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## *Invitation and Propagation Through Islamic Civilization and Culture*

### **ABSTRACT**

*In today's era, it is essential to continue the mission of dawah using both traditional methods and modern, legitimate means. The field of spreading the message of truth remains open for Muslims, and every individual in this community can contribute to this great religious duty using the resources available to them. Many Muslims are already working hard using new methods, but it is crucial to approach this task with thoughtfulness, seriousness, and a sense of responsibility. Islam is a complete religion that has influenced the world through its teachings and civilization. Its cultural concept was based on the belief that this world is transient and deceptive, while true success lies in the hereafter, in attaining paradise in the presence of the Lord. A nation with such a belief could not engage in oppression, injustice, mistreatment, or social evils. The Prophet (peace be upon him) established an Islamic society during his lifetime and formed a community of active companions, setting the foundations for Islamic society, social structure, politics, economy, and culture for centuries to come.*

**Keywords:** *Dawah, Islamic society, Teachings, Responsibility, Civilization, Hereafter*

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### **Introduction**

The propagation of Islam has always utilized all possible means, following the example of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) and the early generations of the Muslim community. When we examine the Meccan period of the Prophet's life, we see that he carried out his mission of dawa (invitation to Islam) both secretly and openly. He used the means available in his society to fulfill this duty. At times, he called people to Allah through speeches, and at other times, he used his eloquence to affirm the divine origin of his message. He proclaimed the truth in markets, fairs, and gatherings, traveled long distances to spread the message, and even migrated for the sake of strengthening the call to Islam.

After migrating to Medina, the situation changed entirely. The Muslim migrants found peace in their new homes and neighborhoods, while the local Ansar (helpers) needed education and training. Thus, the Prophet (peace be upon him) established mosques, took political measures, and made treaties to bring non-Muslims closer to Islam. He sent letters to distant rulers to convey the message of God, waged jihad to pave the way for dawah, welcomed delegations from various tribes, and invited them to Islam while hosting them in the Prophet's Mosque. He also worked to reconcile the hearts of new Muslims. In short, the Prophet (peace be upon him) employed every possible means for the propagation of Islam.

After the Prophet (peace be upon him), the early generations of the Muslim community also left no stone unturned in spreading and promoting Islam. They built mosques, schools, and Sufi lodges, engaged in teaching and writing, established libraries, and created centers for public welfare. Through these means, they called humanity to the worship of the One True God. Their noble character and ethics drew various nations closer to Islam. Islamic civilization and culture attracted millions to the truth in the past.

Maulana Athar Mubarakpuri writes:

"After the passing of the Prophet, during the era of the Rightly Guided Caliphs, the scope of conquests expanded. The companions settled in newly conquered areas and served in governance, judiciary, and jihad, while also teaching and propagating Islamic knowledge and laws."<sup>1</sup>

The Islamic society established by the Prophet (peace be upon him) and his companions had several key characteristics. The most important was the fear of God, which ensured that goodness flourished and evil was repelled. The society was also marked by balance and moderation. Beliefs, thoughts, and practices were free from extremism, and everything moved in the right direction.

This society had a high level of consciousness. People aimed to please Allah, so they were not distracted by trivial matters. Respect for human beings and their values was paramount. Race, ethnicity, language, and region were not barriers to rights or privileges. Equality prevailed in all spheres, and everyone was equal before the law. Social mobility was open to all, and individuals had the freedom to move, express their opinions, and practice their religion if they were non-Muslims.

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<sup>1</sup> Mubarakpuri, Maulana Qazi Athar, *Khairul-Quron Ki Darsghain Aur Unka Nizam-e-Taleem o Tarbiyat*, Idara Islamiat, Lahore, Year of Printing Not Mentioned, p. 110

These characteristics created a society filled with peace, purity, and dignity. It was a model of social cohesion that impressed other nations. When people from other empires entered Islamic territories, they were inevitably influenced by this humane and God-fearing culture.<sup>2</sup> Islamic culture dazzled them, and they recognized Muslims as the most civilized people on earth. Consequently, many embraced Islam and carried its message back to their own nations. Thus, the garden planted by the Prophet (PBUH) flourished, Islam spread, and it continued to find dedicated workers.

Abdul Majeed Khan summarizes this introduction as follows:

"Islam is the last accepted religion of Allah, which guarantees the well-being of humanity. It provides its followers with a creed and shapes their thoughts according to that creed. Islam not only builds thought but also builds character. The mission of the last Prophet (peace be upon him) influenced the entire world, presenting not only monotheistic ideas but also producing a stream of righteous and wise individuals who established Islamic civilization and culture as a beacon of truth and righteousness."<sup>3</sup>

After the Prophet (PBUH), Muslims expanded and nurtured the garden of Islam, spreading its message to every corner of the world using various means. This is all part of the glorious history of Islamic civilization and culture. Certain aspects of Islamic civilization and culture have always played a prominent role in the spread of Islam.

### **The Role of Mosques in Dawah and Propagation**

In Islam, mosques have always held a central position. During the Prophet's time, mosques served not only as places of worship but also as educational institutions, consultation centers, courts, and administrative offices. Muslims would visit the mosque five times a day to receive guidance and instructions. After the Prophet (peace be upon him), during the era of the Rightly Guided Caliphs, mosques were built in newly conquered areas to promote Islam and religious education. For example, Muadh ibn Jabal built the first mosque in Yemen, and Umar ibn al-Khattab built the first mosque in Basra. Similarly, mosques were established in Kufa, Fustat, Cyprus, Qayrawan, and other regions.<sup>4</sup>

### **Spread of Islam through Schools and Education**

Like mosques, schools have been an essential part of Muslim culture. The tradition of education and learning in these institutions has strengthened the mission of dawah for centuries. This tradition began in Dar al-Arqam in Mecca before the migration and reached its peak in the Prophet's Mosque in Medina, where the companions learned and later taught Islam. During the era of the Rightly Guided Caliphs, this tradition continued, with Umar ibn al-Khattab establishing Quranic schools in conquered regions and appointing paid teachers.<sup>5</sup>

In Sindh and India, Muslims not only engaged in military activities but also promoted education to keep the spirit of Islam alive among Muslim residents and to teach non-Muslims the benefits of the true religion. Muhammad ibn Qasim established a military garrison in Debal, where he

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<sup>2</sup> Rasool, H. F., Aziz, A., & Kiran, M. (2024). Mental Health and Spiritual Well-Being in the Qurān: Addressing Modern Psychological Challenges through Islamic Teachings. *Ulūm al-Sunnah*, 2(02), 33-40.

<sup>3</sup> Khan, Abdul Majeed, *Ummat-e-Muslima Ki Tehziibi o Siyasi Pesh Qadmi, Tehziib o Siyasat Ki Tameer Mein Islam Ka Kirdar*, Included in: *Maqalat-e-Seminar*, Idara Tuhqiqat o Tasnif Islami, Aligarh, 2015, p. 98

<sup>4</sup> Nadwi, Shah Moeenuddin Ahmad, *Tareekh-e-Islam*, Vol. 2, Maktabah Islamiyyah, Lahore, 2013, p. 362

<sup>5</sup> *Tareekh-e-Islam* (Nadwi), Vol. 1, Mentioned Above, p. 187

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settled 4,000 Muslims and built a mosque with an educational institution. This was the first Islamic school in India. Later, during the Umayyad and Abbasid periods, Debal became a center of learning. Mansura in Sindh also became a significant educational hub, with mosques serving as centers of learning. In 270 AH, the first non-Arabic (Sindhi) translation and commentary of the Quran were written there. The Ghaznavids made Lahore a center of knowledge, and during Qutbuddin Aibak's reign, Bakhtiyar Khalji conquered Bengal and established schools to spread education.<sup>6</sup>

The history of Islamic education shows that Muslims provided equal educational and cultural opportunities to all, regardless of wealth, status, or religion. This inclusivity led many non-Muslims to benefit from Islamic educational institutions and eventually embrace Islam, contributing to its spread.

### **Promotion of Religion through Writing and Compilation**

After establishing peace in Arabia, the Prophet (peace be upon him) sent messages to foreign rulers, using letters as a means of communication. Thus, writing became a crucial tool in Islamic dawah.<sup>7</sup> Over the past fourteen centuries, Muslims have not only spread Islam through speech but also through extensive writing and compilation. The vast Islamic literary heritage, covering religion, science, politics, sociology, and economics, has played a significant role in dawah. Non-Muslims seeking knowledge often came into contact with Muslims and witnessed Islamic society firsthand.

The tradition of writing and compilation flourished about a century after the Prophet's passing. Initially, Muslims were instructed not to write down hadiths to avoid mixing them with Quranic verses. However, during the reign of Umar ibn Abdul Aziz, prominent hadith scholars began compiling hadith collections, which were then distributed widely. This led to a surge in Islamic literature, with Muslims writing on Quranic studies, hadith, jurisprudence, history, and linguistics. They also focused on translating works from other languages, investing heavily in translation efforts.<sup>8</sup>

Al-Haj Muhammad Zubair writes:

"Muslims enriched the Arabic language so much that, according to Musollibaan, European universities relied on Arabic translations for 600 years. It is also said that until the 15th century, no author was referenced who had not benefited from Arabic books. In short, Muslim scholars cultivated all fields of knowledge and left behind an unparalleled literary legacy."<sup>9</sup>

Books have no boundaries of time or place. A scholar's work in one corner of the world can reach every part of the globe through books. This is a unique advantage of written dawah over oral methods. Books also transcend language barriers, as works written in one language can be

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<sup>6</sup> Dilli Ke Qadeem Madaris o Mudarris , Mentioned Above, p. 46

<sup>7</sup> Jasvi, M. A., Rasheed, Z., Raza, A. A., & Rasool, H. F. (2024). ANTISOCIAL ACTIVITIES AND ROLE OF A RELIGION IN A SOCIETY: A DESCRIPTIVE RESEARCH. *PAKISTAN ISLAMICUS (An International Journal of Islamic & Social Sciences)*, 4(03), 11-18.

<sup>8</sup> Tareekh-e-Islam (Nadwi), Vol. 2, Mentioned Above, pp. 515-516

<sup>9</sup> Zubair, Al-Haj Muhammad, Islami Kutub Khane , Nadwat al-Musannifeen, Delhi, Year of Printing Not Mentioned, p. 28

translated into others.<sup>10</sup> Thus, Muslims have always prioritized writing and compilation to spread the message of Islam and attract non-Muslims to Islamic lands.

Professor Zafarul Islam Islahi writes about the contributions of Indian scholars to Islamic literature:

"Many scholars focused on Islamic sciences, using both Arabic and Persian. They wrote commentaries and annotations on well-known books of tafsir, hadith, and fiqh, and also produced original works. This valuable literature not only benefited their contemporaries but continues to be a source of knowledge for later generations."<sup>11</sup>

### **Spread of Islam through Libraries**

Libraries have also played a significant role in the spread of Islam. The intellectual activities of Muslims, including writing, compilation, and translation, led to the accumulation of books, resulting in the establishment of libraries. These libraries grew rapidly in number and size, becoming unparalleled in the world. The love for books among Muslims and their passion for knowledge were key factors in this development.<sup>12</sup>

For example, the House of Wisdom in Baghdad housed one million books, while the library in Cairo had 1.4 million books, and the library of Hakam II in Cordoba contained 400,000 books. Libraries in Tripoli and Maragha also held hundreds of thousands of books.<sup>13</sup>

These were state-sponsored libraries, but private, commercial, and charitable libraries also existed in every city and village. While these libraries contained books on all subjects, Islamic books predominated, as their primary purpose was to preserve and propagate the teachings of the Prophet (PBUH).

Maulana Abdul Haleem Chishti explains:

"Islam emphasizes the spread of knowledge and truth, considering it a highly rewarding act. The Prophet (peace be upon him) said, 'Whoever hears my words, remembers them, and conveys them as they are, may Allah brighten their face.' This motivation led Muslims to compile and transmit knowledge, establishing libraries for personal, royal, educational, and public use."<sup>14</sup>

### **Spread of Religion through Public Welfare Centers**

The greatest sign of a nation's vitality and progress is its humanitarianism—how it cares for others while advancing itself. This spirit has historically elevated nations, making others eager to follow and join them. Muslims, guided by this principle, included other nations in their material progress and supported marginalized communities, drawing them closer to Islam. Through public welfare, Islam continued to spread, and countless nations embraced the religion influenced by Muslim humanitarianism.

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<sup>10</sup> Rasool, H. F., Aziz, A., & Kiran, M. (2024). Mental Health and Spiritual Well-Being in the Qurān: Addressing Modern Psychological Challenges through Islamic Teachings. *Ulūm al-Sunnah*, 2(02), 33-40.

<sup>11</sup> Islahi, Professor Zafar al-Islam, *Islami Uloom Ka Irtiqā Ahd-e-Sultanat Ke Hindustan Mein*, Islamic Book Foundation, New Delhi, 2012, p. 6

<sup>12</sup> *Islami Kutub Khane*, Mentioned Above, p. 22

<sup>13</sup> Izaan, pp. 34-35

<sup>14</sup> *Islami Tehziib Ke Chand Darakhshan Pehlu*, Mentioned Above, pp. 188-189

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Dr. Mustafa al-Siba'i writes:

"We established social welfare institutions based on principles of collective good and support, which even Western nations are unaware of today. These principles reflect the broader, purer, and more comprehensive concept of humanitarianism in Islamic civilization."<sup>15</sup>

Muslims established various welfare institutions, including mosques, schools, Sufi lodges, hospitals, inns, soup kitchens, water wells, cities, colonies, roads, bridges, canals, ponds, forts, police stations, and post offices.<sup>16</sup> Non-Muslims also benefited from these institutions and were deeply influenced by Muslim generosity.

This discussion highlights the means and methods used in the past to promote Islam. While Islamic history often focuses on military conquests, the above references show that Muslims also excelled in intellectual, cultural, and humanitarian fields, winning the hearts of other nations through these efforts.

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<sup>15</sup> Ibid, p. 34-35

<sup>16</sup> Rasool, H. F., Shah, S. M., & Nasrullah, M. (2024). Islamic Responses to Environmental Protection and Sustainability: Principles and Contemporary Applications. *Islamic Research Journal*, 2(04), 78-85.