulānā A. F. 'Abdul Karīm. It was published in 1914 from Shebratolī Islamic Library of Tangail, one of the famous cities of Banglādesh.
- 8) Amparar Tafsīr (Illustration of the 30<sup>th</sup> Part of the Qur'ān): Although we get many translations and Tafsīrs of the 30<sup>th</sup> part of the Qur'ān this tafsīr has a mentionable distinction and that is, the total work was done in Arabic letters i.e. Bengali pronunciation in Arabic alphabet. But it is not clear why the writer took this method. However, this commentary was written by Maulānā Muḥammad Zulfiqār 'Alī. And it was published in 1934 from Noakhālī of Banglādesh.
- 9) Maulānā Munshī Muḥammad Karīm Bakḥshā. He was a true lover of Islamic knowledge. He was a good writer as well. His many valuable articles were published in several magazines which are vivid examples of his profound Islamic knowledge as well as the social affairs. Though he began to translate the full Qur'ān, he could only translate the 30<sup>th</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Appendix, Ampara-Kiron Gopal Singha, P. 120

<sup>2</sup> Tārīkh-i-Islam by Shāh Mu'īnuddīn Aḥmad Nadwī, Ma'ārif Press, A'zamgarh, 1963

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part. This is a fine sort of translation and was published in 1916 from the Tarīqat-ul-Islam Publishers of Kolkātā.

- 10) Yār Aḥmad translated some verses including the 30<sup>th</sup> part which was published in 1920 from Provincial Publishers of Dhākā. Yār Aḥmad was well-versed in Bengālī, Arabic, Persian and Urdu languages. So his translation was considered very nice in all aspects. This translation is entitled “Amparar Banglai Tafsīr” (Bengālī Illustration of the 30<sup>th</sup> Part of the Qur’ān). This translation was so satisfactory that the then Honorable Director of Education of the Government of Bengal selected it for the government sponsored libraries and as a gift on ceremonial occasions.<sup>1</sup>
- 11) Maulānā ‘Abdur Rashīd Şiddīqī translated the 30<sup>th</sup> part into poetry. It was published in 1928 from Chitagang of Banglādesḥ.
- 12) Translation of Munshī Dīdār Bakhsh Mollā. Its title is “Tafsīr-i-Duradī” published from Muḥammadī Publishers, Kolkātā in 1930. Maulānā Munshī translated some other parts of the Qur’ān but presently that work is not found anywhere.
- 13) Translation of Murshid ‘Alī which was named as “Qur’ān Darpan” and was published in 1930 from Kolkātā.
- 14) Translation of Qāḍī Nadhr-ul-Islām who was a rebel poet from Bengal. This translation was made in poetic form. It was magnificent one. This translation got vast popularity among the Bengali Muslims. It was published first from Kolkātā in 1933 and then several editions were issued which proved its wide acceptance. At last this pioneer translation was published by the Islamic Foundation of Dhākā in 1980.<sup>2</sup>
- 15) Translation of ‘Abdul Wāsik. It was also an exemplary work to the others. It is a distinctive work for the translator included in it the translation of the chapter Raḥmān. It was

<sup>1</sup> Calcutta Gazzete-29 July-1937.

<sup>2</sup> The Monthely Sawgat, Dhākā. 1377 Bengali Year. PP. 563-64.

published from Altafia Press of Kolkātā in 1933. Besides, some other chapters were translated by him.

- 16) Translation of Muḥammad Abū Bakr. It was published in 1934.
- 17) Qur'āner Banī (Teaching of the Qur'ān): It is a translation of the 30<sup>th</sup> part of the Qur'ān by Maulānā Muḥammad Ra'īsuddīn Aḥmad. It was published in 1935 from Kolkātā.
- 18) Translation of Muḥammad Ghulām Akbar. It was published in 1936 from Jessore City of Banglādesḥ. Including fresh translation he also made the illustration in this work.
- 19) Amparar Purnango Tafsīr (Complete Tafsīr of the 30<sup>th</sup> Part): Doubtlessly this is an excellent work subjecting the translation and illustration of the 30<sup>th</sup> part of the Qur'ān including the original Arabic text of the chapters' elaboration, foot-notes, background, necessary grammatical discussion etc. The valuable work was done by Maulānā Muḥammad Ghulām Akbar. He was considered in those days as one of the best Islamic theologians and Islamic thinkers. It is note-worthy here that for having more informative this work became very popular among the 'Ulamā' and Madrash students of Bengāl. However, this book was published in 1936 from Jessore of Banglādesḥ.<sup>1</sup>
- 20) Amparar Tafsīr (Tafsīr of the 30<sup>th</sup> Part of the Qur'ān): Maulānā Muḥammad Ibrāhīm Ḥussain is the author of this tafsīr. It was completed in two volumes. The writer elaborated every point of the verses to make it a detailed book. It was published in 1936 from Kumilla of Banglādesḥ.
- 21) Qur'āner Shikshā (Teaching of the Qur'ān): This is also a nice translation of the 30<sup>th</sup> part of Qur'ān by Maulānā Muḥammad Abū Duḥā Nūr Aḥmad who was a good writer. He added many commentaries and foot-notes in it after simple translation. It was published in 1938 from Islāmiyah Library of Dhākā.

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<sup>1</sup> Encyclopedia of Islam (Bengali), PP. 635.

- 22) Translation of Sayyid Abū Maṣṣūr. It is one of the praiseworthy works indeed. Its title is “Qur’ān Manzurah”. This valuable work was published in 1938 from Kolkātā.
- 23) Saral Ampara (Easy 30<sup>th</sup> Part of the Qur’ān): This is not merely a translation but it is a detailed tafsīr in two volumes. It was authored by Maulānā ‘Abdur Raṣṣhīd. Illustration of every verse, background of each chapter and important āyat etc were given there with great care and caution. It is also mentionable that it has no Arabic text. This valuable work was published in 1939 from Kolkātā.
- 24) Qur’āner Banī (The Saying of the Qur’ān): It is a simple translation of the 30<sup>th</sup> part of the Qur’ān with necessary foot-notes and commentaries. It was done by a prominent Islamic scholar and organizer Maulānā Munīruzzamān Islāmābādī. This was published in 1939 from Kolkātā.
- 25) Translation of Muḥammad Ismā’īl which was published in 1939 from Bahajigange of Kumillā District in Banglādeṣh.
- 26) Translation of Muḥammad Taimūr which was entitled “Qur’ān Probeshika”. This was, no doubt, a unique work. It was published in 1939 from Bahādur Bāzār of Dīnājpur District in Banglādeṣh.
- 27) Apart from men, some scholastic women also tried their best to perform this holy task among whom Begum Nūr Maḥal earned popular reputation and rank owing to her translated work is “Qur’ān Mukul”. She made a versification of the 30<sup>th</sup> part of the Qur’ān. This poetic translation was published in 1941 from Chittāganj of Banglādeṣh.
- 28) Translation of Maulānā Shams-ul-Ḥaq Farīdpūr being entitled “Ḥaqqānī Tasfīr” which was, without any doubt, a popular translation of Banglādeṣh till now. He published this work from Ḥamīdiyah Library of Dhākā in 1941.
- 29) The Qur’ānic exercise was not limited with only male persons, rather the Bengālī women also left unforgettable
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mark in this field. Begum Nūr Maḥal of Bengāl was compared with Rānī Gul Begum, the Queen of Bhopāl, Sulṭān Jahān Begum who wrote “Madārij-ul-Qur’ān” in 1935 and Waḥīdah Khanam of Bombay. All of them are very respectable for their great services in the field of Qur’ānic science. Their works were in Urdu. Likewise some Bengālī Muslim women contributed much to this field. Begum Nūr Maḥal made herself a remarkable translator of the Qur’ān by completing the “Qur’ān Mukul” which contains the exact translation of the 30<sup>th</sup> part of the Qur’ān. Its more than one edition were published which are the fresh acknowledgement of her book.<sup>1</sup>

- 30) Translation of Maulānā Mīzānur Raḥmān which he named as “Nurer Jhalak” (Ray of Light). He published it in 1944 from Kolkātā. The publisher’s name was ‘Kitāb Maḥal”
- 31) Translation of Muḥammad Shahīdullāh naming it as “Mahabanī” from Dhākā in 1946 on behalf of “Reneicence Publishers”.
- 32) Translation of Dr. Muḥammad ‘Abdul Qādir. This work was published in 1948 from Dhākā. Publisher’s name was “Eti Katha Book Depot”.
- 33) Kabye Qur’ān (Qur’ān in Versification): This is a versified translation of the 30<sup>th</sup> part of the Qur’ān which was done by Maulānā Ḥasan ‘Alī al-Alawī (b-1924). It has Arabic text as well. It was published in 1371H from Kumilla city of Banglādes̄h.
- 34) Translation of Maulānā Muḥammad Luṭfullāh which was named as “Tafsīru Luṭfullāh” from “The Ḥabībīyah Library” of Barisal Town of Banglādes̄h in 1951.
- 35) Translation of Maulānā Muḥammad Monowar ‘Alī which he translated in versification and it was published in 1951 from Sunam Gange Town of Banglādes̄h.

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<sup>1</sup>Nidā’-i-Islām, Sep-Oct.1973.P. 72.



- 36) Translation of Muftī Muḥammad Wafī who was a prominent Islamic theologian and had a lot of Qur'ānic knowledge. He published it from Islāmiyah Library of Dhākā in 1952.
  - 37) Translation of S.M. 'Abdul Ḥamīd which was published in 1954 from the Islāmiyah Tablīgh Mission of Rājshāhī, Banglādesh.
  - 38) Banī Ādam: It is a very fine versification of 30<sup>th</sup> part of the Qur'ān. The translator, Ghulām Muṣṭafā, was a prominent Bengālī poet. He had unquestionable capability of Bengālī language. As a result his book became so beautiful that he got warm welcome from all corners of Bengāl. After publishing this book his name and fame spread far and wide. It was published in 1957 from Muslim Bengāl Library of Dhākā.
  - 39) Kabye Qur'ān (Qur'ān in Versification): This is the versified translation of the 30<sup>th</sup> part of the Qur'ān. The translator, Maulānā Ḥasan 'Alī al-'Alawī (b.1924) copied the original Arabic text. It was published in 1371H from Kumillā City of Banglādesh.
  - 40) Translation of Muḥammad 'Alī Ḥasan 'Alī which he versified from beginning to the end. Its title was also "Kabb-i-Qur'ān" (Qur'ān in Verse). He published it from Biṣhwa Jahān Library of Dhākā in 1959.
  - 41) Translation of Maulānā 'Abdur Raḥmān which was published in 1961 from Bangla Academy of Dhākā.
  - 42) Translation of Khondākar Maulānā Muḥammad Ḥusain which was published in 1963 from Rājshāhī of Banglādesh.
  - 43) Translation of Muḥammad 'Abdur Raḥmān who was a Physician by profession. He translated it in poetic form. This marvelous work was published in 1965 from Dhākā.
  - 44) Translation of Maulānā Muḥammad Nūr-ul-Amīn, which was published in 1967 from the Umm-i-Kulsūm Publishers of Dīnāzpūr District of Banglādesh. It is also a versified translation.
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- 45) Ampara (the 30<sup>th</sup> Part): It is a very formal translation of the Qur'ān. It was done by Maulānā Nūruddīn Aḥmad. It was published in 1968 from Book Syndicate of Dhākā.
  - 46) Translation of Ibn Zamīr which comprised some selected chapters along with the 30<sup>th</sup> part of the Qur'ān. It was published in 1971 from The Academy of Pākistān Affaires, Dhākā.
  - 47) Translation of Waḥīd-ul-'Ālam which was called as "Qur'āner Marmo Banī". This work was published in 1973 from 'Ālam Bag Prokāshanī of Chitangange of Banglādesḥ. It was also a versified one.
  - 48) Translation of Maulānā Niṣr-ul-Ḥaq which was published in 1973 from Islāmiyah Library of Chitāgange of Banglādesḥ.
  - 49) Translation of Maulānā Muḥammad Ibn-ul-Mujāhid. It was published in 1975 from "The Munīr Brothers" of Dhākā.
  - 50) Translation of Maulānā 'Ubaid 'Alī which was entitled "al-Qur'ān-ul-Ḥakīm". It was published in 1978 from "Biswa Banī Prokāshanī" of Dhākā. The writer illustrated widely including the primary translation of the verses.
  - 51) Translation of Maulānā Muḥammad Abū Hashim. Its title was "Alor Kona" (Ray of Light). It was published in 1978 from Dhākā.
  - 52) Translation of Maulānā Mīzānur Raḥmān which was published in 1980 from the "Boy Bitan" of Dhākā. Maulānā Mīzānur Raḥmān also added to it some other chapters's translation and Tafsīr apart from the 30<sup>th</sup> part of the Qur'ān.
  - 53) Translation of Maulānā Muḥammad Firdous Khān which was very acceptable to the Islamic scholars of both Bengal and it was published from the Islamic Foundation, Dhākā in 1982.
  - 54) Translation of Maulānā 'Abdud Dayyān Chishtī which was published in 1987 from the Kathakolī, a famous publisher of Dhākā.
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- 55) Translation of Maulānā Sharīf-ul-Ḥaq which was another versified translation of 30<sup>th</sup> part of the Qur’ān. This work was published in 1987 from Mīrpūr of Dhākā City.<sup>1</sup> Now-a-days there are many government sponsored Madrasah in which Tafsīr-i-Jalālain is taught from class ninth to class Kāmil (Graduation). As the students are Bengālīs, so, some translations of Tafsīr-i-Jalālain have been made. Among them two following translations are very mentionable:
- 56) Translation of Maulānā Muḥammad Muḥid-ul-Islām who is a prominent teacher of a Madrasah. Although its 30<sup>th</sup> part has been translated so far, we get universal meaning, usual translation and illustration. Besides, Science of Tafsīr and biographies of some Mufassirs have also been given at the outset of the work. This translation has been published in 2016 from the Balakā Publications of Kolkātā.
- 57) Translation of Maulānā Muḥammad ‘Atīyyur Raḥmān who is a teacher of a Madrasah of Kolkātā. This is also the 30<sup>th</sup> part of that Tafsīr. This work was published in 2011 from the Raḥmānia Library of Kolkātā.
- 58) Translation of Amīruddīn Basunia: It is said that he was the first translator who rendered a complete part of the Qur’ān with great care and exactitude. But as a matter of sorrow, no information was found about his translation.
- 59) Translation of Maulānā Abū Ṭāhir. He named it as “Rāh-i-Qur’ān”. It was not merely a translation but also a complete Tafsīr having vast illustration with reliable and ample references.
- 60) This is a big work on translating the 30<sup>th</sup> part of the Qur’ān, entitled “Amparar Bangla Anubad” (Bengālī Translation of the 30<sup>th</sup> Part of the Qur’ān). Maulānā Muḥammad Isrā’īl

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<sup>1</sup> Tārīkhū Tablīghil Qur’ānil Karīm was Miata Miata A-min Ala Tarjamatihi Bill Lugatil Banglish, PP. 193–203.

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completed it into two volumes. After fine translation he gave the broad elaboration particularly he gave the vast discussion about the back ground of each chapter. However, the translator took all effort to make it an informative one.

61) Translation of Maulānā Muḥammad Muḥiyuddīn Shāmī which was called as “Ḍiyā’-ul-Qur’ān” (Light of the Qur’ān). And it was published from one of the famous publishers of Banglādesh.

62) The translator Dr. Muḥammad Shāhidullāh was a pensive person who acquired profound knowledge in many languages like Sanskrit, Bengali, Pāli, Arabic, Urdu, Hindi, Persian, English etc. He was a Professor of Dhākā University. And it is relevant to mention that he was the first Muslim who gained mastery over Sanskrit. This is why random usage of Sanskrit words are seen in his translation which became like stumbles before ordinary readers. Sanskrit is the mother language of the Bengali. In spite of that problem it is one of the authentic translations of the Qur’ān in Bengālī.<sup>1</sup>

### **Translation of Certain Chapter and Verses of the Qur’ān**

#### **(other than the 30<sup>th</sup> part)**

Usually many people of Bengāl believe that 5 chapters have more virtue than others. Those are Yāsīn, al-Mulk, al-Raḥmān, al-Wāqī’ah and al-Muzzammil. They are together called – Panj Surah (Five Chapters). These five chapters are recited in the morning and evening regularly by the Bengālī Muslims. Apart from those books, some works are also seen containing the

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<sup>1</sup> Exercise of the Holy Qur’ān in Bengali, P. 480.

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translation of specific verses of the Qur'ān. As a result some writers tried to translate those chapters into Bengālī. Besides, the chapter Fātiḥah was translated in several numbers. Till now near about 20 translated works other than the 30<sup>th</sup> part of the Qur'ān have been published but only 16 are available. Maulānā 'Abdur Raḥīm is considered as the pioneer in this field. Then Mīr Faḍal 'Alī is the most mentionable person whose work named as "Qur'ān Konika". However, a brief description has been given in the following:

- 1) Qur'ān Kalāmullāh: This is one of the incomplete translations of the Qur'ān. From the beginning of the chapter Fātiḥa to 5<sup>th</sup> part of the Qur'ān had been translated. The person who was blessed to do such work is Khondokar Mīr Waḥīd 'Alī bin Khondokar Mīr Walī. It was published in 1868.
  - 2) Qur'āner Anubād (Translation of the Qur'ān): This translation was done by Mr. Rājendra Nāth Mitra in 1879. It was published from Kolkātā. He only completed the chapters al-Fātiḥah and al-Baqarah. But the translation was not proper according to the Islamic faith and Arabic grammar. So this work could not spread vastly.
  - 3) Qur'ān-o-Ḥadisser Bakḥaya (Elaboration of the Qur'ān and Ḥadith): This work deals with some selected chapters' translation as well as some important Ḥadīth too. The whole 30<sup>th</sup> part and some others chapters were included in it. Necessary foot-notes, illustration of important words etc were added to it which helped this work to get the popularity among the Bengālī readers. The translator of this work is Maulānā Miyānjān Kamālī. Although some Ḥadīths were also included to it, here only the introduction of the Qur'ānic part is made. However in those days, this type of works in which
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discussion of Qur'ān and Sunnah was hardly seen in Bengāl. So from this aspect it is one of the pioneer one in relevant subject. This was published in 1893 from Korotia town of Banglādesh.

- 4) Sūra Ikhlāṣer Kabyanubad (Versified Translation of the Chapter Ikhlāṣ): The name of translator is Shhāh Sūfi 'Abdus Sattār who was very fond of Qur'ānic exercise. This translation is very nice and easy readable. Besides, some other chapters also were included with the chapter Ikhlāṣ like al-Wāqiyah, Yāsīn, al-Raḥmān, al-Mulk etc. In fact the versified translation was very much popular in those days. As a result this work got wide popularity among the Bengālī readers. However, it was published in 1916 from Alṭāfi Press of Kolkātā.
  - 5) Sūrah Yāsīner Banganubad (Bengālī Translation of the Chapter Yāsīn): It has been said previously that reciting of the chapter Yāsīn and some other chapters like al-Raḥmān, al-Mulk etc. are used to do more than any other chapter of the Qur'ān. So the scholastic person tried to translate and give the Faḍīlah of those chapters in random. Sūrah Yāsīner Banganubad is also like that. This work was done by Maulānā Muḥammad 'Alī. This small work was published in 1928 from Kolkātā.
  - 6) Tarjama Panje Sūrah (Translation of Five Chapters): Yāsīn, al-Raḥmān, al-Wāqī'ah, al-Mulk and al-Naba' were translated in it. Maulānā Kafīluddīn Ṣiddīqī is its translator. It is not merely a translation but it is a miny tafsīr of those chapters. Because he gave necessary words, illustration, foot-notes and nice commentaries too for easy understanding of the readers. This work was published from Tangail city of Banglādesh in 1929.
  - 7) Translaion of Maulānā Rūḥ-ul-Amīn. He was staunch and very scholastic person and was called as 'Allām-i-Bengāl.
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Simultaneously he was Mufassir, Mubāḥith, Journalist, Faqīh, Adīb, Wā'iz, Muḥaddith and Qārī. His name and fame spread all over the Indian Sub-continent particularly in both Bengāls, Assām and Tripura and some parts of Burma. During his period there were some Christians who ceaselessly tried to corrupt the correct meanings of the Qur'ān. As a result the Bengālī Muslims were about to misunderstand of the Qur'ān. Besides, some Hindus who entered in this field also did such mistakes due to the lack of enough Islamic education. Maulānā Rūḥ-ul-Amīn stood before them and made a strong protest against them. So, he wrote down Tafsīr of three beginning parts of the Qur'ān. His first Tafsīr was of the 1<sup>st</sup> part which he began to pen down in 1917 and in 1930 he finished the 3<sup>rd</sup> part. Then he started the 4<sup>th</sup> part but he did not complete it till his death. Yet through this tafsīr, he became successful to show before the readers many blunders committed by non-Muslims in different Tafsīrss written by them. Even now-a-days, the millions of Bengālī Muslims depend on his tafsīr to find exact meanings of the Qur'ān.<sup>1</sup>

- 8) Qur'āner Panch Sūrah (Five Chapters of the Qur'ān): Yāsīn, al-Raḥmān, al-Wāqī'ah, al-Mulk and al-Muzzamil were translated in this work. Khān Bahādur Aḥsānullāh is its translator. Along with translation he added some commentaries to make the meanings clearer. However, this valuable work was published in 1931 from Kolkātā.
- 9) Namāzer Sūra (The Chapter of Ṣalāt): It is also a mentionable effort of Khān Bahādur Aḥsānullāh who was a realistic person in his thought. He wanted to compile some small chapters which are usually used in daily Prayers. According to him it was extremely needed

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<sup>1</sup>Dutiful Maulānā Rūḥ-ul-Amīn, P. 288.

because it is easier to learn those chapters from a small work than a big one. This is why, as the pensive person Janāb Aḥsānullāh took this decision to collect some small chapters from the 30<sup>th</sup> part and to compile in a small book shape. However, it was published in 1932 from Kolkātā and several editions were published which is a proof for the popularity of the work.

- 10) Qur'āner Katha (Saying of the Qur'ān): It is not the translation of any particular chapter or any part of the Qur'ān. It is the collection of some specific āyats of the Qur'ān. The collector of this work is Maulānā Muḥammad 'Abdul Wahhāb Ṣiddīq who was among those people who devoted themselves to spread the Islamic education and teaching among the Bengālī Muslims at any cost. This work was published in 1934 from Āzād Press of Kolkātā.
  - 11) Al-Qaul-ul-Matīn: This is a small work containing the translation of the chapter Yāsīn. It was translated by Maulānā Nūr-ul-Islām. He did not stop with simple translation rather he tried to explain meanings by giving vast illustration of every verse according to the earlier prominent mufassirs. This small work added a new flavor into the Qur'ānic exercise of Bengāl during the 20<sup>th</sup> century. It was published in 1941 from Shilhot of Banglādesh.
  - 12) Translation of Muḥammad Kudrat-i-Khodā who indeed was not the scholar of Islam rather he was a formal educationist. But he had praisable thirst for Islam specially the Qur'ān and Sunnah. He learned Arabic primarily. Then he read many Tafsīrs from which he got mastery over the Qur'ān, Sunnah and the Fiqh. Then he became eager to work regarding the Qur'ānic Science. As a result he began to translate the Qur'ān into Bengālī. He started this major task
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- in 1946. He wanted to finish the work strictly but unfortunately could not finish it except five parts (1<sup>st</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup>).
- 13) Sūra Raḥmāner Kabyanubad (Versified of Sura Raḥmān): Maulānā Badruzza Ḥabībullāh is its translator. Unimaginably it is nice translation that everybody may get interest to read it. However, it was published in 1954 from Barishal city of Banglādesh.
- 14) Tafsīr-i-Sūrah Yūsuf: Originally this work was written by Maulānā Muftī Dīn Muḥammad in Urdu. Maulānā Mustafīdur Raḥmān translated it into Bengālī. It was published from Central Tafsīr Committee of Dhākā in 1963.
- 15) Sūra Yāsīner Tafsīr (Tafsīr of the Chapter Yāsīn): Although it contains merely one chapter, Yāsīn, but for the reason of prolong elaboration it became enough big in size. The author of this work is Maulānā Muḥammad Sirāj-ul-Islām. It was published in 1969 from Rājshāhī city of Banglādesh.
- 16) Al-Qur’ān-i-Narider 25 Sūrah (25 Chapters for Women from the Qur’ān): In this valuable work the chapter and verses which are related to the women are translated and discussed directly or indirectly. Mu’allimah Murshidah Begum is the compiler and translator of this work. It began from the chapter Āli ‘Imrān and ended with the chapter Abū Lahab. The learned translator showed her efficiency in translating and discussing the inheritance system of Islam directly from the Qur’ān. It is mention-worthy here that the Almighty ordered to give the female half of the male person when the inheritance wealth will be distributed among off-springs of a person who passed away. The Qur’ān is saying in this text “وللذكر وللذكر مثل حظ الأنثيين” (Tr.: For the male the double portion of a female will be given. Al-Nisā’). Against this divine saying many persons penned down and spent a lot of pages to

prove that Islamic rulers are always in favor of male person. Their saying is that, it is irrational that even in the case of brother and sister being equally the off-springs of a person who passed away, his leaving wealth is unequally being distributed among them. The great pensive translator tried successfully to prove that Almighty's saying is completely correct in all aspects. Because, according to the Islamic family guide, the male of a family is responsible to lead family's expenses. On the other hand, the women are totally free from that duty. So, the male only gets from few persons where as the women get it from many person. So, if the matter is seen rightly then it will be proved that the inheritance system of Islam is not only good and rational but it must be followed if we want real judgment regarding the same. The translator Mua'llimah Murshidah Begum mentioned this very matter through praisable way. In this way she decorated her book which became a vivid acknowledgement of women's extra rights and facilities in Islam. However, in this way she continued her writing. Without any question, it must be said that this peerless work increased the new energy for those who work in the field to establish Islamic law in the society. It was published from Peace Publications of Dhākā in 2014.

### **Complete Translation and Tafsīrs of the Qur'ān in Bengālī**

1. Qur'ān: This is a complete translation with necessary commentaries. Translator is Sri Philip Biswās who was basically Hindu but later he embraced Christianity and took an oath to establish it in Bengal. Though he was not acquainted with Arabic, he jumped into translating the
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Qur'ān. In fact his intention was not honest. He wanted only to defame the Qur'ān. He said that the Qur'ān is full of contradictories which proves the utter unstability of the author. This is why, this book was rejected by the Bengali Muslims. However, this was published in 1819 from Christian Society of Kolkātā.

2. Qur'āner Anubād (Translation of the Qur'ān): This translation was done by Mr Rājendra Nāth Mitrā in 1879. It was published from Kolkātā. He only completed the chapters al-Fātiḥah and al-Baqarah. But the translation was not proper according to the Islamic faith and Arabic grammar. So this work could not spread vastly.
  3. Translation of Taracharan Bandopadhya: He embraced Christianity and devoted himself to preach that religion among the Indian people specially he wanted to work into the Muslims to convince them regarding the Christianity. Besides another intention was to search out any mistake into the Qur'ān. This is why he started to translate it. He finished the translating from the first part to the twelve part of the Qur'ān. However this was published in 1882.
  4. Furqān: This is a complete translation of the Qur'ān done by the famous Christian Missionary H.G. Rouse who devoted himself to preach the Christian religion among the Bengalis particularly among the Bengali Muslims. So apparently this was a good endeavour to the field of Qur'ān but in fact his intention was to search out any mistake through which he would prove that the Christianity is the superior to Islam. Even he demanded that the Qur'ān was not descended by the Almighty upon the Prophet Muḥammad. It is merely a creation of his own. The Catalogue of Bengal Museum said in this regard-- This work was published from the Christian Trust of Kolkātā in 1883.
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5. Girīsh Chandra Sen ka Torjamah wa Tafsīr: who acquired enough knowledge of Arabic, Persian, Urdu, English and Bengali.<sup>1</sup> He started to translate it in 1881 and it was completed in 1885. He mentioned that he took maximum help from Tafsīr-i-Ḥusainī and Tafsīr Shāh ‘Abdul Qādir. Both the Tafsīrs are in Urdu. Though it is an unprecedented work on the Qur’ān in Bengali language, it is not beyond mistakes and doubt. Perhaps he had not acquired profound knowledge in Arabic specially to work regarding the Qur’ān. So, he could not follow the real spirit and inner meaning of the Qur’ān which deals with the all matters of the universe. For example, he translated the word “Raḥīm” as Rāmā, one of gods of Hindus. If we see deeply his translation, many such blunders must be seen. However, in spite of those mistakes, Srī Girīsh Chandra Sen will be remembered as the first complete translator of the Qur’ān in Bengali.
6. Translation of Maulānā Muḥammad Na’īmuddīn which got much popularity from the then Bengali Muslims. Apart from this, essential elaboration and ample foot-notes were added for easy understanding of the readers. This work was published from Korotia of Banglādesh in 1887.
7. Translation of Maulānā ‘Abbās ‘Alī who was the pioneer translator of the Qur’ān in the Bengali language. He belonged to Ahl-i-Ḥadīth group. He completed this price-worthy work in 1895. This translation has some distinctions as the writer translated the Qur’ān into two language – Urdu and Bengali. He took help to finish this unique one from-(1) Tafsīru Abī al-Sa’ūd, (2) Tafsīr-ul-Kabīr, (3) Al-Jāmi’ li Aḥkāmīl Qur’ān, (4) Tafsīru Jalālīn, (5) Tafsīru Ḥusainī, and (6) Tafsīru Fatḥīl Bayān etc.

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<sup>1</sup> Bangla Islami Biswakosh, P. 383.

8. Translation of Khān Bahādur Taslīmuddīn which was the second complete translation of the Qur’ān done by Muslim scholars. He took sixteen years to finish it. In 1908, he completed this praise-worthy task. In that period a Bengali monthly was so popular among the Muslims named “Islām Procharok” (The Preacher of Islam).

It was widely circulated during 1891 to 1908, Maulānā Khān Bahādur Taslīmuddīn published his translation with some relevant illustrations. Soon after publishing, this valuable work became like popular specially among the Bengali Muslims. The translator got benefitted from many reputed Tafsīrs like – Tafsīr-i-Ḥaqqānī, Tafsīr-i-Qādirī, and some other latest Tafsīrs in Arabic, Urdu and Persian. Besides, he tried to protest against improper analysis and illustrations made by Muḥammad ‘Alī Lāhorī in his Tafsīr – Fī Ma’ānil Qur’ān al-Karīm as well as the ugly effort of some orientalists who translated the Qur’ān. However, those causes made this translation famous and great popular.<sup>1</sup>

9. Qur’āner Tafsīr: Author of this work is Maulānā Muḥammad Sanī. It is a complete Tafsīr of the Qur’ān. From beginning to the end he tried to follow the method of some prominent Mufassirs in his work so that it would not be considered as the self-imagined tafsīr which is, according to the Islamic law, subject to reject as “*Tafsīr bir Ra’y*”. Though some said that this is not his own work, rather it is, in fact the Bengali translation of some Urdu Tafsīrs. In spite of such type of complaint, unquestionably it must be said that this work has a great value because in those days the translation and tafsīr were not generally available in Bengali language. This is why “Qur’āner Tafsīr” is among those tafsīrs which played the unforgettable role to spread the Qur’ānic knowledge in

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<sup>1</sup> Bengali Books of Muslim, P. 441.

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an un-divided Bengal. However, it was published in 1911 from Sirāj Ganj city of Banglādesh.

10. Qur'āner Anubād o Bakhaya (Translation of the Qur'ān and Illustration): Prominent Islamic theologian Maulānā Muḥammad A. F. 'Abdul Karīm is the translator and elaborator of this valuable work. In this work he tried that the discussion should not be so long, rather he finished it in medium length so that the readers would continue their interest in reading. This work was published in 1914 from Tangail city of Banglādesh.
  11. Qur'āner Anubād (Translation of the Qur'ān): It is not a complete translation of the Qur'ān, rather it is the first part and the last part of the Qur'ān. Munshī Muḥammad Karīm Bakhsh is its translator. It was published from Entali, Kolkātā in 1916.
  12. Translation of William Goldshake who was a Christian by religion. According to the reliable source, he was an important member of a Missionary Committee which came from South Australia to propagate Christianity among the Bengalis. Their centre was at the famous district town of the then Banglādesh, Farīdpūr. Indeed the intention of the writer was to show the mistake of the Qur'ān before the Muslims so that they might be eager to embrace Christianity. He started to translate the Qur'ān in 1908 and finished it in 1920. This translation was full of mistakes, improper illustration and lie. Even he wrote in his preface that – the Prophet gave permission to his companions to tell lie. Besides he demanded in it that the Prophet learned many religious matters from the then Christian learned persons of Madīnah. He also emphasized that the Qur'ān broke the rules of Arabic grammar. In spite of those unpardonable mistakes, Mr. Goldshek decorated
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this work with different colors and nice binding so that the Muslims would be eager to buy and read it.<sup>1</sup>

13. Translation of Maulānā Sheikh Faḍlur Raḥmān Chowdhurī who was a prominent Muslim scholar and played great role to spread Islamic knowledge among the Bengali Muslims. He began to translate in 1926 and through continuous effort he finished it in 1930. Among many other translations, this one has chequered distinctions as he summerised every chapter before translating briefly. Besides, it contains powerful and fittest writing protest of those who tried to defame the Qurʾān and the Sunnah through this work.
14. Translation of Maulānā ʿAbdul Ḥakīm and ʿAlī Ḥasan which played a great role to quench thirst of Qurʾānic knowledge. The title of their work among the both Maulānā ʿAbdul Ḥakīm was a great scholar of Islamic and formal education. Primarily he was an cumulist and literature and established Bengali poet. He became a teacher after finishing his education. But he did not continue this work. After giving up teaching he sank into research on Qurʾānic Science. During this period he worked laboriously without any cease. At last he started to translate the Qurʾān in 1922 and it ended in 1938. It is mention-worthy here that he used the method and style from previous many Tafsīrs so that his Tafsīr would be accepted to the staunch Muslims who always mentioned the root of ʿUlamāʾ-i-Mutaqaddimīn (Top Scholars) regarding the Qurʾān and Sunnah. However, his book – The Tafsīr of Qurʾān became so popular that the Saudi Government accepted it and published on behalf of the Rābiṭah al-ʿĀlam al-Islāmī to make the Bengali Muslims aware about the Qurʾānic knowledge who live in U.K. Though the writer used ample Urdu and

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<sup>1</sup> Tadaulul Qurʾānīl Karīm hil Lugatic BangliyahPP. 175–185

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Persian word into his Bengali translation, the present generation may face some problems because on that period maximum Bengali Muslims used Urdu and Persian in their daily and academic activities. But now-a-days, specially Banglādeshī Muslims grabbed Bengālī language and they almost left Urdu and Persian. Even their depending on mother tongue is increasing day by day. This is why the present Bengali Muslims are not so much habituated in Urdu and Persian. So the new Bengali generation get stumble in reading this Tafsīr. However, in spite of some demerits, this Tafsīr must got the credit from the learned persons as it is prolific one.<sup>1</sup>

15. Translation of Maulānā Muḥammad Akram Khān who made a long effected revolution, among the Bengali Muslims who were then under the bondage of British rules. On the other hand they became deprived from Government facilities. So, Muslims fall into poverty, less education and depression. In that critical situation some persons devoted their whole lives to look after the helpless and backward Muslims. And Maulānā Akram Khān was one of them who ceaselessly and laboriously tried to awaken them in their life. After completing his formal education he started his career as a journalist. Later he became editor of the then high circulated Bengali monthly “Moḥammadī”, published from Kolkātā. Maulānā Akram Khān was so much influenced by the thought of Sir Sayyid Aḥmad. As a result he became a famous original thinker. He started to translate the Qur’ān into Bengali in 1923 and it was finished in 1960. It is mention-worthy here that some critics accused him that he dislocated the method of exact process regarding the Tafsīr.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> History of Bengali Literature, P. 164. And Bangla Zaban Khein Tarājim –o- Tafsīr, P. 657.

<sup>2</sup> Tarikhu Tabligil Qur’ānil Karim, P. 96-100.

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16. Al-Qur'ān: It is the complete translation of the Qur'ān. Renowned Islamic scholar Maulānā Muḥammad Shahādat Ḥussain Farrokh is its translator. This work was published from Bagura city Banglādesh in 1928.
  17. Qur'āner Alo (Light of the Qur'ān): This is a complete translation of the Qur'ān. Very few foot-notes and commentaries were given in some places. Maulānā Muḥammad Aẓhar Uddīn is the translator of this book. He did not want to make it a big one in size to avoid the irritation of the readers. This book was published in 1931 from Kolkātā.
  18. Qur'āner Banganubād (Bengālī Translation of the Qur'ān): This is also a fresh translation of the Qur'ān done by Maulānā Muḥammad 'Ābid 'Alī. It was published first in 1932 from Dhākā. From then many editions were published which proves that this work got wide popularity among the readers.
  19. Tafsīr-i-Maẓharī: It is a complete tafsīr written by Maulānā 'Alā'uddīn Azharī. This work was widely read throughout Bengal. It was published in 1933 from Dhākā.
  20. Translation of Maulānā Muḥammad Naqīb Uddīn Khān which was published from The Alṭāfī Publishers of Kolkātā. Although primarily he wanted to translate the 30<sup>th</sup> Part of the Qur'ān, in 1938, soon after completing this part he sank into the rest parts. At last he made a complete translation of the Qur'ān in 1949. He mainly took help from the prolific commentary "Tafsīr-Bayān-ul-Qur'ān" written by Maulānā Ashraf 'Alī Thānawī, Tafsīr of Maulānā Nadhīr Aḥmad and the "Tafsīr-i-'Azīzī". However, there is no way of doubt that Maulānā Naqībuddīn Khān's translation including vast illustration of the Qur'ān is full of rich and exactitude.
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21. Qur'ān Probesh (Entering into the Qur'ān): This is a simple translation of the Qur'ān without a short discussion done by Srī Bāsantā Kumār Mukhopādhaya. In fact he had keen thirst of Islamic learning. He learned Arabic and Persian at primary level. Then he started to translate the 30<sup>th</sup> part of the Qur'ān. Even he bore all the expenses for publishing this work. Because, according to him the financial condition of the Muslim community is very bad. They are hardly able to buy some books. However, it is remarkable that no major mistakes is seen in this work which is random got in many other books written by Hindus and Christians. In fact it is because the difference of intentions. Perhaps Sri Basanta Kumār Mukhāpādhaya had honest intention behind this great task. However, this work was published in 1937 from Dhākā.<sup>1</sup>
22. Tafsīre Ashrafī: It is the Bengali translation of Tafsīr-i-Bayān-ul-Qur'ān written by Maulānā Ashraf 'Alī Thānawī. Maulānā Muḥammad Nūr-ur-Raḥmān and Maulānā 'Abdul Jalīl Mazāhirī translated it. Although it is a fresh translation of Tafsīr-i-Byān-ul-Qur'ān, the translators used several foot-notes and commentaries at the margin of every page. Yet it is, truly, very helpful for the readers to understand the meanings of the verses clearly. However, this valuable work was published in 1941 from Imdādiyah Library of Dhākā.
23. Ḥafīẓul Qādrī: This is a complete and concise tafsīr of the Qur'ān. This tafsīr has some checquired distinctions. According to reliable sources the writer of this work Maulānā Munīruddīn Aḥmad benefitted by many famous tafsīrs like Tafsīr-i-Jalālāin, Tafsīr Kabīr, Tafsīr-i-Ibn Kathīr etc. so that his work would be acceptable to the readers in all aspects. He illustrated the verses righteously and the

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<sup>1</sup> Qur'ān Probesh, P. 1.

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readers may not get any clumsy in this work. The writer strictly followed to finish it in small size. His aim was not to make the readers irreted. So he completed it in a volume. However, having enough qualitative values this tafsīr got wide acceptance from the readers. It was published in 1947 from Rangāpūr of Dhākā.

24. Qur'āner Banī (Saying of The Qur'ān): It is a complete tafsīr in one volume written by the prominent Islamic scholar Maulānā Abul Faḍl. He tried his level best to avoid all types of mistakes. Only some chapters like al-'Aṣr, al-Naṣr, al-Wvqi'ah etc. were discussed vastly where as the writer avoided long illustration in maximum chapter. However, this work was published in 1949 from Khoshroj Kitāb Maḥal of Dhākā.
  25. Qur'āner Anubād (Translation of the Qur'ān): This is a simple translation of the Qur'ān by Ḥājī Ghulām Muḥammad Muḳhtār who was an advocate of Dhākā High Court. He used some foot-notes and explanations of specific words. Although he was not a educated from a madrasah, he had keen interest of Islamic knowledge and culture. As a result he always tried to be busy in Qur'ānic exercise whenever he got chance. In this work the original Arabic text of the verses were not copied, only the Bengali translation has been done. This work was published in 1949 from Jamālpūr of Dhākā.
  26. Tafsīrul Qur'ān: This is a complete tafsīr of the Qur'ān having four volumes authored by Nūrul Islām who was also an advocate. He was well educated in Arabic, Bengali, Persian, Urdu and English. He resolved to spread the Qur'ānic teachings among the Bengali people. It was also his intention that the Bengali translation and tafsīr must would have more qualitative so that the elite and high educated persons would get interest in this field. However, he finished this tafsīr with
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ample foot-notes, huge commentaries and vast illustration of each verse. This valuable work was published in 1950 from Rājshāhī city of Dhākā.

27. Qur'āner Bangla Anubād (Bengali Translation of the Qur'ān): This is not merely a simple but also a vast illustration of the Qur'ān. It was authored by Sayyid Muḥammad Ishāq. He was a thinker and visionary writer. Several valuable articles were published in many reputed magazines. However, he did not copy the original Arabic text wholly, he partially did it after a long gap of time. In another word all the distinctions of a great tafsīr are available in it. It has five volumes and was published from Barishal city of Banglādes̄h in 1951.
  28. Al-Qur'ān: This is a translation of the Qur'ān with illustration. It was done by Maulānā Muḥammad 'Abdur Quraiṣhī. It has two volumes. It was published in 1952 from Dhākā.
  29. Sūra Raḥmāner Kabyanubād (Versified Translation of the Chapter al- Raḥmān): It was done by Maulānā Badruzza Ḥabībullāh. It is, no doubt, a nice translation. However, it was published in 1954 from Barishal city of Banglādes̄h.
  30. Kabāyā Qur'ān (Versified Qur'ān): This is a complete translation of the Qur'ān in fine versified shape. It was done by Maulānā Muḥammad Muḥsin 'Alī Sarkār. It was published from Rājshāhī city of Banglādes̄h in 1957.
  31. Qur'āner Banī (Saying of the Qur'ān): The translator of this work is Maulānā Muḥammad 'Abduṣh Shākūr who was a social worker of Banglādes̄h. He wanted to spread the Qur'ānic knowledge among the Bengali Muslims in particular and all the people in general through the vernacular. Although he avoided elaboration, he didn't forget to give illustration of specific words which need to be explained more. Besides, the Faḍīlah of the chapter,
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distinction of them and the background the revelation of each chapter had also been given with great care and caution. This work was published from Jāmi'ah Nisariah of Barishal city of Banglādesh in 1957.<sup>1</sup>

32. Qur'āne Artha (Meaning of the Qur'ān): This is a complete tafsīr of the Qur'ān having five volumes. It is in both forms-poetic and free verse. It was authored by Maulānā Muḥammad Wāḥid 'Alī. We get in it the original Arabic text which added to the popularity of this work. It was published in 1958 from Jessore city of Banglādesh.
33. Qur'ān Sharīf-Bangla Anubād (Bengali Translation of the Qur'ān): Muḥammad Abul Khair is the author of this work. With original Arabic text very nice and exact translation was done which helped it to be more popular in Bengal. It was published in 1958 from Dhākā.
34. Qur'āner Anubād (Translation of the Qur'ān): Maulānā Shāh Muḥammad Nūrul Hudá is the writer of this work. It is free from original Arabic text of the verses only the Bengali translation was given. It was finished into two volumes. This work was published in 1959 from Noakhālī city of Banglādesh.
35. Sharanubad Qur'ān Sharīf (Translation of the Essence of the Qur'ān): It is a simple translation of the Qur'ān done by Maulānā Muḥammad Mirzā Sulṭān Aḥmad. He did not give broad elaboration of any word to keep remain in small size. This work was published in 1960 from Dhākā.
36. Qur'ān Sharīf: This is a complete translation of the Qur'ān with ample foot-notes, several commentaries including vast description of specific words. It was published from The Qur'ān Prochar Press of Kolkātā in 1961.
37. Qur'āner Anubād (Translation of the Qur'ān): This is a vivid example of praise-worthy effort regarding the Qur'ānic

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<sup>1</sup> Encyclopedia of Islam (Bengali), P. 637.

- exercise in Bengal. It is a complete translation of the Qur'ān. It was done by Maulānā Amīnul Islām (b-1932). It was published from Kumilla city of Banglādesh in 1962. Apart from this work the translator had two other works named "Jibon-o-Qur'ān" (Life and the Qur'ān) and "Nūr-ul-Qur'ān".
38. Tarjamatu Tafsīri Aṣhrafī: Undoubtedly Tafsīr Bayān-ul-Qur'ān written by Maulānā Aṣhraf 'Alī Thānawī is one of those Tafsīrs on which thousands of Muslims are dependent for correctness. Maulānā Sheikh 'Abdul Wāhid translated this Tafsīr into Bengali in 1962 which was published from Dār-ul-Ishā'at Islāmiyah, Kolkātā.<sup>1</sup>
39. Qur'āner Bistarito Bakhya (Broad Illustration of the Qur'ān): It is a complete tafsīr with ample information from the Prophetic Traditions and other sources. The author is Maulānā Maḥmūd Raḥmān who was a pro-Islamic writer. It has original Arabic text of the Qur'ān also. It was published in 1963 from Aṣhrafia Library of Dhākā.
40. Tafsīr-i-Sūrah Yūsuf: Originally this commentary was compiled by Maulānā Muftī Dīn Muḥammad in Urdu. Maulānā Mustafīdur Raḥmān translated it into Bengali. It was published from Central Tafsīr Committee of Dhākā in 1963.
41. Al-Qur'ān al-Karīm: It is one of the best Bengali translations the Qur'ān with its tafsīr. The translation has original Arabic text as well. Apart from it, exact and small foot-notes were also given whenever required. Previously it had three volumes but now it is reduced into one volume. It was published from Islamic Academy and later from Islamic Foundation of Dhākā in 1963-64.
42. Bangali Qur'āner Anubād (Translation of the Qur'ān in Bengali): The person who was graced to perform this

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<sup>1</sup> Tarikhu Tabligil Qur'ān wa Miatu Aam Ala Tarzamatihī Bill Lugatil Bangaliah, P. 115-117.

pious duty is Maulānā Maḥfūzur Raḥmān. He copied the original Arabic text of the verses then translated in a simple way. Besides, background of the chapter and its Faḍīlah were given righteously. However, this work was published in 1965 from Islāmiyah Library of Chhattagram of Banglādes̄h.

43. Qur'ān Sār (Essence of the Qur'ān): This is a Bengali translation of "The Essence of the Qur'ān" written by Sri Vinoba Vabe. It was rendered by Sri Charu Chandra Bhandari and was published from Shorbodoy Prokashona Shomiti of Kolkātā in 1965.
  44. Translation of Qāḍī 'Abdul Wadūd who was a prominent Bengali poet and writer as well as an original thinker among the then Muslims. But it is the matter of sadness that he had not acquired knowledge of Arabic language. So his translation was not so satisfactory to the 'Ulamā' of Bengāl. Although his Bengali translation is very qualitative according to the linguistic value, however, it was published in 1965 from Shorbodoi Prokashona Shamity of Kolkātā.
  45. Al-Qur'ān: It is a simple versified translation of the Qur'ān done by Ḥakīm 'Abdul Mannān. He did not mention the original text. It was published from The Tāj Company Limited of Dhākā in 1967.
  46. Qur'ān Parichoy (Introduction of the Qur'ān): This is an effortful result of ceaseless hard work of Maulānā Muḥammad Mumtāz Uddīn who was a versatile Islamic theologian. He was the prominent teacher of Madrasah 'Āliyah of Kolkātā and later Madrash 'Āliyah of Dhckā. The Qur'ān Porichoy is the simple translation with a few foot-notes. It was published in 1967 from Ṣiddīque Bāzār, Dhākā.
  47. Qur'āner Muktā Har (Pearls String of The Qur'ān): It is a versified translation of the Qur'ān done by Maulānā Muḥammad Sa'īd. It was published in 1967 from Dhākā.
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48. Nuzūl-i-Qur'ān: Without any doubt this is an epic in Bengali subjecting the Qur'ānic translation. It is not only a simple translation but also a big tafsīr in versified form written by Muḥammad Aḥmad Nawāz (1905-1979). He was an established poet of Bengali literature. However, it was published in 1967 from Anantā Prokāshani, Dhākā.
49. Translation of Maulānā Muḥammad 'Uthmān Ḡhanī who was a highly scholastic person in both Islamic and formal knowledge. He required the Islamic knowledge from the then reputed Islamic learning center of eastern India, Madrasah 'Āliyah. Then he took general education from Calcutta University. After completing his education, Maulānā Muḥammad 'Uthmān Ḡhanī devoted himself to the services of the Qur'ān and its related branches. However, for the first time he translated some chapters of the Qur'ān then he continued this work without any cease. At last he succeeded to complete this valuable work in 1968.
50. Qur'āner Anubād (Translation of the Qur'ān): It was done by 'Alī Ḥaidar Choudhurī. It is a translation free from Arabic text. It was published in 1968 from Dhākā.
51. Tafsīr Ibn Kathīr: It is quite known to us that Tafsīr Ibn Kathīr is being considered as the authentic and informative one in the field of Tafsīr. Even it has been translated into different languages of the world. A keen interest was also remained among the Bengali readers towards this Tafsīr. Dr. Muḥammad Mujībūr Raḥmān fulfilled this need and translated it into qualitative Bengali language. His method and style was so rich that no taste of the original book, Tafsīr-i-Kathīr, was lost in anywhere in this Bengali translation. This translation took 18 volumes to be completed. More than thirty years after the first publication in 1986 this Tafsīr is being accepted by the
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Bengali Muslims of both the Bengals; West Bengal and Banglādesh. This work was published from the Tafsīr Publication Committee of Dhākā.

52. Qur'ān Proshongo: This is a complete Bengali translation with relevant illustration of the Qur'ān done by Dr. Muḥammad Shāhidullāh. He added all relevant foot-notes, reasons of the revelation, faḍīlah of important chapter and verses to make the readers understand. This book was so qualitative that Malik Fīroz Khān Nūn, Former Governor of East Pākistān, requested him to publish it as soon as possible. But he could not publish it before his death in 1969 for in adequate financial condition. At last his grandson Muḥammad Sofī'ullāh published it in 1976 after six years of his death.<sup>1</sup>
53. Tarjamutu Tafhīmīl Qur'ān: Sayyid Abul A'alā Maudūdī, the famous Muslim thinker and Philosopher of 20<sup>th</sup> century wrote this revolutionary Tafsīr which quenches the thirst of millions who are educated and conscious and are searching the solutions of our daily social problems from the divine Book. However, this very Tafsīr was translated into Bengali by the learned Islamic thinker Maulānā 'Abdur Raḥīm which was published in 1959 from the al-Kauthar Publishers of Dhākā. Some other translations of Tafhīm-ul-Qur'ān were also done by Maulānā 'Abdul Mannān Ṭālib and Maulānā 'Abbās 'Alī Khān which came into light in the year of 1980 and 1987 from – Adhunik Prokashanī of Dhākā.
54. Tafsīr fī Ṣilālīl Qur'ān of Sayyid Quṭb Shahīd. Like others Islamic theologians, Sayyid Quṭb is very famous and well known to the Bengali Muslims. His revolutionary thoughts, incentive activities and speeches are warmly welcomed by the Bengali Muslims. Hence, it is very usual Tafsīr and got

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<sup>1</sup> Preface, Qur'ān Proshaongo, Dr Muḥammad Shahīdullāh.

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wide acceptance in Bengal. Having noticed these facts, the prominent Islamic thinker and writer Ḥvfiz Munīruddīn Aḥmad translated *Tafsīr fī Zīlālil Qurʾān* into Bengali which was published in 1995 from al-Qurʾān Academy Publications of London and Dhākā. It has 22 volumes.

55. Qurʾān Sharīf: It is the concise and direct translation of the Qurʾān completed by Dr. Muḥammad Mustafīḍur Raḥmān. It has no Arabic text. The translator took 4006 pages to finish the translation. However, this work was published from Khoshroz Kitāb Maḥal of Dhākā in 1999. This brief translation of the Qurʾān got rapid popularity from the Bengali readers of Banglādesḥ and West Bengal.
56. Pabitra Qurʾān-ul-Karīm: This is the concise translation of famous Urdu *Tafsīr – Maʾārif-ul-Qurʾān*. In both the Bengals, it has been demanding from many years that the *Maʾārif-ul-Qurʾān* must be translated briefly into Bengali. At last the eminent journalist and writer Maulānā Muḥiyuddīn Khān translated it in one volume so that one can carry it easily. He copied the original Arabic text of the verses and then translated with great care and caution. The most mentionable significance of this translation is that Maulānā Khān gave necessary commentaries chiefly after every verse, which is considered as very informative after the excellent commentaries of *Tafhīm-ul-Qurʾān* by Maulānā Sayyid Abul Aʾalā Maudūdī. Now-a-days this *Tafsīr* is read widely all over Banglādesḥ and West Bengal. It was published for the first time in 2004 from Madīnah Publications of Dhākā. Till now many editions have been done which are the fresh acknowledgement of its vast popularity.
57. Qurʾān-ul-Karīm Bangla Tafsīr (The Bengali Tafsīr of Qurʾān): Though the title of this work indicates that it is an elaboration of the Qurʾānic meanings but it is a fresh and
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simple translation indeed. Prof. Dr. Mujībūr Raḥmān is its translator. Yet, as he was a learned person in Arabic, Bengali, English, Urdu and Persian, this translation became very nice and prolific. No clumsy is seen in this work. The translation was done so beautifully that, perhaps, the honored readers will have not need any extra commentary regarding any verse only through its normal translation one can understand the meaning of the verses. However, to learn the Qur'ānic knowledge in easy Bengali as well as briefly this translation is a great tool from all aspects. This valuable work was published under the care and supervision of Dr. Fārūq Salafī from Salafī Book Centre of Shāhīn Bāgh, Abul Faḍl Enclave, New Delhi. It was published in 2005.

58. Qur'ān Sharīf-er-Saral Bangla Anubād (Simple Translation of the Qur'ān): The famous and pensive Islamic writer of Banglādesh Dr. Muḥammad Faḍlur Raḥmān is its translator. He left the original Arabic text in his work only to make the translation handy. It was published from Riyādh Prokāshānī of Dhākā in 2011. It was completed in 400 pages.
59. Tafsīr Ḥukmu bi Ghāiri mā Anzalallāh: This is one of the invaluable works of prominent Islamic scholar Sheikh Naṣīruddīn al-Banī. It is mention-worthy here that, the Bengali Muslims have keen interest and respect for him as the Islamic critic and expert of the Prophetic Traditions. So, a renowned Islamic theologian, Maulānā Muḥammad Kamāl Aḥmad approached to translate this book in Bengali. It was published from Srijani Publications of Dhākā in 2012. Total number of its page is 204.
60. Tafsīr-i-Ma'ārif-ul-Qur'ān: It is the famous Urdu tafsīr written by Maulānā Muḥammad Shafī'. Maulānā Muḥyuddīn Khān translated it into Bengali. It has eight volumes. It was published from Islamic Foundation of Dhākā.
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61. Tafsīr-i-Anwār-ul-Qur'ān written by Maulānā Muḥammad Abul Kalām Ma'ṣūm. This work was edited by Maulānā Muḥammad Muṣṭafá. The writer spent all his efforts to make it outstanding. It is a great work as it took six volumes to be completed. He discussed each verse vastly in this exegesis. It has been published in 2013 from Islāmiyah Kutubkhānā of Dhākā. Now this Tafsīr is taught in many madrasahs which proves its huge acceptance. Till now its six volumes have been published.
  62. Shabde – Shabde al-Qur'ān: (al-Qur'ān in Words). This is one of the most popular works to understand the Qur'ān. Sheikh 'Abdul Karīm Pārekh is its translator. Maulānā Nūrul Islām Manī helped him to make this copy magnificent one. This valuable work was published in 2013 from Peace Publication of Dhākā. It was finished in 448 pages.
  63. Shabde Shabde al-Qur'ān (al-Qur'ān in Words) Maulānā Muḥammad Ḥabībūr Raḥmān is the author of this pioneer work. He gave the meaning of each word of the Qur'ān. Then a nice Bengali translation was given. Accordingly to the reliable record – this type of word to word meaning of the Qur'ān has never done before in Bengal. It was finished in 30 volumes and was published from Adhunik Prakāshānī of Dhākā in 2015. Without partiality it is to be said that this work added a new flavor to the Qur'ānic exercise in Bengal.
  64. Al-Qur'ān al-Karim – Saral Banganubad-O-Sankhipta Tika (Easy Bengali Translation of the Qur'ān with Brief Notes): This work was done by Dr. Muḥammad Ra'īsuddīn. He added short notes after direct translation which helps the readers greatly to understand clearly the inner meaning of the Qur'ān. This unprecedented work was published in 2015 from Ḥadīth Society Publications of Dhākā.
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65. Tafsīr-i-Saʿīdī: This is a pioneer book in Bengali Tafsīr literature written by prominent Mufassir and motivational Islamic Orator Maulānā Muḥammad Delwār Ḥossain Saʿīdī. In fact he was greatly influenced by modern Islamic Philosopher Maulānā Sayyid Abul Aʿalā Maudūdī's tafsīr, Tafhīm-ul-Qurʾān. Maulānā Saʿīdī took a new and modern aspect in illustrating the Qurʾānic verses. Particularly, he tried his level best to prove that the Qurʾān is the complete code of human life. He cleared in the preface that the Qurʾān is the only solution of people's various problems. However, this tafsīr has become popular to the Islamic researchers, thinkers, philosophers even non-Muslim scholars have keen thirst to know the scientific rationalism of the Qurʾānic verses. Till now its three volumes are available in the market. This Tafsīr was published from the Global Publishing Network of Dhākā in 2015.
66. Sahaj Banglai al-Qurʾāner Anubād (Translation of the Qurʾān in Easy Bengālī) the great writer Prof. Maulānā Ghulām Aʿzam is the author of this work. He is a pensive Islamic writer and philosopher. According to him everybody should study the Qurʾān properly and of course in his mother language. So, in Banglādeśh there must be available a simple Bengali translation of the Qurʾān. He also took enormous help from Tafhīm-ul-Qurʾān of Maulānā Maudūdī. It was published in 2014 from Kāmyāb Prokāshanī of Dhākā.
67. Tafsīr-ul-Qurʾān bi Kalāmīr Raḥmān: This prolific Tafsīr was originally written by 'Allāmah Sheikh Abul Wafā' Thanā'ullāh Amritsarī. It was translated and edited by Prof. Dr. Muḥammad Raʿsuddīn and Muṣṭafá Sohel Hilālī. This work got wide popularity among the Bengali Muslims. It was published from Ḥadīth Society Publications of Dhākā in 2016.
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68. Tafsīr-i-Jalālain: This tafsīr was written by ‘Allāmah Jalāluddīn Sayūtī and his prominent teacher Jalāluddīn Maḥallī. It is a very famous and popular tafsīr throughout the world. It deals with many sides of Islamic theology and Arabic language briefly so that the readers do not get irritated. On the other hand they may be benefitted of its informative discussion. As a result Tafsīr-i-Jalālain is enormously read in all madrasahs of Bengal. So, many partly translations were made so far. But Maulānā Muḥammad Abul Kalām Ma’ṣūm translated it completely just in the last year, 2015, which is a unique one among the many Bengali Translations of this tafsīr. His translation is balanced which is why after its publication in 2016 this work reached all libraries of all over Bengal, which is the fresh acknowledgement of its correctness. It was published from the Islamia Kutub Khānah of Dhākā. The eminent translator and writer Maulānā Aḥmad Maimun edited this work.
69. Al-Qur’ān-ul-Karīm: The translation and editing were done by Prof. Dr. Ra’īsuddiīn and ‘Abdullāh Fārūq Salafī. Besides Sheikh Nūrul Islām and Amīnul Islām helped them from different corners. There is no original Arabic text of the verses, only the Bengali translation was done. Yet some vital commentaries were made which clearly help the readers to understand Qur’ānic meanings easily. This book has been published from Ḥadīth Society Publications of Dhākā in 2016.
70. Ṣaḥīḥ Nūrānī Qur’ān Sharīf: The writer of this Tafsīr is Maulānā Faḍlur Raḥmān and he was helped by Maulānā Abul Kalām Āzād. It was published from Mīnā Book House of Dhākā. However, Maulānā Faḍlur Raḥmān did not leave any effort to make this book an informative guide on Qur’ānic sciences for the readers. Firstly, he took the
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original Arabic text of the verses then he gave the Bengali pronunciation of those verses and at last he made a fresh and easy translation. Besides, the background of revelation of every important verse and each chapter was also given with great care and caution. Apart from those advantages, nice commentaries were also arranged on each page for the readers to understand the meanings of the concerned verses. However, this book became a peerless one by the hardwork of the writer.

71. *Tāj Nūrānī Banganubād Qur'ān Sharīf*: It was edited by A. K. M. Faḍlur Raḥmān Munshī and published from Banglādeśh Tāj Company Limited, Dhākā. This is also a clear acknowledgement of great effort of the translator. He gave the Bengali pronunciation under each verse to make the ordinary readers understood. It is also mention-worthy here that trying to give the pers pro toto pronunciation in Bengali language specially from Arabic. For instance, if the Tajwīd is not mentioned during Arabic reading the exact meaning never comes. Even, in many cases the reverse meaning will come if the rules of Tajwīd will not be followed. The alternative picture of Tajwīd and Makhrāj are not gotten in Bengali linguistic. It is not the matter of worry as the different languages have different features. So, a writer who wants to give the Arabic pronunciation in Bengali, he has to take extra headache. Again, he has to be cautious and careful at his last degree, specially when the task will be regarding the Qur'ān. However, A.K.M. Faḍlur Raḥmān fulfilled that difficult and complex duty skillfully in all aspects.
72. *Al-Qur'ānul Ḥakīm*: This is a unique work on the Qur'ān. it was done by Ḥāfiẓ Maulānā 'Ain-ul-Bārī Aliabi, a pensive writer and motivational organizer of Bengal. In this book the
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translator firstly took the original Arabic text of the verses then he translated clearly and no clumsy is probably seen in it which is the fresh testimonial of his high skill in both Arabic and Bengali simultaneously. Some foot-notes and brief commentaries are also given here and there. In fact, as the General Secretary of State Ahl-i-Ḥadīth, he uses to come in contract with different types of people whose majority is ordinary and less-educated persons. They are not capable to read the Qurʾān through Arabic language directly. They only need an easy translation of the Qurʾān which is also to be brief. Having recognized this very matter Maulānā Sheikh 'Ain-ul-Bārī Aliabi penned down this translation. However, first edition of this work was published in 2004 from Sufia Prakashani of Kolkātā. It must be said that this nice translation added a fine flavor in the Tafsīr literature of the Bengali language. Accordingly to him till now some 5 editions were published which indicate to its popularity.

**Conclusion:** The study of the Qurʾān in the Bengali language began directly in the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The political, economical and social picture of the then Muslims of Bengal were so much pathetic and disastrous. On the other hand their religious practice was not perfect according to the Islamic aspects. Countless superstitions covered them like deep black cloud. They fall into this frustrated situation chiefly after the defeat of Nawāb Sirājuddaulah, the last Muslim ruler of Bengal. Although the debut of this scenario started decades ago, in fact, realistic thought and genuine Islamic teaching were needed to recover them. So many scholastic persons tried their level best to spread the real Islamic education to the Bengali Muslim. They impressed on the study of the Qurʾān for its divine teaching. Because, according to them the study of the Qurʾān in the vernacular would help a lot to eradicate several

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superstitions. A number of high educated Muslims, from both the madrasah and formal education, were motivated by this thought. As a result several pensive persons took the pens and jumped into this field. Interestingly there were many clergies who opposed them. They thought that translating the Qur'ān into Bengali is nothing but defamation of the Sacred Book<sup>1</sup>. This is why only the very few and high motivated scholars approached in this work. And truly that was insufficient against the huge need. Because ample translations and tafsīrs were required for millions of common Muslims of Bengal. In the meantime many Hindus and Christians started to take benefits from this misunderstanding. However, Sri Grīsh Chandra Sen is considered as the pioneer in his field. He translated the Qur'ān completely in Bengali. But the matter of sorrow that, including him all the non Muslim translators made several mistakes which are, according to the Islamic law and faith as well as the rules of the Arabic grammar, unpardonable. Even it is better to say that except two or three translators, many of them did that willingly. It is because their intention was to create utter confusion into the readers' faith that the Qur'ān is not a Divine Book rather it was written by the Prophet Muḥammad (PBUH). But fortunately their books helped to awake the Muslims regarding the study of the Qur'ān in Bengali language. They realized that without the genuine translation of the Qur'ān in Bengali it would be impossible to remove the mistakes from the readers' minds. In fact, to revenge the biased translators, a huge number of correct translations were needed. Because the ordinary people and the formal educated society who had not enough Islamic knowledge including the knowledge of Arabic with its linguistic characteristics were dependent on those improper translations which were available everywhere. After

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<sup>1</sup> Study of the Qur'ān in Bengali Language, P. 493.

some decades of that realization, hundreds of Muslim scholars and pensive persons devoted themselves into translating and illustrating the Qur'ān in Bengali language. Yet it is true that the works containing the partial translation of the Qur'ān are much more than the complete translations. But all types of those Qur'ānic study plaid revolutionary role to eradicate different kinds of superstitions from the then Muslim society as well as it helped to bring them closer to the real Islamic teaching. On the other hand the biased translators apparently gave up their bias because the Muslims became aware.



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## A Survey of Translations and Commentaries of the Qur'ān in Turkish Language

✎ Prof. Akmal Ayyūbī<sup>1</sup>

Tr.: Mohd. Mo'ataşim A'zmī<sup>2</sup>

The Qur'ān is the sacred divine book revealed to the Prophet Muḥammad (PBUH) for the guidance of human being. The Muslims felt necessary to explain it and interpret it since very beginning of Islam so that it could be easily understood and benefitted from. This very reason caused the start of the Qur'ānic exegesis and its development which resulted in a large number of exegesis books consisting of both types of commentaries; full and partial.<sup>3</sup> Among them “Jāmi' al-Bayān fī Tafsīr al-Qur'ān” of Ṭabarī and “al-Kashshāf” of Zamakhsharī enjoy much publicity. Likewise, the “Tafsīr al-Kabīr” of Fakhruddīn Rāzī is considered among the most important books of exegesis. As far the Turkish commentaries are concerned, the Arabic commentary of Ismā'il Ḥaqqī Burşali got much popularity among the Turks.

There is no need to focus on Turks' love for knowledge and their appreciation for it. The religious sciences had great importance during the medieval age so they gained attention of the Turks too and that's how several great madrasas were established under the patronage of the Turk Sultāns in which they laid focus on exegesis, Ḥadīth, jurisprudence, Arabic, logic, philosophy, mathematics and Islamic history. The

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<sup>3</sup> T.W. Ḥā'iq: The Encyclopedia of Islam, Leiden 1913-34, 3/3-6

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language of instruction for these madrasas was Arabic so Arabic was adopted for writing and compilation particularly in religious disciplines but some scholars also kept their interest in translation of the Qur'ān and writing exegesis in Turkish as well as they wrote books which could not be ignored anyhow.

Among the worth-mentioning early Turkish translations of the Qur'ān is the translation of 10<sup>th</sup> century. This translation was done in Eastern spoken Turkish. According to the research of Dr. 'Abdul Qādir 'Inān<sup>1</sup> and Prof. Dhakī Walīdi Taughān<sup>2</sup>, some other translations of Qur'ān are also found in this language that are still preserved in the form of manuscript in the libraries of Turkey and other countries. In fact these translations are based on Persian translations of the Qur'ān and are influenced by the Arabic and Persian languages and their styles. However, these translations are not less important. Its style is very simple and clear and its language is very similar to the daily conversation of the common people. There found some idioms and phrases which were specified with that period. But most of the interpreters are unfortunately unknown to the history.<sup>3</sup>

A new era starts with the establishment of Turk Saljūqi's (Ottoman) empire in the West Asia in the 11<sup>th</sup> century, which became an effective means for the spread of Islamic culture and civilization in this area. In the 12<sup>th</sup> century Islamic culture became more established and the Islamic sciences got promoted at high scale. But the books written in this period are generally in Arabic or Persian, because Arabic was

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<sup>1</sup> See "Eski Turche Tercumeleri" in Turk Dili (1952) nos. 6,7 and 9

<sup>2</sup> See "The Earliest Translation of the Qur'ān" in Islam Tet Kikleri Enstitüsü Dergisi, Istanbul vol. IV Parts 1-2, 1964 and 9

<sup>3</sup> Muḥammad Fuwād has mentioned an interpretation of 'Ubaidullāh Khān in his "Chugtā'i Adabiyāt" (Chugtā'i literature) "Islam A nsiklopedisi, vol. III, P. 312" in Turkish Chugtā'i.

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considered as the popular language as regards with religious sciences among the Turks of West Asia while Persian was preferred for the poetry.

Turkish language got wide-spread popularity as a language of science and Arts in the West Asia only when the pure Turk Sulṭāns (Bellers) occupied the throne of Saljūqi kings (Ottoman). These Turk sultans knew nothing except their mother tongue Turkish which was popular among them as a language of science.<sup>1</sup> In that period many scholars showed their interest particularly in writing the book in Turkish language as well as translating books written in Arabic and Persian into Turkish language so that they could get support from Turkish governors and leaders. Apart from this, the princes themselves ordered to translate the religious book into Turkish language. Thus books of exegesis and other religious sciences were translated but to translate into Turkish those books were chosen that were recommended or prescribed in the syllabi of the madrasas and religions institutions.

The dynasty of Turkish sultans (Beller) in West Asia survived near about two centuries (from the beginning of 14<sup>th</sup> century till the end of 16<sup>th</sup> century). During this period the whole area was divided into many small provinces. Some of them were known for the development of Islamic sciences particularly for the promotion of Qur'ānic exegesis. But most of the books of this period were destroyed. Among these provinces there was a famous province named as Denizili Inanchogullari (1272-1364). This province is distinguished from others because the trend of writing in Turkish language firstly started in this period. But it is a matter of sorrow that the literature of Qur'ānic exegesis of that period is not found today. Prof. Fahira'z<sup>2</sup> found out a manuscript

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<sup>1</sup> See the article of Proluzadah Fuwād Encyclopedia of Islam (4/941)

<sup>2</sup> See "Eski Turk Edebiyātında", Istanbul, 1964, PP. 3-9

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of this period which contains the commentary of the chapters of Yāsīn, al-Mulk and al-Fīl. This partial exegesis was written on the order of Murād Arsalān Bey bin Ishāq bey. This manuscript is preserved in the library of Department of Language and Literature in Istanbul University. Similarly, the commentary of the chapters of al-Fātiḥah and al-Ikhlāṣ was written in Turkish language on the order of Murād Arsalān bin Inanch. But the name of its compilers is still unknown except the manuscript of first commentary is saved in the library of Istanbul University while the manuscript of the latter is preserved in the Public library of Ankara (Ankara Genel Kutuphanesi). Likewise a manuscript of the commentary of al-Mulk is preserved in Public library of Ankara. This commentary was written on the order of a chieftain of Anatolia Khiḍr bin Gulbey<sup>1</sup> who belonged to the province of Ḥāmidogullari and ruled over Sparta and Anatolia during 14<sup>th</sup> century. Jāndā and Gullari of Qastumini's services to the promotion of Islamic sciences also bear importance. The most important Turkish commentary of this period is "Jawāhir al-Aṣḍāf". This was the first organised endeavor to write a complete commentary of the Qur'ān in Turkish language which was done under the supervision of Bayezid Bey. The development of exegesis' literature took place in the Asia Minor (Anatolia) that is based on this important commentary. This commentary was written in a simple and easy Turkish which has less usage of the Arabic and Persian words.

The Turk provinces came into existence after the conquest of Mangole in Asia Minor (Anatolia), the most established and glorified was the province of Ogullari which was later known Osmānli or Ottoman. The Ottoman sultanate which covered three continents, appeared at that time as a great power of West and East and left its impacts and influences at different

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid, P. 9-13,

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parts. The Ottoman dynasty and their educational and cultural activities were influenced by Turkish traditions as well as by Islamic principles. They also established some specific traditions in administrative affairs and other related affairs and they also developed them. Great madrasas were established to promote the sciences and arts during their reign wherein the Turkish experts used to perform the service of teaching. The teaching of instruction in these madrasas was Arabic. Therefore, the selection of Arabic language for compilation was natural phenomena. But there were some intellectuals who chose Turkish language to express their views and thoughts. Among the earlier scholars of Ottoman period are Sheikh Adīb 'Alī, Ṭaursūn Faqīh, Mullā Rustam, Qara Khalīl and Muḥammad bin 'Āshiq Salmān Allārīqī. The latter composed a poetic book related to the Qur'ān, but according to my research the first ever commentary of that period was the commentary of Muṣṭafá bin Muḥammad Ankarali. This commentary contained only translation and explanation of the chapter al-Mulk and was written for Süleyman Paṣha the eldest son of Sulṭān Orhan. A manuscript of this commentary is preserved in Bayezid Public Library in Istanbul. According to the research of G. M. Meredith Owens there is a translation of the Qur'ān in British Museum that consists of the translation into both Persian and Turkish. It contains translation up to the 19<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup> chapters. This is, according to him, an old translation of Ottoman period.<sup>1</sup> But Dhakī Walīdī does not agree with this opinion and he considers it a translation attributed to the period of Aghwaz which was completed during 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> centuries.<sup>2</sup>

The first madrasah of Ottoman was established in Iznik by Sulṭān Orhan in 1331. Its syllabus included the Qur'ānic

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<sup>1</sup> Oriens, Vol 10, PP. 258-76

<sup>2</sup> Islam Tetkikleri Enstitüsü Dergisi, vol. IV, part 1-3, PP. 1-19

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exegesis as compulsory subject along with other religious sciences. Later on the madrasas were also established in different places such as Brūṣa, Adrana, 'Aksarā'l ('Aqṣara). The Madrasas established in Istanbul during the period of Sulṭān Muḥammad Fātiḥ and Sulṭān Süleyman A'zam Qānūnī were considered as most important. They produced some experts under the supervision of trained and experienced teachers who had distinctive characters in the world in respect of Islamic sciences and arts. Among them Abū Sa'īd Āfandī is worth mentioning. He was the celebrated scholar of religious sciences. He was son of Muḥammad Dayārbakarī, and was born in 898 A.H. (1490-91) in a family which hailed from Kurdistān. He taught in different madrasas then he was appointed the Romans of Caesarea. After serving this post for eight years, he was appointed as Sheikh-ul-Islām in 1545 on which post he worked for 30 years, till he died at the age of eighty seven in 1574. He was one of the strong supporters of Abū Sa'īd Süleyman A'zam. He compiled the famous collection of laws of the Ottoman Empire "Qānūn Nāmah" which was released in Süleyman's period. He also had a taste of poetry and composed many poems in Arabic, Persian and Turkish. He too wrote numerous pamphlets on religious themes and theological issues. But his Arabic exegesis is one of his most important works in which he often benefitted from the commentaries of Baiḍāwī and Zamakhsharī. His commentary was not only popular in the Ottoman Empire but also in abroad. Some historians think that this commentary was originally in Turkish language which was later translated into Arabic and was known as "Irshād al-'Aql al-Salīm". Several commentaries were written for this exegesis. It was published several times.

The commentary of Sa'duddīn has a distinction in the literature of exegesis. The author was one of the great Muslim

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scholars. It is he who, as E. G. W. Gip<sup>1</sup> says, served as an alienation of Islamic studies after the attack of the Mongols in Middle East and demolition of the civilizations and cultural centers. He got an important place in the Islamic history of the Muslim world.<sup>2</sup> Taimūr (Timor), who was famous for his oppression and cruelty, also respected him very much.

‘Allāmah Tuftāzānī was born in 722 A.H. (1322) in Tuftāzān a big village near Nisa in Khurāsān district. After completing his education he joined Istanbul's Madrasa for some time, which was established during the time of the Ottoman Sulṭān Solomon A'zam. He was famous for his expertise in syntax and grammar, eloquence and rhetoric, Islamic jurisprudence and other Islamic sciences. He wrote books on both schools of jurisprudence the Ḥanafī and Shāfi'ī. Therefore, some historians consider him as follower of Shāfi'ī thoughts while some others count him as a follower of Ḥanafī thoughts. In addition to the incomplete commentary of the famous book of exegesis al-Kaṣhshāf, a complete commentary of the Qur'ān named “Kaṣhf al-Asrār wa'dat al-Abrār” is also attributed to him. This is actually in Persian, but Turkish language has been used partially. Its one copy is available in Istanbul's Sulaimāniah Library. According to Fuad Koprulu<sup>3</sup> the essayist of “Encyclopedia of Islam”, two commentaries are worth mentioning among the Turkish commentaries of the 15<sup>th</sup> century. One of them is preserved in Konunion Museum with translation-between-the lines. The second commentary is based on translation of “Anfās al-Jawāhir” an Arabic commentary written by Abul Faḍl Mūsá bin Ḥājī Ḥussain bin

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<sup>1</sup> A history of Ottoman Poetry, London 1958, Vol I, P. 201

<sup>2</sup> ibid

<sup>3</sup> Encyclopedia of Islam, 4/944-945

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ʿĪsá al-Arnīkī in 838 A.H. (1434-35). Ḥājī al-Khalīfah,<sup>1</sup> Professor Rūsi<sup>2</sup> and Fāhir ‘Azz<sup>3</sup> mention Turkish translation of another Arabic commentary. Its author is Abū al-Laith Naṣr bin Muḥammad Samarqandī and translator is Ibn-i-‘Arab Shāh (1392-1450). The latter was the contemporary of Ottoman Sulṭān Muḥammad Awwal bin Bayezid, who translated several books into Turkish on Sulṭān’s demand.

Another prominent Turkish commentator, Jamāluddīn Moḥammad ‘Aksar’ilī (Aqṣarā’ī), was born and died in the town ‘Aksar’i (Aqṣarah). Here he taught in a madrasa for a long time as well as he served as Judge of ‘Askar Amāsiyah. Similarly, he taught for a certain period of time in Istanbul’s Madrasah Salmāniyah. The modern researchers differ about the year of his demise; He died, according to Bursa Li Muḥammad Tāhir,<sup>4</sup> in 1389 while Karl Brukilman<sup>5</sup> and Dr. Adnan Adivār<sup>6</sup> think that he died in 1377 and 1378 respectively. It is also said about him that he was grandson of Fakhruddīn Rāzī the author of “Tafsīr Kabīr” and Mullā Fainārārī (Shamsuddīn Moḥammad bin Ḥamzah) the famous Turkish scholar was his student. His writing was very effective so he was known as Jamālī. Among his books are “Sharḥ Mushkilāt al-Qur’ān” and “Tafsīr Jamālī” are the most important and reputed works. His commentary got published in four volumes from Būllāq that contains the Turkish translation and commentary of the Qur’ān.

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<sup>1</sup> Kaṣhf al-Zunūn, Istanbul, 1941, vol. I, P. 441

<sup>2</sup> Elenco dei Manoscritti della Biblioteca, Vatican, 1953, P. 103

<sup>3</sup> Eski Turk Edebiyatında Nesir, Istanbul, 1964, PP. 13-26

<sup>4</sup> Osmanli Muellifleri

<sup>5</sup> Geschichte der Arabischen Litterature

<sup>6</sup> Osmanli Turkelinde Ilim, Istanbul, 1942

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Though it is correct that the Turks are not so advanced in the field of sciences and arts, as the Western nations of the modern age are, the importance of their works in this field cannot be ignored. Their services in the field of Qur'ānic exegesis are also valuable and significant. Among the literature of exegesis in this period "*Khulāṣat al-Bayān*" of Moḥammad Wahbī Āfandī is distinguished. This is a detailed and complete commentary of the Qur'ān in Turkish language. Its first edition was published in 1920-22 consisting 15 volumes. Similarly, "*Tafsīr Tibyān*" of Moḥammad Āfandī is also an important commentary in Turkish language which was published in several volumes. Likewise, the Turkish translation of the famous Persian commentary (*Mawāhib al-'Alaih* known as *Tafsīr Ḥussainī*) by Ḥussain Wā'iz al-Kāshifī is also a remarkable addition to the Turks' literature of Qur'ānic exegesis. Its translators were 'Alī and Süleyman (Solomon) and it was known as "*Zubdat al-'Āthār al-Mawāhib wa al-Anwār*". This exegesis was published in two volumes under the supervision of Raḍā Āfandī from Istanbul in 1877. The translator's preface is also worthy of study. "*Tafsīr Sharīf Anwār-i-Qur'ān*" by Barkat Zādah Ismā'īl and "*Ṣafwat al-Bayān fī Tafsīr al-Qur'ān*" by Mūsá Kāẓim can also be mentioned among the famous Turkish commentaries of modern age. These commentaries got published in 1903 and 1916 respectively.

The interest of Turks in the promotion and propagation of Qur'ānic knowledge is fully evident from the fact that some special committees were formed along with individual efforts to achieve this goal. These committees prepared several commentaries of the Qur'ān in Turkish Language. Such a committee prepared a commentary entitled '*Tafsīr al-Bayān*' in 1905 and the other committee compiled '*Tafsīr Nūr al-Bayān*'. The latter was published under the supervision of Ibrāhīm Ḥilmī from Istanbul in 1924. The Republic of Turkey also showed its

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interest in the publication of the commentaries in the Turkish Roman script. So 'Hak Dini Kuran Dili yeni Mealli Turkche Tefsir' by Muḥammad Muḥammad Yazār Elmāli is considered the most significant among these commentaries. It was published in ten volumes under the sponsorship of the Government's Department of Religious Affairs. It contains a useful preface along with Turkish translation and commentary. Süleyman Taufiq can be regarded among the modern scholars of Turkey. He translated the Qur'ān into Turkish language with the title of 'Kurānī Karīm Tercumesi wa Tafsiri' and put explanatory notes in many places. He also summarized the above-mentioned 'Tafsir al-Bayān' which was published from Istanbul in 1926, named 'Turkche Kurani Kerim'. Moreover, Süleyman Taufiq made correction of 'Tercumeli Kurani Kerim' which was performed by a committee headed by Uthmān Rashīd Āfandī. This book was published in 1927 with Arabic text. His own translation of the Qur'ān was also published in 1927, but it contains Turkey text only. Ibrāhīm Ḥaqqī Izmirlī also corrected a translation done by a committee which was published from Istanbul in the same period. It is worth-mentioning here that Ismā'il Ḥaqqī Izmirlī's Turkish translation of the Qur'ān was published first with the title of 'Ma'ānī Kurānī Kerim Tercumesi' in original script of the Ottoman Turks in 1927, and the same translation was published secondly in 1932 in Roman script with the title of 'Turkche Kurani Kerim Tercumesi'. The latter has a special significance because it is the first translation in the modern Turkish script. Despite this, it contains history of the Qur'ān, notes and index. Jamīl Sa'īd's Turkish translation of the Qur'ān has been published at least two times with detailed notes. A famous poet and writer of modern time, Muḥammad 'Ākif (d. 1964), did a translation of the Qur'ān into Turkish language on the request of Government's Department of Religious Affairs but the translator

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was opposed to its printing in Roman script so this could not be published. While Kazim Bey, Mu'allim H̄ussain, Nājī Bay and others who had performed the translation into new Turkish script had been published many times. There is another Turkish expert of the Qur'ānic exegesis- Umar Raza Dogrul whose commentary 'Tanri Guyrugu Kurani Kerim in Tercume ve Tefsiri' was published first under the supervision of Aḥmad Kh̄ālīd Kitāb Awy in Istanbul in 1934. It contains a preface in the beginning in which the focus has been laid on the life of the Prophet (PBUH) in addition to the details about the Qur'ān. It also contains an index in the end. Along with Arabic text of the Qur'ān, its Turkish translation has been published in block letters in this edition and the verses have been explained in the Turkish script in the margin of every page. The commentary of 'Abdul Bāqī Golpınarlı 'Kurān i Karim ve Meallni' is very popular in Turkey and has been published several times.

In the light of above details it is correct to say that the Turks paid full attention to the development and promotion of science and literature. Not only Sultān Orhan followed his father's advice, "strengthen the religion, promote the sciences and preserve them", but his successors also took full care of it.<sup>1</sup> During his reign great institutions of Islamic sciences and arts got established which became a source of academic and cultural development. It clearly proves the interest of Turks in the Islamic sciences. Despite the inclination of the Turk scholars towards Arabic and Persian in the field of sciences and arts in the medieval period, their scientific endeavours in Turkish language especially their contribution to the translations and commentaries of the Qur'ān are not less

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<sup>1</sup> Arthur Lumley Davids, A Grammar of Turkish Language, London, 1832 P. XL VIII

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important though these endeavours could not receive as much fame as they desired. We hope that the modern Turk Scholars will introduce completely to the world the valuable works of the Turk scholars and intellectuals in field of Qur'ānic sciences and will fix the correct status of the Turks in promotion of sciences and arts.