

The Cultural Stage - How do you call to the people?

The Cultural Stage

The Messenger of Allah at the start of his call would visit people in their homes, telling them that they had been commanded by Allah (swt) to worship Him and to associate none with Him. He openly invited people to Islam in Makkah, thus abiding by Allah's command,

"O you wrapped up (in a mantle) arise and deliver the warning." [TMQ 74:1]

After this, the Messenger of Allah would contact people secretly to teach them Islam and gather them on the basis of the deen.

The Sahabah (companions) used to offer prayers in the hills on the outskirts of Makkah away from Quraysh. Every time someone embraced Islam, Allah's Messenger would send him or her someone from those who had embraced Islam earlier to teach them the Qur'an. He sent Khabbab ibn al-Ar'rat to teach the Qur'an to Fatima bint al-Khattab and her husband Sa'id. 'Umar ibn al-Khattab once surprised them whilst they held their circle, and he embraced

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Islam there and then. The Messenger of Allah realised that this was not enough though, so he set up the house of al-Ar'qam ibn Abi al-Ar'qam as the centre of his call, a place from which he taught Muslims the Qur'an and perfected their knowledge of Islam, encouraging them to recite the Qur'an and understand it. Every time someone embraced Islam, Allah's Messenger would join him in the house of al-Ar'qam. He pursued this task for three years, teaching this group of Muslims, leading them in prayers, and performing tahajjud at night, motivating their souls, strengthening therefore their belief through prayer and recitation, helping them to improve their way of thinking and to reflect on the verses of the Qur'an and the creation

of Allah (swt). He taught them how to endure all hardships by submitting to Allah (swt).

Muhammad (saw), during this stage, also used to debate with Ibn Azayri and Al-Nadir ibn al-Harith in the vicinity of the Ka'aba.

When Allah's Messenger was sent with Islam, people talked about him and his Message. Quraysh, however, talked the least, because they ignored him at first thinking that his call would be no more than the talk of priests and wise men and that people would eventually return to the faith of their fathers and ancestors.

This is why they did not bother nor interfere with him. Whenever he passed by them they would say, "Here is the son of 'Abd al-Muttalib who is spoken to from the heavens."

So Muhammad (saw) would culture the Sahaba in a concentrated manner as well as collectively. The qareena (indication) which makes this activity a duty and part of the method to establish the Islamic State is that it is *fard* to gain the Islamic culture, as Islam cannot be practiced without the Islamic mentality and Islamic disposition (*nafsiyya*). As the subject matter itself is *fard* then the way to bring about this culturing is also *fard*. Muhammad (saw) undertook this action as a duty, so we must also undertake it in the same way as it is an inseparable part of the method.

It is simple to determine what was being discussed in the *halaqas* (circles) which Muhammad (saw) held for the group of Muslims. By knowing what was the personality of those who went into dar-al-arqam, then observing them after studying with the Prophet (saw) it is possible to deduce what kind of culturing they received inside.

For example, the Prophet's (saaw) companions (raa) came together one day and remarked that the Quraysh had never heard the Qur'an read to them, and who among the Sahabah (raa) could make the Quraysh listen to it was discussed. When 'Abdullah Ibn Mas'ud (ra) said that he would, they [the Sahabah] replied that they were afraid on his behalf and they only wanted a man of a powerful family who would protect him from the populace if they attacked him. He replied, "Leave me alone, for Allah will protect me." (Ibn Hisham)

In another example, when 'Uthman b. Maz'un (ra) saw the misery in which the Prophet (saaw) and his Companions were living under while he (saaw) was under the protection of his uncle, he (saaw) said: "It is more than I can bear that I should be perfectly safe under the protection of an idol worshipper while my friends are afflicted and distressed for Allah's sake." So he went to his uncle, Al-Walid, and renounced his protection saying to him that he wanted to be only under the protection of Allah (swt). Al-Walid asked for this renouncement in public where 'Uthman (ra) told everyone: "I don't want to ask anyone but Allah for protection."

Shortly, after this, in a gathering of the Quraysh a poet was reciting the following verse: "Everything but God is vain." At this point 'Uthman b. Maz'un (ra) said: "True." The poet continued and said: "And everything lovely must inevitably cease." Upon this 'Uthman cried, "You lie! The joy of Paradise will never cease." This enraged the Quraysh and the gathering resulted in one man hitting 'Uthman b. Maz'un in the eye so it became black. Al-Walid said: "O nephew, your eye need not have suffered this had you been under my sure protection." 'Uthman b. Maz'un answered: "No, by Allah, my good eye needs what happened to its fellow eye for Allah's sake, and I am under the protection of One who is stronger and more powerful than you." (Ibn Ishaq) Ibn Mas'ud (ra) narrates that in the early years of the Da'wah, when the Sahabah (raa) were few in number, they would contemplate on how they were going to rule the world. Certainly, if they had doubt in their belief, or if it was based on whims and emotions, or if it was anything less than crystal clear, it wouldn't have driven them to achieve that aim.

So the first stage was to ensure the correct understanding of the new concepts and to incorporate them into personalities and to structure them around these concepts. While the second stage was to transfer these concepts into a mobilising force in the society that drives it to implement them in the different walks of life; for concepts remain only as information unless they are implemented in society. In order for these concepts to be implemented, they first have to go through the process of being transformed from mere thoughts to becoming a driving force within society, then people would adopt them, realise them, carry them and struggle to see them implemented. From there onwards their implementation would become a certainty and merely the natural outcome of events. This is how the Messenger of Allah went about his call in Makkah. In the first stage, he called people to

Islam, cultured them with its concepts and taught them its rules. He gathered whoever he could on the basis of the Islamic belief; this was the stage of the secret grouping in the da'wah. Allah's Messenger pursued the call unabated, eager to culture all those who embraced Islam. He gathered them in the house of al-Arqam, or sent someone to culture them in circles in their own homes or in the mountain valleys. They did so in secret and gathered in a group. Their belief became stronger, and relations between them closer, and their awareness of the task that they faced increased by the day until they were ready to sacrifice anything in the way of the da'wah. The Message took deep root in their hearts and in their minds, Islam became like the blood in their veins - they became walking examples of Islam. Therefore, the Message could never remain a prisoner within their minds, despite the secrecy of their grouping and the care they took to keep their party a guarded secret.

They began talking to people they trusted, and to those in whom they felt a readiness to accept Islam. People, therefore, found out about their Message and felt their presence. At this stage, it became impossible for the Islamic call to be held back, so it had to be launched by calling all the people to Islam.

