

CHAPTER-IV

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Impact of Tafsir al-Qur'an on Muslim Society of North-East India

In the 60th decade, the 'Qur'an Jyoti' a monthly Islamic magazine was published from Darul Uloom, Garigaon in Guwahati. From the page of this Megazine and through the writings of a sincere skillful teacher of the said institution, there created a great Assamese literary personality and translator like Maulana Abdul Hoque.

As a result the two volume of trustworthy translation and interpretation of the great book *Tafsir al-Qur'an* added to the rich treasure of Arabic as well as the Assamese literature. Besides this he has distributed the sweet tastes of Islamic literature to the readers of Assamese literature through the interpretation of Hadith and other innumerable authentic writings.⁴²

The book is considered by some to be a comprehensive and far reaching commentary that takes a clear and lucid interpretation of the Holy Qur'an. It has much influence throughout the country,

42 . Bir Mujahid Maulana Abdul Hoque (Rah) Published by Editorial Committee and Edited by Maulana Fazlul karim Qasimi, October/2009, P.90.

especially amongst the ordinary lay practitioners of Islam in the North-Eastern region of India. The work extends to two volumes and has covered the entire Quran.

The language of the Holy Qur'an has laid down a considerable influence on the literary works done by Indian scholars. Because the realm of Arabic language and literature is inter connected with the Islamic studies based on the corpora. Most of the Arabic prose works are related with the Islamic Theology, but only a few works were carried out as secular literature in medieval India. So, the matter of Indo-Arabic medieval prose literature is no exception to be influenced and developed by the corpora. As such the linguistic styles of the corpora have been undertaken here to discuss the depth of the influence of the *Tafsir al-Qur'an* on the various Learned people as well as the Muslims of North- East especially in Assam.

Tafsir al-Qur'an the translation and interpretation of the Holy Qur'an in Assamese language is the greatest contribution of Maulana Abdul Hoque to the Assamese society. Before him somebody efforted but couldn't complete the task with correct explanation. In spite of his mother tongue is Bengali he wrote many books in Assamese language and completed the first and

correct translation with interpretation, for which he will be ever memorable to the Society.

Before this, the translation and interpretation of Holy Qur'an were available in different Indian languages such as Hindi, Bengali, Urdu and English etc. But due to unavailability of Tafsir in Assamese language the general educated people of Assam were unable to understand the message of Allah written in the Qur'an. They were compelled to follow the speech of Allah delivered by the religious learned people. As the knowledge of the said people was limited, they could not explain the verses of the Qur'an clearly and correctly. As a result the common people were unable to go deep to the religious matter. But nowadays due to the availability of *Tafsir al-Quran* by Maulana Hoque Sahab general educated people have been able to acquire knowledge in religious matters. Due to this book in Assamese language of Maulana Abdul Hoque Sahab, Assamese people have acquired immense knowledge on Holy Qur'an. Many people have accepted this book as the book of easily understandable written in their own language. Many learned people use to keep at last a single copy of the Tafsir done by Maulana Abdul Hoque in their houses. By getting opportunity to study the interpretation of the Holy Qur'an

numerous people of Assam having their mother language Assamese become grateful to themselves. So they are proceeding to the religious matter. Nowadays the general educated people have started writing articles on religious matters giving reference from *Tafsir al-Qur'an* of Maulana Abdul Hoque in different papers and Journals like Jyan Sambhar, Hedayat, Asomiya Khabar, Dainik Agradoot etc. These efforts may be considered as the influence of *Tafsir al-Qur'an* of Maulana Abdul Hoque. The curriculum of different institutions of Assam like Madrasa Schools, Colleges and Universities comprises the some Chapters of Holy Qur'an as their syllabus. *Tafsir al-Qur'an* of Maulana Abdul Hoque is essential for easily understanding the chapters of Holy Qur'an for both Teachers and Taught as it is written in their Mother tongue. Nowadays it is seen that many Non-Muslims of Assam are interested to have knowledge on Qur'an. In such cases they are seen to purchase this book. As a result many Non-Muslims have the knowledge on the Quran and the Hadith of Muhammad (SAS) which are reflected on their writings and versions.

As the book is a vital companion of a man, it never dies. People spent their time reading various books. People forget their

sorrows and grieve by studying books. During old age, the eagerness of people increases for the study of religious books. So the people of Assam specially the Muslim people are seen to accept this book as their companion.

It is mentionable that some books contribute for the development and upliftment of the civilization as well as the culture of a community. Regarding the said book, the *Tafsir al-Qur'an* of Maulana Abdul Hoque has also contributed a large for the development of the culture of Assamese Muslims. As for example many superstitions, evil deeds and ill habits like gambling, drinking wine and lottery etc. are have been diminished from Muslim Society which was prevailed in large scale in Assamese Muslim Society.

It is to mention that the absolute credit goes to *Tafsir al-Qur'an* of Maulana Abdul Hoque for the elimination of such kinds of ill habits. This book has also succeeded to eliminate various types of innovation (بدعة) from Assamese Muslim Society.

He wrote several books on different topics of Islam. All the books have been accepted by the people of Assam. But the said

book is the best Seller, which has made him more popular and familiar to world.

The Qur'an is the best reading book in the World among the Muslims and non Muslim as well. It has now been translated into every major language of the world. In addition to English, it has been made available in 15 Indian languages.⁴³ It is a significant matter that a number of Assamese scholars have also made commendable efforts to translate this Holy book and write its commentary in Assamese languages. But no printed publication has brought these vital issues into light, nor are we aware of any comprehensive study have been made so far in this line. Hence this humble step is a primary effort to bring forward this area for a broader discussion.

It is found in my humble investigation that seven species of Assamese translation as whole or a part of the Holy Qur'an was brought out during the second half of 20th century. It is appropriate to specify these translations with a brief introduction here under-

⁴³ www.africa.upell.edu/publications/Quran_Translated_13255.html

1. Ummul Qur'an: it is the first effort of Assamese translation of the Holy Qur'an done by a well known Assamese writer Mohammed Toyabullah in 1957 A.D.⁴⁴ He had selected twenty seven chapters of his own choice and translated them into Assamese vernacular. These chapters are-

1. Al- Fatiha
2. Al- Baqara
3. Al- e- Imran
4. Al- Nisaa
5. Al- Maidah
6. Al- An'am
7. Al- Anfal
8. Al- Taubah
9. Al- Israa
10. Al- Anbiyaa
11. Al- Hajj

⁴⁴ Toyabullah, Ummul Qur'an, Assamese Tran. Of 27 selected chapters of the Qur'an, Lawyers book stall, Guwahati, 1957.

12. Al- Rum

13. Yasin

14. Al- Shuara

15. Al- Fatah

16. Al- Hadid

17. Al- Mumtahana

18. Al- Saff

19. Al- Dhuha

20. Al- Tin

21. Al- Qadr

22. Al- Takathur

23. Al- Kafirun

24. Al- Nasr

25. Al- Ikhlas

26. Al- Falaq

27. Al- Nas

Mohammad Toyabullah took a special care to provide the Assamese translation of Arabic text of the Qur'an, side by side of the Assamese translation along with some short explanations in these books containing only 200+7 printed pages. The translator may be considered to be successful to convey the message of the Qur'an to those who are lacking the knowledge of the Arabic language for sharing this priceless gift of Allah.

2. Pavitra Qur'an: it is a well circulated complete meaning and brief explanation of the Qur'anic translation done by an Assamese writer Mohammad Sader Ali and published by Lawyers book stall, Guwahahati in 1962 and the second edition in 1970. The book contains xii+978+2 printed pages. The translator did not obtain any University degree with Arabic language nor did he laearn the language from any kind of Arabic institution. He was merely an Arts graduate working as a state government officer who had acquired a vast knowledge in the contents of this Holy book through its English and Bengali yranslation only. Both the edition presented only the Assamese translation of the Qur'anic meaning of the complete volume and short explanatory notes, side by side, where necessary. Accordingly, all sections of readers, lacking knowledge of Arabic language are also abvle to

understand the meaning of this Holy book through this translation. Hence, his contribution to this direction may be considered to be a valuable one.

3. **Quran Boodh:** It is a complete translation and interpretation of the Holy Qur'an, ventured jointly by Syed Shamsul Huda, a distinguished Arabic Scholar of Assam and Mohammad Majid Ali, an Assamese writer and a socio-religious activist. Syed Huda acquired profound knowledge and fluency in Arabic language who obtained the second M.A degree from Jami'a fuwad al-awal, Cairo. He joined the Department of Arabic and Islamic Studies at Murari Chand (Govt.) College, Sylhet in erstwhile British Bengal in 1942 and retired from the position of Head, Deptt. of Arabic, Gauhati University in 1978. During this period he worked as Inspector of schools Secretary of Assam State Madrasa Education Board, Deputy Director of Public Instruction, Assam and an Interpreter also in Indian Embassy in Jeddah from 1954 to 1957.

At first the translators produced the translation of two volumes of the Holy Qur'an, containing the Surah al-Baqarah in vol.1 and from Surah al-Naba to Surah al-Naas including Surah al-Fatihah, in the beginning, in vol.II. Both the volumes were

published by Asomiya Islami Sahitya Prakashan Samity, Guwahati, in 1981 and 1987 respectively. At last, the translation of all the chapters was completed together with the same title *Quran Boodh* and published in 2000 by the same publishers.

It is worth mentioning that *Quran Boodh* is actually a translation of the *Tarjama-e- Quran Majid* made by Maulana Syed Abul A'la al- Maududi. The translators have also followed a number of famous works of Maulana Ashraf Ali Thanwi (R), Sheikhul Hind Maulana Mahmudul Hassan (R), Allamah Yusuf Ali (R) and the Translations of the Meaning and Commentary of the Holy Qur'an published by the custodian of the two Holy Mosques of the K S A. In all these three works, the translators have given the Arabic text of the Holy Qur'an side by side of their meaning or translation along with the explanation or interpretation as footer in every page. This approach is meant to enable the readers possessing an elementary knowledge of Arabic to follow the meaning of the Arabic text of the Holy Qur'an.

As a well conversant scholar of the Arabic language, the main translator Syed Samsul Huda has spared no pains for making the translation as correct and accurate as possible with Arabic text of the Holy Qur'an. The translation is considered to have been

coordinated with the original one, in terms of proper expression and appropriate phrases and idioms. Syed Samsul Huda has showed his proficiency and scholarship in presenting simple and common Assamese words in all these three works. In brief, it may be remarked that the translators have been able to reach their goal very successfully.

4. Pavitra Qur'an: it is an Assamese translation with Arabic text, prepared by Khan Bahadur Aatur Rahman Khan and was 'published under the auspices of Hazrat Mirza Tahir Ahmad, the fourth successor of the Head of the Ahmadiya movement in Islam' in 1990.⁴⁵ The translation is made from English, not from the Arabic text. However it is somewhat incorporated with the meaning of the Holy Qur'an, of course the translator is found deficient in carefulness while using the Assamese words and phrases.⁴⁶ It is observed that he is found so dictionarical that some times he differs from the meaning of some particular words, shown in English translations of the Holy Qur'an made by the presidency of Islamic researches, IFTA or the works of the

45 Khan Bahadur A.R. Khan, Pavtra Qur'an, Islam International publication limited. Islamabad and Tilford, Surrey, U.K. 1990.

46 Khan Bahadur A.R. Khan, Pavtra Qur'an, Islam International publication limited. Islamabad and Tilford, Surrey, U.K. 1990. P- 2:4, 2:5, 5:56, 8:4, 9:71.

renowned translators. It may be put for example that the translator Khan Bahadur gives the meaning of ركع-يركع as to “kneel down” in the Holy Qur’an.

5. Al- Qur’an Asomiya Anubad: It is a translation work of Dr. Zahurul Hoque. Being a public health expert Dr. Hoque could not learn the Arabic language of any educational institution. But he used go through some translations of the Qur’an and translated its meaning into Bengali in 1986 in the title of “Al- Qur’an: Bangla Anubad”. Subsequently he brought out the Assamese translation in three volumes in the year 1993 A.D.⁴⁷

His Assamese translation of the meaning of the Holy Qur’an is an important work for a student of Health and Medicine. In addition to the translation, explanation of some verses is given at the bottom of every page. Although, his Bengali translation had to face a serious controversy for his alleged advocacy for Ahmadiya mission,⁴⁸ any major point of disagreement are not found in the Assamese version except a few.

47. www.qurantoday.com

48. Maulana M. A. Ali, Deobond Madrassar Fatowa, Uttar pub Varot (marate Shariyah, Hoiborgaon, Nagaon, 1991.

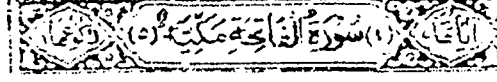
The field of Qur'anic commentary in Assamese is still in its support. Only one commentary was published in the closure of 20th century under the title of Tafsir al- Qur'an. It is a strenuous attempt of Maulana Abdul Hoque who prepared a translation and commentary in two standard volumes of 2493 total printed pages, which was published by Markazaul Maarif, Hojai, Assam in 1988. Abdul Hoque was a renowned scholar of Islamic line who had studied in Darul Uloom, Deoband, where he completed the course of 'Ifa'. She rendered valuable contribution to the socio religious life of the Muslims in Assam as a leader of Jamiat Ulamaye Hind. He authored a number of books in Assamese language. However, the Tafsir al- Qur'an is his outstanding contribution to Assamese literature in general and to Arabic literature through the Qur'anic studies in particular.

It is worth noting that Maulana Abdul Hoque is the first and only scholar to prepare a commentary of the Holy Qur'an n Assamese language. He has provided every verse in Arabic text which is followed by an illustrative commentary.

Before going to conclude, it is worth mentioning that a few other scholars of Assam have also rendered their valuable services in translating different selected chapters of the Glorious Qur'an in

Assamese language, which have also been published in different times by different agencies. Among them: Dewan Abdul Qadir, Keramat Ali, a renowned Journalist and Maulana Abdul Jalil Raghibi, an Islamic scholar and former MLA of Assam are specially remarkable. It is relevant to note that Dewan Abdul Qadir has translated the Surah Ya-sin and Surah al- Hujrah and published separately. Keramat Ali has done the 30th part of the Qur'an and Maulana Raghibi made his fragmentary efforts through Assamese Magazine.

Specimen Copy of Tafsir al- Qur'an of Maulana Abdul Hoque



ছুৰা ফাতিহা

মক্কাত অৱতীৰ্ণ, আয়াত : সাত

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

তৰ্জমা :- পৰম কৰুণাময়, অনন্ত দয়াময় আল্লাহৰ নামত আৰম্ভণি।

তফছীৰ :-

কুবআন শূৰীফৰ এটি স্বতন্ত্ৰ আয়াত 'ছুৰা'ৰ আৰম্ভণি বা দুই ছুৰাৰ মাজৰ ব্যৱধানৰ বাবে অৱতীৰ্ণ হৈছে। বিশেষ কাৰণত ছুৰা "আনকাল" আৰু "তৌবাহ"ৰ মাজত এই আয়াত লিখা হোৱা নাই। অৱশ্যে ই ছুৰা "নমল"ৰ এটা আয়াতৰ অংশবিশেষ। আল্লাহ তাআলাৰ পৱিত্ৰ স্মৃতি আৰু পৱিত্ৰ নামৰ উচ্চাৰণ মানুহৰ কপাল অন্নিয়ানৰ সাৰ্থকতাৰ শ্ৰেষ্ঠ সম্বল আৰু বিশেষ আছিল। প্ৰতিটো কাম আল্লাহ তাআলাৰ নামত আৰম্ভ কৰিলে, ই বেয়া কামৰ বাবে 'প্ৰতিবন্ধক' আৰু ভাল কামৰ বাবে 'বৰ্কত'ৰ কাৰণ হয়। সেই কামত খোদাৰ পৰা সহায় আৰু শূৰ্যতানৰ প্ৰভাৱৰ পৰা বাৰ্চি থাকিব পাৰি। ইয়াৰ প্ৰতি ইন্দ্ৰিত কৰি ছজুৰ (ছঃ)এ কৈছে, যি কামৰ আৰম্ভণিত 'বিছমিল্লাহ' পাঠ কৰা হোৱা নাই— তাত 'সাৰ্থকতা' বা 'বৰ্কত' নাই।

(১)

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ

(১) তৰ্জমা :- গোটেই প্ৰশংসা আল্লাহৰ প্ৰতি যিজন আটাইকেইখন জগতৰ প্ৰতিপালক।

তফছীৰ :- আল্লাহ তাআলা গোটেই বিশ্বৰ গৰাকী, সৃষ্টিকৰ্তা, পালনকৰ্তা। আকাশত, মাটিত, জল-স্থল, গোটেই পৃথিৱীৰ বুকুত যি আছে সকলো প্ৰত্যক্ষ বা পৰোক্ষভাৱে তেওঁৰেই সৃষ্টি। আৰম্ভণিৰ পৰা শেষলৈকে উত্তমতকৈ উত্তম সমগ্ৰ প্ৰশংসা আৰু মহিমা যে তেওঁৰ— তাত কোনো সন্দেহ নাই। সূৰ্য্যৰ কিৰণেৰে প্ৰদীপ্ত, সূৰ্য্যৰ তাপেৰে উত্তপ্ত জেউতি আৰু তাপ যে সূৰ্য্যৰে অৱদান, শিল্পৰ সুখ্যাতি আৰু দানৰ মহিমা শিল্পী আৰু দাতাৰ অৱদান, তাত সন্দেহৰ কাৰণ আছে জানো?

Translation of the above specimen copy as below-

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

Translation: In the name of Allah, the compassionate, the merciful (we start).

Tafsir: It is an absolute verse of the Holy Quran. It is revealed at the beginning of Surah (chapter) or in between two Surahs (chapters). For special circumstances it is not written in between the surah of al-Anfal سورة الأنفال and surah al- Tawbah (سورة التوبة). Of course, it is a part of a verse in surah (chapter) al-Namal (النمل). The Holy remembrance of Allah, the exalted and the pronounciation of the Holy name is the best source of success and special device of human welfare. If every work is started in the name of Allah, it will be protection against evil deeds and it is blissful for good deeds. In that work help from Allah comes and may be saved from the influence of shatan (devil). Indicating this, the prophet Muhammad (SAS) said, “In the beginning of which work بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ is not read, there is no benefit or welfare.”⁴⁹

49 . Tafsir al- Qur'an, vol.I, Markazul Maarif, Hojai, Feb.1988/ Oct. 2000 p.1

الحمد لله رب العلمين

Translation:

All the praises are to Allah who is the lord of whole universe.

Tafsir: Allah, the exalted, is the lord of whole universe, the creator; all those in the sky, in the earth, in water, on the land are his creatures. There is no doubt that from the beginning to the end, the best of the best, all praises and power belongs to Him. Is there any cause to doubt that the light and heat are the contribution of the sun and the fame of the art is the great contribution of the artist and the donation is the contribution of the doner? The root meaning of the word (رب) is to bringing up any things and gradually to give its completeness. رب is its appropriate subject, (علمين) is the plural form of (عالم). In Arabic language, the name of collective creature is (عالم) or 'Universe'. So, generally its plural form is not used. In the field of discussion it is used in common form. The human world, the Jinn world, the angel world, the plants world, the animals world, the solar world etc. all kinds of creatures are considered as an absolute world and Allah is the

creator of all creatures, the lord of all, aiming to declare this word, it is used in plural form.⁵⁰

50 . Tafsir al- Qur'an, vol I, Markazul Maarif, Hojai, Feb 1988/ Oct 2000, p 1-2