

Islam and the Modern Age

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Editorial

'I've no ammunition. What use are cartridges in battle. I always carry chocolate instead; and I have finished the last cake of that hours ago', says Captain Bluntschli in *Arms and the Man*, a play by George Bernard Shaw. Unlike the newborn of several species, we enter this world in a state of being incapable of taking care of ourselves. As newborn babies we are at others' mercy for our survival and upbringing. Thank God, all of us, barring a few, are blessed with one or more nourishers who bring us up with heart, mind, love and dedication, giving us health, strength, character and spirit of assimilation and integration into all ethnic, religious, racial and cultural groups. In spite of our diversities, which we proudly celebrate, we share strong bonds with one another on several counts such as our firm adherence to our faith in the fundamental worth, identity and dignity of human beings.

Nurtured with tender feelings, sparks of anger, sharp reproofs, flashes of inspiration and other nourishment necessary for our growth as human beings, we acquire physical, mental and moral strength; and learn how to respond and reciprocate these feelings while living in strong ties and bonds with our nourishers, fellow human beings and other creatures of God. Unluckily, some of us soak up 'sparks of anger' so well that we become hopelessly addicted to letting loose bedlam and fiery temperament, reducing the order to anarchy and chaos. The fact is that our upbringing directs us towards a positive and non-violent frame of mind. With our upbringing by our nourishers, we do not require any specific and intensive training into the art of living together and maintaining our ties and kinship with others. There are strict prohibitions against breaking off of our family and blood-ties off. It is a grave sin.

All religions and fundamental principles of life inculcate in us the spirit of unity and relationship. The Gita commands us for world solidarity. The Upanishad and Rig Ved propagate 'vasudhaiv kutumbakam' (the

entire world is a family). And the Qur'an declares, 'O humankind, we created you from (a single pair of) a male and a female; and made you into nations and tribes that you know each other (not that you may hate each other)...' (Surah: Al-Hujurat; Verse: 13). It is amply evidenced by these facts that all religious and social values are careful about stressing unity, and spreading the message that the entire humanity is a single family.

No one is an outsider. Even strangers are not outsiders. They are those members of our 'extended family' whom we have never met. By the term 'extended family' here I mean 'children of Adam and Eve.' We are, therefore, asked 'to defend the interest of even those whom we have never met and will never meet.' Most notably, the expression 'vasudhaiv kutumbakam' finds an apt mention on the entrance hall of the Parliament of India. We must practice in our actual life what these comprehensive messages preach. Who will fail to be struck by the vibrancy of our diversity? No one. How delightfully it relieves sameness, dullness and monotony, paving the way for variety, magnificence and splendors of the colors of rainbow.

Our nourishers may be our own parents, some near and dear ones, or some fellow human beings, or some members of our 'extended family.' But it is a fact that they all try their utmost to inculcate in us the stimulating and inspiring picture of life and the world in their brilliant grace and grandeur. They never fail to impart strength and importance to the moral sense. Our nourishers foster and bring us up with full responsibility and commitment. They do ensure the presence of mutual trust and reciprocal love and respect. Raised on such wholesome food and pabulum, we develop necessary awareness of our surroundings and social world with discerning consciousness of right and wrong, sensitivity to others' material and emotional needs and keen insight into the subtleties of relationships. This is how we distinguish ourselves from other creations of God and develop the qualities of respectfully accepting others identities and uniqueness.

Our first dominant instinctive urge for 'chocolate', I mean food, confirms that we are normal human beings. Ram Vriksh Benipuri writes in his essay, 'Gehun Banaam Gulaab' 'jub manav prithvi per aaya, bhookh le ker...kya khaaye, kya piye? Maan ke stanon ko nichodaa' (When a human being was born on this earth, he had hunger pangs

... What to eat? What to drink? He sucked his mother's bosoms dry). During our lifetime we experience various types of hunger pangs, and exert ourselves for the sustenance and survival. When we feel hungry, we search for food to satisfy our hunger. When we feel thirsty, we look for water to slake our thirst. Thus food and water are major elements that sustain our life. Moreover, we also need emotional support for our healthy life. When we need it, we draw sustenance from the members of our family, friends, acquaintances and members of 'extended family'. It satisfies our natural urge to interact with human beings. We never like the idea of living in isolation unless isolation is imposed on us due to reasons beyond our control.

Now one may feel like raising a question, 'Why do we feel inclined to the folds of our family, friends, acquaintances and members of 'extended family' when we need emotional support?' The obvious explanation is that we treasure relationship with unshakable faith in its amazing power, integrity and beauty. It is essential for us to use this unshakable faith for the purpose of creating and promoting an amiable atmosphere where everyone gets ready to provide support and comfort to others without any inhibition, prejudice and discriminations in their hour of need. It is of course reassuring that most of us live together in our country as a microcosmic unit. We are prey to no 'isolationism'. Since we believe in interactions, we are open to knowledge and wisdom flowing from every corner, every religion and every section. Thus our perpetual endeavors to renew and acclimatize ourselves to new conditions and challenges go on without cessation.

We are no stranger to a composite social life and collectivism in India. We have been living here with one another, promoting common good since time immemorial. Somewhere I read the summary of a story – once a man wanted some kids to feast on some assorted fruit. He put a basket full of fruit under a tree and said, 'You have to run. One who gets near the basket first will get the basket with assorted fruit.' To his surprise, the kids held one another's hands and ran together. Then they sat around the basket and relished the assorted fruit. When asked the reason why they did like that, the kids said, 'It is by virtue of our social and emotional relationship that we are inseparably tied to one another.'

Not very long ago, people lived in extended families with their rights and duties, love and affection. They pursued their goals and reaped the

rewards of both shared and individual labour, living together as one whole. The large tightly-knit-families and communities, ate, prayed, enjoyed and reveled together. When faced with the problems, they put up bold front, dealt with the crisis and complex emergencies, turning the challenges into opportunities. But the advent of the new economic system and modern standards, founded on increasingly private affluence, selfish motives and consumer values, led people to depart from the time-tested system. Spurred on by the greed of their individual success, some people felt over-excited. They nursed vaulting aspirations to control the world. Then the lust for wealth, power and authority crept in, leaving many in peril. Numerous innocent citizens sustained harms and suffered material loss. Thus, the societies and the nations witnessed cold-blooded violence let loose mostly on the innocent and the vulnerable.

One may quote Adolf Hitler, as an example, who perpetrated the most heinous atrocities to achieve his overwhelming lust for power and authority. When an individual's or a group's ambitions take the center stage, they adversely impact collective consciousness and aggravate the exploitation of the vulnerable. Brutal hardness holds the sway, depriving many of the spirit of sacrifice, love, compassion and forgiveness. Habituated to discounting their own emotional needs, heartless people find it difficult to respond to others' emotions and feelings. Not giving a damn to the human rights, they aid and abet in unleashing cruelties on soft sections of societies, threatening them with extinction. Such atrocities render the atmosphere defenseless.

We do not feel angry so much as depressed and gloomy to see some people's pitiable state of being devoid of human feelings and emotions. A handful of people, bubbling over with frenzied desire to bring laws and the ethos of the traditions to chaos in the name of false patriotism, flout the religious, moral, ethical and national bounds. They carry out cruelties and trample upon others' civil and religious rights. They cause intentional injuries, sometimes even deaths, and huge damages to the properties. The question that nags us is why this jingoism sweeps only the lower stratum of the society. If it is a part of the ruthless agenda of propagating fissiparous tendencies against some soft section of the society, that too on the basis of imagined hostilities, it will harm the interest of the nation and its people. Justice, or rather the interests of

the nation and its people, demand that upright people must rise to repel the evil with what is better.

Made of clay, we are capable of unconditional love, the most vital force that conquers hearts and minds; the most nutritious food that gives us radiating health and wonderful life; and the most powerful weapon that dispels the notion that physical power, which is no doubt the power of baser order, will rule the modern world. The people who run with the false notion that 'might is right' cult has made a comeback must keep it mind that it is the mental power, faith in human progress and mutual love that dominate and rule the world. It is significant to mention that determined and serious campaigns have always been carried against all evils, irrational, brutalizing and dehumanizing forces, giving them crushing defeats. No malicious forces have ever had a perpetual and uncontested sway. They reach their maturity within no time and vanish into thin air without a trace. In fact they have no strength before the truth that always revives itself in all its glory.

It is not consistent with accepted norms to glorify heartless behavior and killing with fruitless attempts at throwing the societies and the nation in a state of disarray. Our country has been holding together a large and diverse populations with different persuasions and beliefs. It also has people with no religious belief. They have lived together, celebrated special days, festivals and religious events together with a genuine sense of sharing strong bonds and love. The power of love does sublimate our baser qualities and strengthen our unity, enabling us to live together fully and freely with our peculiar genius, social composure, mores, cultures and traditions. In essence, love and relationship call for a mutual give and take. They bring immense joy and lasting peace. When we greet others and make solicitous enquiry after their health we create a deep, enduring and inalienable love and relationship with them. This is how the culture of love, affection and respect is promoted and inculcated.

It is our power of love and affection that elevates our rank in the sight God and His lovely creatures. This is why Allama Iqbal sings hymn to the power of love. He says, 'ishq ne mitti ko masjood-e malaik ker diya' (It is love that made the clay (humankind) worthy of Angels' prostration). It warms our hearts and revitalizes our expectations of good things happening without interval. They prompt us to keep moving

upwardly for self-improvement and betterment of human conditions. Believe me it is the sound reciprocal love that ensures a peaceful and relaxed existence in this world.

True, sometimes helpless situations are created by some people's immature and irresponsible behavior. But such situations are transitory in nature, with no lasting effect on relationship or love. Unassailable by nature, the strong bonds of relationship whether or not entrenched deep in love suffer no permanent injury due to someone's studied or unstudied neglect or disregard for it. It is so because strong bonds are nurtured by a passionate attachment, as also by full trust in their integrity and in the authenticity of words and actions of members of our family, friends, acquaintances and members of the 'extended family'. It is truism that we live with them due to trust, affection and attachment rather than their excellence and perfection. It is necessary for us to be true to our highest glory which lies in our efforts to enrich the nobility of our nature and the loveliness of our spirit.

It is significant to mention here that the spirit of service and broad empathy feed on truthfulness, fortitude, forgiveness and self-restraint. So we are required to stay away from the sordid feelings of antagonism and discriminations on the basis of caste, creed, cult or other mundane obsessions. We must work conscientiously for the light and happiness of our family, friends, acquaintances and members of the 'extended family' so that we all can progress towards our goals, taking care of the well-being of entire humanity. The welfare of humanity depends upon our upright and moral use of our physical and mental power. Our comprehensive growth, as human beings, largely depends on our upbringing. Let us not embarrass our nourishers and make them be the target of others' outrageous slurs.

As human beings, we have so many aspirations and desires, ranging from physical, emotional and social, to moral and spiritual. It is but natural that we crave to satisfy them. So the society has to wisely integrate them well with one another and make concerted efforts to create an all-embracing atmosphere conducive to everyone's growth and prosperity. The social atmosphere should condition us to the life of tolerance, forbearance, nobleness and moderation. Committed to follow organized social dictates for regulating and consolidating social patterns and systems, all of us normally opt for judicious social adjustments,

allowing various cultures, subcultures and even countercultures to grow and flourish. It is not that we determine everything in a social life by instinct alone. We choose an eclectic attitude so that we can cherish humanitarian and altruistic approach to social and personal issues. This approach also facilitates human interactions which surely strengthen our inherent good to uphold justice and the attitude of reason even under precarious circumstances.

Needless to say, relationship is a crucial force, a natural, psychological and normative need. It is an abiding source of clinical empathy, social affiliations, reciprocal interactions, intimacy and interconnectedness. It is the relationship that defies every line of control, never failing in its mission to ensure 'secure attachment' and a prosperous society and nation. It drives away people's morbid fear of being stranded or annihilated. Isn't it disgraceful that this modern and developed world has people who live in the grip of the fear fighting 'abandonment?' And some are even combatting the fear of being wiped off the face of the earth. Can we imagine a healthy world and fit population in the absence of 'secure attachment?' No. Not in the least. The act of propagating hatred will start an unending vicious circle. So, it must be nipped in the bud.

Luckily, today's world abounds in everything required to live elaborately and luxuriously with dazzling splendors. But it cannot be overemphasized that it is in a precarious situation and is falling apart at the seams. The bonds and fabric of relationship are ripped into shreds with cold disregard. Norms of life are flouted and hatred perpetuated with wild abandon and bandages on eyes. It is not at all bad to be strong. But the misuse of strength is definitely a bad thing. The world runs with enlightened maturity to create not with the impulse and frenzy to destroy.

Our sunny disposition towards our burning issues, and our naïve willingness to believe in the inerrancy of our leaders have paved the way for our religious values, society and nation to depart from their normal and healthy practices. As a result, religious values, society and nation have come down with diseases that grow and fester, eating deep into the structures of life. The most tragic bane of such diseases is the acrimonious and malicious discord that results into divisiveness and fragmentation, abetting hostile feelings, radicalism and fanaticism.

History bears witness to the fact that time and again numerous leaders have exploited these things as unfailing weapons for gaining their vaulting desire to control, rule and perpetuate the myth of the leaders' superiority. People must rise to display the signs of awareness and understanding. They should not allow the facts to be cofounded with fiction by their leaders. Life is ready to yield its mysteries to those who know that life and its secrets lie in discipline of hard labour, commitment, purposefulness, intuitive insights into things and so on. Iqbal rightly stirs us to rise in order to shape our lives and the world around us in the best mould, 'apni duniyaa aap paidaa ker agar zindon mein hai / sirr-e aadam hai, zameer-e kun fa kaana hai zindagi (Carve your own world, if you are from among the active ones / Adam's secret and soul of the words, be and it was, lie in life). Read, with delight and interest, the insightful articles that the copy of Islam and the Modern Age in your hands contains. A 'big thank you' to all learned contributors...

A. NASEEB KHAN

PROF. ABDUL QADIR JAFARI

Shah Waliullah's Concept of Ijtihad as Reflected in his Writings

It cannot be said with certainty that Shah Waliullah could fully reform the situation for it was not even possible for a wise and intelligent king like Alamgir to do so. Yet the least that the endeavours of this saintly figure yielded was that the remembrance of Allah and Islam remained intact and unaffected when the thrones and crowns of Mughals were washed away.

Ahmad bin Abdur Rahim better known as Shah Waliullah Dehlavi (1703–1762) flourished during the decline of the Mughal Empire, an era when the Muslim community of India was facing a grave crisis—economic, political and spiritual. This crisis provided Shah Waliullah the opportunity to discuss the problems with which his society was faced. Endowed with rare profoundness and perception Waliullah delved into the depths of the Islamic tradition, came forward with many new and bold ideas and there by regenerated the intellectual life of his community and enriched its cumulative store of ideas. By dint of his creative thinking he exerted a great and lasting influence on Muslim society of India which can still be perceived among the academic circles of the country. Shah Waliullah on one hand gave the great gift of the understanding of the Quran to Indian Muslims while on the other, he instituted a system which proved the biggest shield of our nineteenth century atmosphere marked by a fierce religious conflicts. He not only offered the community a new spiritual, moral life but devised such a system of faith and ideas based upon moderation as was the most-relevant in the specific atmosphere of India and which in reality proved spiritual assets in the reorganization of the community. Owing to the much prevalence of politics, it has become a popular thinking in some of the quarters that religious and intellectual pursuits have no importance at all. To our great ill luck, in our religious training and

mind making, there has been role of persons who started their lives with worldly ways but because of some interest or consideration, they poked their nose in religious affairs as well. Despite this, their real interest remained materialistic.

Obviously, they could never thus know the real importance of the matter spiritual and intellectual. In this connection, Shah Waliullah had only correct and comprehensive views. While he had the real fact about the value of the worldly and materialistic matters, he greatly honored the spiritual pursuits. He has fully elucidated this point in *fuyuzul Harmain* (فيوض الحرمين). He says that those interested in the continuation of the virtuous works are initiated by the prophet (SAW) have only two ways before them namely Khilafat-e-Apparent and Khilafat-e-Hidden and that both of them are useful and necessary in the respective sense. Shah Sahib dedicated himself for the cause of the latter. Those competent for the former and busy in that would be encouraged. But his preoccupation with the latter cause did not mean that the materialistic problems were lost on him. Yet he had his own ways. He not only provided vast materials for wide publicity of the Quran and the Ahadith by translating the Quran and giving lectures about and compiling the Ahadith thus bequeathing to us an invaluable literary treasure by such an ordering and organization of vast Islamic literature but adopted such a way to sort out the moral problems as could be found acceptable by diverse sects of Islam as the Sufis, the Shias, the Sunnis the Hanfis, the Hambalies the Malikis, the Shafais, the Mujaddids, the Wahdatul Wujudis the Mutazilas and Ashaaris also. He offered the Islamic India such a religious and- literary system as could rightly acquire the status of the symbol of the basic temperament of the Muslims in this country. The result of the popularity of which was that a nation could rise on the foundation of religious system enjoying wide consensus and unity and a modern Islamic India ushered in.

Shah Sahib not only translated the Quran but authored a book on the literary aspects of this problem (of translating the Quran) also and in the introduction of the said book gave useful guidelines for the translators of the Quran. He not only preached the Quran merely by translating the divine book but he wrote books on explanation of the wisdom of the heavenly book also maintainable among them being *Alfauzul Kabir fi usul al-tafsir*. There are four chapters in the book in

which different aspects of the wisdom and study of the Quran have been discussed. In the second chapter, he has surveyed the problem of *naskh* according to his own concept of *ijtehed* as an independent thinker and has refused to consider the number of abrogated verses (آیات منسوخه) not more than four while some have considered them as many as 500 and even Allama Jalaluddin Suyuti had considered them 20 (Twenty). Some of the contents of *al fauzul Kabir* tell the readers that Shah Sahib wanted to give widest possible meaning to the Qurānic injunctions and that he also carefully considered the causes behind the revelation of different ayats (verses) and *surahs* (chapters) of the divine book while doing all these, he also tried to ensure that nothing should eclipse the real objectives of the Quran.² The second peculiarity of *al fauzul Kabir* relates to Shah Sahib's love for justice and his moral courage. Some commentators borrowed the tales from Ahle Kitab (Jews and Christians) and made them part of the explanation of the Quran and Islamic literature. Shah sahib raised his voice in protest against these at numerous places in *al fauzul Kabir*.

Shah Sahib has to his credit several books on Ahadith as well. He was a great admirer of the Ahadith compiled by imam Malik the oldest one, Mawatta. It is considered to be an *ijtehad* (independent reasoning) of Shah Waliullah. Regarding the Ahadith literature, he preferred Muwatta to Sahih bukhari. Shah Sahib wrote exposition of Muwatta in both Persian and Arabic languages and titled the Arabic and Persian explanations Al Musawwa (المسوّى) and A1. Musaffa (المصفّى) respectively.³ Shah Sahib had no much interest in Islamic Jurisprudence. His *fatwas* (decrees) or writings regarding complex problems of jurisprudence are not found. Yet it can be argued that he was an expert of all the forms of Islamic literature. The number of the decrees which he issued to meet the temporary requirement is not many but he tried hard to establish jurisprudence on right informative and solid foundations and wrote such books as make the wise and intelligent people taste the real source of Islamic jurisprudence and divine laws a task in which even great books like "Hidaya and fatawa-e-Alamgiri fail. In this regard his best booklet is "*insaf fi bayan Sababil lkhtilaf*. It would be quite right if this booklet is called the history of Islamic jurisprudence and literature on Ahadith as it is indeed an exceedingly interesting, just and information filled history of the compilation of the works of Islamic

jurists, collection of Ahadith and initiation of different religious laws covering a period right since the time of the Prophet (SAW) till the 5th century Hijra. The original book is in Arabic and its Arabic text as well as Urdu translation have been properly ordered by Maulana Mohd Ahsan Nanotavi. This book should rightly be called miracle of Shah Sahib's wide knowledge and tremendous deductive activity. By going through the pages of this small booklet one comes to know as to how well conversant he was regarding the literary history of Islam. The Urdu version of the booklet hardly goes beyond 50 pages but in it have been described all those important and fundamental problems with extreme clarity and justice regarding which ulama have differences. Besides explaining those differences, Shah Sahib has presented a highbrow history of the peculiarities and separate forms and ways of all the four different schools of thought i.e. Hambali, Shafai, Maliki and hanafi. He has also described the characteristics of all the Ahadith as well as of different compilation of compilers like bukhari, Muslim, Abu Dawud and Tirmidhi. He has also thrown light upon the problem of ijtehad (independent reasoning) and *taqlid* (blind following of the faith) and has described the causes which promoted blind following of the faith among the muslims. Besides the small booklet "insaf fi bayani-Sababil-Ikhtilaf" Shah Sahib has authored a very fruitful book on the problem of *ijtehad* and *Taqlid* entitled (العقد الجيد في احكام الاجتهاد والتقليد). In the four chapters of the book along with the descriptions of the kinds of ijtehad and the characteristics of a *Mujtahid*, there are discussions as to what an ordinary man should do in the face of difference of opinions among the jurists and whether an ordinary man can accept different views of different jurists. Shah Sahib has divided the community into two namely the *Mujtahids* and ordinary men. There are three categories of the *Mujtahids*:

(1) *Mujtahid-e-Mutlaq* or *Aimma-e-Arbaa* (Perfect *mujtahid* or four imams) (2) *Mujtahid fil mazhab* (3) *Mujtahid fil fatwa*. He has thus praised *ijtehad* "Essay hard to discover the subsidiary injunctions of *Shariat*" by the detailed evidences cited by him the totality of which comprise of the Quran, the *sunnah*, *ijmaa* and *Qiyas*, one comes to know that Shah Sahib never thought that *ijtehad* could come to an end. He, however, never gave the general masses the right to *ijtehad*.

Even for the *Mujtahids* he has defined categories. He has described conditions for *ijtehad*. He has done all these but at no place of any of his writings he ever said that there was no scope for *ijtihad* any longer. Rather he has confirmed his belief about *permanance* of *ijtehad* in the very beginning of the said work.

In the said book, Shah Sahib has pointed out a very important characteristics of the sayings of the Prophet (SAW). He has written that the person who strives for the injunctions and decrees of the Prophet (SAW) will get a comprehensive law for things. He will find that the Prophet has defined the diverse kinds of the virtues or good deeds in different ways. Shah sahib has presented many instances in this regard which show that the Prophet (SAW) did not impose harsh conditions for the concerned rituals. Shah Sahib has also written that his search for the injunctions of the Prophet (SAW) led him to conclude that excesses should not be perpetuated in regards with subsidiary. He, therefore, says that the one who will view the problem in perspective will get the essence of matters. First of all, in most cases of *ijtehad*, reality rests on both sides of differences. Secondly, there is freedom in religion and not narrow mindedness. Thirdly, to be rigid and unwavering over a particular issue and denying the existence of opposition to it is nothing in religion. Problem of the blind following of the faith and opposition to it has been on issue of much wrangling in Islamic jurisprudence. In this regard, all the exponents of the four schools of thought support the blind faith with the only exception of Ahl-e-Hadith who do not support it. The second problem relates to the indispensable following of the dictates of a particular school. Is binding upon a Muslim supporting blind faith to follow the dictates of a particular school only or can he follow different schools in different matters? Over this issue, there is much difference among the ulema. Shah Sahib has discussed various aspects of the problem. Since he has expressed his views with much subtlety, they are neither very clear nor one sided. By going through his writings, one comes to think that though he was in favor of indispensable following of the dictates of a prescribed school for a common man yet he did not consider it right for Ulema and the *Mujtahids*. He writes on page 72 of his book it is only fit for the Ulema to practice upon the words of a particular school while acting in consideration of the demands of a particular period and thus he has written at the end of the book as well.⁵

یعنی اگر انسان کسی مجتہد کے قول کی جستجو کرے جو اس کے نفس پر سہل ہو تو ہم کو معلوم نہیں کی شرع نے اس عمل پر اس کی برائی کی ہو۔ آنحضرتؐ کا دستور تھا کہ جو باتیں آپ کے امت پر سہولت کی ہوں انہیں کو دوست رکھتے تھے۔

Shah Sahib opposed blind faith exceeding its limits. In one of the chapters of the book on blind faith, he has supported moderation in respect with blind faith and has described a certain kind of blind faith terming it *har'am* (forbidden). This kind of faith relates to the form in which the supporters of blind faith have been deliberately or unintentionally preferring the words of the Muftis and the jurists to even unambiguous Ahadith with glaring clear meanings. Shah Sahib has deep interest in Sufism as well but he was fully aware of the objectionable practices "of the Sufis. His third will has been mentioned".⁶

وصیت دیگر آن است کہ دست در دست مشائخ آیں زماں کہ بانواع بدعت مبتدہ استند ہرگز نباید داد و بیعت
ایشان نباید کرد و بخلو عام مفروضہ نباید بود و نہ بکرامات زیرا کہ اکثر خلوعا م بسبب رسم است و امور رسیدہ را کھتیت
اعتباری نیست و کرامات خیر و نشان آیں زمانہ ہمہ الاما شاء اللہ۔

Apart from this, Shah Sahib not only protested against the evils of the Shaikhs but opposed the theory and practice of extreme self denial also for he considered it seriously harmful for Muslims. As Shah Sahib did not subscribe to the views of any of the four schools of thought of Islamic jurists, he refused to follow anyone of the Sufi orders. Rather he adopted the ways of the order which he considered more favorable to the Holy Quran and the Sunnah of the Prophet (SAW) and more useful for the spiritual therapy of the mankind. Shah Waliullah was in reality attached with only Naqshbandi order like his father but he was associated with other orders as well and it has been mentioned in descriptions that he would name the Shaikhs of the all four orders while swearing allegiance so that favours could be received from all those. Amid the writings of Shah Waliullah, the most popular one is Hujjatullahil Balighah. Nawab Siddiq Hasan Khan has written about it.⁷

ایں صاحب اگرچہ در علم حدیث نیست اما احادیث بسیار در آں درج کرده و حکم اسرار بیباں نمودہ تا آنکہ در فن
مبسوق علیہ واقع شدہ و مثل آں در آیں دوازده صد سال ہجری بیچ کی از علمای عرب و عم تصنیفی موجود نیامدہ۔

At the beginning of the book, Shah Sahib has written an introduction of the book mentioning its objectives. The book is on the secrets of the knowledge of religion. In the introduction, different ranks of the scholars of Ahadith as well as different aspects of the literature of Ahadith have been described. There are scholars who study the correctness, need popularity and uniqueness of the Ahadith while others devote themselves to the study of the meanings of the traditions with a weak Chain of transmission and elucidation of the traditions difficult to understand. Still there was a group of the jurists and scholars of the Ahadith which described the legal meanings of the Ahadith and culled from them legal injunctions. Hence the literature of Ahadith has many other branches as well but the most profound and the deepest one the superior and the most valuable of all the disciplines of Islamic jurisprudence in the view of Shah Waliullah, is the study of the secrets of religion which contain considerations behind all religious injunctions as well as secrets and points behind every action.

Hujjatullahil Balighah is the book on the secrets of religion.

The thoughts behind the beliefs and injunctions of Islam have been described in it. Shah Sahib himself has written.⁸

بعض لوگ خیال کیا کرتے ہیں کہ شریعت کے احکام میں کوئی مصلحت نہیں ہو کرتی اور اعمال اور ان کی جزاء میں جو منجانب اللہ مقرر ہے کوئی مناسبت نہیں ہے اور احکام شریعت سے تکلیف کرنا بعینہ ایسا ہے جیسے کوئی آقا اپنے غلام و ملازم کی فرماں برداری کی آزمائش کرنے کو کسی پتھر کے اٹھانے یا کسی درخت کے چھونے کا حکم دے۔ جس میں بجز آزمائش کے اور کوئی فائدہ نہیں پس اگر اس کی اطاعت کرے جزا پاوے اور سرکشی کرے تو سزا دی جائے۔ یہ گمان بالکل فاسد ہے، حدیث اور ان زبانوں کے اجماع جن کی خوبی اور برکت پر خود شرع نے شہادت دی ہے اس خیال کی تکذیب کرتے ہیں۔

After this he wrote the details of the thoughts behind the rituals of Islam i.e. prayer, fasting, pilgrimage and charity (Zakat). Shah Sahib has divided the book in two parts. The first part relates to the general principles and rules on which rest the ideas of different laws and sects. In the second part are tested the subsidiary injunctions of Islam on the touchstone of the laws and the principles described in the first part. On the one hand, he has explained those injunctions in the light of the Ahadith while on the other he has described the thoughts behind those

injunctions. In this part, lights have been thrown not only upon the rituals of Islam like *taharat* (cleanliness) worship and principles of Islam etc., but on the following problems also: (1) Chapters on good deeds (2) Chapters on matters. (3) Chapters on the training of humbleness (4) Chapters on the politics of Medina (5) Chapters on economy (6) Some other chapters.

The objections which the Prophet (SAW) had kept in mind while ordering the laws of Islam were, in the view of Shah Sahib, three which he had described.⁹

- جس مصلحت پر شارع نے مستند کیا ہے اور جس خرابی سے باز رکھا ہے اس کی انتہا تین اصولوں میں سے ایک نہ
ایک پر ہوتی ہے:
- (۱) ان چار اوصاف میں سے جو معاد مقید ہیں یا ان تمام خصالتوں میں سے جو دنیا میں سود مند ہیں کوئی نہ کوئی
وصف نفس میں پیدا کرنا اور ان کو شائستہ اور مہذب بنانا ہے۔
- (۲) کلمہ الہی اور سچے مذہب کو غالب کرنا شرائع کو خوب مستحکم کرنا ان کی اشاعت میں کوشش کرنا ہوتا ہے۔
- (۳) عام خلائق کی حالت کو منظم کرنا ان کے امور نافعہ اور تداویر مقیدہ کی درستی کرنا اور ان کی رسموں کو مہذب
صورت دینا۔

The objective of Hujjatullahil Balighah was to support the connection that the people who believe in getting the laws and injunctions of religion obeyed by the use of force do not understand religion in its true spirit. All the injunctions of Islam are based upon one or the other spiritual thoughts. Since exposition of these thoughts is itself the best proof in support of the veracity of Islam this book is, therefore entitled Hujjatullahil Balighah by him. He also had in his view the said ills plaguing the Muslim community at numerous places in his writings he had exposed those ills. The best expression of his thoughts on this subject was covered by a chapter in his book Tafhimat-e-llahi. He has spoken about the social reform in his will also and he has directed in his will.

After this, he described the social ills which infected the Muslims due to Hindu influence which the Hindu society is itself struggling today to ward off. In describing these ills, he has first named widow's remarriage (2) The Second wicked practice relates to the fixing of exorbitant amount as dowry which runs counter to the traditions of the Prophet (SAW) and is the cause behind the destruction of homes.

(3) The third evil relates to the improper expenses on the occasion of happiness and sadness which is making Muslims poor.

Shah Waliullah has described these ills and he purged Muslim community of the baneful influences. His reforms are needed even today. He has presented the gist of his experience in his short will. Apart from his writings, Shah Sahib has also left big treasure of Arabic and Persian epistles which make fully conspicuous his intellectual breath, independent' view and love for justice.

In short the greatness and importance of Shah Sahib in the life of India are largely owing to his literary and religions services. But not associating himself with any particular group of the Ulema or the Sufis is also one of the reasons behind his greatness. He used his wide knowledge and intense wisdom in understanding the point of views of different group and thus in creating mutual ordering among them. When Shah Sahib took this step, the condition of the preaching of Islam was such in the country as it was very urgently needed.

The most conspicuous qualities of Shah Sahib are love for justice and moderation. One who comments on his philosophical propensities has to use the epithets like balanced heart and mind, moderate temperament, all embracing disposition, comprehensive balance, true, moderate and right etc. for him.

In Shah Sahib's time Sufism was a rage. Its members opposed to Shariah and fiqh. Shah Sahib tried not only to remove the differences between the Sufis and the jurists but essayed to minimize the differences among the Sufis themselves also. Glaring example of such an attempt of his was modernize letters in which he has proved ibne Arabi's Wahdatui Wujud and Imam Rabbani's Wahdatui Shuhud as complementary to each other. Besides, what more he did to end the spiritual differences was to swear allegiance to all the four Sufi orders though he was emotionally attached with Naqshbandi order. Shah Sahib also endeavored to bring closer the Islamic teachings to the incidents and principles of human life. Such an attempt of his is especially conspicuous in his book Hujjatullahil Balighah. In it, by expounding the thoughts behind Islamic injunctions he has proved that these injunctions are very useful for human welfare.¹¹

Shah Sahib has expressed himself very harshly against blind faith. At one place he wrote that his basic disposition refused and rejected

blind faith and that it was greatly annoyed and perturbed. Secondly, he directly ridicules the ordinary Ulema and the followers of blind faith. The famous sentence of the preface of Hujjatullahil Balighah is.¹²

مصطفوی شریعت کے لیے وقت آ گیا ہے کہ برہان اور دلیل کے پیراہنوں میں ملبوس کر کے اسے میدان میں لایا جائے۔

Maulana Maududi has written about Shah Waliullah.¹³

انہوں نے اسلام کے پورے فکری۔ اخلاقی، شرعی اور تمدنی نظام کو مرتب صورت میں پیش کرنے کی کوشش کی ہے یہ وہ کارنامہ ہے جس میں وہ اپنے تمام پیش روں سے بازی لے گئے ہیں اگرچہ ابتدائی تین چار صدیوں میں بکثرت ایسے ائمہ گزرے ہیں جن کے کام کو دیکھنے سے صاف معلوم ہوتا ہے کہ وہ اپنے ذہن میں اسلام کے نظام حیات کا مکمل تصور رکھتے ہیں اور اسی طرح بعد کی صدیوں میں بھی ایسے محققین ملتے ہیں جن کے متعلق یہ گمان نہیں کیا جاسکتا کہ وہ اس تصور سے خالی تھے لیکن ان میں سے کسی نے بھی جامعیت اور منطقی ترتیب کے ساتھ اسلامی نظام کو بحیثیت ایک نظام کے مرتب کرنے کی طرف توجہ نہیں کی۔ یہ شرف شاہ ولی اللہ ہی کے لیے مقدر ہو چکا تھا کہ اس راہ میں پیش قدمی کریں۔

Maulana Maududi writes referring to the details in Shah Sahib's compilation work on Islamic system.

پھر وہ نظام شریعت، عبادات، احکام اور قوانین کو پیش کرتے ہیں اور ہر ایک چیز کی حکمتیں سمجھاتے چلے جاتے ہیں اس خاص مضمون پر جو کام انہوں نے کیا ہے وہ اسی نوعیت کا ہے جو ان سے پہلے امام غزالی نے کیا تھا اور قدرتی بات ہے کہ وہ اس راہ میں امام موصوف سے آگے بڑھ گئے ہیں۔

Shah Sahib's gifted feats and revolutionary distinctiveness include that balanced and moderate school of thought and that moderate point of view which he adopted in between ijthad and Taqlid (blind faith) and which were the best manifestation of his mild, peace loving, pure hearted and perfect personality as well as of his right taste and love for realism.

In short, Shah Sahib adopted that moderate point of view between ijthad and Taqlid which was in complete consonance with the goals of Shariah, human disposition and situations of life. Shah Sahib believed

that ijtiḥad was the natural demand of the requirements of every age, change in human life, culture and society and as well as of the human potentiality for progress, human needs and continuity of the life situations. It is also the living proof of the flexibility of the Islamic laws and of their being directly from Allah having the capacity to guide the mankind till the day of Judgment and to formulate the just demands of society whose manifestation and proof are an imperative in every age and are binding upon the followers of Shariah. In the preface of Musaffa he writes.¹⁵

اجتہاد ہر زمانہ میں فرض کفایہ ہے۔ یہاں اجتہاد سے مراد اجتہاد مستقل نہیں جیسا کہ امام شافعی کا اجتہاد تھا جو جرح و تعدیل، زبان دانی وغیرہ میں کسی دورے کے محتاج نہ تھے اور اسی طرح اپنی مجتہدانہ درایت میں اپنے پورے اقسام کے ساتھ وہ دوسرے کے تابع نہ تھے مقصود اجتہاد منتسب ہے اور وہ نام ہے احکام شرعی کو ان کے تفصیلی اولہ کے ذریعہ جاننے کا اور مجتہدین کے طریقہ پر تفریع مسائل اور ترتیب احکام کا خواہ وہ کسی صاحب مذہب کی رہنمائی سے ہو۔

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Islam, Individual and Liberty

INTRODUCTION

Islam is the religion, which addresses to all humanity. It is not a religion of a particular class, nation, tribe or race. The fundamental aspect of Islam is its universality. Islam has started, developed and lived as a universal religion of humankind. Universality is the original dimension of Islam. Limiting Islam to any race, color, gender, class or culture means the degeneration of Islam. Understanding Islam as the universal religion requires to understand human individual universally as well. Human individual has been understood as the free and dignitary being from Islamic perspective. Freedom and dignity are the essential values, which exclusively belong to human individual.

Although Islam is a universal religion and understands human individual as a free and dignitary being, it is always said that Islam is a social and political religion, rather than individual religion. Although individual occupies the center of Islam, collectivism dominates Muslim tradition. In this regard, this question is very important: is it possible to understand human individual beyond collectivistic mentality in Islam? In this paper we intend to explore the idea of human individual from the perspective of individuality and liberty.

RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD AS INDIVIDUAL RELATIONSHIP

In fact, Islam is individualistic in nature. Each individual is independent and determines his/her own path toward God. The only absolute authority is God in Islam. The absence of human authority makes Muslim individuals extremely free people. A Muslim individual has only allegiance to God. Therefore, Muslim individual does not need any intercession of any person or institution in order to reach God. All human beings could reach God freely and spontaneously. Relationship

between God and man/woman is very individual and free. Religion essentially is an individual matter between God and individual. It is not a matter between individual and institution. Religion expresses an intimate relationship with God, because God is closer to human being more than his/her jugular vein.¹ Individual experiences God personally.

The relationship between God and man/woman is very special and profound. The breath of God's breath is the central component of the constitution of human being. The Quran says: "When I have fashioned him and breathed into him of My spirit, fall prostrate before him. Then all the angels prostrated themselves entirely."² God's breath is the transcendental source of human dignity. All human beings are equal in terms of human dignity, because all men and women have the Divine breath in their human constitution. Human dignity and liberty is not a non-religious idea, it is the foundation of religion itself.

Human life is creative and meaningful as long as freedom exists. Without freedom, human being cannot be an individual. Freedom is a person's ability to do something or abstain from it based upon his/her own free will without any compulsion. It is a special quality enjoyed by every rational human being. A person lives his/her life without the interference of others through freedom, because a human is not the property of anyone or anything, such as state, society, or class. The center of human individual is freedom and his/her existence is grounded in freedom. Liberty is a natural right, which allows people to recognize their individuality as well as the reality of God. Recognition of human and divine facts is only possible through freedom.

The doctrine of redemption has no place in Islam, because there is no need for a redeemer or savior. Every individual must be redeemer for him/herself. Similarly, the idea of intercession also has no place in Islam. No one can intercede on behalf of man/woman in the presence of God. Individual salvation is not under the control of any religious class or institution. Every individual is saviour for him/herself. No authority could cancel individual will in the name of salvation. Salvation does not depend on submission to the authority of religious class or institution. Salvation depends on individual, who is the only to be held responsible ethically and spiritually on the Day of Judgement by God. No religious or secular power could claim the control of bodies and souls or to discipline the souls of people. God is universally available for

all humankind. Everyone can enjoy face to face companionship with God without any imposition from outside. Relationship between God and human being could be described as the real I-Thou relationship.

HUMAN INDIVIDUAL AS REPRESENTATIVE OF GOD

God created human being with a special responsibility and mission. The responsibility of human individual is to be representative of God in the world. God declares human individual as His representative: "Truly, And when your Lord said to the angels: "Verily I will place a vicegerent on the Earth." They said: "Will You place therein those who will make mischief and shed blood while we extol Your praises and glorify You?" He said: "Verily I know what you know not."³ Further more, The Quran expresses the universal responsibility of human individual as follows: "We offered the Trust to the heavens and the earth and the mountains, but they refused to accept it and were frightened of it, but man accepted it."⁴ Accepting the universal human trust manifests individual and free nature of human being.

As a free, responsible and dignitary being, human individual has the highest position in Islam. The Quran expresses the superiority and speciality of human individual in the following verse: "And surely We have honoured the children of Adam, and We carry them in the land and the sea, and We have given them the good things, and We have made them to excel by an appropriate excellent over most of those whom We have created."⁵ After creation, God taught Adam "all the names" and this constitutes the superiority of human being over angels.⁶ The knowledge of all the names could be understood as the capacity and faculties of human being for the actualisation of his/her being. God grants man/woman the faculty of reflection: "And Allah brought you out of your mother's bellies knowing nothing; and gave you hearing, sight and hearts, that perchance you may give thanks."⁷ God gives wisdom to human being: "He gives wisdom to whom He wills. And he who receives wisdom has received an abundant good. But none takes heed except people of understanding."⁸ Human being has the capacity to learn and understand universe: "Have they not seen how Allah originates creation, then brings it back into being? That for Allah is an easy matter. Say: Travel in the land and see how Allah originated

the creation; then Allah produces the other generation.”⁹ Human being is the only creature, who could actualize certain potentialities and possibilities. Human being occupies a unique position among creatures. Real achievement and development could be only made by human being. And human being is responsible to actualize these potentialities and development.

The locus of responsibility is human individual. This responsibility cannot be transferred to any other creature or power. Every human being is individually responsible. The Quran consistently emphasizes the individual responsibility of human being in the presence of God: “Every soul is accountable for what it commits, and no soul shall bear the burden of another soul.”¹⁰ The idea of collective responsibility is very foreign to Islam. All aspects of responsibility relate to individuality, not collectivity.

COERCION AND INDIVIDUALITY

Coercion, individuality and freedom cannot exist together. Coercion entirely abolishes individuality and liberty. No one can be free at the expense of other. As long as he/she does not harm the rights of others, he/she must be free to live the way he/she wants. Islam recognizes that human individual has free will and free choice. Compulsion and force is totally rejected by Islam. The Quran says that “There is no compulsion in religion”.¹¹ Rejecting the use of force in the realm of religion is a guard against absolutism and totalitarianism. It is forbidden to kill, injure, or transgress against another human being. Freedom of all people must be guaranteed against the use of force. Individuals must live under security, not under fear and threat. A person’s life, dignity, property, family and religion must be secured. Physical, psychological and social security must be provided for all individuals. Islam opens the doors for the public respect and for the liberty to live one’s life.

The Qur’an clearly expresses individual right to free choice as follows: “Had your Lord willed, everybody on earth would have believed. Will you then compel people become believers?”¹² Human being cannot be subjected to the will of anyone else in the name of religion, society or state. He must decide what is proper for him/her, not someone else.

External intervention to individual life is the violation of individual freedom as well as the violation of Islam.

FREEDOM, INDIVIDUAL AND GOD

Man will be judged according to his/her deeds by God. Human individual is the only one, who would be accountable to God. Man/woman cannot be escaped from his/her own responsibility. Freedom and responsibility goes side by side in Islam. They cannot be divorced from each other. One cannot exist without other. Freedom is *the power to choose and determine one's position without external intervention*. The possibility of obedience and disobedience arises out of human freedom. As everyone acts according to his/her own will without any compulsion from outside, he/she is liable to reward and punishment according to his/her deeds. God never imposed a fixed and predetermined nature upon any individual, and it is man/woman him/herself, who chooses and shapes his/her own character and, accordingly, his/her destiny in full freedom. Losing freedom means losing being human.

Islam recognizes the right to be individual. This does not mean being individual means irresponsible creature. Individual must be responsible a creature. Without responsibility, human individual cannot be free as well as responsible. Human individual must control his/her evil desires in order not to give harm to other people. Islam does not restrict human freedom in any way, but makes human beings responsible, individually as well as collectively, for the consequences of their decisions. One must think about one's actions and consider their consequences. The Quran expresses human responsibility in the presence of God as follows: "And stop them, for they shall be questioned."¹³ Divine reward or punishment is ordained in accordance with man/woman's free will. Without free will and its adherent responsibility and commitment there could be neither reward nor punishment. In every individual conscience of believers, God is uniquely present and the individual is directly and immediately responsible to God.

There is no concept of original sin or fall of man in Islam. The fall of man and woman is not the act of original sin, it is regarded as man/woman's ascension to a life of freedom and the first act of the

actualisation of human individuality. First human mistake represents an act of human free choice and the beginning of his/her free life in this world. Human being could only be free and individual in this earth. Paradise is not the place of free individuality. In order to regain eternal life and paradise, human individual must be free and actualize himself/herself in this world. Freedom is a natural right and state of human being. Freedom is the source from which the tree of life grows.

Freedom requires the moral equality of all individuals and to be blind to religion, colour or race. But the demand for collective freedom in the name of religion, nation or class is just defined for particular groups. Collective freedom does not demand freedom of all individuals. Individuals could have their collective identity, but they cannot demand their collective identity with the state power.

THE ACTUALISATION OF INDIVIDUALITY AS *TAQWA*

God created men and woman so that they worship Him.¹⁴ The meaning of life is to be the true man and woman of God. Worshipping God traditionally understood as devotional responsibility. But worshipping God means more than that. Worshipping God means to actualize human capacity and potentials as the representative of God in the world. Human actualisation in Islam could be understood as *taqwa*. Traditionally *taqwa* understood as piety or fear of God. *Taqwa* is the performance and actualisation of man/woman as the representative of God in earth. People could be superior to each other according to their level of *taqwa*, which is the attribute of individuals. *Taqwa* has no collectivistic meanings. *Taqwa* or self-actualisation only belongs to human individuals. Morally, spiritually and socially human individual must constantly renew him/herself. Moral and spiritual renewal is the human responsibility.

IMITATION AND CREATIVITY

Imitation is totally discouraged by Islam. The Prophet warns us not to imitate others blindly: "Do not be a mere imitator with no firm determination. You say, 'I am with the people. Should people do good, so do I. And if they do evil, so do I'." "If people do good so should you.

But if they do evil shun their evil deeds". The prevention of imitation is only possible when human being becomes an individual. Freedom to creativity is what the soul is to the body. Human individual cannot be the prisoner of the rigid and fixed laws, because the constitution of human nature is not rigid and fixed. He/she always could adopt new ideas and perspectives. He/she transcends the *status quo* through his/her power of renewal. The whole universe represents God's creation. God is the Creative Individual and man/woman must follow God's model for the actualization of creativity and individuality. In order to realize their own unique nature, all human beings must follow God's way, which means that each human being must become *more* individual, *more* creative and must express their creativity in action.

FREEDOM AND INDIVIDUAL

Individual must be free to travel around the world. Freedom of movement is a natural right of human being. Islam encourages individual to travel the world in order to develop him/herself financially, socially, spiritually, culturally and intellectually. The Quran says: "It is He Who made the Earth submit to you, so traverse its surface and eat of its sustenance and to Him is your return."¹⁵ Movement is a quality of life. Human life is considered as movement. Dynamism and movement make human life creative and fresh. The freedom to movement is a quality of all living things. Islam encourages human being to be receptive to new ideas. The Quran itself constantly invites people to review their lives and the self-examination of their personality.

Every subject of life, including religion, must be reinterpreted by every individual according to one's time and place.

PRIVATE PROPERTY AND INDIVIDUAL

Private property is where an individual has something and has the exclusive right to benefit from it. Islam grants the individual the right to possess. Islam recognizes right to private property and prohibits to destroy the property of other people. Man and woman equally have the right to private property. God says: "Men have a share in what they earn and women have a share in what they earn."¹⁶ It acknowledges the

natural consequences of private ownership, like the need to preserve and safeguard it from seizure, theft, and misappropriation. Islam sets stern punishments for violations against other's property in order to safeguard the right to private property.

FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION, RELIGIOUS FREEDOM AND INDIVIDUAL

The individual has a right to choose a religion that he or she is convinced is true without being compelled by anyone. Compulsion negates liberty and individuality. The use of force is definitely abolished in the area of religion, which is not a matter of coercion, it is, rather, a matter of conviction. Faith or religion must be the fruit of individual freedom. Islam accepts plurality of religious realm. The Quran says: "If your Lord had willed, then everyone on Earth would have believed. Would you compel the people in order to make them believers?"¹⁷ Human being is the one, who must decide on religious affairs. Human individual is independent in what he/she believes or disbelieves. Any attempt to aim to homogenize religious life is a violation against human liberty as well as God's creation. The Quran says: "And if thy Lord had willed, He verily would have made mankind one nation, yet they cease not differing; Save him on whom thy Lord hath mercy; and for that He did create them"¹⁸ Even the Prophet has no authority to force people to follow the same faith: "So remind them (O Muhammad), you are only one who reminds. You are not a dictator over them."¹⁹ Even the pivotal issue of religion, namely faith versus non-belief in God, was left to individual choice: "Whosoever will, let him believe, and whosoever will, let him disbelieve."²⁰ Islam definitely purifies the realm of religion from the use of force and recognizes individual religious freedom. It is up to individual to believe or disbelieve any religion or faith. Individual is free to discuss, criticise, reject, accept or change religion. Islam not only allows freedom of religion, it also allows freedom from religion. Every individual has the right to form his/her individual judgement about religion. Individual is the only authority, who must decide on religious matters. Only individual could only reach God through free will and free choice. Without religious freedom, there is no religiosity, morality and spirituality.

Free will and free choice have been given to man and woman by God. No human authority could question or abolish human free will and free choice. Human being is the only responsible for his/her choices and life in the presence of God. The Quran expresses free choice of human being as follows: "Surely We have shown him the way: he may be thankful or unthankful."²¹ Islam cannot be constructed as an ideological totalistic system. Islam is a person's individual relationship with God. It is one-to-one relationship with our Creator. It is as varied as are people. False consciousness or wrong morality are not the reasons, which allow people intervene other peoples lives. People have the right to live the way they want. We cannot impose a particular form of government or life style on people. Moral framework and spiritual direction is always used in order to intervene individual life. Unfortunately, limiting individual rather than freeing individual is the more influential attitude among muslims. Sincerity, liberty and honesty are essentials in the matters of faith. Disagreements in the matters of faith of individual cannot be persecuted. There is no heresy in Islam. Heresy must be understood as plurality in opinions, not crimes and diseases in souls. State or a religious institution cannot determine the truth or falsity of one's ideas. People have the right to err. None has the authority to force others to follow true views. Truth or falsity of ideas are not important. What is important is to defend individual, not a particular doctrine or institution.

Freedom of expression is considered as the basic freedom in Islam. There is no central authority in Islam. Human individual has the right to observe, think, experiment and change the world around him/her. He/she must express his/her ideas freely without any intervention. Human being is the only creature, who could change the world through thought and contemplation. Freedom of expression prevents oppression and establish justice. The Prophet said: "The best struggle (*jihad*) is to speak the truth in front of an unjust king." Human individual has the right to criticize the prevailing religious views and challenge them.

INDIVIDUAL, SOCIETY AND STATE

Society is not superior to individual. There must be relation, not isolation between individual and society. It is individual, who will be answerable

to God, not societies, nations, or classes. The idea of collective soul or transcendent being of society does not exist in Islam. Individuals have been encouraged to cooperate and interact with each other. Human individual has the responsibility toward others. Instead of social state, social individual is encouraged by Islam. Islam does not recognize individual freedom at the expense of the community, nor does it establish freedom for communities at the expense of individuals. There must be a balance between individual and society.

Islam locates the human being on the highest level in this world. The violation of human rights and liberties is considered as the violation of the liberty of all humanity. For this reason, aggression against one person is treated as aggression against society as a whole from Islamic point of view. Caring for one individual is equal to caring for the society as a whole. God says: "For this reason, we decreed for the Children of Israel that whoever kills a single soul unjustly or does mischief in the land, will be like a person who has killed all of mankind and whoever saves a single soul, will be like the one who saved all of mankind."²² Establishing relationship between humanity and individual in terms of rights and liberty demonstrates that every human being is responsible for the protection of other people's human rights and liberties.

Institutions and material things cannot be Muslim. Only individuals can be Muslim. Muslim is the one, who has the commitment to God. Islam is the religion, which only accepts the unity of God. Islam is the natural relationship between God and individual. Without individual there is no Islam. Society could include Muslim individuals. Individual has priority over society. Muslim society exists, because Muslim individuals come together in order to worship God together. Those who make society muslim are individuals, not institutions. State cannot be Muslim, because muslimness is an aspect of individuals, not institutions, especially the state. The name of Islam does not derive from institution or a person. It expresses a natural state between Islam and individual. Islam does not establish a particular form of religious institution. It is based on individual relationship between God and man. Every person has his particular degree of personal faith, independent of any religious system or institution. Every individual has the right to define him/herself. Individual cannot be defined by a group, like family or humma

in the name of religion. It is not the task of state or society to design human individuality. Every human being have the right to design his/her own individual life. No institution or authority could determine how they should live on behalf of individuals.

State and religion must not rule each other in order to protect individual freedom. The notion of individual liberty against state or society must be developed. If such understanding develops, the power of state could be limited and social pressure on individuals could be minimized. The obedience to the laws of the state or society is not freedom. Limiting the power of state opens the doors for individual liberty. The role of state is to defend individual freedom, the care of human soul is not the business of state. Religion is a voluntary activity of human individual, which must be based on the freedom of conscience. Religion is a matter of individual choice, it is not the subject of the institutional imposition. Individual must be understood as a separate being endowed by God or natural law with certain rights and liberties. In contrast with this understanding, individual understood as a being, who has definite obligations and duties to God, and state and institutions have right to define these obligations, and corce individuals to practice them. Worshipping God could only be practiced if it emerges from the freedom of conscience. People cannot be true believers if they are foerced to practice faith by the state. Uniting state and religion is very influential idea among Muslims while the institutionalisation of freedom of conscience is very weak. Muslims must develop a new approach, which values and institutionalizes freedom of conscience.

POSITIVE LIBERTY, NEGATIVE LIBERTY AND ISLAM

When we talk about individual, naturally we are talking about individual freedom. We are not talking about freedom of nations or independence of state. Without freedom, there is no individual. Totalitarianism is the main enemy of individual freedom. Identifying freedom with collective entities such as religion, nation, class and so on, could create many illiberal attitudes, which are not compatible with individual freedom. Individual and collective freedom are not the same things. They are totally different. They are representative of

negative and positive freedom. Negative freedom requires individual is free to do what he wants while positive freedom requires individual to shape him/herself according to some ideals. Negative freedom removes coercion, intervention and obstructions while positive freedom aims at the actualisation of ideals and duties. In these two types of freedom, the idea of individual seems to be totally different. The negative concept of freedom understands individual as the real self, who wants to be free from restraint, intervention and force. The source of freedom is individual him/herself. On the other hand, the positive concept of freedom regards individual as a rational or metaphysical construction. Positive freedom makes individual is no longer individual, because it destroys the very existence of human individual and opens the ways for totalitarian and authoritarian governments and leaders to intervene human life. Positive freedom does not promote the wishes of individuals, but it promotes the wishes of other people and institution, which opens the way for totalitarianism. The idea of positive freedom is very prevalent in the Muslim mind. Instead of positive freedom. Muslims need to explore negative freedom, which promotes real individuality and liberty.

CONCLUSION

In Islam, individuality is not a form of idolatry. True individuality derived from God. *The raison d'être* of Islam is the actualisation of true individuality in this world. Being individual does not mean being egoist. Human individual could seek his/her self-interest as well as altruism. Identifying individuality with egoism is a myth and manipulation. Human individuality and liberty have been recognized in Islam, but Islam also believes that there must be moral and religious limits for human behaviors. Muslims have freedom within the sphere of Islam. Individual is free within the moral, spiritual and social boundaries of Islam. It could be said that Islam does not favour individualism, but it favours individual. Islamic approach to human individual allows the broad understanding of liberty and individuality. Muslim individual is not the prisoner of faith or institution. He/she has the right to define his/her personality and lives one's life.

NOTES

1. *The Quran*, 50:16
2. *The Quran*, 38:72.
3. *The Quran*, 2:30.
4. *The Quran*, 33:72.
5. *The Quran*, 17:70.
6. *The Quran*, 2:30-31.
7. *The Quran*, 16:78.
8. *The Quran*, 2:269.
9. *The Quran*, 29:20.
10. *The Quran*, 6:165.
11. *The Quran*, 2:256.
12. *The Quran*, 10:108.
13. *The Quran*, 37:24.
14. *The Quran*, 51:56.
15. *The Quran*, 67:15.
16. *The Quran*, 4:32.
17. *The Quran*, 10:108.
18. *The Quran*, 11:118-119
19. *The Quran*, 88:21.
20. *The Quran*, 18:29.
21. *The Quran*, 76:3.
22. *The Quran*, 5:32.

Mystic Contribution of Prince Dara Shikoh Qadri (A Critique of *Majma al-Bahrain*)

The Shah Jahani era (1627–1657) got scholarly distinction in the field of *Tasawwuf*, the zenith of which was realized in the evolution of the Qadri order in India¹. This *Silsilah* (order) thereafter was academically elaborated by Prince Dara Shikoh Qadri (d. 1070/1659). The domain of Hindu mysticism was constructed by many scholars, who on the basis of *Vedas* and *Upanishads*², tried to develop the details of Indian mysticism. The Upanishads propounded the theory of *Wahdat al-Wujud*³ which according to Prof. Muhammad Habib is the bed rock and kernel of *Tasawwuf* and was presented in the medieval times by the *Mashaikhs*. He further opined that Upanishads for the first time imparted the teachings of *Wahdat al-Wujud* and Dara Shikoh was rightful person in his theory that earliest explanation of *Tasawwuf* was manifested by Upanishad⁴.

The present paper is devoted to the issue that Dara Shikoh, the exponent and promoter of Qadri order in the subcontinent, tried to present commonalities between the two divergent religions i.e. Islam and Hinduism. He for the purpose got the knowledge from moderate and orthodox Hindu scholars of Sanskrit and came into feet of Mir Munshi Chandra Bhan, Brhaman Bhopat Rai Bairagi, Munshi Wali Ram Wali, Narain Chandra Bairagi. All were well versed with Upanishads⁵. His contribution in the field of *Tasawwuf* is of two folds. At one, he translated his mystic understanding into several Persian works including *Safinat al-Aulia*, *Sakinat al-Auliya*, *Hasanat al Arifin*, *Tariqat al-Haqiqat*, *Risala Haq Numa*, *the Diwan and the Rubaeyat*.⁶ On the other hand, he translated Indian mysticism from Sanskrit into Persian language so that both the communities may come closer. He was so overwhelmed by the need of the hour that contributed *Majma al-Bahrain*⁷, *Yoga Vasistha* and *Bhagwat Gita*, *Mukalma Baba Lal Wa*

Dara Shikoh and *Sirr-i-Akbar*.⁸ The latter work is basically a translation of Upanishads, about which he says that they are the treasures of monotheism and words of God. He confidently believed that they shall become imperishable, fearless, un-solicitous and eternally liberated. By translating *Sirr-i-Akbar*, Dara facilitated for those who could not have the knowledge about Hindu Vedanta. He translated Upanishads word by word in a clear style about which Bikrama Jit Hasrat rightly observed that a comparison with the original Sanskrit text, aptly bears the statement of Dara, with the exception that at few places, where the cryptic and philosophical sentences of the translation need explanation in more explicit and un-ambiguous manner, he has most faithfully followed Sankaracharya's commentary.⁹

RELIGIOUS IDEAS OF DARA SHIKOH

The best methodology to judge Dara Shikoh's religious ideas is to analyze his writings. In the past studies, he looks like an enthusiastic Sufi who adopted the same phraseology and style as was experienced by his predecessors like Mansur Hallaj (d.922), Shahabuddin Suhar Wardi (d.1191), Ibn Arabi (d.1240), Abdur Rahman Jami (d.1492), Sarmad (d.1659) and Mirza Mazhar Jan-i-Jana (d.1717). Therefore, in his earlier Sufistic character, he could not examine mystic system of other religions. But deeper his research were elevated, closer he came into enlightenment of the divine realities found in Psalms, the Gospels, Pentateuch and Vedas.¹⁰ He states in the introduction of *Sirr-i-Akbar*:

And the Holy Quran is mostly allegorical and now the people, thoroughly conversant with the subtleties thereof, are very rare—He had thereafter cast eyes in the Book of Moses, the Gospels, the Psalms, and other scriptures—and after verification of these circumstances, it appears to him that among that most ancient people of all their heavenly books which are the Rig-Veda, the Yajur-Veda, the Sam-Veda and the Athara-Veda together with a number of ordinances, descended upon the Prophets of those times, the most ancient of whom was Brahman or Adam.¹¹

In one of his work: *Hasnāt-al-Arifin* (completed in 1064/1653), Dara Shikoh states about his Shathat:

“I was enamoured of studying books on the ways of men of path

and had in my mind nothing save the attainment of unity of God, and since before that time, in a state of ecstasy (wajd) and enthusiasm, I had uttered some words pertaining to sublime knowledge, certain sordid and abject fellows and few dry, insipid and bigoted persons, on account of their narrow outlook accused me of heresy and apostasy. It was then that I realised the importance of compiling the aphorisms of great believers in the Unity of God and saints who have heretofore acquired the knowledge of Reality, so that these may serve as an argument against the fellows who were really imposters (Dajjals), although they wore the face of Christ; and Abu Jahl, although they assumed the garb of Mosses and that of the followers of the Prophet. Dara also says that the Shathat provided by Ruz Bahan Baqli were written in a metaphorical language, replete with numerous allusions and similes and were above the intelligence of an average individual, that he was forced to write in simple, understandable, unambiguous style with suitable verses written by mystics and him.¹²

Dara Shikoh in his advanced studies of mysticism came into contact with many prominent Hindu divines like Baba Lal Mandiya, Mir Munshi Chand Bhan, Munshi Wali Ram Wali, Narain Chand Bairagi and Brahman Bhopat Rai Bairagi. Dara searched for so many commonalities and resemblance between the two living religions of India and concluded that the truth is not the monopoly of any religion.

Sir Jadu Nath Sarkar after dealing with the complex politico-religious situation of Aurangzib era concluded that Dara remained a Muslim throughout. He was no longer apostate from Islam, neither had he denied the Prophetic mission though he committed the following mistakes: (i) consorting with Brahmans, Yogis and Sannyasis,—considering them as perfect spirited guides and knower of God,—regarding the Veda as a Divine Book, and spending his days in translating and studying it. (ii) Wearing rings and jewels inscribed with the word Prabhu, (Lord) in Hindu Letter. (iii) Discarding prayers, the fast during the month of *Ramazan* and other canonical ceremony of Islam, as necessary only in the case of the spiritually undeveloped-while he believed himself to be a man possessed of the perfect knowledge of God.¹³

Shaikh Muhammad Ikram, a noted historian concluded that after keen observation for the reference of his apostasy, he could not find any. He remarks that it was fashion of the hour to adopt the Sufistic

phraseology but Dara tried in a period when Muslim Ulama were not tolerating any heresies or un-Islamic practice in the discipline of *Tasawwuf*.... Nevertheless, Dara pronounced and practiced in such a way that was not justified especially by those ambitious who were claiming for the crownship .¹⁴

According to *Maathir-i-Alamgiri*, the official history of Aurangzeb, the charge against him was that “the pillars of the canonical Law and Faith apprehended many kinds of disturbances from his life. So the Emperor, both out of necessity, to protect the Holy Law and also for reasons of state, considered it unlawful to allow to remain alive any longer as a destroyer of the public peace.”¹⁵

Dara learnt of his fate and made a last appeal to Aurangzeb’s pity. He wrote, “My Lord Brother and Emperor! the desire of Kingship is not at all left in my mind. Be (it) blessed to you and your sons. The plan of slaying me which you are cherishing in your heart is unjust. If you only grant me a house fit for (my) residence and one young handmaid out of my own handmaids to wait on me, I shall employ myself in praying for your (good) in the retired life of a pardoned man.”¹⁶

COMPARATIVE VALUE OF *MAJMA-AL-BAHRAIN*

It is the sixth compilation of Prince Dara Shikoh Qadri which was completed in 1065/1655, when the compiler was of 42. It was supposed to be the last and of immense importance for a student of comparative religion and the world of inter-faith dialogue which according to popular opinion caused for the execution of the compiler in 1659 AD.¹⁷ The work was basically prepared on the technical terms of Indian pantheism and its equivalence in Sufi Phraseology. It is an attempt of its own kind to reconcile the doctrines of the two divergent religions. It tries to show the meeting points of the two religions on broader foundations. It marks the beginning of a very commendable effort by a Prince that led him towards deeper comprehension of Indian philosophical and religious thoughts which produced few years later, Indo-Islamic legacies i.e. the translation of *Gita*, the *Upanishads* and the *Yoga Vasista*. It also proves that living over the centuries Hindus and Muslim can only judge each other comprehending the truths correspondent into their religious scriptures. In that way, it produced values for the growth of religious

tolerance and promotion of inter-faith dialogue. The global world today can borrow many lessons from it.

The *Majma al-Bahrain* running over forty one pages (22 folios), deals with twenty-two mystic issues in separate sub-headings. This treatise was supported by 41 verses from the Holy Quran, three poetic extracts of Maulana Rumi, two quatrains of Shaikh Sa'duddin Hamawi (d. 1253AD), followed by many of his own poetic aphorisms. The manuscripts of *Majma al-Bahrain* are found at several libraries but the complete copies are available at the following places:

1. Asiatic library, Hyderabad, dated 9th Rabiul Awwal, 1224 A. H. It was transcribed by Sayyid Gharib Ali b. Sayyid Shah Ali Riza. The MS contains innumerable clerical mistakes.
2. Khuda Baksh Oriental Public library, Patna (no.1450 of the hand list of Persian Mss. Prepared by khan Bahadur, Abdul Muqtadir. No date of transcription and no name of scribe are available).
3. Rampur State library dated 22nd Dhul Hijia, 1226 AH Mir Qasim. It is imperfect in several ways.
4. Victoria Memorial Hall, Calcutta, by the writing of Dara Shikoh (M. Mazhar-al Haq claims that he compared it with the handwriting of Dara, he found no internal and external evidence to prove it Dara's hand written copy).
5. Asiatic Society of Bengal (Curzon Collection no. 156, 111, of the MS hand list).¹⁸

Chapters of *Majma al-Bahrain*:

1. Discourse on the Elements
2. Discourse on the Senses
3. Discourse on the Devotional Exercise
4. Discourse on the Attributes of God, the most High
5. Discourse on the Soul Discourse on the Air
6. Discourse on the Four Worlds
7. Discourse on the Sound
8. Discourse on the light
9. Discourse on the vision of God
10. Discourse on the names of God, the most high

11. Discourse on the Apostleship and Sanitship
12. Discourse on the Brahman
13. Discourse on the Directions
14. Discourse on the Skies
15. Discourse on the Earth
16. Discourse on the Divisions of the Earth
17. Discourse on the world of Barzakh
18. Discourse on the Resurrection
19. Discourse on the Salvation
20. Discourse on the Day and Night
21. Discourse on the Infinity of the cycle¹⁹

A CASE STUDY OF THE CONTENTS

The introduction of the *Majma-al-Bharain* is illuminating as it asserts that there is no difference between Hinduism and Islam, Dara pronounces:

“Abundant praise be (showered) on the incomparable One Who has manifested on His beautiful, incomparable and matchless face the two parallel locks of faith (Iman) and infidelity (Kufr) and by neither of them has, He covered His beautiful face. Faith and infidelity, both are galloping on the way towards Him and are exclaiming (together). He is one and none shares his kinship:”

In his preface of *Majma al- Bahrain* he seems to be free in his expression as he propounds “Mysticism is equality” It is abandonment of (religious) obligations (*Al-Tasawwuf-huwa al-Insaf Wa al-Tasawwuf tark al-Takleef*). Dara continued to express on the authority of Khawaja Obaidullah Ahrar “If I know that an infidel, immersed in sin, is in a way singing the note of monotheism, I got him, hear him and am grateful to him.”

He maintains that these are his own experiences and intuitions from which intelligent people, (*Fahmidgana-i-Sahib-i-Idrak*) will benefit and the block-heads (*Kund fahman*), without insight will get no share of its benefits. He claims that he has put down them for the benefit of the members of his family and has no concern with the common folk of either community (*barai ahlibuit khud nawishta am...awam har do quam kar e neest*).

It is difficult to provide a full-scale discussion in a short article like this about the beauties and demerits of *Majma al-Bahrain*,¹⁹ even though I tried to deal with some of its philosophical and mystical values which include *Ruh* or *Atma*, conception of sound (*Awaz*), names of Allah (*Asma Allah Taala*), Qiyamat or Mahapralaya, the salvation or *Mukti*, *Hawas* or senses, *Sifat Allah Taala* or Attributes.

Dara presented two kinds of Soul: *Ruh* and *Abul Arwah*, which are called in Indian language as *Atma* and *Pramatma*, when the pure self (*Dhat-i-Bah*) becomes dominated either in respect of purity or impurity. He is known as *ruh* or *Atma* in His respect. And the self that was determined in the eternity past is known as *Ruh-i-Azam* (Supreme Soul) and is said to be possessed uniform identity with the Omniscient being. Now the soul, in which all the Souls are included, is known as *Paramatma* or *Abul Arwah*.

After this discussion Dara provided a relationship between water and wave and equalised it as the relationship between body and Soul or as that of between *Sarir* and *Atma*.²⁰

Dara while dealing with the issue of *Anasir* (Elements) says that sound emanates from the same birth of the Merciful which came out with the word of *Kun* or *Be* at the same time of the creation of the universe. He presents Indian substitute for it as *Sarasvati* as the source of all other sounds, voices and vibrations. He continued to say that Indian monotheists called it as *Nida* which is of three kinds: *Anatha*, *Ahata* and *Sabada*. Explaining all, he adds about the third kind as it passes an affinity with *Sarasvati* and is the source of *Ism-i-Azam* of the Muslims or *Vedamukha* or *Om* of the Hindus. He further provides that Indian divines assign a special symbol to this sound which bears a close resemblance to *Ism-i-Azam* and in which traces of the elements of water, fire and the dust of the Pure Self are manifest.²¹

During his discourse about *Asma Allah Taala* (Names of God), Dara, recognises Him with Absolute, the Pure, the Hidden of the Hidden and the Necessary Self and equates these with Indian substitutes as *Asanga*, *Tringuna*, *Nirankara*, *Niranjana* and *Sattava Chitta*. About being *Him* as *Alim* he provides Indian word *Chetana*, *Haq* as *Ananta*, *Qadir* as *Samartha*, *Sami* as *Sarota*, *Basir* as *Darasta*, *Ruh* as *Vayakta*, *Allah* as *Om*, *Hu* as *Sah*, *Farishta* as *Devta*, *Vahi* as *Akasvani*, *Mazhar-i-Atam* as *Avatara*, *Ruyat* as *Saksatkam*.²²

The eighteenth and nineteenth chapters: *dar bar-i-Barzakh* and *Qiyamat*, Dara Shikoh defines the *Barzakh* with the help of Indian monotheism as after a long sojourn in Heaven or Hell, the *Mahapralaya* would take place,²³ and says that this fact is also ascertainable from two verses of Holy Quran: (i) "And when the Resurrection comes" (Al-Quran, 79: 34) and (ii) "And the trumpet shall be blown, so all those that are in the earth shall swoon, except such as Allah please" (Al-Quran: 39: 68). Dara discusses about the *Najat* (success) for which he provided Hindi substitute as *Mukti*. He presented it within several Qur'anic paradigms such as: Everyone on it must pass away and these will endure forever the person of Thy Lord, the Lord of glory and honour, (Al-Quran: 55: 26–27). The *Mukti*, for which Dara uses the term *Brahmananda* will be according to him absorbed and annihilated in the Self of the Lord, is a term of mysticism for which Dara quoted the Holy verses, (Al-Quran: 55: 26–27). He further explored the concept of *Mukti* into three folds i.e. Jivan Mukti, or salvation in the life, Sarva Mukti or the liberation from every kind of bondage consists in absorption in His Self.²⁴ Sarvada Mukti or eternal Salvation which consist in becoming an Aarif and in attaining freedom and salvation in every stage of spiritual progress. For advocating his stand, he quotes many verses from the Holy Quran such as from Surah Al-Tawbah, ix: 21–22, and Surah Al-Kahaf, xviii: 2–3.

Dara seems to be Ecologist and Cosmologist when he deeply engrosses and presents his own researches about Element of the creation (*anasir*) and senses (*hawas*). In this field, not only he explains the constituents of all mundane creation but also finds successfully internal and external coherence within them. He presents five elements along with their Islamic phraseologies viz. *Shainma* (smelling), *Dhaiqa* (tasting), *Basira* (seeing), *Samia* (hearing) and *Lamisa* (touching). The Indian phraseology which he uses is *Panchaindriyana* which includes *ghrana* (nose), *rasana* (tongue), *chaksuh* (eye), *sarota* (ear) and *tvak* (skin) with their qualities of perception known as *gandha*, *rasa*, *rupa*, *sabda*, and *sparsa*. Dara then provided a descriptive discussion on the relative qualities of these senses saying that the sense is allied with dust which is perceived by *Shamma*. *Dhaiqa* is connected with water, for the taste of water is perceived by tongue, *Basira* is closed with fire as colour is perceived by eye itself, *Lamisa* is connected with air for the perception of all tangible objects is through medium of air and *Samia* is connected

with the *Unsur-i-Aazam* or *MahaKasa*, through whose instrument we hear sounds.²⁵ In the same section Dara further compares five internal relative senses with Indian phraseologies i.e. *mushtara*, *mutakhaiyyilah*, *hafiza* and *wahima* with their synonyms such as *buddhi*, *mansa*, *ahamkara*, and *chitta*.²⁶

The discussion on *Sifat-i-Allah Taala* is equally interesting. He compares the two Sufi concepts: *Jamal* and *Jalal* or beauty or majesty with that of Indian devotees as *triguna* or, *rajas sattava* and *tamas*. When these attributes are included in one another, Indian mystics named them as *Trimurti*, *Brahman*, *Vishnu* and *Maheshvara* who are identical with *Jibril*, *Mikail* and *Israfil*. He further compares Brahma or Jibril with the angel of creation, Vishnu or Mikail is the angel of duration or existence and Maheshvara or Israfil is the angel of destruction. The Triguna is manifested through Brahma, Vishnu and Maheshvara...thus when a person is born, he lives for a fixed period and then annihilated. While dealing with the *Ruyat* (vision of God) he provides the common faith in it by Quran, the Vedas, the Book of David and regards the stand point of Mutazilite a great blunder and mistake who does not believe in *Ruyat-i-Bari Taala*. He advocates it on rational ground providing many references in this connection and condemns the Mutazilites.²⁷

In the discourse regarding *Nubuwwat* and *Wilayat* (apostleship and saintship), Dara seems to be a Sufi. He categorises the *Nubuwwat* into three kinds (i) who might have seen God with inner eyes, (ii) who might have heard the voice of God, (iii) who might have seen the angel or heard their voice. Then Dara has presented three kinds of saintship: pure (*tanzih*), resembling (*tashbih*), and combination (Tashbihi) of both. Dara criticised those Muqallidin in his days having fallen from purity, who have sunk in Anthropomorphism, who indulged in seeing handsome faces and passing their times in playing and toying, so one should never follow such persons.²⁸

CONCLUSION

Dara Shikoh, a philosopher Sufi was a product of different times through which Indian mysticism passed. He is a true representative of Arabian, Mesopotamian and Persian Sufism. Dara has a strong faith in Pantheistic thought (*Wahdat al-wujud*) which was a common feature of

all the major *Salasil viz*, the Chishti, the Suharwardi, the Qadri. Dara perceived the knowledge of Sufism from Indian Saints cult and Islamic *Khanqah*-Organisation. Prof. Renold A. Nicholson observed:

“In his (Dara) research for reality (*haqiqat*), he turned towards the Vedas and the *Upanishads* wherein he discovered the same essence of monotheism as revealed in the Holy *Quran*. But the most interesting part of his endeavours was his attempt to reconcile the theological concept and mystic terminology of both the religions...these comparisons are ingenious indeed...such extra-ordinary exercises in the identification of parallelism between Indian and Islamic mystic terminology in themselves were handless enough”.²⁹

Interestingly enough is the fact that Dara though indulged into pronouncing *Shathat*³⁰ but was not executed on this ground as the execution was repeatedly witnessed in the cases of many Sufis, whose names were mentioned in the introduction of *Hasnat al-Aarifin* by Dara Shikoh. Nevertheless, the debate is still alive and needs to be addressed by a fresh investigation as to why he was decreed Infidel and was executed?

NOTES

1. This order, the most widespread in the subcontinent was founded in Iraq by Hanbali Sufi Abdul Qadir-al-Jilani also known as al- jili (d.1077-11660). The founder is highly regarded in India with the titles of Pir-i-Dastgir, Pir-i-Piran. His festival (Urs) is widely celebrated on the eleventh of the month of Rabi-al-Thani. This Silsilah was however established in India much later under the Mughals by Shah Nimatullah and Makhdam Muhammad jilani. But much emphasis was given to Syed Bandaghi Muhammad Ghawth who introduced it in 1482 AD at uch in Sind. Another outstanding exponent of this order was Sheikh Mian Mir (d. 1550-1635 AD), the mentor of Dara Shikoh. See for detail. Aziz Ahmad, An intellectual History of Islam in India, Edin Burngh at the university, press, 1969 p. 41, Murray T. Titus, Indian Islam (A Religious History of Islam in India), Oriental Books Print Corporation, 54 Rani Jhansi Road, New Delhi, 110055, Second Ed. 1979, pp. 123-4.
2. Upanishads also spelled Upanisad, Sanskrit 'Upanisad (session), any of the speculative texts that contain elaborations in prose and verse of the

Vedas, the most ancient Hindu sacred literature. The name Upanishad implies sitting at the feet of the teacher and the Upanishad of which approximately 108 are known, record the views of sages who were active as early as 1000 BC and who flourished about 600 BC. The text forms the basis of much of later Indian philosophy. The teaching based on them is known as Vedanta. The word Upanishad itself understood to mean esoteric teaching. Sankara has elaborated them in his commentary on the Kathopanisad. The central teaching of these early Upanisads is that the Self (*atman*) is identical to the ultimate ground of reality (*Brahman*). The major Upanisad are: *Aitareya*, *Bradaranyaka*, *Chandogya*, *Katha*, *Kena*, *Mahanarayaiya*, *Maitri*, *Mandukya*, *Mandaka*, *Prasn*, *Taittiriya* etc. See for detail: The Oxford Dictionary of World Religions, John Bowker, Oxford New York Oxford University Press, 1997, p. 1007, Also see, The New Encyclopaedia Britannica, vol. 12, p. 189, (tenth edition).

3. *Wahdat al-Wujud* is a technical term of classical Sufism. The term already, occurs in several meanings in the prose writings of such prominent Baghdadi Sufis as Al-Kharraz (d. 277/890), and Junaid Baghdadi (298/910). Philosophical speculations about “absolute being” probably played a significant role in the development of Sufi thought from the times of Ibn Sina at least; but the question as to whether or not *Al-Wujud Al-Mutlaq* should be identified with God because a serious issue only as a result of the impact of the ‘new’ doctrine of Ibn Al-Arabi (d.638/1240). He became greatest spokesman for the unity of being (*wahdat Al-Wujud*). See for detail: The Encyclopaedia of Islam, New edition, Edited by P.J.B. Bearman, The Bianquis, C.E. Bosworth, E. Van Donzel and W.P. Heinrichs, Vol. xi, p. 217, Leiden, Brill, 2002.
4. Khaliq Ahmad Nizami, *Tarikh-i- Mashaikh-i-Chisht*, vol. I, Introduction by Prof. Muhammad Habib, Idarah Adabiyat-i-Dilli, 1980, pp. 16–17, 29.
5. The first phase of the spiritual life of Dara Shikoh began with his formal initiation into Qadri order, which took place in the year 1049/1639. He had inherited a large standing adherence towards the Chishti order and Khwaja Moinuddin Chishti, the patron–saint of the house of Akbar, but was soon won over by one of the famous disciple of the Qadri order, the renowned Sufi Mian Mir. Dara ascribed him Qadri due to close affinity and adherence to Khwaja Abdul Qadir Jilani. See, Bikrama Jit Hasrat, *Dara Shikuh, Life and works*, Munshiram Manoharlal, Publishers PVT, New Delhi, 1982, p. 45. Shaikh Muhammad Ikram provided that since 1646 AD Dara adopted his nickname as Qadri when he composed his

- Resalah Haq Numa*, Muhammad Ikram, Rud-i-Kausar, Taj Company, New Delhi, 1986, p. 444.
6. See for detail, Dr. Ziauddin Malik Falahi, Shahzada Dara Shikoh: Khandan-i-Mughliya Ka Tanha Hanafi Qadri Sufi, quarterly, *Ilm-o-Adab*, July–September, 2012, Aligarh, p. 14–39.
 7. See, A study of Majma Al-Bahrain with special reference to M. Mahfuzul Haqs’ English translation, Dr. Ziauddin Malik Falahi, *Op.cit.* pp.30-34.
 8. For descriptive study on the works of Dara Shikoh please see, Bikrama Jit Hasrat, *Ibid.*, pp. 216–54.
 9. *Op. cit.*, p. 258.
 10. It is this reason why we can’t find any comparative study for the search of commonalities between religions in his early writings which include: *Safinah Al-Awliya* (written in 1640 AD), *Sakinah Al- Awliya* (wr.1646), *Risalah Haq Numa* (wr.1646), *Aksir-i-Azam or Rubaiyyat* and *Hasnat Al-Aarifin* (wr.1653). Whereas we find Dara Shikoh as a student of comparative religions in his later works which include *Sirr-i-Akbar*, *Mukalmah Baba Lal wa Dara Shikoh*, *Majma al-Bahrain* (wr. 1655) and *Yoga-Vasista* and *Bhagwat Gita* (1656).
 11. See for Persian text, Bikrama jit Hasrat, *Ibid.*, pp. 261, 263.
 12. The translation has been compared with Bikrama Jit Hasrat. *Op. cit.*, p. 105 and Mahfuzul Haq. *Ibid.*, p. 10. This translation of the extract of *Hasnat Al-Aarifin* has been taken from Pandit Shoe Narain in the journal of the Panjab Historical Society, vol. ii, No. i, pp. 28–9, cf. M. Mazharul Haq M.A. *Majma-Ul-Bahrain or The Mingling of the two oceans by Prince Muhammad Dara Shikuh, edited in the original Persian, with English translation, Notes and Variants*, The Asiatic Society, Calcutta, 1982, pp. 10, 11. Dara in his statement indicates without mentioning the names of those who demanded his annihilation for the good of Church and state. Sir Jadu Nath Sarkar unfolded these notable names which include: Shaista Khan, Muhammad Amin Khan, Bahadur Khan, and Hakim Daulat. See for detail, S.J.N. Sarkar, *History of Aurangzib*, Orient Longman LTD, New Delhi, 1973, vols. i & ii, p. 337.
 13. Sir Jadu Nath Sarkar quoted the statement of Aurangzib responding the mercy appeal of Dara Shikoh in these words: “you first acted as a userper and you were a mischief maker.” Sarkar added that for more than sixteen years Dara had been a blighting shadow on Aurangzibs’ life, he robbed his younger brother of the sunshine of their fathers’ favour...he had intrigued with Bijapu and Golkunda in open opposition to Aurangzib in the wars against them sanctioned by Emperor himself, every enemy of Aurangzib had found a ready patron in Dara. ‘Daras’ officers insulted

- Aurangzib.... All these Aurangzib had born with patience and even with affected humanity for sixteen long years. See, Sir Jadu Nath Sarkar, *Ibid.*, vol. i & ii, pp. 169-70, 338.
14. Dara's sufistic aphorisms were not tolerated because of the fact that the reformist contribution in the discipline of Tasawwuf that was initiated by Mujaddid Alf-i-Thani Ahmad Sarhindi (d.1624), Abdul Haq Muhaddith Dehlawi (d.1642) and others were so strong and were supported by equally powerful staunch Prince namely Aurangzib that the trials of Akbar for the unification within religions, which was continued upto Dara Shikoh could not sustain, See for detail, Muhammad Ikram, *Rud-i-Kausar*, Taj Company, New Delhi, 1986, pp. 451-2. See also Dr. Ziauddin Falahi, Shaikh Ahmad Sarhindi ke Tajdidi Karname, *Fikr-i-Islami Ke farogh mein Shaikh Ahmad Sarhindi Ki khidmat (Seminar Maqalat)*, Idara Uloom-i-Islamia, AMU, Aligarh, 2005, pp. 33-49.
 15. Cf. Sar Jadu Nath Sarkar, *Ibid.*, pp. 337-8.
 16. *Op. Cit.*, p. 338.
 17. *Siyar al-Mutaakhhirin*, p. 403, cf. M. Mahfuzul Haq M.A, *Ibid.*, p. 30. Same was opined by Sir Jadu Nath Sarkar, *Ibid.*, and p. 337.
 18. All the five manuscripts have some differences in their texts. A comparative study of these MSS was rendered by M. Mahfuzul Haq M.A. in his aforementioned work entitled: *Variants* pp. 117-35.
 19. Many scholars-Hindus and Muslims along with the author of *Alamgir Nama* are of the opinion that Dara Shikoh appeared to be of free-thinking after Akbar. Many Brahmans and learned men, says Bikrama Jit Hasrat, characterised him as a teacher of delusion. Some European travellers remarks *Majma a-Bahrain* as first attempt of reconcile the two diverge elements of Brahmanvidya and Quran. Though it is generally believed as an irreligious and ridiculous attempt to extrol the virtues of Hinduism over Islam and though not rich, and exuberant in language and style ,is a starting point, it is hard for any to deny. See Bikrama Jit Hasrat, *Ibid.*, pp. 221-3.
 20. Cf. *Majma al-Bahrain*, *Op. Cit.*, p. 83.
 21. *Op. Cit.*, pp. 224-5.
 22. In the discussion entitled *dar bayan-i-Asma Allah Taala*, Dara uses some sorts of Shatahat which was the common doctrine of all Salasil-i-Tasawwuf believing in *Wahdat al-Wujud*, of which Dara was a promoter and propagator.
 23. Bikrama Jit Hasrat provides a footnote quoting Dara's statements about *Qiyamat-i-Kuba and Qiyamat-i-Sughra*, defines Mahapralaya in the light of Vishnu Purana, *Ibid.*, p. 226.

24. Wahdat al-Wujud was reformed by *Wahdat al-Shuhud* because the concept of Sarvamukti or Jama al-Jama was highly criticised by many moderate Muslims since the time of Mujaddid Alf-i-Thani.
25. Majma al-Bahrain, Mahfuzul Haq, Ibid., pp. 40–2.
26. Both Mahfuzul Haq and Bikrama Jit Hasrat searched and collected Dara's expositions as substitutes for the Hindi phraseologies from his different works. The striking feature of the latter in putting the Hindu Scripture in their support, grammatical and literal standard is higher than that of Mahfuzul Haq, See Bikrama Jit, Ibid., pp. 230–1.
27. Mahfuzul Haq, Ibid., p. 52.
28. Mahfuzul Haq has thoroughly provided 52 footnotes while elaborating the discussion about *Nubuwwat* and *Wilayat*. He painstakingly sketched brief biographies of all those saints discussed by Dara. See Mahfuzul Haq, Ibid., pp. 57–63.
29. Bikrama Jit Hasrat, Ibid., Forward by Renold A. Nicholson, Cambridge, March, 1943, p. xix.
30. *Shathat* or *Shathiyat* (pl. of *shath*) are those pronouncements uttered in the state of ecstasy (*wajd*). Some scholars like Imam Qushairy in his *Al-Rasail Al-Qushairiyah* termed this state as *Jama Al-Jama*. In this state a Sufi claims the *Uluhiyyah* (lordship of the Universe), superiority over *Ambiya* (Apostles) claiming him the actual cause for the creation of the universe, blasphemous attitudes towards the Quran and Allah Almighty. For detailed study see, Dr. Ghulam Qadir Lone, *Mutala-e- Tasawwuf-Quran-o-Sunnat Ki Raushni Mein*, Markazi Maktaba, New Delhi, 1998, pp. 413–50.

DR. YAHYA JAHANGHIRI AND DR. KHADIJH BIGHASH

A Comparison of Women's Position in the Tasnim Exegesis of the Qur'an and the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women and the 2030 Education Framework

ABSTRACT

There are without doubt subtle differences between men and women according to the view point of creation. Islam has given an exalted and lofty dignity to women with a definite attitude that considers all of her rights and characteristics. However, there is a balance suiting her dignified and innate nature between both her rights and her obligations in Islam. In recent decades, the issue of women as a global issue has been considered by international declarations such as the "Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women" and the "2030 Education Framework", whose main nature is to create a kind of complete similarity between man and woman based on gender; which in this case sets requirements for nations and governments. This research has employed descriptive and text analysis methods as well as library and field research methods to do a comparative study on international documents and the articles of these treaties. To do this, it will use verses of the Qur'an that talk about women's rights and refer to the Tasnim exegesis of the Qur'an written by Ayatollah Javadi Amoli. The Tasnim exegesis of the Qur'an has recognized rights such as the right to development, theological rights, the right to motherhood and wifehood, economic rights, political rights, social rights, family rights and spiritual rights, etc. as women's indisputable rights. However these international agreements only emphasize one aspect of women, which is the sexual and physical, and so these laws are in stark contrast to

women's natural needs. This attitude will cause their motherly value as well as the spouse's rights to die out, and at the same time, it is a double cruelty to women and even men. The idea of equality of men and women as recognized in international agreements will pave the way for families and societies to disintegrate in either the near or the distant future.

Keywords: Rights, Woman, Tasnim Exegesis, International agreements, 2030 Education Framework, Discrimination.

INTRODUCTION

The holy Qur'an has described about the creation of man and his existential personality as well as his acts and behaviors, and has never assumed men and women as separate from each other. It argues that they are from one source and reality. The Qur'an has given each an independent status while having physical and spiritual differences. In order to rediscover the legal status of the women in human society, the Qur'an describes two main areas; first: for women's existential evolution, it has taken action to correct the deviations of human perspective. The holy Qur'an issues some instructions for women to acquire their rights and obligations in many areas and grants her a legal personality. In its study of women's issues, fair judging of their rights, obligations and their individual, social and economic responsibilities, it has accepted family as the basic institution in society and emphasized the complementary role of men and women in society as well as their mutual needs and rights. From the view point of the international documents, family is the reason that women are restricted, unable to move, and not being equal to men. They also emphasize their gender and the occupational and social equality. Islam has prepared various grounds for women to possess properties and wealth and has granted them things like inheritance, alimony, marriage-portion, lactation fee, house chore's services fee etc. Islam allows women to work to make a profit for themselves according to the conditions laid out in the religion without being bound to run a family or nourish them. On contrary, in the name of men and women's rights, her character and her natural and physical differences have been ignored in international agreements and only one aspect of her existence – her sexual and occupational aspect – has been given attention. This paper tries to comparatively study the

numerous rights of women in the areas of religion and evolution as global documents for women's rights; in particular the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women and the 2030 Education Framework, are all based on verses of the Qur'an and the methodology of Tasnim exegesis in the Qur'an. Based on this, the articles of this agreement and the 2030 Education Framework will be studied first and the viewpoints of the Qur'an will be later explained through the eyes of the Tasnim exegesis of the Qur'an, and then finally an analytical comparison will be made.

WOMEN'S STATUS IN INTERNATIONAL DOCUMENTS

International organizations, in recent decades, have paid a lot of attention to Women's issues, and as a result, numerous movements were created in the name of women and for women. These have elites and international institutions to support women and reconstruct their status in social life. Their attention has resulted into the international documents and agreements relating to women that set the requirements for governments and nations. Of the most important international documents is the "Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women" (ratified in 18 December 1979 at the United Nations General Assembly) and the 2030 framework (ratified in September, 27, 2015 at the United Nations General Assembly), whose evaluation and re-contemplation is of fundamental and strategic importance and sets a responsibility for individuals and institutions. From the view point of these conventions, the phrase; "Discrimination against Women" means making any distinctions, exceptions or restrictions based on gender that has been influential to women's human rights and their political freedom, based on having equal rights to men in political, economic, socio-cultural and civic contexts etc. Given this, we will mention some of the agreements and documents regarding attitudes towards women and their legal status.

WOMEN'S NATURAL RIGHTS

Governing principles in these international agreements such as Paragraphs 4 and 5 of the 2030 Education Framework, and in various paragraphs of Clauses 1, 2, 4, 7, 10, 11, 12, 15, 17 of the Convention

on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, have paid attention to the gender and occupation dimension and believe in gender equality to the extent that her human character has been ignored. For instance, Article 5 of the Convention for Eliminating Discrimination against Women stipulates that; the change in men and women's behavioral and social patterns in order to achieve to get rid of prejudice, habits and other practical ways is based on the idea of inferiority or superiority of one gender over another or the stereotypical role of women and men. According to the United Nations, educational provisions such as Goal 4 in Clauses 1-4, 2-4, 3-4 and Goals 4-5 of the 2030 Education Framework, concepts such as equality of women and men in gender training and official and non-official textbooks of schools and universities etc. are taught to children and teenagers. Based on Paragraph 4-7 of the 2030 Education Framework, countries involved in carrying out this framework are obliged to submit a report on the number of violent incidents and rapes in schools and the extent of teaching skills in regards to aids etc. to the United Nations. This is concerned with their accomplishments based on these criteria.

WOMEN'S RIGHTS IN THE FAMILY

As an example, according to all provisions of Article 16 of the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, the member states are asked to take necessary actions based on the equality of women and men in order to defend women's rights and eliminate discrimination against them in issues related to marriage and family relationships. In these documents, women have been downgraded from a position of motherhood and wifehood to a sexual partner. Likewise, marriage and family have lost their deep meaning and divorce has been turned from an unpleasant phenomenon into a natural and humane solution. Increasing the age of marriage and condemning marriage under the age of 18 is proposed by these conventions, but yet sexual intercourse is encouraged below the age and is a common practice in western countries, which is normal but irrational. There are clear controversies in these documents as on the one hand, they want to make spreading of free sexual relations between teenagers and youths safe and free, they argue for the prohibition of marriage and the inability of

individuals below 18 to establish proper family relationships on the other.

In this manner, when the documents and conventions mention the role of parents in taking care of children (for instance, Paragraph 5 of the 2030 Education Framework and Paragraph 1 of the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women), they mean that those children who are born out of the wedlock, such as those of same sex parents who have adopted a child or parents who have children from illegitimate marriages etc should have the same rights and status as parents who have children in legitimate marriages. As for divorce, Article 16 of the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women stipulates that each party can file for a divorce, if they consent, in absolute equal terms. Thus in Paragraph 16 of this convention, it is argued that in order to create sexual equality, there have to be the same rights and accountabilities for both men and women when they marry and when their marriage fails.

WOMEN'S SOCIO-ECONOMIC RIGHTS

These documents address women's occupations, which is not only the most important way but also the only way to eliminate poverty as well as reduce their dependence on men and family. Sadly, current social relationships have had such a big impact on the norms of societies that not only women but also men consider working for women as an obligation. In western countries however, women-centric opinions on this issue have been implemented through sacrificing emotions and reducing the level of mother-children relations, which has been dubbed as sharing responsibility. (Hosseini, 1378, pp. 569–85).

In spite of the emphasis of international documents and conventions on the equality of man and women, their equal rights, and women's activities outside, they pay no attention to principles and basic regulations of this standardized presence, which has caused women to be equal to men in terms of having cardiovascular problems, smoking, crimes and alcoholism; which has caused the rate of their prevalence to catch up with that of men. (Gerhard Lenski, 1369, pp. 479–90; Pamla, 1381, pp. 210–17).

Since the origin of these documents is cultural, they consider dignity and hijab (headscarf worn by Muslim women to cover their hair) discrimination against them on the basis of gender because it bars them from being showy, and they argue that hijab has limited their freedom and prevents them from freely satisfying their human inclinations.

WOMEN'S LEGAL STATUS IN TASNIM EXEGESIS

The creation of man, his existential personality, and his acts and behaviors etc. have been explained in the Qur'an. Islam has never separated men and women; however it says that they are from one source, one material and one essence. At the same time, they are, although, physically and spiritually different, Islam has given each an independent personality and rights as well as an exalted place. To make the viewpoints of Islam clearer and more understandable regarding women's rights, we will shed light upon it using the Tasnim exegesis written by Ayatollah Javadi Amooli, a contemporary exegete.

WOMEN'S DEVELOPMENTAL RIGHTS

The Qur'an has thrown out incorrect images that have been formed regarding women and their creation; therefore it has made them rights and fixed them (Faroghi, 1404, p. 334). As an example, the Qur'an explains; "...who created you from a single soul. He created you and his mate from it, and from it, the two of them spread countless men and women (chapter Al-Nisa, v1), and the verse 189 of Chapter Al-A'raf reads; "It is He who created you from a single soul." The Shia and Sunni exegetists have commented concerning the two verses above that: "God created you from a single origin that is Adam and Eve (peace and blessing of God be upon them) so they should not be arrogant and proud toward each other and they should be humble to each other (Al-Razi, 2001, V3, p. 477, Al-Zomakhshari, 1998, V1, p. 461). Therefore, there are no differences between them in creation. Disbelieving a woman's perfection in the way they were created will cause their social status to decline (Taba Tabaei, 1392, V1 p. 135). The Qur'an has given women a perfect and absolute existential and genetic personality (Feiz, 1371, p. 1, Safaei, 1386, p. 6) and explains that men and women were created

in the same way. It means they complete each other. According to this idea, the Qur'an rejects the idea that men outweigh women in creation. In the Tasnim exegesis in a footnote about Verse one of Al-Nisa, the fact that men and women were created equally is mentioned. Concerning women's genetic creation, it reads; "There is only one reality about all human beings, and that is, no man is superior to women and no woman is superior to men unless they earn merits through Taqwa or God-consciousness. Men are no different from one another i.e. they were created from a single soul; the Qur'an puts it. So the doors of arrogance are closed and the doors of emotion are open" (Javadi Amooli, 1388, V17, p. 127). In this manner, his eminence Ayatollah Javadi Amooli says; "All present human beings have a particular reality from which their spouses were created from the same particular reality (Ibid, 1393, V31, p. 209). He says men and women both share the same genetic personality.

WOMEN'S RIGHTS IN MARRIED LIFE

Women have various rights in the viewpoint of the holy Qur'an, such as;

2.2.1 Women's Rights on their Husbands

From the viewpoint of the Qur'an, as husbands have rights on their wives, it is incumbent upon women to adhere to them; and likewise, women have rights on their husbands as well which must be adhered to by men. On the subject, the Qur'an proposes: "The wives have rights corresponding to those which the husbands have according to what is recognized to be fair" (chapter Al-Baqarah, verse 228). The Tasnim exegesis regarding this verse says: "Every right that the Almighty God has given to men against women, He has given the same rights to women against men as well. Women and men's rights are reciprocal and mutual. It is not that there should be a right on women which men do not have."

For a family to be in good order and shape, the holy Qur'an employs the expression, *Mavaddatan wa rahmah*, and says two factors—one of which is rational companionship and the other is ignoring each other's mistakes and blunders—are of importance in a family structure. In

this manner, it commands men who are responsible for the family to treat women nicely and fairly. This is the expression, *A'sheru hunna bil maroof*, or treat them nicely and fairly. (Javadi Amooli, 1388, V11, p. 287). According to the verses of the Qur'an, some of the rights of women on their husbands are as follows:

- A. *Right to be treated nicely*: "O, you who believe.... Live with them in accordance with what is fair and kind" (chapter Al-Nisa, verse 19). The Tasnim exegesis regarding this verse explains: "As one has to treat men fairly and kindly, one has to treat women fairly and nicely as well. In fact God almighty has divided every household task between them and there is no difference between men and women. Women and men are no different in their right to live and their right to have a social life (Javadi Amooli, 1389, V19, p. 34).
- B. *Housing Rights*: "Let the women (who are undergoing a waiting period) live in the same manner as you live yourselves in accordance with your means." (Chapter Al-Talaq, verse 6). The commentary regarding this verse reads: "Prepare a housing accommodation for the divorced women of yours according to your abilities in the same house you have prepared for yourselves. You have no right to do them any harm so that the living conditions should get difficult for them" (Taba Tabaei, 1392, V19, p. 522).
- C. *The Right to Receive Alimony*: The Tasnim exegesis following the verse, "Men are protectors of women because God has made some of them excel others, because they spend their wealth on them" regarding this right, explains it like the following: "The holy Qur'an gives controlling affairs of the family to men. Their difference is in the executive affairs and job sharing in which body involves. Men hold responsibilities in executive affairs because they have the money and providing alimony and sustenance is their responsibility as well" (Javadi Amooli, 1389, V19, p. 291).
- D. *The Right to have a Marriage Portion*: "And give women their marriage-portion willingly" (chapter Al-Nisa, verse 4). The word *Nehlah* means honeybee in Arabic, which provides people honey with no expectation, and a gift is also called *Nahlah*. Some exegetists have said *Nahlah* means debt or something owed; i.e. marriage-portion is the definite debt of man to his wife (Atyab, 1341, V5,

p. 159; Makarem Shirazi, 1374, V3, p. 263; Aljazayeri, 1419, V4, pp. 516–17). However, the Tasnim exegesis refers to a marriage portion as a sign of the two parties' truthfulness and therefore goes on to explain; "Do not take the possession of whatever was laid down as a marriage-portion for women and give it back to them because a marriage-portion is the cause and source of both parties' truthfulness. The husband should pay his wife's marriage-portion which is the source of truthfulness (Javadi Amooli, 1388, V17, p. 367).

WOMEN'S RIGHTS REGARDING CHILDREN

As parents have responsibilities toward their children, likewise children have rights regarding their parents. In the meantime, mothers' rights regarding children have priority over that of father's'. Some of these rights according to the verses of the Qur'an are as follows:

A. Right to Do Good and Be Kind

God, in numerous verses, besides inviting people to monotheism and forbidding worshipping others, has mentioned kindness and respect towards parents and commands it: "And worship God and do not associate partners with Him. Be good to your parents" (chapter Al-Nisa, verse 36). The final cause of creation and upbringing of the human beings are parents, who are mentioned to be in the higher ranks of goodness and kindness (Taba Tabaei, 1392, V5, p. 171). If the word "Ehsan or goodness and kindness" is mentioned using the Arabic letter "Ba corresponding to letter B in English," it shows care and continuous goodness and kindness, but if the proposition "Ela or towards in English" is used, it would not show continuity. (Fiyomi, 1405, p. 136; Ibn Manzoor, 1385, V13, p. 17; Juhari, 1368, V5, p. 2099) Imam Ali (peace and blessings be on him) says: "Children have rights on their father and father has rights on his children, children's obligations for their father is that, they should always obey their father, unless it is a sin" (Nahj ol Balagha, p. 399). Concerning this verse, the Tasnim exegesis states: "The importance of doing good to one's parents is so high that it has always been tantamount to worshipping of God Almighty. Being polite and humble towards them, maintaining

their respect, and generally having pure goodness and kindness towards them, are some of the examples. Goodness and kindness towards one's parents (whether haves or havenots, whether Muslim or non-Muslim) is obligatory. God says; we enjoined man to do his parents good. Nonetheless if his parents insist on him to give up on his beliefs and to yank back to his pagan habits, he no longer needs to listen to his parents, however God says; 'You should treat them nicely in this world. Ehsan or Goodness and kindness is an extensive and comprehensive concept meaning unprecedented service, and doing any kind of good to anyone which is physically and spiritually beneficial to them is considered as Ehsan. So being charitable to one's parents and taking care of one's parent's subsistence and economic problems is an act of Ehsan.' God says; 'They will ask you what they should spend or others say whatever you give should be for parents'" (chapter al-Baqara, verse 215). So paying attention to one's family structure comes first. One should give attention to his/her parents because it is both considered as "Selat al-rahem" or visiting one's close relatives and as an act of goodness and kindness to his/her parents (Javadi Amooli, 1389, V18, p. 280).

B. The Right of Respect

Respecting one's parents and being kind to them, especially when they age and become weak, is obligatory according to the holy Qur'an and by the same token, children are not allowed to use disrespectful language to verbally abuse them: "Your lord has commanded that you should worship none but Him, and show kindness to thy parents, if either or both of them attain old age with you, you say no word of contempt to them and do not rebuke them, but always speak gently to them" (chapter Al-Isra, V. 23).

It is the Tasnim exegesis that speaks of mutual responsibilities of parents towards children. God Almighty does not command parents to show kindness to their children due to the fact that it is embedded in the innate nature of the parents. He not only has prohibited children from being unkind to them but also He has directed them in an independent manner to be kind to them: "Say no word of contempt to them and do not rebuke them, but always speak gently to them" or "and treat them with humility and tenderness" (chapter Al-Isra, verse 24). God would not allow children to be unkind to their parents and

similarly He has commanded them to be affectionate towards them both. God Almighty not only commands them not to be unkind towards their parents but also prohibits them from being so. Although being disobedient towards them is haram or religiously unlawful, being gentle and kind to them and being in their company is binding so that the family structure would not collapse and fall apart. Therefore, its immediate benefit lies in strengthening family structure. Regarding the lofty position of “mothers,” Ayatollah Javadi Amooli states: “Speaking of respecting one’s parents, to honor mothers’ status, the holy Qur’an, mentioning the word mother separately and independently, goes on declaring that ‘Either of them attain old age with you, say no word of contempt and do not rebuke them and always speak gently to them.’” Respecting parents depends on children’s upbringing, due to the fact that parents are educators. Honoring parents was the tradition and manner of prophets which is reflected in their supplications, prayers and duas, night prayers and their asking God’s pardon. Parents must always be respected although they are polytheists. One of the prominent phrases of Jesus Christ is: “I treat my mother gently and kindly, He has made me dutiful towards my mother and He has not made me arrogant or wicked” (chapter Al-Maryam, verse 32). (Isrcitation following a commentary on chapter Al-Isra).

Ayatollah Javadi Amooli proceeds to comment on this verse, explaining that: “God has directed people to treat parents nicely and speaking gently with them, ordering that you should not even think of making them live in a nursing home, *‘indaka’* or with you. If one of them was living with you and grew old and weak, the verse does not say while they live in a nursing home they grow old. Unfortunately when a society imitates the west and as a result children are sent to nursery schools for seven years likewise their children will take them to nursing homes too. Parents are channels for receiving blessings and bounties of the Almighty creator. Family is considered as a foundation in Islamic teachings and is not an individual or a social argument” (Isrcitation, following a commentary on chapter Al-Maryam).

THE RIGHT TO PRAY AND ASK FOR FORGIVENESS

Another right of children is to pray for their parents as it is recommended

to recite this prayer from the holy Qur'an for them: "O my lord, have compassion on them as they brought me up when I was little, and reward them abundantly and forgive their sins" (Abu-Hamzah Thomali's supplication). Ayatollah Javadi Amooli, regarding a commentary on verse 24 of chapter Al-Isra, says; "the word *'rabbayani'* means they brought me up not the word *'valdani'* meaning they raised me. Parents should pay attention to educating and rearing their children. The better they educate and rear their children the more rights children have on the parents." As to verse 41 of chapter Ibrahim which declares: "O our lord, grant me protection and my parents and the believers when the reckoning day shall come to pass", he says: "Praying for parents is not only limited to this world, one could pray for his/her parents when they are dead as well, and could ask God for their atonement" (Isracitation, following a commentary on chapter Isra and Ibrahim).

WOMEN'S SOCIO-POLITICAL RIGHTS

Paying allegiance to the government and participating in elections, which are the most outstanding and prominent of political rights, are accepted for women by the holy Qur'an. Various political arenas of history of Islam depict this political action of women. In chapter Al-Mutahanah verse 12, God almighty says: "O prophet, when believing women come to you and pledge themselves..." Imam Sadiq (peace be on him) has been quoted as saying: "When the prophet of God conquered Makka, he swore allegiance to the men and then the women came to swear allegiance which was followed by the revelation of the verse 'whenever believing women come to you to take the oath of loyalty to you, swear allegiance to them'" (Koleini, 1361, V5, p. 527).

Speaking of socio-political rights for women, Ayatollah Javadi Amooli goes on to say: "Executive socio-political tasks are an obligation, not perfection; knowledge, insight and sincerity are considered perfection though. If it is said that women should not hold down executive jobs, the reason is that they are not in harmony with women's emotions and feelings. These are not considered as perfection for females, rather it is an obligation.

Thus, there is not perfection and an accomplishment in religion of Islam that women cannot procure. Executive jobs are considered as

a duty for women not as perfection. Therefore, men and women as to obtaining perfection are equal. Neither being a male is a necessary condition for achieving perfection, nor is being a female considered as an impediment. Although, whatever makes being a male a necessary condition or being a female an obstacle is, socio-political jobs" (Javadi Amooli, 1389, V18, P368).

WOMEN'S RIGHT TO ECONOMIC INDEPENDENCE

According to the teachings of Islam, women do have economic independence and sufficiency like men do, and are considered as the owners of their own labor. In economic affairs such as inheritance, they are entitled to inherit from others.

God says: "And do not covet that by which Allah has made some of you excel others; men shall have the benefit of what they earn and women shall have the benefit of what they earn; and ask Allah of His grace; surely Allah knows all things. And to every one We have appointed heirs of what parents and near relatives leave; and as to those with whom your right hands have ratified agreements, give them their portion. (Chapter Al-Nisa, verse 32-33). When the verses concerning inheritance and Jihad were revealed to the Prophet, some women went to the messenger of God and said: "As a matter of fact men have excelled us in inheritance and Jihad. We wish we were men and were able to take part in battles to enjoy the advantages of Jihad and inheritance. Upon their request, the aforesaid verse was revealed: "And do not covet that by which God has made some of you excel others..." (Toosi 1409, V3, p. 184; Tabarsi 1415, V3, p. 73; Makarem Shirazi 1374, V3, p. 362).

Islam does not force women to meet their own needs and family under any circumstances, but men are responsible for providing alimony and the needs of married life. Ayatollah Javadi Amooli, commenting on this verse regarding women's economic rights, explains: "The woman is the same as man, for everything she earns. Women like men are independent in economic affairs as they are independent in scientific and material matters as well as moral improvement". (Javadi Amooli, 1389, V18, p. 410).

He says women are entitled to economic rights and ownership, property and asset management in the same manner as men are. In

that way, in terms of dividing inheritance, he continues: “Depriving women of the inheritance at the time of pagans was a common belief and accepted by all. Islam, therefore, has a specific and independent verse both in the economic and inheritance part for women. The verse does not say whatever a Muslim’s gain is for him/herself; however it expresses the noun woman and the noun man separately in order to clearly and conclusively cancel out this pagan tradition. Islam divides the inheritance on basis of human dignity and merits, although at the time of paganism, it was not the case and it was done according to one’s military and economic abilities and so on and so forth. Whatever property and wealth women have is theirs. They take alimony and marriage-portion from men and all the costs of women are taken on by men. Thus men possess two thirds, although in terms of spending, they both share two-thirds of it, and the one-third provided by women, is theirs. Men are not only responsible for providing their own costs but also responsible for women’s costs as well” (Ibid, V18, p. 441).

Likewise, regarding the verse “Allah enjoins you concerning your children, the male shall have the equal of the portion of two females, then if they are more than two females, they shall have two-thirds of what the deceased has left and if there is one, she shall have the half...” (Chapter Al-Nisa, verse 11).

Imam Sadiq (peace be on him) has been quoted in Ibn Abi Al-awja concerning the inheritance received by men and women, to have said: “I asked the messenger of God why the poor woman inherits one-third and man two-thirds? The messenger replied; jihad, alimony, blood money and Agheleh (in legal terms, family and close relatives of an individual who commits an unintentional murder or injures someone, that they should pay the blood money) is not women’s responsibility, this is men’s duty though. Therefore men inherit two-thirds and women one-third’ (Horre Ameli, 1369, V17, p. 436) and ‘For women to progress, God almighty has expanded the means for them to take possession of things such as, inheritance...In this verse, the share of women is the basic principle, not the share of the men. Speaking of men the verse goes on saying; a man like a woman takes a share or double share and...by and large, various male shares are measured in relation to the women’s share which is to turn a blind eye to the same remnants of the time of ignorance, because women were deprived of inheritance

by pagans.' The Qur'an states: 'Give boys two times more than girls when you want to share your properties and your wealth. It means girls do inherit, her share is clear and specified and two times more than that of men. This is the men's share which is unspecified and has to be specified by women's share'" (Javadi Amooli, 1388, V17, p. 456; Motahhari 1374, p. 283; Seyyed-Qutub 1415, V4, pp. 112–13).

CONCLUSION

In recent decades, we have witnessed that women's issues have come under the spotlight and have drawn much attention from international institutions; and a lot of movements are operating in the name of women or for women. The outcomes of these activities are the Document on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women and the 2030 Education framework. Emphasis on gender similarity and giving into the unrealistic regulations and laws of these institutions has caused women to lose their "Takvivi" or developmental identity as well as their identity as mothers, and has turned them into men who they do not accept as having any legal rights for being women. On contrary, the holy Qur'an, in order to define the rights of women and men, has defined equal rights for women to be the same as for men in the social and family domains, but this does not mean complete similarity in rights.

Ayatollah Javadi Amooli in his Tasnim exegesis of the holy Qur'an refers to this verse: "Women have been created to do a different job as opposed to men and they have different emotions from men." According to the divine laws, men and women were created to complete each other with distinctive responsibilities and functions. More shares of emotion have been granted to women as maintaining the foundation of family and managing it, breeding generations as well as raising children have been left to them. To put it in a nutshell, the research findings of this paper can be summarized as follows:

1. On the basis of its divine teachings, the holy Qur'an has a holistic view of women. For this reason, it has given her responsibilities and legal rights in proportion to her developmental personality. In contrast, international agreements have only focused on one dimension of women -that is her gender and occupational dimension.

2. According to the Qur'an, breeding and upbringing generations is the most outstanding duty of women, whereas international institutions = chanting the slogan of gender equality—have overshadowed their roles as mothers and wives and have downgraded their role to mere sexual partners and have explained divorce as a pleasant phenomenon and a humane solution.
3. The Qur'an introduces woman like men as a constructive and active agent in individual, family and social life and grants her legal rights according to circumstances, which has not been written in international documents that defend women but have been mentioned on the basis of absolute equality of men and women, which is a double kind of cruelty and disrespect for women and even men. That will definitely cause family and society to disintegrate.
4. The Qur'an has accepted hijab or covering for women for their scion-political and economic activities etc within a regulated framework. However, hijab and modesty don't have any place in international documents and is considered to be part of anti-gender equality which restricts women's individual and social freedom as well as their flamboyance and showiness.
5. The Qur'an is of the opinion that women have economic rights saying that they have absolute ownership over her properties and wealth. It goes on to say that working is optional for women as well as economic regulations, alimony, and having a marriage-portion—but all are in line with protecting women's dignity and respect although international documents downgrade women to being mere sexual partners.

It is suggested that other aspects of women's rights and responsibilities from the viewpoint of the Qur'an should be studied in order that the universality of its divine verses related to knowing the rights and qualities of human beings is explained and made clear.

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Women and Hijab in Iranian Society

INTRODUCTION

Hijab is defined by contemporary Muslim jurists as the obligation of a Muslim woman to cover all parts of her body, apart from hands and face, in public and in the presence of unrelated men—is one of the most visible Islamic mandates. Since the early twentieth century, Hijab has been a major site of ideological struggle between the forces of traditionalism and modernity, and a yardstick by which many observers have measured the emancipation or repression of Muslim women. The emergence of political Islam in the second part of the century turned Hijab into an arena where Islamist and secular feminist discourses and rhetoric clashed head-on, each side judging the other's position and arguments by its own code of morality and values.¹

Each community has its own particular moral, religious and philosophical thoughts. In the Islamic community, morals are the basis of submission to Allah, the Almighty. A pluralistic mentality is demonstrated through limited regulations that control individuals' behaviours. Religion becomes a pivotal force that affects the social process. In this context, the issue of Hijab or the Islamic modest dress and its social dimension assumes greater importance. It is the development not in the biological sense, but in the social one. It is the offspring of phenomena, one from the other. This phenomenon stemmed from nakedness and is considered as freedom stemming from slavery regarding a historical period, and the revelation of the Qur'anic verses. Since Hijab is a social phenomenon in the Muslim community, it leads to development which historically occurred when Muslim women observing Hijab were out of men's sight. Women understood the meaning of freedom, which replaced slavery.²

According to Islam, women have a worthy character and divine position. They can pass the stages of excellence and reach the highest

levels of humanity. The existence of the woman adorns the creation of mankind and the horizon of her spirit is the place where mercy appears. The woman's lap is the school for mankind. The perfection of the man is not possible without the woman, who is the symbol of tenderness. Her existence is the beauty of the creation. The reformation of the society depends on women's virtuosity. The family environment is her class where she can learn and teach. The divine exalted position of this pearl of creation needs to be covered up by the Hijab, which preserves the high values of a woman.³ Hijab is derived from Arabic word which means cover or curtain.

MEANING OF HIJAB

According to the Encyclopedia of Islam and the Muslim World, the meaning of Hijab has evolved over time: "The term Hijab or veil is not used in the Qur'an to refer to an article of clothing for women or men; rather it refers to a spatial curtain that divides or provides privacy. The Quran instructs the male believers (Muslims) to talk to wives of Prophet Muhammad behind a Hijab. This Hijab was the responsibility of the men and not the wives of Prophet Muhammad. However, in later Muslim societies this instruction, specific to the wives of Prophet Muhammad, was generalized, leading to the segregation of the Muslim men and women. The modesty in Quran concerns both men's and women's gaze, gait, garments, and genitalia. The clothing for women involves khumur over the necklines and jilbab (cloaks) in public so that they may be identified and not harmed. Guidelines for covering of the entire body except for the hands, the feet and the face, are found in texts of fiqh and hadith that are developed later."⁴

Islam lays great emphasis on Hijab, which is to avoid contacts between women with non-mahram men (who are not of very close family links). The mahram is a little circle of men or women-parents, grand-parents, children, brothers/sisters, uncles/aunts, grand-children, stepchildren, parents-in-law and step parents. A Muslim adult woman is not obliged to be covered in front of the men mentioned above and such Muslim men are not obliged to lower their gaze. The second group, called non-mahram, is the rest of society. A Muslim woman should wear Hijab in front of all adult males of this group. Any sort of contact between them

or being alone together in Khalwah (private), except in the extreme cases, is banned. Non-mahram, as determinant factor, has created a culture which not only influenced dress, but also social behaviour.⁵

In contemporary Islam, Hijab refers to the following meaning:

1. A simple headscarf.
2. The entire ensemble a woman wears in front of non-intimates that covers her whole body—with the exception of her face, hands and for some, feet—in loose, opaque, non-distinctive clothing; and
3. The philosophy of dressing and acting modestly.⁶

THE HIJAB ISSUE IN IRAN

The issue of Hijab⁷ has been debated in Iran for over a century. At one time, decrees of Iranian governments have required the use of Hijab (Islamic veil) and at the other times forbidden it. Many have fervently spoken for or against the hijab. In fact, veiling has functioned more like a code that allowed everyone to vent their private aspirations, fears, dreams and nightmares. Now, the veil as an emblem of progress, then domination, and later as a symbol of purity, then of corruption, has accommodated itself to a puzzling diversity of personal and political ideologies.

At the end of the nineteenth century, as part of a wider debate over modernization and the spread of secular education—developments seen by the religious establishment as a threat to its authority. Though Hijab was debated during the Constitutional era (1906–11), when the first girls' schools were established, it only became a 'problem' when Reza Shah embarked on a policy of 'unveiling' or *kashf-e hejab*, as part of his programme for modernizing and secularizing Iran. The policy reached its peak in 1936 with a law that made wearing a chador or a scarf an offence, and women who defied it were arrested and their covering forcibly removed. The declared aim was to promote women's rights and their liberation, and the assumption was that replacing traditional women's dress with Western styles would lead to women's increased participation in society.

The unveiling policy caused outrage among the clerics, reflected in 'hijab treatises' (*rasa'el-e hijabiyeh*), a new genre of literature that

emerged in the early twentieth century. In 2001, Rasul Jafarian, a researcher and cleric, published a two-volume collection of treatises, starting with a 1911 treatise by Fakhṛ ol-Islam, written as a refutation of Qasim Amin, and ending with Ayatollah Motahhari's 1968 book. The *Question of Hijab*, a quasi-modernist text which, as we shall see, became the official position of the Islamic Republic on hijab. In between, there are 32 other treatises, whose language and defence of hijab become more radical after the 1930s. With the exception of Motahhari's text, the rest have a strong anti-modernist stance and advocate the fiqh notion of hijab as the 'confinement' of women, largely in reaction to Reza Shah's kashf-e hijab policy and to those who had written in its support.¹¹ Of these treatises make explicit the implicit assumptions that inform fiqh rulings on hijab.⁸

After Reza Shah's abdication in 1941, the compulsory element in the policy of unveiling was abandoned, though its ideology remained intact throughout the Pahlavi era. Between 1941 and 1979 (when the regime collapsed) wearing Hijab was no longer an offence, but it was a real hindrance to climbing the social ladder, a badge of backwardness and a marker of class. Hijab prejudiced the chances of advancement in work and society not only of working women but also of men, who were increasingly expected to appear with their unveiled wives at social functions. Fashionable hotels and restaurants refused to admit women wearing chador (the traditional Iranian form of Hijab) and schools and universities actively discouraged it, although the headscarf was tolerated.⁹

ISSUE OF HIJAB AFTER THE ISLAMIC REVOLUTION OF IRAN

Women were major participants in the Iranian Revolution against the Shah, which unfolded between 1977 and February 1979. The large urban street demonstrations included huge contingents of middle-class and working-class women wearing the veil as a symbol of opposition to Pahlavi bourgeois or Westernized decadence. Many of the women who wore the veil as a protest symbol did not expect hijab (Islamic modest dress) to become mandatory. Thus, when the first calls were made in February 1979 to enforce hijab and Ayatollah Khomeini was quoted as saying that he preferred to see women in modest Islamic dress, many

women were alarmed. Spirited protests and sit-ins were led by middle-class leftist and liberal women, most of them were members of political organizations or recently-formed women's associations. Limited support for the women's protests came from the main left-wing political groups. As a result of the women's protests, the ruling on hijab was rescinded—but only temporarily. With the defeat of the left and the liberals in 1980 and their elimination from the political landscape in 1981, the Islamists were able to make veiling compulsory and enforced it harshly. Cosmetics were also banned. Some young women who defied the new regulations and wore lipstick in public were treated to be a novel punishment by the enforcers of public morality—removal of lipstick by razor blade.

During the first half of the 1980s, the Islamic Republic (IRI) waged a massive ideological campaign that celebrated Islamic values and denigrated the West, extolled women's family roles, and championed hijab as central to the rejuvenation of Islamic society.¹⁰ In 1979, when Ayatollah Khomeini went back on what he had said earlier in Paris, and asked women who work in government to observe Islamic dress, these women once again took to the streets, this time to protest against the veil. But it was to no avail, and in due course Hijab became compulsory. With the onset of the war with Iraq in 1980, radicals within the Islamic groups gained the upper hand and silenced all voices of dissent. In 1983, Article 102 of the Law of Islamic Punishments made women's appearance in public without Hijab an offence against public morality, punishable by the 'Islamic' penalty of up to seventy-four lashes. The imposition of Hijab was defended and enforced with vigour in the following years and became one of the cornerstones of the Islamic Republic. In their Friday sermons, lectures and writings, political clerics often spoke of the success and the authority of the Islamic Republic with reference to the policy of compulsory Hijab. Yet, the ideologues in the Islamic Republic have not produced any juristic argument in defence of this policy, nor did any meaningful discussion of the issue emerged until late 1990s.¹¹

In the early 1990s, the harshness with which the policy was enforced came under some criticism; and eventually, in 1996, the punishment for not observing proper hijab was changed from flogging to between ten days and two months imprisonment or a fine of 50,000 to 500,000 *rials*. (Islamic Punishment Law, Note to Article 638). But it was not until

the emergence of the reformist press, following the unexpected election of Mohammad Khatami as President in 1997 that the unspoken ban on discussing the imposition of hijab was broken. With the opening of political space and the expansion of the discourse of 'rights', discussion of hijab, like other issues that had been successfully suppressed since the Revolution, inevitably resurfaced. A number of articles appeared in the Reformist press questioning the wisdom of the policy of enforcement and pointing out its anachronistic incompatibility with the new discourse advocated by the Reformist government.¹²

In November 1999, the wisdom of the Islamic Republic's Hijab policy was for the first time openly questioned. This happened during the trial of Abdollah Nuri, Khatami's first Interior Minister and one of the boldest reformers. The Conservatives were afraid of Nuri's popularity, as well as his credentials—in the 1980s he had been Ayatollah Khomeini's close ally and his representative in the Revolutionary Guards—and in order to prevent his running in the February 2000 Majles elections they had him brought before the Special Clergy Court. Among his offences was the publication of an article in which he attributed the insistence on imposing Hijab to the despotic desires of those who wanted to enforce their own style of life on the rest of society. His trial was widely covered by the Reformist press. In his defence, Nuri raised the stakes by making explicit what no one until then had dared to say publicly: that the Islamic Republic's policy on Hijab had been an utter failure. While defending Hijab as a religious rule, he advocated tolerance and the recognition of reality. Hijab is our religious obligation, he argued, but the fact is that some in society (including some Muslims) do not follow this religious obligation, and the government's effort to force these people to observe the rule of Hijab has not been successful. Instead of following the policies of the past—that is denying reality, or trying to force it into a straightjacket of fiqh rules and punishing those who do not conform—Nuri offered a way out that reflected the Reformist position: distinguish social reality from religious ideals and rules, and give people the choice whether or not to follow the mandates of their faith, which can never be enforced successfully, as shown by the failure of the Islamic Republic's policy on Hijab. Such a radical departure from the old slogans led to a predictable reaction from the Conservatives who had brought him to trial: he was sentenced to five years in jail. Despite setbacks such as

Nuri's conviction, the Reformists won a massive victory in the 2000 Majles elections. The debate over Hijab did not subside but was taken to a new level. In April, at a conference organized by the Heinrich Böll Institute in Berlin, a number of Reformists—both secular and religious—were invited from Iran to discuss the prospects for reform. In a panel dealing with women's issues, compulsory Hijab became the main focus of objections by opposition elements in the audience. The two panellists with a religious perspective—Shahla Sherkat, editor of Zanan magazine, and the cleric Hassan Yusefi Eshkevari—had to respond. Both rejected the idea of compulsory Hijab, and argued that Muslim women should have the choice whether to adopt it or not.¹³

Since the late 1990s, official threats and conservative consternation over the loosening of strictures on women's attire has been a regular phenomenon, particularly in the month of April. In 2006, Ahmadinejad's first stint as President, the proponents of compulsory Hijab, who had blamed the Reformists for not punishing "immodest" women, now pointedly argued for "cultural means" to deal with the problem. One of Iran's senior clerics declared that women who wear revealing clothing are to be blamed for earthquakes. It was a statement that created an international uproar—but little affected their bid to become an international arbiter of women's rights. "Many women who do not dress modestly...lead young men astray, corrupt their chastity and spread adultery in society, which (consequently) increases earthquakes," said the respected cleric, Hojatoleslam Kazem Sedighi.¹⁴

Ahmadinejad, who during his election campaign earlier in 2005 had promised to bring social justice and having more important issues to deal with than women's dress, joined the chorus. The police came up with a new strategy, designed to defuse popular fears of a crackdown. Male police, accompanied by female colleagues, used persuasion rather than force—that is, instead of arresting bad-Hijab girls and women to be fined by the courts, they merely stopped them and issued warnings, as well as guidance toward "the right path." But on 21st of April 2007, the police launched an unprecedentedly aggressive drive to enforce the rule of Hijab in public space. This initiative—named 'Moral Security' and involving female police in full chador—was targeted at young women sporting the new fashion of Hijab consisting of tight tunics, short trousers and narrow scarves, whom the authorities called 'mannequins'.

Later, the drive had resulted in the arrest of hundreds of women with many thousands receiving verbal warnings; but it had already lost its momentum and brought a rift within the Conservative coalition that brought Ahmadinejad to office. Hardliners hailed the new initiative as evidence of the new government's intention to revive the slogans and ideals of the Revolution, but the head of the judiciary, Ayatollah Shahrudi, criticized it as leading to the criminalization and alienation of the youth, while members of parliament attacked it as unwise and too harsh. Meanwhile, Ayatollah Musavi Ardabili, who headed the Judiciary in the 1980s openly, questioned the wisdom of a policy of imposing Hijab, saying that it only drives the women and youth away from religion. Despite government attempts to control reporting of the arrests, pictures of girls resisting arrest and being roughly treated by the police have been circulating through the Internet, arousing a great deal of comment in the Reformist press and abroad.¹⁵

The visibility and growing public participation of urban women in the 1960s and 1970s had alarmed clerics and the men of the petty bourgeoisie, leading to calls for women's domestication. Westernized women were blamed for the decline of Islamic values, cultural degradation, and the weakening of the family. In the IRI's remake of Iran's political culture, compulsory veiling signaled the redefinition of gender rules, and the veiled woman came to symbolize the moral and cultural transformation of the society. The success of the revolution and the return of Islamic values depended on the appearance and comportment of women—a responsibility that some women gladly assumed but others found extremely onerous. Ayatollah Khomeini had his women supporters, but the government of the IRI initially included no women in important or visible positions. The regime was masculine in style as well as in composition, consisting overwhelmingly of Islamic clerics.

The effects of the Islamic Republic's preoccupation with cultural and ideological issues and with the definition of women's roles were considerable. The full range of their social impact, which came to light when the results of the 1986 national census of population and housing were analyzed, included an increase in fertility and population growth and a decline in female labor-force participation, particularly in the industrial sector; lack of progress in literacy and educational

attainment; and a sex ratio that favored males. Clearly, Islamist politics had produced an extremely disadvantaged position for women. It had reinforced male domination, compromised women's autonomy, and created a set of gender relations characterized by profound inequality. However, a number of factors came to undermine the Islamic Republic's project for women, family, and gender relations. The changes began after the death of Ayatollah Khomeini in 1989 and continued during the presidency of Hashemi Rafsanjani (1989–1997), in the context of economic liberalization and integration into the global economy. During this time, Iranian civil society developed and a lively women's press emerged. Further changes occurred during the two terms of President Mohammad Khatami (1997–2005), including the growth and vitality of Iranian civil society and a movement for political and cultural reform.¹⁶

Veiling, however, implies that a woman can only be seen by her husband or male relatives who are sexually neutral to her. Consequently, a woman's physical appearance belongs to her husband. It can thus be argued that veiling is yet another dimension of a husband's ownership of his wife. Therefore, it can be argued that the unveiled presence of women in public space modified the extent of male ownership.¹⁷ The Islamic Republic also applied a policy of forced veiling of women. In its undemocratic and repressive aspects, the policy was reminiscent of the forced unveiling of the women. The extent of compliance to veiling is in many cases only minimal and veiling has not contributed to seclusion. On the contrary, veiling has brought to public space women from devout Muslim and traditional families who otherwise would have been prevented from participation in the labour market and education by their families. Nevertheless, the implicit and ideological assumption of veiling is the monopoly control of a husband over the physical appearance of his wife, thus increased male ownership.¹⁸

Though the system of Hijab has been successfully implemented and there are severe penalties for not following Islamic dress codes, segregation policies have failed in large cosmopolitan cities such as Tehran. Currently all females past puberty, even visitors and non-Muslims in Iran, will have to observe the current dress code by covering their hair and neck, wearing a loose long coat, trousers and socks to cover feet. Some government institutions require women to wear a chador on

top of the prescribed dress code once inside their compounds. Dark colors are recommended, make up is discouraged but many women in large cities use make up, loose and colorful head scarves and defy the codes. In fact make up industry and cosmetic surgery is booming in Iran right now. Segregation of sexes could not be fully imposed by the new régime despite many measures such as banning co-education and restricting public spaces where the two sexes could freely mix. It is not a common practice amongst Iranians in western countries including North America. Segregation of the sexes if observed is enforced after puberty; however, it is encouraged from early ages before puberty. In such cases single sex education is preferable and the sexes must be segregated in any activity where the body is only partly covered, i.e. swimming. Dating and pre-marital relations are totally prohibited amongst such families. Men and women do not normally shake hands. They may sit separately, even in the same room they may not sit on the same sofa. Outside the family men and women may usually socialize separately. At the hospitals they might ask for nurses or doctors from the same sex. Iranians who have remained practicing Muslims in western countries will normally observe segregation codes while in Mosques and other religious ceremonies and rituals. Same sexes might cluster together at parties and weddings but on the whole they do not observe very strict segregation codes. Muslim women are very active in Mosque activities and are in constant contact with other males during their many happenings and meetings. However some have remained faithful to veiling practices and encourage their daughters to practice modest veiling by mainly covering their hair. Iranians do not practice total veiling where the whole face will be covered. Such strict veiling is not even common in Iran; there are few groups who may practice it voluntarily but it is not part of the official dress code. Majority of Iranians in western countries do not practice either and in fact many are totally against both practices.¹⁹

Less than three decades after the Islamic Revolution of Iran, the policy of compulsory Hijab has produced its own antithesis, in the same way that Reza Shah's policy of compulsory unveiling had done. Today in Iran Hijab is no longer a symbol of protest and liberation but is associated by many with gender discrimination and the denial of

personal choice and freedom. In this context, discourses of feminism and human rights have combined to bring a new consciousness and a new point of reference for women and reformist thinkers. While Iranian women are increasingly defying the rule of Hijab and a growing number even of religious women no longer see it a religious mandate but as a state imposition, Muslim women elsewhere are embracing Hijab. Coming from different walks of life and with different purposes and ideologies, Muslim women who adopt different forms of covering (including, more recently, the face veil) are using Hijab as a marker of a new identity, as a form of protest, to redefine the terms of their presence in public space.

NOTES

1. See *Ziba Mir-Hosseini*, "The Politics and Hermeneutics of *Hijab* in Iran: From Confinement to Choice", *Muslim World Journal of Human Rights*, Vol. 4, Issue 1, 2007, p. 1.
2. For details, see the cover story on *Hijab in Mahjubah*, no. 95, April 1992, pp. 9–27.
3. Hamzah Karim khani, "The Role of *Hijab* in Securing the Society", *Mahjubah*, no. 270, July 2008.
4. *Encyclopedia of Islam and the Muslim World* (2003), New York: Macmillan, p. 721.
5. Jahanshah Rashidian, "Why Islamic *Hijab*", http://www.iran-press-service.com/ips/articles-2007/may2007/rashidian_21507.shtml
6. Sara Javadi Faraz, "The Iranian Government's Approach towards the Use of the *Hijab*", October 2008, Thesis presented to the Senate of University Putra Malaysia.
7. In the Islamic Republic of Iran, *hijab* consists of a scarf, a loose and long overcoat, with trousers and thick socks underneath, but some women put on the more strict optional form, a thick head-to-toe veil that only leaves the hands and parts of the face visible.
8. *Ziba Mir-Hosseini*, "The Politics and Hermeneutics of *Hijab* in Iran: From Confinement to Choice", *Muslim World Journal of Human Rights*, Vol. 4, Issue 1, 2007, pp. 2–3.
9. *Ziba Mir-Hosseini*, "The Politics and Hermeneutics of *Hijab* in Iran: From Confinement to Choice", *Muslim World Journal of Human Rights*, Vol. 4, Issue 1, 2007, p. 3.

10. Valentine Moghadam, "Women in the Islamic Republic of Iran: Legal Status, Social Positions, and Collective Action", paper presented at the conference entitled *Iran After 25 Years of Revolution: A Retrospective and a Look Ahead*, held at the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, 16–17 November 2004.
11. Ziba Mir-Hosseini, "The Politics and Hermeneutics of *Hijab* in Iran: From Confinement to Choice", *Muslim World Journal of Human Rights*, Vol. 4, Issue 1, 2007, p. 7.
12. Ziba Mir-Hosseini, "The Politics and Hermeneutics of *Hijab* in Iran: From Confinement to Choice", *Muslim World Journal of Human Rights*, Vol. 4, Issue 1, 2007, p. 7.
13. Ziba Mir-Hosseini, "The Politics and Hermeneutics of *Hijab* in Iran: From Confinement to Choice", *Muslim World Journal of Human Rights*, Vol. 4, Issue 1, 2007, pp. 8–9.
14. Joseph Abrams "U.N. Elects Iran to Commission on Women's Rights", 29 April 2010, <http://www.foxnews.com/world/2010/04/29/elects-iran-commission-womens-rights>.
15. Ziba Mir-Hosseini, "The Politics and Hermeneutics of *Hijab* in Iran: From Confinement to Choice", *Muslim World Journal of Human Rights*, Vol. 4, Issue 1, 2007, pp. 12–13.
16. Valentine Moghadam, "Women in the Islamic Republic of Iran: Legal Status, Social Positions, and Collective Action", paper presented at the conference entitled *Iran After 25 Years of Revolution: A Retrospective and a Look Ahead*, held at the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, 16–17 November 2004.
17. Fatemeh Etemad Moghadam, "The Political Economy of Female Employment in Post-revolutionary Iran," in Susan Slymovics & Suad Joseph (eds.), *Women and Power in the Islamic Middle East* (Pennsylvania University Press, 2000), pp. 191–203.
18. Fatemeh Etemad Moghadam, "The Political Economy of Female Employment in Post-revolutionary Iran," in Susan Slymovics & Suad Joseph (eds.), *Women and Power in the Islamic Middle East* (Pennsylvania University Press, 2000), pp. 191–203.
19. Massoume Price, "Veiling (*Hijab*) and Segregation of Sexes in Iran"/www.iranchamber.com/society

DR. LUBNA NAAZ

Orientalists' Approach to the Prophet of Islam A Study of Maulana Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi

ABSTRACT

After last Crusade, a new approach began to oppose Islam, mostly in European Countries. It was not a violent struggle but academic and Intellectual war against Islam. That trend or approach coined commonly by the term Orientalism. Many Muslim Scholars condemned and refuted that kind of attack on Islam. In India, Shibli Numani, Sayyid Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi, Abul Ala Maududi and Dr. Abdul Haq Ansari were few among them. This study is a humble effort to find Sayyid Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi's views on Orientalists approach.

Key words: Qur'an, Orientalism, Crusades, Christianity, Islam, Culture, Literature, History.

DEFINITION

The history of Oriental studies of Islamic history, culture and teachings mainly about the Qur'an and the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) reveals that from the very beginning there have been confrontations between Islam and Christianity, though the Jews and Christians share with Muslims a common religious and cultural heritage. As far as the technical sense of Orientalism is concerned, the movement and its academic activities were started properly after a long period from the birth of Islam. The word 'Orientalism' and 'Orientalists' are not of ancient origin. These words were used as the special technical terms only in the later period of eighteenth century. The two terms were derived from the word Orient that means the 'East'. The word Oriental is the adjective of the same which is contrasted with the 'Occidental'. 'Orientalists' is also derived from that root which means the Westerner who expertises over the Oriental languages, arts, literatures, cultures and civilizations.¹

The Orientalism came forward in its original shape clearly when it added the study of the Qur'an and the Prophet (pbuh) as the opponent sources. It is a movement, an attitude and a discipline. Within the framework of Orientalism, Islam was misrepresented and was declared outdate. Attempts to revive and glorify the ancient languages and culture were made again in Egypt, Iraq, North Africa and other region so that these cultures should provide a challenge to Islamic culture and civilization, to fulfil its special mission to organize and propagate anti-Islamic activities. The Orientalists made mountains out of molehills with a view to serving political and religious ends. They taxed their energies to point out mistakes and failings, real or imaginary in the Islamic history, culture and literature and presented them in a dramatic manner in order to highlight only the imaginary dark features.

The knowledge and intelligence pressed them to offer a microscopic examination of their topics with a view to stretching the truth for painting a very dismal picture of Islam, its law and culture with a view to disenchant and despond the Muslim young men with Islam and its way of life and in the present and future of the Islamic World. Consequently they became the most ardent supporter of "modernization" of Islam and reform of Shariah. The Orientalists in that phase determined their objectives to prove their proposition. They, first, collected evidences from all sorts of unauthentic works on different events unrelated to the subject of their study. Material from religious tracts, historical and literary stories, poetry, fictions and anecdotes were collected and used artfully in order to present novel theories which do not exist anywhere save in their imagination.

The Orientalist always worked with the missionary spirit to disgrace Islam; of course their techniques kept changing from time to time. They, coming out of limited circle of enthusiastic approach, came forward with the weapon of logic, knowledge and argument. They adjusted their technique to defame Islam and the Prophet. Later their anti-Islamic attitude was minimized comparatively. Briefly, the Orientalist attitude and technique differed from time to time. Consequently their mode of reasoning, arguments and narration varies and the standard of their thought and art, research and academic works differ but the objective of Orientalization has never changed.²

ALI MIAN NADWI'S CAREER

Ali Nadwi was an Islamic scholar who received education from Madrasa and keenly observed the western culture and its negative impact on humankind. According to Ali Nadwi, the Western civilization is based on materialistic thought. There is no scope for spirituality and morality in the civilization. Its origin is based on Greek philosophy and thoughts. The West has a genealogical relation with the Greek civilization.

Maulana Abul Hassan Ali Nadwi was born in 1914 A.D., in Daira Shah Alamullah in the village Takiya Kalan, Distric Raebareli of Uttar Pradesh. His mother, with the teaching of the Qur'an, started Ali Nadwi's education and then, he began the formal education of Arabic and Urdu.

In 1923, when he was nine years old, his father Hakim Sayyid Abdul Hai died. The responsibility of his education then came to his mother and his elder brother Maulana Dr. Sayyid Abdul Ali Hasani. In 1924, he began his formal Arabic education under the guidance of Allama Khalil. In 1926 Ali Nadwi got admission in Nadwatul Ulama. He attended the Dars of Hadith by Allama Muhaddith Haider Hasan Khan and studied Bukhari,³ Sunan-e Abudaud⁴ and Sanan-e Tirmaizi⁵ word by word from him. In 1926, annual Convention of Nadwatul Ulama held at Kanpur. Maulana attended and impressed all by speaking Arabic fluently at the age of 13. In 1927, Ali Nadwi took admission in Lucknow University where he obtained the degree of Graduation. In 1927-30, Ali Nadwi learnt English language.⁶

In 1931 Ali Nadwi wrote his first article on Sayyid Ahmad Shaheed at the age of 17, which was published in the journal Al-Manar⁷ edited by Sayyid Rashid Rida (1865–1935)⁸ of Egypt. In 1932, Ali Nadwi studied the complete Tafsir of Qur'an at Lahore by Maulana Ahmad Ali Lahori. In the same year, he stayed few months at Darul Uloom Deoband where he took lessons from Shaykhul Islam Maulana Husain Ahmad Madni in Sunan-e Tirmizi and Sahih Bukhari. He also took advantage of his stay and learnt *Tafsir*. He took lessons in Fiqh from Shaykh Aijaz Ali and in Tajweed as per the reference of Hafis from Qari Ashgahr Ali. Ali Miyan was included in the editorial board of the Arabic Journal "Al- Zia" of Nadwatul Ulama in the same year. In 1934, he joined Nadwatul Ulama as a teacher of Tafsir, Hadith, Arabic

literature, History and Logic. In 1935, he travelled to Bombay to invite Dr. Ambedkar (the schedule caste leader) to adopt Islam. In 1938, Ali Nadwi's first book, the biography of Sayyid Ahmad Shaheed (1786–1831)⁹ (titled, *Seerat-e Syed Ahmad Shaheed*) was published. It soon became popular amongst the men of learning.

In 1939, his first journey to Lahore took place. He met Ulama and elites. He met Dr. Muhammad Iqbal. He had already translated a poem of Dr. Iqbal in Arabic prose. In the same year he travelled to the famous Islamic Centres of India, like Markaz Nizamuddin to meet Maulana Muhammad Ilyas of Kandhla in Delhi (1885–1944)¹⁰ and Maulana Abdul Qadir of Raipuri (1878–1962)¹¹ in Raipur. In 1940, Ali Nadwi was included in the editorial board of and the Urdu journal *Al-Nadwa*.¹² He was then invited in Jamia Millia Islamia (A central University of India) in 1942 to deliver a lecture, which later published titled *Deen-o-Mazhab*. In 1943, Ali Nadwi established an association by the name of Anjuman Taleemat-e-Deen.¹³ Moreover, he delivered lectures on Tafsir and Sunnah, which became very popular particularly among the modern educated Muslims. In 1945, Ali Nadwi got selected as a member of the administrative council of Nadwatul Ulama.¹⁴ In 1947, Ali Nadwi performed his first Hajj. He stayed for a few months at Hijaz. It was his first foreign trip. In 1951, he was appointed as the Deputy Director of Education at Nadwatul Ulama, by Allama Sayyid Sulaiman Nadwi. In the same year, Ali Nadwi founded his famous movement *Payam-e-Insaniyat* (Message of humanity). In 1951, he travelled to Egypt where his famous book '*Maza Khasir-al-Aalam-bi-inhibitat-al-Muslimeen*' had already become popular. Here he was introduced as the author of the book. In 1954, after the death of Allama Sayyid Sulaiman Nadwi (1884–1953),¹⁵ he was appointed as Nazim (Principal) of Nadwatul Ulama. In 1955, Ali Nadwi got appointed as the editor of the journal 'Al-Ba's' (Arabic). In 1956, he was appointed as visiting member of the Arabic Academy Damascus.¹⁶

In 1959, Ali Nadwi founded 'Academy of Islamic Research and publications' in Nadwa. In the same year, he got appointed as the editor of the journal 'Al-Raid' (Arabic) as well as he was assigned the responsibility of editorial of a journal from Damascus. In 1961, he was appointed as, General Secretary of Nadwatul Ulama. In 1962, he was appointed by Aligarh Muslim University to recast the BA course

of Islamic Studies. In 1963, he delivered many lectures in Jamia Islamia Madinah Munawara, which were published by the name of “*Al Nubuwwatu wal-anbiya-o-fee zau-al-Qur’an*”. In the same year, he was appointed as the editor of *Nida-e-Millet* and *Tameer-e-Hayat*.¹⁷ Ali Nadwi travelled to Europe and visited Geneva, London, Paris, Cambridge, Oxford and important elites of Spain, in the same year. He met many Arab and Western scholars and delivered many lectures. In 1968, Ali Nadwi was invited by the Education Minister of Saudi Arabia to participate in the critical study of the curriculum and system of the department of Shariah. He delivered many lectures in Riyadh University. In 1976, Ali Nadwi travelled to far West Algiers. In 1977, he visited America for the first time. In 1980, he was appointed as the member of Arabic Academy of Jordan and the Chairman of Islamic Centre Oxford. In the same year, he received King Faisal Award. In 1981, Kashmir University awarded him Honorary Degree of Ph.D. In 1984, Rabita Adab-e-Islami appointed him as Chairman.

In 1999, he was awarded as *The personality of the year* by UAE for in which a special plane was sent for him to take him to Dubai and bring him back. In the same year, Sultan of Brunei Award presented to him by Oxford Islamic centre on his work of ‘*Tareekh-e-Dawat-o-Azeemat*’.¹⁸ On 31st of December 1999, he died in Takya, District Raebareli and buried in his family graveyard.¹⁹

ALI NADWI'S WORK ON WEST

Islamiyat, Maghribi Mustashriqeen aur Musalman Musannifeen (Islamic Studies Orientalists and Muslim Scholars).

This book is a long essay on Orientalists and their intellectual activities. It is an analytical work on the intellectual contribution of Orientalists to Islam. Very open heartedly Maulana Ali Nadwi, appreciates the academic efforts of some famous Orientalists.

It is, thus, the moral duty of every Muslim scholar to acknowledge the services rendered by the Orientalist to the Islamic branches of learning. Several among them have employed themselves to the study of Islamic science not with any political, economic or missionary motive but for the satisfaction of their scholarly passion with devotion and diligence. It would be sheer injustice if one were to deny the fact

that numerous valuable manuscripts, historical documents and source materials on important topic have seen the light of the day through the efforts of the orientalists only. They have contributed it for further studies and researches in Islamic sciences. Had these manuscripts been left to the care of their owners, they would have in all probability been destroyed.²⁰

At the same time, he condemns those Orientalists who try to destroy the real figures of Islam. Their only purpose to study Islam seems to point out the objectionable concepts and to criticize it on intellectual grounds as well as to misguide non-Muslims particularly the West against Islam. It led to extend differences between Islam and the West. These Orientalists are actually the agent of Imperial powers and serving for the false interests of Imperialism. Many of them have made mountains out of molehills with a view to serving certain political or religious ends.²¹

The writings of such Orientalists are much more harmful than those who openly attack Islam through perversion or distortion of fact. Therefore, there is a need for Muslim Scholars to head and pursue the academic efforts equivalent to these Orientalists as well as to present the true figures of Islam in front of the West so that they realize the difference.

Muslim scholars are required to produce original works on different topics keeping with the norms of modern scholarship so as to frustrate the negative influences exerted by the Orientalists as well as to provide the Muslim world with authentic and reliable facts about Islam. The works need to expose the true side of the Orientalists in literary presentation, scholarship, method of investigation, persuasive reasoning, and depth of knowledge. The contribution made by the Orientalists should be surveyed and critically analyzed in the light of the original sources. The references used by them should critically be examined so that the right conclusion may be drawn. Because the underlying political and missionary motives in the disguise of scholarly attempt is implicit in most of the works the Orientalists have done.²²

NAYA TUFAN AUR USKA MUKABLA (A NEW MENACE AND ITS ANSWER)

In the short treatise, Ali Nadwi has analyzed the present situation of Muslim Ummah. According to Ali Nadwi, the Muslim Ummah

has been facing one of the greatest dangers of all times. Ali Nadwi's disclosed wave is sweeping across the Muslim world and carrying away with it the glorious heritage of Islam. Never has Islam experienced a danger so powerful as prevailing, and the tragedy is that there are only a few who are willing to take stock of this dismal situation. Islam has experienced many apostatical upsurges during the course of its history. The most powerful of them was the one that manifested itself among the Arab tribes soon after the demise of the Prophet. The second great onslaught of Apostasy within Islam was the widespread swing towards Christianity at the discharge of Muslims from Spain.²³

Apostasy crept into the Muslims in the East in the wake of the political domination by the West. It has posed the most serious challenge to Islam since the days of the Prophet. Ali Nadwi said, that, the question should be raised here what 'Apostasy' meant in Islamic terminology? What course did an Apostate adopt? He denied the kind of the Apostleship of Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) that was adopted in the creed of Christianity, Judaism or Hinduism.²⁴

The real problem of Islam now is not that of moral slackness in matters of prayer etc, but the real issue is "belief and unbelief". It is that whether Islam will survive or be cast away like an old garment. The battle being fought today in the Muslim world is between Western Materialism and Islam. On one side, there is agnosticism, and on the other there is a Divine law. Ali Nadwi believes that this is the last struggle between religion and irreligiousness, after which the world will swing full-scale towards either side.

The chief task of religious renovation in the modern times lies in the revival of faith among the young and the educated classes of the Ummat in the basic tenets of Islam, in its moral and spiritual scheme and in the Apostleship of the Prophet. The basic characteristics of Paganism that have dug themselves into their minds must be weeded out to vacate place for spiritual truths of Islam.²⁵

CALL TO FAITH

The crying need of the hour is to call the Muslims back to faith. The rally cry of this new religious endeavour should be "Let us re-create faith in Islam". Today Islam needs workers who may be ready to dedicate their entire resources and abilities, their learning, their time, their money

and their energy to its cause and pay not any regard to the attractions of worldly interruption. They should serve, but take no service from others, give and not take.²⁶

The cure of the ill Muslim world lies in our capacity to produce a band of dedicated workers who should keep religion above all personal considerations and will have no worldly aspirations come in the way. Their entire endeavour should be directed towards establishing personal contacts with the ruling class and bringing forth for them an effective religious literature. They should influencing them through their own piety, sanctity of character, earnestness of purpose, sincerity and selflessness and a moral conduct like that of the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh).

VERDICT OF HISTORY

According to Ali Nadwid, it is men of such class and calibre as mentioned above who have rendered genuine service to Islam during all the phases of its course. The credit for changing the course of the Umayyad²⁷ rule and bringing Omar bin Abdul Aziz²⁸ on the throne of the Caliphate belongs to that very class of men functioning under the impaired leadership of Rija bin Hayat. Ali Nadwi says, that you know that history, is always ready to repeat itself-it never tires of the process-the only thing is that there may be some force strong enough to turn its tide. The only force which can bring back the golden era of Islam is the earnestness, the sagacity and the missionary zeal we just have spoken of.²⁹

THE CURRENT CRISIS

A doleful tragedy of moral, cultural and intellectual Apostasy has struck Islam. It should be the object of serious concern to all those who have any consideration for Islam. Today the leading sections of Muslim society almost everywhere are on the verge of the dissolution of faith. They have already discarded, in the main, the moral obligations of the Sharia. Their mental outlook has become wholly materialistic. In politics, they are pursuing enthusiastically what must be described as the course of irreligion. Ali Nadwi says a majority of Muslims do not believe in Islam

as a creed and an ideology. The Muslim masses, although they possess all the seeds of goodness and virtue and constitute innately the most virtuous segments of humanity, are under the influence lordship of these sections due o their educational and economic backwardness.

Ali Nadwi says if the present situation continues as it is, the Apostasy will infiltrate into the masses and destroy the faith of the Muslim peasants and artisans. It has been so in the west and it is going to happen here in the East. If the events are allowed to take their course and the All-powerful will of the providence does not happen.

IMMEDIATE ACTION

Ali Nadwi says that the Islamic world is threatened by the most dangerous wave of Apostasy- a wave that has spread over the most effective sections of the society. This wave is a revolt against the moral and social values that are the most precious treasures of Islam. If this treasure; a sacred heritage from the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh), handed down from generations to generations, is lost, it will Islam to be significantly minimized.³⁰

EAST AND WEST

This lecture of Ali Nadwi was delivered originally in Arabic on Friday, 11th of October 1963 in the University of London Union, Mallet Street London, under the patronage of the University of London Islamic Society. In the lecture, Ali Nadwi discussed the relation between East and West. He here highlights the well known English poet Rudyard Kipling thought:

East is east and West is west
And never the twain in shall meet

These are the words of a poet of our own century. The idea they exemplify has been a foremost one for many years both in the East and in the West and has rooted itself deeply in their respective philosophy and literature.³¹

The first serious encounter between East and West took place during the Crusades. The encounter could not lead to an appreciation of each

other's good qualities, or to an understanding of each other's beliefs, and ethical attitudes. This was due to the blind opposition of the Crusaders which made them believe randomly in all kinds of fantastic reports about the beliefs and practices of the Muslims. In fact, it was their keenness to believe in all sorts of travesties of the truth, such as, for example, that the Muslims were pagan brutes. It helped the instigators of the Crusades to lead Christian fighters' to battle for the liberation of the Holy Land. It is clear that the atmosphere in which these wars were fought inhibited the growth of mutual appreciation, not to mention the urge for some serious study of each other's religious and ethical concepts.

Another phase of the impact of the west on the East was the development of an attitude of slavish surrender and miserable subservience among the peoples of the East. They began to cherish Western values and ideas, adore the modes and manifestations of Western life and Western civilization. There arose a trend of blinding imitation of the West, which robbed the peoples of the East of their distinctive personality as well as of their self respect. This aping of the West in all walks of life pushed the Easterners into the background, reducing them to the position of mere camp-followers.³²

The emergence of Orientalism gave rise to many hopes. It was expected that the Orientalists would be able to bridge the gulf between East and West, and so bring about an understanding between these two branches of the human family and remove the barrier erected by ignorance and geographical distance. It was also hoped that they would be able to transmit to the West all that is best in the East in the way of Prophetic teachings, moral values, examples of the noble life set by its Prophets and its spiritual leaders, the treasures of Eastern wisdom, and its wonderful code of laws and precepts for the guidance of human performance.

Ali Nadwi highlights their achievement of Orientalists.³³ He says there is no doubt that the Orientalists have many achievements to their credit. They resurrected many Islamic works which had for centuries lain buried from the light of day. They wrote a vast number of books which testify to their scholarly discernment. Anyone who has one scrap of fairness and any love of learning can never deny their academic approach

and painstaking labor, their keen perception and the scientific method of their work. The peoples of the East in general and the Muslims in particular, feel nevertheless, that many of the Orientalists were inspired more by religious prejudice than by scientific motives. They have therefore disappointed the lovers of truth, those who expected from them greater immunity from emotional predilections and inherited prejudices, a greater love for reality, a greater searching for the truth, and a greater courage in acknowledging. However, Orientalism has failed, despite its virtues and accomplishments, to fill the gap. They could not give the West what the souls of many Western men, disappointed by the meaninglessness of a worldly civilization, have desired for; namely, a true and glowing picture of the religions of the East in general and of Islam in particular. Ali Nadwi says I speak of Islam in particular because we Muslims believe it to be the last delightful Message and therefore a message of eternal value to mankind, the message which bears the squash of finality, which is in true with the spirit of the age, which seeks to carry human civilization forward, and not, as some religions tend to do, backward; which is free from all extremisms and inflexibilities, which is brilliant with a wonderful ability for creating new molds consistent with the spirit of its own teachings as well as the demands of our changing times.³⁴

The West has confined its activity and devoted all its aptitude and its will power to the external world. The west concentrated all its efforts on the outer world, withdrawing its attention from man himself who is the very soul of this universe and the masterpiece of creation. And even when it paid any need to man's inner self, its approach was tainted by crass materialism, which makes it impossible to plumb the depths of man's inner reality, to come to grips with the very solid facts of the inner life, and to appreciate faith, belief and morality.³⁵

Unfortunately, even if the West wants to profit from the heart and guide humanity by it, it will not be capable of doing so, for it has lost the key which could open the lock. However remarkable the industries of the West may be, however fine their products, and however great and genius of the peoples of the West may be, they are incapable of opening or breaking the lock, for it is not the lock of banks and factories: it is human lock. The only key that can be applied to it is "Faith". This key

the key of faith- which humanity obtained from the Prophets, has been lost, or lain buried amid the heavy burdens of modern civilization or the disaster of old religious centers.³⁶

The affliction of humanity lies in the separation of knowledge from faith, a separation which has led to great disasters in the past, faith has been making strides and growing for long ages in the East, while in more recent centuries, knowledge has been making strides and growing in the West. Faith continues to wait for the companionship of Science, while Science stands waiting to submit itself to the guidance by faith, and humanity is waiting for the two to come together and co-operate with each other in order to produce a new generation. There can be no hope of peace and true happiness without this blessed co-operation between faith and science.

Lastly he says as for the East, my friends of the West, its wealth does not consist of "oil", the black gold which you transport to your respective countries and there use to run aeroplanes and automobiles. The real wealth of the East is that faith which sprang up and blossomed there. You already benefited from some of this wealth at the beginning of your Christian era. Then again in the opening decades of the 7th century A.D., the same treasure of wealth opened up itself again, in the hopeless desert of Arabia and burst forth with a force and speed unprecedented in human history. It can still be appropriated and made use of, if there are good intentions and creative boldness. It is still capable of overcoming all the problems confronting our modern civilization, and it can inject fresh energy and vitality into our present civilization, giving it a new lease of life by providing it with a fresh sense of purpose and renewing its message, and reorienting the instruments and institutions of science and technology to worthwhile purposes. This can lead to momentous results, and to the creation of a new society in the best interests of mankind, the society for which the present age is yearning. Ali Nadwi says the Qur'an addresses you all, saying: "THERE hath come to you from God a new Light and a perspicuous Book-where with God guideth all who seek His pleasure to ways of peace and safety, and leadeth them to a path that is straight".

Maulana Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi was an eminent Islamic Scholar of the 20th century. Though, he belonged to the Madrasah Nadwatul Ulama of Lucknow, he emerged as a towering personality, a great

modern Islamic thinker, socio-religious reformer and a preacher of the true spirit and essence of Islam. An orator par excellence, an author with a distinctive style, a man devoted to the cause of Islam and a guide to the masses. Ali Nadwi was the embodiment of both traditional values and modern concepts. His concept of Islam was somewhat different from the traditional scholars. Always moderate in outlook, he favoured neither the fanatic nor the radical ideologies. He appreciated the positive Concepts of the Modern Era. He believed in Islam as being a blessing for humankind and a positive and creative factor of human history.

Ali Nadwi always raised strong objection against the media image created by the non-Muslims against Muslims and Islam. He was far from being conservative in his approach. Ali Nadwi understood the spirit of the age. He appreciated the role played by democracy and Nationalism too. He did not consider modern civilization as being anti-Islamic. Therefore, He was always keen on seeking possibilities of combining both, modern civilization and Islam on uncontroversial common grounds, instead of forsaking or favoring either of the two. Here two passages from his speech, delivered in a visit to USA, have been quoted. These could be helpful in analyzing his attitude towards the West.³⁷

NAI DUNIYA, AMERICA ME SAAF SAF BATEN (FROM THE DEPTH OF HEART IN AMERICA)

This is among one of the most famous works of Ali Nadwi. It is a collection of Maulana Ali Nadwi's lectures, which he was delivered upon a visit to USA in 1977 on the invitation of "Muslim Students Association". The English version of this book is entitled "*from the depth of heart in America*".

A number of Muslims from India, Pakistan and Arab countries gathered to hear these sermons. Ali Nadwi's main advice to Muslims of USA was how to preserve their faith in such a materialistic culture as America. In one sermon, he stated:

"Brothers and sisters, you are not here merely to earn and spend. This is what any community can do. You are here to earn according to your need, but you must also know your status and should present before the Americans a new design of life. You should give the Azan

which may stir their minds and offer Namaaz (Salat), so that they may see and ponder over it”.

In another place he states, “Today only the Muslim can give a message, but where are they? Has any Muslim country or community the courage to tell the Americans that “in the remembrance of Allah, only do the hearts find rest”? Muslims no longer believe in them. How can they convey message of divine unity to others when they themselves have lost faith in the power and efficiency of Namaaz, in the truth and veracity of the Kalima, in the control and authority of Allah over gain and loss, and in the pre-ordination of good and evil? They made the Americas providers of their daily bread? How can they tell them ‘there is no giver of sustenance, except Allah’?³⁸

He further said, “First try to produce faith within yourselves, perform Namaaz and spend some time everyday in thought, produce the warmth that has been destroyed by the smoke of factories, refresh your soul, set right the aim of your life, read the Qur’an daily, study the life of the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) and seek light from it, and then convey the message of the religion of nature to the Americans”.

Islam, alone, is the religion that does not frown upon human nature, but declares it to be essentially pure and flawless. God had given a clean slate to man, a guiltless nature and an inclination towards goodness; we have debased it. Man is, by nature, upright. Left to his natural instincts, he will follow the correct path. First, realize these truths, produce them within yourselves, in your hearts as well as in your minds, and then, place them before the Americans. You are the people of preaching and instruction; you are the people of Apostleship, a community with a purpose, and the bearers of the Message.³⁹

Ali Nadwi addressed not only Muslim; but also gave speeches in five leading American Universities, Columbia, Harvard, Detroit and Toronto. In these gatherings, he spoke frankly to the public and conveyed the message of Islam plainly to the Americans. He says that despite all technical advancements and economic achievements there exists a lack or even absence of religious practice in the American society. Without these spiritual values and degradation of soul, any society would head towards destruction. Therefore, it is essential with all the technologies that there should be an enlistment of soul and an

increase in religious adherence. This can only be attained by following the teachings of Islam, because Islam is the religion that has a complete guidance to humankind, i.e. it is the last and final message of Allah to humankind. Every individual's success is implicit in it. It is the only religion that can provide the spiritual requirements to Americans".

America is fortunate as the Nature has been so generous to it. The Lord has bestowed His gift lavishly upon this country. Its people are resourceful and enterprising. They are full of enthusiasm for living. They have been granted such a tenacity of purpose, resoluteness and pertinacity that they have made their country a paradise on earth. They have unravelled the mysteries of nature and harnessed its forces to their use.⁴⁰

Ali Nadwi says that, it has been a tragedy not only for America but the whole of mankind that it concentrated entirely on material progress. He further says it would have been a different story, had it received correct guidance and the boon and blessing of true faith had reached it, had the Americans also paid attention to morality with equal earnestness and enthusiasm and had they looked for the portents of God in *Anfus* i.e., within themselves, and not only in *Afaq* i.e., the horizon. If the faculties of the Americans had not been directed altogether towards finding a clue to the mysteries of nature and had they also cared to discover the secrets of the self of the heart and the soul, they would have realized that the world of heart was immeasurably more extensive than the world of matter, so much so that if the whole of the universe was dropped into the heart of man it would have got lost like a pebble in an ocean. The people of America would, then, have been able to appreciate correctly the place of man in the impressive design of creation. Of the time and energy, they have carelessly spent on material sciences. The Qur'an says.⁴¹ I quote:

And that man hath only that for which he maketh effort, And that his effort will be seen
And afterward he will be repaid for it with fullest payment.⁴²

Another verse I quote:

Each do we supply, both these and those, from the bounty of the lord; And the bounty of the Lord can never we walled up.⁴³

Ali Nadwi states “Oh citizens of the United States, My best wishes to you. I do not complaint at you and your attainments. I do not look at your progress with scorn. What I ask you most earnestly is only to add ‘Masha Allah, wa la quwwata illa billah’, to what you have. Subordinate your worldly possessions and extraordinary achievements to the will of Allah. Place it all under the control and authority of divine law. Use it for the rebirth and redemption of equality, fraternity, justice and freedom from fear. Let there be no distinctions of race, colour and wealth between man and man. Use your enormous re-courses for reconstruction of the world. You will thus be helping yourselves as well as others. Without it, your civilization cannot survive and its days are numbered”.

The Muslims, on the contrary, is fortunate to have been blessed with a unique comprehensiveness. They realize the worth and significance of this world, but, at the same time, regard it only a transitional stage in man’s onward journey. With them the real and permanent abode is the hereafter. Their attitude towards life is governed by the Qur’anic verses which say:⁴⁴

And for that Abode of the Hereafter We assign it unto those who seek not oppression in the earth, nor yet corruption. The (good) sequel is for those who ward off (evil).⁴⁵

In the last, Ali Nadwi says, I thank you all for I came here out of love for Muslim brothers and gave them a patient hearing. May Allah protect you and your faith, and your next generations are better believers in Islam. He quoted:⁴⁶

Die not die save as Muslims⁴⁷

My fervent prayers are that you remain true to this commandment.

May you be bowing your heads low before God, offering up Namaaz regularly and adhering steadfastly to the Kalima as long as you live in this world, and when you depart from it, the radiance of Faith may be in your hearts and the Kalima of Laa ilaaha illallah, Mohammadur Rasulullah on your lips.⁴⁸

Such was the condition of the Arabs. As against it, the Romans and the Iranians enjoyed the monopoly of leadership in the world. They had built up magnificent civilizations and their writ ran over a vast segment

of humanity. The two powers had divided the Eastern and Western parts of the civilized world between themselves: the Iranians ruled over the Eastern part while the Western part has been under the domination of the Romans. They wallowed in wealth and all the good things of life were available to them in plenty.

Islam and Qur'an demand of the Muslims to be the criterion of truth and virtue. They should possess a genuine Islamic disposition so that the Americans, here, can see distinctly the difference between their own society which is being driven mercilessly by Materialism and the Islamic society that is pure, healthy and dignified- a society which spends its nights in prayer and regret and days in seeking honest sustenance and rendering selfless service to mankind.

The creation of such a society will, positively, lead to the victory of the true religion. On seeing it, the American will exclaim that the real joy of living is in the society led by the true religion and not his own. They will advance towards it unconsciously and curse the stinking environment in which they have been brought up.⁴⁹

CONCLUSION

To conclude, Maulana Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi is one the most versatile Islamic scholars of the modern age. More than 50 works attributed to him on different Islamic Disciplines. To him despite of all scientific and technical advancements the Western culture is devoid of spiritual peace and satisfaction. There is no or very little space for spiritual sense in the Western culture due to the reason it adopted the Materialistic way of life. To him, the most dreadful evil of the West is their extreme dependence on "Materialism" and denying "Spirituality". The source of Western civilization is Greek civilization which was purely materialistic with very little scope for spirituality in it.

Further, Ali Nadwi has discussed the attitude of orientalists in his research. He comments that the orientalists have their set goal and target before conducting the research and they have preconceived notions. In the light of these notions, they have collected evidences from every type of material, religious or historical literature, fiction, and poetry, authentic or inauthentic resources. They have filtered the

research material according to their own priorities which support the pre-detailed conclusion.

The above discussion can be concluded that the concept of Orientalism addresses the dimensions of vast study of Islam by the orientalists. Ali Nadwi critically analyzed the situation and disclosed the hidden anti-Islamic planning of the West.

NOTES

1. Dr. Fahad, Obaidullah, Islamic Polity and Orientalists, Institute of Islamic Studies, Aligarh Muslim University, Aligarh, India, p. 12.
2. Ibid., p. 13.
3. *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* is one of the Kutub al-Sittah (six major hadith collections) of Sunni Islam, compiled by Persian scholar Muhammad al-Bukhari. It was completed around 846 CE / 232 AH.
4. Sunan Abu Dawood, is one of the Kutub al-Sittah (six major hadith collections), collected by Abu Dawud al-Sijistani (d.889).
5. One of the six canonical hadith compilations in SunniIslam, compiled by Imām al-Termezi.
6. Bilal Ahmad hay Hasni Nadwi, *Swanaye-e- Mufakar-e- Islami Hazrat Maulana Nadwi*, Sayyid Ahmad Shaheed Academy, Rae Bareilly, u.P,1422, p. 80.
7. *Al-Manār* ('The Lighthouse'), was an Islamic magazine, written in Arabic, and was founded, published and edited by Rashid Rida from 1898 until his death in 1935 in Cairo, Egypt.
8. He was a prominent Islamic reformer, scholar, theologian and revivalist He called for the revival of hadith sciences and advocated for the implementation.
9. Sayyid Ahmad Shaheed was an Indian Muslim revivalist from Raebareli, a part of the historical United provinces of Agra and Oudh. Also he is consider as a scholarly authority by Ahl-Hadith and Deoband movements.
10. Maulana Ilyas was the founder of Tablighi Jamaat Islamic revivalist movement in 1925, in Mewat province.
11. Maulna Raipuri was a spritual reformer and well known guide of Islam.
12. *Al Nadwa* (in Arabic الندوة meaning The Forum) was a Mecca-based Arabic daily newspaper published in Saudi Arabia.[1] The daily was in circulation until 2013 when it was renamed Makkah.
13. 1943 established an Association by the name of 'Anjuman Taleemat-e-Deen' and delivered Lectures on Tafseer and sunnah which became very

- popular particularly in Modern educated persons and persons in Govt. service.
14. This educational institution draws large number of Muslim students from all over the world. Nadwatul Ulama fosters a diverse range of both scholars and students including Hanafis (the predominant group), Shafi'is and Ahl al-Hadith. Additionally it is one of very few institutes in the region to teach the Islamic Sciences completely in Arabic.
 15. Sulaiman Nadvi, was an Indian historian, writer and scholar of Islam. He co-authored *Sirat-un-Nabi* and wrote *Khutbat-e-Madras*. He was a member of the founding committee of Jamia Millia Islamia.
 16. Dr. Fahad, Obaidullah, *Islamic Polity and Orientalists*, op. cit., p. 85.
 17. Since published in 1963.
 18. Here is an entirely different outlook on Islamic history, where center stage is held not by rulers and generals but by the spiritual rulers and mujaddids.
 19. Dr. Fahad, Obaidullah, *Islamic Polity and Orientalists*, op. cit., p. 90.
 20. Ahmad, Mohinuddin, *Islamic Studies Orientalist under Muslim Scholars*, Academy of Islamic research publication, Lucknow, 1983, p.
 21. *Ibid.*, p.
 22. *Ibid.*, p.
 23. Kidwai, Mohammad Asif, *A New Menace and Its Answer*, Shukla printed press, n.d., p. 1.
 24. *Ibid.*, pp. 2-3.
 25. *Ibid.*, p. 12.
 26. *Ibid.*, p. 13.
 27. The first great Muslim dynasty to rule the empire of the caliphate (661–750 ce), sometimes referred to as the Arab kingdom.
 28. A great Muslim ruler of Umayyad Dynasty.
 29. Kidwai, Mohammad Asif, *A New Menace and Its Answer*, op. cit., p. 16.
 30. *Ibid.*, p. 17.
 31. Ali Nadwi, Hassan, *Between East and West*, Academy of Islamic research and publication, n.d., p. 1.
 32. *Ibid.*, pp. 2-3.
 33. The history of the origin and development of Islam in the West by the non Muslim experts is commonly know as Orientalism.
 34. Ali Nadwi, Hassan, *Between East and West*, op. cit., pp. 5–6.
 35. *Ibid.*, p. 13.
 36. *Ibid.*, p. 14.
 37. *Ibid.*, p. 15.
 38. Ali Nadwi, Hassan, *Nai Duniya America mein Saaf Saf Baten*, Academy of Islamic Research Publications, Lucknow, 2002, p. 18.

39. Ibid., p. 19.
40. Ibid., p. 25.
41. Ibid., p. 26.
42. Al- Qur'an., (53: 39–41).
43. Al- Qur'an., (17: 20).
44. Nai Duniya America men Saaf Saf Baten, op. cit., pp. 25–7.
45. Al-Qur'an., (27.83).
46. Nai Duniya America mein Saaf Saf Baten, op. cit., p. 44.
47. Al Quran., (2: 132).
48. Ibid., p. 45.
49. Ibid., p. 46.

SYED MOHAMMAD RAGHI*

Afghanistan Foreign Affairs

BOOK NAME: *Afghanistan's Foreign Affairs to the Mid-twentieth Century: Relations with the USSR, Germany, and Britain*

AUTHOR: Ladog W Aidmic (1974).

PUBLISHED BY: University of Arizona Press, later it translated into Urdu "Afghanistan ke Umoo e Kharja" by Kabir Kausar, published in the 1980 by light and life publishers, New Delhi, Page-632).

The author of the Afghan foreign affairs tried to cover up the period 1900 to 1950 very academically. There is no doubt in it that foreign affairs of Afghanistan have very inimitable kind of diplomacy and dissimilar from the other countries because of its geopolitical location and frequent intervention of world power. In the preface of this book, the author rightly pointed out that, Afghanistan has its own historical and political legacy and has an incredibly important position for all neighbours, it was always become the focal point of the power struggle of the outsider and continue its involvement in the wars due to the proxy of the superpowers which is well known as Buffer State. It was also impossible to come to any conclusion without proper analyses of Afghanistan's foreign policy without going thoroughly and deep study of the various documents of England, India, Germany and Soviet Russia, which signed with Afghanistan and the writer did excellent attempt to cover most of the dark areas. The author of the book 'Afghanistan's Foreign Affairs to the Mid-twentieth Century: Relations with the USSR, Germany, and Britain' Ladog W Aidmic is a very renowned professor of the US. He has written and edited numerous books on different

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issues of Afghanistan. His some of books like 'Historical and Political Gazetteer of Afghanistan' and 'Afghanistan 1900-1923: A diplomatic history' was well-known and had lots of insight. He considered as one of the authorities of Afghanistan's political and diplomatic issues. In the process of writings, he critically examined the situation of Afghanistan in different period of time. He is professor emeritus of in the school of Middle East and North African studies at the University of Arizona. This book was originally published in English in 1974 by university of Arizona press and later it translated into Urdu 'Afghanistan ke Umooor e Kharja' by Kabir Kausar, published in 1980 by light and life publishers, New Delhi, when Afghanistan was under intense fight. This book come-up during the Amir Habibullah regime in Afghanistan and discussed relations with foreign powers untill the end of the Second World War.

The writer Aidmic was born in Vienna in 1924 and gone through the very tough life, when he was just at the age of 5 his father died and he has faced a lot of problems. Ideologically he did not like Nazi due to the situation of Europe. He left Austria in 1950 and visited across the world, Europe, Asia, and Africa, but finally settled in the US in 1954 and he obtained his doctorate degree in the Middle East Studies. The writer visited Germany, India and Pakistan, Russia to understand the ground reality and gone thoroughly of all the concerned documents in different places of archives and collected all the valuable information. During the process of writing, he hardly inflicts his own opinion to affect the argument of this book.

Being a Professor Aidmic has a very deep understanding of the history, politics and military engagement in Afghanistan. This book has nine chapters and all chapters discussed the various significant issues during that era and important aspects of Afghanistan's foreign policies from different angles, he also reflected the crucial information regarding the land, people and politics in depth.

The author divided the first chapter period into three broader periods First was the era of expansion 1747-1800, second was the era of external fight 1800-1880 when Afghanistan was in an intense fight with Britain and Soviet Russian and even with Punjab's emerging Sikh power. The third era was dedicated to defence of internal fight, which was started from the period of Abdul Rahman from 1880 to 1901, which was further carried forward by Amir Habibullah till his death 1919. The fourth phase was the neutral defence role which was also

forced Afghanistan to accept the foreign influences. He also briefly discussed the era of expansion through the Nadir Shah (1736-47) but after his death, the expansion of Afghanistan's approach was badly crushed by the British. During all these narrative authors explicitly discussed that how the British government under the Lord Auckland (1836-39) trying to curtail the power of the Shah Dost Mohammad Khan of Afghanistan, who was very close to the British, but he lost his throne and step down by the Lord Auckland's efforts, this incident of military initiative (1839-43) was also known as 'First Anglo-Afghan war' in the history. The writer critically examined the brief account of Abdul Rahman, who becomes friends of British government and assured them that Afghanistan will not allow any foreign power to invade India; he also established diplomatic relations with the British government.

Afghanistan emerges from Isolation: when discussing and making comparisons to his of the personality of his father, Abdul Rahman a man of strong will, Abdullah was a little bit soft nature. He took power in 1901 when he was 32 years old, that time he did not pay attention to his father's strong policy. He recalled people those who had left their land due to fear of his father, and settled down them in different parts of the country, he also changes the intelligence attitude earlier was used for state brutality. He was struck to handle Soviet Russia and Britain, both wanted modification on the Afghanistan's foreign policy. Even when Lord Curzon becomes the Governor-General of India, he wanted to discuss the border dispute which was going on with Russia, the Amir of Afghanistan rejected the talk. He was not ready to even sideline his father's policy that was more aware of Russian and Britain game policy and maintained cautiously. Amir well understood that these powers will ignore Afghanistan's interest and the convention of Anglo-Russia of 1907 was one of the steps of that. In fact, this convention was to make an idea of how to spread peace among the western countries and contain Japan who wanted to become closer to Iran.

During the First World War, Afghan people were fully aware that the Islam and the Islamic countries are under severe threat from Western countries, especially their civilian have full of religious madness kind of orientation to destroy the Islamic countries and their civilization.

In chapter two, the author discussed the assassination of Amir in a brief. Historically the assassination of Amir Hasibullah was the turning point of the history of Afghanistan that impact on its foreign policy

badly. The situation was rapidly changing and a new power vacuum emerged in the country. His brother Nasrullah becomes new political leader but the third son of Amir Hasibullah, Amir Amanullah emerged as the expected candidate for Amir of Afghanistan and was supported by the army and people as well. The new ruler Amanullah assumed power of Afghanistan, the situation was not so good, but he smartly handled the situation quickly taking the confidence of British India and urged to have good political and economical relations with neighbours.

This is also remarkable to point out here that he announced in the court that he will take revenge of his father and also strongly said that now Afghanistan is fully independent and can avail its internal and external sovereignty and those powers will disturb he will cut their head. Lord Chelmsford was Governor-General of India and both had heated exchange of letter, after two weak of that letter Afghan force exchanged of fire on the border and the Third Anglo-Afghan War started. Such his declaration invited the Third Anglo-Afghan war because he was not ready to become the puppet of the British at any cost and had believed full freedom. This war has quickly come to end because both parties were ready to end the war. After analysing the whole war author quickly come to this conclusion that Afghanistan now becomes free from any power grip especially the British and this was one of the biggest achievement. The writer also looks the other issues like Russia-Afghan relations which come after he assumed the power, then started to maintain good relations with Russia, Iran and Turkey and other neighbours. The lot of other issues was happening around in the world, especially in West Asia second great game and the other international events were well covered. The other foreign delegation like France and Russian wanted to get permission for the evacuation of ancient places so Afghani government has given permission but in a very restricted way.

The book is fundamentally having nine chapters but I divided it into five parts. The first part looks the historical background of the dangers and opportunities that Afghanistan people facing since long. The Second part actually collection of three chapters in which mainly discussed the internal rivalry, clash with the British and Soviet Russia, Anglo-Afghan War and Amanullah's reforms, coup and defeats. The third is principally talking about the issue of stability, the defeat of

Bachcha Shaqqa and very importantly, they also talked about the power relations with foreign countries and international political problems. The fourth chapters which are talking about the initial stage of the Second World War helps from Germany and search of alternatives apart from that, it also talks about the conspiracies, etc. Finally, the author gives his personal view for an Afghanistan overall problem as well as the regional conflict.

The author also discussed how Lord Minto sent the crux of convention to the Amir and he delayed it for one year and discussed with cabinet, later replied that he is not ready to accept this convention. He never signed that convention letter, but British and Russian secretary, later on, say that Amir's signed is not necessary for this letter. Abdul Rahman tried hard to establish a different ideological oriented people into a unified command and built them strong which was unexpected in the future.

The author has dealt with every neighbour like British India, Iran, Turkey and Soviet Russia in a very critical way. There is enough literature in circulation in academia and other circles dealing with the same subject. The way the author arranged it in his word makes this work interesting. The author does not look much on the Russian line rather he focused on the British side which may benefit out of the new situation.

In chapter six, the author discussed Nadir Shah and his efforts for consolidation. Nadir Shah becomes the king of Afghanistan at the age of 50, the throne was Shifted from the hand of Kabuli Sardar to Peshawar Sardar. He was very active and similar to Amanullah. The writer also praised a lot to Nadir Shah and his personality due to his extraordinary consolidation work.

The book discusses a plethora of issues which is providing enormous information, but it looks like heavily loaded information. The author looks thousands of research evidence, and other documents to support the author's argument, but often end up raising more complex questions than providing solutions.

The British-Afghan relation was undoubted of a very important and vital for both, but simultaneously the relation with Soviet Russia will also check properly. No doubt in it that it's tough to maintain the same distance with big power nor can be isolated at the international level that

will harm the country's interest in longways. Any book which generally dealing with the foreign policy of Afghanistan cannot neglect this fact at any level. The author also focused on the situation and his relationships with the British and Soviet Russia along with that he tried their hard to get close to the other important countries like Iran and Turkey and send their envoy to maintain good mutual strategic relations. He also briefly discussed all three Anglo-Afghan War and its political and military implementations along with other peace initiatives to calm down War mania.

He also focused too much on World War II pre-conditions, especially around 1935, when the world took a new change. There was high competition in Europe between the colonial powers like Britain, France, Germany and Russia. Later Germany political and economical conditions improving day by day, due to Hitler Industrial and military policies. He also deeply discussed the conspiracies during the wartime to make a greater group against each others. The book also argues that the British predominance was everywhere and Moscow and England had good relations, but they also identified their influence line in the region for its individual interest. The colonial powers were busy to spread their colony in Africa and other East Asian countries. Japan was also becoming an active player, they created a strong group along with Italy. So the situation of the world was in a tense manner.

In the second last chapter of the book author discussed the Second World War in details and focused on the intentional aggression of Germany led by Hitler for this great disaster. He also discussed many conspiracies by the different power players against each other. He also pointed out the account of the pact between Germany and the Soviet Union in the early phase of the war. Afghanistan was also indirectly involved in this war, despite its neutral position but was vigilant much. The War was, of course, collateral damage for not only Europe but the entire world.

The writer in his last chapter discussed the initiative of a new era after the full destruction of World War II in a very critical manner. He also argued about the Afghani foreign policy which was started in the early of the First World War now going to be concluded at the end of 1950. He well observed that in late 1940 the Afghan foreign policy was taken into a new shape and with time changed dramatically. The

British ruled ended in India and the greater land divided into two parts, one part becomes the neighbour Pakistan. This is also not comfortable to Afghanistan point of due to the issue with the issue of Dorand line.

In the concluding session of his book author discussed the re-emergence of the Soviet Union as a big power despite a heavy economic and human loss during the War. He also mentioned the new emergence of the USA as one of the superpower after this war, which Afghanistan has had diplomatic relations since 1942. In the early 1951 American under four-point scheme helped financially even supplied Wheat but despite that Afghan hardly becomes a close ally of the US.

In the view of Afghani security concern the border dispute which has been the issue with the British government now again become the headache, more than that, continue US military help to Pakistan also created a turmoil situation in the region. Finally, he questioned the disorder circumstances and said that the future will decide its destiny.

There were a lot of books published on the Afghanistan issue, but this book is the different from others due to its very depth analysis of every document, agreement and detailed account of events during the periods. He almost covers a large amount of the important issue of that time which is relevant even now to understand the region. The most important thing about this book is it covered the historical pretext of Afghanistan's foreign policy which hardly any book roofed.

In the beginning of the book the author covered the historical and contemporary political situation in brief about Afghanistan and in the region of it, he also discussed the different tribal power of Afghanistan, and Pakistan (united India like FATA region) political leadership and their strength, connection with the foreign powers.

The book itself falls short of providing too many issues which were related to the Afghanistan free and fair own sovereign foreign policy. Absolute dismissal of the Iran and Turkish involvement in Afghanistan was not given much space despite their vital role they played for Afghanistan and especially its Amir Amanullah even they helped during the crisis time of World War II using Germany to include Kabul into their fold. And the border issue with Pakistan. There is no doubt in it that the book is rich in sources, information, the arguments without any bias, but yes, it was looking little bit pro British mindset and anti-German. As per the information given through preface itself, the author

was not happy with German because of their anti Europe stand, and he himself was one of the victims of German aggression. To be very frank, I would like to say here that the book was full of information and sometimes it mentioned very minute information which never counted to be vital information. To analysing all this information can say that this is the merit of the book, it contributes and enriches dark part of history and the hidden foreign policy debate and some other existing debates on the issue like the British and Soviet Union diplomacy against Afghanistan and Turkish-German power struggle to penetrate in Afghanistan to contain the British-Soviet allied power in the region.

Overall, this book is given a lot of depth about the foreign affairs of Afghanistan since the early twentieth century to the till the end of 1950, but he also discussed more extensive period and issue with Pakistan. This book was full of information which will be helpful for academic and non-academic purpose.

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