

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

A. Conclusion

After studying the work of Abdullah Yusuf Ali (*The Holy Qur'an, Text, Translation and Commentary*) in detail, the writer draws conclusion that the methods he employed in his commentary are below:

- a. Despite being aware to *riwâyah* as supporting tool of commentary, Abdullah Yusuf Ali (in the application), rarely used it to analyze the verses. Less of using *riwâyah* means less of using *asbâb al-nuzûl* (for it is transmitted through *riwâyah*) in exploring the meaning of the text. Abdullah Yusuf Ali did not want to emphasize the study only at certain events because The Qur'an is not only descended to a nation, but also applies to all times. Therefore, Abdullah Yusuf Ali conducted the rule of *al-'ibrah bi 'umûm al-lafdz la bi khushûsh al-sabab*.
- b. The literary approaches he used in viewing the verse are semantic, phonetic and semiotic. It's just

very unfortunate that Yusuf Ali was not always consistent to use of these approaches in every verse, it because he only commented the verse sections were deemed appropriate explanation. Yusuf Ali focused more in showing the beauty of The Noble Qur'an with beautiful English words instead of analyzing deeply its language in greater detail through devices of modern linguistic science. He precisely completed his commentary with many quotations of men of letters such as Shakespeare, Dickens, Tennyson, Coleridge, Carlyle, etc.

- c. Yusuf Ali sometimes only revealed a semantic aspect which is the first step in varying alternative meaning that can be derived from the original word. After gaining semantic meaning he sometimes developed it to search for a new significance from the meaning, but sometimes it just stops on a variant reading of the meaning without getting any significance. In other case, Yusuf Ali tried to find the significance without passing the preceded phase for studying the semiotic aspect of the text.

- d. Abdullah Yusuf Ali's personal inclination towards mysticism and philosophy coloring results of commentary. In addition to these two aspects, Abdullah Yusuf Ali was also influenced by Shiite theology. He was clearly very touched by the history and significance of the martyrdom of Imam Hasan and Husayn.
- e. Yusuf Ali gave such great attention to the stories of the past. He adopted and adapted much information from the sources of Jewish and Christian teachings and from various researches on the stories of the past.

Studying methods of Abdullah Yusuf Ali in his commentary through the new theoretical framework of *ulûm al-qur'ân* already developed by Nashr Hamid Abu Zayd, the writer concludes that several methods employed by Yusuf Ali do not meet the Abu Zayd's, those are below:

- a. Discussing the meaning of texts through the dualism of "generality" and "specific reason" is actually contrary to the nature of the relationship between linguistic text and reality that produces text. It because producing text lasted through the medium with autonomic certain rules, they are

thought and culture. *asbâb al-Nuzûl* is an important and fundamental thing to find the meaning and significance; one thing that was forgotten by Yusuf Ali, it does not mean that the meaning is stopped at the level of symbolic of unique particular events. This conception contains such reality ignoring elements that language and text has a unique mechanism for expressing the reality and culture.

- b. Referring to the theory of Nashr Hamid Abu Zayd, what Yusuf Ali did is a reading of a leap, because he tended to directly come to interpretation (*ta'wîl*) without studying its linguistic aspects deeply. The jumping interpretation – without paying attention to much to text linguistic aspect is a kind of not valid interpretation because a valid interpretation should pass three phases of reading. The first is *qira'âh 'âdiyah* which is common reading second is exegesis/commentary or *tafsîr* aims to gain meaning and the third is interpretation or *ta'wîl* which is meaning of meaning. If the writer may

say, Abdullah Yusuf Ali used an arbitrary method to gain the message of The Qur'an.

- c. Without focusing study on aspects of language means that Yusuf Ali has allowed his personal subjectivity involved so far in the reading. Yusuf Ali involved too much his ideology into his interpretation. One thing that Abu Zayd really avoids is precisely done by Ali.
- d. The semiotic approach used by Abdullah Yusuf Ali does not meet the criteria applied by Abu Zayd about interpretation theory. The system of symbol applied by Ali is absence of logical relation between symbol and what is symbolized. In terminology of Saussure “there is not logical motivation (unmotivated between “*signifie*” and “*signifiant*”, or there is not direct relationship between the symbol mandatory with its being symbolized).
- e. Abu Zayd placing *Qashash al-Qur'ân* in the bottom layer of science. Because for him, these stories represent symbols that contain many lessons. But it seems disappear in Yusuf Ali's work. It is right that Yusuf Ali often forgot the

significance of a story. He importantly focused to describe the story with a variety of information from other religious teachings instead of catching the significance of verses. What done by Ali is coloring (*talwîn*) text with other religious traditions, he tended to force the text to speak about what he wanted.

B. Suggestion

In term of developing scientific consciousness and after conducting critical research on the work of Abdullah Yusuf Ali, the writer wants to define some suggestions that might be useful for further research, those are:

- a. Scientific consciousness is to be improved. This is important considering the discourse of science is growing rapidly. Life demands more and more solutions. And The Qur'an is possible to provide solutions because it is one aspect of cultural formation. The text will never change, but the interpretation of the text will be growing up, so that the mechanism of interpretation, as well as scientific tools as scalpel of The Qur'an must constantly be developed.

- b. Realizing the importance of *Ulûm al-Qur'ân*, many Muslim intellectuals seek to develop analyzing tools of interpretation. One is Nasr Hamid Abu Zayd, an Egyptian intellectual who must leave the country because his renewal of *Ulûm al-Qur'ân* he offers is rejected by the conservative Egyptian scholars. In academic life, being a priori of new thought will actually inhibit the development of science itself. Denials that led to consider somebody as infidel, addressed to figures such as Nashr Hamid Abu Zayd, Fazlur Rahman, M. Arkoun, Syahrur, etc. should not have occurred. Critical attitude is emphasized in academic life, but a priori attitude towards a new idea should be avoided. Because it cannot be denied that the development of religious science grows well as the consequence of that critical attitude.
- c. Abdullah Yusuf Ali is a modern Indian thinker who has a great service to the Islamic world. His work, *The Holy Qur'an, Text, Translation and Commentary* is a substantial contribution to the Islamic world. But unfortunately, people have not

many studied his work yet. Therefore, the writer conducts an assessment of his work mainly on the method of interpretation which he applied for whether his work gives beneficial or not depends on the method of interpretation he applied. However, an assessment of Abdullah Yusuf Ali's work still needs a follow-up, especially the assessment of aspects of the formulation of poetic translation. Besides, this study criticizes Yusuf Ali's methods of commentary throughout contemporary *ulum al-qur'an* renewed by Nashr Hamid Abu Zayd. And of course, the value given to Yusuf Ali's work is following Abu Zayd's concept. What considered weak and strong by this research may produce difference from other's concept, and thus, it is possible to study Yusuf Ali's work through some other's perspective.

- d. Critical attitude must always be turned on the academic environment. Good research on both classical and contemporary scholarship must always be done to enrich the scientific vocabulary.

C. Closing

Those what the writer could perform about the work of Abdullah Yusuf Ali. Praises be to Allah, who has given everything to writer. Without His love and compassion, surely the writer would not be able to complete this exhausting final task. After streaming blood and tears, the writer is finally able to complete this final task well.

Peace and salutation may be upon to beloved prophet Muhammad SAW, his inspiring attitude, indeed, inspires the writer to face bravely the storm eventually comes closer and makes too much disturbances in the process of work settlement.

Despite this paper is far from perfect, it is finished on time. With love and compassion coming from the depth of the heart writer says thanks to all those who have helped resolve this paper. The writer hopes that this paper provides a useful contribution for the triumph of science. Nothing is wasted in this world, blood, tired, and tears watered this paper in the course of settlement may provide a lesson for the writer. And finally, this paper is still very far from perfect. As common human being, the writer is impossible free from mistakes, thus, she really excuses for those errors. Hopefully, this writing gives such benefits to scientific discourse.

Unforgettable thanks to Abdullah Yusuf Ali and Nasr
Hamid Abu Zayd, may God bless them.