# Islam and the Modern Age

Vol. XLVIII No. 1 February 2021

Zakir Husain Institute of Islamic Studies
Jamia Millia Islamia, New Delhi

# Islam
## and the
# Modern Age

Vol. XLVIII No. 1 February 2021

*Editor*
A. NASEEB KHAN

*Assistant Editor*
MOHD SAYEED ANWAR

Zakir Husain Institute of Islamic Studies
Jamia Millia Islamia, New Delhi 110025

ISLAM AND THE MODERN AGE
(Established 1970)

R. N. No. 19876

Published quarterly in February, May, August and November
International Standard Serial No. 11 ISSN: 0021-1826

SUBSCRIPTION RATES

| | *Single Copy* | *Annual* | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Inland | ₹ 100 | ₹ 380 | (by regd. mail) |
| Pakistan & Bangladesh | US$ 4 | US$ 15 | (by regd. mail) |
| Other countries | US$ 12 | US$ 40 | (by regd. airmail) |

LIFE MEMBERSHIP

| | |
|---|---|
| Inland | ₹ 5000 |
| Pakistan & Bangladesh | US$ 150 |
| Other countries | US$ 400 |

Back issues are also available.

---

*Zakir Husain Institute of Islamic Studies does not necessarily agree all the statements or opinions expressed by contributors who are themselves responsible for their views and comments.*

---

Published by Honorary Director, Zakir Husain Institute of Islamic Studies,
Jamia Nagar, New Delhi 110 025
E-mail: zhis@jmi.ac.in

Printing Assistant: Rashid Ahmad

Typeset at Sai Graphic Design, 8678/XV, Arakashan Road, New Delhi 110 055

Printed and supplied by Ratna Sagar P. Ltd., Virat Bhavan, Mukherjee Nagar
Commercial Complex, Delhi 110 009

SUBSCRIPTION

Please send me **ISLAM AND THE MODERN AGE**
☐ Single Copy ☐ Four Issues (Annual)
Name: _____

Address: _____

_____

Payment enclosed by Cheque/Draft No._____

Please enrol me as Life Member payment enclosed by

Cheque/Draft No. _____

Signature

Please continue annual renewal of my subscription until I advise you to cancel.
*Please make all payments in the name of **Jamia Millia Islamia**

# Contents

# Editorial

*Mashriq se ho bezaar na Maghrib se hazar kar / Fitrat ka ishaara hai ki har shab ko sahar kar*

(Look not upon the east with some disdain, nor shun the west / Let every night turn into a morn–Nature thus speaks to us).

–Iqbal

One of our most remarkable and impressive qualities, as human beings, is our exceptional capacity to cultivate and nurture mental and emotional inclination to interact and engage with human-beings, several creatures of God and the environment. These interactions play roles of extreme importance in supporting, even propelling our growth and well-being; building our character; nurturing empathy, compassion; enriching the essence of our humanity, mellowing and sobering us meaningfully. In the process of interactions, we learn that it is love alone that holds sway as the most powerful force in our lives. It is love that dispels prejudice and biases, and empowers us to transcend all man-made frontiers and bring hearts to warm embraces.

It is just deplorable that so many of us are now hell-bent on barricading our hearts from cultivating and maintaining ties of relations. What pains us is the brutal hardness of some people who are busy promoting an organised rejection of some human groups, fuelling antagonistic feelings against them. This insidious disease has the potential to eat away our limbs, if it is left untreated. To me, as to many of us, the well-known cure for this disease lies in the promotion and propagation of India's spirit and grace that radiate profound sense of love and understanding. They touch every heart with warmth testifying that love and beauty lie within the core of every heart. It is a duty obligatory on us to strengthen the stunning beauty of all-embracing tapestry of culture and traditions through the practical application of our warmth and cordiality, firm resilience, wisdom and enlightenment.

It would be no overstatement to say that Indian values, including those enshrined in our Constitution, celebrate interconnectedness; encourage commitment to enduring harmony and deep reverence for life. Entrenched in practical, social and spiritual insights, these values aspire to nip every type of ruthlessness in the bud. Love for the integrated life runs in our nation's consciousness. Our country has fiercely stood against disintegration and fragmentation. It has always stood by its citizens in sorrows, urging and inspiring them to desire, hope, dream even if the means are meagre. It is a fact that we survive in this world by virtue of promoting our ties, not due to severance of ties and getting hostile to one another. We in India believe that it is not betting even for a Hawk in 'Hawk Roosting', an English poem by Ted Hughes, who ruthlessly says, No arguments assert my right … I am going to keep things like this.'

India has always been a keeper of conscience. As an honest custodian of the rights of its citizens, our country takes meticulous care to ensure them their rights. It never fails in its duties to instil in us the upright sense of duties. Besides, it arms us with meritorious ways of upholding moral and virtuous principles, ethical values in our choices and decisions, actions and deeds so that we can fortify our nation known in the world for its eternally valid values like hospitality, generosity, pluralism, liberal attitude and so on. India, the country bubbling with freshness, beauty, power, skills and intellectual breadth, hints at it that our diversity and multiplicity, without interactions, may run the risk of becoming the reason and breeding ground for conflict and dissension. Thus, it seems to be a fundamental and practical necessity that every group makes some efforts to interact and engage with others so that the brutal practice of compartmentalisation and division can be dismantled. Initiated into appreciating others' persuasions, we genuinely understand one another's beliefs and values. Our interactions will surely strengthen understanding, refine perceptions and enhance lives, paving the way for love to prosper and to reign supreme.

Love not only heals and bridges divides but also raises a positive, optimistic and constructive society, rearing the culture of reciprocity and the capacity to participate significantly in others' emotions and feelings. At the heart of such exceptional capacity lies the art and power to unite and harmonise diversity, and nurture understanding among the

people belonging to various cultural, social and ethnic upbringings. This capacity facilitates comprehension of others' perspectives, promotion of trust, development of proximity and intimacy, and consolidation of the foundation on which rests the structure of interconnectedness and peaceful coexistence.

I believe it is very important for us to start interacting and engaging now with people at our personal levels with genuine aims to perform right actions for the welfare of our surroundings. 'Right action', says S. Radhakrishnan, 'is rewarded in well-being and success. Intelligence, goodness, wisdom and integrity are to be practised. Ignorance, dishonesty, avarice and fraud are to be avoided. We should resist the temptation to be dishonest and unscrupulous. To believe that it is necessary on occasions to be less than honest is false. A life of discipline, of dharma, is exalted. A lawless society cannot long survive. The Ultimate is Immutable Reality and Absolute Love. These lessons are instilled in our minds by the incidents and episodes of the *Mahabharta*…The Unity transcends diversities of race, colour, language and sect.'

It is truism that different hands beaten together in a rhythmic tune produce a harmonious melody, enchanting our ears, delighting hearts and creating a vibrant and inclusive world where everyone contributes, and everyone's contribution matters. In the same way a harmonious scheme of various colours becomes a feast to our eyes, empowering them to see through fog, smog and dust devil with unique clarity, undertaking the journey through life's impediments, obscure paths and uncertainties. Variety, of course, adds colour, edge and illumination. Perhaps this is the reason that most of us naturally crave variety, freshness and enlivening multiplicity. It is a fact that we are able to survive in the world because we love those dynamic things that raise our spirit to embrace the richness of diversity and wonders of life while chucking out monotony and sameness. It is ingrained in our nature that we dislike to be trapped in the monotonous cycle of unproductive life, for we have been created to stay creative, innovative and productive for our growth and advancement. Needless to say that diversity enriches our lives and stimulates creativity, innovations and excellence.

And the excellence, one of the transformative powers, is the product of learning and knowledge. It imbues us with courage and ability to transcend the restraints and limitations for the sake of forging bonds

with the broader tapestry of humanity. It is excellence that empowers us to challenge irrational, defy the oppressors, and make departure from the ridiculous societal and so-called religious restrictions in order to live a more enlightened existence. Our pursuit of excellence in association with true learning and knowledge, promises us a mentally vibrant, socially mindful, and morally honest life and more inclusive, harmonious, and enlightened global society. Let us continue to cherish and cultivate the spirit of learning from one another, for it is the key to unlocking a brighter future for all of humanity.

Those who do not evolve and adapt themselves to the emerging situations become obsolete – and it leads to serious results. Marching abreast of transformations taking place in the world enables us to grow and develop as individuals. It is only by obtaining new skills, exploring new ideas, and engaging with new people that we can live with our identities. We have to embrace success while exploring new frontiers and surmounting the challenges posed by the time and the world. We have to keep abreast of those who represent the advanced and developed communities. This is why we need to cherish the enlivening and refreshing character of life as opposed to commonplace and routine character of life. It is curiosity, inquisitive mind-set and questioning spirit that make life more enchanting and lively. Seclusion and dullness prove detrimental to the growth of human life and society. They lead us to segregation and isolation, resulting in lethargy and mental stagnation; worsening of emotional well-being and want of impulse and motivation to find out the richness of human experiences. Let us embrace, endorse and promote deep love for human beings, environment and other creatures of God so that we can rise above our snobbish and self-centred tendency, and can nurture and support interconnectedness, ensuring opportunities for the inclusive world to prosper.

A. Naseeb Khan

PROFESSOR MUHAMMED ZAKIR

# To the Memory of Azra and Mujib Rizvi
# A Preceptor—In His Own Words and Mine*

"There is no science of reality, it has only states', (1) but one who comes to know of it, keeps mum; one who finds out the secret, keeps quiet. Such has been the wa*y* of those who have known the secret of reality. Anyone who told the secret was disgraced; one who said 'I am the Truth' was put on gallows and considered to be shallow, having little capacity. It is because of this that there have been many men who have known reality but there have been v*ery* few preceptors of it. Those who are only scholars are like the mounds in flat plains from where one can see very far but that makes no difference on the seasons and the atmosphere (2) (whereas) a preceptor is such a Himalayan rock which causes changes in the seasons on the flat plains where a community lives making them colourful and charing. Their influence creates such a cultural atmosphere which gives courage and teaches a wa*y* of life to man, it takes man towards manliness from animalism. The preceptor does not keep quiet after finding the secret; he spreads the light of his lamp in darkness. The past, present and future of the world are in his hand like the anwla, myrobalan fruit, and he lets others also taste its sweetness and sourness. "He is not a rock like Indian philosophy or Chinese ethics which the time-waves strike against and they themselves break away; he is himself an ocean that breeds waves and storms in its arms." (3) He does not bum himself but creates a burning sensation in others; He becomes a standard-bearer of movement in stagnation; he completely breaks the

* Translation of Mujib Rizvi's Ek Muallim ki kahani: Kuchh Meri, Kuchb Unki Zabani as included in his Peechhe Phirat Kahat Kabir Kabir aur Doosre Mazamin, Dilli Kitab Ghar, Delhi. 2009, pp. 180–195. Words in parenthesis () are provided by the translator.

peace and quiet by hurling his doubts and queries and himself becomes a yogi *purush remaining peaceful* and quiet in pain and pleasure.

The subtle discomforting circumstances never made Prof. Mujeeb irritated; his treasure of knowledge never made him ill-tempered. As such, who can be more deserving and better than him to be called yogi *purush*? For eighteen year*s* living death lived in his home, the angel of death kept threatening him; his son was *growing* in age but his heart trembled with fear instead of being happy because the day his son was born he knew that the crane of death would snatch him away leaving only memories to torture him. To add to the injury, only he knew this secret; even his life-partner could not share it as she did not at all know of it. (5) He kept himself burning in this fire but he did not let it mar the happiness of others. He kept peaceful even at the dancing death of his son before him.

By his nature he was a preceptor; he kept diving in the ocean of knowledge; he did not raise a cry because of the fear of death. He only patiently waited for it. I do not know whether he got this pearl from the Qur'an or from the treasure of Indian thought when he was writing *Tarikh-Tamaddun e-Hind, History of Indian Culture.* The Bhagvat Gita certainly tells us that this attribute and grace are those of a pandit (scholar, a yogi and a perfect man).

Prof. Mujeeb kept himself busy in his search of reality even in that dreadful situation. He found the secret of life and death in the histo*ry* of nations. He says, "It is not death but contentment and lack of courage which kill man; his prison-cell is not fate which is held unavoidable, but it is the failure of planning that man, due to his selfishness or idleness thinks to be his fate."(6) He did not at all let contentment and idleness come near him; he did not let them become impediments in the path of his search even in the unavoidable difficult circumstances.

On one hand there was a spate of grief in his heart and on the other hand the condition of the country and the community was also not peaceful. All over there were civil war *condition.*

Wins and losses in a war of pawns on a chess-board, or one who, like a dumb man, enjoys his knowledge like his sweet food (that is one who keeps his knowledge to himself because he cannot tell others about it). He knew that there was one power which excites the waves and that is their desire to spring forth and take jumps. (10) The society needed

exciting waves, creation of the desire of springing forth and taking jumps; he kept himself busy in exciting waves through his speeches and writings and teaching work of *The Status of the Individual Conscience in Islam.* He did not accept what others said". The western world was a civilised world. Its splendour had dazzled the eyes of the heirs of old civilisations. Our educated class also was looking at not only the world through this (European) lens but also its own faith. But Prof. Mujeeb's farsightedness saw the darkness hidden behind that spreading light through its propagation. "Wherever western civilisation saw the shining lamp of any civilisation, it put it out and left no other way to save itself from darkness except its (western) light. The merciless heart of western civilisation has enslaved its enemies and it has made its lovers sell out even their homesteads by alluring them by its elegance and beauty." (12)

Western people were telling the world fanciful stories about the fall of the East. Some of them were humiliating it in a clear way; some of them while showing some sympathy with it were calling its backwardness as the high standard of spiritualism. Prof. Mujeeb showed a mirror to them also; he told them that their scales of values were too small to measure the vastness of the East. (He told them that) the basic difference between them was not that of materialism and spiritualism, it was the difference between Vastness and narrowness. What is needed in this matter is the support of such an order and of such principles and beliefs which can fully hold the bottomless and shoreless life as that of the East ... The West does not give any high value to principles and faith. What a little thing it needs is only a little support and this support of the western people was their policy and prudence." (13)

It was the age of nation-states and nationalism had become a new religion. One who criticised it was deemed to have been cut off from the mainstream, and its refuter was considered to be a political infidel. But Prof. Mujeeb's world outlook always considered the nation and country to be very small scales to measure humanism. He put a question mark on the political relationship of men. He said," Political relationship can keep small *group*s united; but when they grow larger, there can be no other way to keep them related together except religion and morality."(14) "There is no relationship to maintain *jamiyat*, togetherness, better than love of God." (15)

People of Europe called themselves the standard-bearers of freedom;

they were never tired of proving themselves as lovers of brotherhood and equality; but the social order which the west developed made man worse than the slaves of the Middle Ages. (No doubt) some people did get the freedom to become masters but the others only got the freedom of becoming slaves. Prof. Mujeeb exposed it all only in a few sentences, he proved their golden Elaine to be entirely false. Hardly anyone else may have so shortly and precisely analysed capitalism. He said, "Money has found out such ways to benefit from the labour and needs of others which are far more effective than the old ways of slavery; slaves of today work more and more for their masters and instead of the responsibility of their food and clothing to be on their masters they keep on increasing their masters wealth night and day by purchasing the goods manufactured by them." (16)

Europeans were hiding every virtuous deed of Muslims; they were denying all the gifts of Muslims to the world civilisation. Mujeeb Sahib thought it necessary to tell them that their renaissance was the gift of the Muslims; and that their first teachers in science also were Muslims. It was the foundation which they (Muslims) had laid on which the beautiful and durable edifice of western science and knowledge stands today.

Mulla Abul Qasim, a character in his play *Khana-jangi*, *Civil War*, while telling about creating a new spirit in the community tells his disciples, *"One life is the battlefield where truth and falsehood are at war with each other, and the other and much higher than that is the life in which truth demands truth..."* (17)

Prof. Mujeeb did not make his writings a battlefield of truth and falsehood; nowhere did he follow the way of debate or poster-writing. He adopted the style wherein truth demands truth. He says that one urge to know reality is that which shows itself in the form of a question. And another kind of urge is that which itself tells the answer to the questioner.) Every sentence of Mujeeb Sahib raises questions but his urge is the urge that tells the answer to the questioner.

He does not use questions as lancets, he tortures nobody, and he does not enjoy teasing others. He questions only to give a stir in stagnation, to awaken the sleeping ones, to shake the minds, to encourage the hearts and to show the way of progress; his style is the style of a preceptor, not that of a teacher or a propagator.

By profession Prof. Mujeeb remained a teacher but his mind was that of a preceptor. A teacher, with the air of his unnecessary information, makes so much of his talk as to puff out the balloon. A preceptor encloses the sea in a jar; a teacher is hypercritical, regards a simple point to be the whole thing: the preceptor searches for reality with his sharp mind and sees unity in diversity of thoughts and events: the teacher spreads out the material, the preceptor puts it together. That is why there is so much excess of unnecessary words in the writings and speeches of a teacher and there is Precision and conciseness in the preceptor; the teacher is belief and belief whereas the preceptor is a traveller on a thorny path running from doubt to belief; the teacher's works don't go well without margins and references because he thrusts different thoughts in the minds, he confines the mind instead of freeing it; the preceptor does not thrust things, he awakens the mind by some hints, he creates an urge for research, marks out a new field of activity to be thought. Mujeeb Sahib is a preceptor: it is on account o that his writings are free from references and margins; he introduces a new foot of reality in short sentences; like a wee he does not impress things by argument and logic.

True feeling for search and tune thirst for knowledge create that spell writings which takes the right-minded person) in a world that is at once talismanic and real. The teacher content itself is by measuring the height and roundness of the Qutb Minar and the preceptor Mujeeb is successful in showin*g* in it the beauty of a beautiful wrist wearing bangles and bracelets. The preceptor 'too is a teacher but one who makes teaching a creation. And there is no doubt that Prof. Mujeeb is creative in his every deed and thought.

Due to the burden of the nature of his work, the teacher is an imitator; (19) in him deen or faith, does not remain the source of morality and courage, it becomes a drafter, book, of theology and law. The effort to increase knowledge is suspected to be an insult of elders ... and the thought of perfection is forgotten. (20) The preceptor believes in confrontation of minds and not in their stoppage. Therefore, he confronts the mind with every rock, even if it is the reverence, mountain Himalaya of reverence. He makes a main road by breaking the rocks; sittin*g* under their shadow does not lean safely to him.

When a preceptor has to do just dry teaching work, he remains

unsatisfied; he does not get the good taste of harmony and comradeship. Mujeeb Sabib has himself confessed his dissatisfaction: "For years together I have taught in the Jamia but I never had the feeling of success. Sometimes I complained that students did not pay full attention, and sometimes there were complaints that they knew too little or that they had little capacity. Any way, very little I enjoyed the harmony of interest and comradeship." (21) He sought for harmony of interest outside the Jamia. He does not only financially help the students but also provides research material to the competent researchers. Who knows how many research students are grateful to him? One does not see students coming to him for financial help or academic material. He himself goes to their schools and homes with the wealth of his knowledge and bundles of currency notes. Preceptor Mujeeb gets a spiritual comfort to see new flowers and plants growing in these fertile lands after flowing his Genetic knowledge there. (23)

Prof Mujeeb's special subject is history. Nature has given him a small body but a very big mind. It is because of this that he could not test himself one particular subject. He wrote histories but also on Russian literature; he wrote stories and plays also. Now he is inclined to write novel.

It is our misfortune that he has not been able to write what he wanted to give us in his entire life. It is impossible here to cover all his intellectual work. Therefore, I will have to content myself to simply refer to his historical insight and literary consciousness. "History" to him "is the story of man and manliness, not a *karishma, wonder-work*, of spiritualism." (22) But "his soul is agitated to find in the pages of history that we have time for everything but not at all for becoming a man."(23) In history he has discovered two strong powers; one, the power of culture and the other, of the wheel. In his *Dunya ki Kahani*, *Story of the World*, he has tried to find out in what ways human Vulture has developed so far. According to his point of view culture means to lead a life under the shadow of religion, belief, management to meet the necessary demands of life—and then to improve one life according to one's personal taste."(24) For culture it is essential to make arrangement to meet its requirements. It is because of this that in his *World History and Heritage* we find Prof. Mujeeb whole heartedly paying tribute to

the first man who invented the wheel. Our present day culture too is (worthless or) nothing without the progress of technology. Elements of both, spiritualism and materialism are mixed in the historical consciousness of Prof. Mujeeb. While writing his *Tarikh-e Tamaddun-e-Hind, History of Indian Culture*, he knew that in order to find out the right direction, it is also necessary to see the far-off things—the sky and the moon and stars."(25) But humanity loses its way by only staring and staring at them. He also knows that a traveller, who fixes his glance only on the ground just before him, can forget his path." (26) It is because of this that he wants to keep a balance between the two and to use both, religion and the wheel in the carriage.

Generally, history is a bundle of graveyard entries but Mujeeb Sahib's historical consciousness makes us peep into the well of the future as well. Probably he has got this insight from literature, not from history. He had written *Dunya ki kahani, Story of the World*, in 1937. It was then that he had prophesied that when "nationalism and industrialisation become a force, they will man and culture." (27) Till then there was no talk (charcha) of two civilisations and their confrontation. Intellectuals had no worry about the imbalance between materialism and spiritualism. The world had not yet thought what crisis the western civilisation and industry would have to face if the colonies of those days became free. Perhaps even the designers of Russian foreign policy at the time did not consider—or were unable to consider—that the self-sufficiency of newly independent nations would serve as a "Weapon more effective (kaargar) than even the atom bomb against capitalism and western societies monopoly. It was Prof. Mujeeb who had said those days that when the countries that are called business markets then became factories, all the pomp and show of western industry will be gone! (28)

Prof. Mujeeb saw civil war as the underlying cause of all cultural and political decadence. It was because of this that he made it the subject of one of his plays. Its background is Mughal history, a political war between Aurangzeb and his brother Dara Shukoh. But, in fact, it is an insightful review on the civil war, hatred and disturbances prevalent in India in 1946. Many hundred years ago before this, Muslims had to face a problem: "to oppose the ruler or save the community from the miseries of civil war." (29) But Prof. Mujeeb's mind was not prepared to

accept the solution found at that time. Muslims were inclined to adopt the way of the Christian monks instead of following the bright example of Imam Husain (d.680 A.D) (30)

Imam Ghazali (d.1111 A.D.) in his Ihya ul Ulum had decreed that "There can be three ways of dealing with cruel rulers and administrators: one that is the worst is that you go to them, and the second that they come to you, and the third that you live separately from them; neither they see you, nor you see them!" (31)

I think that the real subject of *Khana-jangi*, *Civil War* is the bright example of Imam Husain and Imam Ghazali's point of view of aloofness from politics. Sheikh Sarmad is following the path of Imam Husain and Mulla Abul Qasim is the follower of Imam Ghazali in this play. The writer of *Civil War* has clearly marked out these ways and the tendencies of the contemporary intellectuals in these words of Mulla Abul Qasim: "One way to deal with the problem is to have trust in God and keep yourself busy in your work. The other way is to confront those *w*ho are against you and put on gallows like Sheikh Sarmad". (32)

While reading *Khana-Jangi. Civil War*, I at least come to think that the Madrasa of Mulla Abul Qasim, in the light of the prevailing conditions in the country, is the Jamia Millia, the healthy and strong child of the Khilafat Movement (1920-21) and a debate is going on the way to be adopted should it be the way of Sheikh Sarmad or just to go on tip-topping doing khut khut with the hope that something or other will come out of it? It seems that Prof. Mujeeb wants to have an encounter with the dragon of communalism; he is the propagator of the way of Sheikh Sarmad while others are among those who follow the way of Mulla Abul Qasim. But no decision could be taken. Mujeeb Sahib has very clearly portrayed the struggle and shaky belief of the intellectuals of those days through Aurangzeb. He puts a sword before Mulla Abul Qasim and says to him, "Mulla, either put me to award or else come along with me." Mulla has neither the courage to slay him nor is convinced to accord with him. And then Aurangzeb says, "I see that just like the other learned men like you, you cannot take a decision; and life could not wait for your decisions before, nor can it now!"(33)

In 1946, people in the Jamia were actually busy in celebrating their Jubilee (34) and could not decide to disapprove the Muslim League mentality or go with it. Perhaps the historian Mujeeb kept persuading

them to follow the path of Sarmad but the voice of history *w*as drowned under the burden of the plans of *salamat ravi*, peaceful going. The country was partitioned, the community lost its strings, the dignity of togetherness, jam'iyat, came to be worthless in India; prejudice and narrow-mindedness came to be the order of the day; if this demon, *'ifrit*, of communalism was—subdued, it was only after drinking the blood of half-naked Gandhi [Sammad was fully naked]. The Jamia served the refugees and tried to reduce hatred in those days but when it was in time to take a decision it had remained confused. Histor*y* is very bold and outspoken. It seems that in the garb of Saeedudeen it has said to the Jamia people and to Mulla Abul Qasim, "Ever since the civil war started in Shahjahanabad you had been opposing party-making with great courage and steadine*ss*. When it was over, you continued to condemn bigotry and narrow-mindedness which were the outcome of civil war." (35) But why did you forget the bright example of Imam Husain (the role of Sammad in the play)? The Jamia people could give the same answer to that historical question that Mulla Abul Qasim gave to Saeeduddin: "We want that nothing wrong is done by us, our plans are restricted by the thoughts of peaceful going and our hearts are subject to prudence and expediency." With historical consciousness and literary insight Prof. Mujeeb who could see the far-off future is not questioning the Jamia people about but he is questioning all those intellectuals who were concerned, Vaabastah, with the freedom movement of India; he is putting this question to Mahatma Gandhi and Jawaharlal Nehru. Why did they not confront and make a sacrifice when it wa*s* the time to confront and make a sacrifice? The preceptor Mujeeb had raised that question in the minds of others in those days. If its answer is required, any teacher of politics or history may search it out now. A preceptor can only give a warning after feeling the air of the coming accidents. And when history takes a further step, a preceptor like Mujeeb busies himself in search of the footprints of this tragedy by writing *The Indian Muslims*.

Prof. Mujeeb does not raise questions only on big problems; he minutely tries to find out the mental confusions through everyday conduct and activities; he points out imperfect thoughts and tendencies; he does not care about time and place to do it, nor does he approve of showing any leniently, in this regard. Once, a well-versed

historian from Aligarh Muslim University came to Jamia. He said to Prof. Mujeeb that Islamic mentality should be developed in the Jamia. Without any hesitation whatsoever, Prof. Mujeeb answered, "Well, look here, mind is mind, it is not Islamic or un-Islamic; let the mind take a flight, don't confine it in a cage, please." The wife of an American ambassador came to him and offered American financial aid for some project, Prof. Mujeeb without any hesitation said, "You cannot help without any personal interest and the Jamia cannot be so helpless and needful." When the Education Commission, under the chairmanship of Dr. D.S. Kothari came to Prof. Mujeeb in connection with planning the educational system, his answer was: "All the systems are good, it is their directors who are bad; even if Allah sends us some system, we who are its directors will make it imperfect and useless."

Once a worthy number asked in the Parliament, "What is the proportion of Hindu and Muslim students in the Jamia?" Prof. Mujeeb sent a short reply to the Ministry of Education: "We in the Jamia do not enrol Hindus or Muslims, we admit only students."

With great efforts of Frof. Mujeeb, a statue of Ghalib (the poet) was installed in the campus of the then Jamia College. Someone disliked it aesthetically and to someone else it seemed to be ill-formed and a cartoon of Ghalib. To all the critics Prof. Mujeeb's reply was: "I have neither got any statue installed, nor have I got the beauty of Ghalib's body and character moulded into it. I only want to smash the idol of iconoclasm (image breaking) which the Muslims have set up in their minds."

Others might have been smashing the stone idols, preceptor Mujeeb smashes the idols installed in the minds; he does not want to cut off only the nose of the idols of imperfect thoughts, he wants to clean the very place where these are installed. He has limitless flexibility tolerance because it is only in such a soil where the plant of thoughts fully flourishes but he never hesitates to cut off a fruitless tree; to him every habit is bad, even if it is the habit of saying prayers. He does not tolerate even idol breaking if it also becomes a habit like 'idol-worship. Many of his contemporaries seem to worship Iqbal (the poet philosopher) like an idol but he never appreciates his world-view. He exposes the weaknesses and imperfect thoughts of Muslims when he is among them, but when he is among the non-Muslims, he sings and praises good qualities of

Musims. This is verily the way of preceptor Mujeeb to maintain the mental balance of the society polluted by the poison of communalism.

The personality of our preceptor is highly well-shaped and profound. I have no idea how many of the aspects of his personality there are which I do not know. To me only one sentence of his seems to be (like) the mirror of Jamshid [in which King Jamshid saw whatever he wished] of his personality. Prof. Mujeeb has written this sentence in English in another man's bayaz, personal note-book: "Whelt Zad. I felt that I was alive"(37) Now, if you may find in it the thought of life after death, or the philosophy of the nirvana of Gautum Budh - that a candle kindles another candle before it is extinguished.

And if you can, you may find the aahat, inkling, of unity of existence in it; if you are bestowed with the divine grace, taufique, you may listen to the voice of science in it that no matter is destroyed, only its form is changed. The image of depth, attraction and vastness of meaning which this one sentence has in it is what preceptor Mohd. Mujeeb is!

## NOTES

1. Prof. M. Mujeeb: *Kaana-jangi*, 1976, p. 32.
2. Prof. M. Mujeeb: *Dunya ki Kahani*, p. 82.
3. do p. 212.
4. Gita.
5. Mjeeb Sahib's elder son, Muhammad Muin, passed away at the age of about 20 years but at the time of his birth the doctor had told him that he night pass away any time as he was born with a fatal disease. He kept it a secret and did not e*v*en *tell* his wife.
6. *Dunya ki Kahani*, p. 216.
7. Analysis of circumstances after the civil war between Aurengzeb and Dara Shukoh by a character, Mulla Abul Qasim in his play *Khana-ian gi*.
8. Words uttered by Sarmad in *Khan jangi*.
9. Prof. M. Mujeeb: *Dunya ki kahani*, p. 152.
10. do pp. 48-49.
11. do p. 213.
12. do do 1.213.
1 3 do do 1.213.
14. do do pp. 48-49.
15. Prof. Mohd. Mujeeb: *Khana-jangi*, p. 84.

16. *Dunya ki kahani*, p. 41.
17. do *Khana-jangi*, p. 86.
18. do: Shaikh Sarmad's dialogue.
19. Generally it is thought that imitators are only in Arabic and religious madrasas but now a days there is no shortage of such persons even in universities.
20. Prof. Mohd. Mujeeb: *Dunya ki kahani*, p. 152.
21. do: Foreword, Jamia ki kahani of Abdul Gaffar Madholi.
22. do *Dunya ki kahani*, p. 132.
23. do: p. 91.
24. do: p. 88.
25. do: p. 48.
26. do: p. 48.
27. do: p. 218.
28. do: p. 241.
29. do: p. 142.
30. do: p. 142.
31. do: p. 142.
32. do: *Khana-iangi.*
33. do p. 75.
34. It is strange that the play K hana-jangi was written for the Jubilee Celebrations and staged on that occasion.
35. Prof. Mohd. Mujeeb: *Khana-jangi*, p. 79.
36. do: p. 80.
37. Mujeeb Sahib had written this in the bayaaz of Agha Ashraf Ali (Kashmir University) in which the celebrities have penned down what would be their feeling after their death.

ABDUL HAQ ANSARI

# Ibn Taymiyah's Criticism of Sufism

Shaikh 'l-Islam Ibn Taymiyah's (661/1262-728/1318) mission was to thoroughly review the whole gamut of Muslim thought and life in the light of the koran and the Sunna as understood and interpreted by the elders (*aslaf*) of Islam, and show what was right and true and what was wrong and mistaken. As a part of this mission he reviewed also the ideas and practices of sufism, and showed what was consistent with Islamic principles and acceptable, and what conflicted with them and had to be rejected.

The popular image of Ibn Taymiyah which early Western writers on Islam in modern times have considerably helped to build up is that he criticizes Sufism indiscriminately, is dead against the sufis, and sees no place for Sufism in Islam.[1] Nothing of this is, however, correct. Ibn Taymiyah, to be sure, is the most thorough and most incisive critic of Sufism, and his criticism is not limited to a few philosophical doctrines or some popular sufi practice, as some writers[2] have held, but covers the entire field of sufi thought and life. but he is certainly not indiscriminate, at times, he is bitter, but on the whole sympathetic. And far from saying that Sufism has no place in Islam, he moves to define the perimeters of an Islamic Sufism.[3]

Ibn Taymiyah's general attitude to Sufism comes out from this passage: 'Some people accept everything of Sufism, its right as well as wrong; others reject it totally, both what is wrong and what is right, as some scholars of *kalam* and *fiqh* do. The right attitude towards Sufism, or any other thing, is to accept what is in agreement with the koran and the Sunna, and reject what does not agree.'[4]

Ibn Taymiyah applies this principle of judicious criticism to sufi ideas, practices and personalities. he divides the sufis in three categories. In the first category of sufis whom he calls *mashaikh 'l-Islam, masha'ikh'l-kitab wa'l-Sunnah* and *a'mmat 'l-huda*[5] he mentions Fudail b. 'Ayad (d. 187/802), Ibrahim b. Adham (d. 160/777), Shaqiq 'l-balkhi

(d. 194/810), Abu Sulayman 'l- darani (d. 203/844), Ma'ruf 'l-karkhi (d. 220/835), bishr'l-hafi (d. 227/841), Sari'l-Saqti (d. 253/867), al-Junayd b. Muhammad (d. 289/910), Sahi b. 'Abd Allah 'l-Tasturi (d. 283/896) and umar b. uthman 'l-Makki (d. 291/903). Later sufis whom he places in this category are: 'Abd 'l-Qadir 'l-Jilani (d. 561/1166), Shaikh hammad 'l-dabbas (d. 525/1130), and Shaikh Abu 'l-bayan (d. 551/1156). Ibn Taymiyah says that these sufis were never intoxicated, did not lose their sense of discrimination, nor said and did anything against the koran and the Sunna. their lives and experiences conformed with the sharia (mustaqim 'l- ahwal).[6]

The second category of sufis 'experienced *fana* and intoxication (sukr) which weakened their sense of discrimination, and made them utter words which they later realized to be erroneous when they became sober.'[7] Some of them also did[8] things under intoxication which the sharia does not approve of, but sooner or later they become sober and lived well. In this category Ibn Taymiyah mentions Abu yazid 'l-bistami (d. 261/875), Abu 'l-Husain 'l-Nuri (d. 295/97) and Abu bakr 'l-Shibli (d. 334/946). but he neither censors their experience of *fana* and *sukr*, nor condemns what they said or did in that state. Instead he offers apology for them on the ground that they were intoxicated (sukran) and had lost control over reason.[9]

His criticism is directed to the third category of sufis who have believed in ideas and expounded doctrines that contradict Islamic principles, or who have indulged in practices that are condemned by sharia. The first sufi in this group is Hallaj (d. 309/922). Ibn Taymiyah say that Hallaj believed in the doctrine of particular incarnation (hulul khass) on the pattern of Christian belief regarding Jesus. he also charges him of indulging in practices such as magic and sorcery.[10]

Next to Hallaj, the sufis who draw strong criticism from Ibn Taymiyah are the ones who expound the doctrine of one being (*wahdat 'lwujud*), such as Ibn 'Arabi (d. 638/1240), Sadr 'l-din 'l- Quniwi (d. 672/1273), Ibn Sab'in (d. 668/1269) and Tilmisani (d. 690/1291). Ibn Taymiyah discusses the basic concepts of *wahdat 'I-wujud*[11] which they hold in common, indicates the points on which they differ, examines their ideas on rational grounds and shows their incompatibility with Islamic principles.

Ibn 'Arabi who is the central figure in this context, Ibn Taymiyah

subjects to a detailed criticism. He is, however, fair to recognize that, 'of all the exponents of *wahdat 'l-wujud* he is close to Islam, that many of his ideas are correct, that he distinguished between the Manifest (*al-Zahir*) and the object of manifestation (*mazahir*), and accepts the commands and the prohibitions (of the *Shar'*) and other principles as they are. he recommends many things in *suluk* which sufi leaders have prescribed concerning good behaviour and devotion. This is why a number of people draw upon his writings in their *suluk* and benefit from them, even though they do not know their real import'.[12]

Ibn Taymiyah criticizes Ibn 'Arabi for believing that *wujud* (being/existence) is one, that the *wujud* of the world is same as the *wujud* of god, and that the objects are god's determinations. He explains the difference between god and the world with reference to the essence of things even though they have no footing in existence. Though he does not consider that their difference is subjective, as Tilmisani[13] does, a lot of things, however, follow from the basic principles of his doctrine which are reprehensible and contradict the essentials of Islam.

For instance the doctrine identifies the existence of everything, however rubbish and filthy, with the existence of God, and ascribes all the attributes of things, good and bad, to Him: It is God who is beautiful and ugly, perfect and imperfect, righteous and wicked; it is He who believes in everything, true and false, faith and infidelity; it is He who commits right and wrong and is rewarded or punished; and it is He who feels pleasure or pain, is happy or miserable. This is not an inference, Ibn Taymiyah says from Ibn 'Arabi's doctrine, but what he has himself stated.[14]

Ibn 'Arabi's doctrine contradicts the basic principles of Islam: It justifies polytheism and idolatory, denies any real difference between *tawhid* and *shirk*, and dubs the prophets' call to worship one God as a trick (*makr*).[15] 'Ibn 'Arabi subscribes to the baseless idea of 'the Seal of the Saints' (*khatm 'l-awliya*) and claims that position for himself. He asserts that his *wahdat 'l-wujud* is the absolute truth, that all other beliefs are partially true, and that the prophets, including the Seal of the Prophets (*khatim 'l-Nabiyin*), get truth from him,[16] although he receives the *Shar* from him and is subject to his authority. He invokes the pre-ordination (*qadr*) of God to condone wrong beliefs and evil practices, and explains away punishment in the hereafter.[17]

Ibn Taymiyah denounces these ideas as *kufr* and *zandaqah*,[18] but he does not find fault with Ibn 'Arabi's life and behaviour. Of the expounders of *wahdat 'l-wujud*, there is only one, Tilmisani, whom he calls wicked (*fajir*)[19] for his antinomian attitudes.

Ibn Taymiyah has nothing against the sufi experience of *fana* and *baqa* as such. He notes that it happens to the travellers of the sufi path. They become so much immersed in God that they forget themselves and the world, and feel that they have lost themselves and become one with god. This is the state of self- effacement (*istilam*) and union (*jam'*).[20] Many sufis in this state lose their sense of discrimination and pronounce: 'I am god' and 'glory to me'. Some make loud claims: 'I would put my tents at the *Jahannam*' (to save men), others commit objectionable acts. Ibn Taymiyah says that such words and behaviours are not to be censored, and the sufi is to be excused on the ground that he is not in his proper senses.[21]

Ibn Taymiyah calls this experience *fana shuhudi*, because it is a matter of perception (*shuhud*) only. The sufi sees that he has lost himself and become one with God, which does not however mean that he believes, or that he is really one with God. but the experience may lead and has led sufis to believe that they are one with god. This belief may take different forms: One is that god has entered into the sufi as hallaj believed, or that he has entered into the world. The other is that god and the world are really one being, and there is no difference between the servant and the Lord.[22] This is *fana wujud* of the people who believe in *wahdat 'l-wujud*. They develop this belief, Ibn Taymiyah says, 'due to the weakness of their heart which fails to see things as they are, and does not perceive the difference in union or multiplicity in unity'.[23]

Ibn Taymiyah says, neither of these two *fanas* was known, to the Prophet or his companions. 'the companions had a perfect faith and a strong conviction. They never lost their reasons nor went into swoon; they never felt intoxication, experienced effacement or got mad in love. These things first appeared at the time of the *tabi'in* (the following generation) among the intensely devoted (*'ubbad*) men of basra'.[24] He further observes that 'the *fana* which we get in the books of sober sufis like Shaikh 'l-Islam (Al-Ansari, d. 480/1080) and the sufis before him is the *fana shuhudi*, even though some of them have entertained wrong ideas about it'.[25]

Some sufis are, for instance so intensely conscious of God's absolute power and his complete control over the world, or his preordination of things and events (*qadr*) that they hold back from calling things good and bad as the Sharia does. They are so overwhelmed by god's *qadr* that they do not see a place for his law (*amr*) or so much immersed in the vision of his lordship (rububiyah) that they do not move to fulfil the demands of his divinity ('uluhiyah).[26] Some do not see any room for supplication (*du'a*)[27] or any justification for preaching and *jihad*. They believe that their task is to resign to every decree of god, and accept everything good or bad. they refuse to make any effort to correct what is wrong or fight what is evil.[28] Ibn Taymiyah discusses these mistaken ideas at length, exposes their fallacy in the light of the *Koran* and the Sunna, and offers a rational view of pre-ordination (*qadr*) and divine rule. He praises sufis like 'Abd'l-Qadir 'l-Jilani who did not fall into these errors, who believed in *qadr* but adhered to the *Shar*, who were intensely conscious of god's rule, yet worked against what was false and evil.[29] One of the main objects of Ibn Taymiyah's commentary[30] on a part of his *Futuh 'l-Ghayb* is to show how the Shaikh has steered clear of the dilemma in which others have fallen.

Some sufis consider that the *fana shuhudi* is the goal of Sufism. even Shaikh Abdullah'l-Ansari, the author of *Manazil'I-Sha'rin*, notwithstanding his greatness, had the same view.[31] This is, however, the goal of imperfect sufis (*qasirin*).[32] One has to go, Ibn Taymiyah says, beyond *fana shuhudi*, disentangle himself the second time (*farq thani*)[33], reaffirm his servanthood, and carry out the will of god in such a way as if he has no will of his own. The goal of perfect sufis is the effeacemet of will, *fana iradi*, which he defines as a state in which

> one loses every interest in what god does not command; engages in what he orders; turns away from every worship and worships god alone; and gives up every obedience and obeys him only. It is a state in which one depends on no one but god; loves no body except him and the Prophet; fears nothing[34] … and pleases no one except him.[35]

This is the *fana* which the koran and the Sunna teach, the *fana dini* and *fana-Shar'l*, which was the state of the prophets, their companions and the rightly guided sufis.[36]

Ibn Taymiyah does not deny extra-revelatory ways of divine guidance

or *kashf*. Referring to the koranic verse (42:51) he says, god talks to man in three ways: from behind a veil, through an angelic messenger, or through secret communication (*'iha*). The wali shares into the last one;[37] the first two are for the Prophet early. but the sufi *kashf* is not infallible and certain. certitude belongs to the Prophetic *wahy* only. Ibn Taymiyah quotes a number of sutis on this point. Abu'l-hasan'l-Shadhili (d. 656/1258), for instance, says: 'We have been assured of the truth of the koran and the Sunna; but the truth which is revealed in *kashf* and *ilham* in not guaranteed'.[38]

The efficacy of the gnostic way in knowing reality through purification of the heart of which Ghazali talks a lot. He remarks:

> A Christian monk, when he polishes his soul, sees in it the image of Trinity, and is addressed through it. Since he had an image of Trinity before his soul, when polished by devotions, sees the image in vision. on the other hand, a Muslim who loves god and the Prophet sees the Prophet in dream as he believes him to be, and sees god in dream as he imagines him.[39]

but he does not negate the efficacy of the gnostic way altogether.

'A section of people of *kalam* and reason', he says, 'reject many of the things that Ghazali has said, and think that devotion and purification of the heart do not contribute to knowledge. They are certainly wrong. the truth is that piety or purification of the heart is one of the great means of receiving knowledge.'[40]

Ibn Taymiyah, however, denies that it is a way by itself, a self-authenticating means of knowledge, reliable and certain.

> 'One has to abide, he says, 'by the koran and the Sunna in knowledge or action; it is not possible that any one should know what the prophet has said of transcendental realities, directly by himself, independent of the agency of prophecy. And no one can dispense with what the prophet has communicated in matters of reality. The word of the prophet is self- authenticating, and the *kashf* or the opinion of any one cannot rule on it.'[41]

In matters of worship and *qurb*, *kashf* has no role at all. 'The forms of *qurb* and worship (*ibadat*) are known only through the prophets; there is nothing *haram* except what God has forbidden, and there is nothing *din* except what he has prescribed.'[42] *Kashf* may, however, have a say in cases where arguments from the principal sources of the sharia collide,

and one is at a loss to decide as to what is the proper course. In such case *kashf* or '*ilham* is a stronger reason than an unsound (daif) Hadith or a weak analogy (*qiyas*). Ibn Taymiyah writes:

> those who say that '*ilham* does not count at all are wrong; and those who consider it as an approved (sharia) way of knowing are also wrong. When the *salik* after taking all the clear arguments of the sharia into consideration, fails to come to a judgement, his inspiration ('ilham) may be an argument for him, provided he is pious and has right motives. At times, *kashf* is a stronger argument than a farfetched analogy, unsound hadith, weak opinion and *istishab* on which the followers of a particular *fiqh* so much rely.[43]

The greatness of a wali lies not in *fana wujudi* or *shuhudi*, it lies in serving god. 'Man is the servant of god, and in the service of god lies his perfection and glory. The more one serves god, the more perfect one is. If he thinks that he can transcend the bounderies of servanthood, or that transcendence is a mark of perfection, he is most ignorant, and most removed from the right path.'[44]

The measure of a wali's greatness is his faith and his obedience to god. Miracles are no criterion. 'Revelation of secrets (*kashf*) or control over events (*tassawwuf*), are not necessarily better than the acts which do not produce these things. If a *kashf* and *tassawwuf* is not helpful for religion it is a worldly thing: a lot of infidels, pagans and men of the book perform them, whereas many Muslims don't.'[45] 'The best of the walis of god are those who follow the Prophet most closely; that is why, Abu bakr is the greatest wali after the prophets.'[46]

Ibn Taymiyah does not oppose the *tariqah* of the sufis as such, neither their concentration on some approved ways, nor adoption of new ones, provided they do not fall in the category of *bida*. he does not object, for instance, to the experience of *fana* and union; what he requires is that one should not make it the goal of Sufism, or entertain about its mistaken ideas. he would not object intensification of some approved forms of *dhikr*, or reliance on some methods of the purification of soul, with neglect of others, provided they are within the limits of the sharia.[47] A sufi may, for instance, withdraw temporarily to seclusion (*khalwah*),[48] provided he observes the *salat* in assembly and the Friday prayer, and renders his essential obligations. Ibn Taymiyah would insist that these practices should not change or after the values of

things which the sharia normally attaches to them.[49] 'There is no way to God', he says, 'except following the Prophet externally and internally'.[50]

The way to know what the inner realities of religions such as renunciation (zuhd), abstinence (wara'), love (mahabbah), trust (tawakkul), resignation (rida), sincerity (ikhlas), thankfulness (shukr) and patience (sabr) are is the koran, the Sunna of the Prophet, and the live of the companions. The more one moves away from this period, the more is the meaning of these realities influenced by external factors such as philosophical ideas, sufi practices and experiences, doubtful traditions and ascetic tendencies.[51] One has to be very cautious going through, for instance, Ghazali's *Ihya'I-'Ulum*.[52] In Ibn Taymiyah's view the *Qut'l-Qulub*[53] of Abu Talib'l-Makki (d. 386/996) is comparatively free from external influences, although it, too, has a lot of weak and unsound traditions.

This is a rapid glance over Ibn Taymiyah's criticism of Sufism. For a full discussion of his comprehensive review one would require a volume by itself.

NOTES

1. For a review of these views see george Makdisi, 'Ibn taimiya: A Sufi of the Qadiriya order', *American Journal of Arabic Studies*, vol. I, 1973. on the alleged affiliation of the Ibn Taymiyah with the Qadiriyah order see note 3.
2. Gorge Makdisi, for instance, thinks that Ibn Taymiyah condemned, 'the pantheistic Sufism of the *Ittihadiyah*, as represented, for instance in the doctrines of Ibn Arabi', or 'the philosophers and sufis influenced by them' (Makdisi, op. cit., pp. 122, 129). Abu'l-hasan Ali Nadwi shows that he criticized the wrong practices, *bidat* of Sufism, such as invocation of sufi saints, visit to their graves, etc. *Tarikh Da'wat wa'Azimat*, second edn., Lucknow, 1971, vol. II, pp. 216-36. there is a better appreciation of Ibn Taymiyah's comprehensive review in Abu Zubra's, *Ibn Taymiyah, Hayatuhu. Atharuhu wa Fighuhu*, dar'l-fikr'l 'Arabi, cairo, pp. 196-210, 316-39; dr. Mustafa hulmi, *Ibn Taymiyah wa'l Tasaswwuf*, cairo, 1982; and thomas Michels paper Ibn Taymiyah's Shah on the futuh'l-ghayb, *Hamdard Islamicus*, vol. IV, no. 2, Summer 1981, karachi, pp. 3-12.
3. For this task one does not have to be sufi, and most probably Ibn Taymiyah was not associated with any *silsilah*. Prof. Makdisi's evidence

for his affiliation with Qadiriyah order is not convincing. thomas Michel's observations on his arguments seem to be right. Michel, op. cit., pp. 3-4.

4. Abd 'l-rahman 'l-Asimi and his son, Muhammad, riyad, compiled by Majmu fatawa Shaykh 'I-Islam Ibn Taymiyah, vol. X, p. 82. this work will be henceforth referred to as *Fatawa Shaykh 'l-Islam*.
5. For these appellations and the names of Sufis, see, rashid rida's, *Majmu'at 'l Rasa'il wa 'l-Masa'il*, cairo, vol. I, p. 179. this work will be henceforth referred as *Al-Rasa 'il wa 'l-Masa'il*; and fatawa Shaykh' I-Islam, op. cit., vol. X, pp. 516-17 and vol. XI, p. 233.
6. Fatawa Shaykh'l-Islam, op. cit., vol. X, pp. 516-17.
7. Ibid., vol. X, pp. 220-1.
8. Shibli, for instance, shaved his beard and tore his cloths in that state, *Fatawa Shaykh'l-Islam*, vol. X, pp. 382, 557.
9. *Al-Rasa 'il-wa'l-Masa'il*, vol. I, p. 168; *Fatawa Shaykh'I-Islam*, vol. X, pp. 382, 557.
10. *Al-Ras'il wa'l-Masa'il*, vol. I, pp. 81, 83; *Fatawa Shaykh'l-Islam*, vol. XI, p. 18. Ibn Taymiyah has reviewed hallaj's life and ideas in a separate treatise. dr. M. rashad Salim, *Risalah fi 'I-Jawab 'an Suwal 'an 'I-Hallaj hal Kana Siddiqan aw Zindiqan*. Jurni 'I-rassa'il: cairo; 1969, pp. 185-99. henceforth this will be referred as *Jami' 'I-Rasa'il*.
11. Ibn Taymiyah has referred to the doctrines of the expounders of *Wahdat 'I-wujud* in many of this writings. In two treatises, however, he has dicussed them at length. they are *Ibtal wahdat 'I-wujud*, (*Al-Rasa'il wa'l-Masa'il*, vol. I, pp. 61-120), and *Haqiqat Madhhab'-Ittihadiyin* (*Al-Rasa'il wa'l-Masa'il*, vol. IV, pp. 1-10).
12. *Al-Rasa'il wa'l-Masa'il*, vol. I, p. 176.
13. Ibid., vol. IV, p. 23.
14. *Al-Rasa'il wa'l-Masa'il*, vol. IV, p. 78.
15. Ibid., pp. 79-90.
16. Ibid., pp. 59-72.
17. Ibid., vol. V, pp. 42-3.
18. *Fatawa Shaykh' I-Islam*, vol. XI, p. 385; vol. X, p. 339.
19. *Al-Rasa'il-wa'l Masa'il*, vol. I, p. 177.
20. Ibid., vol. I, p. 83.
21. *Fatawa Shaykh'I-Islam*, vol. X, p. 340; *Al-Rasa'il wa'l-Masa'il*, vol. I, p. 168.
22. *Fatawa Shaykh'l-Islam*, vol. X, pp. 219-20, 222; *Al-Rasa'il wa'l-Masa'il*, vol. I, p. 168; Ibn Taymiyah, *Al-Rasalah Al-TadmurIyah*, Al-Maktab 'i-Islami, beirut, 1391 A.h., p. 138.
23. *Fatawa Shaykh 'I-Islam*, vol. X, p. 338.
24. Ibid., p. 220.

25. Ibid., p. 341.
26. Ibid., pp. 487, 497, 499; *Al-Risalah 'I-Tadmuriyah*, pp. 130-35.
27. Ibid., pp. 694 and 712-14.
28. Ibid., pp. 682-5.
29. Ibid., p. 668.
30. The commentary on *Futuh'i-Ghayb* is included in vol. X of the *Fatawa Shyakh'I- Islam*, pp. 455-549. the more relevant pages are 482-9.
31. *Fatawa Shaykh'I-Islam*, vol. X, p. 498.
32. Ibid., p. 220; *Al-Rasa'il wa'i-Msa'il*, vol. I, p. 166.
33. Ibid., p. 497.
34. *Al-Risalah 'I-Tadmuriyah*, p. 137.
35. *Al-Rasa'il wa'I-Masail*, vol. I, p. 167.
36. *Fatawa Shaikh'I-Islam*, vol. X, pp. 218-19, 337-8 and 488; *Al-Rasa'il wa'l-Masa'il*, vol. I, pp. 83, 105.
37. *Al-Rasa'il wa'l-Masa'il*, vol. IV, p. 64.
38. Ibid., vol. IV, pp. 62-3.
39. *Fatawa Shaikh'I-Islam*, vol. X, p. 612.
40. Ibn Taymiyah, *Kitab'l Radd 'ala'l-Mantiqiyin*, ed. Sharfuddin, Beirut, p. 511.
41. Ibid., p. 511.
42. *Fatawa Shaikh'l-Islam*, vol. X, p. 76.
43. Ibid., vol. X, p. 473.
44. *Fatawa Shaikh'l-Islam,* vol. X, pp. 544-5.
45. Ibid., vol. XI, p. 398.
46. *Kitab'l Radd 'ala'l-Manfiqlyin*, op. cit., p. 516.
47. *Al-Rasa'il wa'l-Masa'il*, vol IV, pp. 86-7.
48. Ibid., vol. IV, pp. 84-6 and 92-3.
49. *Fatawa Shaikh'l-Islam*, vol., XI, pp. 398-400.
50. Ibn Taymiyah, *Al-Furqan Bayn Awliya'; Allah wa Awliya'l-Shaylan*, ed. M. Abd 'l-Wahhab fair, dar'l-fikr, p. 145.
51. Ibn Taymiyah makes these points in treatises which he wrote on *tawbah*, *shukr*, *sabr* and *tawakkul*, as well as in his discussions on *rida*, *mahabbah*, *khawf*, *rija* and *dua* in versions discourse that are spread out in the two volumes of his writings on *Sulak* and *Tassawwuf*, *Fatawa Shaikh'l-Islam*, vols. X and XI.
52. *Fatawa Shaikh'l-Islam*, vol. X, pp. 551-2.
53. Ibid., p. 551.

DR JAVED AKHATAR

# Islamic Studies: A New Star in the Old Firmament

ABSTRACT

Around 1400 years ago, Arabia saw the rise of Islam. Since then, it has developed into the second-largest religion in the globe, with followers and intellectual pursuits taking place everywhere from the Philippines to Alaska, between, up north to Siberia, and all the way down south to Argentina. Its academic pursuits abruptly shifted from the Muslim World to the Western World. The Europe started to benefit from the contributions and accomplishments of Muslim philosophers, thinkers, and intellectuals. Since then, Europe had begun to engage in research, invention, and discovery. In the meantime, a new academic field called Orientalism emerged in the west around 18th century and reached its zenith in strength and influence by the 20th century as a Machiavellian strategy against Islam.

Oriental studies, then, started to diverge, and 'Islamic Studies' arose as a fresh light in the established firmament. The disciplines of Orientalism and Islamic studies, which were developed in Europe to study the "others," have now become books and subjects of study. What exactly are Islamic studies? The following essay is an effort to provide a concise response to this topic and to briefly summarise the variety of problems associated with conceptualising it in light of some of the most notable reports and observations made by leading authorities in the subject. The paper also provides a broad overview of the history and development of Islamic studies, as well as an evaluation of its historical growth in India, a discussion of the nomenclature issue, and a list of some of the field's challenges.

Keywords: *Islam, Islamic studies, Orientalism, reports and reflections*

## INTRODUCTION

The term "Islamic Studies" (Or-al-dirasat al-Islmiyya) has a long history in the modern era, with numerous definitions, interpretations, and points of view, whether in the West and the Muslim world, India and its neighbouring countries, and the madrasas, and the universities. The idea of the subject matter as a university discipline today has broad ramifications. For this reason, we must examine the real idea of Islamic Studies first, because without doing so, it might be difficult to distinguish between a general study of a person, group, organisation, culture, work of art, time, place, race, or civilization, and a study of theology (diniyat).

Muslims and non-Muslims alike have recognised and valued Islamic Studies as a legitimate academic field of study, and India is no exception to this rule.[1] It is acknowledged as a significant area of study in western institutions. This topic is of a great importance and carries an acute curiosity in present time. It is even more significant for India than for the Europe and the America. For more than a millennium, Islam has had an impact on the Indian subcontinent in a variety of ways, including thought and behaviour, history and culture, economy and politics, art and literature, society and philosophy, as well as past and present. On the other hand, the ecology of the Indian subcontinent has had a significant impact on Islam itself. Islamic Studies has thus become a distinct and independent field of study in contemporary India, but its significance has not yet been completely appreciated. Furthermore, it lacks a precise definition at all.

This essay on Islamic Studies is meant to cover three topics: first, it will attempt to define *Islamic Studies* in a global context; second, it will provide a general analysis of the field's history and advancement with more focus on India; and third, it will discuss the nomenclature issue in relation to *Islamic Studies*. To accomplish the task, the methodology adopted will deal with chronological information about Islamic Studies, followed by miscellaneous reflections of some of the prominent reports as well as the reflections of the scholars of the field as a sample. So as to say there are varieties of understanding of Islamic Studies into which the present paper will venture in.[2] The article is entirely based on the thematic review and synthesis of writings of the experts in the discipline.

a) To this end, I have prepared a list of seven reports (*as a sample*) that have been reviewed and analysed in this memo. They are as follows:
   1. *The Reay Report* (1909)
   2. *The Scarborough Report* (1947)
   3. *The Hayter Report* (1961)
   4. *The Parker Report* (1986)
   5. *Mohamed Taher Report* (1991)
   6. *Ataullah Siddiqui Report* (2007)
   7. *HEFC Report* (2008)

b) The following reflections of the experts of the field of Islamic Studies (from east to west) cover different approaches of Islamic Studies. They have been taken (*as a sample*) under considerations. They are mentioned below:
   1. *Dr. Attaullah Siddiqui*-A Professor of Islamic Studies, and Director of the "Certificate in Muslim Chaplaincy" course at Markfield Institute of Higher Education, UK.
   2. *Prof. Clinton Bennett*-A British-American scholar of Islamic Studies, He is a Fellow of the Royal Asiatic Society, of the Royal Anthropological Institute and of the Committee for the Scientific Examination of Religion.
   3. *Dr. Sir Muhammad Iqbal*-a Famous Muslim Philosopher and Poet of the Indian Sub-continent.
   4. *Prof. Mohamed Mackeen*-a Professor of Islamic Studies, Kulliyah of Islamic Revealed Knowledge and Human Sciences at the International Islamic University of Malaysia and University Malaya.
   5. *Dr. Muhammad Zubayr Siddiqi*-a Professor of Islamic Culture, Calcutta University.
   6. *Dr. Mohamed Taher*- Dr. Mohamed Taher is an accredited library professional, in Library Science, History and Islamic Studies, worked in HYD and USA.
   7. *Professor John O. Voll*-a Professor Emeritus of Islamic History and past Associate Director of the Al-Waleed Bin Talal Centre, at Georgetown University in Washington, DC.
   8. *Dr. Yusuf Dalhat*-a professor of Islamic Studies at Federal University of Education Zaria, Nigeria.

Writing this essay on Islamic Studies, I intended to avoid any value judgments in general as my purpose is to create a climate of understanding the concept of the field and to avoid any of the ideological disputes or disagreements. As a student of Islamic Studies, I have simply stood to contribute into the on-going conversations about what Islamic Studies ought or ought not to be.

## ISLAMIC STUDIES

There are multiple challenges before Islamic Studies, some of them, for example *the issue of nomenclature or the problem of the term, the problem of the location, or place, what approach takes into consideration?, study of Islam by non-Muslims, a multi-dimensional discipline, how to market the subject?* have been elucidated below:

1. *The Issue of Nomenclature:* There are a few institutes and centres in India for Islamic Studies both at universities level and in research organizations. The university departments, usually full-fledged, carry on a study and research programme. The issue is made worse by the fact that the departments of Islamic Studies are not consistently referred to by a single name in all universities in India (or overseas) that teach roughly the same topic. University of Lucknow, for example, has a department of Arab Culture, Calcutta University has the department called the Department of Islamic Culture, while the same department in Aligarh Muslim University, Jamia Millia Islamia, Jamia Hamdard, University of Kerala and University of Kashmir is called the Department of Islamic Studies. Then, in Aligarh they also have the two Departments of Sunni and Shi'a Theology. Departments of Islamic theology are meant to be more concerned with the study of Islamic texts while the departments of Islamic Studies are supposed to focus particularly on the study of the historical interface between Islamic texts and changing social contexts. Therefore, there should be some more clarity in this issue of nomenclature.[3]
2. *The Problem of the Location:* The problem of Islamic Studies as a university discipline is not merely one of semantic interpretation, but also one of location.

3. *What Approach Take into Consideration?* Let us make the naïve assumption that the purpose of Islamic Studies in the West is to increase the *understanding* of Islam, its people, culture, society and civilization in the developed world. Taking cue from Iqbal, the objective of Islamic Studies in the Muslim world is to produce well-versed scholars who can tackle, and perhaps solve, some of the formidable problems faced by the Muslim societies. Can one suggest a new, radically different approach to Islamic Studies that takes full account of contemporary technological and political realities and serve both objectives? What factors and trends such an approach take into consideration?[4]
4. *The Nature of a Multi-Dimensional Discipline:* This field, Islamic studies, is beyond a multi-dimensional disciplinary, yet it also constitutes itself as a specific field. It covers all aspects of Islam and Muslims. a student of Islamic studies is ,therefore, expected to demonstrate competence in Islamic religious history, focusing on the development of Islamic civilization, law, society and institutions; Islamic religious thought focusing on Islamic philosophy, theology, Sufism and Shi'ism; Islamic scripture and tradition focusing on the composition, and interpretation of Qur'an and Ḥadīth; and also the modern developments. They are also required to demonstrate their skills in research and research methodology.
5. *Study of Islam by non-Muslims:* For centuries Islam has been studied by non-Muslims from many different angles, which saw Islam and Muslims as an 'external' object of study and demonstrated an 'us' against 'them' mentality including missionary objectives and finding any 'flaw' in it. Perhaps, this is why we observe several conceptions as for as Islamic Studies is concerned, this is also one the problems.
6. *How to Market the Subject?* The second challenge confronted by the student of Islamic studies is the job market. The basic question is how to market the subject. In this age of information and technology there is a vast scope to change the traditional outlook by introducing the Choice Based Credit System (CBCS).

## ENABLING BETTER GLOBAL UNDERSTANDING

Islam arose roughly 1400 years ago in Arabia; since then it has grown into the world's second largest religion with adherents from the Philippines to Alaska and everywhere in between and going north all the way to Siberia and coming down south to Argentina, inhabited by 1.8 billion Muslims.[5] The expansion of Islam, it must be remembered, led the way, on one hand, to a unique integration of peoples and cultures and, on the other, to a wide range of intense intellectual activity which embraced the classical Muslim achievements in historiography, philology, belles-letters, medicine, mathematics and that supreme science geography which blossomed in all its aspects-political, organic, mathematical, astronomical, natural science and travel.[6] These are but a few of the landmarks in the historical development of Islam and its civilization. The geographical area of Islam as eventually built up bore the impress of a truly heterogeneous belt of adherents-Arabs, Persians, Berbers, Caucasians, Copts, Slavs, Turks, Kurds, Tartars, Chinese, Indians, Indonesians, Malays, Africans and comprised ethnic and linguistic groups of widely differing tastes and attainments. This vast empire of Islam represents also an amazing amalgam of languages and the cultures associated with them-Arabic, Persian, Turkish, Berber, Urdu, Malay, Chinese and a number of dialects.[7]

## SUBJECT PARTURITION

Though with the progressive disintegration of the Muslim world, intellectual activities gradually transferred from them to the western world and they began to reap the fruits of the efforts of Muslims. It was practically at the time that Europe took-up the task of research, invention and discovery. Meanwhile, as a *Machiavellian strategy*, a new discipline Orientalism began to emerge in western scholarship in the 18$^{th}$ century and reached its height in power and influence by the 20$^{th}$ century. At that time, Oriental studies began to splinter[8] and as a new academic expression, '*Islamic Studies*', emerged.[9] Allow me to explain here that this phenomenon is called *subject parturition* which means new fields evolved from older ones and gradually gained full independence. In recent times, Islamic Studies has assumed an independence status, which

is no longer a part of Oriental Studies. But this independence has been very evolutionary and interesting to know.

## AN EXPRESSING NEED FOR DEFINING THE CONCEPT OF ISLAMIC STUDIES

Even a cursory glance at the ever-increasing literature on Islam, and the emergence and expansion of educational programs and institutes concerned with the study of Islam would seem to indicate that there is a definite upsurge of interest in Islamic Studies both within and outside the Muslim world. There are probably many reasons for this development.[10]Charles Kurzman and Carl W. Ernst attended to the mushrooming of interest in Islamic Studies in the post-9/11 landscape, and articulated a few metrics by which to demonstrate the growth of Islamic Studies across discipline. They measured a numerical increase of dissertation about Islam, flagship or top-tier journalist featuring an increased number of articles about Islam, as well as an avalanche of books about Islam.[11]The scope and setting up of Islamic Studies in a modern university as a discipline fraught with immense interest but at the same time loaded with the question '*What is Islamic Studies?*' to the scholars of Islamic Studies in particular and to the educationalists in general the world over. Hence, I feel there is a pressing need for expanding the concept of Islamic Studies.

## SOME WORKING DEFINITIONS

Islamic Studies as an academic discipline is a contemporary approach of studying Islam academically. It is a *catch phrase* or a *cover term* which has come to mean many things for many people hence there may hardly be any clear cut or specified definition that can be quoted as standard. Or in other words it is difficult to offer a comprehensive definition of Islamic Studies, but to my mind there may have *some working definitions*. Ziauddin Sardar, for example, quotes in his article, i.e., '*The Future of Islamic Studies*' that conceptual analysis will give Islamic Studies a meaning. Since several writings have already appeared on Islamic Studies in a varied form of books, articles, reports, research papers, statements, avowals, accounts, testimonies and talks that would be conceptually

analysed to define what '*Islamic Studies*' means today.[12] Hopefully, the following prominent reports and reflections of the scholars of the field would be able to offer a more systematic sense to Islamic Studies.

The nature of '*Islamic Studies*' and its status as an '*independent discipline*' have been widely contested. There are those who believe that Islamic Studies has its own core subjects and methodologies. The Islamic classical intellectual discipline of Islam, educated and sustained by the understanding of the Quran, the Prophet Muhammad's tradition (Sunnah) and the Arabic language and the civilisation that it created, forms the basis of Islamic Studies. There are others who believe that the subject cuts across various disciplines and there is no common methodology that holds it together. There are varieties of understanding of Islamic Studies, of some, into which the present paper will venture in this article to voice what 'Islamic Studies' is supposed to be today.[13]

## THE CHANGING CONTEXT

This piece of the note is a quick survey of some of the prominent Reports as well as Reflections of the experts of the field on Islamic Studies. To begin with, the contact between England and its colonies and the Arab world has a long history. The contacts depended upon the political requirement to rule and to regulate the colonies, and maintain an economic prosperity at home through business and trade. **The Reay Report** (1909) looked at the situation from an imperial vantage point, scanning its needs in the colonies and recommending training for people who are going to visit in a civil service, military, business, medical or missionary capacity, and those interested in scholarships in languages and cultures. At the heart of the report, it is the preoccupation with the success and continuity of imperial Britain, which had been able to influence certain elite colonies with 'the surroundings of the West'. It suggests a need to go beyond the English-speaking elite and reach the "*locals*" in "*their language*". This was becoming even more urgent because there were political tensions in the colonies and it was therefore important to equip people with knowledge of and sensitivity to the customs and practices required of the "*locals*". For Reay immediate attention was to be directed towards trade and commerce, where Britain needed not only to catch up but get ahead of her European

competitors.[14] This is a pre-War word report and the context was imperialism and colonialism.

Four decades later **the Scarborough Report** (1947) was published, when colonies were gradually becoming independent of the Empire. Decisions were no longer made from Britain; emerging countries were in a rush to assert their own identities separate from the Empire. Scarborough's priority was to maintain a moral influence on former colonies and international affairs. For that he emphasises that learning about other's culture, history and faith was central to the British interest.[15] This is a post-War world report and the context was to maintain a moral influence.

It was noted in **the Hayter Report** (1961) that the 'world is now a startlingly different place from what it was at the end of the war', but finding that the British educational system had 'taken little account of these developments'. Immigration from South Asian countries was at its height. Britain was increasingly becoming a plural society. The immigration issue, particularly the restriction of immigration, was hotly debated. Asian and African studies were Hayter's priority. He rightly emphasised that the 'universities have, a duty to meet in their own way the needs of the society in which they live'. He recommended 6 to 8 new centres of "area studies" in several universities, and also that 'the School of Oriental Studies in Durham and the Middle East Centres in Cambridge should be supported and expanded as centres of Middle East or Islamic Studies. This report came at a time when most of the colonies became independent states.[16]

To look at the situation from a commercial and diplomatic perspective, **the Parker Report** (1986) came, 'language and areas studies', which had argued, 'are all-important means to that end: i.e. success in diplomacy and commerce. All four reports convey different perspectives of the world. They reflect the socio-economic and political situation of the time.[17]

The very popular and well-linked **the Ataullah Siddiqui Report** (2007) which Dr. Attaullah has submitted to the UK government and context are substantially different. It reflects the growing Muslim population in England and its growing interest in Islam as a faith and as a civilization. But, crucially, the changing dynamics of relations between Muslims and the policymakers in the Western countries brought by

9/11 and the London bombing in 2005 added a new urgency to the need to regard the growing Muslim population and their future role in the country as an asset and not a liability.[18]

Another comprehensive and very well-surveyed report published in 2008, *the Higher Education Funding Council (HEFC),* surveys Islamic Studies in eight countries. It comments that: the events and aftermath of 11 September 2001 galvanised reassessment of Islamic Studies at a variety of levels, with scrutiny emerging from government and media. The role of Islamic Studies, as represented across disciplines, became a heated topic. It is mentioned in a report to HEFCE that Islamic Studies is taken to include the study of Islam & Muslim societies. The capacity of Islamic Studies is so broad that it is taught under different names at various universities, such as Oriental Seminar (*Orientalistik* or *Orientalisches Seminar*), Islamic Studies (*Institut fürIslam wissenshaft*), Arab Studies, or History and Culture of the Middle East, usually under the Faculty of Arts (not theology), hence completely different faculties with professors of different specialisations, each focusing normally on language and the specific culture before "*Islam*".[19]

The very prominent scholar of Islamic Studies, Dr. Attaullah Siddiqui, points out in his 114 pages report where he critically argues that Islamic Studies as an 'independent discipline' has been widely contested. There are those who believe that Islamic Studies has its own core subjects and methodologies. The classical intellectual discipline of Islamic Studies is informed and sustained by understanding of the *Qur'ān*, *Sunnah* and Arabic language and the civilisation that flowed from those sources. Understanding the core subjects, engaging with their civilizational outcomes and observing the interconnections between the two – this roughly defines the traditional scope of Islamic Studies. However, there are marked disagreements about what Islamic Studies does or should cover. There are those who see Arabic language as the core of Islamic Studies, and who do not consider anthropological and ethnographic study of Muslim societies as a necessary or proper part of the Islamic Studies syllabus. There are others who believe that the teaching of Arabic and textual analysis does not address the issues facing Muslims in contemporary societies in different parts of the world. There is some consensus amongst the interviewees that while the knowledge of Arabic could form the basis for the understanding of the *Qur'ān* and *Sunnah*,

some knowledge of other sciences has to be part of Islamic Studies, e.g., *'Islamic Studies is not just one subject, you have to look at history, philosophy, theology, art and architecture, to mention a few. But I do believe it has a core, a classical core which we in the universities should insist on teaching. That classical core would include the Qur'ān as the actual foundation of everything. It would include ḥadith, it would include some knowledge of fiqh, and then at least an outline of classical Islamic history right from the birth of the Prophet Muḥammad (PBUH) through to say 1258 at least.'*

*'…the religion of Islam in all its manifold aspects…obviously the Qur'ān and the ḥadith and fiqh, sufism …Islamic history, not as a set of battles but the whole appearance and the flourishing of Islamic civilisation…is Islamic Studies.* [20]

Others also agree with this interpretation but with emphasis on Arabic: *'Islamic Studies is primarily a study of the religious tradition of Islam, the religious thought and the religious practice of Muslims, and whilst that covers a very broad area, I see as essential to any good grounding in Islamic studies a knowledge of relevant Islamic languages, particularly Arabic ….'*

There are other views that accommodate a much wider perspective of Islamic Studies and include not only the past but also the present, and which argue that it should not be defined narrowly.

*"Islamic Studies means studies concerning Islam, covering all its aspects–cultural and religious, economic and political, social and philosophical, past and present, regional and universal. This study has now emerged from a melange of several disciplines into one well-defined discipline …It involves the doctrine but also the lived experience; anything which affects the …beliefs, the history and the social organisation of Muslims would fall under Islamic studies. It shouldn't be narrowly defined".*

While such definitions seem to have a wide acceptance among academics, there are some who point out that, as a result of looking at Islam as lived and expressed in the past, current trends can be ignored:

*"Islamic Studies has tended to be the study of the Arabic language and the Middle East in particular. One of the biggest drawbacks of Islamic Studies in Britain is that it is a bit too historically focused, so when it comes to things like the study of philosophy, theology or Sufism, we always look at historical texts and figures and very rarely look at the contemporary world and the question of what sort of trends there are in theology and in Islam today … particularly how diasporas have developed*

*and how they have behaved … what are their relations with other types of communities, social coexistence and pluralism issues and so forth, remain overlooked".*

There is a broad consensus, however the subject matter is defined, and that study of it must be critical and rigorous, e.g., *'…a critical study of Islam as a total civilisation. By critical I … mean analytical, in other words academically rigorous without necessarily being hostile … an empathetic study is required."*[21]

Prof. Clinton Bennett, another famous scholar of Islamic Studies, sees Islamic Studies, in his book the Bloomsbury of Islamic Studies, as multidisciplinary and poly methodological, although individual scholars may primarily operate within a single discipline. Islamic Studies includes all those for whom an aspect of Islam is a major focus. Many, for example, anthropologists, sociologists, political scientists, and Religious Studies specialists maintain neutrality *vis-à-vis* God's existence or Islam's "truthfulness" as a religion. However, Christian theologians continue to study Islam, sometimes from within prestigious schools such as Oxford and Harvard, as well as from faith-based seminaries and theological institutions. Some of these scholars make important contributions to Islamic Studies, again blurring distinctions between faith-related and neutral scholarship. At least once seminary, Hartford, CT, has Muslim faculty and students, as did the former Selly Oak Colleges, Birmingham. Islamic Studies scholars are almost always interested in what Muslims are writing; it is increasingly a collaborative venture between Muslims and non-Muslims. Like all "studies," Islamic Studies aims to be systematic in acquiring, cataloguing, and transmitting knowledge. Certain topics are taken as central, beginning with the Qur'an, followed closely by and interlinked with ḥadith.

Islamic Studies is the academic study of Islam and Islamic culture. Islamic Studies can be seen under at least two perspectives. 1) From a secular or neutral point of view, Islamic Studies do academic research on Islam and Islamic culture independent of faith. 2) From a Muslim point of view, Islamic Studies do academic research on Islam and Islamic culture, but from a faithful perspective. Today, there are attempts to bring together both perspectives, especially by the attempts to establish Islamic theology at Western Universities according to the model of the well-established Christian theology. Scholars of Islamic Studies are

called by their special field of study, as e.g. historian, sociologist, or political scientist, or in general a scholar of Islamic Studies.

Another great scholar, Dr. Sir Muhammad Iqbal argued that Islamic Studies had four basic objectives. In a letter written in June, 1925, to the Secretary of '*All Indian Muhammadan Educational Conference*', which was then developing a curriculum for the Islamic Studies course at the Aligarh Muslim University, he wrote that the purpose of Islamic Studies is:

"*First to educate and train well-qualified theologians, second to produce scholars who may, by their researches in the various branches of Muslim literature and thought, third to turn out Muslim scholars well-versed in the various aspects of Muslim history, art, general culture and civilization and fourth to produce scholars who may be fit to carry on researches in the legal literature of Islam*".

To use Prof. Dr. Mohamed Mackeen's words, a prominent professor of Islamic Studies who worked at the Kulliyah of Islamic Revealed Knowledge and Human Sciences at the International Islamic University of Malaysia and University Malaya, the semantics of the term "*Islamic Studies*" provides scope for interpretations at once infinite and challenging. This vast empire of Islam stretching from the fringes of the Maghrib in the West across the Middle East to Pakistan, Malaysia, Indonesia, China and the Philippines, represents also an amazing amalgam of languages and the cultures associated with them-Arabic, Persian, Turkish, Berber, Urdu, Malay, Chinese and a number of dialects. Of all these tongues, Arabic, the original medium of transmission of Islam, enjoyed a pre-eminence in many ways unparalleled in the history of the world. It was not merely the language of the Arabs but the common channel through which the Persians, Turks, Berbers, Copts and others expressed the intellectual achievements and culture of the Muslim empire. It was in Arabic and in the Middle East that Islam received its first classical formulations and identity. It is quite apparent, therefore, that Islamic Studies, on whatever basis they may be defined, they must for all times rest on the foundations of Arabic philology and literature. Just as the learning of Latin was fundamentals to the study of Western Christianity, so is Arabic to the study of Islam, with this difference, that Arabic is still a living force in a wide geographical area, and the language of speech, literature, legislation, songs and the cinema

from North America to the frontiers of Iran. To countless Muslims the world over it is still the language of greetings, of sermons, of religious festivals, of *mawlid* sessions and, above all, the language of the Qur'an and the apostolic traditions. In our times, with rapid expansion of universities and the birth of a new consciousness, the concept of Islamic Studies as a university course is beginning to provide new avenues of knowledge and research.[22]

To use his words again 'Under the stimulus of changing political and economic patterns of the twentieth century and the accompanying release of fresh energy and intellectual vigour, the subject appears as '*a new star in an old* firmament'

Dr. Muhammad Zubayr Siddiqi (d. 1976), professor of Islamic Studies at Calcutta University, reflects his thought on Islamic Studies in his lecture (delivered in 1970 at Khuda Bakhsh Oriental Public Library, Patna) '*Islamic Studies*' which was later published by Khuda Bakhsh Oriental Public Library, Patna. He articulates that:[23]

*"The interest of the Arabs as well as of the non-Arab Muslims was at first confined to the learning of the Qur'an and the Hadith. The very word 'ilm was used by them to indicate these subjects only. Their cultural activities also were confined to the learning of the traditions of the Prophet of Islam from all the available sources and in writing them down in the form of books and treatises. It is therefore that the term 'Islamic Studies' has been used by some scholars to indicate the religious sciences of Islam only like the Qur'an, the tradition of Islam, Islamic law, Jurisprudence etc. This narrow interpretation of the term "Islamic Studies" spread so widely that some Muslims held that the study of any science other than the Islamic religious subjects is irreligious. But this is entirely wrong. As a matter of fact, every branch of knowledge which originated by Islam or was developed under its protection, in any period, is included in the connotation of the term "Islamic Studies."*

Islamic Studies is not a narrow concept. He goes on to argue in his another article, i.e., '*Islamic Studies: Their Significance and Importance*' and that *the term "Islamic Studies" includes all such studies as either originated by Islam or developed and advanced under its influence, be they are theological, literary, historical, philosophical or scientific in the narrow sense of the term*.[24] Thus Islamic Studies covers a very vast area

which deals with all the phases of Islam and Muslims, past and present, regional and universal, religious and political, cultural and social.

Dr. Mohamed Taher, an accredited library professional and also has over thirty years of research, teaching and training experience gained in India, US, Middle East and Canada, presents his overview pertaining to Islamic Studies in his book *Islamic Studies in India: A Survey of Human, Institutional and Documentary Sources*.[25] *Islamic Studies by its nature inter and multi-disciplinary. The main concept of Islamic Studies specialists is religion, history, social, cultural, economic, political and scientific. They are not just concerned with Islamic religion, theology, philosophy but also with the whole civilization*[26] *including of course the language in which this civilization has expressed itself. Islamic Studies is a catch phrase or a cover term which has come to mean things for many people. He also says there is hardly any clear cut specified or specifiable definition that may be quoted as standard. However, we can explain it by saying that it encompasses to a large extent anything and everything on Islam and Muslims. There are two schools of thought on Islamic Studies, one view it is "an area of study" and the other view it is "a discipline". Islamic Studies presents a history of the study of Islam from its origins to the present, emphasizing scholarship in the West, and also provides a critical analysis of methods developed in western academies to study Islam as a religion, a civilization, and a culture*.

Professor John O. Voll, Professor Emeritus of Islamic History and past Associate Director of the Alwaleed Bin Talal Centre for Muslim-Christian Understanding at Georgetown University in Washington, DC, defines:

*"The field of Islamic Studies is both wide-reaching and dynamic. It includes the range of foundational documents, traditions, institutions, and history of Muslims in various countries and regions throughout the world from the origins of Islam to the present day. This interdisciplinary field therefore includes history, religion, philosophy, anthropology, Arabic language and literature, as well as literatures in other languages including Persian, Turkish, and Urdu, and remains responsive to new discoveries, interpretations, ideologies and theories."*

Dr. Yusuf Dalhat, Faculty of Islamic Studies at Federal College of Education, had given the matter some thought where he elaborates[27] *"Islamic Studies as the particular field of learning in the*

*curriculum of university education can be portrayed in two ways. The first is that which is related to those who include it under the field of humanities and social sciences, concentrating only on Islam and Muslims heritage and civilization. Their emphasis in this regard is on exploring how Islam and Muslims influenced the world in social aspects of life such as education, religious dominance, politics and economic relations. The second dimension is even broader wherein it aims at studying and understanding the absolute sense of Islamic knowledge, exploring all facets of Islamic teachings."*

As Prof. Muhsin Mahdi points out, one cannot easily separate contemporary scholarship in terms of "*Western*" and "*Muslim*".[28] And even Dr. Azim Nanji holds the similar view perhaps the most encouraging trend in Islamic Studies in recent times is the cosmopolitan profile of the scholars and their methods in the field.

## GENERAL ANALYSIS OF THE ORIGIN AND DEVELOPMENT

This entry presents a history of the study of Islam from its origins to the present. The discipline of Islamic Studies, as a rubric for a field of study, emerged in the mid-20th century.[29]Islamic studies, its origin and development can be seen under at least two historical perspectives: first from a traditional Islamic perspective, it means researching or learning any topic in a way that agrees with Islamic sciences (*'Ulūm al-Dīn*). Muslims consider all kinds of sciences are the creation of Allah and they convey the greatness of Him. Second from the secular perspective, it is, emphasizing scholarship in the West, to study Islam as a religion, a civilization and a culture. It appears closely aligned with Oriental Studies which started developing in Europe from the twelfth century onwards where Islamic studies is a field of academic research whose subject is Islam as a religion as well as a civilization and culture. It means the historical study of Islam, as it is a very comprehensive domain. It attempts to include the whole range of Islamic civilization, society, cultural life, history, socio-economic structure, law, theology, administration, scientific foundation of Islam, philosophy, cosmology, mysticism, literature, fine arts, besides Islam as a faith and related matters.[30]

***First From a Traditional Islamic Perspective***: in Islam, since knowledge is considered a pious duty, *masajid* (mosques) were the first institution of learning. To learn various sciences and knowledge and

to disseminate it is important duty for every Muslim. Therefore, the teaching places such as *maktab*, *madrasa*, *darul-ʿulūm*, *jāmia* etc., have been given a special attention in Islam. Islamic Studies arose in the ninth century in Iraq, when the religious sciences of Islam began to take their present shape and to develop within competing schools to form a literary tradition in Middle Arabic.[31] However, the origin of the study of Islam can be traced back from the times of the prophet Muhammad (PBUH), *saḥābah* (companions), *tābʿīn* (followers of the companions of the Prophet (PBUH)), *tabʿatābʿīn* (disciples of the followers of the companions of the Prophet (PBUH)) and it continued to flourish during the Umayyad and the Abbasid periods through different schools of Islamic laws namely *Ḥanafi, Shāfaʿī, Mālikī, Ḥambalī,* etc.[32] We came across the name of most prestigious and oldest academic institutions in the Muslim world like the Al-Azhar University of Egypt founded in 970 or 972 by the fourth Fatimid Caliph, Al-Muʿiz (d. 975) as a centre of Islamic and Arabic learning.[33] It is one of the most influential universities in the Muslim world. It was one of the first universities in the world, and the only one in the Arabic world to survive as a modern university. Its students study the Qur'an, exegesis of the Qur'an (*tafsīr*), the Hadīth, the Islamic Jurisprudence (*fiqh*), principle of Islamic Jurisprudence (*uṣūl al-fiqh*) in detail, along with the Arabic grammar (*naḥw and ṣarf*), rhetoric (*bayān and badīʿ*) and logic (*manṭiq*).[34] In the year 1065 the Nizamiyyah institute at Baghdad for higher studies was started by AbūʿAlī Ḥasan ibn ʿAlī Ṭusī (d. 1092) popularly known as Nizām al-mulk Ṭusī, the Persian vizier to the Seljuq king, Alp Arsalan (d. 1072). This institution imparted its students the study of the subjects of the Qur'an, the Tafsir, the Hadīth, and the Fiqh. After a little over three centuries, the Nizāmiyyah was merged into a new institution named al-mustaṇiriyyah which was the first educational institution to have a hospital attached to it.[35] We also come across a number of such institutions in the Indian sub-continent during the sultanate and the Mughal periods. Shāh ʿAbdul Ḥaq Muḥaddith of Delhi (d. 1642) was the one who set up first madrasa in Delhi. ʿAbdul Ḥaq revived the studies of Hadīth literature in the eighteenth century. Shāh Waliullāh (d. 1762) was the one who impounded the theory of talfīq and was the one who tried to reconcile between the mufassirūn and the muḥaddithūn, the muḥaddithūn and the fuqahā

and the wujūdīs with the shuhūdīs.[36] During the eighteenth century the syllabus of dars-i nizāmī designed by the eminent educationist Mullā Nizām al-Dīn of Farangī Maḥal (d. 1748) was implemented in all the traditional madarsas of India. Its curriculum included the subjects like the Qur'an, the Hadīth, the Fiqh, Arabic literature (adab), syntax & grammar (*naḥw*), morphology (*ṣarf*), biography (*sīrah*), intonation (*tajwīd*), memorization of the Qur'ān (*ḥifz*).[37] The Deoband was the leading madrasah of traditional sciences and Nadwa was a midway road between the transnationalism of Deoband and modernism of Aligarh Muslim University. One of its main aims was to reduce the distance between traditional and westernized institutions of learning.[38]

***Second From: the Secular Perspective***, as a modern field of scholarship, Islamic studies, emerged around the middle of the nineteenth century and was a part of oriental studies also called orientalism.[39] Oriental studies represent the academic field of study that embraces Near Eastern and Far Eastern societies and cultures, languages, peoples, history and archaeology; in recent years the subject has often been turned into the newer terms of Middle Eastern studies and Asian studies.[40] Here, an extract of a well written article of Richard C. Martin, a western scholar of Islamic Studies, has been employed to tell the history of the field clearly. His writing presents a history of the study of Islam from its origins to the present, emphasizing scholarship in the Western academies. Prof. Martin divides the whole history of the field into seven major phases, *The Theological Beginnings, Religious Polemics (800–1100), Crusades and Cluniac Scholarship (1100–1500), Reformation (1500–1650), Discovery and Enlightenment (1650–1900), The Nineteenth Century, Orientalism, the Twentieth Century and Beyond*.[41]

1. ***The Theological Beginnings*** where the European view of Islam throughout the Middle Ages was derived from biblical and theological constructs. Mythology, theology, and missionary evangelism provided the main modes of formulating what the church knew about Muslims as well as its reasons for developing an official discourse on Islam. Mythologically, Muslims were conceived as peoples (Arabs, Saracens) descended from Abraham through his concubine Hagar and their son Ishmael.
2. ***Religious Polemics (800–1100)*** It was through theological polem-

ics, however, that the boundaries that separated Jews, Christians, and Muslims were worked out in the eighth to eleventh centuries. Theological disputations (*munāẓarāt*) often took place in public or in the audience of a caliph or other high official, conducted by spokespersons (*mutakallimūn*) for the various confessional communities. Regarded as "protected" (*dhimmī*) confessional communities, Eastern Christians and Jews participated in the social rituals of public discourse and disputation with Muslims (and with each other); this required some knowledge of Muslim doctrine, if only for the purpose of refuting it. European Christians and Jews, in contrast, had to construct their own understandings of Islam, again as a theological enterprise. Lacking the symbiotic experience among scriptural religions living under Islamic hegemony in the East, the Roman church experienced Islam more as an alien "other," a non-Christian enemy to be converted or defeated. Whereas Eastern Christian communities could not mount successful missionary and military campaigns against their Muslim rulers, Western Christendom lay outside of the territory of Islamic rule (*dār al-Islām*). For the next four centuries until the beginning of the Crusades, Europeans lived in virtual ignorance of the religion and people thriving nearby in Spain. It was not until the time of the Crusades, beginning in the eleventh century, that the name Muḥammad was known among Europeans, and then in a very pejorative way. Until the eleventh century the Bible provided for Western, as it did for Eastern, Christendom the exegetical means for identifying the Saracens as the Ishmaelites—descendants of Abraham through Hagar. This was the conclusion drawn by the Venerable Bede (672–735) in his *Ecclesiastical History of the English People* and in his biblical commentaries. Before Bede and Isidore of Seville, Christian exegesis had seen Isaac as the precursor of Christ and the Jews as the descendants of Ishmael. Now Islam replaced Judaism in the Christian world view as the alien Ishmaelites.

3. ***Crusades and Cluniac Scholarship (1100–1500)*** study of Islam in the context of religious war, or the study of Islam for missionary purposes began in the twelfth century in the time of Peter the Venerable (c.1094–1156), abbot of Cluny in France. This was the period of the beginning of the Crusades as well as the great re-

forms of monasticism, which was until then the main institution of Christian learning. Indeed, both the Crusades and the scholarly pursuits of the monks—translating the Qur'ān and other Muslim texts—served as offensive measures against Islamic civilization, which formed the southern and eastern boundaries of Western Christendom. In 1142 Peter undertook a journey to Spain, ostensibly to visit Cluniac monasteries. Nonetheless, on the occasion of his journey he determined to undertake a wide-ranging project, involving several translators and scholars, to begin a serious systematic study of Islam. By the time Peter the Venerable had commissioned translations and interpretations of Arabic Islamic texts, many salacious accounts of Muḥammad had long been in circulation, presenting the Prophet as a god of the Muslims, an impostor, a licentious womanizer, an apostate Christian, a magician, and so on. The "Cluniac corpus," as the results of Peter the Venerable's efforts came to be known, was the beginning of a Western canon of scholarship on Islam. Peter commissioned renowned translators like Robert of Ketton to translate such texts as the Qur'ān, the Hadīth, the biography of Muḥammad (PBUH) (sīrah), and other Arabic texts, particularly polemical texts written against Muslims. In letters to leaders of the First Crusade, Peter made it clear that the mission of the church was his principal concern and that Christianity could and should triumph over Islam. Nonetheless, like a few other scholars, he was critical of the blatantly false accounts by Christian authors of Muḥammad (PBUH) and the Qur'ān, and he was also critical of military campaigns and slaughter, even of infidels, in the name of Christianity. Peter the Venerable's attempts to provide Europeans with authentic accounts of Islamic texts and doctrines were not well received by the church at a time when Western Christendom was attempting to drive Islam out of the Holy Land. One of the most influential translations of an apologetic text was that of the "*Apology of al-Kindī*," a contrived disputation between a Muslim and a Christian set in the days of the caliph al-Ma'mūn (d. 833).[42] Al-Kindī's "Apology" gained circulation and popularity among Christian scholars in the Middle Ages because it provided a model of argumentation against Islam. These attacks focused in particular on the Qur'ān, the prophethood of Muḥam-

mad (PBUH), and the spreading of the faith by conquest (*jihād*). These three themes formed the main topics of Christian scholarship on Islam in the Middle Ages. In this socio-political environment another kind of translation activity proved to be of much more genuine scholarly interest in Christian Europe. By the late twelfth century and particularly in Spain and Sicily, scientific and philosophical works began to be translated from Arabic to Latin by Christian, Jewish, and sometimes Muslim scholars. A collection of the works of the Muslim peripatetic Avicenna (Ibn Sīnā, d. 1037), for examples, appeared and circulated in Europe, the first Spanish translation of the Qur'ān appeared in 1456, thanks to joint efforts of the Spanish theologian Juan de Segovia and the Muslim religious scholar YçaGidelli. As more and more philosophical and scientific works were translated from Arabic to Latin, European scholars of the late Middle Ages came to view the contemporary Muslim world as a civilization of savants and philosophers. Another way in which the Islamic world commanded the respect of Europeans in the Middle Ages came from the Crusades themselves. The military and diplomatic successes of the Ayyūbid sultan Saladin (Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn, d. 1193) turned into legends that circulated in Europe. Even the religious comportment of Muslims, observed by many European Christians to be simple and pious in the practice of their religion, earned Islamic religion a certain respect among some Christian clerics and scholars.

4. ***Reformation, 1500–1650*** as Europe entered the period of profound religious, political, and intellectual change sparked by the sixteenth-century Reformation, the knowledge and study of Islam were also affected. It should be noted that the Reformers produced little new actual scholarship on Islam. In the sixteenth century published editions of the Qur'ān and other Muslim texts in Europe leaned heavily on the Cluniac corpus of four centuries earlier.
5. ***Discovery and Enlightenment, 1650–1900*** new and original European scholarship on Islam was to develop in the late sixteenth and seventeenth centuries for several reasons. First were the new political realities of Ottoman aggression, which had diminished by the eighteenth century. Another factor that helped to raise European consciousness about the world of Islam was the increase

in navigation, the accompanying expansion of trade beyond the Mediterranean. The expansion of markets and of military interests was a prelude to colonial ventures and imperial ambitions. Europe entered into treaties and alliances with Muslim states—for example, the French and Ottomans against the Habsburgs. On the other side, European interest in Islamic lands went beyond the polemical interests of the church to include state interest in the potential for trade, politics, and military ambitions. European reasons for studying Islam were no longer confined to theological disputes about the Qur'ān, the Prophet (PBUH), and early Muslim conquests. At the broadest level, religion was conceived differently during the Enlightenment in Europe. The recognition that other peoples had religions that were not simply heresies or aberrations of Christianity was an important aspect of the new concept of religion. The new theory of "religions" of humankind called for new methods for the study of Islam that went beyond theological polemic. Late in the sixteenth century the study of Arabic was introduced at the *Collège de France*, and by 1635 it was taught at *Leiden* in the Netherlands and at *Cambridge* and *Oxford* in England. The work of these universities was the first broad and serious European scholarship on the Arabic textual tradition since the Cluniac corpus in the twelfth century. An important result of the changing conception of religion during the Enlightenment was a new concern with the life and mission of the prophet Muḥammad (PBUH). By the late eighteenth century some scholars saw in Muḥammad (PBUH) a preacher of a religion that was more natural and rational than Christianity. The late-eighteenth-century variant, however, reflects the growing importance of the study of history. The life of Muhammad, the plots of the Rshidn (Rightly Guided caliphs), and the conquests were still the most fascinating aspects of Islamic history to Enlightenment thinkers.[43] The eighteenth century ended with a European project to study Islam that was more thorough than any such attempt since the compilation of the Cluniac corpus. In 1798 Napoleon invaded Egypt with a military force, accompanied by a large team of scholars assigned to study and document the language, culture, and religion of the Egyptian people. The transparent link between scholarly means and political ends was to replace—some would say

supplement—the evangelistic ends of Islamic studies in Europe.

6. ***The Nineteenth Century*** the remoteness of the Middle East and other parts of the Islamic world began to disappear in the nineteenth century. With this came increased opportunity for European scholars, missionaries, entrepreneurs, and travellers to encounter contemporary Islamic societies. Opportunities to discuss Islam with Muslims still often took the form of disputations between Christian and Muslim clerics and leaders, but the terms of these polemics had changed, reflecting new ideas about religion and the evolution of scholarly inquiry into the "human sciences." One important development in nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century Islamic studies was historicism, the idea that events like the rise of a new religion can be explained as being historically dependent on previous events. One implication of historicism is the denial of absolute originality in the historical phenomena under investigation. Another implication is that only Orientalists, Arabists who specialize in Islamic texts, have the scholarly skills to study Islam. Islamic history, religion, science, art, and other topics became the almost exclusive scholarly domain of Orientalists rather than of historians or specialists in religion, science, and art. The prophet Muḥammad (PBUH) and the rise of Islam continued to be a chief preoccupation of Western scholars, including, by the 1800s, Jewish scholars as well as more secular thinkers. Characteristic of historicist scholarship on Islam was Abraham Geiger's, *Washat Mohammed ausdem Judentu maufgenommen?* (What Did Muhammad (PBUH) incorporate from Judaism?; translated as Judaism and Islam, 1833). The counter thesis of Christian historicist scholarship on Islam—that Islam was based on the model of Christianity—was epitomized a century later in Karl Ahrens's *Muhammad als Religionsstifter* (Muhammad (PBUH) as Founder of a Religion, 1935). Although historicism has now mostly fallen out of favour, the charge of historicism is still frequently made against those who discuss the rise of Islam against the background of pre-Islamic Arabia and the Middle East. Quite different was the approach of William Muir, whose four-volume *Life of Mohamet* (1858) reflected the growth of evangelicalism in Protestant Christianity, with the expressed missionary claim that salvation is not attainable for Muslims because they do not accept

Christ as their saviour.

7. ***Orientalism, the Twentieth Century and Beyond*** from confrontation to co-existence or the study of Islam as a separate discipline, like so many disciplines of the modern university, also emerged in the nineteenth century. The discipline was called Orientalism. Classical humanism, with its interest in recovering the richness of past human achievement through the textual record, along with the lingering spirit of the Enlightenment, deeply influenced Orientalism. Orientalism has by and large accepted the traditional account of Muḥammad's (PBUH) life, the articulation of the Qur'ān in Mecca and Medina, and the early formation of the Muslim community. While the age, exact provenance, and authenticity of many of the sayings (Aḥadīth) attributed to Muḥammad (PBUH) have been disputed between Orientalists and modern Muslim scholars, radical source criticism of the Qur'ān and other early Islamic texts has been attempted by very few scholars. Throughout the twentieth century and into the twenty-first, Orientalist scholarship has continued to evolve in its scope, as well as in its understanding of itself. This has occurred in response to criticism coming from both inside and outside the field of Islamic studies, and it is also an attempt to meet the demands and challenges of the modern Western academy, as well as those of contemporary geopolitics. The best-articulated and most influential—albeit not the first—critique of the Orientalist enterprise was formulated by the Arab-American literary critic Edward Said (d. 2003) in his work Orientalism (1978, 1994). Said sought to chart the history of Europe's construction of a fictional "Orient" situated outside of the West, and therefore vulnerable to its colonial ambitions and romanticized or sometimes wilfully misleading representations by European, and later American, scholars and artists. Said and others have also passionately argued that Orientalism knowingly supported Western political, economic, and intellectual hegemony over the Muslim world. Although Said's work itself has been criticized for its lack of historical depth, it has nevertheless served as an empowering starting point for scholars wishing to reconstruct and revise many of the out-dated paradigms into which Muslim civilization has been cast. Gradually, and perhaps

less comprehensively than the postcolonial ethos of Orientalism, Islamic studies has also come to familiarize itself with the body of postmodern theory that has so influenced the rest of the Western academy. If scholars of Islam have tried to reassess the limits of their objectivity with regard to their subject, so too have they begun to rethink the very epistemological bases on which they ground their historical and literary studies. Added to this is an increasing interest in interdisciplinarity, highlighting the methodological usefulness of disciplines such as literary criticism and anthropology for the study of Islam. This is no doubt indicative of a wider aim to end the former isolation of Orientalism and better incorporate the study of the Muslim world into the various branches of the humanities and social sciences. An important example of these trends has been the growth and success of women's and gender studies within Islamic studies, with more and more scholars and academic publications focused on the diverse roles of women in Islam. Another promising trend has been to look at the Muslim world less as a geographical entity in its own right, but rather in relation to, for example, the broader history of the Mediterranean basin, or to attempt to assess its role in the emerging field of global history. Nevertheless, as Islamic studies engages with other disciplines, new paradigms and methodologies will have to evolve, a process already well underway in the field of religious studies, to name but one. A different view of Islamic Studies has been voiced by some scholars in light of the critiques and failures of Orientalism and area studies. At the end of the twentieth century, this view seems to call for the domestication of Islamic Studies within the framework of the modern university, rather than isolating it as a special subject that does not quite fit into conventional departments and disciplines. Nonetheless, the modern university is constantly evolving its construction of scholarly knowledge, governed by discipline. Marshall Hodgson's The Venture of Islam (3 volumes, 1974), which epitomises the contemporary trend towards examining Islam in relation to other historical periods, may be a sign of the course that Islamic Studies will follow in the twenty-first century.

## HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF ISLAMIC STUDIES IN INDIA

Islam had spread in Indian subcontinent from the three ways; first it reached the shores of Malabar, Kerala through the Arab merchants who had been involved in peaceful commercial activities and maritime trade since pre-Islamic age. Second, it came to Sind in the wake of Muhammad bin Qasim's conquest of Sind and later invasions, it was, actually, the ruling class who can take credit for the political expansion of Islam, third the Sufis can take credit for the spiritual spread of Islam.

From the point of view of the numerical strength of Muslims, India is undoubtedly bigger than many of what we call Muslim countries in the world. Here, millions of Muslims have been living for centuries. Indeed, Indian Culture and Civilization cannot fully be appreciated without the proper understanding of Islam. For this, if for no other reason, Islam has to be studied both intensively and extensively not only as a religious phenomenon but also as a living and dynamic force of the world civilization. Islam has always been a subject of intensive study in India. We have thousands of traditional Muslim seminaries in our country called *madrasas* institutions where the Qur'an, Hadith, Fiqh, theology, philosophy and Arabic language and literature have been intensively studied. Some of the important *madrasas* are Darul Uloom Deoband, at Deoband; *Nadwatul Ulema*, at Lucknow; *Jamia Salafiah*, at Banaras; *Jamia Ashrafia*, at Mubarakpur; *Mazahir Uloom*, at Saharanpur; Jamia Darussalam, at Oomerabad; *Jamiatul Falah*, at Azamgarh, *Jāmi'a Raḥmāni*, at Munger Bihar; *Markazu Saqafa al-Sunniyya*, Kerala etc. These *madrasas* have played an important role in spreading and preserving the tradition of Islamic learning in India. No serious student of Islamic Studies can ignore the services rendered by the *madrasas* in this field. In modern India, however, Islamic Studies have acquired a new dimension. Now they are no longer confined to the madrasas (in madrasas it is termed as Islamic sciences or dini uloom). Since independence, Islamic Studies have begun to be treated with other modern disciplines of Arts and Humanities in Indian Universities. It was the academic expression of a growing concern amongst Indian Muslim scholars that Islamic Studies needed a fresh breath of life. The idea that Muslim universities should have departments, schools or institutes of Islamic Studies has its roots in the revivalist movements of India.[44]

Aligarh Muslim University is perhaps the first among our universities to start instruction and research in Islamic Studies. In 1954, during the Vice-Chancellorship of the late Dr. Zakir Husain, an Institute of Islamic Studies was established at Aligarh. This institute has now built up a very good library and admits students to the various courses leading to the award of B.A., M.A. and Ph.D. degrees in Islamic Studies. Osmania University, Hyderabad, has a Department of Islamic Studies where students are taught and trained up to the doctoral level. Other Indian universities also have followed suit. For example, Visva Bharati University at Santiniketan, which was founded by the Poet-philosopher, Ravindra Nath Tagore, offers courses in Islamic Studies with emphasis on Islamic philosophy. Punjabi University, Patiala has a research and teaching department of Religious Studies where students are enrolled in M.A., M. Litt., and Ph.D. programmes in Comparative studies of Religions. To complete the requirements, they have also started to study Islam beside four other major religions of the world-Hinduism, Buddhism, Christianity and Sikhism. This department has published some very valuable monographs in the field of Islamic Studies and Comparative studies of Religions. The Punjab University, Chandigarh, has established a Chair after the name of great Muslim saint, Sheikh Farid Shakarganj. Guru Nanak University, Amritsar, another university of Punjab, has also established a Chair of Religious Studies after the name of great Muslim saint of the 17th century, Hazrat Miyan Mir. Both of these Chairs are devoted to the study of Islamic mysticism, its influence on and contribution to the Indian National life. Islamic Studies had always been a part of the curriculum at the undergraduate level at the Jamia Millia Islamia. In 1976, a new *Department of Islamic and Arab-Iranian Studies* was established in the Jamia. It has started B.A., M.A. and Ph.D. programmes in Islamic Studies. The setting up of this department is, in a way, a materialization of Jamia's long cherished desire of participating in the field of Islamic Studies including that of Arabic and Persian languages. The problems of Islam in general and those of the Indian Muslims in particular, constitute the field of specialization at the Jamia. Another research institute at the Jamia, Zakir Husain Institute of Islamic Studies is engaged in studying the Indian Muslims' attitude to modernity.

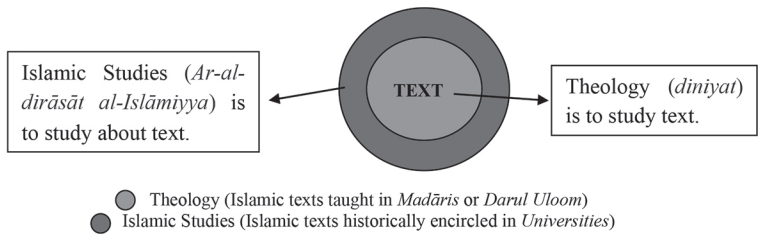
Besides these universities, some other independent institutes and

societies are also engaged in research in the field. Well-known among them is the Indian Institute of Islamic Studies, Delhi, which is run by the Hamdard National Foundation of India. This Institute, founded in 1960, is still in its take-off stage. It has built up a well-equipped library on Islamic Studies. It also has to its credit about a dozen books and monographs. Periodically it organizes Seminars and Symposia on current Islamic problems. Another prestigious institution in the field of Islamic Studies was the Islam and the Modern Age Society, New Delhi. It aims at presenting a liberal and scientific interpretation of world religions especially Islam. Its two research journals, *Islam aur Asre Jadid* in Urdu and *Islam and the Modern Age* in English, published articles on Islam's contribution to world civilization and the position of Islam vis-à-vis the modern age.[45] These Journals have now been getting published successfully by the Zakir Husain Institute of Islamic Studies, Jamia Millia Islamia, New Delhi. The next in line is Henry Martin Institute of Islamic Studies. It was established on 27 January, 1930 in Lahore under the name of Henry Martyn School of Islamic Studies (HMSIS). The School was named after the nineteenth century British missionary who was appointed the first Chaplain to the British East India Company. The School's first Principal, L. Bevan Jones, suggested Henry Martyn's name as a reminder and tribute to this great missionary and scholar. The Henry Martyn School of Islamic Studies was established at Egertan Road, Lahore. It remained there till 1938, when it moved to Landour, Mussoorie – a Himalayan hill station – where it occupied until 1940 the property made available by the American Presbyterian Mission. The financial burden has been home mainly by British mission societies – Methodist, Baptist and Anglican. But the move to Landour, and then in the autumn of 1940 to Aligarh, where the Institute remained till 1962, marked the beginning of an increased share by American missions. The American Methodist Church (Women's Division) provided the property of the Institution. This was a time of transition. Two different sovereign states were created in the subcontinent. This was the time for the Henry Martyn School to decide whether to remain in India or to work in a Muslim state like Pakistan? The committee of Management resolved in its 7 November, 1947 meeting; 'the Henry Martyn School are agreed that the changed conditions brought about by the division of India greatly augment the opportunities for evangelism amongst Muslims in

the Indian union; and that it seems advisable for the Henry Martyn School to remain in Aligarh'. The Institute moved from Aligarh to Jabalpur in 1962, where it remained till October 1966, when it moved to Lucknow. Finally, the Institute moved to its own proper building in Hyderabad in December, 1971. The library of the Institute, in addition to the general and classical Islamic books, has a good collection of Christian writings on Islam. Besides producing monographs and tracts, it publishes journals, which give us an idea of the Christians' understanding of Islam. Although this institute is basically meant to cater to the needs of missionaries whose field of activities is Islam, yet it offers a measure of our national interest in Islamic Studies as also in Islam.[46]

## CONCLUSION

Orientalism and Islamic Studies, which emerged as European disciplines to study the '*others*' have themselves become texts and objects of study. Islamic Studies is a maverick term and a porous field which is free and comes to mean many things for many people. For the analysts whose work we have examined here, the response is clear: no matter how elaborate or shrewdly devised, all of the above interpretations come back to the same reductionist point that it is to academic study of Islamic culture, civilization, social, political, economic and cultural trends with more emphasis on oriental languages especially Arabic. If I interpret my thoughts on Islamic Studies in images it would appear like beneath




Here I would like to make the last three comments: first, the above figure takes to mean that in Darul Uloom (*Deenyat*) the Islamic texts are taught without any historical background while in the Modern

Universities (*Ar-al-dirāsāt al-Islāmiyya*) the historical backgrounds are taught without much emphasis on Islamic texts. Further to say that there is a difference between the Muslim religion and the Muslim culture. As the previous is the part of theology and Muslim culture is taught in Islamic Studies. In India, we are aware of the fact that there is a gap between universities and madaris, but these days this gap is being tried to be filled. Today, there are attempts to bring together both perspectives, especially by the attempts to establish Islamic theology at Western Universities according to the model of the well-established Christian theology. Scholars of Islamic Studies are called by their special field of study, as e.g. historian, sociologist, or political scientist, or in general a scholar of Islamic Studies.

Second, the fact, as far as the term is concerned, appears that the concept of it in the mind of students as well as scholars of the field has been very vague or perhaps not clear. Though, they have been trying to explain a proper definition for Islamic Studies. But the problem, with the field, is scholars of Islamic Studies from all over the world perceive and conceive it differently. This is why different subject matters are assigned to it by different scholars of Islamic Studies. As it appears from its root of the words, Islamic Studies, it will mean studies on Islam. In other words, whatever is related with Islam is included in the area of the field. Therefore, the scope and subject matter of Islamic Studies will include each and every study (either originated with Islam or developed and advanced under its influence), knowledge, information about Islam be they theological, literary, historical, philosophical or scientific.

And third, the increased participation (greater than before particularly after 9/11) of Muslim scholars as well as non-Muslim scholars of Islamic Studies and cooperative and two-way work between them are also very significant aspects of the recent trends in Islamic Studies.

In a nut shell we should look at with what approach the study of Islam is being done, as we have seen it is bound by approach, term place and time, and then only we can solve the most of the issues or problems connected with Islamic Studies.

## NOTES

1. The term "*Islamic Studies,*" currently used in scientific and professional journals, academic departments, and institutions, encompasses a vast field

of research with Islam as its common bond. References to Islam, whether in the sense of culture, civilization, or religious tradition, have become even more frequent since the appearance of a plethora of literature in European languages treating the notion of political Islam. The literature speaks of Islamic banks, Islamic economics, Islamic political order, Islamic democracy, Islamic human rights, and so on. A cursory glance at catalogs of published works in the past three decades reveals countless titles containing the word "Islam" and its corresponding adjective "Islamic," indicating the subject matter of what has become part of "Islamic Studies" in academia. The academic discourse on "Islamic Studies" has still to proffer explanation as to how so many diverse fields, theories, cultural spheres, disciplines, and concepts came to be associated with a single word, "Islam" or "Islamic". For full discussion, see Richard C. Martin, "*Islamic Studies*" & Mohammed Arkoun, "*Methodologies*" in the Oxford Encyclopedia of the Modern Islamic World, vol. 2, Ed. John L. Esposito. Oxford University Press, New York, 1995, pp. 325-340.

2. This comprehensive article is formed on conceptual analysis based on materials, i.e., books, journal articles, websites, videos, and e-mail replies of a few experts of the field. It gives a shorthand version of my findings and its reflections stand to demonstrate how Islamic Studies must be defined broadly, given its multiple avenues of study across disciplines.
3. Some of the major departments in India are: *Department of Islamic Studies* (Aligarh Muslim University, Aligarh), *Department of Islamic Studies* (Jamia Millia Islamia, New Delhi), *Zakir Husain Institute of Islamic Studies* (Jamia Millia Islamia, New Delhi), *Department of Islamic Studies* (Jamia Hamdard, Delhi), *Shah-i-Hamdan Institute of Islamic Studies* (University of Kashmir, Kashmir), *Department of Islamic Studies* (Islamic University of Science and Technology, Kashmir), *Department of Islamic Studies* (University of Kerala, Kerala), *Department of Islamic Studies* (Osmania University, Hyderabad), *Department of Islamic Studies* (Maulana Azad National Urdu University, Hyderabad), *Guru Gobind Singh Department of Religious Studies* (Punjabi University, Punjab), *Department of Islamic History and Culture* (University of Calcutta, Calcutta), *Department of Islamic Studies* (Aliah University, Calcutta), *Department of Arab Culture* (Lucknow University), *Department of Middle Eastern Studies* (Mysore University, Karnataka).
4. Z. Sardar, The Future of Islamic Studies. In Mohamed Taher (ed.), *Encyclopedic Survey of Islamic Culture* Vol. 12, pp. 181.
5. Pew Research Center, see demographic date https://www.pewforum.org/2015/04/02/muslims/#fn-22776-40.[Accessed 04 March 2019].
6. H.A.R. Gibb, *Mohammedanism* (London, 1957 [reprint]), pp. 7-8.
7. For a brief overview see Bernard Lewis, *The Middle East and the West*

(London, 1963/64), p. 16. Muslim scholars unanimously agree that Islam is not just a religion, but a complete way of life as well as a sophisticated culture and civilization. See: Z. Sardar, The Future of Islamic Studies. In Mohamed Taher (ed.), *Encyclopedic Survey of Islamic Culture* Vol. 12, pp. 180-181. See, also, Jurji Zayadan, *History of Islamic Civilization*, (tr. by D.S. Margoliouth), Kitab Bhavan, New Delhi, 1981, introduction.

8. By the 1960s, "Oriental Studies" was typically split into different sections; for a brief overview, see Muhsin Mahdi, "The Study of Islam, Orientalism and America," in *Mapping Islamic Studies: Genealogy, Continuity, and Change*, ed. Azim Nanji (Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter, 1997), pp. 149-179.
9. The demand for the establishment of departments or schools of Islamic Studies in modern universities was the academic expression of a trend that emerged from the scattered embers of a civilization in revolt in the nineteenth and twentieth century. The idea, therefore, is of recent origin. For a brief overview see A. M. Mohamed Mackeen. "Islamic Studies: A University Discipline." *The Muslim World* 55, no. 3 (July 1965). The discipline of Islamic studies emerged in the mid-twentieth century; see P. K. Hitti, "Arabic and Islamic Studies in Princeton University," *Moslem World* 31 (1941), pp. 292-4. For a brief overview also see: Burke-III, E. (1995). Orientalism. In J. L. Esposito (Ed.), *The Oxford Encyclopedia of the Modern Islamic World*, Vol. 3, p. 268.
10. Rouhollah K. Ramazani, *Islamic studies: A Concept and Approach*, The Muslim World, Vol. LVIII, No. 4, October 1968, p. 279.
11. For a brief overview see Charles Kurzman & Carl W. Ernst, "Islamic Studies in U.S. Universities" Paper for Social Sciences Research Council Workshop on "The Production of Knowledge on World Regions: The Middle East". Available at http//www.unc.edu/-cernst/pdf/(Curzman_Ernst_Islamic_Studies.pdf. [Accessed 25 March 2017]. Also see: Clifford Geertz, "Which Way to Mecca?" New York Review of Books, June 12, 2003, p. 27. Also see an edited volume of "*The State of Islamic Studies in American Universities",* The International Institute of Islamic Thought, VA, 2009.
12. My viewpoint here is as terms combine to form sentences so concepts combine to form definitions.
13. Ataullah Siddiqui, Islamic Studies in Higher Education: Reports and Debates, Ad-Lib, Issue 37, March 2009, University of Cambridge, p. 6.
14. The Reay Report, 1909, p. 6.
15. The Scarbrough Report, 1947, pp. 24-25.
16. The Hayter Report, 1961.
17. The Parker Report, 1986, pp. 26-27.

18. Ataullah Siddiqui, Islamic Studies in Higher Education: Reports and Debates, Ad-Lib, Issue 37, March 2009, University of Cambridge, p. 7.
19. For a comparative international overview of the field, see the June 2008 report of the Higher Education Foundation Council for England (HEFCE), "International Approaches to Islamic Studies in Higher Education," http://www. hefce.ac.uk/pubs/rdreports/2008/rd07_08/. [Accessed 18 March 2017].
20. Ataullah Siddiqui, 'Islam at Universities in England: Meeting the Needs and Investing in the Future' (London: DFES, 2007). Available at *http://www.dfes.gov.uk/hegateway/uploads/DrSiddiquiReport.pdf* [accessed 23 April 2017].
21. Ataullah Siddiqui, 'Islam at Universities in England: Meeting the Needs and Investing in the Future' (London: DFES, 2007). Available at *http://www.dfes.gov.uk/hegateway/uploads/DrSiddiquiReport.pdf* [accessed 23 April 2017].
22. A. M. Mohamed Mackeen. "Islamic Studies: A University Discipline." *The Muslim World* 55, no. 3 (July 1965).
23. M. Zubayr Siddiqi, *Islamic Studies*, Khuda Bakhsh Oriental Public Library, Patna, 1970, p. 5.
24. Siddiqi, M. Z. "Islamic Studies: Their Significance and importance." *Islamic Culture* 35, no. 1 (January 1961): 217. Also see N. Akmal Ayyubi, Presidential Address, Bulletin of theInstitute of Islamic studies, Aligarh, No. 22, 1989, p. 1.
25. Mohamed Taher, *Islamic Studies in India: A Survey of Human, Institutional and Documentary Sources*, Concept Publishing Company (P) Ltd., New Delhi, 1991, p. 15.
26. Perhaps no one has done more in presenting Islam as a civilization than Hodgson. His work entitled '*The venture of Islam',* a systematic and penetrating three-volume study of the civilization of Islam from its beginning to the twentieth century, is now used as a standard text in most Islamic Studies courses in Western universities. He is concerned primarily with the exceptional character of Islamic society, culture and civilization. But what is really unique and exceptional about Islam is not just the society and civilization that it has produced, which have reached the zenith of human achievements and declined, but its world-view. And it is this world-view that should be the prime focus of Islamic Studies, both in the Muslim world and the West. See: Z. Sardar, The Future of Islamic Studies, in Mohamed Taher (ed.), *Encyclopedic Survey of Islamic Culture* (Vol. 12, pp. 179, 180).
27. Yusuf Dalhat, (2015, December). "Introduction to Research Methodology

in Islamic Studies", *Journal of Islamic Studies and Culture*, Vol. 3, No. 2, pp. 147-152.

28. For a brief overview, see Muhsin Mahdi, "The Study of Islam, Orientalism and America," in *Mapping Islamic Studies: Genealogy, Continuity, and Change*, ed. Azim Nanji (Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter, 1997), pp. 149-179.
29. P.K. Hitti, *Arabic and Islamic Studies in Princeton University*, Moslem World 31, 1941, pp. 292-4.
30. In the light of what has been stated above it is important to distinguish the study of Islam during the medieval period in the madrasas and the present-day universities. The madrasas in the Islamic world, including the sub-continent had a traditional approach to the study of Islam. Their orientation was mostly theological, where as Islamic studies taught as a subject in the western and eastern universities is of social science orientation, with emphasis upon the study of Muslim societies, its culture, economies, politics, art and architecture and off course the study of subjects like the Qur'ān, the tafsīr, the ḥadīth, the fiqh, the sīrah, the tārīkh and taṣawwuf. The courses at University level also orient the student of Islamic studies to study Islam in West Asia, South East Asia, North West Africa. More recently even the study of Islamic banking and its different aspects such as ijārah, murābaḥah, bay'al-dayn, takāful etc., due to technological enhancement which made every corner of the world closer to each other. Hence the importance of Islamic law in Islamic studies, in banking and finances yet to become a vital requirement. In fact, some of the more traditional Western universities still confer degrees in Arabic and Islamic studies under the primary title of Oriental studies. This is the case, for example, at the University of Oxford, where Classical Arabic and Islamic studies have been taught since as early as the 16th century, originally as a sub-division of Divinity. This latter context gave early academic Islamic studies its Biblical studies character and was also a consequence of the fact that throughout early-Modern Western Europe the discipline was developed by churchmen whose primary aim had actually been to refute the tenets of Islam. See https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Islamic_studies (Accessed: Feb 12, 2018).
31. See Richard C. Martin, "Islamic Studies" In the Oxford Encyclopedia of the Modern Islamic World, vol. 2, Ed. John L. Esposito. Oxford University Press, New York, 1995, p. 325.
32. De Lacy O Leary, Arabic Thought and Its Place in History, pp. 75-76; Ahmad Hidayat Buang and Saim Kayadibi, The Role of Islamic Studies in Muslim Civilization in the Globalized World: Malaysian Experience, Jurnal Hadhari, 3 (2) (2011), pp. 83-102.

33. Farhad Daftary, Historical Dictionary of the Ismailis, p. 25; H.A.R. Gibbs, The Encyclopaedia of Islam, vol. 1, p. 814, Brill, 1967; Mary Elizabeth Devine, Carol Summerfield, edt., International Dictionary of University Histories, p. xiii.
34. For reforms introduce in Azhar University by Muḥammad ʻAbduh see Islamand Modernism in Egypt, pp. 18-103; Hatsuki Aishima, Public Culture and Islam in Modern Egypt: Media, Intellectuals and Society, p. 159; Oliver Leaman, The Biographical Encyclopedia of Islamic Philosophy, pp. 199-200.
35. Ibn Athīr cites the incident of a lecturer who received his appointment but could not perform his duty pending confirmation from the caliph. Ibn Jubayr once attended a lecture delivered after a mid-noon prayers by a professor. The lecturer stood on the platform and the student sat on a stool and plied him with written and oral question till evening prayers. "Al-Ghazālī who was the product of the same seminary in his Iḥyā al-ʻulūm wal dīn combated the idea that imparting of knowledge was the object of education and emphasis the necessity of stimulating the moral consciousness of the students, thus becoming the first author in Islam to bring the problem of education into organic relation with a profound ethical system." History of the Arabs, pp. 410-411. M. M. Sharif, Muslim Thought: Its Original Achievements, p. 22; Michael M. J. Fischer, Iran: From Religious Dispute to Revolution, p. 38.
36. M.M. Sharif, A History of Muslim Philosophy,vol. ii, pp. 1557-1579.
37. M. Reza Pirbhai,Reconsidering Islam in a South Asian Context, p. 184; Francis Robinson, The Cambridge Illustrated History of the Islamic World, p. 242; Mubarak Ali Khan, The ulema, sufis and intellectuals, p. 134.
38. Dietrich Reetz, Islam in the Public Sphere: Religious Groups in India, 1900-1947, Oxford University Press, 2006; Andrew Shryock, Islamophobia/Islamophilia: Beyond the Politics of Enemy and Friend, p. 125. Muhammad Qasim Zaman, The Ulama in Contemporary Islam: Custodians of Change, p. 249.
39. Bernard Lewis, Islam in History: Ideas, People, and Events in the Middle East, pp.103-114;Azim Nanji,Mapping Islamic Studies: Genealogy, Continuity and Change,p. 149;A profile of the department of Islamic Studies, University college of Arts and Social Sciences, Osmania University, Hyderabad – 2005-2006, p. 2.
40. https://www.definitions.net/definition/oriental%20studies (Accessed: April, 04, 2019).
41. See Richard C. Martin, "Islamic Studies" In The Oxford Encyclopedia

of the Modern Islamic World, vol. 2, Ed. John L. Esposito. Oxford University Press, New York, 1995, pp. 325-331.

42. The translator of this famous text was Peter of Toledo, a Jew who converted to Christianity and who contributed, along with other Jewish translators from Hebrew to Arabic into Latin, to the compilation of the Cluniac corpus.
43. In *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, Edward Gibbon (1737–1794) devoted a chapter to the life of the Prophet and the early stages of Islamic history. Gibbon paid little heed to the scurrilous medieval Christian biographies of the Prophet, relying instead on more recent European scholarship and accounts by travelers. He presented Muḥammad as a man of spiritual genius who conceived an admirably pure form of monotheism; however, with the emigration from Mecca to Medina came success and military power. The distinction between Muḥammad in Mecca and Muḥammad in Medina was to become a familiar theme in later European scholarship. So, too, was the attempt to credit Muḥammad for his spiritual and leadership qualities without going so far as to acknowledge him as a true prophet.
44 Z. Sardar, *The Future of Islamic Studies*. In Mohamed Taher (ed.), Encyclopedic Survey of Islamic Culture Vol. 12, p. 174.
45. The society was closed after the demise of its patronage Dr. Syed Abid Husain.
46. Islam and the Modern Age, *Notes and Memoranda*, vol. viii, No. 2, May, 1977, pp. 71-75. Also see Islam and the Modern Age, *Notes and Memoranda*, vol. vi, No. 2, May, 1975, pp. 104-110. Also see http://hmiindia.org/.

DR. LUBNA NAAZ

# Concept of Islamic State
# A Study of Muhammad Asad

## THE INTELLECTUAL BACKGROUND

Muhammad Asad (1900 to 1992), was a notable intellectual of the 20th century and an outstanding Islamic scholar. He was Jewish and born with the name was Leopold Weiss. He was not a typical reverted Jew. He had accepted a new faith in addition to his own. As a writer, activist, diplomat, and *mufassir* (interpreter of the Quran), he made an effort to influence the contemporary Islamic landscape.[1]

His thoughts have inspired a whole generation, making him one of the world's leading thinkers. He was an expert in religion, had a keen interest in astronomy and mathematics, and was among the greatest chess players in the area. He lived in the Middle East for many years before moving to Cairo, where he happened to reside close to a large mosque. In Cairo, he was surprised to see that Muslims were still praying to Allah using the same phrases as he had heard in Jerusalem's old city, such as God is Greatest and I bear witness that Muhammad (PBUH) is His Messenger. It was at that time that he realized the inner unity of all Muslims. Also, He spent most of his time at Damascus and read a number of books on Islam. He also read the *Qurān* in French and German Language translations. He spent eighteen months in different Arab countries. He spent some time in Turkey and then went back to Europe. But he and his wife left Europe because the European culture appeared to them as an unusual environment.

Islam in Asad's life proved to be a turning point for him. He was attracted by the moral teachings of Islam and the practical life-style of the Muslims. He himself was not aware of how Islam had come into his life. He says:

*Islam came over me like a robber who enters a house by night; but, unlike a robber, it entered to remain for good.*

He saw the need for a proactive strategy to address Muslim concerns by using *Ijtihad* based on the two canonical sources of Islam, the Qur'an and the Prophet's traditions (PBUH). He fervently insisted that taking this bumpy route was the only way to guarantee a prosperous renaissance in the Muslim world. He drew inspiration from such luminaries of the classical, medieval, and modern periods as the second Caliph Umar Ibn al-Khattab[2], Ali Ibn Hazm[3], Fakhr al-Din al Razi[4], Taqi al-Din Ibn Taymiyyah[5], Ibn al-Qayyim al-Jawziyah[6], Jamal al Din al Afghani[7], and Muhammad Abduh[8] in order to insist on the use of independent thought. He had the utmost respect for the accomplishments of the great academics of the past, but he was critical of the blind obedience to individual viewpoints, which are not recognized as infallible by Islamic norms. He believed that all capable Muslims were obliged to use their judgment on a wide variety of contemporary societal challenges that had not been predetermined by divine revelation or reliable prophetic traditions. He frequently used the prophetic traditions in favor of his viewpoint, which stated that even if one made the correct decision and received a reward from Allah, he would still receive a reward if he was wrong. Today, the idea of Ijtihad is passionately endorsed by many notable scholars.

For the aforementioned reason, he refrained from associating with mainstream movements that supported Islamists' shared goal of the restoration of Islam. The leaders of the large Islamic groups, however, were people he knew, respected, and had friendly relationships with. He paid tribute to them when the occasion demanded it, but he also stood up in their defense or wailed in sadness whenever catastrophe befell any of them. For instance, even though he disagreed with some aspects of the Jamaat-e-Islami's platform, he viewed it as a legitimate and an uplifting movement. He regarded Sayyid Abul Ala Maududi[9], the founder of the Jama'at, as not only a brilliant Islamic scholar but also a dear friend who had known him for a very long time.[10]

## SOURCE OF ISLAMIC POLITY

The work has evolved into a key foundation for ongoing initiatives to revive Islamic legal thought and create a much-needed Islamic theory

of government. The original impetus for this book's research was the necessity to create an Islamic constitution for the newly formed Islamic Republic of Pakistan, which would have relied purely on the philosophy of the Qur'an and the Sunnah rather than on considerations of race or nationality. The book thus captures some of the exhilarating realization that the Muslim world would once again have a free choice over its course. The book is divided into five chapters along with the conclusion. The first chapter of the book deals with the issues related to Islamic state, its need, importance and scope. But, terminology and historical precedent are covered in the second chapter. He covered the improper use of western words in this chapter. He left out the requirement to make a distinction between the Shari'ah, which is the name given to the extremely limited body of divine laws regulating society and the Qur'an and Sunnah. The large body of laws known as fiqh, which originates from the Qur'an and the Sunnah, has its origins in revelation but was primarily developed by man.

The flourishing of a group of people who fight for fairness and justice, for right and against wrong, or, to put it more accurately, a group of individuals who labor to create and maintain social conditions that would allow the maximum number of people to live morally and physically in accordance with God's natural law and Islam, is the goal of the Islamic state, in his view. It is not an end in itself. Therefore, he believed that modern and future Muslims would have enough of liberty to think independently and creatively in order to deal with the challenges presented by a constantly changing world. However, he held that they were required to adhere to the Qur'an and the Sunnah, the two main sources of Islamic law, at all times when conducting Ijtihad[11]. He also held that Allah alone was the sole possessor of sovereignty in all instances where the Islamic law made it obvious to do so.[12]

## MISAPPLICATION OF WESTERN TERMS

Muhammad Asad believes that the establishment of an Islamic State is not a goal or an end in and of itself, but merely a means to an end, which is the development of a group of people who fight for equity and justice, for right and against wrong, or, to put it more precisely, a group of people who work to create and uphold social conditions that would

allow the greatest number of people to live morally and physically in accordance with the natural law.

He belongs to the group of scholars who support the idea of the state in Islam and has significantly contributed to Islamic philosophy. The University of California Press, Los Angeles, released that in 1961. This piece offers a logical critique of western philosophy that is written from a contemporary viewpoint. He seeks to dispel any misconceptions regarding the Islamic state by bringing up topics like Why an Islamic State, Religion and Morality? The Scope of Islamic Law, Misapplications of Western Terms, etc. Dealing with the issue of the principles of state is the second aspect of his strategy.[13] Here, he opens new ground by examining the various state political structures and the wisdom of the Islamic Constitution's unwritten nature. In addressing the crucial demand of the Muslim world to formulate the guiding principles of statecraft in Islam, he throws light on the scope of Islamic law, and on the nature of the council and the assembly in the state.[14]

## THE CONCEPT OF ISLAMIC STATE

An Islamic state is a state that has government based on Islamic Law (*Shari'ah*). Islamic State as a concept in the contemporary Islamic thought has been discussed at the very outset of the current work. The goal of the current study is to determine a state's Islamic character in light of Muhammad Asad's research. He was concerned about the deplorable status of Muslims despite the political corruption of the Ottoman caliphate. He was the eyewitness to the major events that took place during the 20th century. Besides the events like World War I, abolition of the *khilafah*, and World War II followed by decolonization of the countries, the period observed the emergence and establishment of world order based on peace and justice. It was during that period that a tremendous increase in Islamic literature supporting the *Shari'ah* based government, formation of movements and other endeavor appeared to respond against the intellectual and political challenge of Western hegemony.[15]

His study explains how several Islamic state structures could originate from Islamic principles and how, in essence, for a state to be authentically Islamic, it must adopt the concept of government

by permission and counsel. Given that none of the existing Muslim countries have yet achieved an administrative structure that might be regarded to be truly Islamic, an analysis of the principles that underlie the constitution of an Islamic state is imperative. This book is an effort to continue that conversation.

This is one of the few books about the origins of the Islamic state. First, a critique of a secular state is made, followed by a support of an Islamic state. With the exception of a very small number of Shari'ah, absolute rulings, he argues in his examination of how Islamic law is applied that all other ijtihadi legal judgments rendered by past jurists are subject to change in response to fresh problems and circumstances. His explanations on the judicial and legislative departments of the Islamic state are equally interesting to consider. Asad, however, seeks to justify how these two branches of government diverge from Western conceptions of the division of powers by presenting it as a benefit.

## THE SIGNIFICANT FEATURES

Historically, Muslim jurists have emphasized three characteristics of an Islamic state that are crucial:

1. Islam Law(*Shari'at*) and
2. The Muslim Community (*Millat*)
3. Also, the Muslim Community's leadership (*Khilafat*)

Since the Muslim community is to be ruled in line with Islamic law, it must have a directing head to implement or execute the above mentioned law. The Islamic state supports the primacy of Islamic law. The head of an Islamic state has no inherent authority to legislate because Allah, Who is referenced in the Qur'an, has already established the law. Wherever the law is expressly stated in the Qur'an, a Muslim is required to follow or carry out that law.

Since absolute authority or ultimate sovereignty vests in Allah, the Islamic state upholds the supremacy of Islamic law and further, since the Muslim community is to be governed in accordance with the Islamic law, it must have a directing head to implement or execute the said law. The ruler of an Islamic state is solely an executive authority and lacks any inherent legislative capacity because the law has already been

established by Allah, Who is stated in the Qur'an. He must follow or carry out the law wherever it is expressly stated in the Qur'an.

The concept of Islamic state is a debate idea more often used by its proponents as the authority responsible for the implementation of *Shari'at* (Islamic Law) in the newly changing world politics. Like other contemporary Islamic scholars such as, Sayyid Qutb,[16] Sayyid Abul Ala Maududi, Al Nabhani,[17] and also Muhammad Asad believed that Islam provides a definite scheme of life based on universal principles mentioned in its clear-cut injunctions of Islam, present in the form of *Qur'ān* and *Sunnah*. For a true Muslim to live, there must exist what Muhammad Asad refers to as the "state." Without it, Islam is basically just a philosophy with no real application.[18] According to Muhammad Asad:

The growing of a community of people who stand up for equality and justice, for right and against wrong or, to put it more precisely, a community of people who work for the creation and maintenance of such social conditions as would enable the greatest possible number of human beings to live, morally as well as physically, in accordance with the natural Law of God, Islam.[19]

He asserted that any particular form of government and any complete defense of a constitutional system would be disallowed by a fair consideration of the political laws contained in the Qur'an and the Sunnah. The political law that emerges from the context of the Qur'an and Sunnah is real, nonetheless. In that it reveals the particular details of a political strategy with widespread applicability, it is sufficiently vivid and explicit. This suggests that there are many different Islamic state forms, not just one, and it is up to Muslims of all ages to choose the one that best suits them, provided that it adheres to the values outlined in the Qur'an and Sunnah.[20]However, he considered that in modern times, when political philosophy and its manifestations had achieved their zenith, the presidential form of government is the most appropriate for an Islamic state since it is consistent with the Islamic concept of the Caliph (*khalifat*)[21]The renowned scholar described it as a coordinating body with command and preventative capabilities and a device through which the principles of Islam can be put into practice.[22]If Muslims sincerely desire a means by which to put the teachings of Islam

into practice, the construction of an Islamic state is a work that must be completed immediately.

## REJECTION OF SECULAR STATE

While countering the contemporary forms of government, the scholar differs in term of tune and approach. He addresses in a moderate tune. Amid rejecting the contemporary form of government, he presented his arguments on logical basis. He dispels the myths surrounding contemporary nation-states by arguing that they are not governed by universal principles but rather by the needs of a state, a class, a breed, or some other dividing factors; as a result, they lack stable norms to distinguish between vice and virtue, good and evil, and good and bad. Because none of the modern Western political systems ever made a genuine effort to study political and social issues in the context of unwavering moral values, according to his argument, they were unable to produce a universally accepted system of government. If we continue to examine his ideas, it becomes evident that he believed that a state founded on religious principles offers an enormously better prospect of national happiness than a state based on the concept of a secular political organism. The reason for this is because religious authorities fully take into account both the rule of historical and intellectual progress to which human society as a whole is subject. They also try to satisfy the biological and social requirements of men.[23]

He contends that Islam actually demands its adherents work tirelessly, at all times and under all circumstances, to establish an Islamic state because Islam's core teachings not only set forth guidelines for how humans should relate to Allah (the Almighty), but they also specify a specific code of conduct that needs to be followed as a result of that relationship.[24]

## FOUNDATION OF ISLAMIC STATE

He claims that there is no requirement that the external structures and operations of an Islamic state match any "historical precedent." A state must include those definite and unmistakable Islamic laws that have an immediate impact on its people's social, political, and economic ex-

istence in its constitution and in its daily life in order to be rightfully referred to as Islamic.[25]He didn't think it was important to recreate any historical precedents; rather, he thought it was important to create a constitution that was fully compatible with Islamic scriptures while also being workable and relevant in the current.[26]In addition, he endorsed the view of those who believed that any departure from the model of the rightly guided Caliphs must ultimately diminish a state's Islamic character and advocated for making full use of the allowance for men's social and intellectual progress.[27]He also said that our moral obligation is to emulate the companions of the Prophet (PBUH) or Sahabah relates precisely to their character and behaviour and not necessarily to their procedure in matters of administration.[28] He agreed with the slogan "return to the Qur'an and Sunnah," but he had differing opinions on the kind of Islamic state that should be established in the modern era. This is common to every Islamic organization endeavoring to establish a universal Islamic state.

Several of the theories for an Islamic state were derived by advocates of a Shari'ah-governed state, and they were supported by the Qur'an and Sunnah. Similarly, Muhammad Asad proposed many doctrines based on their understanding of Islamic text. According to him, make the Islamic state different from any other ruling systems existing in the world today. The following principles can be extracted from his writings such as:

1. *Tawhid.* He gave importance to the doctrine of *tawhid* by saying that the *Qur'ān* revolves round Allah's oneness, uniqueness, and omnipotence etc.[29] According to Muhammad Asad, the unity of all existence is a result of this divine unity. It also guides an individual in reproducing the unity of idea and action both in his existence and in His consciousness.[30]The *Qurān* says:

   > Allah, the Ever-Living, the Self- Subsisting by whom all subsist, there is no god but He. Neither slumber seizes Him, nor sleep; to Him belongs all that is in the heavens and all is in the earth. Who is there who might intercede with Him save with His leave? He knows what lies before them and what is hidden from them, whereas they cannot attain to anything of His knowledge save what He wills them to attain. His Dominion[31] overspreads the heavens and the earth.[32]

The *Qurān* says:

And none is comparable to Him.[33]

2. Sovereignty of Allah is a very first and important issue in the debate of an Islamic state. On the basis of attributes given to the sovereignty by political writers such as absoluteness, universality, permanence, inalienability, indivisibility, originality, and infallibility. The mainstream scholars of Islam argue that such type of sovereignty belongs to none save Allah. The debate between divine sovereignty and popular sovereignty is found in the writings of scholars of both trends; proponents as well as opponents of an Islamic state. Muhammad Asad advocated the divine sovereignty with giving a role to the human's authority of vicarious kind to manage the affairs of the world in conformity with the Will of Allah. The *Qurān* says:

   *The Palm - trees that you cut down or those that you left standing on their roots, it was by Allah's leave that you did so. (Allah granted you this leave) in order that He might humiliate the evil-doers.*[34]

   Further the Qur'an says:

   He is Allah: there is no god but He; the knower of the unseen and the manifest, He is the most Merciful, the Most Compassionate.[35]

   The Qur'an says:

   He is Allah: there is no God but He: the king, the Holy, the All- peace, the Giver of security, the Overseer, the Most, they Overpowering, the All-Great. Exalted be He from whatever they associate with Him.[36]

   The Qur'an says:

   He is Allah, the Planner, Executer and Fashioner of creation. His are the names most beautiful. Whatever is in the heavens and the earth extols His Glory. He is the Most Mighty, the Most Wise.[37]

3. The notion of consultation (Shura) has emerged as one of the most crucial ones in modern political thinking. It is one of the most fundamental principles in Islamic administration, and most experts demonstrate the compatibility of the Islamic state on this

particular basis. It is on the basis of this term that the Islamic state is considered compatible with modern democratic forms of government. According to many scholars, this very principle is the command of Allah, traditions of the Prophet (PBUH) and the practice of the *Sahabah* and their successors. In the same line, Asad emphasized its vital role within an ever-evolving *ummah*. They go on to say that this procedure enables Islamic law to develop rationally so that it can provide solutions to entirely new problems.[38] According to the *Qurānic* dictates and the Prophetic traditions, Asad argues that "both the executive and the legislative organs must be established through election."[39]The *Qurān* has commanded the faithful to settle the disputes of the society and state through mutual consultation. The honorable companion of the Prophet of Islam (PBUH) is referred to in the Qur'an as being the most democratic and consultative in their dealings. The *Qurān* says:

> (O Prophet), it was thanks to Allah's mercy that you were gentle to them. Had you been rough, hard-hearted, they would have surely scattered away, and pray for their forgiveness, and take counsel from them in matters of importance. And when you are resolved on a course of action put your trust in Allah. Surely Allah loves those who put their trust (in Him).[40] Who obey their Lord and Establish Prayer; who conduct their affairs by consultation, and spend out of what We have bestowed upon them.[41]

## SCOPE OF HUMAN LEGISLATION

According to Islamic law, an Islamic state's authority, or its religious claim to a Muslim's loyalty and allegiance, rests on the Qur'an's fundamental endorsement, explaining the verse 42:38 of the Qur'an, which says that the government must be viewed as a fundamental phrase of all Qur'anic legislation dealing to statecraft.[42]He imposes the sole limitation that no legislation can be passed and no decision can be made at any level that is completely or partially in opposition to the Qur'an and Sunnah. He asserts that the constitution must specifically state that no temporary legislation or administrative order, whether it be mandatory or permissive, shall be legitimate if it is proven to conflict with any Shari'ah stipulation. He backs up this claim by citing Surah al-Ahzab,

verse number 36. In addition, he makes the case that Islamic law needs to be universally codified in order for its ordinances to be upheld in the areas that fall under its purview. Because there are so many traditional schools of Islamic philosophy, this is quite challenging. He rejects the idea of using the Fiqhi doctrines, to which the majority of its citizens subscribe, and maintains that an Islamic state must be equipped with a Shari'ah code that:

1. It would be largely accepted by all of its Muslim residents, regardless of the fiqhi schools they may belong to, and
2. Would highlight the divine law's eternal, immutable nature in order to show how it can be applied to all eras and levels of human progress both socially and intellectually.[43]

It is a serious issue that an Islamic state faces in the contemporary times as whether a non-Muslim be appointed as its leader or not. He argues that non-Muslims are not eligible for the post of leadership. Further he said, he maintains the posts of leadership and legislature are reserved for the Muslims only. He contends that until a state is run by citizens who voluntarily adhere to Islamic rule, it cannot be really Islamic. He uses logic to support the claim that non-Muslims are not eligible for leadership positions because, in his opinion, even if they had the highest levels of personal integrity and state loyalty, they could never give their all to advancing Islam's goals. Nor could such a demand be made of them without being unfair.[44]

Asad contests the rigid structure of the Islamic political system, believing it to be incorrect to adhere to a single form of government. He maintains that there are various kinds of governance that Muslims can choose from and that they should find the one that best satisfies their requirements and fosters social and intellectual development in accordance with the explicit directives of *Shari'ah*.[45]In Asad's opinion, an Islamic state would benefit from the modern presidential style of administration since it is compatible with the Islamic concept of the Caliph (*khalifat*).[46]

## QUALITIES OF THE HEAD OF STATE

Muhammad Asad holds the view that the person, who may be entrusted with the office of the Amir, should possess the following qualities:

i. The *khalifa* or amir must be Muslim: Aaccording to Asad's point of view, only a Muslim must be entrusted with the office of the head of an Islamic state because the principle of an Islamic state is establishing of Islamic law as a practical proposition in man's affairs. He also said that a non-Muslim citizen cannot be ever supposed to work wholeheartedly for the ideological objectives of Islam.[47]
ii. The *khalifa* must be righteousness. This is the second criteria of eligibility for the post of the head of the state. Muhammad Asad supports his argument with the following verses of the *Qurān*: Behold, the noblest of you before God is the most righteous of you.[48]
iii. Wise and mature: Asad argues that Amir must possess both of these qualities, namely intelligence and superior character.[49]

According to Muhammad Asad, it is a prerequisite for leading an authentic Islamic life, without which Islam is primarily a theoretical belief system with no tangible application. They have discussed the characteristics of an Islamic state, its organisational structure, and associated concerns in light of current statecraft models.

His in-depth understanding of Islamic doctrine and modern systems of government lay out in crystal-clear terms the theoretical underpinnings for the construction of an Islamic state, which in his opinion could be accomplished without resorting to any violent methods. According to him, a state can testify its Islamic character only by virtue of a conscious and unreserved application of the socio-political tenets of Islam and by an incorporation of those tenets in the basic constitution of the country. He intentionally supported the cause of an Islamic state, which is endowed with flawless permanent and divinely ordained principles that are universal in application.

## NATURE OF ISLAMIC STATE

He presents his Islamic country as a welfare state with more than 1,300 years of illuminating values. The current welfare state can be traced back many centuries to the time of Hazrat Umar (May God be pleased with him). Given how closely it resembles the Islamic idea of a caliphate, he

thought that the presidential system of administration would work best for an Islamic state. It should be given to a strong head of state who possesses the skills required to govern the nation. His ministers should serve at his discretion. The constitution of the majority of Muslim governments, including those not regulated by Islamic law, stipulates that the head of state must be a Muslim. He says:

> It is obvious that only a person who believes in the Divine origin of that Law, in a word, a Muslim – may be entrusted with the office of head of the state. Just as there can be no fully Islamic life without an Islamic state, no state can be termed truly Islamic unless it is administered by people who can be supposed to submit willingly to the Divine Law of Islam.[50]

Four components make up a state: the nation, the people, the structure, and the sovereignty. The concept of sovereignty is different in Islam. Without sovereign authority or the capacity to enact laws on behalf of its citizens, no state can be considered autonomous. Islam recognizes God as the sole legitimate ruler. However, one shouldn't presume that the Qur'an provides all laws that may exist or that God created all laws.

But the laws that an Islamic state's citizens enact must be founded on Qur'anic principles. People only have a limited ability to create laws since they cannot contradict Qur'anic principles. Legislators are simply the law's agents of execution and are on an equal footing with regular people. The original text that establishes laws and rules is the Qur'an. It is a divine book, and the laws it contains are superior to those created by humans. It is viewed as the base upon which Islam's superstructure is built. .

He desired to see the Islamic living tradition flourish in the contemporary world. He wished for the advancement of Islam as a living religion in the contemporary era. He was saddened by the plight of the Muslim world and its retaliatory agenda, but he never lost faith that a new generation of Muslims would one day emerge to realize his ideal. He asserted that this would serve as the cornerstone of an Islamic state, built upon the Prophet's teachings and the Qur'an's prohibitions. He had promoted a logical Islam, worked to bring Islamic principles and democracy together, and attempted to modernize the Qur'an.

On February 23, 1992, he passed away in Spain after serving Islam

until his death. He was buried in Granada, Andalusia. He had a deep and ongoing love with Islam, which is still evident in his excellent works.

## CONCLUSION

To conclude, the book "*The Principle of State and Government in Islam*" is a pioneering work in the modern Islamic political thought. Unlike other scholars who mostly adopted the traditional approach to studies on Islamic state and government in modern times, Muhammad Asad enlightened the reader with the most advanced and practicable form of Islamic state which is more democratic in nature. Asad's Islamic state concentrates on the powerful *khalifah* and therefore he suggests the presidential form of government especially the 5th French Republic closer to the *Qurānic* concept of *khalifah*. Further his views are, however debatable and invite the scholars of Islamic political thought to go into the deeper study of the text of the *Qurān* and *Sunnah* and the practice of *Khilafat-e-Rashidah* and to evolve a more democratic *Shurah* based system of government.

## NOTES

1. Khan, Abdul Majid. *Muhammad Asad: An Intellectual Giant of Contemporary world*, Published by Averroes Academy, Aligarh, 2018, Iqra Colony, New Sir Syed Nagar, p. 1.
2. Hazarat Umar (634-644 A.D) was one of those extraordinary personalities in history who not only moulded the destiny of the nation but made history of their own. His brilliant conquests and benevolent administration inaugurated a new era in the history of the World. He had to fight against the Persians and the Romans who were bent upon the destruction of the infant State of Islam. It was due to this dexterity and ability that the mighty empires of Persia and Rome crumbled before the arms of Islam and it was no small credit to him that the whole of Arabia and Egypt came under the influence of the Muslims. He was the best example of ideal character. All the good qualities of a man were combined in him.
3. Ibn Hazam (994-1064), belong to south of Tehran. A theologian of Arab-Persian decent born in Cordova, he was a violent opponents of the Asharites. Literalist and singular in his approach,, he was a chauvinist in regard to Arab Civilization. He followed the Zahiri (exoterist) School of

Law and so maintained that the only level of meaning in the *Qur'ān* was the explicit; according to him no hidden meaning were admissible. He wrote many book on a variety of subjects including Philosophy, history, and descriptions of different sects and school thought. He spent the letter years of his life in a kind of internal exile, and the number of his disciples was restricted by the authorities. He was died in Heart, Iran.

4. Fakhruddin al Razi (1149-1209), philosopher, historian (he wrote the history of the Dynasties) and theologian, he belonged to the Shafi school of law and was a defender of orthodox views in his book, kitab al-Muhassal. His commentary on the *Qur'ān* is called the *Mafatih al Ghayb* (The Keys of the Unseen), itself a quotation from the *Qur'ān* (6:59: with Him are the Keys of the Unseen).
5. Ibn Taymiyyah (1263-1328), the great Muhaddith, judge and proto-salafist theologian was born in Harran, Turkey. He was imprisoned several times in Egypt and Syria for his religious and political opinion. Even while in prison he continued to teach religion, to his fellow inmate, and to write prolifically, so much so that his opponents were driven to deprive him of writing materials, an insult that wondered him perhaps more then prison itself. His literalist understanding of the *Qur'ān* led him to attack many authorities in Islam including al Ghazali, and Ibn Arabi. Ibn Taymiyyah stormed against what he saw to be *bid'ah*, or innovation in religious practice. He was one of the principle figure in the fundamentalist strand of Islam, and he is an important forerunner of the Wahabis.
6. Ibn al-Qayyim al–Jawziyyah (d. 1350) was an important medieval Islamic jurisconsult, theologian, and spiritual writer. He was one of the foremost disciple and student of Ibn Taymiyyah.
7. Jamal al Din al Afghani (1839-1897) was a political activist and Islamic ideologist who travelled throughout the Muslim world during the late 19th century. He is one of the founders of Islamic Modernism as well as an advocate of Pan-Islamic unity in Europe and Hindu-Muslim unity in India against the British. His ideology has been described as a welding of "traditional" religious antipathy toward non-Muslims "to modern critique of Western imperialism and an appeal for the unity of Islam", urging the adoption of Western sciences and institutions that might strengthen Islam.
8. Muhammad Abduh (1849-1905) an Egyptian religious reformer who sought to "modernize" Islam and rectify it through reason. He did not take all of the *Qur'ān* to be Divinely inspired, what the *Qur'ān* says of human institutions 'Abduh ascribed to the Prophet's thinking. This is, to say the least, completely un-traditional; the orthodox views are that all of

the *Qur'ān* is Divinely inspired, from beginning to end; not only Divinely inspired but the un-created Word of God. He was the influential figure of Salafiyyah Movement. He associated briefly with the political agitator Jamal ad Din al-Afghani and they founded a political/religious society called *al-Urwah al-Wuthqa* (The Unbreakable Bond) and published a periodical called *al-Manar* (The Minaret). He became a member of the Supreme Council of the al-Azhar University and in 1897 published his book on theology and law entitle *Risalat at-Tawhid* (The Message of Unity).

9. Sayyid Abul Ala Maududi (1903-1979) was an Islamic scholar, at early age became a correspondent, and soon became an editor of Taj, a newspaper in Jabalpur. In 1920 he assumed the editorship of Muslim, which was published by the Jam'iyat-i 'Ulama, the Ulema of India in Delhi. The newspaper closed in 1923, he soon became editor of the prestigious al-Jam'iyah. While a journalist, he also began writing about Islam. In 1941, he founded Jama'at-i Islami, of which he remained Amir, until 1972 and which is one of the most prominent Islamic movements of our day. Between 1948-67, he spent a total of five years in different prisons of Pakistan. In 1953, he was also sentenced to death by a Martial Law Court for writing a 'seditious' pamphlet, this sentence being later commuted to life imprisonment
10. The party was established to reform society in accordance with the faith and drew its inspiration from the model of the Prophet Muhammad's original Muslim community in Medina. It called for moral reform and political action but was not concerned with questions of nationalism or national boundaries because Islam is a universal religion. The Jama'at was to provide an alternative to the practices of the Sufi brotherhood (*tariqas*) and was designed to create an elite of educated and devout Muslim leaders that would direct the way toward the revival of Islam.
11. In Arabic it means effort, in Islamic law, the independent or original interpretation of problems not precisely covered by the *Qur'ān*, *Hadith,* and *Iijma*. *Ijtihad* is an Islamic legal term referring to independent reasoning by an expert in Islamic law, or the through exertion of a jurist's mental faculty in finding a solution to a legal question. *Ijtihad* is always necessary and inevitable because of the need to act in situations which are new or unique, or because information is lacking or competent authorities not present. As long as an individual is responsible for himself until the Day of Judgement, every believer finds himself, at one time or another, in the position of Muʿaz, and has to fall back upon the *ijtihad* of personal decision. Within the *Sunni* World, the decisions of Judge in certain

domains over the years represent small increments of *ijtihad* at the levels of the Schools of Law.

12 Khan, Abdul Majid, op. cit., pp. 32, 33, 34, 35.

13. Asad, Muhammad. *The Principles of State and Government,* University of California Press, 1961, p. VIII.

14. Ibid., p. 30. Nationalism in all its forms and disguises runs counter to the fundamental Islamic Principle of the equality of all men and be emphatically ruled out as a possible basis of Muslim Unity.

15. Esposito, John L. "*Islam: Overview*" in John L. Esposito (ed), The Oxford Encyclopedia of the Islamic World, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), vol. 3, pp. 62-78.

16. He was an Islamic activist and one of the principal ideologues of the Muslim Brotherhood (al-Ikhwan al-Muslimun). He was born in 1906 in a village near Asyut in Upper Egypt. In the early part of his career, Qutb demonstrated little interest in religious activism. He focused primarily upon his work with the Ministry of Education, and his literary pursuits. Later his interest were turning increasingly toward political and social concerns. He associated with Egyptian monarchy and British colonialism. His first major essay along religious lines, *al-Adala al-Ijtima'iyya fi'l-Islam* (social justice in Islam) was published in 1949. Qutb become actively involved with the Muslim Brotherhood, he wrote two works for which he is best known while in prison. He began his voluminous *Qur'ānic* commentary, *Fi Zilal al-Qur'ān* (In the Shade of the *Qur'ān*), in 1962. In 1964 his supporters published a collection of his letters under the name *Ma'alim fi'l-Tariq* (Milestones), in which he argues that *Jihad*, entailing armed struggle, not just peaceful preaching, is necessary to overturn the corrupted state of Muslim societies (the new ignorance or neo-*jabiliyya*) and establish a true Islamic order based on God's laws (*Shari'ah*), His influence has steadily grown through the translation and proliferation of his work.

17. Muhammad Taqi al-Din Ibrahim bin Mustafa bin Ismai'l bin Yusus al-Nabhani (1914-1977) was an Islamic scholar from Jerusalem who founded the Islamist political party *Hizb ut-Tahrir* (is an international pan-Islamist and fundamentalist political organization whose stated aim is the re-establishment of the Islamic caliphate to unite the Muslim community, *ummah* and implement *Shari'ah* globally). The party was immediately banned in Jordan. Al-Nabhani was banned from returning to Jordan and settle in Beirut. Al Nabhani proclaimed that the depressed political condition of Muslims in the contemporary world stemmed from the abolition of the Caliphate in 1924. Other causes of stagnation

included the Ottoman Empire's closing of the doors of *ijtihad*, its failure to understand "the intellectual and legislative side of Islam", and neglect of the Arabic language. He argued for a new Caliphate that would be brought about by peaceful politics and ideological subversion and eventually cover the world replacing all nation states.

18. Asad, Muhammad, op. cit., p. 4.
19. Ibid., p. 30, the prevention of injustice and the establishment of justice on earth are the ultimate objectives of the social message of Islam.
20. Ibid., pp. 22-23.
21. Ibid., p. 61, the main distinction between an Islamic state and secular state is that the Islamic state is governed in accordance with the laws of Allah as revealed in the *Qur'ān* whereas a secular state is governed by the laws made through human reason.
22. Ibid., p. 96.
23. Ibid., pp. 4-10, It is extremely misleading to apply non-Islamic terms to Islamic concepts and institutions. The Ideology of Islam has a social orientation peculiar to itself, different in many respects from that of the modern West, and can be successfully interpreted only within its own context and in its own terminology.
24. Ibid p.2., the *Qur'ān* makes it abundantly clear that the ultimate purpose of all creation is the abidance of the created with the will of the Creator, because this conformity called Islam.
25. Ibid., p. 17.
26. Ibid., pp. ix-x.
27. Ibid., p. 22, Asad argues, one may safely say that there is not only one form of the Islamic state, but many; and it is for the Muslims of every period to discover the form most suitable to their needs on the condition, of course, that the form and the institutions they choose are in full agreement with the institutions they choose are in full agreement with the explicit, unequivocal *Shari'ah* laws relating to communal life.
28. Ibid., p. 24, Our moral obligation to try to emulate the great companions relates precisely to their selflessness, their idealism, and their unquestionning surrender to the will of God.
29. Asad, Muhammad. *The Message of the Qur'ān* (Gibraltar: Dar al Andalus, 1980), p. 553.
30. Asad, Muhammad. *Islam at Cross Roads*, (Gibraltar: Dar al Andalus, 1934), p. 553.
31. The Arabic term *Kursi* signifies sovereignty, dominion and authority. This verse is generally known as the "Verse of the throne" and its provides in

one piece a Knowledge of God without any parallel. No wonder it has been characterized in the *Hadith* as the most excellent verse of the *Qur'ān*.

32. *The Qur'ān*, 2:255.
33. *The Qur'ān*, 112:4.
34. *The Qur'ān*, 59:5.
35. *The Qur'ān*, 59:22, None other than God has the status and position that entitles him to be served and worshiped. None other than God is possessed of the attributes and powers that justify regarding them as an object of worship and service.
36. *The Qur'ān*, 59:23.
37. *The Qur'ān*, 59:24.
38. Asad, Muhammad. *The Principles of State and Government in Islam,* op. cit., p. 43.
39. Asad, Muhammad. *Islam and Politic*s, (Geneva: Islamic Centre, 1963), p. 9.
40. *The Qur'ān*, 3:159.
41. *The Qur'ān*, 22:38.
42. Asad, Muhammad. *The Message of the Qur'ān*, op. cit., p. 145.
43. Asad, Muhammad, *The Principles of State and Government in Islam,* op. cit., p. 35.
44. Ibid., p. 40.
45. Ibid., pp. 22-23.
46. Ibid., p. 61.
47. Asad, Muhammad. *The Message of the Qur'ān,* op. cit., p. 174.
48. *The Qur'ān*, 49:13.
49. Al Bukhari, *Al-Jami Al-Sahih,* vol. 9, Book 93, Chapter 4, Hadith no. 7142, p. 162.

ISHRAT MUSHTAQ

# A Review Essay: An Intellectual Biography of Gail Minault, a Historian on Muslim Women of Colonial India

ABSTRACT

The last five decades saw scholars from various disciplines conducting extensive research on Indian women. Various aspects of women's lives and history have been thoroughly examined, including the discourse on gender issues and nationalism, women's participation in the nationalist movement, women's writings, etc. However, such works, both specialized as well as general, have largely focused on Hindu women, with little attention paid to the specificities of Indian women of other religions. Moreover, the majority of research on Muslim women has been sociological or anthropological in nature, focusing mostly on the second half of the twentieth century and women's legal status. Very few works, such as those of Gail Minault, give the account of Muslim women from a historical perspective. So, this article attempts to explore Minault's study of India's Muslim women and the evolution of her intellectual journey.

Keywords: Gail Minault, Khilafat Movement, North India, Muslim Women, Education, Urdu, Social Reforms.

## INTRODUCTION

"*The priests and the women are the most important influences in India… and I am not much afraid of the politicians until they play on these two*", said Sir Harcourt Butler.[1]

Gail Minault, one of the leading historians studying South Asia, chose to explore both-the women and the priests. How did an American of French ancestry become a historian of South Asian Muslim women,

and Indo-Muslim culture, is an interesting story to know. In the introduction of her book, Minault herself admits that "one's biography has a great deal to do with the subject one chooses to write about[2]". This article is an attempt to explore the intellectual journey of this Gail Minault and her study of India's Muslim women.

Gail Minault, born in Minneapolis, Minnesota (USA) in 1939, is of French and Scots-Irish ancestry.[3] Both of her parents were educators: her mother, Martha Mc Kim Minault (1908-2003), taught mathematics in primary school, and her father, Paul A. Minault (1906-1996), who came to the United States from France, taught French and Latin in secondary school.[4] Learning French from her father, Minault grew up bilingual. This bilingual background gave her a curiosity about the ways people expressed themselves and enabled her to see the world through different lenses. So, to her, speaking different languages and analyzing different cultures has always remained very important.[5] She attended public schools in Pottstown, Pennsylvania, for her initial education, till her ninth standard and joined the Northfield School (now Northfield- Mt Hermon) for Girls, Massachusetts, for higher education. She completed her B.A. in History from the Smith College in 1961, spending her junior year at Ecole Nationale des Science Politiques in Paris to tap her French roots.[6]

After college, Minault joined the U.S. diplomatic service and worked there for three years (1961-64) as a trainee in Washington, a junior officer trainee in Beirut- where she learned conversational Arabic, and an assistant cultural officer in Dhaka.[7] In Dhaka, she ran a Fulbright program, which took her to travel extensively to West Pakistan and India, covering the places such as Karachi, Lahore, Peshawar, Delhi, Agra, Bombay, Madras, and of course Aligarh. Consequently, she decided to specialize in the history of South Asia. Already having learnt Bengali by then, she realized the need to learn Hindi/ Urdu for the task. Her interest in India's history and the emergence of Pakistan was growing, as was her realization that she was 'not cut out to be a diplomat.'[8] Receiving a foreign language fellowship to study Hindi/ Urdu, she quit her job. She joined the University of Pennsylvania for a master's degree in South Asian Studies, which she earned in 1966. During the course, she learnt the Devanagari script and Urdu speaking and reading.

After marrying a fellow scholar Thomas Graham, she soon joined a Ph.D. course in the same university under the guidance of Professor Holden Furber[9], and began studying Persian. She also took research advice from Aziz Ahmad[10] (1914-1978), Peter Hardy[11], and Ralph Russell[12]. During the period, she explored the National Archives, Delhi; the Ali brothers' papers at Jamia Millia; the UP state archives in Lucknow; and the Aligarh Muslim University (AMU). At Aligarh, she stayed with the family of Khurshidul Islam[13] where she furthered her Urdu linguistic proficiency.

After getting her Ph.D, Minault joined the University of Texas, Austin, in 1972 as an assistant professor and has stayed there ever since. There, she developed survey courses on Indian history and seminars on various themes such as Indian Nationalism, India's Muslims, Gandhi and Gandhism, and Women in South Asia. She has been a visiting fellow at the University of California at Berkley and at the "Centre d'Etudes de l'Inde et de l'Asie du Sud, Ecole des Hautes Etudes en Sciences Sociales", in Paris.

## INTELLECTUAL JOURNEY

### PART I

Minault's scholarship is wide-ranging. She has authored and edited more than five books and around 40 scholarly articles/essays covering the themes of Indo-Muslim culture and politics, political poetry, South Asian Muslim women, and women's rights in Islam, among many others. Her debut article, "Akbar and Aurangzeb: Syncretism and Separatism in Mughal India—A Re-examination"[14] studies the religious policies of Akbar and Aurangzeb in context of varying degree of dynamic elements within medieval Indian Islam. To her, while Akbar's 'Din-i-Ilahi' (actually *Tauheed-e-Ilahi*) was a tactical move to forge '*asabiyya*' (feeling of loyalty) of ruling group to the emperor, within his court, it however, had divisive impact on Indian Muslims in a long run. On the other hand, Aurangzeb's religious policy, although, guided by his desire to re-establish an Islamic state, was not the most significant factor of Mughal decline. The real cause of decline was the 'disintegration of '*asabiyya*'.

She then turned from 17th century to explore the early decades of 20th century.

On Donald E. Smith's[15] suggestion, she had already written her M.A. dissertation on 'the Khilafat movement of 1919-24'. During her time in India, she worked simultaneously and sometimes collaboratively with other historians of South Asia such as David Lelyveld, Francis Robinson, Judith Brown, Thomas, and Barbara Metcalf, C. A. Bayly, and Kenneth Jones[16]—most of these being the students of Anil Seal[17], one of the pioneers of the Cambridge school of historiography.

Minault's M.A. dissertation and Ph.D. thesis were on 'the Khilafat Movement of 1919-24', but the theses varied in their interpretation. Her M.A. dissertation, borrowing from the British sources, regarded the Khilafat movement as 'pan-Islamic'. For her Ph.D., she explored the Urdu sources and personal papers, apart from the British records, and revised her earlier position. Now she viewed the movement as a quest for a 'pan-Indian Islamic political constituency' within the context of Indian nationalism—a means to unite the 'very diverse Muslims of India' in cooperation with Indian nationalism. The Khilafat movement has been a matter of continuous debate among historians. Before Minault, H. A. R. Gibb in his 1932 book called the Khilafat movement as a reaction to the rising Hindu Nationalism.[18] W. C. Smith (1916-2000) in his *Modern Islam in India* [19] devoted a chapter to Khilafat movement. He contests the pan-Islamic nature of the movement. For him, the Khilafatists were not actually struggling for the Turkish Khilafah (about which they really knew very little) but for something else. Quoting Jawaharlal Nehru (*An Autobiography*), he says, the masses of the rural areas mistook the meaning of the word *Khilafat* for Urdu word, *Khilaf*, meaning 'against', thus opposition to the government. Thus, pan-Islam is primarily a sentiment of cohesion, not cohesion in itself, nor a practical expression of it[20]. A.C. Neimejier (1972) sees the movement as pan-Islamic.[21] M. Mujeeb in *The Indian Muslims* (1960), finds 'the allegiance to Islam as the only unifying factor among Indian Muslims', which, (he has insisted), must not be confused with identity as a 'distinct body politic or nation'. Similarly Tara Chand in *History of the Freedom Movement in India,* Vol. 3 (1972), has devoted a whole chapter discussing the issue as 'the Muslim Problem'. Such preliminary studies would in fact create a pre-existence of knowledge-base for Gail Minault to elaborate upon and reflect on the theme, 'Muslims of India'.

With David Lelyveld, she wrote an essay (1974), "The Campaign for a Muslim University"[22] The essay demonstrated how the campaign (1898-1920) to establish a Muslim university at Aligarh was a confluence of education and politics- an effort to create an All India Muslim constituency and was also a direct challenge to the British control of the 'educational access to power.' In fact the campaign was more political than educational in both its cause and impact. They traced four phases in the campaign from 1898-1920, with many personal and ideological conflicts within. The essay was reprinted in her book *Gender, Language, and Learning* (2009), it also appeared in Juhi Gupta and A R Kidwai, eds., *Oxford of the East* (2020).[23]

While developing her Ph.D. dissertation into a book, she wrote various articles around the theme of the Khilafat movement.[24] Her essay, "Urdu Political Poetry during the Khilafat Movement" (1974)[25] depicts the use of political poetry as a 'new technique' of organization and communication to broaden national political participation. It glimpses the political poetry of Hali, Iqbal, Zafar Ali, Hasrat Mohani, and Muhammad Ali Jauhar.

Her book on the Khilafat movement came out in 1982. Heavily borrowing from Urdu sources, she defines the movement as a nationalistic (and not pan-Islamic) attempt on the part of the India's Muslims to forge a pan–Indian Muslim political constituency within Indian nationalism. She shows that Khilafat was being used more as a symbol to unite India's diverse Muslims divided along the lines of region, language, sect, and class. The so-called pan-Islamism of the movement emerged from a serious misunderstanding of Arab and Turkish politics by the Indian Muslim political leadership. The movement witnessed new forms of leadership and communication, the creative force of religious values and institutions demonstrated by the entry of Ulama such as Abdul Bari of Firangi Mahal, the Ali Brothers (Md. Ali Jauhar and his elder brother Shaukat Ali), and the Ulema of Deoband into the movement. The collapse of the movement fractured the Hindu-Muslim alliance, communalism manifested itself as mistrust among politicians and violence among the masses. The failed movement had a great impact on the course of subsequent Indian political struggle. Muslim self- consciousness had become a factor in Indian politics and

Muslims as a third party in the same. This new consciousness "provided the techniques, and much of the personnel, for the development of a specifically Muslim 'nationalism' or 'separatism', in the subcontinent later."[26] Subsequent works on the Khilafat movement by Azmi Ozcan (1997)[27] and M. N. Qureshi (1999)[28] argue for alternative interpretations, highlighting the pan-Islamic aspect of the movement.

## PART II

Soon, Minault turned her attention to another direction. From her school days, she was convinced of the need for women's education and self –sufficiency. Her paternal grandmother was left a widow by the World War I and raised her two sons with great difficulty; imparted them a good education; her aunt, a school teacher, was a widow from the World War II.

While in the teaching job, her interest in feminist history grew further. Thus, securing a research grant from the National Endowment for Humanities in 1975, she started a project on 'a history of women's education among India's Muslims', which took her twenty years to complete. She wrote various essays around the theme. Her essay tracing the role of Indo-Muslim women in freedom struggle was published in 1977.[29] Her other essays include "Muslim Women in Conflict with Purdah: Their Role in the Indian Nationalist Movement" (1980)[30] and "Purdah's Progress: The Beginnings of School Education for Indian Muslim Women" (1982).[31]

Her research connected her to other scholars of the field such as Geraldine Forbes, Hanna Papanek, and Barbara Ramusack. They organized many conferences on South Asian Women, which subsequently resulted in two edited volumes.

*The Extended Family* (1981)[32] is a collection of eleven essays studying women's political participation in India and Pakistan in a historical context. The opening essay by Minault shows how extended family provided a metaphor for the expansion of Indian women's social concerns and helped shape their thinking about their place in society. Another of her essays "Sisterhood or Separatism" analyses the All India Muslim Ladies' Conference. Geraldine Forbes, Barbara Ramusack,

Shahida Lateef, and Sylvia Chipp are the other contributors to the volume.

*Separate Worlds* (1982)[33], which Minault co-edited with Hanna Papanek, is a collection of ethnographic articles about female seclusion (*purdah* ) in South Asia. How *purdah* is practiced by both Hindus and Muslims and permeates South Asian culture is well documented. Differences in the Hindu and the Muslim variant of *purdah* and its implications are discussed in detail. There is also a detailed essay illustrating a modernist interpretation of women's status in Islam. The book is vital for people interested in gender question.

Minault's tryst with Urdu language started at University of Pennsylvania, during her masters (1964-66) where she studied C.M. Naim's Urdu textbook, *Readings in Urdu Prose and Poetry*.[34] Her engagement with Urdu never stopped hereafter. In 1977, she translated one of her essays into Urdu as "*Tehrik-e-Khilafat ke Daur ki Siyasi Sha`iri*".[35] She also rendered a chapter from her book *Secluded Scholars* into Urdu as "*Bibiyon ke Madrase*," in the *Aligarh Magazine*.[36] Further, she translated Altaf Husain Hali's *Chup ki Dad* into English as "Homage to the Silent" in *Annual of Urdu Studies* (1981).[37] Her essay "The Urdu Women's Press as a Source for Social History" was translated into Urdu by Sayyid Shahabuddin Desnavi (1913-1993) as "*Urdu Niswan Press: Samaji Tarikh ka Ma'akhaz*".[38] She also wrote essays on: development of Urdu press[39], "Delhi College and Urdu[40]", and on famous personalities associated with the Delhi College such as master Ramachandra[41] and Aloys Sprenger.[42]

Her third book, *Voices of Silence*[43], came out in 1986. It is an English translation of two of the best-known works of Hali (1837-1914) about women: *Majalis un-Nissa* (Assemblies of Women) is a fiction in prose form depicting a conversation among the middle-class Muslim women of Delhi about their daily life, household, customs, beliefs, and need for education therein. The book is written in the idioms of *Begamati Zuban* (elite Muslim women's dialect) in eloquent style. To Minault, *Majalis* is not only a didactic work containing a plea for women's education and rights but also a work of social history betraying the language, culture, ceremonies, beliefs, and home life of an urban middle class of the time. The work is 'up to date' for its time and place. *Chup ki Dad* (Homage to the Silent) is a poem written by Hali in praise of women's education

at Shaikh Abdullah's request (the founder of Aligarh women's college) and was first published in his reformist journal *Khatun* in 1905. While lamenting women's oppression and forced ignorance, Hali reiterated his support for women's education as vital to the regeneration of the Muslim community. It is intriguing that while studying Hali, Minault does not refer to Moin Ahsan Jazbi's Ph.D thesis, later published as an Urdu monograph[44] (1959), which is a vital intervention to comprehend the reformist mood of late 19th century. Jazbi argues that Hali had his own independent and at times divergent views from those of Sir Syed, particularly in terms of critiquing colonialism, on women's education and on the roles of the middle classes. Also, Hali's *nazm*, *Munajaat-e-Bewah* (Widows' prayers), 1884, which was Mahatama Gandhi's favorite, does not find any mention in Minault's works.

Meanwhile, Minault interrupted her women's history project with another task: to edit a thesis she found in the collection of Henry Martyn Institute in Hyderabad. It was the Oxford doctoral thesis of late Ian Handerson Douglas on Abul Kalam Azad's intellectual biography. Together with Christian Troll, the edited work was published as *Abul Kalam Azad: An Intellectual and Religious Biography* in 1987.The book remains one of the best biographies of Azad in English. Mushirul Hasan calls it 'the first scholarly study on Azad'. Further, Minault also wrote many encyclopedic and biographical articles on Azad.

While continuing her research on Muslim women, the paucity of sources on Muslim women's education in British records convinced her of the need for alternative sources for her work. While doing so, she opened up a new line in this direction- the study of 'Urdu magazines for women' as a source for studying their history. Her main focus were the 'big three' Urdu periodicals- *Tahzib un -Niswan*, *Ismat* , and *Khatun*.[45]

Using Urdu sources extensively, she also wrote about various reformers and intellectuals among India's Muslims. Her essay on "girls' education at Aligarh"[46] studies the process of women's education at Aligarh through the efforts of Shaikh Abdullah (1874-1965) and Waheed Jahan. Another essay, "Begamati Zuban"[47] treats women as a 'sub culture' and portrays their lives, ideas, and contributions through the study of women's spoken Urdu in 19th century *zenana*. It uses linguistics as a source of study of culture and society. "Sayyid Ahmad of Delhi and the Delhi Renaissance"(1986)[48] is an intellectual history

of "Delhi Renaissance" and some of its major contributory figures like Sir Syed (1817-98), Nazir Ahmad (1830-1912), Zakaullah (1832-1910), Hali (1837-1914), and Syed Ahmad of Delhi (1846-1918). It also accounts Dehlavi's works dealing with society and culture of Delhi. While comparing and contrasting between the "Bengal Renaissance" and the "Delhi Renaissance", Minault argues that, in the later, there was an urge to protect and preserve the pre-existing intellectual heritage in Urdu:

> The Delhi renaissance shared certain characteristics with its Bengal counterpart: a concern for education, for propagation of ideas of religious reform, and for the status and dignity of women. But the Delhi renaissance was a movement of preservation as well as revitalization, and this difference in motivation is the greatest point of contrast between the two movements.[49]

Mushirul Hassan's book, *A Moral Reckoning*[50] (2005) seems to draw heavily from this essay.

Besides, she also wrote an essay on Rashid-ul-Khairi and his Urdu literary journalism for women.[51] Her essay (1990)[52] is a summary of Sayyid Mumtaz Ali's work advocating women's rights, the *Huquq un-Niswan.* It highlights Mumtaz Ali's arguments, in favor of women, on various issues such as: education, *purdah*, and marriage. She also wrote an essay on Mumtaz Ali's *Tahzib un- Niswan*.[53]

Her book *Secluded Scholars* (1998) gives a detailed account of individuals, institutions, and organizations influential in the education and reform of colonial Muslim women. The work mainly studies three groups: pre-1857 reformers, post-1857 Anglicized reformers, and the products of the reforms (the first generation of educated Muslim women). The book provides an in-depth study of women's education and reform, the role of print media in the same, struggles of Muslim men and women reformers while doing reform work, and forging of new all India alliances among reformist Indian Muslims. Efforts for Muslim girls' education at various places like Hyderabad, Lucknow, Aligarh, and Jallandhar are discussed. The last chapter describes how, in the 1930s, many Muslim women decided to leave *purdah*, Atiya Fyzee of Bombay, Nazr Sajjad Hyder, women of the Mian family of Lahore, Rashid Jahan of Aligarh being a few. However, this decision to leave *purdah* was more of an intra-family diplomatic affair than an individual

decision. Altogether, the book has focused on the process of reform of Muslim women by the *Ashraf* class and attempted to render such women visible.[54]

How women despite maintaining strict purdah, were both aware and part of the public life among Indian Muslims remains a recurring idea in Minault's writings.

Her essay "Sources and Methods for Research on Women and Islamic Cultures in South Asia"[55] is a must read for researchers interested in the history of South Asian Muslim women. It identifies research gaps, delineates scope, and suggests possible sources/evidences for extending research in the said field. She highlights topics such as women poets and women's language, cross-cultural attraction, and intermarriages between Muslims and Europeans as potential research areas. In her essay "Other Voices, Other Rooms"[56], Minault provides a corrective to the stereotypical understanding about purdha-observing women, which regards such women as "a hermetically sealed respectability". She shows how, in actuality, the zanana life was considerably more sociable.

Minault also wrote an essay (2013) on Zahida Khatun Sherwani (1894-1922)[57]. Zahida was the daughter of Sir Muzamilullah Khan Sherwani (1865-1938), and the first poetess of Urdu language; she was also an activist for women's rights who gave voice to women's identity through her writing. Zahida wrote both prose and poetry under the pseudonyms of Zay Khay Sheen and Nuzhat. Minault shows how Z-Kh-Sh, despite her isolation and anonymity was able to become one of the earliest women writers of Urdu. In the beginning of twentieth century, Zahida started writing articles and verses for different women's periodicals like *Khatun, Ismat, Tahzib-un-Niswan, Sharif Bibi*, etc. She organized to raise funds to start schools and to donate to the cause of the Aligarh girl's school. She wrote nazms about Balkan wars and Kanpur mosque incident. In her political views on Muslim political cause, Zahida crossed the line, even in seclusion. The essay demonstrates how Muslim women like Z-Kh-Sh were more than mere dutiful daughters and obedient wives, they were lively intellectuals who were aware of women's marginal status and interested in the life and politics of their times.

*Gender, Language, and Learning* (2009)[58], Minault's most recent book is a collection of reprinted essays originally published from 1974-99. Its

foreword is part autobiographical, containing the author's personal and academic journey. The book is not a monotonous account of the history of women-only but contains three broad themes: gender, language, and learning, covering a wide range of topics like Muslim women, family, women's rights, legal reform, politics, poetry, literary journalism, and Muslim political identity. The first section defines Muslim women's complex position within a patriarchal and colonial milieu and studies such women as the subjects of reform. The second section studies the role of print in the reform while focusing more on the 'Big Three' and the political use of Urdu poetry by the Indian Muslims during the Khilafat movement. The third section gives a detailed account of Sayyid Karamat Husain's and Shaikh Abdullah's educational efforts for Muslim girls at Lucknow and Aligarh respectively. The book depicts her academic sophistry in the history of modern South Asian Muslims, it illustrates how language and literature are connected to society and culture.

Her 2019 essay titled "Sir Sayyid on 'The Present State of Education among Muhammadan Females[59]" explores Sir Syed's complicated position on different aspects of women's question like education and *purdah.* In his testimony before the Education Commission in 1882, Sir Syed declared that Muslim women's education could follow only after a large number of Muslim men were educated and that the 'present state' of education among the Muslim women was enough for domestic happiness. Studying Sir Syed's various writings like *Sirat-e-Faridiyya*, 'Auraton ke Huquq,' 'Hindustan ki Auraton ki Halat', and 'Purdah,' Minault shows various ambiguities in Syed's stance. While he considers Muslim women's legal status better than that of western women, he also considers western women better in terms of participation in society. He agrees that *purdah* followed in India is excessive but does not consider it responsible for women's backwardness. To Syed, the solution lay with men; they should improve their social attitude towards women, and only then could they enlighten the women, once they are themselves enlightened. As in this essay, Minault's take on Sir Syed's position on women's education remains constant since her 1990 essay in *MAS*. Syed's staunch reluctance to the cause of women's education is continuously emphasized. Shafey Kidwai (2021)[60] adds a qualifier to Minault's interpretation. He shows how Sir Syed's position on women's

education was complex and dynamic and not that of a constant denial (as established by Minault).

## PART III

Minault is fluent in French, Urdu, and Hindi and can fairly speak and read Persian and Italian. She also has a reading knowledge of German language. She has received various grants and fellowships from Fulbright Foundation, American Institute of Indian Studies, Joint Committee on South Asia of the Social Science Research Council, and National Endowment for the Humanities.

Minault's works are vital to study the Indo-Muslim culture and Muslim women of colonial India, but many of her interpretations and conclusions are open to questions. First, while exploring the Muslim women, both of her recent books seem to give more space to men's writings and efforts; an in-depth analysis of women's own efforts and writing is missing. Moreover, the reception of reforms and reaction to them by Muslim women of different sects (say Shia-Sunni) has not been undertaken. Secondly, Minault has drawn a generalized conclusion that women's reforms were symptomatic of social change rather than causative. The Muslim male reformers educated women only because they wanted to produce better wives, mothers, and helpmates to make their lives harmonious. Such a conclusion reduces these "women of the older generation" (those who took part in the reform process as agents) to mere objects of the reform. These women were the editors of magazines, wrote articles in favour of women's education, formed organizations, opened and run schools. Any reform activity on their part was revolutionary in itself and should not be reduced to the only aim of improving the household. Rather these women should be seen as the true forebearers of the Indian brand of Muslim feminine (if not feminist) consciousness.

Notwithstanding such minor criticisms, her contribution in the field is undeniably great.

Minault herself acknowledges in the epilogue of her book *Secluded Scholars* that she has only tried to "outline the dimensions of a territory that others need to explore." Indeed she pioneered something which others could heavily build upon.[61] Minault's research on South Asian

Muslims remains distinctive. First, she breaks the stereotype that the British were the sole agency of women's reform, and Muslim men were merely mute spectators or the passive obstacles in their way. She not only depicts Muslim men as active agents in the reform, but also traces their indigenous tradition of cultural re-examination and reform back to the times of Shah Waliullah (1703-1762), Shiekh Ahmad Sirhindi (1564-1624), and Abdul Haqq Muhaddith (1551-1642). Secondly, Minault depicts an interdependence between the private and the public spheres, as against the overdrawn analytical dichotomy between the two, and shows how women despite maintaining strict *purdah* were part of the public life among Indian Muslims. Further, Minault's use of women's magazines in Urdu as alternative source to study women's history created a scope for using such material, available in other regional languages like Bengali, Marathi, Gujarati, Tamil, Kashmiri, etc, for historical investigation.

Gail Minault's academic commitment to the field of women's education is already known and duly acknowledged and appreciated. From the AMU, she received the Sir Syed Excellence Award, 2020, in the international category, she donated the award money to AMU Women's College. This is a testimony of her personal dedication to the cause of women's education.

NOTES

1. Butler to Lord Hardinge, Rangoon, 16 January 1916. Butler papers, Mss. Eur.F.116/53, IOLR. Quoted in Gail Minault, *Secluded Scholars: Women's Education and Muslim Social Reform in Colonial India*, Oxford University Press, Delhi, 1998, p. v.
2. Gail Minault, *Gender, Language, and Learning: Essays in Indo-Muslim Cultural History*, Permanent Black, Delhi, 2009, p. 2.
3. Jennifer Scanlon and Shaaron Cosner, *American Women Historians, 1700s-1900s: A Bibliographical Ditionary*, Greenwood Press, London, 1996, p. 158.
4. Ibid.
5. Gail Minault, "Growing Up Bilingual and Other (Mis)adventures in Negotiating Cultures," in Wm. Roger Louis, ed., *Burnt Orange Britannia*, I.B.Tauris, London, 2005, p. 319.

6. The account is based on a summary of: *American Women Historians*, pp. 158-9, and foreword of *Secluded Scholars*, p. ix.
7. *Gender, Language, and Learning*, pp. 3-4.
8. Ibid., pp. 5-6.
9. A specialist in the history of Brtish Raj in India, Holden Furber (1903-1923) was a professor of South Asian Studies at the University of Pennsylvania from 1952-73. His *John Company at Work* (1948) is a classic.
10. Then professor of Islamic Studies at the University of Toronto, Aziz Ahmad is famous for his novel, *Aisi Balandi Aisi Pasti* (1947), tr. by Ralph Russel as *The Shore and the Wave* (1971); short story, *Bekaar Din Bekaar Ratein;* and books, *Sayyid Ahmad Khan, Jamal al-din al-Afghani and Muslim India* (1960), and *Islamic Modernism in India and Pakistan, 1857-1964* (1967); among many other scholarly works.
11. A historian of Muslim Indian at SOAS in London, he authored *The Muslims of British India* (1972).
12. Then reader in Urdu at SOAS, his works include, ed. *Ghalib, the Poet and his Age* (1972); *The Pursuit of Urdu Liteature* (1992).
13. Islam was head of the Urdu department, he collaborated with Ralph Russell in their studies of Urdu poetry. Their collective works include: *Three Mughal Poets*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, MA, 1968; and *Ghalib: Life and Letters*, Allen and Unwin, London, 1969.
14. "Akbar and Aurangzeb: Syncretism and Separatism in Mughal India – A Re-examination," *Muslim World*, LIX, 2 (April, 1969), pp. 106-126.
15. He was then a political scientist at Penn. And studied religion and politics in South Asia, his works include: *India as a Secular State*, Princeton University Press, Princeton, 1963; and ed., *South Asian Politics and Religion*, Princeton University Press, Princeton, 1966.
16. Their most important works are: David Lelyveld, *Aligarh's First Generation: Muslim Solidarity in British India,* Princeton University Press, Princeton, 1978; Francis Robinson, *Separatism among Indian Muslims: the politics of the United Provinces, 1860-1923*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1974; Judith M. Brown, *Gandhi's rise to power: Indian politics 1915-1922*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1972; Thomas R. Metcalf, *Ideologies of the Raj* (Vol. 3), Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1997; Barbara D. Metcalf, *Islamic revival in British India: Deoband, 1860-1900*, Princeton University Press, Princeton, 1982; C.A. Bayly, *Rulers, Townsmen and Bazaars: North Indian Society in the Age of British Expansion, 1780-1870*, Cambridge University Press Archives, 1988; Kenneth Jones, *Socio-religious reform movement in British India*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1989.

17. Seal made one of the earliest studies on 'Muslim Separatism' in a chapter "Muslim breakaway" in his book *The Emergence of Indian Nationalism: Competition and Collaboration in the later Nineteenth Century*, Cambridge University Press Archive, Cambridge, 1971. Seal's student, Francis Robinson expands on the same theme in his book, *Separatism among Indian Muslims: the politics of the United Provinces, 1860-1923*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1974. The theme of 'Muslim separatism' in India still remains a highly debatable issue among historians.
18. H. A. R. Gibb, *Whither Islam? A survey of the modern movements in Moslem world*,, 1932, Routledge. Hamilton Gibb (1895-1971) was a Scottish Arabist, Islamist and a historian on Orientalism.
19. W.C. Smith, *Modern Islam in India:A Social Analysis*, Minerva Book Shop, Lahore, 1943. Smith (1916-2000) was Canadian Islamicist historian and a scholar of comparative religion.
20. Smith, *Islam in Modern History*, Princeton University Press, Princeton, 1957, pp. 88-89.
21. A. C. Neimejier's book on the Khilafat Movement came out in the same year as Minault's PhD dissertation. It treats the Khilafat movement as a movement to safeguard Islam, represented by the Turkish Sultan. On the part of Indian Muslims, pan-Islamism was a means of asserting their separate identity vis-a-vis both Hindu nationalism and British imperialism. The work , however, reflects a paucity of primary and non English sources, unlike Minault's . A.C. Neimejier, *The Khilafat Movement in India, 1919-1924*, Brill, 1972.
22. "The Campaign for a Muslim University," *Modern Asian Studies*, vol. 8, no. 2 (April, 1974): 145-189.
23. Juhi Gupta and Abdur Raheem Kidwai , eds., *Oxford of the East: Aligarh Muslim University 1920-2020*, Viva Books Private Limited, 2020.
24. Her essays include, "Islam and Mass Politics: The Indian Ulama and the Khilafat Movement," in Donald E. Smith, ed., *Religion and Political Modernization*, Yale University Press, New Haven, 1974, pp. 168-182; "Religious Symbolism and Political Mobilization: A Reinterpretation of the Khilafat Movement," in Dietmar Rothermund, ed., *Islam in Southern Asia: a survey of current research*, Franz Steiner Verlag, Wiesbaden, 1975, pp. 37-39, 42-43.
25. "Urdu Political Poetry during the Khilafat Movement," *Modern Asian Studies*, vol. 8, no. 4 (Oct., 1974), pp. 459-471.
26. *The Khilafat Movement: Religious Symbolism and Political Mobilization in India*, Columbia University Press, New York and Oxford University Press, Delhi, 1982.

27. Azmi Ozcan, *Pan Islamism: Indian Mulims, the Ottomans and Britain (1877-1924),* Brill, Leiden, 1997. Drawing from the Turkish archives, Ozcan treats the Khilafat movement as pan-Islamic, totally linked to the developments in Turkey. For him, the Indian- Ottoman connection began as early as 1530's. Among Indian Muslims, the longing for the symbol of Turkish sovereignty developed as early as 1857, with the collapse of Muslim power in India.
28. M. N. Qureshi, *Pan-Islam in British India: A Study of the Khilafat Movement, 1918-1924,* Brill, Leiden, 1999. He defines the movement as pan-Islamic and Indian Muslims as an already established political community. For him, the Caliphate was a symbol of great potency for Indian Muslims; for whom, "the real issue was the defense of Muslim power abroad and with it the security of Muslim position in India".
29. "The Role of Indo-Muslim Women in the Freedom Movement, 1911-1924," *South Asia Papers* , Lahore, Pakistan, I, 3 (March, 1977), pp. 21-36.
30. "Muslim Women in Conflict with Purdah: Their Role in the Indian Nationalist Movement," in Sylvia Chipp and Justin J. Green, eds., *Asian Women in Transition*, Pennsylvania State University Press, PA, 1980, pp. 194-203.
31. "Purdah's Progress: The Beginnings of School Education for Indian Muslim Women," in J.P. Sharma, ed., *Individuals and Ideas in Modern India*, Firma KLM, Calcutta, 1982, pp. 76-97.
32. Gail Minault, ed., *The Extended Family: Women and Political Participation in India and Pakistan*, Chanakya Publications, Delhi, 1981.
33. Hanna Papanek and Minault, eds., *Separate Worlds: Studies of Purdah in South Asia*, Chanakya Publications, Delhi, 1982.
34. C. M. Naim is currently professor emeritus at Chicago University. His other works include: *Urdu Reader* (1960); *Introductory Urdu* (2 vols), 1975; ed., and tr. *Mir Taqi Mir: Rememberences*, Havard University Press, Cambridge, MA, 2019.
35. "Tehrik-e-Khilafat ke Daur ke Siyasi Sha`iri," *Qaumi Zuban*, Karachi, Pakistan, June, 1977, pp. 18-21.
36. "Bibiyon ke Madrase," *Aligarh Magazine*: *Khawatin* Number, 2001: 36-105.
37. "Homage to the Silent: A Translation of Hali's *Chup ki Dad*," *Urdu Studies Annual* , vol.1 (1981), pp. 46-56.
38. Sayyid Shahabuddin Desnavi*, "Urdu Niswan Press: Samaji Tarikh ka Makhaz,*" Jamia (Delhi) 81, 5 (May 1984), pp. 7-16.
39. "From *Akhbar* to News: The Development of the Urdu Press in Early

Nineteenth- Century Delhi," in Kathryn Hansen and David Lelyeld, eds., *Wilderness of Possibilities: Urdu Studies in Transnational Perspective*, Oxford University Press, Delhi, 2005, pp. 101-121.

40. "Delhi College and Urdu," *Annual of Urdu Studies*, vol. 14 (1999): 119-134.
41. "Master Ramchandra of Delhi College: Teacher, Journalist, and Cultural Intermediary," *Annual of Urdu Studies,* vol. 18 (2003): 95-104.
42. "Aloys Sprenger: German Orientalism's 'Gift' to Delhi College," *South Asia Research* (London), vol .31, no. 1 (Feb. 2011): 7-23.
43. Gail Minault, *Voices of Silence: English Translation of Khwaja Altaf Husain Hali's Majalis un-Nissa and Chup ki Dad*, Chanakya Publication, Delhi, 1986.
44. Moin Ahsan Jazbi, *Hali Ka Siyasi Shaoor,* Sarfaraz Qaumi Press, Lucknow, 1959
45. *Tahzib* (1898-1949) was published from Lahore . It was started by Syed Mumtaz Ali (1860-1935) and edited by his wife Muhammadi Begum; *Ismat* was founded by Rashid ul- Khairi of Delhi in 1908; *Khatun* (1904-14) was started by Shaikh Abdullah of Aligarh in 1904, it was a mouth piece of Women's Education Section of MEC.
46. "Shaikh Abdullah, Begam Abdullah, and *Sharif* Education for Girls at Aligarh," in Imtiaz Ahmad, ed., *Modernization and Social Change among Muslims in India*, Manohar Book Service, Delhi, 1983, pp. 207-236.
47. "*Begamati Zuban*: Women's Language and Culture in Nineteenth-Century Delhi," *India International Centre Quarterly*, vol. 11, no. 2 (June, 1984), pp. 155-170.
48. "Sayyid Ahmad Dehlavi and the Delhi Renaissance," in Robert Eric Frykenberg, ed., *Delhi Through the Ages: Essays in Urban History, Culture, and Society*, Oxford University Press, Delhi, 1986, pp. 287-298. It was reprinted in her book *Gender, Language, and Learning.*
49. *Gender, Language, and Learning,* p. 193.
50. Mushirul Hassan, *A Moral Reckoning: Muslim Intellectuals in Nineteenth Century Delhi*, Oxford University Press, New Delhi, 2005.
51. "*Ismat*: Rashid ul-Khairi's Novels and Urdu Literary Journalism for Women," in Christopher Shackle, ed., *Urdu and Muslim South Asia: Studies in Honour of Ralph Russell*, School of Oriental and African Studies, London, 1989, pp. 129-138.
52. "Sayyid Mumtaz Ali and *Huquq un-Niswan*: An Advocate of Women's Rights in Islam in the Late Nineteenth Century," *Modern Asian Studies*, vol. 24, no. 1 (Feb., 1990), pp. 147-172.
53. "Sayyid Mumtaz Ali and *Tahzib un-Niswan*: Women's Rights in Islam

and Women's Journalism in Urdu," in Kenneth W. Jones, ed., *Religious Controversy in British India: Dialogues in South Asian Languages*, State University of New York Press, Albany, 1992, pp. 179-199.

54. Gail Minault, *Secluded Scholars: Women's Education and Muslim Social Reform in Colonial India*, Oxford University Press, Delhi, 1998.
55. "Sources and Methods for Research on Women and Islamic Cultures in South Asia, from the mid-Eighteenth to the early Twentieth Century," in Suad Joseph, ed., *Encyclopedia of Women in Islamic Cultures,* Vol. I, Brill, Leiden,2004, pp. 176-85.
56. "Other Voices, Other Rooms: The View from the *Zenana*," in Nita Kumar, ed., Women as Subjects (Calcutta: Stree; and Charlottesville, VA: University Press of Virginia, 1994), pp. 108-124.
57. "Zay Khay Sheen, Aligarh's Pardah-Nishin Poet," in Usha Sanyal, David Gilmartin, and Sandria B. Freitag eds., *Muslim Voices: Community and the Self in South Asia*, Yoda Press, New Delhi, 2013.
58. Gail Minault, *Gender, Language, and Learning: Essays in Indo-Muslim Cultural History,* Permanent Black Publications, Ranikhet, 2009.
59. Yasmin Saikia and M. Raisur Rahman , eds., *Cambridge Companion to Sir Sayyid,* Cambridge University Press, New Delhi, 2019.
60. Shafey Kidwai, *Sir Syed Ahmad Khan: Reason, Religion and Nation*, Taylor and Francis, 2020.
61. Minault along with Barbara D. Metcalf pioneered a rich scholarly literature on the history of South Asian Muslim women. Their footsteps were followed by others such as: Sonia Nishat Amin, Siobhan L. Hurley, Dushka Saiyid, Azra Asghar Ali, etc. For an overview of Metcalf's contributions, see Barbara D. Metcalf, *Perfecting Women: Maulana Ashraf Ali Thanawi's Bihishti Zewar*, University of California Press, Berkeley, 1992; Islamic Revival in British India: Deoband, 1860-1900, Oxford University Press. She has also written various articles on Tablighi Jamaat, Muslim women, Urdu in India, and Indian Islam.

# Contributors

ISHRAT MUSHTAQ
Research Scholar, Department of History, Aligarh Muslim University, Aligarh, India
Email: ishratmalikk6@gmail.com

DR JAVED AKHATAR
Asst. Professor, Department of Islamic Studies, Jamia Millia Islamia, New Delhi
Email: aved.akhatar1985@gmail.com

DR LUBNA NAAZ
Guest Teacher in women's college, Aligarh Muslim University Aligarh
Email: nabihanaaz5@gmail.com

PROFESSOR MUHAMMAD ABDUL HAQ ANSARI
Retired Professor and Head of the Department of Arabic, Persian and Islamic Studies, Vishwa Bharti University, Shantiniketan, West Bengal

PROFESSOR MUHAMMED ZAKIR
Retired Professor, Department of Urdu, Jamia Millia Islamia, New Delhi