

“Call to the path of thy Lord with wisdom and goodly exhortation,
and argue with people in the best manner.” (Holy Quran, 16:125)

The Light

AND

ISLAMIC REVIEW

Exponent of Islam and the Lahore Ahmadiyya Movement
for over ninety years

April – June 2018

In the spirit of the above-cited verse, this periodical attempts to dispel
misunderstandings about the religion of Islam and endeavors to
facilitate inter-faith dialogue based on reason and rationality.

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احمدیہ انجمن اشاعت اسلام لاہور

◆ Ahmadiyya Anjuman Isha'at Islam Lahore Inc., U.S.A. ◆

The Light was founded in 1921 as the organ of the AHMADIYYA ANJUMAN ISHA'AT ISLAM (Ahmadiyya Association for the Propagation of Islam) of Lahore, Pakistan. **The Islamic Review** was published in England from 1913 for over 50 years, and in the U.S.A. from 1980 to 1991. The present periodical represents the beliefs of the worldwide branches of the Ahmadiyya Anjuman Isha'at Islam, Lahore.

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The main objective of the A.A.I.L. is to present the true, original message of Islam to the whole world — Islam as it is found in the Holy Quran and the life of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, obscured today by grave misconceptions and wrong popular notions.

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Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad (d. 1908), our Founder, arose to remind the world that Islam is:

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Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad taught that **no** prophet, old or new, is to arise after the Holy Prophet Muhammad. However, **Mujaddids** will be raised by God to revive and rekindle the light of Islam.

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History:

1889: **Hazrat** Mirza Ghulam Ahmad founds the Ahmadiyya Movement.

1901: Movement given name **Ahmadiyya** after Holy Prophet Muhammad's other famous name **Ahmad**.

1905: Hazrat Mirza appoints central body (Anjuman) to manage the Movement.

1908: Death of Hazrat Mirza. Succeeded by Maulana Nur-ud-Din as Head.

1914: Death of Maulana Nur-ud-Din. Ahmadiyya Anjuman Isha'at Islam founded at Lahore as continuation of the original Anjuman. Maulana Muhammad Ali elected as Head.

1951: Death of Maulana Muhammad Ali after fifty years of glorious service to the cause of Islam. Maulana Sadr-ud-Din (d. 1981) becomes Head.

1981–1996: Dr Saeed Ahmad Khan, an eminent medical doctor and religious scholar, led the Movement, at a time of intense persecution.

1996–2002: Prof. Dr Asghar Hameed, a distinguished retired University Professor of Mathematics, and learned Islamic scholar, served as Head.

2002: Prof. Dr Abdul Karim Saeed Pasha elected Head.

Quran Translation: Space and Empowerment

By Prof. El-Hussein Ali

[Prof. Hussein Ali is Associate Professor of Translation Studies at Helwan University (Egypt). In this article, he assesses the possibilities for translation being a tool of empowerment, by having a translation go beyond the target text to include translator's notes, which involves readers in a process of critical understanding. Prof. Ali applies these concepts to translations of the Quran, using translations by Maulana Muhammad Ali and Dr. Muhammad Taqi-ud Din Al-Hilali / Dr. Muhammad Muhsin Khan as source materials. The information presented provides a valuable glimpse into the numerous subtleties of academic translation work which are often not appreciated by the casual reader. This article was originally published in the American Journal of Translation Studies (Vol.9, No.1, November 2017).]

1. Introduction

Translation has often been defined in terms of preserving equivalent meaning while replacing one form by another. With reference to that act of replacement, various translation strategies – mostly binary have been proposed. For example, Nida (1964, 1969, 2006) argues that two different types of equivalence are achievable in translation, formal and dynamic; Newmark (1981, 1988, 1991) distinguishes between two types of translation, semantic and communicative; House (1977, 1997) recognizes two possibilities for translators, overt and covert translation; and Venuti (1995) identifies two states of translator's presence, visibility and invisibility.

The above views of translation create a dichotomy of translation strategies leaving translators with only “two possible lines of action” as House (1997) puts it when describing her strategies (p. 111). However, I argue in this paper that there are more possibilities for translators. The aim of this paper is to redefine translation as a tool for empowerment, and in so doing, it attempts to open up possibilities for translators rather than limit them to two lines of action.

2. Translation as Empowerment

Grossberg (1987) defines empowerment as “the enablement of ... the conditions of possibility that enable a particular practice or statement to exist in a specific social context” (p. 95). It is a process through which people may have greater access to resources [Cornell Empowerment Group (1989)] and a critical understanding of their environment [Zimmerman, Isreal, Sculz, Checkoway (1992)].

In that sense, concepts like equivalence and binary translation approaches have disempowered translators as well as target text readers. For example, assessing translation in terms of equivalence reduces translation to a position secondary to writing [Bassnett & Trivedi (1999)]. In other words, it makes the source text the starting point and sets it as the standard against which the translation can be evaluated. In that case, the possibilities open to translators are so limited that even reproduction of original page layout and font are sometimes among the task requirements. At the same time, if translators have to domesticate their target texts, they work hard to make sure that their product is a *second* original; that is, a work in an intermediate state between an original work and a translated work. In fact, translators do their best to keep their second original both a mirror of the original and a reflection of the target culture production, which lays as many constraints on translators and target readers as any other approach.

More importantly still, translation is a meeting point for two cultures. But this is not possible in the case of choosing between two alternatives such as formal/dynamic, semantic/communicative, overt/covert, or foreignization/domestication, because the choice forces the translator to represent only one culture to the exclusion of the other. This is disempowering as it denies translators the ability to construct alternatives to the two choices. At the same time, it may deny access to the source culture by target text readers. In all cases, the point of reference is the source language text and writer, whereas the translator and the translated text remain at utmost a replica. This dilemma requires a redefinition of translation as well as a redefinition of the relationship between the writer, the translator, and the reader.

From an empowerment perspective, translation can be defined as an act of re-establishment of power relations between the source text writer and the target text reader (through the translator). According to Page and Czuba (1999), power is changeable and expandable, and these characteristics make empowerment possible. To empower translators, part of the power of the source text writer should be expanded to involve the translator as a second writer. The translator as a second writer can establish new power relations by gaining control over resources that are not available for translators per se.

Translators, then, can share the resources with their readers who are the less competent partner in communication. In this sense, translation is a type of cultural scaffolding as indicated by Wimsatt (2012). Wimsatt (2012) believes that there are at least five kinds of elements that are necessary for a theory of cultural evolution. First, there are the meme-like things (MLTs) which are copyable such as practices and ideas. Secondly,

there are the biological individuals who develop and whose experience and training shape the way they receive MLTs. Thirdly, there are the institutions which constitute the rules and frameworks that guide behavior of the biological individuals. Fourthly, there are organizations which are self-organized for certain purposes such as interest groups, firms and professions. Fifthly, there are artifacts which are physical infrastructures maintained from generation to generation. According to Wimsatt (2012), many of these cultural elements “are specifically designed to aid the construction or development of competencies among individuals and organizations” (p. 8), i.e. part of their purpose is to maintain a process of scaffolding. Wimsatt (2012) distinguishes among scaffolding for individuals such as family, schools, curricula etc.; scaffolding for organizations such as regulations, corporate law, chambers of commerce etc.; and infrastructural scaffolding such as language and translation. Translation as scaffolding allows the reader to have access to more resources. Although translation per se can achieve this, scaffolding can be enhanced if the translator is empowered as a writer.

3. Translation as Space

To empower translators as writers, we need to redefine translation as space. The concept of space is taken from theatre studies. Traditionally, performers perform on a stage, which is separated from the auditorium by a fourth wall. The Fourth Wall, which is a theatre convention rather than a real wall, is based on the assumption that actors should act as if they do not see the audience; they cannot talk to the audience, and the audience cannot take part in the staged action, i.e. each party has a pre-set role which it cannot exceed. Later, that convention was violated, and the stage was replaced by the performing space. In the performing space, performers may mingle with the spectators; they can turn into observers while observers can take part in the performance. An example of such a performance is the invisible theatre [Boal (2002)]. The invisible theatre is a theatrical form enacted in a place which is not normally recognized as a performance space, and so it gives the impression of a real situation rather than an organized event. For example, performers may perform on a bus, and in that case, both the possibilities and the performing space are limitless.

In translation, space is very limited; sometimes accuracy is initially measured by considering the word count of the target text in comparison to that of the source text. In that case, space is the boundaries of the text which translators cannot exceed. What is proposed here is to redefine translation as space that goes beyond the boundaries of the target text. That space is quite legitimate and is supported by the process of translation and its product, but it is usually kept hidden from readers.

That invisible space is usually filled with the numerous pre-final translation drafts as well as with all the activities, readings etc. that a translator has to go through to solve a translation problem. That space is never shared with the target text reader. However, it is very important as it is an evolving part that may enable an act of re-establishment of power relations. In the final version, that space can form a footnote, an introduction, a preface etc. As Tymoczko (1999) explains, “In the form of introductions, footnotes, critical essays, glossaries, maps, and the like, the translator can embed the translated text in a shell that explains necessary cultural and literary background for the receiving audience and that acts as a running commentary on the translated work” (p. 22). The translator may not only explain the cultural and literary background of a work, s/he can also describe the mental strategies he follows as well as the resources s/he checks in arriving at a certain translation. That space expands the boundaries of the target text and enables the translator to create new possibilities. It also enables a definition of the translator as ““an all-powerful reader and a free agent as a writer” [Bassnett, & Trivedi, (1999, p. 5)].

The remainder of this article will be devoted to the application of the above concepts to the translation of the Holy Quran. The purpose is to see how translator’s notes can empower the translator to include more possibilities. They also enable translators to provide readers with access to resources and involve them in processes of critical understanding, and this allows readers more control over the text.

4. The Quran in Translation

The Quran is believed to be the words of God, i.e. revealed verbally by God to the Prophet Muhammad. It is believed to be the miracle of the Prophet Muhammad, partially because of its eloquence which surpassed all other Arabic texts, but more importantly because of its impact on the lives of so many millions of people. Because the Quran is exceptionally miraculous in its style, Quran translation is a controversial topic. The controversy is evident in the selection of titles for the various published Quran translations. For example, Arberry (1996) clarifies that he chooses the title *The Koran Interpreted* for his translation due to the fact that

“...the rhetoric and rhythm of the Arabic of the Koran are so characteristic, so powerful, so highly emotive, that any version whatsoever is bound in the nature of things to be but a poor copy of the glittering splendour of the original. Never was it more true than in this instance that traduttore traditore” (p. 24).

Arberry (1996) states that his title reflects the orthodox Muslim view. Indeed, in the early 20th century,

Quran translation was resisted by orthodox Muslims. In my viewpoint, that was due to misconceptions about translation, which was seen either as a second original or a distorted copy of the original. However, Sheikh Al-Azhar (the most revered position in the Muslim World held by Sheikh Muhammad Mustafa Maraghy from 1928 to 1930) strongly defended the translation of the Quran. Nevertheless, there was still a need to call it translation of the meaning of the Quran, and not translation of the Quran, a tendency that continues in the Arab world and is motivated by looking at translation in terms of equivalence.

In fact, the argument in the early 20th century (probably motivated by colonization and concerns about reservation of the Quran) was totally different from the argument of earlier centuries. In the early 20th century, the argument was whether or not the translation would be equivalent to the Arabic text. But in earlier centuries, the argument was whether or not the translation should be seen as the Quran in itself. These two arguments are totally different and reflect two distinctive perspectives of translation. One looks at translation in terms of equivalence to the source text, whereas the other looks at translation as a work which can stand by itself.

Quran translation started as early as the days of the Holy Prophet Muhammad when the messages of the prophet to the surrounding kingdoms included verses in Arabic and had to be translated into the language of the receiving kings. It was also reported that one of the companions of the prophet was asked by a group of Persians to translate the first Chapter of the Quran (The Opening) into Persian [Al-Nawawi, (n. d., p. 341)]. It is logical that in the early centuries of Islam, teachers teaching the Quran to people speaking other languages had to interpret the verses in other languages [see Al-Gahiz, (n. d., p. 140)]. But early Muslims were against using the translation as the Quran, i.e. reciting it in prayers and using it for worship. Al-Nawawi (a well-known Muslim scholar and writer of the 13th century CE) says, “Quran translation is not the Quran by best opinions...The Quran in Hindi is not the Quran, ...and prayers cannot be performed with a translation” (p. 342; my translation). Al-Baqilani (a well-known Muslim scholar and writer of the 10th century CE) is also against reading the Quran in translation for worship. Al-Ghazali (a well-known Muslim philosopher and Sufi of the 12th century CE) says, “Al-Fatiha [the first Chapter in the Quran] in translation does not stand for Al-Fatiha in the Quran” (p. 350; my translation). This is a progressive view of a translation that can stand by itself, i.e. translation as creation. According to the best opinions of Muslim scholars, translation as creation cannot substitute for the Quran.

Late Muslim scholars of the early 20th century took a more orthodox view, insisting on the untranslatability of Quran, at a time when translations of the Quran already existed. In fact, the first Quran translation into Latin was performed in 1143 CE and printed later in 1543 CE, and was followed by other translations into Spanish, French, and German [Alinoori (2008)]. The first English translation was completed by Alexander Ross in 1649, and a few centuries later it was followed by a number of translations by Muslims and non-Muslims such as Sale, Rodwell, Arberry, Bell, Dawood, Pickthall, Maulana Muhammad Ali, Yuosif Ali, and Al-Hilali and Khan.

In a nutshell, translation as a creation that can substitute for the Arabic Quran in prayers is not permissible according to the most correct of opinions of Muslim scholars. Translation of the Quran to facilitate understanding of the Quran and contemplate its message complies with the spirit of Islam, and should properly be called *Quran translation*.

That said, this paper examines Quran translation into English in order to explore the use of notes, whether or not they empower translators to include more translation possibilities, and whether or not they empowered readers by providing them with more resources and involving them in a process of critical thinking. For that purpose, two translations with annotations are selected: Ali (2002) and Al-Hilali and Khan (1996).

5. Research Questions

This study attempts to provide answers to the following questions:

- a) How do notes open up possibilities for translators?
- b) How do notes promote translation as scaffolding?
- c) How do notes involve readers in a process of critical thinking?

6. Material

The study investigates the following two translations of the Quran into English:

- a) *The Holy Quran: Arabic Text with English Translation, Commentary and Comprehensive Introduction*, by Maulana Muhammad Ali. The first edition of that translation was published in 1917. In 1951, the author produced a revised edition of his work, which was published on-line in 2002. Maulana Muhammad Ali (1874-1951) is a Sunni Muslim and the founder of the Lahore Ahmadiyya Movement, a faction of Ahmadiyya, led by Maulana Muhammad Ali in opposition to claims of prophethood to Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, the founder of Ahmadiyya, by his son and successor. Ali is the author of valuable books on Islam,

the Quran and Hadith. Most eminently, his text-book on Islam, *The Religion of Islam*, is approved by the Islamic Research Center of Al-Azhar and is prefaced by Sheikh Al-Azhar, professor Muhammad Sayed Tantawi. Among the features of Ali's translation is (a) a lengthy preface in which he explains his views on various topics in the Quran, (b) an introduction to each Chapter explaining its structure and its relation to preceding and following Chapters, and (c) copious notes.

- b) *Translation of the meanings of the Noble Qur'an in the English language*, by Dr. Muhammad Taqiud-Din Al-Hilali and Dr. Muhammad Muhsin Khan. The translation was published in 1996 (1417 A. H.). Al-Hilali is a former professor of Islamic studies in the Islamic University of Al-Madinah Al-Munawwarah. Khan is a former director at the University Hospital of the Islamic University of Al-Madinah Al-Munawwarah. The translation is approved by the Ministry of Islamic Affairs, Endowment, Missionary and Guidance of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. Like the translation of the Quran by Ali (2002), Al-Hilali and Khan (1996) provide lengthy notes to their translation.

The two translations are selected mainly because of the abundant notes provided with the translation. For practical reasons, the whole translation cannot be discussed in this paper, and so only the first Chapter (Al-Fatiha) will be the focus of discussion. Al-Fatiha is a relatively short chapter which consists of seven verses. Its seven verses are described in the Quran itself as the most recited verses (see Quran 15: 87) as they constitute part of the Muslim prayers performed five times a day, which adds tremendous significance to that short Chapter.

The purpose of this paper is not to assess the translation as much as to show how the notes help the translator include more translation possibilities and involve the reader in a process of critical thinking to gain more control over the text. Translation as such is a tool for empowerment for both the translator and the reader.

7. Data Analysis and Discussion

As indicated above, only seven verses, which constitute the first Chapter of the Quran, called Al-Fatiha (The Opening) will be the focus of this section. Al-Fatiha is headed with (bismillahirrahma:nirrah:im) which some scholars consider the first verse of Al-Fatiha, whereas, others consider it a head. Whether it is the first verse of Al-Fatiha or a head, it is a significant phrase on which Ali (2002) comments abundantly, and so it is included in this discussion. Ali (2002) engages the reader directly by his comment on the particle *bi*. He says, "I retain the ordinary translation of the particle *bi*, but I must warn

the reader that the sense of this particle is not the same in Arabic as the sense of the word *in* in the equivalent phrase *in the name of God*" (p. 3). According to him, the meaning of *bi* in *bismillahi* does not exactly mean *in the name of God*, but *I seek the assistance of God*.

In the footnote, a translation which may sound odd to English speakers but conveys a meaning closer to the Arabic text (*I seek the assistance of God*) is included; in the target text itself, the translator chooses a communicative translation (*in the name of God*). The co-presence of the two translations involves the reader in a process of critical thinking as s/he can compare the two translations and combine elements of both. Indeed, homogenization occurs when the reader reads the target text while contemplating the meaning included in the footnote. That is to say, in terms of equivalence, the translation of *bismillahi* is neither *in the name of God* nor *I seek the assistance of God*; it is a combination of both, not one or the other.

This footnote is significant because it allows the translator to include an alternative translation, i.e. it opens up possibilities for the translator. As Slack and Whitt (1992) states, "There are always ways in which [people's] practice is enabling, creative – opening up possibilities" (p. 573), and indeed empowerment is "the enablement of ... the conditions of possibility" [Grossberg (1987, p. 95)]. The footnote does not only open up possibilities for the translator, it also opens up possibilities for the reader, who has now access to two translations and two cultures side by side. According to Cornell Empowerment Group (1989), empowerment allows the co-presence of two cultures. Translation alone cannot easily allow the co-presence of two cultures since the translator has to choose between foreignization and domestication. The footnote, however, allows the co-presence of two cultures. The co-presence of the two translations/cultures permits the reader to compare the two and identify with one or both, and calls into question the supremacy of either. In the example above, the supremacy is not for either translation, but for a combination of both, which is made possible only by means of the footnote, which legitimizes the presence of the footnote as part of translation space.

In terms of power relations, the translator has more power than the reader who may not have access to the original work and/or original culture. However, in the example above, the translator acts as a cultural agent who enables the reader to reach the desired state of possessing knowledge and hence power. In that sense, translation can best be seen as scaffolding. Scaffolding can simply be defined as providing support for the less competent partner in an interaction (Wimsatt, 2012). A clearer example of translation as scaffolding is the foot-

note on the translation of the Arabic word *rabb* (Lord). Again, Al-Hilali & Khan (1996) involves the reader by claiming that there is no proper equivalent in English for the Arabic word *rabb*, which means “the One and the Only Lord for all the universe. Its Creator, Owner, Organizer, Provider, Master, Planner, Sustainer, Cherisher, and Giver of security” (p. 1). Ali (2002) does not only explain the Arabic word, he also cites references to support his view. He cites Imam Raghīb Al-Asfahani (a well-known Muslim scholar in the 10th century CE), Al-Zubaidi (a well-known Muslim linguist in the 12th century CE) and William Edward Lane (a well-known British Orientalist and the author of a valuable Arabic-English Lexicon). In citing these authorities, the translator supports the reader, the less competent partner in the interaction, who may not know what resources he may look at if s/he needs more detail. It is noteworthy that Ali (2002) also cites an English reference (Lane’s Lexicon) for those readers who may not speak Arabic and/or may not have access to Arabic reference books.

This is a clear example of scaffolding because the reader is guided step by step towards a stronger understanding of the text. First, both Ali (2002) and Al-Hilali and Khan (1996) clarify the meaning of the word *rabb* in the lexicon, then Ali (2002) takes a step further and indicates its significance (“Rabb signifies the fostering of a thing in such a manner as to make it attain one condition after another until it reaches its goal of completion”), and finally its application (“[it] includes both the physical and spiritual sides so far as man is concerned, His Word being the spiritual nourishment through which man is brought to perfection” [p. 4]). The progression from the lexical meaning to significance to application involves the reader in a process of critical understanding of the original text, the translation and the notes.

Quite contrary to the above two examples is the translation of verse 7 by Al-Hilali and Khan (1996). Al-Hilali and Khan (1996) use brackets in order to insert an interpretation which, in their view, may help the reader understand the text better. Their translation goes as follows:

Those who earned Your anger (such as the Jews)
(Quran 1: 7)

The translation above is empowering for the translators who are able to create space for themselves inside the target text to insert an interpretation. However, that space is at the expense of the reader, who is disempowered as a result. According to Slack and Whitt (1992), “To ‘disempower’ a person or a group has ... two aspects: (1) to subordinate them in hierarchical relations

of power and (2) to deny the inherent ability to construct alternative practices, structures, and spaces, despite degrees of subordination.” (p. 573) The reader is subordinated in a hierarchical relation of power because the translators enforce their interpretation as part of the sacred text. By so doing, they may hinder the reader from constructing alternative interpretations. They also influence the reader into believing that what they have inserted between brackets is part of the Holy verse. Ali (2002) has not used addition in his translation, and in his footnote, he interprets the verse as a warning to Muslims who may incur Divine displeasure and go astray from the path which leads to perfection; therefore, believers among Jews, Christians and Muslims, who follow the path to perfection, are compared to those who do not follow the path to perfection. In fact, this footnote is a call for changing consciousness, as all readers are warned of incurring Divine displeasure if they do not work hard to continue to improve themselves. The translation alone, particularly of Al-Hilali and Khan (1996) who take those who incurred Divine displeasure to be the Jews and Christians, makes the Muslim reader content with his spiritual state and do not think about improving his life. The footnote of Ali (2002) engages the reader in a process of changing consciousness as it is a call for all readers to follow the path of perfection. In this sense, translation is empowerment, a process that starts and ends with changing consciousness [Walters & Manicom (1996)].

The concept of change is central to empowerment [Page & Czuba (1999)]; it is not only consciousness that changes; roles and relationships also change. I have already talked about the role of the translator as a writer, who can comment on his/her translation. The role of the reader also changes as s/he is involved in a process of decision-making. When the reader is given alternative translations, s/he actually becomes part of the process of decision-making as s/he can choose the translation which s/he finds more convincing. For example, in the following two translations of Verse 2:

– All the praises and thanks be to Allah, the Lord of the ‘Alamin (mankind, jinn and all that exists)
[Al-Hilali & Khan (1996)]

– Praise be to Allah, the Lord of the worlds [Ali (2002)]

Al-Hilali and Khan (1996) choose to transliterate the Arabic word *ʿā:lāmī:n* and introduce a paraphrase between brackets leaving the reader to choose whichever s/he finds convenient. Ali (2002) translates the Arabic word as *the worlds*, but in the footnote, he indicates that it signifies any class of created beings or of mankind; hence, an alternative translation can be *nations*. In other

words, Ali (2002) gives the reader the meaning of the word in the lexicon followed by an alternative translation to the one introduced in the text. This is, in fact, the typical mental process that a translator goes through when translating: checking resources, generating alternatives and making a decision. By citing references and unobfuscating the mental process of decision-making, the translator involves the reader in the process of decision-making leaving the reader with more control over the text, which is made open to various possibilities.

Translation as space then allows the translator to be a writer, and the reader to be a translator. It is a paradoxical space, which allows one to occupy both the center and the margin, the inside and the outside [Rose (1993)]. The translator who usually occupies the margin can occupy the center as a writer; he does not only act inside the text but outside the text as well. Similarly, the reader can share part of the power of the translator, and so occupies the center as a translator. Translation in that sense becomes an open space in which the walls between the source and the target are broken, and the shared part between the writer, the translator and the reader becomes larger than their differences. It becomes - literally and metaphorically - a point where the source text writer and the target text reader meet, and where the source culture and the target culture run into one another, and thus move away from cultural conflict to cultural communication.

8. Conclusion

This article is an attempt to answer three questions: (a) how do notes open up possibilities for translators; (b) how do notes promote translation as scaffolding; and (c) how do notes involve readers in a process of critical thinking? To answer these three questions, two Quran translations which include abundant text annotation were selected. Data analysis and discussion provided some answers and highlighted the following conclusions and implications:

8.1 The Power of Translation and Translation of Power

Empowerment may encompass three aspects: (a) opening up possibilities, (b) enabling access to and control over resources, and (c) allowing more freedom in decision-making processes. Translation notes bolster these three aspects. To start with, they open up possibilities for both the translator and the reader. For example, the translator can produce a communicative translation inside the target text while explaining the literal meaning of the original text in the note. He may give more information on the source culture elements, which may allow readers to compare the source and target cultures, identify with one or the other, or adopt elements of both.

The translator can also provide the reader with some

of the references that he checks in arriving at a certain translation. By providing the reader with the resources the translator has used, the mental translation procedures s/he has gone through and the translation alternatives he has arrived at, the translator involves the reader in a process of critical thinking as the reader will be able to understand both the source and target texts better and see for him/herself which translation alternative can work better. That is, the reader is involved in the decision-making process, and is empowered by part of the role of the translator, who is already empowered as a writer. This is the power of translation, and translation of power. The power of translation as enablement, which is translated when the translator becomes a writer, and the reader becomes a translator.

8.2 Translation Space Vs. Translation Text

In order to consider translation as a tool for empowerment, translation should be looked at beyond the boundaries of the target text. The target text is a limited concept which cannot free itself from its attachment to the source text. It does not in any way empower translators to create possibilities. Translation as space that comprises the translator's notes, prefaces, introductions etc. allows translators to include more alternatives.

Space can be literally understood as the extra lines available for the translator's notes. It can also be metaphorically understood as the space separating two texts and two cultures. In both cases, translation as space permits the co-presence of two cultures. When it is physical space on paper, it allows the translator to resolve dichotomies such as domestication/foreignization and opens up a whole range of possibilities between the two alternatives. As metaphorical space between two texts and two cultures, Bhabha (1994) says, "by exploring this Third Space, we may elude the politics of polarity and emerge as the others of our selves." (p. 39). Indeed, translation as space allows us to "emerge as the others of our selves" as writers, translators and readers. ■

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When Europe Loved Islam

By Marya Hannun and Sophie Spaan

[This article was originally published in *Foreign Policy* magazine (May 5, 2016). The authors – Marya Hannun (Ph.D. student in Arabic and Islamic studies at Georgetown University) and Sophie Spaan (Ph.D. student at Utrrecht University) – present a fascinating account of a time, quite different from prevalent sentiments today, when Islam and Muslims were accepted, appreciated, and even courted in Western Europe. As expressed in a subtitle to the original article: “Before the continent started banning hijab, European aristocrats used to change their names to Abdullah and Muhammad, and going to the local mosque was the latest trend.” This period is shown to be when Lahore Ahmadiyya missions were established in England and Germany, and actively engaged in contributing to the philosophical discussions of the day. This era, in which the “relationship between Europe and Islam [was] characterized by dialogue and fluidity”, is contrasted with contemporary times in which Muslims struggle to be seen as an integral and equal part of European public life. The original publication may be viewed at: <https://foreignpolicy.com/2016/05/05/when-europe-loved-islam-interwar-weimar-republic-wilmersdorf-mosque/>.]

From the outside, with its high minarets and bulbous Mughal-style dome, the Wilmersdorf mosque, located on Brienner Street in southwest Berlin, looks much the same as it did when it was built in the 1920s. But the institution, just like the city around it, has changed.

Today, the mosque is a quiet place. It mainly serves as an information center: School children sometimes visit on field trips; it hosts interfaith brunches. A small community of Muslims regularly show up for Friday prayer. It’s all a far cry from the days when the Wilmersdorf mosque was the lively center of a spiritual countercultural movement in the Weimar Republic.

The Ahmadiyya missionaries from British India’s

Punjab region who built the mosque attracted a varied crowd in 1920s Berlin, hosting lectures that tapped into the philosophical questions of the day. Topics included the growing gap between life and doctrine; the future of Europe; and the future of humanity as a whole. Germans of all ages, wrestling with their profound disillusionment in Christian civilization in the wake of World War I and seeking a religious alternative that was modern and rational, as well as spiritual, attended these lectures, and many of them ultimately converted to Islam.

It's an odd scene to imagine in today's Germany, where the right-wing Alternative for Germany party has called for a ban on burqas and minarets, and more than half of Germans say they view Islam as a threat. But in the interwar period, Berlin boasted a thriving Muslim intelligentsia comprising not only immigrants and students from South Asia and the Middle East but German converts from all walks of life. Islam, at the time, represented a countercultural, even exotic, form of spirituality for forward-thinking leftists: Think Buddhism, in 1970s California.

Germans were no exception in displaying this kind of openness and even fascination with Islam. The early 20th century saw the emergence of the first Muslim communities and institutions in Western Europe and, with them, came converts in Britain and the Netherlands, as well. It's a virtually forgotten period of history — but one of particular relevance today, as the relationship between Islam and Europe is increasingly marked by wariness and at times outright hostility.

Even the more nuanced discussions about Islam in Europe — those that take into account the structural factors that have marginalized the continent's Muslim populations — still, for the most part, treat the presence of the religion as a new and thorny phenomenon, something foreign to European cultural and political life as we know it. But a look back at the early 20th century — primarily the period after the first wave of Muslim immigration to Europe in the wake of World War I — shows that not so long ago Western Europe and Islam had a very different relationship, one characterized by curiosity on the part of citizens and almost a sort of favoritism on the part of governments. At the same time that European citizens were experimenting with an exotic eastern religion, European governments were providing special treatment for Muslim citizens and catering to them in ways that might at first glance seem surprising: The secular French government spent lavishly on ostentatious mosques, while Germany sought to demonstrate its superior treatment of Muslims, when compared to France and Britain. Examining this past serves as a reminder that not only is this not a new encounter, but the relationship between Western Europe

and Islam was not always what it is today and may not always look this way in the future.

Converts like Hugo Marcus, a gay Jewish philosopher, show Islam wasn't just present in Europe in the years after World War I — for some, it played a vital role in discussions about what the continent's future should look like. Marcus, who helped run the Wilmersdorf mosque, was born in 1880 and moved to Berlin to study philosophy. He converted in 1925, after tutoring young South Asian Muslim immigrants. Adopting the Muslim name Hamid, Marcus wrote articles for the mosque's publication, *Moslemische Revue*, in which he engaged with the philosophers popular at the time — Goethe, Nietzsche, Spinoza, and Kant — to argue that Islam was a necessary component in crafting the “New Man.” Used to describe an ideal future citizen, the “New Man” was a trendy philosophical concept taken up by everyone from the socialists to the fascists and was central to both Soviet and National Socialist imagery. For Marcus, Islam, as the monotheistic successor to Judaism and Christianity, was the missing component at the heart of this “man of the future.”

The Ahmadiyya mission also managed another mosque in Western Europe — the Shah Jahan Mosque in Woking, England. The mosque was commissioned in 1889, by Gottlieb Wilhelm Leitner, a polyglot Anglo-Hungarian Orientalist who was, by most accounts, not a convert but had served as an interpreter in the Crimean War and travelled widely throughout the Muslim world. With no one to oversee its operations after the death of its eccentric founder 10 years later, the building fell into disuse. But just before World War I, Indian-born barrister and Ahmadiyya missionary Khwaja Kamaluddin took over the property, revived it, and transformed it into the Woking mission. The mosque, located just 30 miles south of London, successfully nabbed converts from among Britain's *Downton Abbey*-era upper and middle classes and others who shared in their dissatisfaction with Christianity and modern Western society. One of the more legendary converts of the time was the Irish peer Lord Headley. Born Rowland George Allanson Allanson-Winn, the 5th Baron Headley converted to Islam in 1913, adopting the Muslim name Shaikh Rahmatullah al-Farooq. Lord Headley became a poster child, of sorts, for British Muslim converts; in the 1920s, he went on a widely published pilgrimage to Mecca and would, in his life, write a number of books and articles on Islam, which he was certain would have a glorious future in Britain.

It seems clear that, on an individual level, Islam won over some Europeans looking for a break from tradition in the modern world. Pieter Henricus van der Hoog, a Dutch dermatologist who founded a cosmetics company

that still provides women in the Netherlands with face creams and firming masks today, converted during this period and went on pilgrimage to Mecca. Harry St. John Philby, a British intelligence officer and father of Kim Philby, the infamous double agent, converted when living in Saudi Arabia in 1930 and went by Abdullah. Another convert from this period, the Jewish writer Leopold Weiss, adopted the name Muhammad Asad; his son, Talal Asad, is one of the most influential anthropologists alive today.

But Western European governments in the early 20th century also demonstrated a tolerance and even a partiality toward Islam that might surprise contemporary readers — though their motivations were often more cynical than those of their citizens.

During World War I, France and Britain relied on their colonial subjects — many of whom were Muslim — to serve on European battlefields, and so they paid a great deal of attention to the needs of these troops. Imams were attached to regiments, and Muslims in the armies received special halal provisions: Instead of pork and wine, they were given couscous, coffee, and mint tea. (Jewish regiments, on the other hand, received no such special treatment.) On the German side, the country's first mosque was built in a prisoner of war camp in Wünsdorf to accommodate captured Muslim soldiers and demonstrate to them how much better Germans treated them than the French or British. The result, they hoped, would create unrest among Muslim populations in the colonies of Germany's two rivals.

In the postwar period, anticolonial movements' increasing emphasis on Islamic identity made those same European governments increasingly anxious. Secret services were dispatched to the coffee shops of the continent, where Muslim intellectuals — including Shakib Arslan, one of the most important pan-Islamists in interwar Europe, who was based in Geneva and is the grandfather of contemporary Lebanese politician Walid Jumblatt — had started to tout a pan-Islamic message of resistance.

But European governments also tried to win over Muslims through the soft power of propaganda. In 1926, more than two decades after affirming its commitment to secularism, or *laïcité*, in a 1905 law, the French state relied on a variety of loopholes to finance the construction of the Grande Mosquée de Paris — an act that left many of the nation's Catholics outraged at the state's preferential treatment toward Muslims. Ostensibly, the mosque was to serve as a tribute to the Muslim soldiers who had fought for France during the war: When the foundation stone was laid in 1922, Parisian municipality official Paul Fleuret proudly declared that when France had found itself in

danger in 1914, its Muslims in Africa did not hesitate to come to its defense: Muslims, he said, “were not the last to answer the call of the fatherland in danger... Many gave their lives in defense of civilization.” He added that the mosque was an expression of France's gratitude, a commemorative memorial for the Muslim soldiers who fell on the country's behalf.

In fact, historians now see the mosque as a piece of colonialist propaganda, meant to give rich visitors a taste of French imperial might in the Muslim world. North African workers in Paris lived far from the mosque, and its prayer times did not accommodate their factory schedules; the high prices of the bathhouse and restaurant made it unaffordable for all but a handful of French and Moroccan elites. The mosque, built in the fifth arrondissement, across from the Jardin des Plantes, still survives today; tourists from all over the world come to enjoy a cup of mint tea and baklava in the café or purchase a Moroccan rug in the gift shop, inhaling some “eastern atmosphere” in the heart of Paris.

In 1935, the secular French state again singled out its Muslim subjects, building a hospital in Bobigny, a small commune in northeast Paris, that was exclusively for Muslim use. This hospital was supposedly erected to uphold the republican value of equality by providing special care for Muslims: Patients were provided halal food, and the building itself, designed by French architects in what they saw as a “North African” style, was equipped with prayer halls and a Muslim cemetery. At the same time, the hospital also kept Muslims out of Parisian public wards, at a time when French citizens expressed concerns that North African workers might carry dangerous venereal diseases — a sign that, for all their unexpected curiosity about Islam, Europeans were also often racist. The hospital serves as a good example of a colonial government strategy typical for the period: provide services to Muslim residents both to help win their favor and to bring them under the control of the state.

In the buildup to World War II, and during the war itself, efforts of states to win the favor of Muslims took on new urgency. During this period, Britain helped finance two mosques in London, while the Nazis attempted to convince Muslims, especially in Eastern Europe, to join their fight against the Soviets. Particularly in the Balkans, Crimea, and the Caucasus, the Nazis presented themselves as the protectors of Islam. Propaganda disseminated through radio and leaflets focused on anti-bolshevism, anti-Judaism, and anti-British imperialism. (Muslim legions in the German army were created, but many of the soldiers who signed up did so for the better conditions rather than out of ideological considerations.)

This period — in which Europeans and their governments courted Muslims and Islam — ironically foreshadows the treatment of Islam in Western Europe today: Special attention to Muslims, rather than a sign of acceptance, was often driven by a perceived threat to national interests stemming from the religion’s politically subversive potential. This impulse is not so different than the thinking behind state-sponsored Imam-training programs that have cropped up in Britain and the Netherlands in recent years.

The scars of battle and the passage of time have left their mark on Berlin’s Wilmersdorf mosque. In the final stages of World War II, it was transformed into a battlefield when, during the Russian invasion of Berlin, Nazi troops dug trenches in its tranquil gardens and fired upon enemy soldiers from its high minarets. During the fighting, one of the minarets was all but destroyed, and the mosque was seriously damaged. Though it has since been reconstructed, the mosque has never quite returned to its former glory. Today, its attendance, while steady, is mostly limited to Friday prayers, and its storied history is known to few.

In the eventful decades following the war, this brief period — when some Europeans embraced Islam — has also faded from memory. Just why isn’t clear: perhaps because the recent and larger influx of Muslim workers in the 1960s and 1970s made Muslims an increasingly visible minority in these countries, rather than a tiny fraction of the population, and brought with it increased tensions. Or perhaps because, since 9/11, the events that have marked the relationship between Western society and the Middle East have often overshadowed its history.

Nevertheless, looking back is important for understanding the good, the bad, and the ugly when it comes to the rich and complex history of Islam in Western Europe. If governments, in their zeal to win over Muslim populations, singled them out in ways that may have helped lay the groundwork for the sense of “otherness” Europe feels toward Islam today, the Wilmersdorf mosque represents an alternative vision, a nod to a time when Islam did not, in European minds, come with repressive, anti-intellectual, or threatening associations. Imagining the lectures once held at Woking and Wilmersdorf and their varied audiences — by some accounts, German novelist Thomas Mann attended once — allows us to envision a relationship between Europe and Islam characterized by dialogue and fluidity.

The history of Muslims and Islam in Western Europe is both older and more entangled than many think, and acknowledging this helps us imagine a future in which Muslims can be seen as an integral and equal part of European public life, rather than timeless or threatening outsiders. ■

Lessons on the Quran

Chapter 10 (Jonah), Section 11 (Divine Judgment)

By Fazeel S. Khan, Esq.

[Lahore Ahmadiyya members in various locations gather each week for a Quran study group via Skype. The study group commenced with lessons from Sura Fatihah and continued with a subsequent section of the Quran each week. Members take turns presenting on a particular section and discussion from all participants follow. This article is based on a lesson presented to the study group by the Editor. It deals with Section 11 of Chapter 10 of the Holy Quran, which concerns the topic of “divine judgment”. In addressing this section, points are also presented relating to possible alternative significances to the story of Prophet Jonah and his encounter with the whale, and how references to bodies of water in scripture are used as metaphors for life’s trials and tribulations.]

We will be discussing Section 11 of Sura (Chapter) Yunus (Jonah) today, which Maulana Muhammad Ali has titled “Divine Judgment”. This is the final section in this chapter, and it provides a very fitting conclusion to the message contained in it.

The chief feature of the chapter, as Maulana Muhammad Ali explains in his Introduction, is that while it asserts the truth of revelation, it also lays stress on God’s merciful dealing with man. And the chapter being titled after Hazrat Yunus (Prophet Jonah) is an illustration (or a prophecy at the time) of how, just like the people to whom Prophet Jonah was sent accepted the revelation sent to him, the Arabs too would ultimately accept the revelation given to the Holy Prophet Muhammad.

For me, there seemed to be a secondary theme in this chapter as well. It seemed to allude to the law of evolution working in this world and its parallel in the spiritual realm. In the very first section, in verse 3, it mentions the divine attribute of **Rabb** (Lord), and speaks about the creation of the heavens and the earth, and Almighty God “**regulating the Affair**”. This “regulating the Affair” depicts how Almighty God is not only the Originator of everything but also the Controller of everything. It signifies that everything is dependent on Him. And it is an aspect of Almighty God’s attribute of *rabbubiyat* which involves making everything progress in gradual stages. And MMALI comments that in the phrase “regulating the Affair” there is reference to the spiritual evolution of man. So, the lesson being that just as the original simplest forms of life (in pools of water) progressed to the complex intelligent beings we have

ruling the material world today, so too does man progress and advance in stages in the spiritual realm.

As a result, I was able to see some imagery of this lesson in the story of Prophet Jonah. Prophet Jonah is well-known for the story of him being stranded in the sea, then having an encounter with a whale (the Bible stating that he spent 3 days in the belly of the fish – basically being one with the fish), and then was cast out and made his way from the sea to land where he found safety. The progression of events in this story seems to mirror the evolutionary process of man – first originating from water, then evolving to sea life and finally being established firmly on land. *But*, the key appears to be what Prophet Jonah did afterwards. He was, on the basis of divine revelation, able to convince his people (over a hundred thousand of them) to accept the truth and live in accordance with the divine laws. So, the significance being that mankind's true greatness is not simply in its physical evolution, but what truly distinguishes mankind's evolution and establishes its greatness in creation is its spiritual essence.

The chapter opens with the statement (in verse 2):

“Is it a wonder to the people that We have revealed to a man from among themselves: **Warn the people and give good news to those who believe that for them is advancement in excellence with their Lord? ...**”

Maulana Muhammad Ali explains that “advancement in excellence” can be literally translated as “*footing with firmness*”. So, again, this refers to the progression of spiritual life being the true firm footing for man, not the mere physical footing (or physical attributes) it enjoys in the physical world. In this verse it is explained what the divine revelation given to prophets entail: a warning and the giving of good news to those who heed the warning. And those who accept the message, we are told, “advance in excellence” (or evolve and progress in terms of spiritual development).

And the chapter closes in this section by clarifying exactly what that warning entails – and that is to believe in the One, True God, Who is the Creator and Controller of all things.

Verse 104

“Say: O people, if you are in doubt as to my religion, (know that) I serve not those whom you serve besides Allah, but I serve Allah, Who causes you to die; and I am commanded to be of the believers”

Here the true essence of *belief* is explained. True belief is attained when one “serves” God only. It is when one directs all his or her actions in accordance

with this goal. And this verse seems to clarify that “serving” God doesn't simply mean not worshipping other deities, but it means following God's guidance as opposed to any other desire – whether it be for money, power, recognition or anything that is done to selfishly satisfy one's ego.

And, as Almighty God is the Creator and Controller of all, He not only gives life but has the authority to take it. Early in this chapter we read how Almighty Allah also gives death to nations – stating that every nation has its term. These nations, we were told, were destroyed on account of rejecting the guidance that was provided. So, the point seems to be suggested that “death” here also refers to “spiritual death”. That only Almighty God (through His guidance) can give spiritual life and without this guidance one inevitably faces spiritual death.

This verse also clarifies the reference to the “doubt” mentioned in verse 94. Critics have argued that the phrase “But if thou art in doubt” in verse 94 refers to the Holy Prophet doubting the revelation he was receiving, but this verse confirms that the reference to the doubters is to the people to whom the Holy Prophet was delivering the revelation.

Verse 105

“And that thou set thy purpose towards the Religion uprightly; and be not of the polytheists.”

This seems to be more clarification of what “serving only Allah” means. It is setting one's purpose or objective in all affairs towards this goal. Diverting from this goal, following one's low desires, is not following religion “uprightly” or with full sincerity. In the previous chapter we learned a lot of lessons on sincerity of belief, and how not acting in accordance with one's stated belief is a sign of hypocrisy.

And this concept is explained elsewhere in the Quran as people taking their low desires for gods besides Allah. It seems we are being told here that not directing one's purpose towards the goal of religion (which is serving God and striving to become close to God in a spiritual sense), is tantamount to a form of polytheism – regardless of whether one consciously believes in some deity besides God. As following one's low desires, as a practical matter, is in effect serving something other than God.

Verse 106

“And call not besides Allah on that which can neither benefit thee nor harm thee; for if thou dost, thou shalt then be of the unjust.”

Here we are reminded that, as Almighty God is the Controller of everything, other deities that people worship can neither benefit them nor harm them – they sim-

ply do not have any power or ability to affect anything. Now, this is most clearly exemplified in the case of people who worship idols. If one is to drop the idol and it breaks, the obvious argument to be made is if the idol could not even help itself, how can it help you?

But, again, it seems the deeper significance is that the following of one's lower desires – the desires innate in us and ingrained in us through the evolutionary process of survival in the animal kingdom – is *not* what truly benefits us. We may feel that having power or money or large families is a true benefit and what should be the goal to achieve in life – it actually makes people feel as though they are immortal – but, we are told that these are mere temporary acquisitions and they provide us no ultimate benefit.

Verse 107

“And if Allah afflicts thee with harm, there is none to remove it but He; and if He intends good to thee, there is none to repel His grace. He brings it to whom He pleases of His servants. And He is the Forgiving, the Merciful.”

This verse, like the previous one, re-emphasizes that Almighty God is the true Controller of all. That punishment cannot be averted if it is His will, and no harm can materialize (despite the plans of mighty and powerful forces) should He not will it. The implication being that it is only Almighty God upon which one should rely and serve.

And this verse ends by stating Almighty God is “the Forgiving, the Merciful”. It seems to suggest that if we were to be held strictly accountable for all of our shortcomings, for all the times throughout the day that we lose focus and serve and rely on something other than Allah, whether it be for fear of losing money, or fear of losing friendship with someone, or fear of losing a certain position or status, we would rightly be punished in an overwhelming manner – the ratio of how one serves God with how one serves this world on a daily basis would be in complete imbalance. Even when one thinks they are serving God – like when praying and giving in charity – we are warned elsewhere in the Quran to consider whether we are engaging in such acts for the right purpose – for serving God or simply to be seen by men (i.e. which only serves our egos).

Yet, despite our constant shortcomings and flaws, we are reminded here that it is due to Almighty God's Forgiveness and Mercy, that we continue to be provided for, and supported, and are able to progress.

Verse 108

“Say: O people, the Truth has indeed come to you from your Lord; so whoever goes aright, goes

aright only for the good of his own soul; and whoever errs, errs only against it. And I am not a custodian over you.”

A final declaration is made here about the truthfulness of the revelation given to the Holy Prophet Muhammad. We are reminded that the key requirement (or precondition) to spiritual development is *free will*. That free will – the opportunity to choose what is right and what is wrong – is necessary in order to develop divine attributes within one's self.

And we are also reminded that accepting this message (of serving Almighty God and placing reliance entirely in Him) is for one's own benefit. Almighty Allah's greatness is neither amplified nor decreased by our service, but it is our souls that benefit (or not) by our beliefs and actions. An analogy used – like for prayer – is that one should think of spirituality (or spiritual sustenance) like physical food. Getting nourishment from physical food benefits *our* bodies and no one else, and, likewise, starving ourselves is only a detriment to our bodies and no one else's. So too do our spiritual practices only benefit our own souls.

Verse 109

“And follow what is revealed to thee and be patient till Allah give judgment, and He is the Best of the judges.”

In this verse, we are told to follow the divine revelation and be patient. It seems what is being implied is that upholding the truth is not an easy task. And it is not something that is established overnight. Rather, it requires patience and forbearance.

The first verse of this chapter states “I Allah am the Seer”, and it ends with this final verse stating Allah “is the best of the judges”. Although we tend to judge quickly based on our limited knowledge and understanding of who people are and what they do, Almighty Allah is certainly the best of judges as He only is All-Seeing and All-Knowing.

And this is a wonderful lesson to apply in our daily lives: although we may feel we know enough to judge something (whether it be a person or a circumstance), in reality we know very little. We may not know what made a person the way he or she is today. What difficulties or obstacles that person may have had to overcome. What trials the person may be currently facing. Only Almighty Allah is cognizant of everything – only He is the All-Seeing and All-Knowing – and, thus, He is the best of judges.

Conclusion

I'll make on last point before completing. The last verse of the previous section states:

“Then We deliver Our messengers and those who believe – even so (now); it is binding on Us to deliver the believers.” (10:103).

And we were given the example in this chapter of three messengers who were “delivered” due their reliance and trust and dependence on Almighty Allah. And these three examples provide unique illustrations of serving God by placing reliance in Him. Interestingly, all three examples deal with protection from being engulfed by the “sea”, the sea seeming to be a metaphor for the evils of this world.

The first was Prophet Noah, who despite criticism and ridicule placed his trust in Almighty God and worked towards building an ark that ended up saving him from the ravages of a disastrous flood. The second was Prophet Moses, who followed Almighty God’s commands to stand up for justice, placing trust and reliance in Him, and saw the obstacles being removed by the parting of the sea. And the third is Prophet Jonah, whom the chapter is named after, who most would think was being punished by being swallowed by a whale (according to the story), but whose apparent punishment was actually protection from death in the stormy sea.

And these 3 lessons of trust and reliance on Almighty God were all exemplified by the Holy Prophet Muhammad and his blessed companions. They strove hard in building an ark, like Prophet Noah, but their ark was of piety and righteousness, which protected them from all the storms of temptations and evils that are rampant in the world. They relied on Almighty Allah, like Prophet Moses, and fought for justice as they were commanded (even though their hearts were not inclined to fight) and witnessed the parting of the enemies and obstacles being removed. And, like Prophet Jonah, they relied on Almighty Allah by being patient in times of utter darkness and distress, knowing that this period, which may seem like punishment or abandonment by God, may in reality be protection from something else and in fact a blessing.

So, the particular stories of the prophets mentioned in this chapter are excellent illustrations of the intended message contained in it, and also provides us with valuable lessons that we may try to recognize and apply in our daily lives. ■

The Real Basis for Muslim Progress

Eid Khutba (Sermon) from April 27, 1925

By Maulana Muhammad Ali
(Translated by Dr. Mohammed Ahmad)

[This article is an abridged version of an Eid Khutba (Sermon) delivered by Maulana Muhammad Ali on April 27, 1925, translated from Urdu to English by Dr. Mohammed Ahmad. In this khutba, Maulana Muhammad Ali discusses the vital social aspect of the Eid gathering and the important exhortations that are to be relayed on this occasion for the betterment of the community. In particular, a reminder is given to remember those who are suffering, whether materially or in matters of faith. Also emphasized is the essential role that women play in effectively caring for the needs of the community.]

I bear witness that none deserves to be served besides Allah, and I bear witness that Muhammad is the servant and messenger of Allah. After this, I seek the protection of Allah from the accursed devil. In the name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful.

Praise be to Allah, the Lord of the worlds,
The Beneficent, the Merciful,
Master of the day of Requital.
Thee do we serve and Thee do we beseech for help.
Guide us on the right path,
The path of those upon whom Thou hast bestowed favours,
Not those upon whom wrath is brought down, nor those who go astray.

– Holy Quran, “Al Fatihah”, Chapter 1

Significance of Eid

The Arabic word *Eid* means “a recurring happiness”. Eid is an occasion of great joy for Muslims. No doubt there is an aspect of worship connected with the occasion, but the emphasis is on the assembly of people. True happiness is only achieved when there is a gathering of friends and one celebrates with relations. It is similarly customary in our culture to assemble relatives and friends on weddings. Hence, Eid, in addition to being a religious duty for Muslims, is also a social affair that brings great joy. Such celebrations are in fact a part of our religion. And the means of acquiring this joy is the meeting of friends and relatives, so that one may reacquaint with loved ones and strengthen social ties.

Important Exhortations in the Eid Sermon

A distinguishing feature of the Eid prayer, when compared with the daily obligatory prayers, is the increased

number of times the words *Allah-hu-Akbar* (God is the Greatest) is pronounced. This distinctive part of the Eid prayer has a positive effect on one's heart and mind. A special appreciation of God's Glory and Omnipotence is felt.

It is noteworthy that the Holy Prophet Muhammad instructed both men and women to assemble on the occasion of Eid. Even women who are otherwise exempt from the obligatory prayer were enjoined to participate in the Eid service, as the sermon presents an occasion for conveying some important and necessary exhortations.

One such exhortation the Holy Prophet would relay on this joyful occasion is that Muslims are to remember their brethren who are suffering. Today, it seems Muslims grieve the fact that they are facing a united front against them in a common cause to deter them from their faith. The concern is not that Muslims do not have temporal power in the world in this day and age. As the Quran states: "And We bring these days to men by turns ..." (3:140). The real pain and distress is that the great world powers are intent on dissuading Muslims from the religion of Islam.

It is a notable characteristic of the early Muslims that none of them became apostates. Today, however, due to widespread poverty and ignorance, we see many Muslims turning away from Islam. One hears of such news on a daily basis, whether it be in Siam, China, Java or other Muslim countries. In our own country, we see the *Shuddi* Movement working diligently to convert Muslims to Hinduism on a large scale, though many Muslims are totally unaware of such practices. Extensive plans are being executed for this purpose, and the financial distress and illiteracy of Muslim populations are being exploited to achieve this goal.

Teachings of the Mujaddid (Reformer) of the Age

As a result, on this occasion when Muslims are assembled to hear a worthy message, I would like to remind you to not forget the plight of your brothers who have renounced Islam due to their scarce resources and lack of knowledge. Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, the *Mujaddid* (Reformer) of this age, drew our attention to this quandary. Thirty-five years ago, he stated that Muslims were failing to give due attention to the objective of propagating their religion. He didn't emphasize this in words alone, but took practical steps to form an organization to work towards the objective to counter and rectify this unfortunate situation. If there is no other proof of Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad's truthfulness, the simple fact that he exhibited an incomparable heartfelt passion to propagate Islam should be a sufficient rebuttal to his critics. The Holy Quran describes such a passion as: "... Strive hard in Allah's way with your

wealth and your lives ..." (9:41).

This is what I want to remind the gathering today. There is much opposition to Islam and an agenda is being implemented to dissuade Muslims from their religion. You must stand firm against this opposition. It is not a time to live in comfort. It is a time to sacrifice for the cause of defending your religion against these attacks. Both men and women must contribute in this cause, as your life as a nation depends on it. Keep in mind, you can only succeed in this cause if you strive in its way as one body. It is essential to be united and work together in this peaceful striving.

Think about why you are commanded to worship together. Worship signifies submitting before Almighty God with humility. The real pleasure experienced from such submission, though, is when it is performed in solitude in some remote corner. Why then is there a command to gather together for worship? It is because the real blessing lies in people gathering for a unified purpose. As a result, the entire *Jammat* (organization) must be united in this effort, focused in one direction, with everyone contributing to accomplish the great task before us. It is like a rope being pulled in opposite directions, with us pulling at one end and the opponents pulling at the other. Some of those among us are not pulling as hard as they should. Strive hard and sacrifice with your wealth and your lives in the way of your religion. Defending your faith against such attacks in a peaceful manner is surely a noble task.

Spirit of Sacrifice in Women

Such causes are all the more commendable when women contribute as well. Remember, the wives of the Holy Prophet and the wives of his noble companions were integral to such causes. Even on the battlefield, they participated by rescuing the injured and tending to the wounded. There is a report that states one woman accompanied her husband in six of the twelve defensive battles in which he took part. What sort of Muslims would we be if we were to neglect women's contributions to this essential endeavor of educating people with the Holy Quran. Muslims today have deprived their women of such opportunities and placed them in a state of apathy. If they were given the chance, they could accomplish all these tasks.

I feel immense happiness when I see the spirit of sacrifice in women at work. Truthfully, their determination and resolve cannot be matched by men. Women, generally, are more soft-hearted and kind, making them much more inherently capable to raise children. Women bear all kinds of hardship in fostering and nurturing children. They sacrifice many comforts and even their own health for them. And we see how they excel in virtues of empathy and devotion, far excelling the standard in men. It

would therefore be foolish to not utilize these virtuous qualities in our cause.

It is also worth mentioning that it is a shame that we do not provide adequate space for women to gather in our facilities. Only a few seem to attend the Friday congregational prayer service. It is your duty to provide opportunities for them to learn and acquire knowledge. They should be educated so they can read newspapers to learn about the world and understand their religion by studying the Holy Quran. This way, they will be familiar with lessons of history and will be a positive influence on the upbringing of your children. Remember, the wives of the Holy Prophet taught men. Many notable companions would visit Hazrat Aisha to seek her advice on religious matters, as they appreciated her expertise on issues of Islamic jurisprudence. For your children's sake as well, provide for your women to become knowledgeable about their religion.

Providing for the Impoverished and Destitute

The other point the Holy Prophet would particularly emphasize on Eid is the need to look after the impoverished and the destitute. From my review of many hadith reports, the Holy Prophet would utilize the occasion of giving sermons to draw special attention to this matter. He would also motivate the women in the congregation to give charity and they would respond wholeheartedly, giving rings, bangles and other jewelry while Hazrat Bilal would collect the donated items.

I know for a fact that there is a lot of *sadaqah and khairaat* (non-obligatory charity) given by Muslim households. And the women of these households play the prominent role in this charity. However, sometimes such charity is not spent in the most useful manner, like when large quantities of food are served to others. This is not a bad thing, but if the money that was being spent was used in a more systematic manner it could provide a much greater benefit. The most effective way to administer charity is to have a central point of collection and then have the funds dispersed on the basis of community needs. We see such organized systems used to administer charitable givings being utilized in other nations. There are many needs in our community for which our charitable donations can be properly spent. For instance, there are students who have come here from Java and other distant places. These people have faced great hardships to be here with us. What you give to help them will actually be a source of *sadaqah jaahriyya* (perpetual charity) for you. You will be rewarded whenever they convey the good knowledge they learn here, whatever place in the world that may be. God neglects nothing, as the Holy Quran states: "He utters not a word but there is by him a watcher at hand" (50:18).

I am therefore requesting my friends, and in particu-

lar the ladies of the households, to give their charitable donations here. It is better than serving large quantities of food to others. You may also have extra clothing at home that can be donated. That too can be used here. Please keep this thought in mind whenever you have the opportunity to give. See how much you gain from making a small sacrifice? Does your heart not fill with contentment, happiness and gratitude that the determination of your small community resulted in the establishment of a mosque in the center of Europe? No doubt others also contributed to this campaign but it was your determination that made it happen. With nominal sacrifice in an organized manner, a mosque was built in Germany where the truth of Islam is spreading and being accepted by people. We need to try to build on this effort.

Included in your old customs are lessons on charity. Do not let these lessons be forgotten. You can modify the customs to continue the goodness contained in them. For example, in some villages cooking oil is donated to the village mosque. You can modify this by simply donating the price of that oil as a donation to us. Your donations to us will be spent on those truly deserving of it. This is simply a better way of effectuating the purpose of your charity.

The Real Basis for Muslim Progress

I tell you with full confidence, you will be honored by giving to the orphans and the needy. Do not give simply because they are poor, but give to bestow honor and respect to them. Charity should never be given in a manner that is denigrating to others.

Give full effort to the goal of propagating the true message of Islam in the world, and be resolute in caring for the impoverished and destitute. These two characteristics are the real basis for Muslim progress. ■

Attributes of Allah

Selections from the Quran

Compiled by the Editor

Allah is Unique

Nothing is like Him (42:11)

Say: He, Allah is One. Allah is He on Whom all depend. He begets not, nor is He begotten; And none is like Him. (112:1-4)

He is Allah besides Whom there is no God: The Knower of the unseen and the seen; He is the Beneficent, the Merciful. He is Allah, besides Whom there is no God; the King, the Holy, the Author of Peace, the Granter of Security,

Guardian over all, the Mighty, the Supreme, the Possessor of greatness. Glory be to Allah from that which they set up (with Him)! He is Allah; the Creator, the Maker, the Fashioner: His are the most beautiful names. Whatever is in the heavens and the earth declares His glory; and He is the Mighty, the Wise. (59:22-24)

Allah — there is no god but He, the Ever-living, the Self-subsisting by Whom all subsist. Slumber overtakes Him not, nor sleep. To Him belongs whatever is in the heavens and whatever is in the earth. Who is he that can intercede with Him but by His permission? He knows what is before them and what is behind them. And they encompass nothing of His knowledge except what He pleases. His knowledge extends over the heavens and the earth, and the preservation of them both tires Him not. And He is the Most High, the Great. (2:255)

Allah is the Creator and Shaper

He has created the heavens and the earth with truth; He makes the night cover the day and makes the day overtake the night, and He has made the sun and the moon subservient; each one moves on to an assigned term. Now surely He is the Mighty, the Forgiver. He created you from a single being, then made its mate of the same (kind). And He sent down for you eight of the cattle in pairs. He creates you in the wombs of your mothers — creation after creation — in triple darkness. That is Allah, your Lord; His is the kingdom. There is no God but He. How are you then turned away? (39:5-6)

Allah is He Who made the earth a resting-place for you and the heaven a structure, and He formed you, then made goodly your forms, and He provided you with goodly things. That is Allah, your Lord — so blessed is Allah, the Lord of the worlds. (40:64)

The Originator of the heavens and the earth. He has made for you pairs from among yourselves, and pairs of the cattle, too, multiplying you thereby. Nothing is like Him; and He is the Hearing, the Seeing. His are the treasures of the heavens and the earth — He amplifies and straitens subsistence for whom He pleases. Surely He is Knower of all things. (42:11-12)

He it is Who shapes you in the wombs as He pleases. There is no god but He, the Might, the Wise (3:5)

He is the Cleaver of the daybreak; and He has made the night for rest, and the sun and the moon for reckoning. That is the measuring of the Mighty, the Knowing. And He it is Who has made the stars for you that you might follow the right way thereby in the darkness of the land and the sea. Indeed We have made plain the signs for a people who know. (6:96-97)

Vision comprehends Him not, and He comprehends (all) vision; and He is the Subtile, the Aware. (6:104)

To Allah belongs whatever is in the heavens and the earth. Surely Allah is the Self-Sufficient, the Praised. And if all the trees in the earth were pens, and the sea with seven more seas added to it (were ink), the words of Allah would not be exhausted. Surely Allah is Mighty, Wise. (31:26-27)

Divine Love and Mercy

And He is the Forgiving, the Loving (85:13-14)

And ask forgiveness of your Lord, then turn to Him. Surely my Lord is Merciful, Loving-kind. (11:90)

Surely Allah loves the doers of good. (2:195)

Surely Allah loves those who turn much (to Him), and He loves those who purify themselves. (2:222)

And Allah loves the steadfast. (3:146)

Allah surely loves the dutiful. (3:76)

Surely Allah loves those who trust (in Him). (3:159)

Surely Allah loves the equitable. (5:42)

Say: O My servants who have been prodigal regarding their souls, despair not of the mercy of Allah; surely Allah forgives sins altogether. He is indeed the Forgiving, the Merciful.

Our Lord, Thou embracest all things in mercy and knowledge. (40:7)

He has ordained mercy on Himself (6:148)

Your Lord is the Lord of all-encompassing mercy. (6:148)

“Our Lord, Though embracest all things in mercy and knowledge.” (40:7)

“Say, In the grace of Allah and in His mercy, in that they should rejoice.” (10:58) ■

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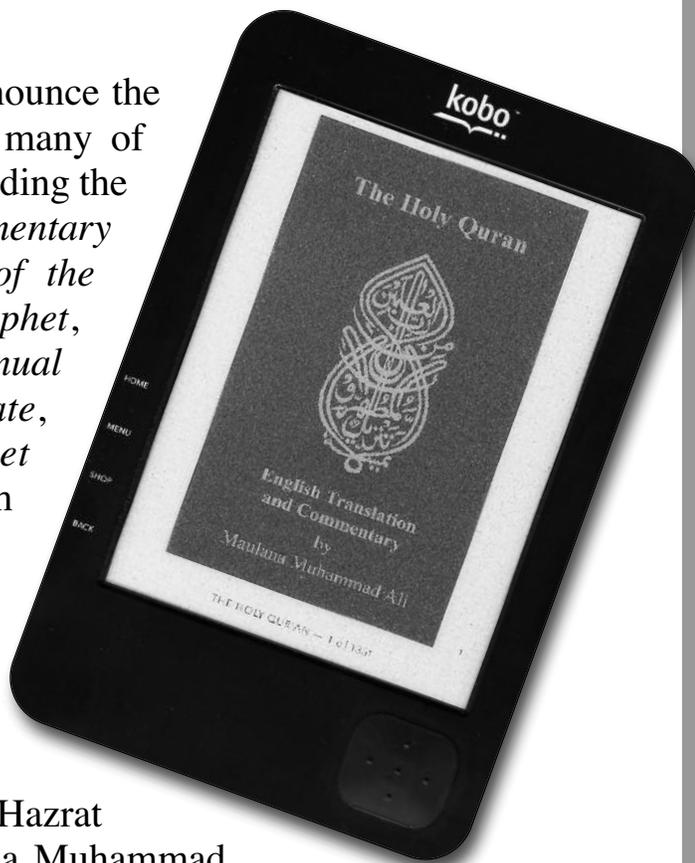
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