

## MAULANA MUHAMMAD ALI'S INTERPRETATION OF THE STORY OF ISA/JESUS

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**Abstract:** The concept of birth is understood by Maulana Muhammad Ali as the result of Maryam's marriage to Yusuf. As for the crucifixion, Ali acknowledged the truth of this fact but denied that Jesus died on the cross but died naturally in the Kashmir area. This research is qualitative with its material object, namely the interpretation of Maulana Muhammad Ali in the context of the commentary of The Holy Qur'an. This article uses Gadamer's hermeneutic theory. The results of this study are historical effect or historical influence reveals that Maulana Muhammad Ali experienced a phase of British colonialism which did not only carry out political and economic missions but also aimed at Christian missionaries and friction with Hindu groups. Ali's pre-understanding was dominated by Ahmadiyah ideology. Fusion of horizons raises the assimilation of horizons owned when Maulana Muhammad Ali produced his interpretation, namely that Isa was not claimed to have died during the crucifixion. The application of the interpretation of the story of Isa has a moral message, namely the existence of the same perception of the role model of Isa because he was born from the holy womb of Maryam.

**Keywords:** *tafsir the Holy Qur'an; the story of the prophet Isa; Maulana Muhammad Ali; Ahmadiyah Lahore; Gadamer's hermeneutics.*

### INTRODUCTION

The story of the Prophet Isa in various interpretations of the naming of Jesus is not found in the interpretation of Maulana Muhammad Ali. Classical commentators say that Isa's rapture was lifted into heaven. Meanwhile, Ali argues that the interpretation that Jesus did not die is error. This view became the basic concept of the Ahmadiyya community in Lahore, including the Ahmadiyya community in Indonesia. Similarly, the Ahmadiyya Qadiyan view was the beginning of Lahore's Ahmadiyya belief that Jesus did not die on the cross. Nevertheless, after Isa was crucified, he went to Kashmir. In the opinion of the Ahmadiyya Community in Indonesia, sending Isa to heaven is logically unacceptable. They felt that his basic needs would not be met if Isa were taken up to heaven. Ahmadiyya asserts that what is meant by Jesus' rapture is death, not the process of Jesus' rapture into heaven by God.

The way Muhammad Ali tells the story of Isa differs from the classical interpretation of the story, which does have similarities with the Christian narrative of Jesus. Muhammad Ali's relationship with Christianity occurred during the British colonization of India. Later, one of the British colonial missions, in addition to expanding the territory, also expanded Christianity. In Christianity, Jesus is presumed dead by crucifixion and was raised by God to appear (1 Corinthians 15: 3-8). The crucifixion resulted from Jesus' actions, namely a conspiracy against the rule of King Pontius Pilate. The similarity of the story of Isa with the concept of Muhammad Ali in terms of appointment is also found in the birth of Isa. The definition of the birth of Isa according to the interpretation of Muhammad Ali and in the Gospels, there is a similar story, namely Muhammad Ali described Maryam as the wife of Joseph through a raffle. Furthermore, the biblical account of the birth of Christians describes Mary being betrothed to Joseph from the family of David (Matthew 1:18) and (Luke 1:27). In fact, Ali called Isa the son of Joseph and Maryam. Ali's description of Isa is almost identical to the image of Isa in Christianity.

There are various studies of the Prophet Isa as in the interpretation, the Koran, and the Gospels. Research can be classified into three forms: First, study the birth, crucifixion, and resurrection of Jesus, both from the interpretation and from Scripture. Second, there is a convincing argument for dialogue about understanding Jesus from different religions, especially Christianity and Islam. Third, study Jesus with a historical approach to the birth, existence, and crucifixion of Jesus. These three types of studies show sketches of different conceptions of Jesus from birth, crucifixion, and resurrection. However, his research needs to explain Maulana Muhammad Ali's view of Isa, although Irfan Rahmatullah and Makmuri discuss the story of Isa according to Ahmadiyya. However, there are differences in the Ahmadiyya concept of death and resurrection, but this study focuses on the Ahmadiyya Qadian view and Mirza Bashiruddin's interpretation of the view that God's death was the Lord Jesus not crucified. And resurrected. Jesus is represented not by himself but by Mirza Ghulam Ahmad as al-Masih/Savior. this research tends to follow the timeline of the story of Isa from Ali's point of view and consider the context of his interpretation.

The way the story of Isa is told in Ali's explanation influences the life story of Isa in the Qur'an, which is different from the general concept. Ali's views on the birth, crucifixion and naming of Jesus have become controversial among commentators. The opinion of the majority of classical interpreters is that the birth of Isa was an event of the nature of Allah *kun fa yakun* and the appointment of Isa by Allah. Ali asserts that Isa is descended from the relationship between Joseph and Maryam, and the concept of Isa's death is interpreted as actual death. It is feared that the implications of Ali's concept will become the main guideline so that the narrative of Isa in the Koran will discredit its meaning and be incorporated into its ideological concept. This is because the perception of the mufasir's ideology when interpreting the verse affects its interpretation. In this case, Ali, who represents the Ahmadiyya ideology, considers Isa a different figure. The narrative of Isa in Ali's interpretation is closely related to the story's narrative in the

biblical view. There may be interactions between Islam and Christianity that influence the product of the interpretation of the Qur'an, especially concerning the narrative of the story in the Qur'an. However, the proximity of understanding to some of these changes suggests Ali's critique of Isa's concept of history in the Gospels. Ali's relationship with Christianity arose when British colonialism took hold of India. Colonialism has had a significant impact on the development of various fields. Some Muslims reacted to the British and Christian presence and missionaries in Punjab, disrupting local Muslims. This context, which contains Ali's authority through his interactions with Christians, gives rise to a narrative concept of the story of 'Isa in the Qur'an that is different from other interpretations.

## METHODS

This type of research is qualitative research which means descriptive-analytical research. Based on the data used in this type of research, this research is included in the category of library research, namely theoretical research, references, and other relevant scientific literature related to culture, values, and developmental standards in the social context, of the subject of the study. The material object of this study is Maulana Muhammad Ali's interpretation of the story of the Prophet Isa, the formal subject of Gadamer's hermeneutic theory, and the context of Maulana Muhammad Ali's interpretation of the Quran. This study uses Gadamer's hermeneutic theory: historical affected<sup>1</sup>, pre-understanding<sup>2</sup>, the fusion of horizons<sup>3</sup>, and application<sup>4</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> The definition of historical influence/effective history as explained by Gadamer in his book *Truth and Method* is awareness of hermeneutical conditions. However, gaining awareness of the condition has always been a highly difficult task. The idea of this situation horizon outside history, but we are within a circle of traditional civilization, this condition is in the form of a horizon. A horizon is a range of vision that includes everything that can be seen from a certain point of view or in simple language, this horizon is in the form of understanding/knowledge formulated from historical influences Hans-Georg Gadamer, *Truth and Method*, trans. Joel Weinsheimer and Donald G. Marshall, *Continuum*, Third Edit (London: Continuum, 2004), 301..

<sup>2</sup> Pre-comprehension is the initial form of interpreter knowledge that is on his horizon when he reads the text. Before carrying out the interpretation, it is expected to compare in advance what we have (vorhabe), what we see (vorsicht), and what we get later (vorgriff). However, thus the pre-understanding of the interpreter requires dialogue with the substance of the text being interpreted Gadamer, 269..

<sup>3</sup> In modern constructivism, Gadamer says experiencing the combination of the two power horizons understands itself and understands what can be reproduced. There is a difference with the construction conception of the Greek tradition which only shows its existence (horizon). Hermeneutical reflection on the concept of experience and the expressions raised by the text, both accommodate tools for generating understanding Hans-Georg Gadamer, *Philosophical Hermeneutics*, trans. David E Linge, *University of California Press*, Second Edi (Los Angeles: University of California Press. Ltd., 2008), 39, <https://doi.org/10.1038/scientificamerican02061847-154g..> In the process of interpretation there are two horizons that must be raised and realized by interpreters. First, the text horizon or weltanschauung (point of view of text elements). The two interpreter horizons can also be understood by a view or possibility that the interpreter has towards the text. These two horizons have a significant role in producing interpretation products

<sup>4</sup> The text is not only understood only in terms of the substance of the text, but must give rise to indications and implementation of the meaning produced in reality or also known as the process of contextualization Gadamer, 224.. We don't just instill what is understood from the text, but we miss the moral message that should be a concern in social life Gadamer, *Truth and Method*, 315..

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### **The Life of Maulana Muhammad Ali and Discourse About Him**

Hafiz Fatehud Din is Muhammad Ali's father who has 7 children (6 boys and a girl), namely; Khairud Din, Amirud Din, Aziz Bakhsh, Nabi Bakhsh, Muhammad Ali, Imam Begum, and Ahmad Ali. Maulana Muhammad Ali was the fifth child born in December 1874<sup>5</sup> in Murar, a district of Kapurthala, Punjab, India. Muhammad Ali has a father who has good morals, honesty, and integrity, because of this character, the local government appointed him as village head. In addition, it is a fair policy as long as he handles various cases, memorizes the Koran, and always reads it on the sidelines of his activities, masters the Persian language, so that he has a mosque next to his house, and becomes an imam there. If traced from the genealogical map of his descendants, Muhammad Ali is related to Mian Muhkamud Din and his brother Mian Qutbud Din, an ethnic Arian Muslim who migrated from Kharla Kingra<sup>6</sup> to the village of Murar in the state of Kapurthala.<sup>7</sup>

Maulana Muhammad Ali's academic journey began with his participation with his brother Maulvi Aziz Bakhsh in the Anglo-Vernacular school near the city of Diyalpur on the orders of his father Hafiz Fatehud Din. The reason they were sent to Diyalpur was that there was no school in Murar. At that time, Muhammad Ali was 3 and a half years old, while his brother was 6 or 7 years old. This made Rahmatullah one of the teachers there appreciate a small child who walked two miles away to school with his brother. Together these two brothers continued until they entered Lahore State University, although both took different subjects from each other. In 1883, his father sent them both to Randhir High School, Kapurthala. At that time Muhammad Ali was almost 9 years old.<sup>8</sup>

The limited economic conditions made them while studying at the Lahore State College (Government College Lahore) live a frugal and simple life, often cooking themselves. In 1892, both of them passed the F.A exam, when Maulana Muhammad Ali took Arabic as his focus subject. However, he had very good mathematical credibility, so Muhammad Ali took his B.A. degree in mathematics and graduated in 1894. When Muhammad Ali asked for a recommendation from one of his professors, his professor simply wrote "Muhammad Ali is the best mathematician from our campus". Muhammad Ali's M.A. degree was obtained at the Lahore State University (Government College Lahore) with the subject in English. At the same time, he gained experience working at

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<sup>5</sup> There is an opinion stating that he was born in 1874, see Muhammad Ahmad and Mumtaz Ahmad Faruqi, *A Mighty Striving: Life and Work of Maulana Muhammad Ali*, ed. Zahid Aziz, trans. Akhtar Jabeen Aziz, Ahmadiyya Anjuman Lahore Publications, Second Edi (Wembley: Ahmadiyya Anjuman Lahore Publications, 2020), 3, [www.ahmadiyya.org/books/pdf/muj-kabir-uk-online.pdf](http://www.ahmadiyya.org/books/pdf/muj-kabir-uk-online.pdf).

<sup>6</sup> Kharla Kingra is an area whose ethnic majority are Arian (Islam) and Hari Chand (Hindu) descendants, see Ahmad and Faruqi, 1.

<sup>7</sup> Ahmad and Faruqi, 1–3.

<sup>8</sup> Ahmad and Faruqi, 3–4.

Islamia College Lahore as a professor of mathematics at the age of 19 and spent three years there. Finally, he graduated M.A in 1896 majoring in English. In 1896 after graduating with his M.A., while continuing to teach at Islamia College, he was accepted into the LLB (law) class. In 1897, he finally left his job at Islamia College and took a job at Oriental College, Lahore, then outside the Taxali Gate, and worked there as a professor of mathematics until May 1899.<sup>9</sup>

Maulana Muhammad Ali's meeting with Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad took place in 1897. Mirza Ghulam Ahmad wrote an opinion on Ali in an announcement. The summary of the contents of the announcement is Mirza's statement of interest in Muhammad Ali who has completed his legal exam. Mirza Ghulam asked Muhammad Ali to serve in religious studies by translating some of his writings into English<sup>10</sup>. Two months later on another occasion Mirza Ghulam again mentioned a person who had joined the Ahmadiyya Movement. As for his writings, he describes his pleasure and gratitude for the joining of Maulana Muhammad Ali in the Ahmadiyya community. Mirza continued to have high expectations for Ali. This is because of the depth of his understanding of the Qur'an<sup>11</sup>. After that, Mirza Ghulam still had many impressions of Ali joining the Ahmadiyya movement.

Maulana Muhammad Ali was asked to be the editor of the Review of Religions magazine. Ali dedicated his service to religion, Islam, and the Ahmadiyya Movement. Therefore, Ali arrived and settled in Qadian in 1899. Arriving in Qadian, Ali married the daughter of Mian Nabi Bakhsh named Fatima Begum. However, in November, Ali gave up his job to take care of his wife's health. Finally, on November 20, 1908, his wife died.<sup>12</sup> The magazine is mostly filled with Ali's writings and many of the translations of Mirza Ghulam's (The Promised Messiah) writings. The development of this magazine did not take long to be known not only in India but has expanded abroad.<sup>13</sup> However, in April 1914, Maulana Nuruddin died and at that time Ali left the Ahmadiyya Qadian. The problem that was used as the reason for his departure was the emergence of polemics related to doctrinal issues, Ali moved to Ahmadiyah Lahore and was immediately appointed as president based in Pakistan.<sup>14</sup>

At the end of the 19th century, the political conditions in India were experiencing British (British) colonialism.<sup>15</sup> Thus, socio-cultural India experiences polemics that occur all the time. Starting from the hunger crisis, and the division of Indian society groups.

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<sup>9</sup> Ahmad and Faruqi, 5–6.

<sup>10</sup> Maulana Muhammad Ali, *The Founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement*, ed. Zahid Aziz, Edisi ke-3 (Wembley: Ahmadiyya Anjuman Lahore Publications, U.K, 2008), 110, <https://aail.org/text/books/mali/fndrahmd/founderahmadiyyamovement.pdf>.

<sup>11</sup> Ali, 111.

<sup>12</sup> Ahmad and Faruqi, *A Mighty Striving: Life and Work of Maulana Muhammad Ali*, 56.

<sup>13</sup> Ali, *The Founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement*, 112–13.

<sup>14</sup> Zainuddin Hamka, "Pemikiran Kalam Maulana Muhammad Ali," *Ash-Shahabah* 6, no. 1 (2020): 77, <http://journal-uim-makassar.ac.id/index.php/ASH/article/view/349/pdf>.

<sup>15</sup> Spencer Lavan, *The Ahmadiyah Movement: A History and Perspective*, I (New Delhi: Manohar Book Service, 1974), 1, file:///C:/Users/user/Downloads/(CRL-E-Resources) Spencer Lavan - The Ahmadiyah movement a history and perspective.-Manohar Book Service (1974).pdf.

The obvious impact is the cracking of relations between social groups, even to the point of stretching Hindu Muslims in India.<sup>16</sup> This is the situation experienced by Maulana Muhammad Ali when he struggled to help India's reform struggle.

Maulana Muhammad Ali's health declined, especially his liver and respiratory problems. He usually rests a bit, but eventually sleeps soundly. Despite his weakened condition, Ali still wrote detailed replies to two letters that had been addressed to him. Mr. Naseer Ahmad Faruqi, a specialist in Karachi who treats Ali, said that Ali had difficulty in breathing, other problems that had arisen, and excruciating pain in his stomach. On October 13, 1951, at 11.30 pm coinciding with 10 Muharram 1371, Maulana Muhammad Ali breathed his last in Karachi, but at 6.30 at night his body was sent to Lahore by Pakistani train.<sup>17</sup>

As for his work in book form, namely: *The Teaching of Islam* (1910), *Divine Origin of The Holy Quran* (1910), *Islam, the Natural Religion of Man* (1912), *Al-Muṣliḥ al-Mau'ūd* (1914), *'Asmat-I Anbiyā'* (1915), *Nukātul Qur'ān Part 1,2,3, and 4* (1915-1916), *English Translation of the Holy Quran 1917 with Arabic text and commentary* (1917), *Masīḥ Mau'ūd* (1918), *Mir'at-ul-Ḥaqīqat* (1919), *'Isawiyyat kā Ākharī Sahāra* (1920), *Muhammad and Christ* (1921), *Bayān-ul-Qur'ān, 3 volumes* (1922-1924), *Muhammad The Prophet* (1924), *Faḍl-ul-Bārī, 2 volumes* (1926-1937), *Muqaddama-tul-Qur'ān* (1930), *Tahrīk-i Ahmadiyyat* (1931), *Early Caliphate* (1932), *Muhammad The Prophet Revised Edition* (1932), *The History and Doctrines of the Babi Religion* (1933), *Collection and Arrangement of the Holy Quran* (1934), *the Religion of Islam* (1936), *Founder of The Ahmadiyya Movement* (1937), *History of Prophets* (1946), *Wafāt-i Masīḥ wa Nuzūl-i Masīḥ* (1947), *The Anti-Christ, Gog and Magog* (1948), etc.

### **The Framework of Maulana Muhammad Ali**

When he wants to study the thoughts of Maulana Muhammad Ali, the researcher will take most of his writings or studies on Ali's thoughts. If traced back to his work, it can be seen that Ali's thought covers all aspects of life, from theology, society, law and politics, and other scientific treasures. However, the researcher included only a few thoughts related to this research topic, namely his thoughts on theology and politics, specifically as follows:

#### **Theology**

Maulana Muhammad Ali is a theologian who puts forward logical rationalism in order to open up a space for understanding religious teachings that are seen as narrow and rigid. Using his rationality, Ali also reinforced the Islamic teachings of various thoughts that emerged among Christian and Zoroastrian scholars<sup>18</sup>. Ali's rationality can be seen from his understanding of miracles. Ali explains miracles as rational and not magical, even though calling superrational miracles the opposite of human reason.<sup>19</sup> Then Ali pointed

<sup>16</sup> Philip Lawson, *The East India Company: A History* (London: Routledge, 1993), 110, <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315845364>.

<sup>17</sup> Ahmad and Faruqi, *A Mighty Striving: Life and Work of Maulana Muhammad Ali*, 423–24.

<sup>18</sup> Hamka, "Pemikiran Kalam Maulana Muhammad Ali," 78.

<sup>19</sup> M Syukri Ismail, "Rasionalisasi Tafsir Ayat-Ayat Mukjizat: Kajian Tafsir The Holy Qur'an Maulana Muhammad Ali," *Nur El-Islam* 3, no. 2 (2016): 20–21.

out that what is meant by the Prophet khatamun is the last or the end of the previous prophets. It is based on the fact that according to many dictionaries, Muslim and Christian scholars, none understand the Prophet Khatamun as the last and last Prophet. This is what strengthens Ali's rationality in understanding different research subjects.

Maulana Muhammad Ali distinguishes the basic teachings of Islam, namely the theoretical aspect known as the pillar of faith and the practical aspect contains all the practices that must be absorbed as a guide to life. The first aspect is called *uṣūl*, and the second is called *furu'*. *Uṣūl* is the plural of *asl* meaning principal or principle, and *furu'* is the plural of *far'* meaning branch. The first type is called *aqaid*, which means belief, and the second type is called *aḥkām*, which means Islamic rules.<sup>20</sup> Muhammad Ali gave the meaning of faith as the acceptance of the truth from the mouth and heart over the truth of the teachings brought by the Prophet saw, doing good, and then applying all the accepted teachings.<sup>21</sup>

### Politics

Ali also concern to political thought. He said that Islam has a global goal. The goal of Islam is to bring peace and prosperity to humanity worldwide, not only to Muslim countries.<sup>22</sup> Ali emphasized that Arabic literature, which greatly influences world science, cannot be separated from the role of the Koran in recognizing the greatness of the Arabic language and literature.<sup>23</sup> Islam is not just laying the foundation of the world order by placing its faith in God. Moreover, it cultivates a deeply ingrained taste in the heart to divide their differences. It also includes the principles of a healthy social system and a political organization that accepts all criticism and contributions without hostility to each other.<sup>24</sup>

In his book *the early caliphate*, Ali describes the beginning of conflicts with the Romans and Persians under Abu Bakr's Caliphate. The Romans and Persians supported the Bahraini uprising and often incited them against Muslim rule. Sarah was one of the figures hostile to Islam in Mesopotamia. These resistance problems prompted Abu Bakr to carry out attacks on the surrounding Arab kingdoms to defend the sovereignty of the Arab nation.<sup>25</sup> Therefore, Islam does not teach the authority of a legitimate government. Abu Bakr was forced to counterattack them to defend the sovereignty of the Arabs.

### Kitab The Holy Qur'an

The Book of Tafsir Maulana Muhammad Ali, which was used as a reference for Ahmadiyya Lahore participants, entitled *The Holy Quran: Containing Arabic text with English translation and commentary*. The translation of this book is almost word by

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<sup>20</sup> Maulana Muhammad Ali, *The Religion Of Islam: A Comprehensive Discussion of The Sources, Principles, and Practice of Islam* (New Delhi: S. Chand & Company Ltd, 1936), 119.

<sup>21</sup> Ali, 121.

<sup>22</sup> Ali, 5.

<sup>23</sup> Ali, 50.

<sup>24</sup> Ali, 38.

<sup>25</sup> Maulana Muhammad Ali, *The Early Caliphate* (Lahore: The Ahmadiyya Anjuman Isha'at Islam, 1932), 30–31.

word.<sup>26</sup> By studying this book in more depth, researchers researched it and backed it up with other publications. Thus, researchers can explore books from the inside and outside. The mental aspect examines the systematics of interpretive writing, interpretation styles, and interpretation sources. While the external aspect explores the context of writing a Qur'anic explanatory book, it is present in the midst of the growth of Islamic scholarship in India, especially within the Ahmadiyya group of Lahore.

Maulana Muhammad Ali's Tafsir book entitled "*The Holy Quran: Containing Arabic text with English translation and commentary*" and was written for seven years from 1909 to April 1916.<sup>27</sup> Two years later, it was rewritten in Urdu with three volumes of a complete discussion entitled "Bayanul Quran" from 1918 to 1923.<sup>28</sup> Bibliography of a list of texts and translations of the Quran, Woolworth notes that Ali's interpretation was first published in 1917. He was using Arabic texts for his English verses and interpretations.<sup>29</sup> Maulana Muhammad Ali began translating and interpreting the Quran in English in 1909, where he lived and worked, i.e., Qadian. At the time, Ali was secretary of the central executive committee of the Ahmadiyya movement (Sadr Anjuman Ahmadiyya) and also editor of *The Review of Religions*.<sup>30</sup> That year Ahmadiyya was led by Maulana Nuruddin, who had a close relationship with Ali and admired his understanding of the Koran. Thus, Maulana Nuruddin instructed Ali to start writing English translations and interpretations.<sup>31</sup>

Researchers needed to find Maulana Muhammad Ali's statement about the background of this Qur'anic interpretation in its first publication. However, the next edition, the 1973 revision, contained Ali's foreword. In his preface, Ali explained several things, including the reasons for the revision of the book, the system and sources of explanation, the development of his interpretation, and the anti-Christian propaganda of the Ahmadiyya community. The need for revision was based on the fact that after the end of World War II, conditions changed drastically. Moreover, as Ali's knowledge of the Koran, hadith, and other Islamic literature grew, he created the energy to deepen his interpretation.<sup>32</sup> Researchers in this regard is limited to the 1920 edition of Tafsir Ali published in Lahore, which was once printed in England in 1917.

Historical records reveal that Ali's book of interpretations was first printed and published in Woking, Surrey, England. Maulana Sadruddin, an influential Ahmadi figure who became an imam at a mosque in Woking, Surrey, England, asked Ali to print his

<sup>26</sup> Jonas Svensson, "Computing Qur'ans: A Suggestion for a Digital Humanities Approach to the Question of Interrelations between English Qur'an Translations," *Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations* 30, no. 2 (2019): 219, <https://doi.org/10.1080/09596410.2019.1603414>.

<sup>27</sup> Ahmad and Faruqi, *A Mighty Striving: Life and Work of Maulana Muhammad Ali*, 145.

<sup>28</sup> Ahmad and Faruqi, 165.

<sup>29</sup> Woolworth S, "A Bibliography Of Koran Texts And Translations," *The Muslim World* 17, no. 3 (1927): 283, <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1478-1913.1927.tb00678.x>.

<sup>30</sup> Zahid Aziz, *Centenary of Maulana Muhammad Ali's English Translation of the Quran* (Wembley: Ahmadiyya Anjuman Lahore Publications, U.K, 2017), 10.

<sup>31</sup> Ahmad and Faruqi, *A Mighty Striving: Life and Work of Maulana Muhammad Ali*, 64.

<sup>32</sup> Maulana Muhammad Ali, *The Holy Qur'an: Containing The Arabic Text With English Translation and Commentary*, II (Lahore: Ahmadiyya Anjuman-i-Ishaat-i-Islam, 1920), v.



interpretation immediately. Because there is a mission to spread Islam around the world, especially in the UK, this is because, without an explanatory book, problems and difficulties arise in understanding the Qur'an.<sup>33</sup> The monthly magazine initiated by Khwaja Kamaluddin announced the publication of the book of interpretations of the Holy Quran Maulana Muhammad Ali.<sup>34</sup> The British edition was reprinted in 1920 and 1935. This Qur'anic Tafsir has the nuances of bil ra'yi, and it is even argued that this interpretation makes more sense than Muhammad Abduh and Rashid Ridha.<sup>35</sup> Ali's interpretation can be called I'tiqāḍī<sup>36</sup>, which focuses on matters of faith but is presented logically. This is based on Ali's understanding of Ahmadiyya's teachings and beliefs. It appeared when Ali paraphrased the word rafa'a in 19:57, meaning to be improved, not revived.<sup>37</sup> This interpretation suggests that the Ahmadiyya faith influenced Ali's interpretation in general.

Although Maulana Muhammad Ali explained the nuances of ra'yi, namely prioritizing rationality, Ali remembered to consult mainstream commentators on several issues to reinforce his opinion. The sources of interpretation referenced by Ali include: Bahrul Muhith (tafsir), Anwārut Tanzīl wa Asrārut Ta'wīl (tafsir), Tafsir Aṭ-Ṭabari (tafsir), Tafsir Ibn Katsir (tafsir), Jamī'ul Bayān fī Tafsīril Qur'ān (tafsir), Kasysyaf (tafsir), Tafsīr Al-Kabīr (tafsir), Rūhul Ma'āni (tafsir), and others. Morefull Again about Various sources that Used Ali the do not only literature tafsir but also field Scientific Other.<sup>38</sup>

### **Explanatory of the Story of Jesus in the Gospels**

#### **Birth Of Jesus Christ**

Jesus was born towards the end of the reign of Herod the Great (died 4 BC), around 7 or 6 BC. Jesus comes from the Hebrew name Yeshua or Yesu, which means "Yahweh, please." Joseph is thought to be the father of Isa, who was engaged to Maryam. Then there is the contradiction among Christian scholars about the origin/birthplace of Isa. Matthew and Luke say that Jesus was born in Bethlehem, while other Gospel records state that the city of Nazareth was his birthplace. His contemporaries considered Isa to be a descendant of King David.<sup>39</sup> He was referring to Matthew 1:18-24 records that the procession of Jesus' birth begins with the breath of the Holy Spirit. Maryam, who was engaged to Joseph and loyal to Maryam, initially refused to marry him because Maryam was already pregnant before having sex with Maryam. However, the angel of the Lord in Joseph's dream gave him an ultimatum that a man who would save the nation from his sins would

<sup>33</sup> Ahmad and Faruqi, *A Mighty Striving: Life and Work of Maulana Muhammad Ali*, 146.

<sup>34</sup> Khwaja Kamaluddin and Maulana Sadruddin, "Islamic Review And Muslim India," *The Mosque Woking* (Surrey, 1916), 16, <https://www.wokingmuslim.org/work/islamic-review/1916/jun16.pdf>.

<sup>35</sup> Ismail, "Rasionalisasi Tafsir Ayat-Ayat Mukjizat: Kajian Tafsir The Holy Qur'an Maulana Muhammad Ali," 17.

<sup>36</sup> The definition of an *I'tiqāḍī* style interpretation is an interpretation that brings ideology based on the ideology/ideology it adheres to and gets rid of opinions that are different from the mufassir, See Al-Dzahabi, *Al-Tafsir Wa Al-Mufasssirun*, vol. 1 (Kairo: Dar al-Hadits, 2005), 316.

<sup>37</sup> Ali, *The Holy Qur'an: Containing The Arabic Text With English Translation and Commentary*, 618.

<sup>38</sup> Ali, xcii–xciii.

<sup>39</sup> John P Meier, "Jesus Christ in the New Testament : Part One : The Historical Jesus behind the Gospels" 30, no. 4 (1997): 6–7.

be born in his mother's womb. From this dream, Joseph decided to marry Maryam without having sex before Maryam gave birth to a man named Jesus.<sup>40</sup> Whereas Luke 2: 1-7 describes Mariam's and Joseph's move from Nazareth to Bethlehem. There, Maryam gave birth to Isa, who was wrapped in cloth and placed in a manger.<sup>41</sup>

Maryam's role in Christianity was very important, namely as the mother of Isa, as described in Matthew and Luke. Both show the true birth of Isa. As for Matthew, Mary and Joseph refused and were forced to leave the house for the safety of Jesus. When rejected, Joseph was visited by the angel of the Lord in a dream so that Joseph could adopt Mariam as his son. Meanwhile, editors Luke, Mary, and Joseph had moved to Bethlehem at the behest of the Roman Empire to register the census process. Kathleen Mroz revealed significant differences between Christians and Catholics in the following statement. This distinction concerns Isa with siblings, as Catholicism revolves around three axes about "Mary's virginity," namely: before, during/at that time, and after the birth of Jesus.<sup>42</sup>

### **Crucifixion and Rapture of Jesus**

The fact that Jesus was crucified and died is one of the core beliefs of Christianity.<sup>43</sup> It represents the Christian belief in Jesus as the Savior of all humankind by dying on the cross. The stories of Jesus' crucifixion and ascension in the Bible have much common ground. So much so that it significantly impacted the fundamentals of the Christian doctrine of Jesus' crucifixion. Mark chapter 15:Verses 1 through 14 describes the events before Jesus' crucifixion by Pilate at the instigation of the priests. Finally, in verse 15, he explicitly legitimizes Jesus' crucifixion, beginning with the deliverance of Barabbas to the priests, which also pleases the priests.<sup>44</sup> Jesus was crucified in Golgotha after the procession (Mark 15:22-24). During the day, darkness began to envelop the area, then at three o'clock, Jesus cried out, "Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani." When the soldiers saw Jesus die, they said, "Truly, this man is the Son of God" (Mark 15:33 and 39).<sup>45</sup>

When Jesus was crucified, many laughed at Him for claiming to be the Son of God (Matthew 27:17).<sup>40</sup> Pastors, clerks, and public figures said:

He saved others, but could not save himself, so they mocked him with a curse saying, "Are you king of Israel? If He came down from the cross, we would believe! (Matthew 27:41-43).

They even denounced him, to the point that those involved in the crucifixion with Jesus threatened him (Matthew 27:44). Isa shouted out loud, saying, "Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani?" the meaning of the sentence is "O Lord, my Lord, why did you forsake me." However, the people there still did not save Isa but opposed Eli's arrival. Finally,

<sup>40</sup> Lembaga Alkitab Indonesia, *Alkitab*, NL (Jakarta: Percetakan Lembaga Alkitab Indonesia, 2021), 2.

<sup>41</sup> Lembaga Alkitab Indonesia, 66.

<sup>42</sup> Kathleen Mroz, "Mary the Bridge Builder : Re- Thinking Patriarchal Portrayals of Mary in Islam and Christianity," *Journal of South Asian and Middle Eastern Studies* 42, no. 3 (2019): 3-4, <http://www.jstor.com/stable/10.33428/jsoutasiamiddeas.42.3.0001>.

<sup>43</sup> Michael McDowel and Nathan Robert Brown, *World Religions At Your Fingertips* (New York: Alpha Books, 2009), 39.

<sup>44</sup> Lembaga Alkitab Indonesia, *Alkitab*, 61.

<sup>45</sup> Lembaga Alkitab Indonesia, 62.

Jesus cried out as before and laid down his life.<sup>46</sup> Gospel 1 Corinthians 1:18 explains the wisdom of the phenomenon of the cross being understood as God's dominion over Jesus, even though the cross is seen as a doctrine of ignorance (See gospel references).

In case 1:9-11 confirms Jesus' procession to heaven. This event was seen by those who saw when Jesus was lifted, and the clouds instantly covered him from their sight. When they raised their eyes to the sky, two people in white came to announce that Jesus had ascended into heaven, left you, and returned to you like a group of people who went to heaven.<sup>47</sup> In this interpretation, there is the legitimacy of Jesus being taken up by God into heaven.

The punishment of the cross does not come from the Jewish tradition but from the pre-Jewish tradition. The first crucifixion was because he opposed the authority of the Hasmonean King Alexander Jannaeus, who was crucified in 88 BC with 800 Pharisees.<sup>48</sup> The crucifixion of Isa is said to have been described in the four canonical Gospels, in which Isa (Jesus) prophesied the events of his arrest, the end of his life, and his betrayal of his followers. Judas Iscariot was one of Jesus' disciples who became a deserter until he handed Jesus over to the Jewish priests. After his arrest, Isa was interrogated by Jewish priests, who accused him of blaspheming Jews. Finally, Isa was taken to see a Roman governor named Pontius Pilate in an attempt to institutionalize the death penalty by crucifying him.<sup>49</sup> From this explanation, the Christian belief that Jesus Christ/Isa sacrificed himself through death on the cross can be ascertained.<sup>50</sup>

### **The Resurrection of Jesus**

The events of the resurrection after Jesus' death on the cross-correlate with the sequence of processions. After dying on the cross, Jesus experienced a resurrection under the witness of his disciples and those who stabbed him (Revelation 1:7).<sup>51</sup> On the third day after the crucifixion (redemption), Jesus appeared to Cephas and his twelve disciples. Afterward, five hundred people witnessed Jesus' resurrection and met James, the apostle, until He appeared to the premature baby (1 Corinthians 15:3-8).<sup>52</sup> Others also witnessed Jesus' resurrection by God (Acts 2:32). In Case 4:33, it is explained that the apostles edified their hearts based on the testimony of Jesus' resurrection.<sup>53</sup> John recounted the appearance of the resurrected Jesus, explaining that he was wearing a robe that reached his feet and his chest was wrapped in a gold plaque. His head and hair were white, and his feet were shiny, with a picture of the appearance of Jesus from John's testimony, to whom he counseled, "do not be afraid! I was the first. The First and the Last" (Revelation

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<sup>46</sup> Lembaga Alkitab Indonesia, 37.

<sup>47</sup> Lembaga Alkitab Indonesia, 133.

<sup>48</sup> Nicholas Thomas Wright, *The Day The Revolution Began: Reconsidering the Meaning of Jesus's Crucifixion*, First Edit (San Francisco: HarperOne, 2016), 73.

<sup>49</sup> Louay Fatoohi, *The Mystery of the Crucifixion* (Birmingham: Luna Plena Publishing, 2008), 11.

<sup>50</sup> Karen Armstrong, *Sejarah Tuhan*, ed. Yuliani Liputo, trans. Zaimul Am, XVI (Bandung: Mizan, 2015), 177.

<sup>51</sup> Lembaga Alkitab Indonesia, *Alkitab*, 275.

<sup>52</sup> Lembaga Alkitab Indonesia, 199.

<sup>53</sup> Lembaga Alkitab Indonesia, 137.

1:13-19).<sup>54</sup> The verses about the evidence of Jesus' resurrection can still be traced, roughly showing their testimony of Jesus as in Mark 16:1-8, Luke 24:1-12, John 20:1-10, and Matthew 28:1-10.

The story of Jesus' empty tomb is evidence of the resurrection and was also seen on Sunday morning. This event prompted his disciples not to go to Athens or Rome to teach but to return to Jerusalem.<sup>55</sup> People saw the spirit in the light form of Isa and the physical form of Jesus on the beach. There, Jesus invited his disciples and the chief priests to eat fish<sup>56</sup>. Paul gives a vision of what this resurrection means with the term *sarkikos* meaning flesh or the world.<sup>57</sup> The phenomenon between the crucifixion and the resurrection of 'Isa is recorded as one event. This interpretation identifies the event of Jesus being resurrected after his death on the cross. The evidence is available from the sacred text (the Bible) and eyewitness explanations.

### **Explanatory of the Story of Isa in the Qur'an and It's Interpretation**

The objects are the concept of the birth of the Prophet Isa a.s in Q.S. Ali Imran (3): 43-47, the crucifixion in Q.S. An-Nisa (4): 157-158, and the resurrection in An-Nisa: 159.

#### **Birth of Prophet Isa *alaihissalam* in Q.S. Ali Imran (3): 43-47**

According to Hazrat Bashiruddin Mahmud Ahmad's interpretation, he emphasized verse 44 of surah 'Ali Imran verse 44 on the word *aqlam*, which means arrow. He explained that it has become customary in Arabic culture to use arrows as a pen to draw and shoot (games). The facts contained in the Qur'an about Maryam's features have yet to be found in previous documents. Maryam is said to have become pregnant while devoting her life to the temple. This made the priest worried and afraid of this scandal, namely Maryam's pregnancy. Their interest leads to finding the right person in marriage. Lot eventually reached the hands of Joseph, a carpenter, as mentioned in the Bible.<sup>58</sup> This interpretation suggests the possibility of a Christian story, plus Hazrat Bashiruddin mentions biblical references.

The birth of a son made him happy and confused the unmarried and devoted Maryam in the Temple. The existence of this verse announces her pregnancy, so according to the law of the temple, Maryam must marry a man named Joseph.<sup>59</sup> Later, Hazrat Bashiruddin considered it unusual to claim the existence of natural fertility from female reproduction without having a close relationship with men. However, he does not rule out this process from a biological approach. Dr. Timme's quotes have seen a tendency due to the ability of tumors to produce male sperm, such as *arrhenoblastoma*. The

<sup>54</sup> Lembaga Alkitab Indonesia, 276.

<sup>55</sup> Josh McDowell and Sean McDowell, *Evidence for the Resurrection: What It Means for Your Relationship with God* (Washington: Baker Books, 2009), 97.

<sup>56</sup> Simon J. Joseph, *Jesus and The Temple: The Crucifixion in Its Jewish Context* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016), 184.

<sup>57</sup> Bruce D. Chilton, *Resurrection Logic* (Texas: Baylor University Press, 2019), 72.

<sup>58</sup> Mirza Bashiruddin Mahmud Ahmad, *The Holy Qur'an With English Translation and Commentary, British Library Cataloguing*, vol. 2 (Surrey: Islam International Publications Limited, 1988), 487-88.

<sup>59</sup> Ahmad, 2:493-94.

presence of such sperm is alive and active, causing fertilization of the egg or egg of the female.<sup>60</sup>

Ṭabaṭabā'i in his interpretation, Al-Mizan proclaimed the chastity of Maryam as the holy woman and the choice of all women. The selection of his guardian was due to obedience, always kowtowing, and because of his association. Maryam specifically prioritized Jesus' design. The verse related to surah An-Nisa verse 45, related to surah Al-Anbiya:91 Theologically understood, that is, the process of Maryam keeping her virginity, and then the spirit is breathed into her body, this is evidence of the greatness of God. There is also a correlation with Q.S. At-Tahrim:12. This verse reinforces the previous argument about Maryam's virginity and the breath of spirit (life) in her womb so that it becomes evidence of the majesty of her words for us to obey.<sup>61</sup>

The Prophet Isa *alaihiṣṣalam* was announced as glad tidings of al-kalimah. Maryam conceived Jesus without human contact (male). Except as a result of theological creation (kun) which was dedicated to Jesus a.s. with the same appearance as any other human being. Judging from the biological process of human beings, it is the mixing of male semen with female eggs. This process was not experienced by Isa because there was God's intervention.<sup>62</sup>

### **The Crucifixion of the Prophet Isa in Q.S. An-Nisa (4): 157-158**

There are three keywords at the heart of the discussion of the crucifixion of the Prophet Isaiah. As the Ahmadiyya Qadian view expressed in Hazrat Mirza Bashiruddin's interpretation, the word *māqatalūhu yaqīnā* means disbelief that they killed Isa. So, the word *qatalūhu* carries the connotation of prejudice because the Jews do not know for sure about the state of Jesus. The word *ṣalabū* comes from the word *ṣalaba*, which means crucify (etymology), as in the sentence *صلب اللص* means that someone has crucified a thief. The broader meaning implies that crucifixion is carried out by sticking nails into wood and then being allowed to eat or drink. Thus, they slowly died of suffering, starvation, exhaustion, and the scorching sun. Finally, the word *syubiha* etymologically means the same as the phrase *شبهه اياه*, meaning like him.<sup>63</sup>

Sura An-Nisa verse 157 is a verse that has become a controversy between Jews and Isa (Jesus), especially regarding the legitimacy of Jesus' birth and death at the time. The phrase "Verily we have killed Almasih, Isa, son of Mary, the Apostle of Allah...." It gives the Jewish claim that he killed Isa, who claimed to be Almasih and the messenger of God. There are two views on the claim that Jesus died on the cross, namely that Jesus died first, and then his body was displayed on the cross. The second view confirms the fact that Jesus died on the cross. The Qur'an refutes both views by stating "... they didn't kill and didn't crucify him..." This statement shows the Qur'an's rejection of the murder of 'Isa in any form, awake, before dying or dying on the cross. The term *syubiha* means

<sup>60</sup> Ahmad, 2:494–95.

<sup>61</sup> Muhammad Husain Thabathaba'i, *Al-Mizan Fi Tafsiril Qur'an*, vol. 3 (Beirut: Muassasah al-A'lamī lil Mathbu'at, 1997), 218–19.

<sup>62</sup> Thabathaba'i, 3:223.

<sup>63</sup> Ahmad, *The Holy Qur'an With English Translation and Commentary*, 2:725–26.

someone of a similar kind or similar creation. Hazrat Bashiruddin criticized the claim about the apparition of someone who looked like Isa, namely Judas. This statement is not based on chronological context without mentioning anyone in verse. The context of the time makes it clear that the Jews did not kill Jesus on the cross, but he was created in the image of the people who had been crucified.<sup>64</sup>

Qadian Ahmadiis understand that Jesus was crucified, but did not die on the cross, but lived and traveled. Hazrat Bashiruddin mentions the Gospel texts that explain the subject matter of Sura An-Nisa 157 in various discussions.<sup>65</sup> Jesus did not die during the crucifixion, but after his crucifixion, he wandered in search of missing Jews in Afghanistan and Kashmir. Jesus came to the East in his quest after miraculously escaping death on the cross. Ahmadiyya Qadian claims that Jesus was buried in Khan Yar Road, Srinagar, Kashmir as evidenced by various historical events on Khan Yar Road.<sup>66</sup>

The discourse on Jesus' death focuses on the difference between the crucifixion of Jesus, in which some claim that He died on the cross, who died first before being crucified, and the view that Jesus did not die and was not crucified. However, rather someone who looked like Jesus was crucified. Isa survived the target of Jewish assassination and crucifixion. However, God lifts the body and soul (life) to face God. If Jesus rose from the dead on the cross, the result would be that Jesus was not perfect. This designation is a method of purifying God by saving Him from the pursuit of the Jews' punishment on the cross, so Jesus' condition cannot be known if crucifixion and murder happen to you. In his interpretation of Thabataba'I, the birth of Jesus is emphasized as a glory given to Jesus to avoid his death on the cross.<sup>67</sup>

Fakhruddin Ar-Razi interpreted An-Nisa verse 157 as an argument against the skepticism of the Jews who claimed to have killed Jesus. Their success in killing Jesus had a hidden mission: to make fun of Jesus' followers, such as Pharaoh making fun of Moses' prophecy and mocking the Quraysh's skepticism of the Prophet Muhammad. The phrase was mā qatalū hu was mā ṣalabū hu wa lakin ṣubbiha lahum is a rebuttal of the Jews.<sup>68</sup>

### **The Resurrection of Isa in Q.S. An-Nisa: 159**

Sura An-Nisa's interpretation of verse 159 presupposes that Jesus' resurrection has a theme similar to the previous verses, namely verses 157-158, as previously described. Q.S. 4:158 confirms the ascension of 'Isa, with no clear reference to the physical ascension of 'Isa. Meanwhile, this verse is a rebuttal to the Jews' claim of success in the crucifixion and spiritual degradation of Jesus. Mirza Bashiruddin points out that the Koran in this verse does not indicate the designation of Jesus. However, they are raised spiritually because no particular place in heaven can be occupied, even if it is God's appreciation. Furthermore, the view of Jesus' physical ascension seems absurd in such a way.<sup>69</sup> In the

<sup>64</sup> Ahmad, 2:726–27.

<sup>65</sup> Ahmad, 2:727–29.

<sup>66</sup> Ahmad, 2:729.

<sup>67</sup> Thabathaba'i, *Al-Mizan Fi Tafsiril Qur'an*, 3:134–35.

<sup>68</sup> Fakhruddin Razi, *Tafsir Al-Fakhr Al-Razi*, vol. 31 (Beirut: Dar Al-Fikr, 1981), 100–105.

<sup>69</sup> Ahmad, *The Holy Qur'an With English Translation and Commentary*, 2:730.

next sentence (Q.S. 4:159), Hazrat Bashiruddin shows that Jewish and Christian beliefs were considered unfounded based on contextual data. They viewed Jesus' death on the cross as a belief that if rejected, their teachings would be criticized and even the collapse of their status as Jewish, Thai, and Christian.<sup>70</sup>

Tabataba'i connects Sura An-Nisa verse 158 with Q.S. 3:55, where God preaches that Isa died, then was taken up by God. Jesus' resurrection was no resurrection from the dead, but he was saved from crucifixion and brought into the presence of God. This verse is also an obstacle to the notion that Jesus was crucified and died, as both Jews and Christians believe. The body and soul of Isa protected him from the crucifixion of the Jews. This designation is the process by which God purifies Jesus and saves Him from their (Jewish) hands. As for the claim that Jesus died of wounds or was crucified, we do not know for sure his death. Similarly, Isa's claim remains true because he survived his crucifixion and death, and even then, we do not know for sure. So all these possibilities may or may not happen. All these adoption processes were not impossible for God to be able to raise Jesus and keep Jesus in his power.<sup>71</sup>

Ar-Razi interprets Isa's ascension to heaven as in the sentence "... bal rafa'ahullah ilaihi..." which presents a picture of Isa's spiritual happiness at being present before him, having gone through various difficulties and difficulties. Threat. Verse 158 of Surah An-Nisa seems clear about the ascension of 'Isa, as also explained in Q.S. 3:55. God has ordained that the event of Jesus' rapture was glorious, for 'Isa experienced many trials and trials that were very hard. This designation is, therefore, nobler than heaven and all physical pleasure in terms of rewards. This verse also identifies toxicity in the form of divine happiness. Furthermore, Ar-Razi analogizes this fact to the concept of Isra' Muhammad SAW because it is clear that the presence of God is impossible for an ordinary man, except for his natural and intellectual nature.<sup>72</sup>

### **Explanatory Maulana Muhammad Ali on Isa**

#### **The birth of Prophet Isa**

The interpretation of the Prophet Isa, according to the interpretation of Maulana Muhammad Ali, is fairly prominent from other topics. This can be seen from the last section, where there is an index, where the subjects of Isa's research have a large number ranging from his birth and the dynamics of his life to his death.<sup>73</sup> In his birth speech, Muhammad Ali raised a beautiful topic entitled "The Birth of Isa and His Service" in the order of Q.S. Ali 'Imran from verses 41-53. From this sequence, Ali also gives a sub-discussion of each verse sequence. Verses 41-43 deal with the election of Maryam as guardian, verses 44-47 provide information about the birth of a child in Maryam's womb, subsequently verses 48-50 discuss Isaiah's teachings to his people, 51 and 52 about

<sup>70</sup> Ahmad, 2:730-31.

<sup>71</sup> Thabathaba'i, *Al-Mizan Fi Tafsiril Qur'an*, 3:135-36.

<sup>72</sup> Fakhruddin Razi, *Tafsir Al-Fakhri Ar-Razi*, vol. 8 (Beirut: Dar Al-Fikr, 1981), 100-105.

<sup>73</sup> Ali, *The Holy Qur'an: Containing The Arabic Text With English Translation and Commentary*, 1260-61.

Isaiah's disciples, finally verse 53 explains the plan against Jesus.<sup>74</sup> However, this study only follows Maulana Muhammad Ali's interpretation of the subject of the birth of Isa. Maulana Muhammad Ali begins his interpretation by telling the story of the character Maryam. The story of Maryam became the basis for understanding the birth of Isa. Maryam devoted herself to the holy house a long time ago. It is said that when Maryam was born, her mother prayed that Maryam would soon marry and have children (4:36). Maryam's marriage to Joseph occurred in an ill-fated event that fell to Joseph (4:44). Furthermore, in Q.S. 4:45 Ali reveals that the meaning of a sentence has the meaning of a word or prediction. It is based on God's declaration of the "good news," which is the birth of Jesus. Like the meaning of the phrase in the other verse, 4:39 explains that this sentence means the prophecy of the birth of the Prophet Yahya.<sup>75</sup> Q.S. 6:34 reveals kalimah as a prophecy of victory that God promised to His messengers.<sup>76</sup> The Prophet Isaiah had the same status as any other prophet, namely the messenger of God. As for the pair Isa, called kalimuhu and ruhu minhu, they do not claim their strength compared to others. This is based on Isaiah's description as well as Adam's account (3:58). The fact that Christians view Jesus Christ as the son of God is a very basic mistake. Meanwhile, the use of the Son of God standing next to Jesus is a form of symbolism.<sup>77</sup>

### **Crucifixion and Death of the Prophet Isa**

The fundamental belief of the Ahmadiyya movement is that Jesus' death was justified. In addition to the Qur'an background, some scholars such as Imam Bukhari and Imam Malik believe this. As Imam Bukhari narrated from Ibn Abbas, the notion of mutawaffika tends to be mummi>tuka. The evidence corroborates that he did not accept the science that simultaneously confirms the pleasure of the soul and body. Imam Malik also believed in the death of Jesus. Maulana Muhammad Ali is also based on facts about the death of Prophet Muhammad SAW, which some friends do not believe; even Umar bin Khattab threatened anyone who believed in Muhammad's death. Then Abu Bakr narrated Q.S. 3:144. The statement of all the apostles before Muhammad's death became an ultimatum to Ali's belief in the death of Isa.<sup>78</sup>

Jesus' crucifixion focused on understanding the meaning of wa māqatalūhu wa ma ṣalabuhu and the term subbiha lahum as found in Q.S. 4:157. Regarding the interpretation of the verse, Maulana Muhammad Ali stated that Jesus was crucified and survived his death on the cross, but died a natural death. The meaning of salabuhu means to kill him in the usual way.<sup>79</sup> Ali based Isa's death on Q.S. 5:117, explaining that Jesus died naturally and has not lived in heaven until now. This concerns the words of Isaiah, who claimed his position as a witness to the disciples, but after Jesus' death, it was God

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<sup>74</sup> Ali, 153.

<sup>75</sup> Ali, 152.

<sup>76</sup> Ali, 294.

<sup>77</sup> Ali, 47.

<sup>78</sup> Maulana Muhammad Ali, *True Conception of The Ahmadiyya Movement*, First U.S. (Ohio: Ahmadiyya Anjuman Isha'at Islam Lahore inc. (USA), 1996), 7.

<sup>79</sup> Ali, *The Holy Qur'an: Containing The Arabic Text With English Translation and Commentary*, 241–42.



who became a witness for them.<sup>80</sup> The events of Jesus' life in heaven are not important in Islamic doctrine, not even included in the detribalization of the Islamic faith.<sup>81</sup>

The meaning of rafa'a is for God to lift the glory of 'Isa. If this term is understood as the exaltation of the body and soul to God, God has a throne (place). Ali is similar to the prayer that Muslims say at each prayer sitting between two prostrations of "warfa'ni" which means lift me. Muslims cannot understand this prayer as a desire to lift their souls and bodies to heaven, but it is understood as reverence or improvement.<sup>82</sup> In verse 4:158, rapture in God's presence contrasts with dying on the cross. Ali quoted Deuteronomy 21:23 as revealing death on the cross as something condemned by God.<sup>83</sup>

Maulana Muhammad Ali cites several biblical accounts that prove that Jesus survived death on the cross, see more in.<sup>84</sup> Another basis that can be used as a reference is that all prophets experienced death. This also applies to Isa without exception.<sup>85</sup> The term subbiha lahum has two meanings: how it looks and how it looks. Ali then quoted Ruhul Ma'ani's interpretation as explaining that "it became indecisive and suspicious to them." Ali points out that reports of people like Jesus are claims that the Qur'an does not substantiate.<sup>86</sup> Another explanation from Ali suggests that the Quran has no real evidence of Jesus' life in heaven.<sup>87</sup> The Qur'an does not explain in detail what happened after Jesus' crucifixion, because the Qur'an is not a history book. However, in Q.S. 23:50, it is revealed that Isa and Maryam were guarded on the plateau through which the river passed, describing the journey Isa made to Kashmir and stayed there until he was 120 years old.<sup>88</sup>

### **The Resurrection of Prophet Isa**

In Sura An-Nisa:159, Maulana Muhammad Ali needs to detail the fact of the resurrection of Isa. Ali paid more attention to Jewish and Christian beliefs, which believed in Jesus' death on the cross. However, Jews believe that Jesus died under condemnation, whereas Christians consider Jesus' death on the cross to be a form of penance for those who believe in him.<sup>89</sup> According to Ali's interpretation, the discourse of Jesus' resurrection is not explicitly stated because he believes in Jesus' death and his rejection of Jesus to heaven. He called the belief that Jesus descended from heaven an escape from the reality of Jesus' death.<sup>90</sup> Ali narrated verses relating to the rise of Isa by relating it to the prophecy of Islam's victory over all religions. This is what happened with the victory of the Prophet Muhammad in the Arab conquest.<sup>91</sup>

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<sup>80</sup> Ali, 285.

<sup>81</sup> Aziz, *Centenary of Maulana Muhammad Ali's English Translation of the Quran*, 49.

<sup>82</sup> Ali, *The Holy Qur'an: Containing The Arabic Text With English Translation and Commentary*, 160.

<sup>83</sup> Ali, 243.

<sup>84</sup> Ali, 241–42.

<sup>85</sup> Maulana Muhammad Ali, *History of the Prophets*, E-Book (USA: Ahmadiyya Anjuman Isha'at Islam Lahore, 2011), 57, [www.alahmadiyya.org](http://www.alahmadiyya.org).

<sup>86</sup> Ali, *The Holy Qur'an: Containing The Arabic Text With English Translation and Commentary*, 242–43.

<sup>87</sup> Maulana Muhammad Ali, *Muhammad and Christ* (Ohio: Ahmadiyya Anjuman Isha'at Islam Lahore inc. (USA), 1993), 83.

<sup>88</sup> Ali, *History of the Prophets*, 58.

<sup>89</sup> Ali, *The Holy Qur'an: Containing The Arabic Text With English Translation and Commentary*, 243.

<sup>90</sup> Ali, *True Conception of The Ahmadiyya Movement*, 9.

<sup>91</sup> Ali, *The Holy Qur'an: Containing The Arabic Text With English Translation and Commentary*, 1073.

## Gadamer's Hermeneutic Analysis

### Historical Affected

Maulana Muhammad Ali in this regard was brought under the siege of British colonial hegemony by a large business, the East India Company (EIC). Ali's connection to Christianity occurred when the British colonists took control of India. Colonialism has had a significant impact on the development of various fields.<sup>92</sup> Some Muslims reacted to the British and Christian presence and missionaries in Punjab, which was troubling to local Muslims.<sup>93</sup> History records that before British controlled India, there was a dynasty whose civilization lasted for three centuries, namely the Mughal dynasty, founded in 1526 by Zahiruddin Muhammad Babur, a Muslim.-1857 AD. Islam officially entered in 711 AD, while the British arrived in India in 1757 AD.<sup>94</sup> However, this dynasty was destroyed by the EIC, which was then lost at that time, then by coercion by the Indian people. At that time, the people felt a sense of urgency, eventually rebelling against the EIC, but Islam suffered defeat because of the military prowess of Muslims far behind the British.<sup>95</sup> European expansionism landed in India for economic purposes and to spread Christianity. They were threatening even Muslim forces in the region.<sup>96</sup> The British and Dutch in the 1700s were able to monopolize Asia and the West. Indeed, both had the richest companies, the East India Company on the British side and the VOC (Vereenigde Oostindische Compagnie) on the Dutch side.<sup>97</sup> However, both were granted concessions by local officials in the Coromandel region of India, hoping that the joint venture would benefit their coffers.<sup>98</sup> Hindu and Muslim communities in India also cooperate with British merchants in Madras. They have supported Europe's struggle against indigenous governments and unwanted competition.<sup>99</sup> From this arose the development of the mission from economic goals towards the religious sphere in the expansion of Europe, particularly Great Britain with its company (East India Company).

The East Indies company began with the desire of British merchants and investors to obtain sources of spices from the Indian Ocean region, as Dutch and Portuguese companies carried out the expansion of spices. In 1600, Queen Elizabeth I gave it to the local government and affiliated trading companies in the East Indies. Finally, in 1607, the EIC established the first trading post in India, at Surat on the west coast. Then in 1614,

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<sup>92</sup> Wali Ahmadi, *Modern Persian Literature in Afghanistan: Anomalous Visions of History and Form*, Routledge, Taylor and (New York: Taylor and Francis Group, 2008), 17, <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203946022>.

<sup>93</sup> Lavan, *The Ahmadiyah Movement: A History and Perspective*, 26.

<sup>94</sup> Much. Kamdi Ihsan, "Peradaban Islam Masa Mughal Di India," in *Dinamika Peradaban Islam: Perspektif Historis*, ed. Umar Faruq Thohir and Anis Hidayatul Imtihanah (Yogyakarta: Pustaka Ilmu, 2015), 228–29.

<sup>95</sup> Ihsan, 240.

<sup>96</sup> Lawson, *The East India Company: A History*, 2.

<sup>97</sup> Geoffr V Scammell, *The First Imperial Age: European Overseas Expansion c. 1400-1715* (Canada: Routledge, 1989), 18.

<sup>98</sup> Scammell, 67.

<sup>99</sup> Scammell, 71.

he received a trade charter from the Mughal Emperor Jahangir which granted trade concessions and protection to settled English merchants.<sup>100</sup>

From economic expansion, the East India Company expanded its mission in India to spread Christian/Evangelical teachings by Protestants, pragmatists, and liberals brought from the early 19th century. Similarly, there was a development of political (corporate) power into political power. the power to rule India. At that time, India was under the rule of William Bentinck; India underwent reforms from 1753-1856. There was a significant impact on the indigenous (Indians) during British rule. Even Bernard Porter and Chris Bayly say missionaries can disrupt social culture, impose foreign values, and instill spirituality in Protestant Indians.<sup>101</sup>

With his conceptual interpretation of the birth, crucifixion, and resurrection of Jesus, Maulana Muhammad Ali draws parallels with the teachings of Christianity. For Ali, the understanding of the birth of Isa that was established after the marriage of Joseph and Maryam showed a tendency towards a Christian conception. It is revealed in the Gospels that Maryam was married to Joseph, but before they lived together, Maryam was blown by God.<sup>102</sup> Protestants believe that Maryam and Joseph had sex after the birth of Isa. Because in some documents, it is revealed that there is a brother Isa.<sup>103</sup> Despite his resemblance to the Christian faith, Ali did not recognize Jesus as the son of God.<sup>104</sup> With empirical facts about interactions with Christians and Hindus, Ali emphasized the spiritual strengthening of Indian Muslims to stay away from the teachings of other religions. Even the most negative is the *murtad*.

### **Pre-Understanding**

After being traced, Maulana Muhammad Ali's ideology turned to Ahmadiyya's. It began with his meeting with Mirza Ghulam Ahmad in 1897. Mirza was then amazed by Ali's high intellectual level in understanding the Koran's values. Even though Ali has been appointed editor of an Ahmadiyya magazine, Review of Religions. Nevertheless, Ali's contribution increased and expanded the magazine's reach in India and abroad as an expression of his devotion to Mirza Ghulam Ahmad.<sup>105</sup>

Thus, it can be understood from Maulana Muhammad Ali's early understanding of the interpretation of the story of Isa, especially regarding the birth, crucifixion, and resurrection has a systematic understanding. Including ideologies such as the Ahmadiyya Lahore Congregation, he was also trying to criticize Christian Doctrine to stop the missionary movement in spreading Christian theology, especially in India, in general, throughout the world. In Ali's eyes, this interpretation of the story of Isa is a form of anticipation due to the mass arrival of Christian missionaries. In addition to encouraging

<sup>100</sup> Bruce Brunton, "The East India Company: Agent of Empire in the Early Modern Capitalist Era," *Social Education* 77, no. 2 (2013): 80.

<sup>101</sup> Lawson, *The East India Company: A History*, 150–51.

<sup>102</sup> Lembaga Alkitab Indonesia, *Alkitab*, 2.

<sup>103</sup> Mroz, "Mary the Bridge Builder: Re- Thinking Patriarchal Portrayals of Mary in Islam and Christianity," 2.

<sup>104</sup> Ali, *The Religion Of Islam: A Comprehensive Discussion of The Sources, Principles, and Practice of Islam*, 47.

<sup>105</sup> Ali, *The Founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement*, 111–13.

resistance to Christian missionaries, Ali's Qur'an was written in English. At that time, society was under pressure about the amount of Arabic literature that Indian Muslims could read but could not understand.<sup>106</sup> Ali also regarded Mirza Ghulam Ahmad as a mujaddid, as was the Ahmadiyya principle of Lahore. This is in contrast to Qadiyan Ahmadiyya who understood messiah Mirza Ghulam Ahmad as a prophet. In this case, Ali has his expression of understanding of Mirza Ghulam because of his secret mission to make him the leader of Sadr Anjuman.

### **Fusion of Horizon**

At this stage, it is understood as an operation similar to dialogue and reflection between the text's reality and the interpreter's horizon while reading the text.<sup>107</sup> The two horizons in question are the text horizon and the offender's horizon. How the text was understood at the time of its decline, and how it was understood by the translators of that time, who were in dialogue with their different conditions and realities. This section explains how Ali's interpretation of the story of Isa was shaped by the horizons of the text and the history they experienced.

Ahmadis not only resisted Christian missionaries, but they also clashed with Aryan Hindu Samad. This group of Hindus leads the shuddi movement or aims to restore the beliefs of Muslims to Hindu beliefs. Ahmadiyya did not remain silent, and Maulana Muhammad Ali advised all congregations to dedicate their wealth to Islamic proselytizing activities in India. Meanwhile, Christian missionaries in India debated Ahmadiyya for years until they were ordered by their superiors to no longer have a dialogue with Ahmadis.<sup>108</sup>

The Ahmadiyya movement is considered a group that does not have a major role in India, but its spread is very fast in the West (Europe).<sup>109</sup> According to researchers, this is one of the reasons why Ali wrote his interpretation in English. Ahmadis not only resisted Christian missionaries, but they also clashed with Aryan Hindu Samad. This group of Hindus leads the shuddi movement or aims to restore the beliefs of Muslims to Hindu beliefs. Ahmadiyya did not remain silent, and Maulana Muhammad Ali advised all congregations to dedicate their wealth to Islamic proselytizing activities in India. Meanwhile, Christian missionaries in India debated Ahmadiyya for years until their superiors ordered them to no longer dialogue with Ahmadis.<sup>110</sup>

Ahmadiyya massively organized Ahmadiyya conferences and forums to raise questions about Islam. One of them was a conference held in Allahabad on January 9-10, 1911, but Ali did not leave on the first day because he was busy completing the project of translating the Quran. Finally, Khwaja Kamaluddin was the speaker for the first

<sup>106</sup> Tanika Sarkar, "Gendering of Public and Private Selves in Colonial Times," in *India And The British Empire*, ed. Douglas M. Peers and Nandini Gooptu (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 14, <https://doi.org/10.1093/acprof:oso/9780199259885.001.0001>.

<sup>107</sup> Gadamer, *Philosophical Hermeneutics*, 45.

<sup>108</sup> Ahmad and Faruqui, *A Mighty Striving: Life and Work of Maulana Muhammad Ali*, 205–6.

<sup>109</sup> Wilfred Cantwell Smith, *Modern Islam In India: A Social Analysis* (Lahore: Minerva Book Shop, 1943), 324.

<sup>110</sup> Ahmad and Faruqui, *A Mighty Striving: Life and Work of Maulana Muhammad Ali*, 205–6.

session. The next day, Ali declared that Islam is the truest religion according to humanitarian principles.<sup>111</sup> Proselytizing activities through magazines and articles did not escape the expansion of Ahmadiyya through the writings of Ali and others. Among them are Religious Reviews, Badrs, Islamic Reviews, etc.

From this description, the analysis of Ali's assimilation horizons related to the issue of Isa's birth, crucifixion, and resurrection can be understood when Maulana Muhammad Ali gave his interpretation that the Lord Jesus was believed not to have died at the time of his crucifixion. Ahmadis and Hindus affirm this understanding. However, besides Ahmadiyya, there are other views on Christianity and Islam. In the Bhavisiya Purana, the Hindu text mentions Jesus living in northern India around the city of Shrinagar in the Kashmir valley. Isa lived there until 80 to spread the teachings of love, after which she died. When Isa died, the Hindu rulers of Kashmir built a luxurious building for Isa's burial place.<sup>112</sup> This is supported by extant Buddhist manuscripts showing that Isa studied Brahmin and Buddhist law in India. Ali's basis for understanding the story of Isa begins with his extensive reading, which includes references from other religious scriptures such as the Bible and Hinduism as well as the debates he has to deal with, becoming a skeletal structure that influences Ali's interpretation of the story of Isa.

### **Application**

This section shows the meaning of Maulana Muhammad Ali's interpretation of the story of Isa. Gadamer quoted Sahiron explaining that in addition to the process of understanding and interpretation, an interpreter must apply the message or teachings of the text of the scriptures when the text is understood.<sup>113</sup> In short, with this applied theory, the abuser can express the moral message that the text conveys to apply in social life or to increase trust.

The understanding of the birth, crucifixion, and resurrection of Jesus is a controversial discourse, both within the framework of Islam (the Qur'an) and Christianity (the Bible). However, like the various discussions surrounding the story of Isa, this should reflect tolerance. From the story of Jesus, we should look at the exemplary attitude and behavior, not around Jesus' death and resurrection in later years. However, Jesus, born from Mary's womb, has become an ideal model for us to apply His pattern of obedience and submission.<sup>114</sup>

In addition to Maulana Muhammad Ali's interpretation, there are similarities with other mufassir regarding the rebuttal of Isa's death in the manger. Following Islam in India, Ali experienced friction with Christian and Hindu civilizations. This phenomenon weakened Islam in its spread. Maulana Muhammad Ali saw this social status as a struggle to strengthen the Islamic faith. We know that Ali was a theologian, but he advocated

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<sup>111</sup> Ahmad and Faruqui, 78.

<sup>112</sup> Anand Krishna, *Isa: Hidup Dan Ajaran Sang Masiha*, V (Jakarta: Gramedia Pustaka Utama, 2005), 294.

<sup>113</sup> Sahiron Syamsuddin, *Hermeneutika Dan Pengembangan Ilmu Al-Qur'an* (Yogyakarta: Pesantren Nawesea Press, 2017), 83.

<sup>114</sup> Jon Armajani, "Interpretations of Jesus and the Virgin Mary in the Quran and the Bible : A Possible Contribution to Muslim-Christian Cooperation ?" 1, no. 1 (2017): 13.

rationality and tried to reinforce the teachings of Islam.<sup>115</sup> Ali made a big change without realizing it was an Islamic revolution. It is seen here that Ali is looking for Indian Muslims to strengthen his faith in Islam. There are several basic principles of the power of one's faith: faith in God, faith in the process of revelation, and worship/prayer to God.<sup>116</sup> Ali said that the spiritual triumph of Islam would be based on convincing arguments and various evidence of the majesty of Allah integrated during his life and after his death. Also, with a servant's humility, Islam can turn the whole world into a united nation.<sup>117</sup>

## CONCLUSION

Maulana Muhammad Ali was a rationalist and theological scholar with various thoughts. Ali's interpretation of the story of Isa includes a discussion of birth, crucifixion, and resurrection. Ali understands that Isa was born due to the marital relationship between Joseph and Maryam. The crucifixion of Isa described in the Bible is taken by Ali as a fact of Jesus' crucifixion. However, Ali criticized Isa's death on the cross as untrue. Isa's death occurred after the crucifixion became Ali's teaching, as he, along with Ahmadiyya's ideology, believed that Isa died in Kashmir, India. Meanwhile, according to Ali's interpretation, the resurrection of Isa has yet to be demonstrated. This is because Ali rejects the ascension of Isa as a principle. Ali considered Isa's death due to his belief in the unshakable appearance of mau'ud, namely Mirza Ghulam Ahmad. Nevertheless, the legalization of Mirza Ghulam Ahmad was limited to mujaddids. The verses about Jesus' resurrection refer to God's promise of victory over all religions.

Gadamer's hermeneutics has four theories: historical effect, pre-understanding, the union of horizons, and application. Historical effects or historical influences show that during the British colonial period, Maulana Muhammad Ali carried out political and economic missions and targeted Christian missionaries. So from this interaction, Ali constructed an interpretation of Isa. Ali's early knowledge or horizon before interpreting was dominated by Ahmadiyya ideology. Furthermore, Ali's non-Muslim material forms a horizon in the initial comprehension used to read the text. The unification of the horizon led to the assimilation of the horizon that concerns Ali in the matter of Isa's birth, crucifixion, and resurrection. It can be understood when Maulana Muhammad Ali explained that Isa is believed not to have died during the crucifixion. Ahmadis and Hindus affirm this understanding. However, besides Ahmadiyya, there are other views on Christianity and Islam. Finally, the application of the interpretation of the story of Isa carries a moral message, namely the similarity of perceptions of the exemplary figure of Isa because he was born from the sacred womb of Maryam. The issue of negative stigma against Ahmadis, through Ali's interpretation of Jesus' denial of Jesus' death on the cross, became a topic that could be understood by other mufasir.

<sup>115</sup> Hamka, "Pemikiran Kalam Maulana Muhammad Ali," 78.

<sup>116</sup> Maulana Muhammad Ali, *Islam Religion Humanity*, Revised Ed (Lahore: The Ahmadiyya Anjuman Isha'at Islam, 1985), 7.

<sup>117</sup> Maulana Muhammad Ali, *The Ahmadiyya Movement*, trans. S. Muhammad Tufail, English Ed (Lahore: Ahmadiyyah Anjuman Isha'at Islam, 1973), 6.

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