



## **JAWAHIR AL-BUKHARI OF TUAN HAJI HUSAYN: A SIGNIFICANCE HADITH TEXT IN SOCIAL TEACHING FOR MALAY READERS**

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### **ABSTRAK**

*Artikel ini merupakan suatu kajian terperinci ke atas peranan Tuan Husayn (seorang ulama terkemuka di Malaysia pada awal kurun ke-20 masehi) dalam penyebaran ilmu hadith di Alam Melayu. Dalam hal ini, analisa kepenggunaan kitab hadith karangan beliau iaitu Jawahir al-Bukhari (sebagai suatu elemen pendidikan sosial yang signifikan kepada masyarakat Melayu) menjadi fokus utama kajian ini. Justeru, kajian ini merupakan suatu usaha pengkaji untuk menyerlahkan maklumat-maklumat penting berkaitan Tuan Husayn khususnya dalam konteks peranan kitab penulisan beliau tersebut terhadap transmisi dan penerapan prinsip-prinsip asas agama Islam terhadap masyarakat Melayu Muslim. Untuk tujuan kesahihan dan kebolehpercayaan maka data dan dapatan kajian ini telah diperolehi dan dikemukakan berasaskan bukti-bukti daripada pelbagai sumber dan kaedah. Ini termasuklah memanfaatkan teknik temubual eksklusif bersama beberapa orang penyelidik terkemuka tanahair (khususnya mereka yang pakar dan mahir dengan persoalan politik, kemasyarakatan dan keagamaan di Malaysia pada kurun ke-20 Masehi) dan dari ahli-ahli akademik yang memiliki maklumat-maklumat penting berkenaan latarbelakang Tuan Husayn. Kaedah interpretasi teks telah dimanfaatkan sepenuhnya dalam kajian ini bagi memahami isi kandungan, matlamat dan fungsi penghasilan Jawahir al-Bukhari. Kajian ini juga menerapkan metode 'hermeneutik' (penafsiran) dan 'inferensi' (penyimpulan hakikat) dalam usaha memantapkan lagi pemahaman pengkaji tentang kandungan kitab ini. Dengan hal demikian maka kajian ini wujud hasil penggabungan kaedah kualitatif, hermeneutik dan inferensi. Dapatan kajian membuktikan bahawa kitab hadith dimanfaatkan sepenuhnya sebagai alat pendidikan sosial dalam bidang keagamaan, kemasyarakatan serta politik. Dapatan kajian juga membuktikan bahawa pembangunan pengajian hadith di Malaysia adalah seiring dengan isu-isu semasa yang ditimbulkan dan dibicarakan oleh ulama. Antara isunya ialah kritikan dan*

*keimbangan ulama terhadap sikap dan pegangan masyarakat Melayu Islam yang semakin jauh dari landasan Islam sebenar. Kajian ini juga menunjukkan bahawa antara sebab kemunculan penulisan terjemahan dan komentar kitab hadith dari bahasa Arab ke bahasa Melayu memelihara keaslian hadith-hadith Rasulullah s.a.w yang berlegar dalam masyarakat Melayu di samping mengajak masyarakat Melayu untuk bersatu dan kembali kepada Islam.*

**Kata Kunci:** Hadis, logik, pendidikan sosial, pembaca Melayu.

### **ABSTRACT**

*This article presents an investigation into the part played by Tuan Husayn in disseminating Hadith teaching in Malay world. It is concerned primarily with the use of specific Hadith text (Jawahir al-Bukhari) as a tool for social teaching in Malaysia. It is an attempt to provide a briefly work on the subject, particularly the role of this text in terms of his transmission of fundamental Islamic principles to Malay Muslims. In the interests of validity and reliability, the study provides multiple sources of evidence. These include tape-recorded in-depth interviews<sup>1</sup> with researchers (in particular with an expert educationalist in twentieth century social, political and religious affairs in Malaysia) and academicians who are biographers of Husayn identified. My approach to the text builds also on the employments of the interpretation approach used in the understanding of text. Thus, research methods used to examine the original writings of Husayn are largely 'qualitative'<sup>2</sup>, and consist of approaches such as 'hermeneutics' and the 'inferential' technique of content analysis. This article identifies that in social and religious discourse in Malaysia the use of Hadith texts serves social and political as well as religious practical teaching. It also identifies that the development of the Hadith in Malaysia and its significance for Malay Muslims was signified by several issues raised by Malay religious scholars. This includes the consciousness and critique of Malay Muslims on the misconduct in their lives. Among the purposes of the translation and commentary of Arabic texts are the definitions of an ideal Islamic society and to preserve the Hadith of the Prophet s.a.w to the Malay community. Such discourse is an example of an increasingly common genre of Malay Islamic literature that emphasizes the 'unity' and 'brotherhood' of the Muslim community.*

**Keywords:** Hadith, rational, social teaching, Malay readers.

### **INTRODUCTION**

Basically, there are two main sources for an understanding of Islam: the Holy Qur'an and the collections of the recorded words, actions and sanctions of the Prophet Muhammad s.a.w which are normally referred to as Hadith. These two sources were brought to the Malay world which initiated the arrival and introduction of Islam to this region. The Hadith for example, has been a

significant instructional force in the religious, political and social teaching of Malay society. Particularly, the introduction of Hadith to the community is seen as a source of socio-political revolution.

### **THE RATIONAL OF WRITING HADITH TEXT FOR MALAY READERS**

The translation of *Tazkir qaba'il al-qadahi fi tarjamah Jawahir al-Bukhari* (*Jawahir al-Bukhari*) of Husayn is provided for the local Malay people (Ishak 1993; Wan Mohd Saghir 1995). It was written in the early 20th century by Malay ulama, Tuan Haji Husayn Kedah or al-Banjari<sup>3</sup> (Ismail 1988).

According to Annie Brisset, “one translates not only into a target language, but into a ‘discourse cible’ (target discourse) as well” (Ettobi 2006). Therefore, having noticed the great need of those Muslims in Malaysia to learn the correct authentic Hadith of the Prophet s.a.w, and also to acknowledge *Sahih Hadith* (*of al-Bukhari*) as the most authentic of the Prophet’s Hadith, therefore Husayn undertook the project of translating<sup>4</sup> the meanings of the Hadith and its contents into the Malay language to serve the Muslim community, as illustrated in his introduction. Thus, the scholar asserts that:

*“I have translated this book because of the encouragement I have received from the scholars and my friends to translate the Jawahir al-Bukhari wa ba’du sharh of al-Qastallani<sup>5</sup>...”*

It also may not be clear at whom Husayn actually primarily aimed his work. Was it to a particular group he calls ‘my beloved friends’, or to the public in general whom he addressed as ‘ladies and gentlemen’ who were unable to understand Arabic.

Having analyzed his work, we may state firmly that the author did not have any particular group directly in mind while writing this work. However, it appears from the evidence discussed that the text was written as a guide to the Hadith text for the public (which means for all people and Malay Muslims) on matters concerning Islamic teaching (Latifah 2008).

In addition, Wan Mohd Saghir (2006) and Tuan Guru Mohd Hafiz (2006) assert that because of the movement which seeks to renew and strengthen the role of Islam in the faith and deeds of the Malay Muslims, calls for greater knowledge of the Hadith continue to be stressed by the scholars in this century.

Furthermore, we will see many cases where texts of the Hadith were prepared with this effort in mind as Federspiel (2006) writes:

*“The ‘revivalist and propagation movement’ aside, many lay Muslims undertake their own informal studies of religion as a pious activity. They seek privately - alone, in family sessions or through meetings among friends - to learn more about their own religion and its various aspects to improve their own understanding of the beliefs and practices of Islam and thereby allow them to improve their own behaviour. Studying and reading Traditions has been an important part of such religious intensification”.*

Federspiel concluded that “literature concerning the Hadith (whether it is explanatory or inspirational in nature) plays its role here, both for the scholars and for those who are the object of this renewal”.

Thus, whether he wrote the commentary to comply with his friends’ or the people’s request, what is clear is that Husayn took the responsibility very seriously to disseminate the Hadith to Malay readers.

We can summarize the rationale for writing Hadith text because in the 20th century, the importance of the Hadith raised with the advent of the reformist Muslim movements at that time (Latifah 2008). Therefore, for the Malay scholars “new interest in both these scriptures (stress on the Qur’an and verified Hadith), opened the way for scholars to formulate new Malay-language materials concerning them”. Scholars worked with translations of the Hadith into Malay to produce appreciable collections for the Malay Muslim community.

It is argued here that the Malaysian works discussed in this study provide a strong base for the study of the Hadith in Malay Muslim society due to its conscientious translation from the original Arabic texts. While not all of the material of the great collectors has been rendered into Malay, enough exists to satisfy most Malay Muslims and also students of Islam. Since value is still placed on reading this material in Arabic and all classical collections do exist in Arabic<sup>6</sup> in many places throughout Malaysia, it therefore seems unlikely that Hadith are not available in the original Arabic for anyone who wants to use the material.

Thus, we understand that the work was composed by Husayn in this century to impart to non Arabic speakers a true understanding of the Hadith teachings in their language and more importantly as a teaching for the Malay society (Latifah 2008).

### **THE CONTENT OF *JAWAHIR AL-BUKHARI***

The content of the *Jawahir al-Bukhari* in general can be deduced from the ‘introductions’ (*muqaddimah*) to his work. The purpose of the ‘introduction’ in this case is to illustrate the structure and the content.

Husayn tells his readers the rationale for writing the work, relating that some of his friends requested him to compose this text. His readers are not specifically informed who his friends are, the reason for their request or what sort of questions or problems led to the request. Nevertheless, he informs these friends that he wrote the work in order to enlighten them in their understanding of the Hadith literature of Bukhari, because being Malay; they did not comprehend these texts in Arabic.

Husayn then proceeds to enlighten his readers about the importance for the Malay community of learning Hadith. According to him:

*“The study of the Hadith, which is received from the best of mankind, is the noblest thing which has been singled out for special attention, and the most appropriate thing in which precious days should be spent. No rational man would doubt that the axis of these sciences is the al-Qur’an (which is) followed and the Sunna of His select Prophet. The remaining sciences are either tools to understand them, and they are the lost things which are sought, or they are unrelated to them, and they are the harm to be overcome”.*

Thus, the author sees it as his task to throw light upon the relevance of the Hadith to the religious and social life of Muslims in Malaysia. Husayn reminds his readers that the sayings and actions of the Prophet not only complement the Qur’an, but, being the authentic record of the Prophet’s life, they also lead followers to the source of revelation and provide them with access to the inner, spiritual dimension of the Hadith teachings.

Husayn mentions to Malay readers that every religion seeks to build ideal patterns of society, prescribing certain ethical rules and devotional observances for achieving that end. Life in harmony with the spirit of such rules and laws can be realized only by forming and moulding the life of the followers of that religion after the perfect model of that system. Thus, in the case of Islam, this model is obviously the life of the Prophet s.a.w because his Hadith provide us with the means of realizing the inner reality, the gist and spirit of the Islamic system of beliefs and observances.

Husayn then concludes the ‘introduction’ with a verse of the Qur’an revealing his uniqueness and virtues, inclusive of his accomplishments and deeds, so that mention of him adorns the book’s conclusion.

The content of Husayn contains several sub-topics and beginning with the Hadith ‘How Divine inspiration first came to Muhammad s.a.w and comprising the Hadith for most devotional practices. These are examples of concise information of the Hadith in his book:

*“Sub-topics of an explanation: How the Divine inspiration started, sub-topics of an explanation: the belief of Islam, sub-topics of an explanation: regarding the deeds of faith of Islam, sub-topics of an explanation: your invocation is your faith (invocation means belief), sub-topics of an explanation: a Muslim is the one who avoids harming other Muslims with his tongue and hands, sub-topics of an explanation: to feed (others) is part of Islam, sub-topics of an explanation: to wish for one’s (Muslim) brother what one likes for one-self is a part of faith, sub-topics of an explanation: to love the Prophet s.a.w is a part of faith, sub-topics of an explanation: to swear allegiance to Prophet s.a.w sub-topics of explanation: sweetness (delight) of faith and Islam, sub-topics of an explanation: the sins of abusing others, sub-topics of an explanation: a person who embraces Islam sincerely, sub-topics of an explanation: both legal and illegal things are evident, sub-topics of an explanation: religion is to be sincere, sub-topics of an explanation: a person who is asked about knowledge...and so on”.*

Husayn provided the book with a brief ‘introduction’ of the same size as the book itself. He deals with matters relating to spiritual and behavioural practices, to those relating to leadership (as political teaching) as well as the etiquette of charitable giving (*sadaqah*) to others. The books exist in printed form. It is clear that the compiler had as an aim that his book should be an easy reference source for authentic Hadith for Malay Muslims’ practice in their life.

In his interpretation of the Hadith, Husayn briefly highlights the importance of learning Hadith, followed by different topics based on the meaning of each Hadith. For example, the beginning of revelation is the theme for the first Hadith; three issues that could ascertain a person’s pleasurable experiences of faith (then the Prophet urged the *Ansar* to be loyal and pay allegiance). Sub-topics were included under each Hadith when necessary.

Thus, this work is considered to be midway between the source books predominantly employed by specialists (al-Bukhari and al-Qastalani) and those used by the general reader for the purposes of practical application in his or her devotions.

### **JAWAHIR AL-BUKHARI: A SIGNIFICANCE HADITH TEXT AS A TOOL FOR SOCIAL TEACHING**

In drawing important lessons for Malay Muslims from the example of the Prophet s.a.w in religious and political matters, Husayn is also concerned to present teachings to guide believers in right conduct in their social interactions as follows:

## **THE IMPORTANCE OF PROPER MANNERS IN MUSLIM LIFE**

Husayn concurs in placing great stress on proper manners (*adab*) in Muslim life; his main concerns here is that a true Muslim should maintain both an internal spiritual and external worldly discipline. Thus, as “the two worlds are closely related, it is important (for Muslims) to perfect their spirituality, and for their physical customs to reflect their inner spirituality” (Qamar-ul-Huda 2001). For this reason, therefore, the concept of ‘*adab*’ is emphasized by Husayn in a symbolic sense, since these are inner concepts which should govern social structure and human interactions within it.

Husayn’s emphasis upon ‘*adab*’ stems from the conviction that it is necessary “to submit oneself wholly to the *Shari’a*, which is the manifestation of divine order”. His purpose is thus to show Malay Muslim readers how to create through right behaviour a perfect harmonious society, using an intensely structured model. ‘*Adab*’ is therefore a significant element in the text, because it demonstrates how all the minute details of individual conduct can be improved to reflect the wisdom of the Prophet s.a.w Sunna.

According to Husayn, the believer needs to be prepared to fulfil this profound responsibility by controlling thoughts and actions at every moment, in every place. On this subject, he wrote:

*“The Prophet s.a.w declares that: Allah (s.w.t) had taught me good manners, and then He taught me wisdom in morality, to follow a virtuous path and give wise and virtuous advice (sic)”.*

Based on this reason, Husayn places prominent stress on ‘*adab*’. The Prophet’s s.a.w words confirm that spirituality and inner wisdom manifests themselves in good manners; the result is social harmony, arising out of spiritual principles.

This scholar (Husayn) therefore explain that the spiritual principle of good character in one’s dealings with others is above all to avoid harming, annoying or inconveniencing them, as declared by the Prophet s.a.w:

*“The [true] Muslim is one from whose tongue and hand other Muslims are safe” (al-Bukhari, Sahih, Kitab al-Iman).*

As a Muslim, we need to be guided by the words and example of the Prophet himself, as one with whom Allah Himself (s.w.t) was well pleased (as being, “of tremendous character”) and whose example was praised as “the most beautiful of examples”) in the Qur’an. As Iqbal (1980) states, “we see that the basis of ‘*adab*’ is to promote the social good, and spread love and mercy between humanity”.

This text, hence, clearly emphasized that remembering and applying (both spiritually and socially) the Prophet's hadith on 'adab' is a crucial component in terms of strengthening the true meaning of the Prophet's s.a.w words for the minds, souls and actions of Muslims. At the same time, by using the hadith in this way recreates the very same practices and movements which the Prophet s.a.w performed in this world, and in a spiritual sense brings the believer closer to him.

Remembering all hadith regarding 'adab' by heart would strengthen the piety of the Malay Muslim - that is, by performing the same physical movements and following the spirituality of the Prophet s.a.w words and examples during his life.

Husayn then reminds the Malay Muslim that the Prophet's purpose in these 'adab' hadith is not only to strengthen the piety and spirituality of the individual but beyond that there should be perfect bonding in unity to each and every Muslim community, as he cited:

*"The Prophet s.a.w claims: None of you would be a believer till I am dearer to him than his father, his children and (in fact) the whole of mankind"* (al-Bukhari, Sahih, Kitab al-Iman).

The Prophet s.a.w, to Husayn, was 'trained' as the final messenger by Allah (s.w.t) and his words and examples as 'final messenger' are therefore handed down for all Muslim believers to follow (through the Qur'an and hadith).

As evidence throughout the discussion above, the writer clearly uphold the conviction that it is obligatory for every Malay Muslim to take the 'adab' hadith into his or her heart in order to get closer to Allah (s.w.t) and His Prophet s.a.w.

### **ADAB AS A BASIS OF SOCIAL RELATIONS AND INTERACTIONS**

In affirming the 'adab' of the Prophet s.a.w, Husayn, make a strong instructional position by presenting it in his text. Husayn uses *Jawahir al-Bukhari* (for the purpose of teaching) by examining precisely the significance of relationships which are the basis of social relations and interactions including such as between parent-child, relationships between Muslims and their neighbours etc.

It is based on this strong foundation that Husayn creates for Malay Muslims the ideal of a perfect Muslim society in which adab operates within it throughout its spiritual symbolic sense, as well as socially, embracing kinship, authority, and obligations towards neighbours, the poor and orphans (Woodward 1993). From this perspective, Husayn uses the concept of kinship in a symbolic sense to show to the Malay Muslim how social structure and human relations is the



fundamental layer in the type of community which the Prophet s.a.w desires the believers of Allah to create.

According to Husayn, ‘*adab*’ is an essential part within the society, hence, Malay Muslims should maintain good relations with their relatives, and should not unjustly favour them over others. Moreover, a Muslim is required to be a good person to his or her neighbours regardless of their religion or belief (be it Buddhism, Hinduism, etc. Indeed, Malay Muslims ought to keep this in their hearts, as Husayn cited from the Prophet’s hadith:

*“The Jibril kept recommending treating neighbours with kindness until I (the Prophet s.a.w) thought he would assign a share of inheritance”* (al-Bukhari, Sahih, Kitab al-Adab).

This teaching (from the hadith and discussion of it throughout *Jawahir al-Bukhari*) highlights the profound importance in Islam of how we should behave towards our neighbours, and of the significance of our actions and words. The essential point here is that if we follow the Prophet s.a.w way, then this relationship is a force for good, a purveyor of peace and justice for everyone, providing stability in a warring world without peace and harmony.

Husayn, thus, clearly teaches us that precise ‘*adab*’ had to be followed at all times in order to follow and internalize the spirituality of the Prophet s.a.w. In this way, through adherence to the Prophet’s hadith, Husayn attempted to move his Malay Muslim readers from remembering the Prophet s.a.w as a historical figure and to embodying his spirituality and his legacy in a living sense. For this reason also, he emphasized that the Prophet s.a.w used to make ‘allegiance’ with whoever came to him that the convert would submit to Islam in faithfulness and spread good faith and counsel to other Muslims.

### **STRENGTHENING THEIR COMMUNITY**

The translations continues to highlight the type of perfect Muslim society which is created through the symbolic, spiritual and social application of the ‘*adab*’ and how in this way it creates ‘one body’ of believers, as the Prophet s.a.w said: *“The believers are like one body”* (al-Bukhari, Sahih, Kitab al-Adab). This unity is an ultimate strength which cannot be either resisted or disputed, in the same way as the hardness of bricks is founded upon the strength of their cohesion and solidity.

In the style of many great scholars, Husayn gives a visual picture to his readers, to make his meaning more concrete: ‘the walls will not collapse if all the bricks stick together’. Thus, bricks are only stronger than walls and able to support them when there is purity and freedom in one single block, as well as by ‘the strength with which its parts are inter-connected’. The strength of Muslims is therefore only obtained by the totality of their good counsel and love for each other.

Husayn's strong position here thus affirms the centrality of the '*adab*' of the Prophet s.a.w in maintaining a disciplined structure through Islamic teaching, but beyond this, the use of hadith of '*adab*' places the Prophet's Sunna and spirituality at the heart of teachings for Malay Muslims. This intense concentration on '*adab*' practices could sometimes point to the desire for control by its use over its Muslim members. The deeper intention however is to cause believers to remember and 'relive' the Sunna of the Prophet.

To summarize, then, Husayn, as religious scholar, urge spiritual development through good moral conduct in all areas of human activity. His text (as a significant part of this development) suggests that each individual should know his own ability and weaknesses, and behave responsibly to correct and nurture his or her spirituality. Such self-discipline and effort are crucially important to prevent evil deeds and negative acts, towards themselves as well as towards other people.

Husayn clearly emphasize that the acquisition of such high quality of moral conduct is essential to spiritualize the Malay Muslim way of thinking. It was through this more 'spiritual' way of thinking that disputes and conflicts could be resolved by referring to the Prophet's words and deeds. This spiritual development, in line with the Prophet's example, will in turn enrich their communities and therefore develop their society.

### **PARENT-CHILD RELATIONSHIPS**

In this section of his teaching, Husayn is particularly concerned to address the problem of behaviour and lack of respect for parents and elders amongst Malay Muslim children, for which parents did not accept responsibility. Thus, he urges parents to teach their children self-discipline, to instil in them the good manners which they themselves develop according to the example shown by the Prophet s.a.w, and respect for their elders.

It is important to stress here that firstly, all Muslims must be as the Prophet himself would be within the family unit. Each family unit then enriches the wider society, as each brick works with the other as a totality to make a fine building. It is for this reason that Husayn focuses on the family unit itself as the heart of the Muslim community, and on the different relationships which radiate outwards from it. In this sense, he focuses on the 'brick' itself within the total 'interconnectedness' of the wall of which it is part.

Most important here is not only the parent-child relationship, but also the parents' 'loved ones', as in the hadith:

*"The finest act of goodness on the part of a son is to treat kindly the loved ones of his father"* (al-Bukhari, Sahih, Kitab al-Adab).

## **OBLIGATION OF OBEDIENCE TO PARENTS**

An integral part of harmony within the family and in the wider community is that each individual must have clear 'rights' as well as obligations, as indicated through Husayn's teaching. The 'rights' of a child, however, may become the 'responsibility' or 'duty' of the parents, for example. Likewise, the 'rights' of the parents become the 'duty' of the child. It is in this sense that Husayn stresses the 'reciprocity' of relationships within kinship networks and beyond, instructing children that they should act, as cited in the Qur'an:

*Allah (S.W.T) reveals: "Worship none but Allah (s.w.t) (alone) and be dutiful and good to parents..." (al-Baqarah 2:83)*

This counsel is then further strengthened. 'Kindness to parents' is ranked by the Prophet himself as the second of those three actions which 'Allah (s.w.t) loves best as Husayn cited:

*Ibn Mas'ud said: I asked the Prophet: which action Allah (s.w.t) loves best?". He replied: "Prayer at its proper time". "Then what?" I asked. He said: "Then kindness to parents". I asked, then what?" He replied: "Then jihad in the Way of Allah (s.w.t)" (al-Bukhari, Sahih, Kitab al-Adab).*

Husayn taught his Malay Muslims readers that Allah Himself (s.w.t) commands that His people worship Him alone, and that the obligations of Malay believers towards each other are second only to this commandment. If, we treat our parents kindly, then, we earn the pleasure of Allah (s.w.t).

As a great scholar, Husayn is very cautious to stress that although kindness and obedience must be shown towards our parents, they must not be obeyed in that which causes disobedience to Allah (s.w.t).

Elaborating further on this hadith, Husayn yet again stresses the importance of respect and kindness towards parents, as declared by the Prophet s.a.w:

*"The satisfaction of the Lord is (in) the satisfaction of the parents and the displeasure of the Lord is (in) the displeasure of the parents" (al-Marbawi n.d.).*

This hadith confirms to readers that the pleasure or displeasure of parents incurs the pleasure and displeasure of Allah (s.w.t). Elsewhere, Husayn identifies benevolence toward parents as one of the acts most pleasing to Allah (s.w.t). We can affirm his views on this matter by understanding the paragraph below:

*"Islam gives weight to the problem of the obligations parents owe their children, for example, to raise, educate, provide them with subsistence, but at the same time Islam gives attention*

*to the obligation of children to obey and sacrifice for their parents”.*

It is a fundamental point, then, that parental obligations must be observed strictly in Islamic society. This important point was also confirmed by Husayn (1931) as he cited:

*The Prophet s.a.w said: “Everyone of you is a ruler and everyone of you shall be questioned about those under his ruler; the king is a ruler and he shall be questioned about his subjects; and the man is a ruler in his family and he shall be questioned about those under his care; and the servant is a ruler so far as the property of his master is concerned and he shall be questioned about that which is entrusted to him”.*

To conclude this section, it is for this reason that as great scholar, Husayn emphasize parental entitlement by right to kind and dutiful treatment from their children, since this is an important duty which Allah (s.w.t) has taken care to emphasize so strongly. In their view, it is essential for every human being to know what constitutes kind treatment of parents.

### **THE SUPERIOR RIGHTS OF A MOTHER**

Husayn explains that between parents the mother has more rights than the father. The reason for these increased rights is apparent because the mother has borne the burden of pregnancy and childbirth, has undergone the pains of delivering the baby, has sacrificed her own comforts to provide comfort to her children, has looked after them and felt anxiety for their well-being. It is for this reason that they deserve our good treatment more than the father, as Husayn states from the Prophet’s hadith:

*A hadith of the Prophet s.a.w tells us that a companion asked the Prophet, “Who deserves my good treatment most? Your mother, said the Prophet. Who next? Your mother. Who next? Your mother. Who after that? Your father” (al-Bukhari, Sahih, Kitab al-Adab).*

This means that the mother deserves treatment from her children which is three fold that merited by the father.

### **THE RIGHTS OF CHILDREN**

In *Jawahir al-Bukhari*, Husayn also stresses to Malay parents that their children also have the right to be fed, educated, clothed and protected until they reach adulthood. Husayn affirms this with the Prophet’s s.a.w words “*He who provides good upbringing to three daughters shall go to Paradise*”.

Husayn reminds us that children have many psychological needs. They, for example, need to be loved, cared for, kissed and hugged. He also reminds us that the Prophet s.a.w loved children greatly and sometimes he would even kiss small children he met on the street:

*“Once a Bedouin saw the Prophet s.a.w kissing a small kid. Out of wonder he said: I have eight children but I never kiss them. The Prophet s.a.w remarked: What can I do if Allah (s.w.t) has taken away love and compassion from your heart. The Prophet s.a.w would show special kindness to orphaned children”* (al-Bukhari, Sahih, Kitab al-Iman).

This, then, indirectly outlines the ‘rights’ and ‘duties’ of both parties in the parent-child relationship, and of the hierarchical character of social relations as described by Husayn in his translation text. For him, if both the parents and children live according to these guiding principles, they can create a family environment that is most conducive to peace and contentment for the parents and to a healthy growth in the personality of the children.

Thus, it is beyond doubt that the Prophet’s s.a.w own words give life and meaning to the teachings of Husayn. Similarly, he wishes his readers to remember and put into practice the Prophet’s s.a.w words in any action and in each thought. It is for this reason that Husayn select those hadith which speak of social responsibility with the intention that Malay Muslims may ‘mirror’ and ‘re-enact’ the Prophet’s own example in relationships between parents and their children. The theme of ‘benevolent parents’ thus acts as a basis for social teachings as to right conduct within the Malay community.

### **MESSAGE FOR MUSLIM UNITY IN THE COUNTRY**

This great scholar is especially concerned to focus his instruction on the need for Malay Muslims to become a united body, acting from a sound base of right conduct in all the areas which are presented. His scholarly task is vital one particularly when considering the religious, social and political background against which the translation was written, as described below.

During the twentieth century Malays were facing severe social problems, particularly because of their disunity and poor standard of living compared with other ethnic communities, especially the Chinese. Poverty was the biggest difficulty for Malay society and the greatest obstacle in its development.

This poverty was apparent in both their material and intellectual lives, despite the potential for prosperity. The need was for teaching in good moral conduct, and they badly needed ‘the qualities of leadership’, ‘self-reliance, self respect, self sacrifice, sense of responsibility, sense of duty, punctuality,

honesty and so on. 'Truthfulness and self-perseverance' were especially vital in facing such adversity, as Za'ba has also observed. Za'ba (2006) also argued that misguided and corrupt religious beliefs and instruction were actually responsible for '75% of the ills that Malays have been heir to'.

It is, then, this need that Husayn address in his scholarly teachings: urge Malays to strive hard to improve their political and social standing. The writer also affirmed that Malay backwardness was aggravated by lack of unity in struggling for their cause, and by their failure to follow the true path of Islam as outlined by the Qur'an and hadith.

### **THE CONCEPT OF UNITY IN ISLAM**

As aforementioned, this scholar emphasizes the importance of unity in society. From this perspective, the apparently harmless act of severing relationships with other Muslims or relatives becomes a grave sin, as Husayn warns in citing the words of the Prophet :

*Narrated by ʿAbd Allah bin ʿAmr : A man asked the Prophet s.a.w: "What sort of deeds (or what qualities of) Islam are good", the Prophet replied: "To feed (the poor) and to greet those whom you know and those whom you do not know" (al-Bukhari, Sahih, Kitab al-Iman).*

Instead, in order to build a strong and unified community, living and co-operating together in the journey from birth to death is essential for every Malay Muslim. If a man is sick, for example, it is an obligation to visit him; the same way, if he dies it is an obligation to attend the funeral.

The example of the Prophet s.a.w is once more given, when he declares:

*"A Muslim is one from whose tongue and hand Muslims are safe. And the emigrant is one who abstains from that which Allah (s.w.t) has prohibited" (al-Bukhari, Sahih, Kitab al-Iman).*

In urging this unity for Malay Muslims, Husayn does not neglect however to draw attention to a key hadith which sets out for them exactly what they must do in actual practice:

*"It is not righteousness that you turn your faces to the East and the West (in prayer); but righteous is he who believes in Allah (s.w.t) and the Last Day and the angels and the Book (Holy Scripture) and the Prophets; and gives his wealth, in spite of the love for it, to kinsfolk and to orphans and the needy and to the wayfarer and to those who ask, and to set slaves free and offers prayer perfectly and pays the zakat (alms) regularly, and those who fulfil their covenant when they make it. And those*

*who are patient in (severe poverty), and in ailment (disease) and in time of fighting (during battles) such are the people of truth and such are the pious” (al-Baqarah 2:177).*

Thus, it is made clear to Malay Muslims that the unity for which they must strive is founded on conduct which is of great merit in the sight of Allah (s.w.t). Key areas of conduct which are of great merit in the sight of Allah (s.w.t) can thus be summarised as follows:

- to aid Muslims who are in financial difficulty
- to strive for religious knowledge and understanding
- to recite the Qur’an, and make arrangement for its study and teaching
- to hold meetings for the understanding and elucidation of the message of the Qur’an.

The nature of Husayn’s appeal to the spiritual intelligence of his Malay readers indicates that he intended his instruction for a diverse audience of well-educated Muslims, religious scholars and laymen who would recognize and respond to the need for the concept of unity in Islam through striving for the truth, as given by the Prophet s.a.w. Husayn’s appeal is, therefore, to those who would be ‘true believers’, for example, under the heading of ‘right conduct in Islam’:

*“The Prophet s.a.w said that no Muslim is a true believer in Islam until and unless he loves for his fellow man what he loves for his own self” (al-Bukhari, Sahih, Kitab al-Iman).*

We can infer from the above, then, that in his great work of translation from Arabic to Malay for use as a teaching tool, Husayn is actually demonstrating “how he himself has fulfilled his ‘covenant’ with the Prophet s.a.w as ‘caretaker’ for the Muslim community, as believers are commanded to do by Allah Himself (s.w.t)”. This is also a way for Husayn to show his Malay readers at the same time that they in turn must fulfil their own ‘covenant’ with the Prophet s.a.w. They too must undertake to be ‘caretakers’ of the Muslim community.

A key element of his methodology is thus to ‘centre’ the Prophet himself within the life and practice of each believer, and to remind them as they read this wise instruction that the Prophet is ‘present’ in their social activities. It is part of this ‘covenant’ for example for Muslim believers to ensure the social welfare of their fellow Muslims, as a high priority in their lives, so as not to displease Allah (s.w.t). This concept of the ‘covenant’ with the Prophet thus gives life and meaning to Husayn’s scholarly teaching, and focuses the spiritual eyes of his readers’ hearts upon remembering and living out the Prophet’s words in each action and in each thought.

## CRITIQUE OF MALAY MUSLIM PRACTICE

As spiritual scholar and teacher, Husayn was greatly concerned by the numerous superstitions (*bid'ah*) among the Malays. The numerous superstitions continued to persist even with the coming of Islam, often becoming mixed with (and distorting) the great principles in Islam. These superstitions, as El-Edrus (1995) observes, spanned a long cultural and religious history where ancient beliefs such as animism, dynamism, Hinduism, Buddhism etc, all featured in together. El Edrus, in particular (as cited), has expressed his view of these deeply-rooted beliefs (and the practices which accompanied them) that led to a warped understanding of Islam.

Husayn, thus, begins his response regarding this matter by instructing Malay believers in the first five fundamental basic principles of Islam as contained in the hadith. His special attention is to show how the words of the Prophet s.a.w demonstrate the reality of their meaning. This great scholar particularly stresses the importance of testifying to the great truth that there is no God but Allah (s.w.t) and why we therefore worship Him as devout Muslims. To illustrate clearly, he gives an example of hadith narrated by Ibn 'Umar, where the Prophet s.a.w declares that:

*“Islam is based on the following five principles: to testify that none has the right to be worshipped but Allah (s.w.t), and that Muhammad is Allah (s.w.t)’s Messenger; to offer up congregational prayers as commanded dutifully and perfectly; to pay zakat (obligatory charity); to perform Hajj (pilgrimage to Mecca) and to observe the commandment to fast during the month of Ramadhan”* (al-Bukhari, Sahih, Kitab al-Iman).

These fundamental principles are thus combined to teach that there is no God but Allah (s.w.t) and that as followers of Islam they should give their faith to, worship and pray to Him only, and via no other belief or superstition. It is forbidden (and heretical) that they should seek the help in prayer of ancient spirits, for example, when it is the Most High who is our Creator (s.w.t) and who has given His Word to his Prophet that he might teach through his example.

## THE IMPORTANCE OF ACQUIRED KNOWLEDGE

As stated in the previous topic, Husayn as great scholar wished to instruct his readers in the important role of education, and was especially concerned about the apparent apathy of the majority of Malays with regard to the education of their children. His text is thus used as tools to counsel his Malay readers to change from their lazy and negligent attitude to one full of a sense of responsibility for uplifting the status of the nation.



It is clear from Husayn's teaching that he wished to change the community of Malays from an illiterate community to a learned community. His teaching here is that through knowledge, Allah (s.w.t) was preparing Muslims to carry the great message of Islam. Hence, this great revelation to the Prophet s.a.w is stressed by Husayn in his translation in order to encourage them to learn and seek knowledge:

*“Read! In the name of your Lord, Who has created (all that exists). Has created man from a clot (sic) Read! And your Lord is the most Generous, who has taught (writing) by the pen. Has taught man that which he did not know”*

(al-Bukhari, Sahih, Kitab Bad' al-wahy).

To signify to Malay Muslims the importance of seeking knowledge and education, he encourages them to explore both direct and indirect layers of meaning in the following hadith :

*“While we were one day sitting with the Messenger of Allah, there appeared before us a man dressed in extremely white clothes and with very black hair. No traces of journeying were visible on him, and none of us knew him. He sat down close by the Prophet s.a.w, rested his knee against his thighs, and said, O Muhammad! Inform me about Islam..... ‘There upon the man went off. I waited a while, and then he (the Messenger of Allah said, ‘O! ‘Umar, do you know who that questioner was?’ I replied, ‘Allah (s.w.t) and His Messenger know better. He said, that was Jibril. He came to teach you your religion”*  
(Al-Bukhari, Sahih, Kitab Bad' al-wahy).

Interestingly, we can infer from the above hadith that there are several points which Malays can understand regarding the ethics of seeking knowledge; for example:

- sit properly, close to the teacher,
- ask questions for better understanding and
- seek knowledge from the right source or authority.

Husayn's concerned with the importance of seeking knowledge which is in line with hadith about 'seeking Islamic studies or 'seeking religious studies as he cited:

*“Islamic knowledge is the road to Islamic belief, and leads the person to fear Allah (s.w.t)”*.

To Husayn, the 'fear' (from the above Hadith) that is based on knowledge regulates the person's deeds. For that reason, Allah (s.w.t) lifted the position of 'people with Islamic knowledge' to different higher ranks according to the level of their knowledge.

“Allah (s.w.t) will exalt in degree those of you who believe and those who have been granted knowledge” (al-Mujadila 58:11).

As wise scholarly instructor, Husayn stress that acquisition of knowledge is obligatory to Malay Muslims, male or female, and should not be gender-biased - that is, in the sense that there should be no discrimination between men and women in having formal education. They, hence, were against the practice of many Malay parents at that time to confine their daughters at home (Malay parents at that time believed that life before marriage was exclusively a training period before they became wives and mothers, and that formal schooling was not important for them).

## CONCLUSION

In the light of Husayn strong influence upon such esteemed *Hadith* scholars as al-Bukhari and al-Qastalani, it is argued that the writings of Husayn represent a vital resource for the purposes of educating the Malay people on the subject of the *Hadith*. The article's conclusions are therefore two-fold: firstly, the writing of Husayn is crucial to the purity of fundamental Islamic principles, and therefore have a vital role to play as transmitters of authoritative *Hadith* teachings to the Malay Muslim community. Secondly, if social and religious discourse nowadays is based on the purity of this translation, then all such discourse will be legitimized as deriving directly from the sayings of the Prophet s.a.w<sup>7</sup>. All in all, from the above discussion in this article is to present a role of *Jawahir al-Bukhari*, for Malay Muslim during twentieth century until nowadays as tools for social teaching in their life.

The text of Husayn illustrates what is a perfect Muslim society, in which he analyses '*adab*' which includes kinship, authority, and obligations towards neighbours, the poor and orphans. From this perspective, Husayn uses the concept of relationship in a symbolic sense to discuss social structure and human relations in the life of the Malay Muslim.

Therefore, the translation *Jawahir al-Bukhari* take into accounts the significant of unity, neighbours, brotherhood and seeking knowledge; since they paint a picture of an ideal Muslim society. The text describe that in order to be an ideal society, therefore, the scholars to these days must bring Malay Muslims together and avoid among themselves disputed topics which do not bring any good to the community.

In another, indirectly Husayn also reminds the scholars of Islam must not interpret any verses of the Qur'an<sup>8</sup> or hadith according to their own opinions and preferences. They must follow the consensus of Islamic scholars upon any issue, and they should not spread hate amongst Muslims, particularly those

who disagree with them. In this, the Malays should follow the interpretation of the Qur'an and hadith from an authentic scholar of Islam.

The text is, in sum, an attempt to formulate a vision of Islam of an ideal Muslim life to Malay Muslim in all period of time.

### Endnote

<sup>1</sup> There are three types of interviews; fully structured interview, semi-structured interview and unstructured interview. Denscombe, Martyn. *the good research guide*, Open University Press, Buckingham. Philadelphia, 1998, pp.112-113; Robson, Colin, *Real research world*. Oxford: Blackwell, 1993, p.231

<sup>2</sup> This method is suitable when the data is not in the form of numbers and it is also can be applied to examine human's lives and organizations. See Gary D. Bourma, *A handbook of Social Science Research*, Oxford: Oxford University Press. 1995, p.207.

<sup>3</sup> He is among of the most prolific Malay ulama (religious scholars) that enriched Malay religious literature with works on all branches of Islamic knowledge, including several exegeses on the Hadith. His full name was Husayn bin Muhammad Nasir; he was born on November 2nd in 1863 at Titi Gajah, Alor Setar, Kedah (Ishak 1993). Thus, we know exactly whereabouts in Malaysia he was born. Among the Malays he is known popularly by his nickname, Husayn al-Banjari or Husayn Kedah al-Banjari. The affiliation of the word 'Kedah' (one of the northern states in Malaysia) to his name indicates that he was originally a native of Malaysia. The term 'al-Banjari' however, indicates that he was descended from Banjar, Indonesia.

<sup>4</sup> Husayn translated the book of al-Qastalani's (*Jawahir al-Bukhari wa ba'du sharh of al-Qastalani*) commentary of al-Bukhari's book.

<sup>5</sup> Syakh Ahmad bin Muhammad bin Abu Bakr bin 'Abd al-Malik bin Ahmad bin Muhamad al-Qastalani al-Qahiri al-Shaficiy. He was born in Egypt in 1482 and living an illustrious life, passed away in 1517. He had completed his commentary on Sahih al-bukhari in 1504. See Mustafa Muhammad 'Imarah, *Jawahir al-Bukhari wa syarh al-Qastalani 700 hadith mashruah*, n.d.; Maktabah al-Tijariyah al-Kubra.

<sup>6</sup> In the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, there was often writing and publishing on Hadith in the Arabic language. See Muhammad Qasim Zaman, Commentaries, print and patronage: Hadith and the madrasas in modern South Asia, *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies*, University of London, 62 (1), 1999, pp.60-81.

<sup>7</sup> In this period conflicts appeared between the followers of the Traditional School of Fiqh and those who would like to free themselves from the disciplined intellectual control of Sunni classical scholarship. For details discussion see Azra, Islamic thought: theory, concepts and doctrines in the context of Southeast Asian Islam, In K.S. Nathan and Mohammad Hashim Kamali, e.d. *Islam in Southeast Asia: Political, social and strategic challenges for the 21st century*.

<sup>8</sup>The meaning and the translations of Quranic verses in this article is provided by cAbd Allah Yusuf °Ali. 200 1. *The meaning of The Holy Qur'an*, Amana publications: USA

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