



## Imam Ahmad Raza Khan's *Kanzul Iman*: A Scholarly Examination of its Contribution to Quranic Translation in the Context of Indian Subcontinent

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### ABSTRACT

*The Quranic exegesis and translation work, “Kanzul Iman” (Treasury of Faith) by Imam Ahmad Raza Khan is one of the most significant works in the field of Quranic exegesis and translation in the South Asian Islamic tradition. This translation of the Urdu was done in 1911 and over the last hundred years it has played a major role in creating awareness in religions, understanding of the scriptures, and Godly conduct among South Asian Muslims. The paper is a critical analysis of “Kanzul Iman” in terms of its idiosyncratic linguistic correctness, theological and spiritual eloquence. It came at an opportune moment when Islamic scholarship began to spring up in the early part of the twentieth century, and with the Urdu edition, accessibility of the sacred Arabic text may be achieved without altering the orthodox Sunni interpretative system. The work speaks of a great deal of knowledge which the Imam Raza Khan possessed on classical Islamic sciences, and the desire to keep the orthodoxy of the theology and ensure that the Quran would be understood by the Urdu faithful. “Kanzul Iman,” in its fusion of both traditional commentarial style and the use of easily accessible and respectful terminology, has made an enormous impact in the study of the Quran, not only in South Asia but also beyond it, in the field of religious practices and religious thought. Applying an analysis of this article in terms of texts, historical contextualization and analysis of scholarly reception, one can illuminate on the fact that the translation has continued to hold its role in preserving the intellectual and spiritual essence of Islam in the region and its applicability to contemporary Muslim communities.*

**Keywords:** Imam Ahmad Raza Khan, Kanzul Iman, Quranic Translation

## INTRODUCTION

Quranic translation in South Asia is a centuries-old intellectual effort of providing the divine guidance to the heterogeneous language communities without losing the spiritual and theological nature of the holy text.<sup>1</sup> Among the many efforts to make the Quran approachable in Urdu, the vernacular language of most South Asian Muslims, Imam Ahmad Raza Khan, in his work *Kanzul Iman* (Treasury of Faith), may have the greatest impact on the religious awareness and scriptural interpretation of South Asian Muslims during the past century, gaining a legendary status of a scholarly and spiritual authority.<sup>2</sup>

*Kanzul Iman* has much more significance than a simple language transfers between Arabic and Urdu. Instead, it is a complex combination of conventional Islamic learning and popular vernacular that forms a translation of extraordinary quality that is both correct translation of the original text, as well as implicit commentary on theology, spiritual manual, and instructional text. The distinguishing feature of the approach to the translation of the Quran by Ahmad Raza Khan compared to the previous works was his impeccable ability to compress millennia of Islamic interpretive tradition, specifically, the tremendous classical commentaries on the Quran, into judiciously selected vernacular language without impairing the meaning, the spirituality and the theological accuracy of the original.<sup>3</sup> To comprehend *Kanzul Iman*, one needs to consider several aspects, its linguistic and philological features, the theological foundations of its approach, its historical background and the conditions under which it was produced, as well as the overall everlasting influence of *Kanzul Iman* on Islamic thought and practice in South Asia. The paper is a detailed examination of Imam Ahmad Raza Khan and his wanderings in the thicket of theory of translation, theological orthodoxy and spiritual accessibility to deliver what can be considered by many modern and later scholars as an unsurpassed contribution to the history of Quranic translation.<sup>4</sup>

## HISTORICAL CONTEXT AND BIOGRAPHICAL BACKGROUND

Imam Ahmad Raza Khan (1272-1340 AH / 1856-1921 CE) was one of the most influential Muslim scholars of the Indian subcontinent that is a period of great religious, intellectual, and cultural change.<sup>5</sup> Ahmad Raza Khan was born in Bareilly, in the United Provinces of colonial India and lived through a time of great religious, intellectual and cultural upheaval. His life and his academic activity should be interpreted in terms of this complicated historical situation, when the maintenance and the eloquent expression of the Islamic orthodoxy became the main issue of Muslim thinkers who had to face the unprecedented problems of the traditional religious authority

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<sup>1</sup> *Maarif-e-Raza*, Special Issue: *Centennial of Kanzul Iman*, 2009, pp. 108-109.

<sup>2</sup> Mumtaz Thaqafi. "*Distinctive Features of Kanzul Iman*." *My Islamic Information*: January 26, 2022.

<sup>3</sup> *Al-Madina Al-Ilmiyyah: Ala Hazrat and Services to the Qur'an*. Islamic Research Center. Maktaba Al-Madina: Karachi, 2023, pp. 16-17.

<sup>4</sup> Allama Abdul Hakeem Sharaf Qadri. "*Principles of Qur'anic Translation*." *Raza Book Review--Al-Qalam Foundation*: Patna, October-December 2009, Vol. 2, Issues 7 & 8, pp. 25-27.

<sup>5</sup> Ashraf Jahangir. "*Conditions for Qur'anic Translation in Light of Fatawa-e-Razvia*." *Raza Book Review--Al-Qalam Foundation*: Patna, October-December 2009, Vol. 2, Issues 7 & 8, pp. 25-36.

and the pattern of knowledge itself.<sup>6</sup>

Ahmad Raza Khan had his early educational training in Islam as per the conventional Islamic curriculum, dars-i-nizami, which was now standardized in the Indo-Muslim academic institutions. Nevertheless, his intellectual growth could be characterized by an extraordinary range of study that went way beyond the traditional bounds of curriculum. He also learned advanced skills in Arabic grammar, rhetoric, and logic and Sufi spirituality in addition to the basic Islamic sciences: jurisprudence (fiqh), Quranic exegesis (tafsir), hadith tradition (hadith), and Islamic theology (kalam).<sup>7</sup> This thorough and intensive Drilling prepared him with the academic acumen that was required to achieve the grand challenge of translating the entire Quran into Urdu and be theologically consistent and richly spiritual in doing so.

At the beginning of the twentieth century there was flowering of Quranic translation activity all over South Asia. It was the conviction of a number of scholars that vernacular accessibility was a key to spiritual enrichment and true theological knowledge among the mainstream Muslim populace that had led to the attempt to translate the Quran to Urdu. But those previous attempts at translating often encountered great defects,—some were too literary in their tendency, and lost the precision and faithfulness to the original, others were too scholarly in their work, and others too inconsistent, in the theological turn they took.<sup>8</sup> It is in such an intricate intellectual environment that Ahmad Raza Khan had the idea of undertaking his translation project, in which he aimed at fulfilling the perceived gaps in the earlier translations and set new and higher standards of academic translation of the Islamic holy books.

The practical accomplishment of *Kanzul Iman* (1330 AH/1911 CE) was a landmark event in the South Asian Islamic scholarship and in the religious life.<sup>9</sup> The work continued for a long time, during which Imam Raza Khan applied his great knowledge, language sensitivity and zeal for the religious cause. The project was far from being a mere personal scholarly achievement; rather, it was a targeted endeavor to meet what he felt was a burning need of the Islamic community, namely, one to translate the Quran into a usable form that would serve the needs of the advanced student and teacher and combat the intellectual and modernist subversion of the orthodoxy of Islam.<sup>10</sup>

### **The significance of nomenclature and title selection**

The title Ahmad Raza Khan (1272-1340 AH / 1856-1921 CE) deliberately used in his translation, “*Kanzul Iman fi Tarjamat al-Quran*” (Treasury of Faith in the Translation of the Quran), was clear that the translator had been a theologiser with his attention drawn to the language that resulted in the satisfaction of the reader's expectations and approaches.<sup>11</sup> The scholar purposefully adopted

<sup>6</sup> Maulana Hanif Khan Rizvi. *Jami al-Ahadith*: Vol. 8. Shabbir Brothers: Lahore, p. 10.

<sup>7</sup> Mumtaz Thaqafi. “*Distinctive Features of Kanzul Iman*.” My Islamic Information: January 26, 2022.

<sup>8</sup> Javed Akhtar Qasmi. “*Services of Subcontinent Scholars to Qur'an and Hadith*.” Jamia Farooqia, Karachi. Archived from original on January 3, 2017.

<sup>9</sup> Dr. Majidullah Qadri. “*Imam Ahmad Raza's Qur'anic Translation, Kanzul Iman in the Mirror of History*.” Maarif-e-Raza: 2009, Vol. 29, Issue 3, p. 116.

<sup>10</sup> Ghulam Mustafa Rizvi: *Death of Hassan Adam Gujarati*. Salnama Maarif-e-Raza, p. 374.

<sup>11</sup> Maulana Muhammad Abdul Mubeen Nomani Qadri. “*Publication of Kanzul Iman Translation*.” Raza

the name which is of a spiritual nature and has theological implications instead of a neutral, descriptive title. The word 'kanz' (treasury, storehouse) implies and resonates with the Quranic teachings about the divine book itself, which contains within it all the knowledge, directions and spiritual storehouse necessary for the development of the human being, and for his salvation.<sup>12</sup>

This naming decision is an eloquent way of comprehending the vision that Ahmad Raza Khan had regarding a translation of Quran and guidelines that the readers must follow in reading the translated text. In the title, Treasury of Faith, he shows his firm conviction that the use of this translation of the Quran will enrich and strengthen and deepen the spiritual commitment and theological understanding of the reader. Thus, the title is an interpretative frame or a hermeneutical filter which somewhat reminds the reader that the text is not a technical experience of language, nor is it a historical source, but a source of spiritual reinforcement, theological training, and increasing awareness of faith.<sup>13</sup>

The nomenclature also suggests that Ahmad Raza Khan was situated in the broader field of Islamic thought and the understanding of theology. He also took care to make faith (iman) the central concern and the theme of his translation, so that he would not go the way of other translations that emphasized either the historical criticism of the Quranic text or the presentation of the language alone without a spiritual dimension. Rather, he deliberately placed the translation in the Sunni orthodox tradition whereby the Quran is intended as a holistic manual that deals with the full spectrum of human experience- belief and practice, both individual spiritual aspiration and community social responsibility.<sup>14</sup>

## **DISTINCTIVE FEATURES AND LINGUISTIC APPROACH OF KANZUL IMAN**

### **Synthesis of Classical Islamic Scholarly Tradition**

Among the most impressive and unique aspects of Kanzul Iman is the fact that it manages to reduce and unite centuries of the Islamic Quranic scholarship into vernacular terms. The work at first glance may appear as a straightforward translation, but it is quite evident in the course of the process that it is an expression and the passing down of the wisdom that developed in the past centuries of the Islamic interpretive tradition.<sup>15</sup> Ahmad Raza Khan's translation decisions and interpretations have been taken from monumental works of the great classical commentaries of the Quran by Al-Tabari, Al-Zamakhshari, Al-Razi, Ibn Kathir and many other renowned commentators. The academic influences, however, are not explicit and extensive through the dense devices and commentaries. Rather, their input was encoded and smoothly integrated into the text of the translation.<sup>16</sup>

It was an important and a calculated change in the methodology of translation prevailing in the

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Book Review--Al-Qalam Foundation: Patna, October-December 2009, Vol. 2, Issues 7 & 8, p. 71.

<sup>12</sup> *Maarif-e-Raza*, Special Issue: *Centennial of Kanzul Iman*, 2009, pp. 108-109.

<sup>13</sup> Mumtaz Thaqafi. "Distinctive Features of Kanzul Iman." *My Islamic Information*: January 26, 2022.

<sup>14</sup> *Al-Madina Al-Ilmiyyah: Ala Hazrat and Services to the Qur'an*. Islamic Research Center. pp. 16-17.

<sup>15</sup> Allama Abdul Hakeem Sharaf Qadri. "Principles of Qur'anic Translation." *Raza Book Review*, Vol. 2, Issues 7 & 8, p. 25.

<sup>16</sup> Ashraf Jahangir. "Conditions for Qur'anic Translation in Light of Fatawa-e-Razvia." *Raza Book Review*, Vol. 2, Issues 7 & 8, p. 28.

time of Ahmad Raza Khan. Instead of offering voluminous footnotes, textual commentaries, or marginal glosses that would render the translation a rich commentary, he had succeeded in the most miraculously fine feat of infusing much interpretive richness into the text, without at the same time disabling its readability, fluency and spiritualness. The outcome is a translation which is a plural translation; it is a precise and faithful translation of the original Arabic; it is an implicit theological commentary based on classical scholarship; it is a devotional text that can aid in spiritual practices; and it is a pedagogic text that can aid students of Islamic learning.<sup>17</sup>

### **Careful Diction and Consistent Respectfulness**

The selection of appropriate words and phrases was indeed the crux of the ideology and methodology of Ahmad Raza Khan translation.<sup>18</sup> He knew that language is not just about the abstract propositional meaning, but also establishes crucial registers of respect, reverence, emotional coloring, and spiritual appropriateness. According to his well-chosen perception, the Quran needed linguistic treatment that was a true representation of its divine character and the richness of its content. In this context, Ahmad Raza Khan's (1330 AH/1911 CE) language in discussing the attributes of God, divine acts, or the divine nature, is measured and well-thought to underscore the divine greatness and loftiness. In explaining the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) and his spiritual stage, he said what is appropriate to the level of reverence and honor and refrained from anthropomorphism, exaggeration, or overstepping the bounds.<sup>19</sup>

Most importantly, those who have analyzed *Kanzul Iman* in the last century have noted many times, or rather stressed as an unusual accomplishment, the exceptional freedom of the translation itself, to resort to a word of disrespect to the divine character of the text, its principal religious personalities, its stories and lessons.<sup>20</sup>

From the first chapter (Surah al-Fatihah) to the last chapter (Surah al-Nas) there is not any place in the whole translation that contains any language that can be interpreted to mean the disrespect of the divine attributes or the prophet or any other religious issues. That consistency of respectful style and these sublimations of diction in such an unusual piece of work are a monument to the language's control, the theology's sensitization, and that spiritual devotion of Ahmad Raza Khan.<sup>21</sup>

### **Stylistic Fidelity and Flexible Methodology**

In the past, in some Urdu translations of the Holy Book of Quran the originality, correctness and fidelity of style was compromised in order to make it comprehensible in the language of that time. Other translators used rich, decorated styles of prose which were popular in Urdu literature in their day, and others used didactic, expository styles that were not appropriate to the nature of the Quranic original. Ahmad Raza Khan took a very different route; he attempted to retain the stylistic linkage with the Quranic original, while at the same time making it understandable and accessible

<sup>17</sup> Maulana Hanif Khan Rizvi. *Jami al-Ahadith*: Vol. 8, p. 101.

<sup>18</sup> Mumtaz Thaqafi. "Distinctive Features of *Kanzul Iman*." My Islamic Information: January 26, 2022.

<sup>19</sup> Maarif-e-Raza, Special Issue: *Centennial of Kanzul Iman*, 2009, p. 109.

<sup>20</sup> *Al-Madina Al-Ilmiyyah: Ala Hazrat and Services to the Qur'an*. Islamic Research Center.. p. 17.

<sup>21</sup> Dr. Majidullah Qadri. "Imam Ahmad Raza's *Qur'anic Translation, Kanzul Iman in the Mirror of History*." Maarif-e-Raza: 2009, Vol. 29, Issue 3, p. 117.

to the Urdu speakers.<sup>22</sup>

As it is understood that the unique stylistic nature of the Quran posed great difficulty in its translation--it is neither a pure literary nor a pure metaphoric text, neither a pure rhetoric text nor a pure report. Ahmad Raza Khan solved these issues by developing a methodology of translation which was flexible and according to the need of the text and he methodologically adapted it as per the need of a particular text. The translation has removed the directness of the original direct statement. Where the translation has had to include a new metaphor, symbolism or rhetorical question, it has been preserved and, in the case of rhetorical questions, made understandable in Urdu.<sup>23</sup>

Such adherence to stylistic faithfulness was a well-developed knowledge concerning translation in theory and practice. Ahmad Raza Khan was well aware that meaning is not just a propositional content but meaning is tone, mood, emotional appeal and rhetorical effect. It is through his hard work in the preservation of these multi-dimensional expressions of meaning that he was able to produce a translation which was so much more spiritual and intellectual than the works which were limited only to lexical translations of the Quran.<sup>24</sup>

## **THEOLOGICAL PRINCIPLES AND METHODOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK**

### **Orthodox Sunni Theological Orientation and Barelvi Positioning**

The "Kanzul Iman" is a translation that is both profoundly and purposefully committed to the task of translating and defending orthodox Sunni Islamic theology as seen in the 'Barelvi' school of thought in South Asia.<sup>25</sup>

Although the translation is not polemic or explicitly argumentative in its tone and approach, it is consistently based on theological stances of Sunni orthodoxy and especially the scholarly stance of the "Barelvi" movement. Discussions regarding divine qualities, the nature of the divine, the question of human free will and predestination, the high spiritual rank of the Prophet Muhammad (Peace be upon Him) and the nature of spiritual authority are all discussed in a way that is consistent with the classical Ash'arite and Maturidite theological systems.<sup>26</sup>

This was a theological coherence that was entirely premeditated. Ahmad Raza Khan appears to have suggested that translation is never a neutral or non-dogmatic process, but is an act of interpretation, which is necessarily influenced by the religious outlook and the theological convictions of the translator. He openly accepted his part in the orthodox Sunni school and admitted it, rather than trying to adopt an impossible objectivity or fake neutrality, because he knew that telling the real interests of the readers was more helpful than concealing his true

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<sup>22</sup> Allama Abdul Hakeem Sharaf Qadri. "Principles of Qur'anic Translation." Raza Book Review, Vol. 2, Issues 7 & 8, p. 26.

<sup>23</sup> Ashraf Jahangir. "Conditions for Qur'anic Translation in Light of Fatawa-e-Razvia." Raza Book Review, Vol. 2, Issues 7 & 8, p. 30.

<sup>24</sup> Maulana Muhammad Abdul Mubeen Nomani Qadri. "Publication of Kanzul Iman Translation." Raza Book Review, Vol. 2, Issues 7 & 8, p. 71.

<sup>25</sup> Mumtaz Thaqafi. "Distinctive Features of Kanzul Iman." My Islamic Information: January 26, 2022.

<sup>26</sup> Maarif-e-Raza, Special Issue: Centennial of Kanzul Iman, 2009, p. 110.

theological status.<sup>27</sup>

### **Integration of Mystical and Juridical Dimensions of Islamic Understanding**

The other most striking aspect of “Kanzul Iman” is that it consciously combines some mysterious (tasawwuf) and juridical (fiqh) aspects of Islamic knowledge and action. Most translations had either emphasized the one aspect of the story rather than the other, namely, either the mystical and spiritual interpretation with not much emphasis on the legal and practical aspects or the legal and practical aspects with not much emphasis on the spiritual and devotional aspects.<sup>28</sup> This either-or approach was strongly opposed by Ahmad Raza Khan. His translation is a conscious attempt to render both of these aspects justice: The Quran itself speaks of and encompasses the entire spectrum of human experience - spiritual aspirations and moral obligations, inner spiritual illumination and social obligations. The integrative and holistic nature will make “Kanzul Iman” useful in various Muslim subsets and able to handle various spiritual and intellectual needs.<sup>29</sup>

### **RECEPTION, SCHOLARLY ENGAGEMENT, AND ENDURING INFLUENCE**

#### **Immediate Acceptance and Widespread Adoption**

Kanzul Iman was an incredibly fast-adopted and widely adopted publication in the Muslim communities, particularly among the Sunni Muslims, which began to be published in 1911 by the Mataab-i Ahlus-Sunnah (Sunni Printing Press) in Moradabad.<sup>30</sup>

This translation spread widely among the Muslim communities in India, Pakistan, and other places unlike the scholarly works that usually reach out to a wider audience over a prolonged time. The ease with which the translation was translated and the popular awareness of its quality as a scholarly work and richness of spirituality helped in no small part to this rapid acceptance and adoption.<sup>31</sup> During decades of the first publication, Kanzul Iman was the most popular, and most frequently referred to, Urdu translation of the Quran.<sup>32</sup> Several editions were printed and distributed, many translations were reprinted and made accessible to all parts of the South Asian continent and it became a standard reference text in the Islamic educational institutions, seminaries and mosques. Such a wide usage and universal acceptance does not only confirm the scientific caliber and religious influence of Imam Ahmad Raza Khan but the true usefulness, strength, and dependability of the translation itself.<sup>33</sup>

#### **Development of Exegetical Commentary Tradition**

The publication and popularization of Kanzul Iman caused great academic activity that followed to further elaborate on the translation, to explain the translation, and to add onto the translation. Most importantly, the first and most important large-scale exegetical commentary on Kanzul Iman,

<sup>27</sup> *Al-Madina Al-Ilmiyyah*: Islamic Research Center. *Ala Hazrat and Services to the Qur'an*. p. 18.

<sup>28</sup> Javed Akhtar Qasmi. *Services of Subcontinent Scholars to Qur'an and Hadith*.

<sup>29</sup> Dr. Majidullah Qadri. *Imam Ahmad Raza's Qur'anic Translation, Kanzul Iman in the Mirror of History*. Maarif-e-Raza: 2009, Vol. 29, Issue 3, p. 118.

<sup>30</sup> Allama Abdul Hakeem Sharaf Qadri. "Principles of Qur'anic Translation." *Raza Book Review*, Vol. 2, Issues 7 & 8, p. 27.

<sup>31</sup> Ashraf Jahangir. *Conditions for Qur'anic Translation in Light of Fatawa-e-Razvia*. Raza Book Review, Vol. 2, Issues 7 & 8, p. 32.

<sup>32</sup> Maulana Hanif Khan Rizvi. *Jami al-Ahadith*: Vol. 8, p. 103.

<sup>33</sup> Mumtaz Thaqafi. *Distinctive Features of Kanzul Iman*. My Islamic Information: January 26, 2022.

the *Khazain-ul-Irfan fi Tafsir al-Quran* (Treasures of Gnosis in the Interpretation of the Quran), was produced by Maulvi Naeem-ud-Din Muradabadi (1948), with the aim of supplementing the interpretive structure of the translation and adding more scholarly paraphernalia, textual criticism, and spiritual counsel.<sup>34</sup>

Later, other significant commentaries and explanatory works were produced, the most notable of them being the comprehensive *Nur-ul-Irfan* (Light of Gnosis) by Mufti Muhammad Ahmad Yar Khan (1957), which has since become one of the most popular and most consulted commentaries and exegetical works on the Urdu language version of the Quran.<sup>35</sup>

These derivative scholarly works are eloquent witnesses to the generative intellectual force of the translation - to its ability to provoke new scholarly thinking, commentary and exposition by and between generations of Islamic scholars and students.<sup>36</sup>

## LINGUISTIC AND PHILOLOGICAL ANALYSIS OF TRANSLATION FEATURES

### Lexical Precision and Semantic Appropriateness

Linguistic and philological analysis of *Kanzul Iman* shows that Ahmad Raza Khan is extraordinary in his attention to the accuracy of lexical means and the adequacy of semantic meanings in choosing words.<sup>37</sup>

The modern linguistic literature has systematically translated the language and made it clear that Ahmad Raza Khan generally used the word choices in Urdu language having the best semantic meaning to express the meaning of Arabic Quranic words. The decisions he made were never haphazard but could always be seen as carefully and consciously based on the semantic fields, connotative levels, and the suitability of the given context.<sup>38</sup>

What is of special interest is the delicate treatment by Ahmad Raza Khan of Arabic words having theological meaning and which bear spiritual connotation-words such as *sifat* (divine attributes), *asmaa* (divine names), *wilayah* (spiritual authority and guardianship), *rida* (divine pleasure) and many others. Instead of making simplistic or crude equivalences or not translating such terms into Arabic, he usually found or invented Urdu equivalents and constructions that could capture all of the semantic richness and theological importance and still be readable and intelligible by vernacular readers.<sup>39</sup>

## CONCLUSION

The *Kanzul Iman* of Imam Ahmad Raza Khan ((1330 AH/1911 CE) is an apocalyptically significant and truly an impressive work in the Islamic scholarship and translation practice. The

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<sup>34</sup> Maarif-e-Raza, Special Issue: *Centennial of Kanzul Iman*, 2009, p. 112.

<sup>35</sup> *Al-Madina Al-Ilmiyyah: Islamic Research Center*. Ala Hazrat and Services to the Qur'an. p. 20.

<sup>36</sup> Javed Akhtar Qasmi. "*Services of Subcontinent Scholars to Qur'an and Hadith.*"

<sup>37</sup> Dr. Majidullah Qadri. "*Imam Ahmad Raza's Qur'anic Translation, Kanzul Iman in the Mirror of History.*" Maarif-e-Raza: 2009, Vol. 29, Issue 3, p. 120.

<sup>38</sup> Allama Abdul Hakeem Sharaf Qadri. "*Principles of Qur'anic Translation.*" Raza Book Review, Vol. 2, Issues 7 & 8, p. 29.

<sup>39</sup> Ashraf Jahangir. "*Conditions for Qur'anic Translation in Light of Fatawa-e-Razvia.*" Raza Book Review, Vol. 2, Issues 7 & 8, p. 34.

Urdu version of the Quran published in 1911 following a lengthy academic effort has had a significant impact on Islamic philosophy, religious piety, as well as academia in South Asia over the past century. Its importance lies much broader than is specific to its time and location of creation, and has much to say to, and of, timeless principles of faithful translation, theological rigor, and spiritual accessibility that cuts across historical moments and geographical situations. The work shows the way in which translation can function as linguistic expression and translation, theology, spiritual manual, and instruction at the same time.

It is the peculiarities of the translation, with its meticulous choice of language, its uniform respectfulness, its assimilation of the classical scholastic tradition, its synthesis of the mystic and juridical aspects of Islam, its blend of theological and purely spiritual safekeeping, its astute avoidance of serious mistakes, that have all joined together to create an intellectual and spiritual masterpiece and potency that continues to this day. These attributes clarify why it was immediately accepted when it was published, as well as why it has remained popular and scholarly attractive to the many generations that followed.

Kanzul Iman is a strong illustration that translation is not just a technical linguistic activity or a mechanical process but it is essentially an act of interpretation full of theological meaning and spiritual connotations. The theoretically advanced approach of Ahmad Raza Khan, clear in terms of its theological affiliations without cease putting effort into the accessibility of it and the fidelity, has long-term and valuable lessons to suggest to modern translators theoreticians. His piece is a compelling argument that loyalty to original intent and true responsiveness to modern audiences do not have to be opposed qualities; instead, when employed correctly and applied correctly, they enhance and consolidate each other.

To sum up, it must be admitted that Kanzul Iman deserves to be praised as one of the greatest accomplishments of the whole history of Quran translation. Its outstanding blend of language mastery, theological profundity, spiritual strength and practical application on a wide spectrum of people make it a masterpiece that should be studied, enjoyed and used further. As the Muslim communities the world over face the various aspects and realities of modernity today, Kanzul Iman will continue to be a priceless asset of a lasting value- enabling the believers to identify themselves with their scripture even as they endeavor to embrace all that comes to pass and personally connect with the scripture in the modern setting.

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