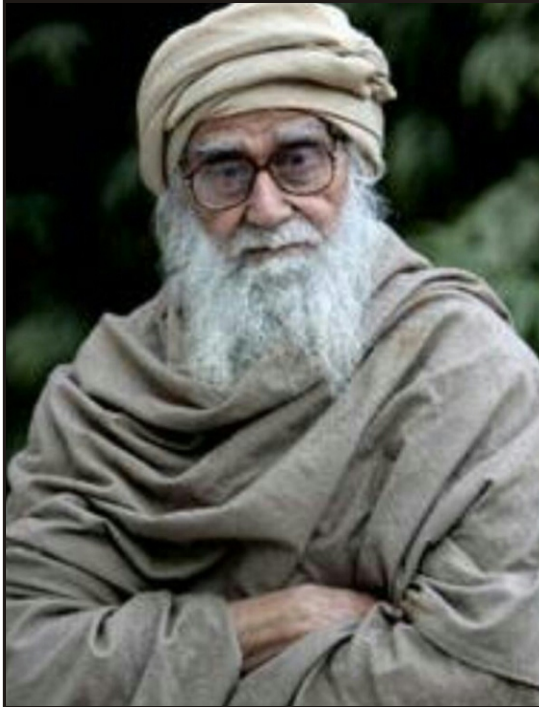


REVISITING ISLAM

The Reformist Thought of Wahiduddin Khan



by

Anjum Awan D. Phil



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All Praise and honor belong to Almighty Allah; Whose Benevolence is the sole criteria of success in every walk of life. When years of earnest research finally translate into a published book, it is easy to take all the credit and pat oneself on the back for a gigantic task accomplished. The fact remains, however, that no work of such magnitude is possible without a whole network of support systems available to a scholar. I consider myself both fortunate and blessed to have been associated with people who went out of their way to lend me a helping hand even before I asked for it. I would like to express my deep gratitude to institutions and persons who helped me undertake this challenging job.

The present volume in fact emanates from a research undertaken at University of Kashmir. I owe an enormous debt of gratitude to Shah-I-Hamadan Institute of Islamic Studies, University of Kashmir under whose auspices this research was conducted. I am highly indebted to Prof. Naseem Ahmad Shah, without whose guidance, help and encouragement, the execution of this extensive research work would have been rather impossible. My special thanks are due to my teachers and senior faculty members, at Department of Islamic Studies, fellow research scholars, library staff, non-teaching and ministerial staff for all the required support.

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I must express my deepest gratitude to 'the person of study-Maulana Wahiduddin Khan', a living legend in the 'Modern Islamic Thought' for his kind consent to interact on numerous occasions about his life and mission, in details.

I shall be failing in my duty if I do not acknowledge the love and affection given to me by my family members, particularly my wife Mrs. Munira Begum for the moral support and encouragement throughout my academic endeavors.

I thank Almighty Allah for uncountable blessings that made it possible for me to finally complete this project. Let me also acknowledge that 'If there is any merit discernible in the work, it is absolutely due to the grace of Almighty Allah; and if there are faults, and undoubtedly there might be many, they must be credited to my own incompetence. Further I strongly believe that 'the largest room in the world is-the room for improvement' and I solicit feedback and suggestions for improvement in the next edition.

Dr. Anjum Awan
BGSBU Rajouri

FOREWORD

Maulana Wahidudin Khan (b.1925) is an epitome of extraordinary educational and intellectual career. His family traces its history to the intellectually fertile land of Shibli, Farahi, Aslam Jayrajpuri, and Iqbal Suhail. During his affiliation with *Jamat-i-Islami*, Maulana Wahidudin Khan produced some excellent works that left indelible marks on the intellect of literate society. At a time when Marxism was holding its sway all over the globe, Maulana; convincingly proved Marxism, as a fallacy (*Marxism Tarikh Jise Radd Kar Chuki He*). Likewise, his book '*Mazhab Aur Jadid Challenge*' brought out, when new scientific knowledge was undermining religious spirit; provided a rejuvenating push to religion as well as religionists. It stands out as the most remarkable work establishing Maulana's Islamic Scholarship at international level.

It is interesting to note that spending years in the company of Maulana Mawdudi, Wahidudin Khan parted ways with the former's ideology and confidently embarked on a distinct journey for showcasing Islam in a modern context. Another coincidence is no less remarkable that Maulana Maududi had edited the reputed "*Al Jamia't*" the mouthpiece of '*Jamiat Ulama-i-Hind*' and later, Maulana Wahidudin Khan also edited this prestigious *weekly magazine* for many years (1967-74). The intellectual legacy of *Nadwat-ul-Ulama* Lucknow and Aligarh Muslim University also attracted attention of Maulana briefly, but the sojourn didn't last too long; lending vindication to Iqbal's words: '*Sahil tujhe ata ho to sahil na kar qabul*'. Maulana finally decided to establish his own Islamic Centre

and thus was born the world famous monthly magazine *Al-Risala* in 1976. The might of his pen coupled with unique analytical skills, presented the interpretation of Din; in a fascinating, lucid and convincing, epiphany style; that attracted many followers, satiating their intellectual hunger in a novel and greatly impressive way. It is truly a representative of the Arabic dictum: '*khairul kalame ma qalla wa dalla*' (The brevity and authenticity are essence of a good speech).

Some scholars might differ with personal opinions of Maulana and rightfully so. The fact however, can't be denied that he always remained firm on the methodology of *ahl al-Sunnah* never side stepping from *Ijma* of the Muslim *Ummah*. The way Maulana interprets and transmits the essential message of Islam to a generation overwhelmed by modern and post-modern challenges might annoy some conservative scholars; yet none can prove any deviations against him. Be it *Tazkir ul-Qur'an*, or "Woman in Islam" or any other writings, all represent the essential spirit of Islam. Like many others, we may not completely agree with his political views; yet we can't over-rule the fact that in a democratic setup and an age of freedom of thought and expression; no one can be compelled or forced to bow before a particular opinion. History offers defend, when it comes to controversies, for, these often surrounded great minds and ideas; and, it remains one of the hallmarks of their greatness. So it comes as no surprise that *Maulana* has also been criticized by some scholars.

While a lot has been written on his personality, his Islamic thought and political views; it is for fraternity of Islamic

Studies, a matter of great satisfaction that Dr. Rafique Anjum has produced a remarkable research work, *Religious Thought of Maulana Wahid ud Din Khan: An Analytical Study*, under the august supervision of one of my close friends, Prof. Naseem Ahmad Shah at University of Kashmir. The thesis earned a doctorate degree (Ph. D. in Islamic Studies) for Dr. Rafique Anjum from Shah-i-Hamadan Institute of Islamic Studies, University of Kashmir.

Dr. Rafique Anjum, himself, is no less an interesting personality. He is primarily a 'Doctor of Medicine' having served as Consultant Pediatrician in the Department of Health & Medical Education, Jammu and Kashmir, for many years. Besides; he is by intuition a linguist who has made remarkable contributions in the field of literature, particularly in his mother tongue, *Gojri*. He represents the higher echelon of Modern *Gojri* Scholarship. Lately, kindled by the passion for Islamic Studies, that always occupied a place close to his heart; he did M.A. and Ph. D. in Islamic Studies and got voluntary retirement from his parent Health Department to serve his society in intellectual and educational spheres. Dr. Rafique Anjum, has joined Baba Ghulam Shah Badshah University, Rajouri as Assistant Professor in the Department of Islamic Studies. Embracing one of the brilliant minds of the region, BGSBU is availing services of this scholar, who has in a short span of time, firmly established himself as a dedicated teacher and learned scholar having created a niche for himself in the intellectual circles of the varsity.

I think Dr. Rafique Anjum is only the second after Dr. Israr Ahmed who preferred Islamic Studies over medical profession. The research work, of Dr. Rafique Anjum on the Religious thought of Maulana Wahidudin Khan; is quite balanced in analysis and objective in approach. The scholar is hardly seen as defending or advocating the views of Maulana. He has rather realistically presented Maulana's thought as reflected in his works. This makes his research worthy, for which he deserves appreciation. I hope the work will find a great readership and applause as it is published.

August 30, 2018

Prof. Akhtar ul Wasey

Professor Emeritus JMI New Delhi
President Maulana Azad University,
Jodhpur Rajasthan (INDIA)

INTRODUCTION

Maulana Wahiduddin Khan (b.1925) is one of the leading Indian Islamic scholars of modern times, recognized worldwide for his scholarship and his commitment to the cause of Islamic revival and reform. Later in life he has grown into a multifaceted personality with deep knowledge of science and western philosophy in addition to Islamic sciences. His strong conviction, exemplary perseverance and clarity of vision are unparalleled in contemporary Islamic thought.

Maulana Wahiduddin Khan has developed his own, understanding of Islam and its place in the modern world. Although the Muslims of India are his primary focus, and the development of his thought must be located in the specific Indian context, Maulana seeks to address the Muslim *Ummah* as a whole that has registered considerable success. Maulana appeared on the intellectual scene of subcontinent strictly speaking in post-partition era. The history of Islamic reformist thought in the latter half of twentieth and early 21st century can't be complete without a comprehensive account of Maulana's ideas and endeavors.

His prominent senior contemporaries included *Allama* Sir Mohammad Iqbal, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, Maulana Abul Aala Mawdudi, and Abul Hassan Ali Nadwi, better known as Ali Miyan Nadwi. Though a sizeable literature has been produced on the life, works and ideologies of these stalwarts, little is available in written form about Maulana's reformist and revivalist efforts barring a few polemics. His modernist

approach and rediscovery of Islam from its original sources has not been taken well by his contemporaries and many have criticized him. The criticism is however too one sided as it ignores his contributions as a revivalist and reformist particularly his ideas of Peace, *Dawah* and *Akhirat* orientation as essential teachings of Islam. Some literature on the life and thought of Maulana Wahiduddin Khan though scanty exists in English and Arabic languages and it was in fact through these languages that he got introduced to outer world.

In this backdrop it is imperative to take an objective look at the thought and mission of Maulana Wahiduddin Khan in present times, to highlight his real contributions to modern Islamic thought. In the present study, no attempt has been made to prove or disprove Maulana Wahiduddin Khan's philosophy or religious thought. What has been attempted is rather to give a systematic and objective account of his religious as well as social and educational teachings. Avoiding elaborate biographical details, an attempt has been made to concentrate on his thought process.

In the beginning, I had not the slightest imagination that so much of virgin material was still required to be unearthed that Maulana Wahiduddin Khan has written on varied topics. In fact, there is hardly any aspect of Islam on which he has not written something; such as theology to science, Islamic sciences to contemporary issues and modern legal issues in Islam to ethical and moral teachings of Islam; each has found a mention in Maulana's writings. The present work is an attempt

to classify and summarize his 'Religious Thought 'expressed in over 200 books on different aspects of Islam.

The book is divided into seven chapters. In the first chapter, a sincere effort has been made to present an overview of the 'History of Revival and Reform in Islam'; an account of the earlier revivalists as well as response of Muslim scholars to modern challenges and changes that took place in the world especially as a result of French Revolution, European invasion of Muslim lands in South-west Asia and Africa, and the onslaught of modern secular values and the advancement in fields of Science and technology. As it forms a subject of elaborate discussion, out of the scope of present work, the factors and responses have been dealt with briefly and presented as an overview of the responses.

Second chapter displays the background scenario of early 20th century, particularly in reference to Islamic thought and the identifiable precursors that led to such particular developments. There has been much intellectual activity during this century in socio-religious and info-technological fields. An analysis of the factors that led to such political development in preceding decades necessitated a soul searching by Indians to formulate responses appropriate to the demand of times. The British policy on education for Indians, the failure of 1857 uprising, the division of Bengal, First World War and the collapse of Ottoman caliphate; all had to play a part in shaping the contours of Islamic thought in India in early twentieth century.

Having talked about the world scenario and the Indian conditions in early twentieth century, when our author appears on the scene of Indian intellectual discourse; the third chapter exclusively deals with the life and times of Maulana Wahiduddin Khan. As it was difficult to incorporate each and every important aspect of his life; an attempt has been made to write about his life in a manner so as to portray his psychological and intellectual progress as an enlightened thinker and scholar. Thus, the chapter three includes an account of his descent, settlement in India, early education and formative influences, his literary career, organizational associations and establishment of his own *Al-Risala* Mission. Maulana's presentation of Islam in modern scientific idiom and his response to contemporary issues in Indian environment as well as a detailed list of his works, chronological as well as thematic is, of course, presented as an essential feature.

Since no individual thinker or movement can be studied or evaluated in isolation, a brief account of the prominent contemporary thinkers and their ideologies have been incorporated in chapter Four; for a better understanding of Maulana's thought, in light of points of convergence and divergence with his contemporaries and its contemporary relevance.

Since Maulana has authored over 200 volumes on the subject of 'Islam in the Modern world', the 5th chapter; an extension of the previous one; deals with major themes in his writings, elucidation of some of his selected works and exploration of

his real contributions to the contemporary Islamic thought. The fields of his special interest including particularly the scientific theology, peaceful jihad, *Dawah*, Spirituality and a change of paradigm from emotional reactions to reasoned response have been focused upon. As one of the main objectives of Maulana was to evolve a new interpretation of Islamic doctrines for which *Ijtihad* is the best instrument; Maulana is in favour of making full use of it.

In addition to his ideas of Scientific Theology, Peaceful *Dawah* and *Aakhirat* oriented life; he has of late deliberated on issues relating to Eschatology or Speculative theology. In fact, this is the most delicate subject on which his ideas invited harsh criticism from the contemporary '*Ulama*'. Thus, having made significant contributions to contemporary Islamic thought and some marvelous works acknowledged world-wide, there has been expression of discontent among individuals and organizations over some of his ideas, explanations and stray remarks on contemporary developments.

Chapter Six deals with criticism of Maulana's works, the grounds and merit of major objections and the way things have been presented in regards to ethics of disagreement. Extreme care has been exercised to genuinely present his ideas followed by the views of his opponents taking into account the counter arguments of Maulana. Finally, a fair assessment of both the viewpoints has been attempted in light of facts, with objective intentions believing in the famous Aristotelian saying: "*Dear is Plato but dearer is the Truth!*"

The 7th and the last chapter include a fair assessment and conclusion of the entire discussion in previous pages. I can't claim to have exhausted the subject; rather a humble attempt has been made to make a small contribution to the understanding of the reformer's influences in shaping the minds of his fellow religionists; as well as dispelling the clouds of misconceptions about Islam in the minds of people with different faiths and political backgrounds. Although the conclusions are based on original writings of Maulana Wahiduddin Khan, the relevant views and reviews of others, wherever applicable, have been taken into consideration without a bias or hesitation.

A standardized system of translation and transliteration has been employed for proper names and technical Islamic terms in Oriental languages; some anomalies have however been inevitable and most of the titles of the books in Urdu language have been transliterated phonetically. Dates have normally been given in Christian Era (CE).

Let me admit that initially I wanted to fathom the whole range of Maulana's works and then write a perfect analysis that could prove to be a prologue to study of Maulana's ideology but later it was realized that, it would be akin to asking for moon. In the words of Margret Atwood: *"If I waited for perfection I wouldn't have written a word"*. So, it was thought appropriate to be content with the humble attempt of a dispassionate study of Maulana's 'Religious Thought', while trying to remain faithful to the research ethics and format. It was finally decided to proceed with this supplication:

اللهم ارنا الحق حقا وارزقنا اتباعه و ارنا الباطل باطلا وارزقنا اجتنابه

.....

CHAPTER I

REVIVAL AND REFORM IN ISLAM: AN OVERVIEW

INTRODUCTION

Coming to terms with new challenges have always been a matter of serious concern in all ages for Muslim scholars; and over the centuries they have responded positively to their fullest capability in their respective ages. But the ever-changing and dynamic nature of the world poses new challenges with each passing moment, particularly in the present times when the world is moving as if in a fast-forward motion. Improved ways of communication and modern information technology has transformed the vast world into a global village. Thus, the issues don't remain confined to a particular geographical area or a social group but assume international significance, warranting fresh look at the problems and possible solutions more frequently than earlier periods; meaning thereby that readymade solutions fall short of relevance regarding their application *in toto* though these could have been best suited for the particular ages when framed.

Al-Quran; the word of Allah, was revealed onto the last in the series of prophets, for guidance of mankind, for all times to come. It was not a philosophy book rather its practicability was proved through the living life of Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ). Thus; insisting in a particular set of rules runs counter to the spirit of Islam and the guidelines contained in the holy Quran and the *Sunnah* of holy prophet (ﷺ). Over more than 1400 years it has always stood the test of times and will continue to guide mankind till the Day of Judgment as promised by Allah. It is evident from history that in times of confusion and conflict

scholars were forced to turn to Quran for guidance and it never failed to provide the right guidance.

In the early period of Islam, the revelation (*wahi matlu'and ghair matlu*) was taken as the source of guidance and reason (*ijtihad*) was used as tool for understanding and interpretation as well as dealing with the new situations and developing responses and policies. The Islamic Thought has evolved gradually throughout the course of History. Whereas the Quran and the Hadith remain unchanged in corpus, these continued to provide guiding principles; *ijtihad* formed the dynamic element of Islamic thought that played a vital role in formulating new responses for emerging challenges in all ages. Thus, the newer branches of Islamic learning like *fiqh*, *tasawwuf*, *kalam* and philosophy developed as responses to newer challenges not independently but through guidance provided by primary texts of Islam.

Islam, from its earliest days possessed a strong tradition of revival (*tajdid*) and reform (*islah*), expressing itself in a variety of concepts and beliefs in lives and teachings of individual reformers and their movements. These reformers from traditional or philosophical approaches responded well to new situations and made considerable contributions to development of Islamic thought through their *ijtihadi* capabilities particularly during medieval period. The prominent among them were Al-Ghazali (1058-1111) and IbnTaimya (1263-1328) who were throughout their ages engaged in rebuttal of the temporal concepts alien to the teachings of Islam. In Indian sub-continent; scholars like Shaykh Abdul

Haqq *Muhaddith* of Delhi (b.1551), *Shaykh* Ahmed Faruq of Sirhind (1564-1624) and Shah Waliullah of Delhi (1703-1763), made remarkable contributions in reforming Muslim society and reinvigorating Islam in their respective periods. There has been, thus, a continuity of revival and reform throughout the History of Islam.

In the recent past, particularly after the 18th century, when Muslims faced challenges from the west, threatening not only the Muslim polity but its entire civilization; a variety of Muslim responses emerged from Muslim self assessment and reflection on the causes of the decline. The spectrum of Muslim response ranging from rejection, withdrawal, conservatism, through selective adaptation, modernization and cultural synthesis and complete assimilation were manifest in Islamic thought.

As rightly analyzed by Afsaruddin A.; "Islam possesses a strong tradition of revival and reform. The concepts of *tajdid* (renewal) and *islah* (reform) are fundamental concepts within Islam, based on the Qur'an and Sunnah of the Prophet ﷺ. The preaching of Islam itself is presented in the Qur'an as, first of all, the revival of the true religion of God. Islam regards itself as both the corroboration and the purification of the original Abrahamic faith, not a new religion but a reaffirmation of the ancient Abrahamic tradition and its renewal. *Islah* (reform) itself is a Qur'anic term (occurring in chapters 7:170; 11:117, 28:19) and refers to the reformist activities of all the prophets throughout time, who were sent by God to warn their

communities of their sinful ways and calling on them to return to God's path".¹ As also observed by John O. Voll:²

"Two of the great concepts in the Islamic vocabulary of resurgence are *tajdid* (renewal) and *islah* (reform). Together they reflect a continuing tradition of revitalization of Islamic faith and practice." In changing circumstances and with different implications, *islah* and *tajdid* have always involved a call for a return to the basic fundamentals of Islam as presented in the Quran and Sunnah of the Prophet ﷺ.^{3,4} Although the era of the prophets and their *islah* efforts is over; the work of *islah*, righteous reform continues as a part of the responsibility of believers-an effort to increase the righteousness of the people."⁵

The Divine messages throughout the centuries came to reform human understanding, and messengers were sent as "*muslihun*" [reformers], those who bring good, reconcile human beings with the divine, and reform their societies for the better.⁶

¹ Afsaruddin A. 'Revivalism and Reform'<http://ocw.nd.edu/arabic-and-middle-east-studies/islamic-societies-of-the-middle-east-and-north-africa-religion-history-and-culture/lectures/lecture-9>

²² John O Voll, "Renewal and Reform in Islamic History: *Tajdid and Islah*" in 'Voices of Resurgent Islam (Ed.) John L. Esposito (New York: Oxford University Press 1983.pp.32-33

³ Abul Aala Mawdudi, A Short History of the Revivalist Movements in Islam' New Delhi, 2009, p37-39

⁴ Fazlur Rehman, 'Revival and Reform in Islam' The Cambridge History of Islam, vol2, pp-632-42

⁵ John O Voll, "Renewal and Reform in Islamic History: *Tajdid and Islah*" in 'Voices of Resurgent Islam (Ed.) John L. Esposito (New York: Oxford University Press 1983.pp.32-33

⁶ Tariq Ramadan, *Radical Reform: Islamic Ethics and Liberation*, Oxford University Press, New York, 2009, p 13

The seventh-century Arabic context was enveloped by the vices of unbelief, polytheism, and idolatry. People preferred ancestral authority over divine commands, tribal customs over divinely sanctioned law. The revelation of the Quran, as embodied in the figure of the Prophet, intervened to mend, resolve, and reform that disorder which was prevalent in the society. Since then the religion of Islam, as contained in the Quran and the Hadith is the final revealed religion remaining intact, evading any addition or subtraction. However, it offers scope for interpretation and application; for it is the understanding and application, which tends to vary with time, hence needing reform.

The concept of reform in Islam therefore means the reform in the sense of application of Islam in society, revitalizing the Muslim community and making an endeavor to return into the path of Islam afresh.

For great Muslim reformer of modern times Muhammad Abduh; *Islah* (Reform) refers to: "Liberating one's thought from the shackles of *taqlid* to understand religion in the way the predecessors of this *Ummah (salaf)* did prior to emergence of disagreements-through direct recourse to the sources of Islam and in due regard also to the norms of rationality which God has endowed in the human intellect. *Islah* is to eliminate confusion and accomplish God's messages for the preservation of humanity and world order"⁷.

⁷ Muhammad Hashim Kamali, *The Middle path of Moderation in Islam: the Quranic principle of Wasatiyya*, Oxford University Press, New York, 2015, pp 225

Muhammad Abduh who was both a renewer and a modernist worked in a specific context in the modern situation in which Muslim thinkers were defending Islam against the charge of being stagnant. But his attack on *taqlid* and advocacy of *ijtihad* reflect a longstanding element into renewalist-reform. Similarly, the people talking about *islah* and *tajdid* in the twentieth century claim the right to return directly to the fundamental sources of Islam, the Quran and the *Sunnah*. Later interpretations are not considered binding and are often rejected.⁸

Regardless of what form it takes in the future, it is clear that the *tajdid-islah* tradition remains a vital part of Islamic life. Working within the opportunities provided by the challenges of post-modern society, the *tajdid-islah* tradition has proven its continuing vitality and it continues to represent one of the dynamic dimensions of the Islamic experience.⁹

The notion of *tajdid* (renewal) is based on a prophetic Hadith in which Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) states: "God will send to the ummah [the Muslim community] at the beginning of each century, those who will renew its faith for it."¹⁰

Two main conclusions have been drawn by scholars from this tradition, first the, necessity of religious renewal is

⁸ John O Voll, "Renewal and Reform in Islamic History: *Tajdid and Islah*" in 'Voices of Resurgent Islam' (Ed.) John L. Esposito (New York: Oxford University Press 1983.p.39

⁹ Ibid. p. 45

¹⁰ Abu Hurairah, recorded in Kitab-al-Malahim, Sunan Abu Dawud.

acknowledged; second that the renewal has to be periodic, thus implying the inevitability of social change over the course of time, that will necessitate a fresh interpretation of the religion or institutional reforms.

The two major components or aspects of the process of renewal are the following:

The process of renewal advocates, calls for, a return to the basic moral and religious principles contained in the Qur'an and the Sunnah and secondly:

The right to practice *ijtihad*; that is to use independent reasoning in interpreting and re-interpreting the sources of Islam.

This two-pronged process of renewal therefore is based on the assumption firstly that the righteous community established and led by the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ at Madina should be imitated by later Muslims, secondly, the additions and innovations (*bid'a*) that have crept in over the centuries, have to be removed, and thirdly, one must examine critically the interpretation of the medieval commentators and scholars of Islam. Therefore, those who are regarded as renewers of the faith, like al-Ghazali, claimed the right to exercise *ijtihad* to reinterpret Islam in order to purify and revitalize their societies. Another famous renewer or revivalist was Ibn Taymiyya (d. 1328) who wielded great influence on later day Islamic scholars.¹¹

¹¹ Afsaruddin A. 'Revivalism and Reform'<http://ocw.nd.edu/arabic-and-middle-east-studies/islamic-societies-of-the-middle-east-and-north-africa-religion-history-and-culture/lectures/lecture-9>

Historically, reform movements in the Islamic world; have emerged in response to two challenges or a combination of them: 1) external threats especially foreign conquest; and 2) departure from moral and religious observance, often followed by a period of overall decline of Muslim societies.¹² Reformers have often seen foreign conquest as resulting from the erosion of religious and moral standards and the ensuing decline of Muslim societies. Since the mid-nineteenth century, the departure from Islam's rationalist and scientific spirit and traditions has been added to the causes of Muslims' decline.¹³

Over the centuries the specific meaning and understanding of *Islah* and *Tajdid* has changed, depending on the evolution of Islamic thought and the changing circumstances of the Muslim community. In the modern times, the primary purpose of Islamic reform has been two-fold; first to define Islam by bringing out the fundamentals in a rational and liberal manner and emphasizing on basic ideals of Islamic brotherhood, tolerance and social justice; and second, to interpret the teachings of Islam in such a way as to utilize its dynamic character within the context of the intellectual and scientific progress of the modern world.

The renewer- reformer generally has claimed the right to make his own judgment based directly on an independent analysis of the Quran and the *Sunnah*. The *mujaddid* (renewar) has not felt bound by the interpretations and ideas of the teachers and schools that emerged after the times of the

¹² Shireen T. Hunter, *Reformist Voices of Islam*, ME Sharpe, New York, P-6

¹³ *Ibid.*

Prophet ﷺ and his companions. This process of independent analysis is called *ijtihad* and is traditionally seen as the opposite of *taqlid*, the following of the views and rulings of earlier teachers.¹⁴

What this *ijtihad* means is using individual effort to apply the Quran and the *Sunnah* to existing conditions. The Quran and the *Sunnah* are maintained as the authentically complete and universally applicable guidance from God for man. In this context, *ijtihad* may be necessary in order to determine the proper application of the Quranic message in changing circumstances.¹⁵

Until the nineteenth century, renewal and reform had generally meant the elimination of what were seen as exogenous influences on Islam; return to the essentials of the faith, and often a restrictive interpretation the two major Islamic sources, the Quran and the Sunnah of Prophet of Islam ﷺ as recorded and related in Hadith. By the mid-nineteenth century however, the terms *tajdid* and *islah* acquired the added meaning of reform in the sense of reconciling Islam with rationalist and scientific thinking and restructuring Muslims' countries' educational and sociopolitical institutions more or less along the European institutions.¹⁶ Similar conclusions have been drawn by J.L. Esposito in 'Oxford History of Islam'. He observes thus: 'The seventeenth and

¹⁴ J. Schacht and Macdonald DB, *Ijtihad* in 'Enclopedia of Islam' vol.3, pp.1026-27

¹⁵ John O Voll, "Renewal and Reform in Islamic History: *Tajdid and Islah*" in 'Voices of Resurgent Islam' (Ed.) John L. Esposito (New York: Oxford University Press 1983.p.39

¹⁶ *Ibid.* p-5

eighteenth centuries witnessed the rise of pre-modern reform movements from Africa to South East Asia, including the *Wahhabi*, *Mahdi*, and *Sannusi*, which responded to internal causes of stagnation and decline. By the nineteenth century, much of the Muslim world faced an external threat, the onslaught of European Colonialism. Thus the reformist efforts in nineteenth and early 20th century were in response to the political, economic, and religious challenges of European imperialism.' He is further of the opinion that the resurgence of Islam in 20th century has been a testimony to Islam's vitality.¹⁷

In Indian context, therefore, it may be noted that revival movements of Abdul Haqq Muhaddith, Sheikh Ahmed Sirhindi and Shah Waliullah were primarily internally motivated while those of modernists, Sir Syed Ahmed Khan, and Allama Sir Muhammad Iqbal and that of Sayyid Ahmed Shaheed were a response both to internal weaknesses as well as external socio-religious and political threats of colonialism in their own perspectives.¹⁸

Islamic Modernism and Revivalism

Islamic modernism is in fact a movement to reconcile Islamic faith with modern western values such as democracy, civil rights, nationalism, rationalism, secularism and progress. It is

¹⁷ John L. Esposito, 'The Oxford History of Islam' Oxford University Press, 1999, p-xi

¹⁸ Sheikh Jamil Ali, "Islamic Thought and Movements in the Sub-continent" D.K Printword, 2010. P 147

one of the many responses to western challenges and Muslim Decline. Modernism differs from secularism in that it insists on the importance of religious faith in public life and from Islamism in that it embraces contemporary western institutions, social processes and values.¹⁹

Modern knowledge was in fact the lost property of Muslims after the fall of Abbasids (1258CE). This gem was of course picked up by west, polished developed and reintroduced to the whole world.²⁰ It is surprisingly strange that it is only Muslims who failed to recognize it because it came disguised in western garments. All modern values democracy, secularism, scientific enquiry and cosmological mysteries were in fact conceived and encouraged through the Quran. Once new vistas of knowledge were opened up the shackles of mental and physical bondage were broken; and the new technological development and social values got upper hand. It was a eureka for the west. When they experimented with these in their fields and found it working; they transmitted it to rest of the world wherever they went or whoever was exposed to them in anyway.

Islamic Modernism and revival are two of the many intellectual responses operating within an Islamic framework, to western colonial influences and to the eighteenth century political decline of Muslim Powers. While Islamic modernists acknowledged with varying degrees of criticism, the technological, scientific and legal achievements of the west,

¹⁹ Thompson Gale, 'Encyclopedia of Islam and the Muslim World, 2004.

²⁰ Maulana Wahiduddin Khan, 'Islam the Creator of Modern Age'.

the Islamic Revivalists objected to western colonial exploitation of Muslim countries and the imposition of western secular values.²¹

In addition to the oft repeated colonialism thesis or the political commercial and educational influence of the west; various scholars have assigned other causes for the responses that ranged from total rejection to total embrace to synthesis. The innate nature of Islam as a dynamic and eternal system of principles to adjust to modern changes has often been undermined. Islam possesses a strong tradition of revival (*tajdid/ahya*) and reform (*Islah*). History stands witness to the fact that in times of weakness and decline, responding to the discrepancies of essence and praxis in Islam the scholars in different ages always found the model for Islamic reform, in a return to the primary texts of Islam and the early Muslim Community.²²

The most prominent intellectuals who pioneered the modernist vision of Islam were Jamal-al-Din Afghani and Muhammad Abduh in the Middle East and Sir Sayyid Ahmed Khan and Sir Muhammad Iqbal in South Asia. Islamic modernism had an ambivalent attitude towards west. Europe was admired for its strength, technology and political ideals of

²¹ <http://www.oxfordislamicstudies.com/article/opr>

²² Fazlurrehman, " Revival and Reform in Islam" in Cambridge history of Islam vol. 2, p-641

freedom, justice and equality but rejected for its imperialist goals and policies.²³

John L. Esposito discerns four distinct and diverse responses of Muslim scholars to western influences; rejection; withdrawal; secularism and westernization and the Islamic modernism.²⁴

Muslim Responses to Modernity:

Historically, Muslims' encounters with modernity most often began with military defeat at the hands of European powers²⁵, as exemplified by Napoleon Bonaparte's conquest of Egypt (1798-1800), the fall of Mughal empire in India to British (1857), Iran's defeat in Russo-Iranian wars in early 19th century (1804-1828) and successive reverses and finally disintegration of Ottoman empire (1924). Depending on their specific geopolitical, social and political conditions, individual Muslim societies reacted differently to challenges beginning with felt need of military reforms according to the model of European armies. Reforms soon extended to educational, administrative and legal spheres e.g. *Tanzimat* of Turkey. The Muslim responses fall under three major categories²⁶: A similar trilateral response has been noted by Muhammad Amin in his

²³ ParrayTauseef A. "Sir Syed Ahmed Khan: On *Taqlid*, *Ijtihad* and Science-Religion Compatibility" *Social Epistemology, Review and Reply Collective* no. 6 (2015): 19-34

²⁴ Esposito, J. L. "The Islamic Threat: Myth or reality" Oxford 1992. 53--62

²⁵ Shireen T Hunter, *Reformist Voices of Islam*, ME Sharpe, New York, pp-13-14

²⁶ *Ibid.*p-14

article '*Islam aur Tajaddud Pasandi*' published in Monthly journal *Assharia*.²⁷

Total embrace of European-style modernity, identified with the new and expanding elites educated in West or later in western -style educational institutions. Such response was evident in Turkey's *Tanzimat* and Iran's secular modernizer Mirza Malkum Khan's reform initiatives.

The Second, Creationist response was represented by the uneducated masses and the clerical establishment. From this perspective the main cause of Muslims' decline has been the erosion of Islamic values and piety. To reverse the process of decline, Muslims should revive and observe Islamic rules and values. This response manifested in the form of Muslim educational institutions springing up in later part of 19th century India, for example.

The third reaction, and the most important one, has been that of Synthesis or a selective assimilation of modernity.²⁸ The adherents of this trend maintain that Islam is not a hindrance to scientific and other progress and have worked hard to validate their views. They advocated the restoration of Islam's rationalist and scientific spirit and the interpretation of its basic tenets in ways more suited to Muslims' current

²⁷ Muhammad Amin, '*Islam aur Tajaddud pasandi*' in '*Mahnama Assharia*' December 2005. P-27

²⁸ Dr. Adibah Abdul Rahim et. all. 'Major Trends of Muslim Responses to The Challenges of Modernity', *Journal of Islam in Asia*, IIUM Malaysia, Special Issue, No.1, March, 2011.

conditions and needs. The pioneers of this movement were Jamal-al-Din Afghani, Muhammad Abduh and Sir Sayyid Ahmed Khan.²⁹ They had common goal but slightly different methodologies. Some trends in the modern Islamic thought include:

The acknowledgement “with varying degrees of criticism or emulation” of the technological, scientific and legal achievements of the west, while at the same time objecting to Western exploitation of Muslim countries and the imposition of western secular values and aiming to develop a modern and dynamic understanding of science among Muslims that would strengthen the Muslim world and prevent further exploitation.³⁰

Taking the four traditional sources of Islamic Law- the Quran, the Hadith, Consensus of the theologians(*ijma'*) and juristic reasoning by analogy(*Qayas*) and reinterpreting the first two sources (the Quran and the Hadith) to transform the last two (*Ijma'* and *Qayas*) in order to formulate a reformist project in light of the modern social theory.³¹

A radical reinterpretation; of the authoritative sources particularly the Quranic text, is advocated by some on issues like jihad, penal punishments, polygamy and treatment of unbelievers, which conflict with modern views. On the issue of

²⁹ Hourani, Arabic thought in the Liberal Age, p-68

³⁰ Islamic Modernism and Islamic Revival' Oxford Islamic Studies Online. Retrieved 27 march, 2014.

³¹ Mansur Moaddel, Islamic modernism, nationalism, and Fundamentalism: Episode and discourse. University of Chicago press, p-2

jihad, for example, scholars like Muhammad Abduh, Rashid Rida, Mahmud Shaltut (*and Wahiduddin Khan*) taking a different line than traditional scholars emphasize that Jihad was allowed only as defensive warfare to respond to aggression against Muslim community and that the 'normal and desired state' between Islamic and non-Islamic territories was one of 'peaceful coexistence'.³²

History of Modernist Thought in Islam

It was in 18th century that French occupation of Egypt and ottoman exposed Muslims to western developments in education, technology science and social values. In the 18th century the new ideas of the Enlightenment, which stressed the importance of science, rationality, and human reason, and the new technologies of the Industrial Revolution swept across Europe, giving Europeans great power and influence over rest of the world.³³ The rise of modern Europe coincided with the decline of the Ottoman Empire, which by the 18th century was facing political, military, and economic breakdown.³⁴

In 1798; Napoleon Bonaparte's army occupied the Egypt, then a province of Ottoman Empire. Although the occupation lasted only three years, it exposed the people of Egypt to Enlightenment ideas and Europe's new technology. The

³² Peters Rudolph (1996) *Jihad in Classical and modern Islam: A Reader*, Princeton: Marcus weiner. p-64

³³ Hourani, Albert (1991) *A History of the Arab People*, p,259

³⁴ Esposito, Jonh L. (2005). *Islam: The Straight Path*. Oxford University Press, pp. 115–116.

exposure to European power and ideas inspired the new governor of Egypt, Muhammad Ali, to draw on western technology to modernize Egypt, setting an example for the rest of the Ottoman Empire. The Ottoman government began to send officials to study in Europe."³⁵

One of the scholars sent by Muhammad Ali to Europe in 1826 was Rifa'a Rafi' al-Tahtawi. Tahtawi was impressed with Europe's technological and scientific advancement and political philosophy. Having studied Islamic Law, he argued that "it was necessary to adapt the *Shariah* to new circumstances" and that there was not much difference between "the principles of Islamic law and those principles of 'natural law' on which the codes of modern Europe were based."³⁶ Like Tahtawi, Khayr al-Din Tunusi was also sent to Paris. After his return from Europe he argued that the only way to strengthen the Muslim States was by borrowing ideas and institutions from Europe, and that this did not contradict the spirit of the *Shariah*.³⁷

In the period between 1839 and 1876 the Ottoman government began instituting large-scale reforms as a way to modernize and strengthen the empire. Known as the *Tanzimat*, many of these reforms involved adopting successful European practices. In addition to military and administrative reforms, Ottoman rulers implemented reforms in the sphere

³⁵ Hourani, Albert (1983). *Arabic Thought in the Liberal Age: 1798–1939*. Cambridge University Press.p. 43.

³⁶ Ibid. p-75

³⁷ Ibid.p-88

of education, law, and the economy. New universities and curricula were created and modern curricula were introduced to allow students to acquire the knowledge necessary to modernize. European legal codes became the basis for legal reforms, and Islamic law was restricted to personal status or family law (marriage, divorce and inheritance). The key figure in the Turkish modernist movement was Namik Kemal, the editor of a journal called 'Freedom'. His goal was to promote freedom of the press, the separation of powers, equality before the law, scientific freedom, and reconciliation between parliamentary democracy and the Qur'an.

"The reformist spirit of the times was especially evident in the emergence from Egypt to Southeast Asia of an Islamic modernist movement that called for a "reformation" or reinterpretation (*ijtihad*) of Islam." Islamic modernism was both an attempt to provide an Islamic response to the challenges presented by European colonial expansion and an effort to reform Islam from within as a way to counter the perceived weakness and decline of Muslim societies in the 19th and early 20th centuries.

Islamic modernists argued that Islam and modernity were compatible and "asserted the need to reinterpret and reapply the principles and ideals of Islam to formulate new responses to the political, scientific, and cultural challenges of the West and of modern life." The reforms they proposed challenged the status quo maintained by the traditionalist Muslim scholars (*ulama*), who saw the established law as the ideal order that had to be followed and upheld the doctrine of *taqlid* (imitation or blind following).

Prominent Revival and Reform Thinkers and Movements

Muhammad ibn Abd al-Wahhab: The first movement of significance in the 18th century was founded by Muhammad ibn Abd al-Wahhab (1703-1792). Ibn 'Abd al-Wahhab was by training a jurist and a theologian. He was greatly influenced by the writings of the 13th century reformer Ibn Taymiyya. Ibn 'Abd al-Wahhab, maintained that the moral decline of the Muslim community; was due to deviation from the original practices of the *ummah*. For the community to regain its vitality and moral vigor, these practices had to be uprooted and replaced with a society that resembled the early Muslim community set up by Muhammad (ﷺ). The reformist movement of Muhammad ibn 'Abd al-Wahhab acquired a political dimension when he joined hands with, Muhammad ibn Saud (d.1765), the founder of modern Saudi Arabia. It was a 'Religio-Political' movement that was highly successful in achieving political power for Muhammad ibn Saud; and the Islamic religious reforms, as envisaged by Muhammad ibn 'Abd al-Wahhab. His understanding of *ijtihad* was not that *ijtihad* should lead to a reinterpretation of Islam but rather a return to the exact state of affairs during the time of the Prophet (ﷺ) and his four caliphs. He was able to spread his teachings not only in Arabia but even beyond its borders to other Islamic lands where his reforms continue to wield influence to this day.

Shah Waliullah (1703-1762): He was an Islamic Scholar, reformer and founder of modern Islamic thought who attempted to reassess Islamic theology in the light of modern

changes. He is the first Indian Muslim Scholar of international repute who felt a need for revivalism and reform in Islam in view of decay in Islamic Civilization as well as decline of Muslim polity. Qutbuddin Ahmed Ibn Abdul Rahim better known as Shah Waliullah got his early education at Madarsa e Rahimiya founded by his father Maulana Abdul Rahim; studying Quran, Hadith, Arabic and Persian from his father and started teaching at same *madarsa* after demise of his father in 1719 CE. He visited Hijaz in 1724 that changed the outlook of his religious thought. It was his exposure to international scenario (1724-32) that he was fully convinced of a burning need of revival and reform in Islam that he ventured after his return from Hijaz.

It was in fact Shah Waliullah who defined the contours of Islamic thought in Indian subcontinent giving it a definite direction. He was a scholar of wide caliber, capable of holding different contradictions together and then solving them through his visionary and gradual methodology utilizing the exemplary Quranic wisdom or the *Hikmah* as is often referred to in Quran. His approach in accommodating modern knowledge into the classical Islamic literature was that of synthesis. He presented what he considered pure and pristine Islam and made an attempt to present teachings of Islam in a spirit of scientific objectivity. He attempted major works on Quran, *Hadith*, *fiqh*, *usul-al-fiqh*, *Aqaid*, *Kalam*, *philosophy*, *tasawwuf*, history, biography, Arabic grammar and psychology besides Sociopolitical and ethical Philosophy. He translated the holy Quran into Persian the then *lingua franca* of Indian Muslims for wider access of Muslims to the original source of

Islamic teachings. {It may be pertinent to mention that translation of Quran then, into any other language was not as easily assimilated by conservative *Ulama* as today.} This tradition was later carried forward by Shah Abdul Qadir and Shah Rafiuddin; by translating Quran into Urdu language. Some of his notable works include:

- *Fatah ul Rehman Al Tarjamatul Quran* is the Persian translation of Quran.
- *Hujjatul Baligha* or the 'Conclusive Argument' is an exposition of the Islamic world view, wherein he attempts to present teachings of Islam with scientific objectivity.
- *Musaffa Shara al Muwatta* is an extensive work on Hadith Literature based on commentary of Al-Mawatta of Imam Malik.
- *Ahkam al ijtihad wal taqlid* An important work on law & Justice; discusses various dimensions of issues involved in *ijtihad* and *taqlid* and presents a balanced view of this much debated issue. He adopts a synthetic or reconciliatory approach here.
- *Al Badar al Bazigha* is Shah Waliullah's treatise on Philosophy and Kalam.

The other notable works by Shah Waliullah, include '*Tafheemat e ilahiyya*' on Scholastics, '*Fuyuz al Harmain*' on Spirituality and '*Tohfatul Muwahiddin*' and '*Al-Aqeedat al Hasna*'. That is sufficient to show his knowledge, his vision and versatility of his genius.

The 19th Century represented the height of European colonialism in the Middle East and other areas of the Islamic

world. This was a humiliating situation for Muslims everywhere. Whereas until recent times, the Islamic civilization had been the dominant one and Muslims had been the masters of their destiny; now they were reduced to subjects of alien, hostile powers who regarded their way of life with contempt. This was therefore a period of great soul-searching and self-examination.

In the 19th century, Islamic assertion took several different forms ranging from the *Mahdi* movement of the Sudan and the *Sannusiyyah* in North Africa which fought wars against European colonizers; to educational movements such as that of Aligarh in India aiming to reeducate Muslims. In Egypt which, because of al-Azhar University, remains central to Islamic learning; a number of reformers appeared, each addressing some aspect of Islamic thought. Some were concerned more with law, others economics, and yet others with the challenges posed by Western civilization with its powerful science and technology.

In 19th century Iran, Mirza Malkom Khan arrived after being educated in Paris. He created a newspaper called *Qanun*, where he advocated the separation of powers, secular law, and a bill of rights. Khayr al-Din al-Tunisi was similarly educated in Paris around the same time. He surveyed the political systems of 21 European countries in an effort to reform Tunisia. At the recommendations of reform-minded Islamic scholars, western sciences were taught in new schools.

Jamal al-Din al-Afghani (d.1897) was a great champion of Pan-Islamism, a movement to unite the Islamic world politically as well as religiously. His student, Muhammad 'Abduh, also known as founder of Islamic modernism, who became the rector of *Al-Azhar* was very influential in Islamic theology and modernist reformist thought.

Other notable Islamic modernists include Sir Sayyid Ahmad Khan (1817–98) and Sir Muhammad Iqbal (1877–1938) in the Indian subcontinent and Rashid Rida (1869–1935), in Middle East. Like al-Afghani and Abduh, they rejected the doctrine of *taqlid* and asserted the need for Islam to be reinterpreted according to modern conditions. Although Islamic modernists were subject to the criticism that the reforms they promoted amounted to westernizing Islam, their legacy was significant and their thought influenced future generations of reformers. While others looked to west uncritically and traditionalists shunned the west rather obstinately, Iqbal attempted to establish a continuity between the Islamic heritage and modern change developing a synthesis of his own. Muhammad Rashid Rida also stated in his journal *Al-Manar* that *shariah* was relatively silent about agriculture, industry, and trade, and that these areas of knowledge needed renewal. Some of the reform movements and thinkers of 19th century are discussed here:

Faraizi Movement

During the nineteenth century when the affairs of the Muslims fell to low ebb at political level, reform movements sprang up in various parts of the Muslim world. The thesis underlying

such movements was that the Muslims had fallen because of their laxity in the observance of the injunctions of Islam. Accordingly, these movements aimed at reinvigoration of Islam so it could serve as an effective instrument for enabling the Muslims regain their lost glory. One of such movements launched in Bengal during the early years of nineteenth century was the Faraizi movement.³⁸

The Faraizi Movement³⁹ was founded in 1818 by Haji Shariatullah to give up un-Islamic practices and act upon their duties as Muslims.⁴⁰ He was born in 1781 CE in Faridpur district of Bengal (now Bangla Desh). He received his religious education in his home district and Calcutta. Thereafter he left for *Hijaz* in 1799 where he came under the influence of the reform movement founded by the Arab reformer, Muhammad ibn Abdul Wahhab. On return to Bengal he led a simple and pious life and enjoined upon his followers to fulfill the obligations laid on them according to Islam. He held that Shariah should be enforced strictly. Because of the emphasis he laid on the fulfillment of obligations or *faraiz* in accordance with Islam, the movement came to be known as *Faraizi* movement.⁴¹

³⁸ Shamim Akhtar, 'Faith and Philosophy of Islam' Kalpaz Publications, Delhi, 2009. P-141.

³⁹ Haji Shariatullah, *Muslim Ummah of North America*. Retrieved 22 February 2015.

⁴⁰ Muin-ud-Din Ahmad (2012). "Shariatullah Haji". In *Islam, Sirajul; Jamal, Ahmed A. Banglapedia: National Encyclopedia of Bangladesh (Second ed.)*. Asiatic Society of Bangladesh.

⁴¹ Badar Azimabadi, "Great Personalities in Islam" Adam Publishers, New Delhi-2007. p-290

He denounced the superstitions and corrupt practices that had found currency among the Muslims due to contact with Hindus. He criticized the excesses of Sufism. He was also critical of the domination of Hindus and their sociopolitical and cultural invasion into Muslim life. He was equally critical of the alien British rule over India and declared Bengal as *Darul-Harb*.⁴² Haji Shariatullah commanded his disciples not to pay dishonest cesses to the landlords. All these heated instances added up to tensed and stressed relationships amongst the *Faraizis* and the landlords. Haji Shariatullah was placed under the detention of the police in more than one instance, for purportedly inciting agrarian turbulences in Bengal.

The Faraizi's adhered to the Hanafi School with certain differences in practices. The main features of this movement included:

- To observe strictly the obligatory duties or *faraiz*;
- Strict adherence to *Tawhid*;
- Denouncing all cultural rituals and ceremonies which had no reference to the Quran and *Sunnah*; as *bidah* or sinful innovations.⁴³

After the death of Haji Shariatullah, his son, Dadu Miyan, led the movement to a more agrarian character, consolidating the movement and facing the ire of oppressive landlords and British masters. Dadu Miyan died in 1862, his son Naya Miyan

⁴² Ibid.

⁴³ Opcit.Muinuddin.

succeeded him who, with great difficulty, kept the dwindling movement regain some of its lost strength.⁴⁴

On the death of Naya Miyan in 1884, the third and the youngest son of Dadu Miyan, Syeduddin Ahmad alias Khan Bahadur was acclaimed leader by the Faraizis. In 1905, on the question of the partition of Bengal, he lent support in favour of partition, but he died in 1906.⁴⁵ Khan Bahadur Syeduddin was succeeded by his eldest son Rashiduddin Ahmad alias Badshah Miyan. He took part in the Khilafat and Non-Co-Operation Movements also. Soon after the establishment of Pakistan (East) he summoned a conference of the Faraizis and declared Pakistan as *Dar-ul-Islam* and gave permission to his followers to hold the congregational prayers of *Jum'ah* and *Eid*.⁴⁶

Sanusiyah Movement

Sanusiyah was a Sufi Brotherhood Movement, established in 1837 by Muhammad bin Ali *As-Sanusi* known popularly as *As-Sanusi al-Akbar* or the Grand Sanusi. It was a reformist movement aimed at a return to the simple faith and life of early Islam. As a missionary order, it sought to reform the life of Bedouins and Africans.⁴⁷ *As-Sanusi* was concerned with what it saw as both the decline of Islam in thought and spirituality and the weakening of Muslim political integrity.

Muhammad bin Ali as-Sannusi (1787-1859), the founder of the Sanusiya order and a proponent of Sufism, traced his descent

⁴⁴ Opcit. Muinuddin.

⁴⁵ *Sufiauddin, M. (2006). Constructing Bangladesh: Religion, Ethnicity, and Language in an Islamic Nation. University of North Carolina Press. pp. 53–54.*

⁴⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁷ <http://www.britannica.com/topic/sanusiyah>

from Fatimah (RA) the daughter of Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ). He was born in Algeria; studied in a *madrassa* in Fez and then travelled in Sahara preaching and purifying reform of faith in Tunisia and Tripoli, gaining many adherents; and then moved to Cairo to study at Al-Azhar University. The pious scholar was critical of Egyptian *Ulama* for their compliance with Ottoman authorities and their spiritual conservatism. He was against blind following of four schools of law and strongly advocated *ijtihad*. Sanusi through his thought and action sought a synthesis of Sufism and rationality, devising a middle path. He was, as expected, opposed by *ulama* as unorthodox and expelled from Egypt through a *fatwa*. Sanusi then moved to Makkah and joined Ahmed bin Idris al-Fasi, the head of *Khadirites* a religious fraternity of Moroccan Origin.

After the death of Ahmed bin Idris, Sanusi found his first *Az-Zawiya* (monastery) at Abu Qubays near Makkah in 1837. He was not assimilated by supporters of Wahabi Islamic thought in Makkah and was forced to migrate and settle in Libya in 1843; where he built his *Zawiya al-Baidha* or the 'white monastery'. He was supported by local tribes and his influence extended to Maghrib. In 1855 Sanusi moved to Jaghub to avoid Ottoman surveillance. He died in 1859 leaving two sons, Mohammad Sharief (1844-1895) and Mohammad al-Mahdi (1845-1902) who succeeded him.

Under al-Mahdi, the *zawiya* extended to Fez, Damascus and India. In eastern Sahara and Sudan, Mahdi had the authority of a sovereign. In 1881 Mahdi proclaimed himself to be the actual promised Mahdi; that drew unwelcome attention of Ottoman authorities. He died in 1902 and was succeeded by his nephew, Ahmed Sharief.

In early 20th century *Sanusiya* movement fought French colonial expansion in Sahara. In 1911 when Italy took Libya from Ottomon, Sanusiyah fought against Italy till 1943⁴⁸. While Sanusiya fought British in Egypt and Sudan in World War I; they provided vital support to British in World War II, against Nazi German and Fascist Italian forces in North Africa. In 1951, Idris the grandson of Sanusi became king of Libya but he was overthrown in 1969 by the military coup led by Muammar al-Qaddafi.

Characteristics of Sanusiya Movement:

- Revivalist movement; a strict puritanical movement calling for return to basics of Islam.
- Different from other Sufi orders in rational approach with no spiritual acrobatics.
- Disciplined, centrally controlled *Zawiya* system, with accountable officials.
- Strong work ethics- a desert order focusing on Beduins of Sahara and Libya.
- Tolerant attitude towards other reformist movements.

Jamal al-Din al-Afghani (1838–97) is regarded as one of the pioneers of Islamic modernism. He believed that Islam was compatible with science and reason and that in order to counter European power the Muslim world had to embrace progress. Jamal al-Din *Afghani*, published the pamphlet "*Al-Urwa al-Wuthqà*". He was critical of other Muslim scholars for

⁴⁸ Umar Mukhtar (1861-1931) was the most prominent leader of Sannusi native resistance against Libya.

stifling scientific thought; and hoped to encourage scientific inquiry in the Muslim world. He believed that the Islamic world was suffering from an inner decay and was in need of a revival. Asserting that "Islam could be the moral basis of a modern and progressive society" he was critical of both secularists and the conservative *Ulama*. He called for a legal reform and the reinterpretation (*ijtihad*) of Islamic law according to modern conditions. While critical of the West, he believed that it was necessary to borrow or assimilate what was good from it. Jamal al-Din al-Afghani was a great champion of Pan-Islamism, a movement to unite the Islamic world politically as well as religiously.

Muhammad Abduh: In Middle East, there were two famous names that are now forever associated with Islamic reform and modernism; Jamal al-Din al-Afghani (d. 1897) a great champion of Pan-Islamism and Muhammad 'Abduh (d.1905), also known as father of Islamic modernism. Both these men stressed the importance of *ijtihad* as their main tool of effecting reform, and they advocated using *ijtihad* to arrive at new interpretations of Islam, rather than slavishly following the interpretation of the medieval scholars. Abduh in particular stressed that religion was completely compatible with reason, and that reason, employed through the tool of *ijtihad*, should lead to sweeping social and legal reforms. Although Western political domination should be resisted and Muslim countries liberated from colonialism; Western Civilization in itself was not to be regarded as a threat to Islam. And that modern science and technology in so far as they improved the quality of life and led to social advancement,

should be embraced just as Muslims had once embraced the learning of the ancient Greeks, Persians, and Indians.

Muhammad Abduh made a very important distinction between two spheres of activity of Islam, one of which was badly in need of reform. The first sphere of activity was worship as embodied in the five pillars; this formed the core of Islam and is unchangeable. What remains is then a vast body of social relations and matters: commercial transactions, legal relations, public and family law that are subject to reform. Abduh argued that the elaborate legal system that had grown up concerning these matters were conditioned by historical circumstances; as historical circumstances changed, the old legal rulings should be subjected to reinterpretation to reflect the new social realities. Muhammad Abduh's thought has been enormously influential among reform-minded Muslims. Abduh, however, was in many ways ahead of his time, and during his lifetime had his share of critics.

Muhammad 'Abduh, also known as founder of Islamic modernism, who became the rector of al-Azhar was very influential in Islamic theology and modernist reformist thought. Also, of considerable influence was his Syrian student, Rashid Rida, who held a position closer to that of 'Abd al-Wahhab and stood for the strict application of the Shari'ah. Similarly, Muhammad Iqbal, the outstanding poet and philosopher of east wielded great influence in Indian subcontinent in early 20th century.

Sir Sayyid Ahmed Khan: A multi-dimensional personality', a creative thinker, a philosophical theologian an educationist and liberal modernist was one of those dynamic and revolutionary figures of history that have molded, patterned and shaped the destinies of nations and changed the course of time. Like Afghani and Abduh he called for a bold new theology or reinterpretation of Islam and acceptance not rejection of best in the west. He was the only Muslim who ventured to write a commentary on the old and the New Testament (the Mahomden Commentary on the Bible, 1862) which was strategically designed to bridge the gulf between two communities. In London he also wrote a response to William Muir's 'Life of Mahomet' 'a series of essays on the life of Muhammad' later published in Urdu as '*khutbaat e Ahmadiya.*'

He further developed an exegetical rationalism in his writings and insisted that *ijtihad* should be exercised freely and without limitation as a fundamental right for all Muslims. He was for scrutinizing of classical Hadith literature with unlimited stress on *ijtihad* and rejected the principle of *ijma'* in classical sense which limited it to the *ulama*. (Similar were the views of Sir Muhammad Iqbal; on issues of *ijtihad and ijma* as contained in his "Reconstruction of 'Religious Thought in Islam".)

Sir Sayyid was a pioneer modernist who is known to re-open the closed doors of *ijtihad*. He was against blind following and viewed *ijtihad* as a right of every Muslim. Like Iqbal he blamed Muslims for clinging to past and stagnation of Islamic thought in medieval periods. Both of them decried *taqlid* and

prescribed *ijtihad* as a remedy for modern malady of Muslim *ummah*. Again, on issue of *ijma'* Sir Sayyid objected to its limitation to *ulama* only while Iqbal suggested a new institution of *ijma* based on representation from different specialized fields of knowledge along religious scholars.

Sir Sayyid may also be considered as pioneer in what is now called inter-faith dialogue and he worked for greater understanding and good will and harmony among Muslim sects, and between Muslims and non-Muslims.

Sir Sayyid captivated by the amazing progress registered in multiple fields of European people wanted similar scientific and technological sophistication and superiority, material progress and advancement of Muslims as well.

Similarly, Sir Muhammad Iqbal, the outstanding poet and philosopher of East wielded great influence in Indian subcontinent in early 20th century.

'Ahl al Hadith' Movement:

The term '*Ahl al Hadith*' (the People of Hadith) refers to adherent's belief that they seek guidance in matters of religious faith and practice from Quran and authentic Hadith as the principal worthy guides for Muslims. They believe that they are not bound by *taqlid* or following of any particular School of Islamic Fiqh. Opposed to '*Ahl al Rai*' the adherents of Ahl al Hadith ideology trace their origin to the prophetic period of Islam when the present schools of Islamic fiqh had not developed yet. Though not followers of any single authority among traditional Imams, they draw inspiration from

Imam Shaafi, Ahmed bin Hanbal, IbnTaimya and Imam Shawkani of Yemen.

In Indian subcontinent the Ahl al Hadith movement was revived in the mid 19th century by Sayyid Nazir Hussain of Delhi (1805-1902) and Nawab Siddique Hassan Khan of Bhopal (1832-1890); drawing much of its membership from the educated upper class. It has now developed into a strong revivalist movement spreading to whole of India besides Pakistan, Bangladesh and Indonesia.

Though in practice they resemble Salfis, yet they maintain their separate unique identity, showing utmost loyalty to Allah and his messenger only. Despite oppositions and persecutions, they have succeeded in maintaining their distinct character. They are Unitarians par excellence denying intercession and Sufism as an institution. Though not in direct conflict with any particular school of Islamic Fiqh; they prefer to seek guidance directly from the Holy Quran, the authentic Prophetic Hadith literature and consensus of the early generation of Muslims.

In early twentieth century, Maulana Sana Ullah Amritsari (1868-1948), one of the stalwarts of this movement played a significant role in combating the onslaught of Christian Missionaries on Islam and the *Shudhi* Movement launched by Hindu organizations to reconvert Muslims to polytheism. He was also in forefront to refute Ghulam Ahmed Qadiyani's claims to Prophethood. Maulana's exegesis of the Holy Quran popularly called '*Tafsir e Sanai*' holds prominent place in Indian Tafsir literature.

Jadidism in Central Asia

Jadidism has been defined in 'The Oxford History of Islam' as: Nineteenth-and early-twentieth-century Russian Muslim intellectual movement, inspired by Ismail Bey Gasprinski; that developed in response to colonial hegemony and the modern age. Sought to reform education, raise the quality of life for Muslims, improve their economic and technical competitiveness, and restore something of the power, wealth, and dignity gradually lost over the previous decades and centuries. It sought to empower women and grant them a more central status and a greater role in society.⁴⁹

The Jadids were Muslim modernist reformers within the Russian Empire in the late 19th and early 20th century. Jadids maintained that Muslims in the Russian Empire had entered a period of decay that could only be rectified by the acquisition of a new kind of knowledge and modernist, cultural reform. Jadids were marked by their widespread use of print media in promoting their messages and advocacy of the *usul ul-jadid* or "new method" of teaching in the *maktabs* of the empire, from which the term *Jadidism* is derived. Jadid members were recognized and honored in Uzbekistan after the fall of the Soviet Union.

From the very beginning the Jadids were aimed to the reform of the traditional system of education of Muslim religious school; establishing new-method schools, publishing, theatre, social, and political and cultural institutions, which, under their influence, were turning into a powerful ideological weapon in

⁴⁹ The Oxford Dictionary of Islam

the struggle against economical, moral, and political backwardness of the peoples of Turkestan; more and more. They were eager to study the experience and progress of the other people of the world, especially the best practices of the Muslim reformers of the Crimea, the Volga Region, the Transcaucasia, Turkey, and Iran, who had already, become aware of the progressive social and political, spiritual and cultural life of Europe. They were also influenced by the reformist and revolutionary movements among the Muslims of Russia and the neighboring Islamic countries in the late 19th and early 20th century. The Jadids were also inspired by political movements in the Islamic world: the anti-colonial struggles in India, the constitutional movement in Persia (1905-1911), and, above all, the Young Turk movement in the Ottoman Empire. They could not but feel a strong sense of solidarity with their fellow Muslims. 'Jadidism' a Muslim modernistic movement in Central Asia at the turn of the twentieth century however remains virtually unknown to scholars of Muslim cultural history.

Jadidism was in fact a movement of reform among Muslim intellectuals in Central Asia, mainly among the Uzbeks and the Tajiks, from the first years of the 20th century to the 1920s. It took its name from *Usul-e jadid* (new method), which was applied to the modern schools that the reformers advocated in place of the "old" (*qadim*) schools: the traditional *maktabs* and *madrasas*. "*Jadid*" or "*jadidi*" became a synonym for reformer, while "*qadim*" or "*qadimi*" meant a conservative opposed to change. These terms also suggested a generational divide: the *jadids* were, on the whole, younger men and looked to the

future, whereas leading *qadims* were older and embraced tradition.⁵⁰ Maḥmud Behbudi (1874-1919) was by all accounts the most prominent figure among the Jadids. He was an enthusiastic founder of new-method schools and an ardent promoter of the indigenous press. Other ideologues included Hamza Niazi (1889-1929) and Abd-al-Ra'uf Feṭrat (1886-1937). The Jadids were determined, first and foremost, to bring Central Asia into the modern age. They were, in essence, Muslim modernists as their perception of the contemporary world and their attention to its problems originated in the culture and society of Muslim Central Asia. Thus, they belonged to a common Muslim modernist community that extended from the Ottoman Empire and Egypt to Persia and India; but, unlike the Young Turks, they did not reject Islam. Rather, they sought to bring Islamic teachings into harmony with the norms of modern society.⁵¹ Jadid newspapers and periodicals made their appearance after the Russian Revolution of 1905, when restrictions on the press were loosened. In their zeal to enlighten and to reform, the Jadids turned to literature also.⁵²

The Jadids by no means eliminated religion from their schools. Indeed, they devoted much attention to instruction in the

⁵⁰ The Politics of Muslim Cultural Reform, Jadidism in Central Asia. Adeb Khali, University of California Press-Berkeley-Los Angeles-Oxford.p-93

⁵¹ Sarfraz Khan, 'Reformist Political Thought: Revivalists, Modernists and free will.' Routledge Curzon, NY 2003, P115

⁵² K. Hitchins, "JADIDISM," *Encyclopaedia Iranica*, XIV/4, pp. 339-346, available online at <http://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/jadidism> (accessed on 30 December 2017).

tenets of Islam and the recitation of the Qur'ān, but the approach had changed. New textbooks written in the vernacular (Uzbek Turkish or Tajik) were used, and, instead of having pupils memorize sacred texts, teachers strove to instill in them a genuine understanding of the doctrines and practices of their faith. In the *madrasas* the Jadids emphasized the need to focus on the sources of Islam as the proper subject of study rather than on commentaries and interpretations, as was the prevailing practice.⁵³

Political dimensions of Reform

As the West began to influence Islamic society, organizations gradually grew up; whose goal was to reform society along Islamic lines. The notable among these included 'the Muslim Brotherhood' (*Ikhwan al-Muslimun*) founded in Egypt by Hassan al-Banna (d.1949) and Syed Qutub (d.1966) with its branches in many Muslim countries, and the *Jama'at-i Islami* (1941) founded by Mawlana Mawdudi (1903-1979); having its influence in Indian sub-continent. Political dimension of Islam as a modern phenomenon arises in the early part of the 20th century. Esposito refers to these groups as neo-revivalists. Like the early revivalists, these neo-revivalists also believed that contemporary Muslim society should be reformed from within by modeling themselves closely on the early Muslim community at Madinah.⁵⁴

⁵³ Adeb Khalid, *The Politics of Muslim Cultural Reform: Jadidism in Central Asia*, Berkeley, 1998.

⁵⁴ John O voll, *Renewel and Reform in Islamic history: tajdid and islah*, in *Resurgent Voices in Islam* ed. Esposito, J.L. P-32

As Esposito points out, they were personally pious, highly educated men both in the traditional Islamic sciences and in Western learning. Both came to react strongly against British imperialism, under whose shadow they lived a part of their lives. Thus, they were fighting the influence of both external and internal forces. Islamists are both religious and social activists; both al-Banna and Mawdudi were very effective at organizing supporters at the grass-roots level. The activities of these Islamists may be described as being part of a religious, socio-political protest movement that was committed to fighting political corruption and religious laxity, through violence if necessary. These organizations originally sought to reestablish an Islamic order through education but with allowance for violence if needed in establishing Islamic order in society and state. Today in every Muslim country there are strong movements to preserve and propagate Islamic teachings.⁵⁵

After the departure of the foreign colonial rulers, they continued their opposition to the local governments that were set up, often by the departing colonizers. These local ruling elites were thus perceived as representing Western interests at the expense of national interests. For them, *jihad* primarily came to mean the equivalent of just war or holy war to fight those whom they regarded as compromising Islamic principles. Many Islamists, but not all, believe in what Mawdudi called theo-democracy; in other words, a democracy that called for power-sharing through consultation, according to the Qur'anic

⁵⁵ Ibid.

concept of *shura*. They also believed in elections, because the Islamic principle of *bay'a*, which is a pledge, an individual gives to his or her ruler, gives the right to the people to express their approval or disapproval of the government.

Members of the Muslim Brotherhood may embrace a variety of opinions. Many of the current members in Egypt are moderates who seek to create an Islamic state by democratic means today. In the earlier period, they did engage in violent and largely unsuccessful actions against the government. The movement's leading thinker during the period of Jamal Abdul Nasser was Sayyid Qutub who was accused of attempting to assassinate Nasser. Qutub was tortured and hanged in 1966.

The Modernist Muslims believe that the Qur'an and the Sunnah can be reinterpreted so as to make their injunctions compatible with the modern world and that real change, can come about only through long-lasting changes in the legal and educational systems; not merely through political changes, not simply by overthrowing corrupt governments.

Modernists are, therefore, reformers. Fazlur Rahman (and Maulana Wahiduddin) ; are certainly among these modernists, who emphasized that by correctly interpreting the Qur'an in particular, and not simply by accepting the views of the medieval commentators, modern Muslims could derive an authentically Islamic response to modern life.⁵⁶

⁵⁶ Islam and Modernity, Journal Religion and the Arts, Brill Academic Publishers, Volume 5, Number 4, pp. 495–503

Education and Science in the Muslim World

Muslim scholars in seeking to live successfully in the modern world have been emphasizing a great deal the role of education and the importance of mastering Western, science and technology. Already in the 19th century, certain Muslim countries such as Egypt, Ottoman Turkey and Persia established institutions of higher learning where the modern sciences were taught. During this century educational institutions at all levels have proliferated throughout the Islamic world.

In various parts of the Islamic world there is, however, a sense that educational institutions must be expanded and also have their standards improved to the level of the best institutions in the world in various fields of learning especially science and technology. At the same time there is an awareness that the educational system must be based totally on Islamic principles and the influence of alien cultural values and norms, to the extent that they are negative, be diminished.

It may be of interest to note that despite difference in methodology almost all the Muslim scholars in 20th century remain united in rejecting the communism and Marxism as a sociopolitical ideology. Badiuzzaman said Nursi (1877-1960) Sayyid Abul A'ala Mawdudi (1903-1979), Maulana Wahiduddin Khan (b.1925) and Yusuf al-Qardawi (b.1926) have written extensively against Marxism, Socialism and Communism.

Inference:

The Islamic world remains today a vast land not restricted to a particular part of the globe. Muslims wish to live in the modern world but seeking to assert their own identity without simply imitating blindly the ways followed by the West. The Islamic world wishes to live at peace with the West as well as the East but at the same time not to be dominated by them. It wishes to devote its resources and energies to building a better life for its people on the basis of the teachings of Islam and not to squander its resources in either internal or external conflicts. It seeks finally to create better understanding with the West and to be better understood by the West.

CHAPTER II

ISLAMIC THOUGHT IN INDIA IN EARLY 20TH CENTURY

INTRODUCTION

Thought, generally is the action or process of thinking, reflection, or of conceiving ideas, and arrangement of ideas in mind; in a collective sense it is the intellectual activity or characteristics of the particular thinkers of a class or times.

As for Islamic thought; it is a general term with variable interpretations. However, in simple terms it is the combination of revelation and reason, or the role of the mind in appreciating, comprehending and interpreting revelation and guiding mankind about means and objective of Divine revelations. Al-Quran the word of God and Sunnah or the practice of the holy Prophet of Islam, form the firm foundation on which the whole edifice of Islamic thought has been developed.⁵⁷

The contours of Islamic thought in India in early 20th century were in fact shaped by certain political events in latter half of 19th century. It may be remarked right in the beginning that while talking about India of early 20th century; we mean the Indian subcontinent, as it then included the territories now standing distinctly separate as Pakistan and Bangladesh.

The new developments and realignment of political forces had thus a lasting effect on the future molding of Islamic thought in the sub-continent. e.g:

- 1857 event, leading to a chain of reactions.
- Intellectual moves of Sir Sayyid Ahmed Khan, Maulana Shibli Nomani, Sir Muhammad Iqbal & Maulana Azad.

⁵⁷ Sheikh Jamil Ali, Islamic Thought and Movements in the Sub-continent, 2010, p-12

- Religious educational movements of Deoband and Nadwatul Ulama Lucknow.
- Division of Bengal and creation of Hindu- Muslim gulf.
- Indian freedom movement
- Religious Challenges like Christian Missionaries and *Shudhi* Movement.
- Ahmadiya (Qadiyani) Movement.
- First World War.
- Fall of Ottoman Empire and *Khilafat* Movement.

With the turn of 20th century, in Indian sub-continent and the fall of Muslim empire, as a part of world scenario, posed new challenges and the worthy Muslim scholars like Sir Sayyid Ahmad Khan, Sir Muhammad Iqbal and Maulana Abul Kalam Azad responded to the need of the hour with their respective visions and capabilities. Though the divide and rule policy of the British couldn't be fully overcome especially with Indian Muslims but the non-sectarian approach of these scholars had lasting effect on Muslim scholars who always carried the gem on their back of mind in their deliberations and write-ups. Similarly, the need for *ijtihad* in modern times advocated by Sir Sayyid Ahmad Khan and Allama Iqbal's 'The Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam' is more relevant today than yester years. The call for return to Quran and "*let the Quran speak for itself*" by Maulana Azad, made the Muslims more comfortable in a pluralistic society though the political deprivation still haunts the Muslim leaders. There was fall of Ottoman Empire and Khilafat Movement of Indian Muslims had miserably failed.

Fall of Muslim Rule (1857):

The year 1857, marked a significant development in the history of India in the form of fall of Mughal Empire and the British control of Indian subcontinent. It disturbed the social harmony of Indian society and elicited varied response from Indian intelligentsia. It changed not only the political scenario but equally affected the social, cultural, educational and religious aspects of Indian culture particularly the Muslim life. The Muslims though in minority had been ruling India for a long time and the weakness and decay in their collective life had begin much earlier; the 1857 incident was in fact a ceremonial end of Muslim power in India.

As the British had taken over the political control from Muslims who; though in minority were the rulers of the land, it is not surprising that their reaction to British take-over and their policies was sharper and more determined than that of Hindus. Muslims participated in the revolt with spirit of *Jihad* which was not only legalized by Indian *Ulama* but they actually participated in it in sizeable numbers. Indeed, they were the main organizers of this revolution. After the collapse of this movement therefore they had to pay a heavy price and that is why the British policy in post-1857 was decidedly anti-Muslim.⁵⁸

Muslims losing ground in polity, services and education stood powerless defeated and demoralized, falling farther behind their Hindu compatriots in the matter of education. There was

⁵⁸ Sheikh Jamil Ali, *Insight Islamicus*, Vol.9, 2009, p-132

a realization that idea of *jihad* for their revival was impracticable at this stage and rather counterproductive. At this juncture of History in Indian subcontinent two types of Muslim responses were offered, one by the traditional or orthodox *Ulama* and another by Muslim modernists.

Majority of Indian *Ulama* advocated a policy of isolation and noncooperation with a particular reference to western educational institutions, their language, ideas and values in an attempt to preserve the Islamic culture and heritage under non-Muslim rule. However, some of the *Ulama* particularly Maulana Qasim Nanotwi and his colleagues turned to a more peaceful method, establishing a Madarsa drawing guidance from Shah Waliullah's legacy that later developed into the world famous, Religious Institution of Islam, *Darul 'Ulum Deoband*; the main centre of traditional Muslim thought in subcontinent.

Another Muslim school of modernists sought to respond to the situation, rather than reaction against the western challenges. They pressed for internal reform through a process of reinterpretation of Islam (*ijtihad*) and selective adaptation of western education, ideas and technology. Though sporadic efforts in this direction had begin already but the main focus of modernist thought in Indian subcontinent was Sir Sayyid Ahmad Khan, rightly called the first Muslim modernist. He was convinced that the survival of Muslim community necessitated a bold reinterpretation of Islam and the acceptance not rejection of the best in western thought.

Sir Sayyid Ahmad Khan (1817-1897):

Sir Sayyid Ahmed Khan was born and brought up in a noble Muslim Family of Delhi receiving his early orthodox education from Mawlana Mamluk Ali an accomplished teacher of Shah Waliullah School. He was thus in early phase of life, a traditional Muslim who under influence of Shah Waliullah's revivalist thought, wrote his first theological work, "*Rah-i-Sunnat wa Radd-i-biddat*". It was much later that he turned to rationalistic interpretation of Islam. Later, when he was in judicial service under British government, he wrote his literary works like "*Athar-e-Sanadid*" on the monuments and leading personalities of Delhi, published in 1847.

It was in fact the upheaval of 1857 that, like Indian scenario brought a similar revolution in the personal life of Sir Sayyid Ahmad Khan and undertook the responsibility of reform and modernization of Indian Muslims. He felt a strong urge to lead and guide a regular movement to bring about a drastic change in the political, social and religious outlook of the Muslims.⁵⁹ Through his treatise "*Asbab-e Baghawat-e-Hind*" or the 'Causes of Indian Mutiny' he analyzed the situation and sought reconciliation between British rulers and Indian Muslims. He tried to convince British that Muslims were not their enemies and on the other hand persuaded Muslims not to reject the useful aspect of western ideas particularly education, science and technology.

⁵⁹ Sheikh Jamil Ali, *Insight Islamicus*, Vo.9, 2009. p-137

To promote education and understanding of western thought he started schools at Ghazipur trying to bring English works within reach of his fellow countrymen through translation into Urdu. He established Scientific Society in 1864 and published a biweekly 'Aligarh Institute Gazette' to give a particular shape to his ideas. He visited England in 1869-70 and studied Western educational system in more depth. It was here that he compiled his "*Khutbaat-e-Ahmadiya*" a refutation of Sir William Muir's book "Life of Mahomet".

On his return, he started the Urdu journal "*Tehzibul Ikhlāq*" (Reform of Morals) to convey ideas on political social and religious problems. He now started his 'Muhammadan Anglo Oriental College' at Aligarh in 1875 on the lines of Oxford and Cambridge that forms a landmark in the history of Indian Muslim education. The Aligarh Movement so called after the Aligarh College (Aligarh Muslim University since 1920) is taken as an educational movement but in fact it was a comprehensive reform movement.

Darul 'Ulum Deoband:

Darul 'Ulum Deoband was established at Deoband, U. P. India by Maulana Qasim Nanotwi and Maulana Rashid Ahmad Gangohi in 1866 in the wake of the failed Sepoy Rebellion (1857) or the first war of independence as Indians often like to call it. Maulana Qasim Nanotwi was a student of Maulana Mamluk Ali from the tradition of Shah Waliullah (1703-1762). Maulana Nanotwi thus inspired by the revivalist reformist thought of Shah Waliullah established this institution on the

guidelines laid down by Shah Waliullah in the preceding 18th century.⁶⁰

The institution teaches revealed Islamic sciences according to the Hanafi School of jurisprudence. This Islamic seminary of international repute is conservative in nature based on the 17th century Indo-Islamic syllabus popularly known as '*Dars e Nizami*'. The students learn the Quran, and its exegesis; Hadith and its commentary; and *Hanafi Fiqh* (juristic rulings) with textual and rational proofs. They also study the biography of Prophet of Islam ﷺ; *Kalam* or scholastic theology; Arabic grammar, language and literature. The syllabus consists of many stages according to the specialty chosen by students. Despite efforts to modernize the education system there has been no change in curriculum; however the management has successfully incorporated the modern methods of classroom teaching, system of examinations and use of computers and other modern gadgets in teaching and publications.

Darul 'Ulum Deoband played an important role in India's freedom struggle. The political ideals of *Darul 'Ulum* Deoband were in fact founded a decade earlier after the failure of 1857 revolt. Maulana Imdadullah Muhajir Makki a spiritual leader alongwith his followers staged a protest against British rule at Thana Bhawan calling for independence of India. In 1913 Nanautwi's pupil Mehmudul Hassan was the leader in independence movement who incited the revolution through a movement called *Reshmi Rumal Tehrik* or 'Silken Letters Movement'. However, the program failed and Maulana

⁶⁰ Wani Bilal Ahmed, 'Contribution of Darul uloom Deoband to the development of Tafsir'; LAP Publishing, Germany, 2014. P-16

Mehmudul Hassan and Hussain Ahmad Madni along with many others joined hands with Indian National Congress under the banner of *Jamiat Ulama-e-Hind*. It may be of particular interest that Hussain Ahmad Madni always favoured a 'Pluralistic Indian Society' like Maulana Azad and criticized Muslim League for its Two Nation Theory.⁶¹

The Deoband Seminary has over the years grown into one of the largest and influential institution of Islamic learning; second only to Al-Azhar University at Cairo (Egypt), that combines modern secular subjects with the religious studies in all the schools of Islamic jurisprudence.

Ahmadiyah (*Qadiyani*) Movement:

It was a religious movement founded in Punjab province of British India near the end of the 19th century (1889). It originated with the life and teachings of Mirza Ghulam Ahmad Qadiyani (1835-1908), who first claimed to have appeared as a *mujaddid* of Islam (renewer), then promised Massih and Mehdi awaited by Muslims and finally a claim to have received *Wahi* like other prophets. The adherents of this movement are referred to as *Ahmadis*.

Mirza was born in 1835 in Qadiyan in Punjab and emerged as a writer and debater of Islam. At 40 years of age, he believed that God began to communicate with him. In 1882 Mirza claimed to be *mujaddid*. In 1889 he claimed to be promised Messiah and Imam Mehdi of the end times and took a pledge

⁶¹ Ibid.

of allegiance from his supporters and formed a community of followers called Ahmadi Muslim Community, committed to revival of pure and pristine Islam. In 1908 Mirza died in Lahore delegating powers to his successive caliphs.

Mirza Ghulam Ahmad Qadiyani was a prolific writer who wrote more than 90 books on various, religious, theological and moral subjects. His first work was "*Brahin-e-Ahmadiya*" or 'The Proofs of Islam' published in 1880. In addition, Mirza penned thousands of letters, delivered hundreds of lectures and engaged in scores of public debates in defense of Islam with Christian missionaries, and Hindu revivalists. Mirza believed that Jesus survived crucifixion and later died a natural death. He in his book 'Jesus in Kashmir' traces visit of Jesus to Kashmir and possibility of his grave there. These views of Mirza have been wrested by Christian theologians as against their beliefs.

Similarly, his claim to prophet-hood and use of words *Nabi* and *Rasul* go against the Islamic belief of finality of prophet-hood in favor of Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) as explicitly described in Holy Quran⁶². As such the mainstream Sunni Muslims treat *Ahmadis* as non-Muslims and the Pakistan government has officially declared *Ahmadis* as a non-Muslim group.⁶³ Further Mirza emphatically declared that an aggressive '*jihad* by the sword' has no place in Islam. In its place he taught his followers to wage a bloodless, intellectual jihad or the '*jihad* of

⁶² Al-Quran, 33:40.

⁶³ Government of Pakistan, Second Amendment to Constitution of Pakistan, 1974, Ministry of Law and Justice, Sept.7, 1974.

pen' to defend Islam. *Ahmadis* thus, view themselves as leading the revival and peaceful propagation of Islam.

The movement initiated by Mirza Ghulam Ahmad which is often seen to have emerged as an Islamic religious response to the Christian and Arya Samaj missionary activity widespread in 19th century India; is viewed by its adherents as a embodying the promised latter day revival of Islam by Messiah and has since grown in organizational strength and global spread.⁶⁴

In early twentieth century, Maulana Sana Ullah Amritsari (1868-1948), one of the stalwarts of *Ahl-al-Hadith* Movement was in forefront to refute Ghulam Ahmad Qadiyani's claims to Prophethood.

The Barelvi Sunni Movement:

It was founded by Allama Ahmad Raza Khan in view of intellectual and moral decline of Muslims in British India. He was a *Sufi* Muslim scholar of Hanafi School of thought and founder of the Barelvi Movement that sought a synthesis of *shariah* and Sufism, unlike the rival Deobandi School having leanings towards Salafism. The movement emphasizes primacy of Islamic law over adherence to Sufi practices in form of veneration of saints, and personal devotion to Prophet Muhammad ﷺ. The movement was a conservative response to Revivalist efforts of some Muslim scholars and groups in India particularly the *Salafi* movement and the Deoband institution, Aligarh Movement, Nadawatul Ulama and *Ahl-al-Hadith*

⁶⁴ Louis J. Hammann, *Ahmadiyyat: An Introduction*, The Ahmadiyya Muslim community.

Movement. It was in fact a mass movement, defending popular Sufism, which grew in response to the influence of Deobandi and Salafi movements.⁶⁵ It seeks adherence to the medieval Islamic tradition especially the defense of traditional mystic practices of South Asia.⁶⁶

Although the Darul 'Ulum Nadwatul Ulama was founded in 1893 to reconcile South Asia's Muslim sectarian differences, the Barelvi Ulama eventually withdrew their support and finally established their own independent institute in 1904.⁶⁷ It needs a mention here that unlike Deoband school of thought the Barelvi Ulama were supporters of the two nation theory and movement for creation of Pakistan. Ahmad Raza Khan wrote extensively on numerous topics including religion, law and Sufism. His prominent works include translation of the Qur'an, *'Kanzul Iman'* (1911), and *'Fatawa e Razvia'*.

Today the movement has spread across the globe with a huge number of followers in Indian Subcontinent as well as south Asian Diaspora throughout the world. Many religious schools, organizations and research institutions have been established now, that work on the teachings of Ahmad Raza Khan. *'Darul 'Ulum Manzar-e-Islam'* Bareilly is the central institute of this movement, established in 1904.

⁶⁵ Sirriyeh, Elizabeth (2004). "Sufi Thought and its Reconstruction" in *'Islamic Thought in the Twentieth Century*, I.B. Tauris.

⁶⁶ Jones, Kenneth W. (1989) *Socio-Religious Reform Movements in British India*, Cambridge University Press.

⁶⁷ Riaz Ali (2008). *'Faithful Education: Madarsahs in South Asia'* Rutgers University Press.

Darul Ulum Nadwatul Ulama Lucknow:

'*Nadwatul Ulama*' is an Islamic institution at Lucknow-India, which draws large number of Muslim students from all over the world. It fosters a diverse range of scholars and students including Hanafis, Shafis and *Ahl al-Hadith*. The Nadwah was formed to bring about the reconciliation of eastern and western learning of Deoband and Aligarh, as it was needed to unite the Ulama in task of spreading and defending Islam.⁶⁸

The idea of a modern Islamic institute was conceptualized in the convocation of *Madarsa Faiz e Aam* at Kanpur in 1893 by a group of Muslim scholars. It was named Nadwatul Ulama and Maulana Muhammad Ali was named the first *nazim* of Nadwah. The goal was to bring harmony and cooperation among various groups within Muslim *ummah* and to bring moral, religious and educational reform with an idea to counter the challenges of western education. It was founded at Kanpur in 1894 in the first annual convention of Nadwatul Ulama organization of scholars by Muhammad Ali Mongeri, Ashraf Ali Thanwi and Mahmudul Hassan among others. Maulana Shibli Noamani presented the working guidelines (*Dasturul Amaal*) for the institution before a galaxy of Indian *Ulama* belonging to different denominations.

Nadwah was eventually shifted to Lucknow in 1898 and the Islamic curricula were updated with modern sciences and vocational trainings etc. *Nadwa's* foundation stone was laid by John Briscott Hewitt, Lt. Governor of India on Nov. 28, 1906.

⁶⁸ Dr. Sayyid Abdul Bari, "Azad Hindustan men Muslim Tanzimen" Instt.of Objective Studies, New Delhi, 2013. P-69

The objectives of the Nadwah as envisaged by its founders were:

- To serve as a bridge between old world and the new but firm on matter of fundamentals.
- To produce an educated class of Muslims well versed in traditional learning and yet actively involved with the ruling power.
- To give Arabic a central place in its system of education.

Nadwatul Ulama has since undergone many changes. Initially it was proposed to spread a network of such institutions all over India and affiliate all madarasas with it for uniformity in syllabi and educational standards but it could not materialize. Similarly, the attempt to unite all schools of Islamic law under one umbrella also failed, and Nadwah is now just another sister concern of Deoband with addition of some modern subjects. It could not hold all the Muslim scholars together; and stalwarts like Shibli had to resign on differences of opinion.

Still, *Nadwatul Ulama* continues to be a prestigious Islamic institution of Indian subcontinent. It made significant progress in education, research and publication particularly under Maulana Abul Hassan Ali Nadwi, a Muslim scholar of international repute, who was a teacher at Nadwah from 1934 to 1960 and then head of the institution for another forty years till his death in 1999.⁶⁹

⁶⁹ Sheikh Jamil Ali, 'Trends in 20th Century Islamic Thought' in 'Insight Islamicus, 2009, p-179-90.

Maulana Shibli Nomani:

Shibli Nomani (1857-1914) was an Islamic scholar from Indian subcontinent during British rule. He was born at Azamgarh district of present day Uttar Pradesh. He is known for founding the Shibli National College in 1883 and the *Darul Musannifeen* at Azamgarh in 1914.

Though his brother was sent to Aligarh, Shibli got a classical Islamic education. One of his teachers, Muhammad Farooq Chiryakoti had rationalist leanings but in opposition to Sir Sayyid. That connection is often quoted as a reason for Shibli's ambivalent relationship with Aligarh and Sir Sayyid. He went to Makkah for Hajj and there he devoted his time to furthering his studies in Islamic theology, history, philosophy and Sufism from different scholars in Arabia.

In 1882, Shibli joined a teaching position at Sir Sayyid's Aligarh Institute (Now A.M.U.); where he taught Arabic and Persian for sixteen years. Shibli's genius in fact had its flowering in Aligarh when he came into contact with Sir Sayyid and British scholars like Thomas Arnold from whom he learnt western thought. In 1892 Shibli accompanied Thomas Arnold and travelled extensively in west Asia visiting educational institutions and libraries in Turkey, Egypt, and Syria for his own research and meetings with Islamic scholars there. After leaving Aligarh in 1898, Shibli had a brief stint with Nizam's government in Hyderabad, before shifting to Nadwatul Ulama in 1908.

Shibli was concerned with the reform of the *Ulama* so that they could be effective guides to the Muslim community. He was a scholar who wrote and published prolifically and who nurtured younger authors. Shibli was a versatile founding member of *Nadwah*. It was Shibli who formulated the initial guidelines for *Darul Uloom Nadwatul Ulama*. He intended to incorporate the best of Islamic and western learning in its curriculum, in order to produce a new breed of modernized *ulama*. Ultimately *Nadwah* gave up the notion of uniting Occidental and Oriental knowledge and concentrated on Islamic scholarship and on dissemination of biographical and historical writings in Urdu. Shibli's own writings set the pattern for the latter.

His works included biographies of caliphs, al-Mamun and 'Umar (RA), the jurists Imam Abu Hanifa and Imam al-Ghazali, the poet Rumi and the Prophet of Islam Muhammad (ﷺ). He had two works *Al-Kalam* and *Ilm-al-kalam* on scholastic theology.

Though he introduced methods of western historiography and biography, there was a tendency to romanticize the Islamic past in the interest of promoting Muslim pride and solidarity. His works, thus, in essence were defensive in nature as regards the response to west. In last year of his life (1913-14) he left *Nadwah* and retired to his home in Azamgarh, where he started *Shibli Academy (Darul Musannifeen)*; again, to promote historical scholarship and publications in Urdu.⁷⁰

⁷⁰ Dr. Ian Henderson Douglas: A Biographical sketch of Shibli Nomani.

Sir Muhammad Iqbal (1877-1938):

Allama Iqbal had a better exposure to west and through his study of western philosophy and Islamic traditions; he presented Islamic thought in a modern and scientific perspective. While admiring west for its dynamic spirit, intellectual tradition and technology, Iqbal is equally critical of western imperialism and cultural invasion.

Allama Iqbal had a deep, all consuming love for his community, an intense faith in Islam and profound reverence for Islamic traditions. Muslim religious and political revival and reform was his lifelong concern. He made significant contributions in this direction both as a poet philosopher with considerable influence on contemporary Muslims; and with some reluctance, utilizing his political thought.

He even had to come forward for reform in religious thought through his suggestion for a 'Reconstruction of Religious thought in Islam' that was though frowned upon by conventional *Ulama*. He was fully convinced that Islamic tradition was intrinsically dynamic and creative and thus well in a position to accommodate modern developments in science and education. He was convinced that blind imitation of the past was at the root of Muslim decline, world over. Like Sir Sayyid Ahmad Khan, he also suggested a reassertion of *Ijtihad*.

Maulana Abul Kalam Azad (1888-1958):

Muhayyudin Abul kalam better known as Maulana Abul Kalam Azad (born in Makkah 1888) was one of the most influential personalities of Indian Sub-continent in the early 20th century. Born and brought up in a religious atmosphere, Azad molded himself into an *aalim* of encyclopedic knowledge rightly called *Imamul Hind* and *Abul-Kalam*. Gifted with a revolutionary mind, Azad started his journey as a revivalist, then transforming into a journalist and finally a towering political figure, never divorcing his earlier interests.

When his father Maulana Khairuddin came to Calcutta from Makkah, Azad was 10 years old. It was here that Azad received his early education from his father who was an orthodox Muslim in his thought and action, averse to modern education and thoughts.⁷¹

Still Azad, defying all obstacles went on to make extensive study of both traditional Islamic and modern knowledge, establishing himself as a scholar of international stature. With Arabic as his mother-tongue, Maulana Azad, learnt Persian, Urdu, English and French and had in depth knowledge of Islamic Sciences like Quran, Hadith, *Sirah*, *tasawwuf*, Islamic History, culture and civilization; at the same time being well versed with modern socio-political and scientific developments.

⁷¹ Badar Azimabadi, "Great Personalities in Islam" Adam Publishers, New Delhi, 2007. P-236.

'Tarjumanul Quran', 'India Wins Freedom', *Tazkira, Ghubar e Khatir*, and 'Quran ka Qanoon e Urooj o Zawal' are internationally acclaimed contributions of Maulana Azad.⁷²

Maulana Azad started his literary career quite early in life with poetry and then permanently shifting to prose writing which he not only excelled but developed a unique and inimitable style of his own that could accommodate creative, scientific and critical subjects alike at the same time, addressing the needs of his times. His literary acumen was appreciated by legends like Abul Hassan Ali Nadwi. Though Azad had interactions with Sir Sayyid Ahmad Khan, Maulana Shibli Noamani and Hamiduddin Farahi; his thought and expression was never eclipsed by any of them.⁷³

Azad, while still young, envisaged a revolutionary model for Muslims and tried to establish a revivalist religio-political organization, *Hizbullah*, and he preached his *ijtihadi* Islamic thought through his periodicals, *Al-Hilal* and *Al-Balagh*,⁷⁴ but majority of Indian *Ulama* were little moved as they preferred to stick to their fixed ideas and loyalties.⁷⁵ Soon he abandoned the project which was later adopted by Maulana Mawdudi in modified form of *Jamaat-i-Islami*. Maulana Azad now concentrated on his exegesis of Quran '*Tarjuman ul Quran*', which though he could not complete, is a precious addition to

⁷² Ghatreef Shahbaz Nadwi, *Aalalm e Islam ke Chand Mashahee'* Rehbar Book Service New Delhi, 2014. P-276

⁷³ *Afkar e Milli*, "Shakhsiyat Number" July 2005. P-6.

⁷⁴ Ubaidullah Fahd, '*Ahya I Din aur Hindustani Ulamaa'* Al-Qalam Publications Kashmir, 2011. P-66

⁷⁵ *Ibid*.p-106

modern Exegetic literature; wherein, he has adopted the principle, "Let the Quran speak for itself", a return to the *Tafseer bil Mathur* methodology of scholarship.

Similarly, Maulana Azad has deliberated in detail on the causes of decline of Muslims as dereliction of their role as '*Khair e Ummat*' and working for their worldly interests rather than 'Cause of Islam'. He advises them to be realistic, just, and useful to society and focused on spreading the 'word of God' to whole humanity. He frequently reiterates his principle of '*Baqa-i-Anfa*' or 'survival of the useful' in the society that Muslims should adopt.⁷⁶

Maulana Azad believed that nationalism and pluralism are the realities of modern world and Muslims need to realize this fact as early as possible. But only *Ulama* of Deoband were convinced and were only ally with Azad in opposing Two-nation Theory. He proposed a united nationalistic idea that was best in the interest of Muslims. He also exhorted Muslims to join Indian National Congress to win Freedom for India. His image of congress was however distorted in later years when congress stalwarts like Jawahar Lal Nehru and Sardar Patel agreed to division of India on communal lines as demanded by Muslim League.

After the Indo-Pak partition in 1947, Maulana Azad served as the first Union Minister for Education, shaping the contours of Education System in India; and making many more valuable

⁷⁶ Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, "Quran ka Qanoon e Urooj o Zawal" Maktaba Jamal, Lahore, ND. P-100- 108

contributions, before his death in 1958.⁷⁷ It may be of interest to note that the Two-nation Theory finally proved to be a mirage, and there is now a revised interest in study of Maulana Azad's Islamic thought even in Pakistan.⁷⁸

The Khilafat Movement⁷⁹:

The Khilafat Movement (1919-1924) was an agitation by Indian Muslims allied with Indian Nationalism in the years following World War-I. Its purpose was to pressurise British government to preserve the integrity of Ottoman Empire as it stood prior to World War 1, and to uphold the status of its Sultan as Caliph of Muslims.

The leaders of the movement included Ali Brothers (Muhammad Ali and Shaukat Ali), Maulana Mehmudul Hassan (Deoband) and Maulana Abul Kalam Azad. They viewed European attacks upon the authority of the Caliph as an attack upon Islam, and thus as a threat to the religious freedom of Muslims under British rule. To achieve these goals they sent a delegation led by Mahatma Gandhi, to London in 1920 but it failed in achieving the desired results as British government was adamant on its stand, with no change in its policy towards Turkey.

⁷⁷ Badar Azimabadi "Great Personalities in Islam"; Adam Publishers, New Delhi, 2007. P-242.

⁷⁸ Ghatreef Shahbaz Nadwi, "*Aalalm e Islam ke Chand Mashahee*"; Rehbar Book Service, New Delhi, 2014. pp-280,82

⁷⁹ *Encyclopedia.1914-1918-online.net/article/khilafat_movement*

The significance of the Khilafat movement, however, lies less in its supposed Pan-Islamism; than its impact upon the Indian Nationalist Movement. The leaders of the Khilafat Movement forged the first political alliance among western educated Indian Muslims and *Ulama* over the religious symbol of the Khilafat. The National Congress, led by Gandhi called for non-violent, non-cooperation against the British. Gandhi espoused the Khilafat cause, as he saw in it the opportunity to rally Muslim support for nationalism. The Ali Brothers and their allies, in turn, provided the non-cooperation movement with some of its most enthusiastic followers.

In late 1921, however the movement was suppressed by British government through tyrant methods of arrests and imprisonments. Gandhi suspended the Non-Cooperation movement in early 1922. The final blow to the Khilafat movement came from Turkish nationalists who declared to abolish the Ottoman Sultanate in 1922 and the caliphate in 1924.⁸⁰

Tablighi Jama'at

Tablighi Jamaat (the society for spreading faith) is a non-political, global missionary movement based at Basti Nizamuddin in Delhi (India). It was established in 1927 by Maulana Muhammad Ilyas al-Kandhelvi, then a teacher at *Muzahir al-Ulum* Saharanpur U.P. Its primary aim is spiritual reformation of Islam by reaching out to Muslims and working at grassroots level; to bring them in line with group's understanding of Islam. *Tablighi Jamaat* believes that Muslims are in constant state of *Jihad* in the sense of fight against evil,

⁸⁰ Minault, Gail: The Khilafat movement. Religious symbolism and political mobilization in India, New York 1982: Columbia University Press.

the weapon of choice is *Dawah* and that battles are won or lost in the 'hearts of men'.

Tablighi Jamaat began as an offshoot of Deobandi movement, and a response to perceived deteriorating moral values and negligence of Islamic ideals. It expanded from a local to national and then international movement. The *Jamaat* denies any affiliation, in principle, with politics; focusing on the Quran and *Hadith* and states that it rejects violence.

The *Tablighi Jamaat* represented the intensification of individual reformation aspects of the original Islam. It was also a continuation of the broader trend of Islamic revival in India in the wake of the collapse of Muslim political power and the subsequent consolidation of the British rule.

The emergence of *Tablighi Jamaat* also coincided closely with the rise of various Hindu proselytizing movements such as *Shudhi* (Purification) and *Sangathan* (Consolidation) which launched massive efforts in the early twentieth century to reconvert to Hinduism; those who had earlier embraced Islam or Christianity.

At the time, some Muslim leaders feared that Muslims were losing their religious identity to the majority Hindu culture. It started its initial activities in Mewat suburbs of Delhi where some ignorant Muslims were reported to have reconverted to Hinduism when Muslim political powers declined in the region.

Maulana Abdul Majid Daryabadi (1892-1977):

Maulana Abdul Maajid Daryabadi was an Indian Muslim scholar and exegete of the Qur'an. He was associated with the *Khilafat Movement*, Royal Asiatic Society, Aligarh Muslim University, Nadwatul Ulama Lucknow, Shibli Academy Azamgarh, and some more organization. He contributed an extensive four volume commentary on the Qur'an in English (*Tarjuman ul Quran*) and an independent *Tafsir* in Urdu named '*Tafsir e Majidi*'; besides many more publications. As mentioned earlier, the turn of twentieth century posed many challenges for Indian Muslims including, British colonialism, western Science and technology, Christian missionary activities coupled with decline of Muslim polity and civilizational decay. While many Muslim individuals and organizations responded to these challenges in their own capacity, Daryabadi a Muslim intellectual of high caliber chose to cooperate with other contemporary movements along with his own efforts to register an individual intellectual response.

His main contribution of high merit is his Commentary on the Quran in four volumes wherein he has tried to seek a compatibility of Islam and the modern sciences, explaining many Quranic verses in light of science and tracing the roots of modern sciences in Quranic *ayah* revealed centuries ago. He thus proves Islam as a religion that stands the test of time and scientific inquiry alike. Another important aspect of his exegesis is refutation of the Christian allegations against Islam, through scientific and logical arguments in light of modern

available knowledge.⁸¹ This two pronged strategy of Maulana Daryabadi was a befitting response to the western challenges to Islam in the early part of the twentieth century.

Inference:

In Indian sub-continent, particularly after the 1857 event, Sir Sayyid Ahmad Khan (1817-1897) and Sir Muhammad Iqbal were the earliest scholars for modernization of Muslims particularly in the fields of education, science and technology. They were equally concerned with the stagnation of Islamic thought as a result of blind following and lack of exercise of *ijtihad*, the only dynamic factor allowing eternal principle of movement in Islam. While Sir Sayyid Ahmad Khan is known as the first Muslim scholar to open the closed doors of *ijtihad*, Allama Iqbal suggested introducing more reforms in Islamic legal system that even earned him the displeasure of many conservative Muslim scholars and institutions. Still; both of them along with Maulana Abul Kalam Azad wielded great influence on the Islamic thought in India in the latter half of 19th and early 20th century.

Among institutions, Sir Sayyid Ahmad Khan's Aligarh Movement, Maulana Qasim Nanotwi's *Darul Uloom Deoband*, Maulana Ahmad Raza Khan's Institute at Bareilly, *Nadwatul Ulama*, Shibli's *Darul Musannifeen Azamgarh*, *Ahl al-Hadith* Movement and Tablighi Jamaat formulated the wide-ranging responses that shaped the contours of Islamic Thought. It may be pertinent that political developments in subcontinent in

⁸¹ Maulana Abdul Majid Daryabadi, *Tafsir ul Quran(English)*, Academy of Research & Publications, Lucknow, 2007

form of British colonization and its attendant problems (like division of Bengal, Hindu-Muslim discordance, and reorganization of united Provinces), the first world war, collapse of Ottoman empire and Khilafat Movement; and the growing demand for freedom of India all had social and political aspects that greatly influenced the Islamic thought and civilization as well.

Maulana Mawdudi's suggestion for re-establishment of Muslim Rule in India strictly according to letter and spirit of Islam was appealing to the Muslim youth but it was a long-term policy having no immediate solutions for the beleaguered Muslims. More over the Indo-Pak partition in 1947 further reduced its application, as the same was not suited for a pluralistic society like India.

The latter half of twentieth century belonged to Mawlana Sayyid AbulAla Mawdudi (1903-1979) and Maulana Sayyid Abul Hassan Ali Nadwi (1913-1999) popularly known as Ali Miyan Nadwi. Both of them were personally pious and prolific writers who, through their writings provided ideological foundations to the contemporary Islamic revivalist thought. They formulated specific responses to the challenges facing Muslim Ummah in general and Indian Muslims in particular. Their contributions in defending Islam against onslaught of western materialistic civilization and the ideologies like Marxism and Communism; are laudable. Though revival and reform were the common goals for both of them; they differed in their approaches. Another significant revivalist, reformist and modernist voice of the post-independence India, often

overlooked is that of Maulana Wahiduddin Khan (b.1925), who has developed an independent understanding of Islam, capable of solving a host of contemporary problems facing Muslim *Ummah*. (To be discussed in coming chapters in detail).

Mawlana Sayyid AbulAla Mawdudi considering it essential for development in society with unity and transcendental sovereignty of Allah that is not merely a belief but determines the political, economic and moral aspects of societies. Thus by revival he means to reinstate Islam as a political system. He believes that 'the *shariah* does not make any distinction between religion and other aspects of life particularly between religion and the state.'

Mawlana Mawdudi's major contribution and legacy was his systemic presentation of Islam, calling for restoration of Islam's primacy in personal and political lives. He attempted to provide a theoretical blueprint for the revival of Islam through a process he called Islamic revolution. He never ignores the importance of securing power which he believes is sine-qua non for the establishment of '*Din e Haqq*' that translates to mean "accepting Allah as the real ruler and to spend one's individual and collective life in His servitude."⁸²

He argues that power and leadership in society are crucial and decisive factors in human affairs as the course of human civilizations is often determined by people who control the centers of power. He further asserts that, it needs organized

⁸² Sheikh Jamil Ali, Insight Islamicus, Vol.9, 2009. p183

efforts to bring God's land under God's rule and the presence of good individuals in large numbers is not enough.⁸³

It is here that Mawlana Ali Miyan Nadwi and Maulana Wahiduddin Khan parted ways with Maulana Mawdudi. Both of them stress on individual reform to bring about durable and sustainable social changes. They lay more stress on worship (*ibadah*) and spirituality (*maarifah*) in Islam as an attempt to attain pleasure of Allah and his nearness. Here they come closer to Maulana Ilyas's Tablighi Jamaat showing little concern for political awareness and social issues. Maulana Nadwi stressed the importance of reforming individuals instead of establishing Islamic government.

According to Nadwi "prophets used to transform men from inside, they emphasized the change in attitudes and perspective of men rather than change of system (*nizam*)"⁸⁴. He further argues that the political ideology of social change propounded by Maulana Mawdudi (based on Prophet's Madinan model) is not suited to needs of Indian Muslims in a pluralistic society comparable to Makkah period of early Islam. In this regard his thought is in line with the stance of Ulama of Deoband, Maulana Azad and Maulana Wahiduddin Khan. Through his '*Payam e Insaniyat*' he appealed to all, irrespective of cast creed or religion for moral reformation and humanitarianism. However, with regard to modern western education, the views of both Sayyids however, converge. They suggest being selective in adopting from the west, only good,

⁸³ Maulana Mawdudi, *Islami Hkumat kis trah Qaim Hoti Hai'*

⁸⁴ Maulana Ali MiyanNadwi, *Payam-i-Insaniyat*, p. 17

useful and compatible with moral and spiritual heritage of Islam are to be taken.

According to Maulana Mawdudi 'the healthy achievements of western civilization, especially its scientific and technological advancements, in so far as they are in conformity with Islamic principles and the spirit and objective of Islam, should be appraised, abstracted and assimilated, into the Islamic scheme of life.'⁸⁵All the three Indian Muslim scholars of 20th century, Maulana Mawdudi, Maulana Ali Miyan and Maulana Wahiduddin Khan see modern scientific education as the continuation of the sciences that had flourished in Islamic civilization several centuries ago. ⁸⁶ However, Mawlana Ali Miyan Nadwi stresses on reformation and modernization of Arab world as essential for revival and resurgence of the past glory of Muslims.

The differences of paradigms; among these Muslim scholars are divergence of thought rather than belief, one of methods not meanings, and of means not ends. It is interesting however, to note that all these scholars while making efforts for revival and reform of Islam, turn to primary texts for guidance but come out with different formulations for achieving their common goal; that necessitates a detailed study of each of them in their right perspectives.

⁸⁵ Maulana Mawdudi, *Talimat*, pp. 34-35.

⁸⁶ Maulana Wahiduddin Khan, *Islam Daur e Jadiddka Khaliq*, Maktaba Al-Risalah, New Delhi

CHAPTER III

LIFE & WORKS OF MAULANA WAHIDUDDIN KHAN

INTRODUCTION

India since time immemorial has been a land of culture, civilization, religion & spirituality and it has maintained that identity over the centuries despite many ups and downs in political history. The twentieth century has been a period of vigorous intellectual history in fields of politics, science and technology and so in socio religious fields.

The main institutions of learning in Islamic sciences in early twentieth century were Aligarh Muslim University, *Darul uloom* Deoband and *Nadwatul Ulama* Lucknow. Maulana Wahiduddin Khan appears on the horizons of Indian Islamic thought strictly speaking in post-independence era, as a socio-religious reformer when he starts his journey after selecting a path after decades of turbulent early life and arduous journey of search for truth.

His prominent senior contemporaries included Allama Sir Mohammad Iqbal, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, Mawlana Abul Aala Mawdudi and Maulana Abul Hassan Ali Nadwi better known as Ali Miyan Nadwi. Though a sizeable literature has been produced on the life, works and ideology of these stalwarts; little is available in written form on life and mission of Maulana Wahiduddin Khan, barring a few polemics.

Maulana Wahiduddin Khan (b.1925)⁸⁷ is one of the leading Indian Islamic scholars of modern times, recognized worldwide for his scholarship and his commitment to the cause of Islamic revival and reform. Later in life he has grown into a renaissance man with deep knowledge of science and western philosophy in addition to Islamic sciences. His strong conviction, perseverance and clarity of vision are exemplary in contemporary Islamic thought.

This chapter provides an introduction to his life and works and a broader overview of his over 200 published works and unclassified writings on Islam in the modern world. It focuses particularly on his own view of Islam in contemporary world as well as his efforts to reconcile status of post-partition Indian Muslims as citizens of a multi-religious society and as members of a larger global Muslim *Ummah*.

⁸⁷ 1925 is the date of birth of Maulana available in official records; the actual being a year earlier (1924) according to Maulana's own recorded statements.

Maulana's TimeLine

1925	Birth at Badharya, Azamgarh U.P. India
1929	Death of father
1930	Primary Education at <i>Darsgaah e Islami</i> Badharya
1938	Joined <i>Madarsatul Islah sarai Mir</i> Azamgarh
1942	Marriage and family Life
1944-47	Spiritual Crisis//Quest for Truths
1947	Joined <i>Jamat e Islami</i> (Hind) at Bhadarya Azamgarh)
1956-1962	<i>Jamat e Islami</i> (Hind) Rampur, U.P. India
1956	Published first Booklet: <i>Naye Ehd ke Darwaze Par.</i>
1962-66	<i>Majlis e Tehqiqat o nashriyat</i> (<i>Nadwatul Ulma Lukhnow</i>)
1967-74	Editor <i>Aljamiat</i> Weekly Delhi (<i>Jamiyat Ulma e Hind</i>)
1975	Shifted to C-29 Nizamuddin West// Islami Markaz
1976	Al-Risala (Urdu) & Maktaba Al-Risala
1984	Al-Risala English (The Spirit of Islam)
1996	Goodword Books
2001	Centre for Peace & Spirituality
2011	Al Quran Mission

Origin, Migration and Settlement of Ancestors

Maulana Wahiduddin Khan's ancestors migrated from Chitral-Swat area of Afghanistan (now Pakistan) during 15th century and settled at Jonepur India, a city in Uttar Pradesh of modern day India; like so many other Pathans who had migrated from Afghanistan to India at various stages of history. Maulana's great grandfather Hassan Khan was the first man to venture a journey to India leaving behind his ancestral property in Swat to his brother Hussain Khan who preferred to stay back. His progeny prospered and progressed there for a couple of centuries before Maulana's great grandfather Ziauddin Khan after getting married to Nasiba Khan a noble lady of Azamgarh shifted from Jonepore and settled in a village Bhadarya near Azamgarh permanently. It is here that Maulana Wahiduddin Khan was born and brought up in second quarter of 20th century.

Early life and Education

Maulana belonged to a family of Pathan landlords settled in village Bhadarya, Azamgarh, (UP); and was born and brought up here. Maulana spent early years of his life in village *Bhadariya* a purely rural and scenic environment devoid of hustle and bustle of cities; a classical example of rural India. But when his father Fariduddin Khan a well-known figure of his locality died in 1929, young Wahiduddin was just 5 years old. The family suddenly got pushed to wall; getting only a negligible portion of ancestral property. There was social and economic marginalization. With meager resources at hand, his mother, *Zaibun Nisa* (d. 1985), a pious lady, faced great

hardships in managing family affairs and bringing up five of her minor children including; Abdul Aziz then 8 years old, Wahiduddin, 5 years, and Abdul Muheet just one year old. But the noble lady successfully managed everything including better education of her children till she finally expired in 1985; when they were all well settled and prosperous in their respective fields. Maulana, often gives credit of his success to four factors in his personality development that made him what he is today: i) Natural environs of rural India; ii) His mother Zaibun Nisa (d.1985) who brought up and educated her five young children for Half a century after death of her husband Fariduddin Khan;⁸⁹ iii) Madrasa system of education and iv) Services of good teachers that Maulana was lucky to have during his life at different stages of learning. He believes that primary aim of education is personality development of a student; academic degrees and jobs are just by-products. He believes that it was because of this natural environ that he could develop a scientific temperament and objective thinking, at the same time remaining immune from psychology of reactionary thought.⁹⁰

Maulana believes that credit of democratizing education goes to Islam and history is witness to the fact that before advent of Islam, priorities of different rulers were establishment of Citadels, temples and mausoleums only. Muslims in the first phase of Islam established educational institutions around the globe. The Concept of 100% literacy was alien to world before

⁸⁹ Maulana Wahiduddin Khan, 'Aurat Ma'amaar e Insaniyat' New Delhi, p-179-82.

⁹⁰ Maulana Wahiduddin Khan, Al-Risala, August 1998, p-33-34

advent of Islam. Earlier it was the prerogative of chosen few to have access to education. It was Islam that delivered the knowledge from restricted spheres and gave a concept of mass education to the world history. Muslims learnt this secret directly from the Holy Quran which at number of places stresses on knowledge and condemns ignorance. That includes the oft quoted, chronologically the first *Ayat* of Sura al Alaq (86:01) starting with the assertive *iqra* -READ! That was revealed on Feb 12th 610 CE. This education mission spread from Makkah to Madina and then travelled to Damascus, Baghdad, Cairo, Cordova and then the whole world.⁹¹

Maulana is a product of formal Madrasa Education and has often expressed his satisfaction for being so. He traces the origin of Madrasa system of education to Lord Macauley's education policy that was announced in 1834 CE wherein the East India Company started a campaign of education in India that could produce such educated Indians who could contribute to consolidation of British rule over India. After failure of Indian Muslims in 1857 and formal take-over of British rule; Indian *Ulama*, in response to the education policy of British, decided, instead of confrontation, to launch a peaceful but elaborate network of Madrasa throughout the length and breadth of Indian subcontinent that could hold young Muslims to the roots of Islamic culture and civilization drawing requisite strength from original sources of Islam. While Institutes of Secular learning were established by Britishers in big cities and towns only like Calcutta, Madras,

⁹¹ Maulana Wahiduddin Khan, *Al-Risala*, September, 2000 p-34

Delhi and Bombay; Indian *Ulama* extended the madrasa network of education to doorsteps of common man hardly leaving out any uncovered village. Establishment of *Darsghah e Islami* in Badharya and *Madrasa tul Islah Sarai Mir* where Maulana later got his education; were a part of this larger Madrasa network, he believes.

Maulana started his early education under guardianship of his uncle Sufi Abdul Majid Khan (d.1948) and his cousin Iqbal Ahmed Khan Suhail an Aligarian advocate, socio-political activist and an accomplished poet. Though many children of his family studied in secular English medium schools including his well-known cousin Iqbal Ahmed Sohail and his brothers Abdul Aziz Khan and Abdul Muheet Khan, family elders particularly Maulana's uncle Sufi Abdul Majid, decided to make Wahiduddin an *Aalim* as there was none earlier in this family.

Thus, born and brought up in Islamic environment, young Wahiduddin was sent in 1930 to a local maktab (*Darsghah e Islami at Bhadarya*) established by Khalil Ahmed Khan (a village land lord) for study of Quran and Hadith. Young Wahiduddin started his primary education under Maulana Faiz ul Rehman Islahi an accomplished and dedicated teacher who instilled in young Wahiduddin a quest for knowledge at right time. He was the elder son of Maulana Muhammad Shafi the founder of Madrasatul Islah Sarai Mir; which Maulana Wahiduddin Khan joined in 1938. Here he spent Complete eight years in this *Madrasa* learning Urdu, Persian, Arabic and Islamic sciences from different sources of knowledge available in this

institution, unlike his peers most of whom would drop out after some working knowledge of Urdu and recitation of Quran.

Maulana is highly appreciative of Maulana Ismaiel Mirthi and Maulana Hali Panipati for playing the role of reformers, writing down realistic and lucid poetry that instilled value education in the minds of young learners at primary level. Besides *Gulistan and Bostan* of Saadi in Persian, Maulana also learnt Arabic as a subject of special interest that helped Maulana a lot in later life.

In order to train him as an *aalim* Wahiduddin Khan; after early education was sent to *Madrasatul Islah at Sarai Mir*. Established in 1908 AD, this Madrasa was founded by Maulana Muhammad Shafi (d.1945), father of the well-known Urdu poet Khalilur Rehman Azmi.⁹²The objectives of this madrasa were chalked out by Maulana Shibli Noamani (d.1914) while Hamiduddin Farahi supervised the affairs of Madrasa including formulation of curriculum for institutional studies till his death in 1930. Maulana recalls the intellectual environment of his days there and calls it 'Golden Period' of Madrasa, as services of top class teachers in different disciplines of Islamic sciences were available during this period. Farahi's book on basic Arabic learning as also of Allama Zamakhshri's; were cherished by Maulana Wahiduddin Khan. He finally obtained the degree of *Aalim* in 1944 from this institution.

⁹² Maulana Wahiduddin Khan, *Al-Risalah*, September, 2000 p-31

Prominent teachers of Maulana in this Madrasa were Maulana Amin Ahsan Islahi (d.1997), Maulana Akhter Ahsan Islahi, Maulana Daud Akbar Islahi, Maulana Sayeed Ahmed Nadwi, Najmuddin Islahi, and Muhammad Shibli Nadwi who used to teach Fiqh. Maulana believes that Learning is a life-long process and he continued to learn even during his stay with *Jamaat e Islami* (1956) where he learnt Arabic from Maulana Jamil Ahsan Islahi and Sadruddin Islahi. In *Majlis e Tehqeeqat o Nashriyat e Islami* of *Darul Ulum Nadwatul Ulama* (1963) he acquired valuable knowledge from Maulana Ali Mian Nadwi, Maulana Abdul Bari Nadwi and Maulana Taqi Ammini among others. Even with *Aljamiyat* weekly in Delhi (1967) Maulana recalls learning from Mufti Ateeq ul Rehman Uthmani.

List of Teachers⁹³

S. No.	Place	Name of teacher	Year of Death
1	Bhadarya	Maulana Faiz ul Rehman Islahi (<i>Darsgah e Islami Bhadarya</i>)	1972
2	Sarai Mir	Maulana Akhtar Ahsan Islahi	1985
3		Maulana Amin Ahsan Islahi (<i>Tadabuur e Quran</i>)	1997
4		Maulana Mohammad Shibli Nadwi	1973

⁹³ Adopted from *Awraq e Hayyat* (Biography of Maulana Wahiddudin Khan) Ed. Shah Imran Hassan 2015.P 202.

5		Maulana Daud Akbar Islahi	1983
6		Maulana Sayeed Ahmed Nadwi	1949
7	Azamgarh	Iqbal Ahmed Khan Sohail	1955
8		Shah Moinuddin Ahmed Nadwi	1974
9		Maulana Abul Jalal Nadwi	1984
10	RamPur	Maulana Jalil Ahsan Nadwi	1981
11		Maulana Sadar uddin Islahi	1998
12		Maulana Abdul Wahab Rampuri	1978
13	Lucknow	Maulana Abul Hassan Ali Nadwi	1999
14		Maulana Mohammad Ishaque	1995
15		Maulana Mohammad Awais	1976
16		Maulana Abdul Hafeez	1971
17		Maulana Abdul Bari Nadwi (<i>Mazhab</i> aur Science)	1976

18	Algarh	Maulana sayeed Ahmed Akbarabadi (<i>Tarikh e Islam</i>)	1985
19		Maulana Mohammad Taqi Amini	1991
20	Delhi	Maulana Qazi Sajjad Hussain	1990
21		Maulana Mohammad Mian	1975
22		Maulana Abdul Khaliq Naqwi	1975
23		Maulana Abdul Haleem Siddiqui	1969
24		Mufti Ateeq ul Rehman Uthmani	1984

Maulana Wahiduddin Khan had an environment of educated family members back home where his Cousin Iqbal Ahmed Khan Suhail (M.A. LL B.) a practicing vakil and prominent Poet was there managing Maulana's family affairs after death of Maulana's father Fariduddin Khan. Even Maulana's brothers Aziz Ahmed Khan had his own business (Light & Co.) while younger brother Abdul Muheet Khan was a qualified engineer (B.Tech. (Electricals)) from B. H. U. They along with their uncle Sufi Abdul Majid provided a good learning environment. After his graduation, Khan returned to his village, instead of taking up employment in a mosque or *madrassa*, as did most of his class-mates. Back with his family, he found himself a misfit, sensing a great chasm between himself and his brothers and other relatives, who had received a modern, western,

education. That was followed by a period of great introspection and disillusionment with the traditional understanding of Islam.

Spiritual Crisis

A major turning point in life of Maulana Wahiduddin Khan came in 1944 when he returned home after completion of his Islamic studies at *Madrasatul Islah*. Faced with his modern educated peers back home, he felt a vacuum in himself with a haunting notion of inadequacy of religious education to face the challenges of modern world. After some hesitation he decided to equip himself with modern education particularly of English and Sciences. He took to self study in libraries for hours together studying English, Science and Philosophy that made him quite competent in these fields. During his self study he had come across writings of western scientists and philosophers particularly Bertrand Russel.

His faith in Islam was in fact temporarily shaken (1944 -1948) until restored by dedicated and diligent self study of Quran and Hadith as a result of which he has shown the zeal and vitality of a convert.⁹⁴ During this period, in search of truth he made long journeys to Lahore (1945) and Kanyakumari (1946) also without much success. As there still remained the unanswered question of compatibility and relevance of conventional Madrasa acquired Islamic knowledge to the advancement of modern world. He decided to study Islam directly from original sources (Quran and Hadith) not relying

⁹⁴ Maulana Wahiduddin Khan, 'Aurat Mazaar e Insaniyat' p-183-84

on the conventional Madrasa curricula based on medieval commentaries of the holy text. During this period, he spent long hours in different libraries to study Islam from original texts and world literature. He particularly visited, *Darul Musanaffin* Lucknow, Library of Shibli National College, and Mehta Library, quite often. While engaged in the study of holy texts he was able to regain his firm faith in Islamic teachings as well as innate power of Islam to prevail upon the man made western ideologies and - isms that had enchanted human thought over past few decades. Clearing away centuries of commentary and interpretation, and approaching the Qur'an and the Hadith directly, he came to believe, held the key to an understanding of Islam that could prove its relevance in the modern world. His attempt to learn English and modern sciences on his own and his exposure to western literature led him to believe that a new understanding of Islam was absolutely necessary to address the western educated mind, while at the same time remaining firmly grounded in the original sources of Islam.⁹⁵

Maulana recalling this phase states that it was not a matter of rejecting the faith, rather a quest for discovering the Truth at a higher plane not merely the common man's belief in a particular religion. He says such incident often were faced by intellectual class of Islamic scholars like, Abul Hassan Ali Ashari, Al-Ghazali, Ibn Taimya, Imam Razi, Abdul Majid Daryabadi, and Abul kalam Azad also. He remembers that during this period he used to perform regular prayers, fasting

⁹⁵ Yoginder Sikand, " Analysis of the writings of Maulana Wahiduddin Khan" Milli Gazette, Feb.2001

and even recited Quran regularly, particularly focusing on Al Baqra's Ayat (2:260) referring to Prophet Ibrahim (AS).⁹⁶

It was finally in 1948 that one day Maulana in Jama Masjid of Azamgarh heard the Quranic ayah being recited:

“ ⁹⁷لَمْ يَجِدْكَ يَتِيمًا فَآوَىٰ ۝ وَوَجَدَكَ ضَالًّا فَهَدَىٰ ” that delivered him of all skepticism and he regained his firm faith and vitality of a true Muslim. He admits that “The thing that warded me off from taking to atheism and contained me back to Islam was the self study of Quran and the life of Holy Prophet from original sources not relying on the later day medieval commentaries, interpretations and annotations.”

Thus, the erudition of Quran and *Hadith* not only delivered Maulana from clouds of doubt but also imbued in him a sense of mission. What Maulana learnt was thus self- acquired. An overall assessment of his life suggests that he was a self-made man as he often mentions in his writings.

Maulana Wahiduddin Khan was now in a position not only to analyze objectively and decry the various western ideologies but also present Islam in the modern idiom to address western educated mind as the only viable ideology for future world.

It is generally considered that a long list of good teachers is a testimony to the talent and capabilities of a student, and it is customary to add a long list of teachers to the life of a successful performer in different fields of life; but that is not always true. The commitment and hard work of individual student sometimes plays a more important role in growth and

⁹⁶ Maulana Wahiduddin Khan, Al-Risala September, 2003, p. 25-26

⁹⁷ Al-Quran,93-5-7

intellectual development of a person. Here I am tempted to quote few lines from Maulana's own pen:

"My formal education was confined to studies in an Arabic school, after which I learnt English on my own. My educational and intellectual background had given me only a traditional knowledge of Islam, which was obviously insufficient for an understanding of Islam in relation to the modern world. In 1948, therefore I decided to go directly to the sources of modern thought in order to study the Quran and the Hadith and related subjects, in order to have a fresh understanding of Islam."⁹⁸

Early Writings

Maulana started scribbling right in his school days when he was in *Madrasetul Islah* Sarai Mir Azamgarh. It was probably influence of lucid and reformist poetry of Maulana Hali and Maulana Ismaiel Mirthi. He initially started writing on subjects of Urdu literature and poetry He wrote few articles for example on *Fani Badayuni* and *Mirza Ghalib*. His early writings were published in *Nigar Urdu* a monthly magazine edited by Niaz Fatehpuri and in *Piyam e Taalim, Shayr* etc. But Maulana's formal writings on Islam came up only after he had joined *Jamaat e Islami*.

Maulana Wahiduddin Khan formally joined Maulana Mawdudi's *Jamat I Islami* movement (Estd. 1941) in November

⁹⁸ Maulana Wahiduddin Khan, *The vision of Islam*, Good Word Books, 2015. p-6

1947 just after Indo-Pak partition. His commitment to the *Jama'at*, and his skilful pen, helped him move rapidly up the *Jama'at*'s hierarchy, being appointed as a member of its central organizing committee (*Markaz-i-Majlis-i-Shura*), and serving as one of the senior administrators of the *Jama'at*'s publishing house in Rampur (1956-1962) During this period he also availed the services of experienced and learned teachers of *Jamaat's Sanvi Madarsa* at Rampur. He started writing articles that were published in *Jamaat's* monthly organ, "*Zindgi*" regularly, besides, "*Daawat*" and "*Al-Furqan*". Maulana gradually realised that the *Jama'at-i-Islami's* political approach was ill-suited to the needs and conditions of the Muslim minority in India. He began airing his differences with the *Jama'at's* ideology and policies even while a senior leader of the *Jama'at*, but as these differences began to grow, he decided to part ways with the organization after serving it for fifteen years, in 1962.

Religious Literature

It was with *Jama'at e Islami* that Maulana's great skills as writer were able to develop and flourish. In 1955, he presented his first research paper titled "*Naye Ehd ke Darwaze Par*" (At the doorsteps of new era...) in annual conference of *Jama'at e Islamiat* Lucknow. It was the result of a year-long research and analysis of Maulana over issue of Islam in the modern world, well fortified with references and a powerful literary style. Seeing the overwhelming response this article published initially as a pamphlet was expanded to a full length well researched book "*Ilm e Jadid ka Challenge*" published for

the first time in 1964 from Lucknow and later as "*Mazhab aur Jadid Challenges (1966)*" in Urdu which was translated into many languages including the best selling Arabic version, *Al Islam yatahadda* and "*God Arises*" in English. The writing of "*Mazhab aur Jadid Challenge*" was the first step towards fulfillment of his mission and it whetted his appetite to devote all his energy and power to expounding teachings of Islam.

Disgruntled with affairs in *Jama'at e Islami* moving towards politicization of Islam; Maulana was attracted to a more God-Oriented nonpolitical organization "*Tablighi Jamaat*" founded by Maulana Mohammad Ilyas Kandhelvi in 1927, engaged in reform of Indian Muslim Community. But finding the *milieu-interio* more dogmatic and not congenial for intellectual growth, Maulana decided to leave that too. On a formal invitation by Maulana Abul Hassan Ali Nadwi the patron and director of Nadwah, he then moved to *Darul Ulum Nadwatul Ulama* (Estd. 1897) working in its research and analysis wing (*Majlis e Tehqiqat o Nashriyat*) for five years before moving to Delhi in 1967 on the invitation of Maulana Asad Madni as editor of '*Al-Jamiyat*' weekly under the aegis of *Jamiyat Ulama-i-Hind*; where he continued till 1974. It was his favorite paper wherein he expressed his views boldly on different topics concerning Islam and Indian Muslims as also utilizing the opportunity for learning and intellectual growth. By now Maulana's pen had grown strong and smooth enough to establish his reputation as a voice to be reckoned with in the religious and journalistic circles.

About his changing affiliations with different organizations he writes in one of his daily diaries that He was very clear about

the Teachings of Quran that it focuses around *Tawheed*, and *Akhirat* only and Islam warns the whole mankind about that. I have always, he says, written on that subject only with a pledge that I will focus on individual reform and won't launch any party or religious group, though I can cooperate with existing ones.

With this ambition I joined *Jamaat e Islami* but it dawned upon me that source of inspiration for *Jammat* was not Quran & Sunnah but rather a deviant political interpretation of these primary sources. Similarly, in Tablighi Jamaat it was their own organizational bible (*Tablighi Nisab* or *Fazail e a'amaal*) which they followed and not Quran and *Sunnah*.⁹⁹ In *Nadwatul Ulama* even, it was more of a personality cult than Godliness that ruled the organization. About *Jamiy'at* he states that it focused on Muslim politics only that was not my cup of tea. So, I finally parted ways and started my own *Al-Risala* in 1976.¹⁰⁰

Despite working with three different religious organizations, his journey as a Muslim scholar and author continued unhindered making little compromise with his own vision of Islam in contemporary world. His critical inquiry, objective analysis and free thinking were not in line with dogmatic set up of organizational hierarchy that made him uncomfortable in any formal organization. It may be pertinent to mention here that his associations with all these bodies was at organizational level only but not ideological.

⁹⁹ Shah Imran Hassan ed. 'Awraq e Hayat' ed. Rehbar Books New Delhi, 2015.p-232

¹⁰⁰ Ibid.p232

Formative Influences

Maulana Wahiduddin Khan is a product of Madrasa education with a difference. He belongs to Farahi-Islahi School of thought who were not adamant on a particular sect and had given enough breathing space for new ideas unlike air-tight compartments of sectarian institutes. That was a right environ for reinterpretation of things in light of available modern intellectual tools. As mentioned by Maulana himself, curriculum at *Madrasatul Islah* Sarai Mir included *Alkashaf* and Arabic grammer by *Allama Zamakhshri* and *Arabic Nahv & Sarf* by Hamiduddin Farahi Himself. Further he recalls that Madrasa library was replete with writings of Farahi and Abul-Kalam Azad particularly *Al-Hilaal* and *Al-Balagh*, the Urdu magazines that at that particular time of History were full of anti-British outpourings. Maulana Azad's magazines contained portion of his commentary on Quran (*Tarjuman ul Quran*) also, which stressed on exploring the meaning of Quran in its own pages rather than depending on later day interpretations. Even during his self study, he had gone through the revivalist and reformist literature of Shah Waliullah and got sufficient exposure to Sir Sayyid's thought and methodology while in association with Maulana Taqi Ammini and Aligarh Institute. That clearly shows that it was not a dogmatic theological environment but open for free and independent thinking and intellectual growth.

Even a cursory look at the list of Maulana's teachers during his formative period reveals that none of his teachers came from a particular school of *fiqh* and most of them are either Islahis,

Nadwis or Uthmanis. Even in his later life he was associated with Maulana Mawdudi, Maulana Ali Miyan Nadwi and Maulana Asad Madni of *Jamiy'at Ulama e Hind*; all having a broader and modernistic outlook of Islam as compared with various sectarian Islamic institutions. That helped him develop a broader vision of Islam and Non-Sectarian approach in his discourse.

But it should not be forgotten that Maulana didn't even follow the Islahi or Farahi interests but selected an independent field of Scientific & Scholastic theology and Peace, *Dawah* and spirituality for himself. He often says" I am not an extension or continuation of any ideology or ideologue".¹⁰¹

Phases of Maulana's Life

Maulana Wahiduddin Khan (b.1925) has already turned 92 and is still continuing with his Islamic *Dawah* mission through his God given faculties of Audio visual as well as literary activities. For Convenience of better understanding the evolution of his Islamic thought and expression, it would be advisable to divide his literary life into major phases each spreading over a quarter of century. It is however not only for ease but a thorough study of his Islamic literature barring minor overlaps exhibits definite identifiable trends in different phases.

¹⁰¹ Interview with Maulana Wahiduddin Khan by Author, New Delhi, January 13, 2016.

First Quarter (1925-1950): Early Life and Formative Period. Phase of turbulent, early Start and successful search for Truth, ending in 1948.

Second Quarter (1951-1975): Literary Career with Jamaat e Islami (1949-1962), Idara e Tehqqaat o Nashriyat e Islami of Darul Uloom Nadwatul Ulamaa (1963-1967) and Jamiyat al Ulama e Hind (Aljamiyat weekly 1967-1974).

Third Quarter (1976-2000): Maulana emerges as an established and internationally reckoned Muslim Scholar with many master-piece books during this phase. *Islami Markaz* and *Maktaba Al-Risala*.

Fourth Quarter (2001-till date): Having made significant Contributions to different branches of Islam, Maulana now gets more focused on *Aakhirat* Oriented Life, *Peace & Dawah* and *Spirituality*, as also some debates emerge over his views on Islamic Eschatology.

Family affairs, Marriage and children

As mentioned vide supra Maulana Wahiduddin Khan got Madrasa education on sponsorship of his uncle Sufi Abdul Majid khan while other two brothers were educated in secular institutes. Maulana's Cousin Iqbal Ahmed khan Suhail a renowned lawyer had come to family's rescue in the hour of need and patronized the young cousin till Maulana's elder brother Abdul Aziz khan established his own business and was in a position to support his family.

Maulana Wahiduddin Khan when back from *Madrassa*, felt it difficult to adjust in an environment of modern-educated relatives. He was unable to figure out the relevance of Madrasa education in modern world. While still in the dilemma, Iqbal Ahmed Khan Suhail arranged Maulana's marriage to Sabia khatoon, daughter of Haafiz Syed Hamid Hussain Alwi, belonging to an educated and noble family of Azamgarh. As there was no household of his own the family stayed for many years with elder brother Abdul Aziz khan. During Maulana's period of spiritual crisis and quest for truth and birth of first two children, Sabia Khatoon played an exemplary role of a faithful wife and provided him supportive and sympathetic environment.

It may be pertinent to mention that it was his wife **Sabia khatoon** who first introduced Maulana to the books of Maulana Mawdudi in 1947; *Khutbaat* being the first book that he studied. Finally, he joined *Jamaat e Islami* in November 1947 and stayed in the organization for 15 years till 1962. While Maulana parted ways with the organization on ideological differences; Sabia Khatoon continued to be a member of the female wing of *Jamaat e Islami* till her death in 2006. Maulana's family lived in Azamgarh with his elder brother Abdul Aziz Khan. As Maulana Wahiduddin Khan was engrossed in self study the family affairs; including bringing up, health and education of all the children, were being managed by Sabia Khatoon single handedly.

In 1956; when Maulana moved to Rampur on Jamaat e Islami's assignment the family also accompanied him but the stay was not long enough and they moved back to Bhadarya-Azamgarh till Maulana got his next appointment with '*Idara e Tehqiqat o Nashriyat e Islami*' (The Research & Publication Wing) under aegis of *Nadwatul Ulama* Lucknow (1963-1967).

Maulana moved to Delhi in 1967, on an invitation by Maulana Asad Madni the convener of *Jamiyat Ulama e Hind*, to take up the editorship of *Aljamiyat* Weekly. He initially stayed in Jamiyat building alone leaving his family in Azamgarh but after few years Maulana's wife Sabia Khatoon alongwith children moved to Delhi. Maulana didn't like this move as it was bound to distract his attention from his cherished subject but he was forced by nature to accept their decision. It is here that Maulana, along with his literary pursuits, started taking interest in family affairs though not involved very emotionally as he recalls.

As Maulana's relationship with Jamiyat came to an end in 1974, but by now he had established himself as a renowned and reputed Islamic scholar, with his own Ideology and future course of action. While still in *Aljamiyat* he had taken a decision to start his own Al-Risala mission. He thus finally moved to C-29, Basti Hazrat Nizamuddin West in 1975 along with his family where they are residing since then. Maulana, in many of his writings has duly acknowledged and appreciated the role played by his wife Sabia Khatoon in housekeeping and education of children. She expired in 2006 when all the children were well educated and well settled.

Children

Since the Children of Maulana have contributed significantly, whole heartedly and unconditionally to his Dawah Mission at different stages; it becomes imperative to produce a brief sketch of their lives to facilitate the reader to grasp the subject more clearly.

Dr. Zafar ul Islam Khan (b.1948)¹⁰² the eldest surviving son of Maulana Wahiduddin Khan is a well known Socio-political figure of India having recognition beyond borders for his Islamic scholarship and his concern for Predicament of Muslims at national and international level. Born and brought up in Azamgarh he got his primary education from *Madrasatul Islah*, Sarai Mir the institute where his worthy father had studied earlier.

Later he studied at Cairo, getting his Masters degree from *Darul Ulum* College, Cairo University, and started working in Department of Information and Broadcasting. Later he worked in Riyadh (KSA) and U.K. finally getting his Ph.D. in Islamic Studies from Manchester on the subject "*Hijra in Islam*" under guidance of Prof. C.E. Bosworth in 1987. While still in Cairo he had established himself as a Scholar in Arabic and had contributed various research article including the significant work "*Al Islam Yetahadda*" the Arabic translation of *Maulana's "Mazhab aur Jadeed Challenge"* that proved to be revolutionary initiative in Arab World. In fact, he is the person

¹⁰² Shah Imran Hassan, ed. 'Awraq e Hayat' Rehbar Books New Delhi, 2015.p-125

who suggested the name of *Al-Risala* after one of Egypt's famous journal published by Al Hassan al Ziyyat. After his return to India in 1988 he established the Institute of Islamic and Arab Studies in New Delhi for research and publications. He is the Editor of *Milli Gazette* a fortnightly magazine published from New Delhi focusing on national and international issues facing Muslim *Ummah*. He has contributing significantly to the cause of Indian Muslims in different formats including as President of *Muslim Majlis e Mushawrat* (2008-09) and (20013-14) and president of *Darul Musannifeen Azamgarh* since 2011. Further, he is member or trustee of various national and international *forae*.

Significantly and surprisingly despite all sociopolitical engagements Dr. Zafar ul Islam has not divorced his literary pursuits and continues to contribute his scholarly write ups, research papers and scholarly books on different aspects of Islamic Sciences. A Book on Life & Works of Zafarul Islam Khan has been published from Germany in 2010.

Al-Islam Yatahadda the Arabic Translation of Maulana's book, "*Mazhab aur Jadeed Challenge*" and *Al Islam* the Arabic Translation of Maulana's *Al-Islam* are the well known international treatises translated by him. Furthermore, he has authored and managed some laudable works including:

- "*Al Talmud-Tarikha w Taalima*" (The New Testament (1971).
- "*Hijrah in Islam*"-1988. The Meaning and Implications of Migration in Islam.
- "*Daleel al Bahath*" 1993 or *Asool e Tehqiq* in Urdu, a volume on Research methodology.

- “Islam and Ahmadism” 1995. Refuting the allegations of R.S.S on Iqbal being a Qadiyani.
- “*Tareekh Falastine al Qadeem*” -1998 or The Palestinian Documents a must-read treatise for researchers and scholars on the subject.
- “*Milli Gazette*” a fortnightly magazine published from New Delhi since 2000 A.D, focusing on national and international issues facing Muslim *Ummah*.¹⁰³

Prof. (Dr.) Farida Khanam (b.1952)¹⁰⁴ was born and brought up in Badharya near Azamgarh, the birth place of Maulana himself as well. She got her primary education from *Jaamiat ul Salihat* Rampore when Maulana was with *Jamaat e Islami Hind*. When Maulana shifted to Delhi, working as Editor of *Al-Jamiyat* weekly, Farida Khanam completed her Matriculation from Aligarh as a private candidate. She got BA Hons in 1973 and MA English 1976 from Delhi University. Then she turned to Islamic Studies completing MA in 1980 from Jamia Milia Islamia New Delhi. She went on to complete her Ph.D in Islamic Studies from same Institution under guidance of well known Islamic Scholar Prof. Mushir ul Haque who later served as Vice Chancellor of University of Kashmir before his tragic assassination in 1990. Her Topic of Research Was “*Mawlana Mawdudi: Shakhsiyat aur Tehrik*” (The Life and Movement of Mawlana Mawdudi).

¹⁰³ Shah Imran Hassan, ed. ‘Awraq e Hayat’ Rehbar Books New Delhi, 2015.p-142

¹⁰⁴ Ibid.p-149

Dr. Farida Khanam was appointed Asstt. Prof. in Islamic Studies in 1994 and has recently retired as Professor of Islamic Studies from Jamia Millia Islamia New Delhi; rendering her official and Milli services in form of guidance of young scholars as well as research and publication of Islamic papers and books. Among all the issues of Maulana Dr. Farida Khanam is most closely associated with thought and mission, and often accompanies him on domestic and foreign tours. Maulana proudly calls her, his 'Intellectual Assistant'. She is also presently shouldering the responsibility of 'Chairperson of CPS Global' (The Centre for Peace and Spirituality), an international spiritual organization established by Maulana in 2001.

Being well versed with English language, style and contemporary idiom, she has translated most of the Maulana's about 70 books available in English including; *God Arises* (1985), *The Quran translation* (2008), *Tazkirul Quran* 2011, and *Life & Teachings of Prophet Muhammad*. Furthermore, she has authored "*Sufism: An Introduction*" and "*A study of Major world religions*". Both these volumes find place in syllabi of Islamic Studies in various universities.¹⁰⁵

Dr. Musailma Khan (b.1954) is the second surviving daughter of Maulana Wahiduddin Khan and a practicing BUMS doctor, settled in Delhi. She has of late started sharing the family responsibility by participating in Maulana's mission through Hindi translation of Maulana's booklets on Introduction to Islam.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid, p. 159.

Saniyasnain Khan (b.1959)¹⁰⁶ is the youngest son of Maulana Wahiduddin Khan. He is postgraduate from Delhi university (M.A. Arabic), associated with Maulana's Al-Risala Mission since school days. He was made manager of Maktaba Al-Risala in 1992 and the mission has since then expanded tremendously world-wide. In 1996 the name of publishing house was changed to 'Good Word Books' that is now an internationally acclaimed institution engaged with quality publishing of Maulana's scholarly works.

Saniyasnain Khan is also a well-known name in Children's Literature having authored more than 100 books on Islamic literature for children including the well known, 'Tell Me' series his first endeavor being 'Tell me about Hajj'. Now all the publications of Al-Risala including its internet version, the CPS Global books, Dawah literature, Al Quran mission and Children's literature is published by 'Good Word Books' under able supervision of Saniyasnain Khan. Besides he also organizes the national and international *Dawah* meets and Book-Fairs for furthering the cause of Al-Quran Mission started in 2011. Saniyasnain Khan also figures in the Limca Book of records for his work for Children's Literature.

¹⁰⁶ 'Awraq e Hayat' ed. Shah Imran Hassan, Rehbar Books ew Delhi, 2015.p-167

Institutions & NGOs

Maktaba Al-Risala and Islami Markaz¹⁰⁷

Maulana Wahiduddin Khan by 1975 had established himself as an erudite Islamic Scholar with an ideology of his own and powerful but lucid and persuasive literary style. As editor of *Al-Jamiyat* weekly particularly he got a chance to express his thought on different issues more clearly and authentically. In 1970 while still working as editor of *Al-Jamiyat* weekly, he had designed the blue print of his own proposed organization *Islami Markaz* with its own publishing house *Maktaba Al-Risala* but it was in 1976 that he finally decided to launch his own monthly *Al-Risala urdu*, that contains exclusively Maulana's articles on different aspects of Islam and the contemporary world scenario.¹⁰⁸ It was in October 1976 that its first issue came out and has continued now for over forty years with exception of two issues only (Nov.1976 & June 1977). Maulana's powerful literary and epiphanic style attracted the young educated minds and soon *Al-Risala* became a popular household name that continues to be published uninterrupted for last more than 40 years now. As Yoginder Sikand notes:

'To give full expression to these ideas, he established the Islamic Centre at New Delhi in 1970. Subsequently, the organ

¹⁰⁷ Ibid. pp-222, 226.

¹⁰⁸ Irfan A Omar, 'Islamic Thought in Contemporary India: The Impact of Mawlana Wahiduddin Khan's Al-Risala Movement' in "The Blackwell Companion to Contemporary Islamic Thought" Ed. Ibrahim M Abu Rabi, 2006. P-76

of the Centre, Al-Risala – the monthly magazine – was launched in Urdu in 1976. This journal, consisting entirely of his own articles, has done much to make people understand the peaceful face of Islam. The first issues of the English and Hindi versions of Al-Risala were launched respectively in February 1984, and December 1990.¹⁰⁹

The English version of *Al-Risala* is now being published from Bangalore as '*The Spirit of Islam*' while, the Hindi version couldn't continue beyond 1990. The journal today has a fairly large readership both in India and abroad, and several issues of it are also available on the Internet. Maulana is credited with having authored more than 200 books and pamphlets mostly in Urdu and some in English, many of which have been translated into various European and Indian languages, in addition to Arabic. Khan also regularly writes for various Indian newspapers on issues of contemporary importance from an Islamic perspective. He is certainly one of the few Indian *Ulama* to seriously engage with the largely non-Muslim 'mainstream' Indian press.¹¹⁰

It may be recalled that most of his books, barring a few are compilations of various articles published in Al-Risala over the years. Al-Risala thus forms the backbone of Maulana's Islamic thought and revivalist modernist ideology.

Aims and objectives of Al-Risala according to Maulana are:

- To present Islamic Teachings in modern idiom.

¹⁰⁹ Yoginder Sikand, "Analysis of the Writings of Maulana Wahiduddin Khan" Milli Gazette, Feb.2001

¹¹⁰ Ibid.

- To raise Muslims as Preachers (*Dais*) and
- Stop “Othering” of non-muslims and rather treat them as Customers of *Hidaya* and spread the word of God to them in a congenial /peaceful environment. The creation of such an environment according to Maulana lies on *Dai* not *Madu*. And the Muslims should be ready to go extra mile in this direction, according to Maulana.

“Good-Word Books” Publishing House: Al-Risala and Maulana’s other books since 1976 were published by *Maktaba Al_Risala* Nizamuddin West New Delhi. In 1996 Maulana’s younger son, *Saniyasnain Khan* started his new publishing house; “Goodword Books” that has undertaken the responsibility of Publication and distribution of Books by Maulana Wahiduddin Khan as well as Children literature authored by Saniyasnain Khan himself.

Now all the Islamic literature by Maulana Wahiduddin Khan and the Children Literature by Saniyasnain Khan is being published and managed by Good-Word Books under personal supervision of Saniyasnain Khan himself. Saniyasnain Khan has even launched a successful mission of digital service for all groups of publications and the whole body of literature is now available online through internet.

Centre for Peace & Spirituality (CPS Global)¹¹¹:

To cater to the needs of inquisitive minds and of the spiritually inclined, Maulana established at New Delhi, in 2001, the Centre for Peace and Spirituality; another series of *Dawah* Work under the aegis of C.P.S. International.

According to the official website, the goal of CPS is to bring about an intellectual revolution in the individuals and reveal their true, positive personalities so that they become peaceful members of society. It also gives a scientific explanation of the Monotheistic concept of God, the Hereafter and the Creation Plan of God. As a result, participants, while understanding their purpose in life, embark on a journey in search of truth.

Al-Quran Mission¹¹²

It was started in April 2010 with a pledge of dedicated Muslims to spread the word of God to whole of humanity, through individual and collective efforts with a missionary spirit. The English translation of Quran by Maulana was published in 2008 and this responsibility was undertaken immediately after that. But since 2010 it is being performed in a more organized way. The Quran has since been translated in many world languages to address different nations and linguistic groups. Under Al-Quran Mission, outreach camps, book fairs and *dawah* campaigns are organized in collaboration with 'Good-word Books' and CPS international particularly participating in for distribution of Translation of Quran by reaching out to unreached.

¹¹¹ Shah Imran Hassan, ed. 'Awraq e Hayat' Rehbar Books New Delhi, 2015.p-253

¹¹² Ibid.p-257

Published Works: Chronological Classification:¹¹³

Urdu Works:

S.No.	Name of Book	Pages	Theme	Year
1.	<i>Nye Ehd ke Darwaze pe</i>	24	Islam in the Modern World	1956
2	<i>Haqeeqat ki Talaash</i>	40	In Search of Truth	1958
3	<i>Islam ek Azeem Jado Jehd</i>	24	Islam a Great Struggle	1958
4	<i>Islam ka Taaruf</i>	20	The Introduction to Islam	1959
5	<i>Marxism-Tarikh Jise Rad kar Chuki he</i>	119	Marxism-Rejected by History	1959
6	<i>Socialism-Ek Ghair Islami Nazriyya</i>	70	Socialism an Un-Islamic Idea	1959
7	<i>Insan Apne Aap ko Pehchan</i>	23	Man Know thyself	1960
8	<i>Manzil ki Taraf</i>	24	Towards Destination	1960
9	<i>Musalman Kya Karen</i>	32	What should Muslims do	1962
10	<i>Ta'abeer ki ghalti</i>	344	The Misinterpretation	1963
11	<i>Ilm e Jadid Ka Challenge/ Mazhab aur Jadid Challenge</i>	220	Religion & the Modern Challenges	1964-1966
12	<i>Al-Islam</i>	175	The Islam	1977
13	<i>Din Kya Hai</i>	31	Religion Illustrated	1978

¹¹³ Adopted from Shah Imran Hassan, "Awraq e Hayat" Rebar Books New Delhi, 2014.pp-372-80

14	<i>Ta'amir e Millat</i>	47	Reforming Muslim Community	1978
15	<i>Sacha Raasta</i>	16	The Right Path	1980
16	<i>Dini Taaleem</i>	48	The Religious Education	1980
17	<i>T'aruf e Islam</i>	40	The Introduction to Islam	1980
18	<i>Mazhab aur Science</i>	96	The Religion and Science	1980
19	<i>Fasadaat ka Masala</i>	32	The Communal Violence	1981
20	<i>Baagh e Jannat</i>	48	The Garden of Paradise	1981
21	<i>Paighambar e Inquilab</i>	208	The Prophet of Revolution	1982
22	<i>Hindustan Azadi ke Baad</i>	16	India After Independence	1982
23	<i>Ahya'e Islam</i>	127	The Islamic Revival	1982
24	<i>Hayaat e Tayyaba</i>	30	The Pious life of Prophet	1982
25	<i>Aqliyat e Islam</i>	169	The Islamic Wisdom	1983
26	<i>Khuda aur Insan</i>	48	The God & Man	1983
27	<i>Quran ka Matloob Insan</i>	79	The Quranic Expectations of Man	1984
28	<i>Din ki Siyasi taabeer</i>	72	The Political Interpretation of Islam	1985
29	<i>Socialism aur Islam</i>	207	Socialism & Islam	1985
30	<i>Siraat e Mustaqeem</i>	200	The Right Path	1985
31	<i>Zahur e Islam</i>	199	The Emergence of Islam	1985
32	<i>Paghambar e Islam</i>	32	The Prophet of Islam	1985

33	<i>Islam Pandharvin Sadi Main</i>	32	The Islam in 15 th Century AH	1985
34	<i>Hal Yahan He</i>	88	Here lies the Solution	1985
35	<i>Islami Zindgi</i>	160	The Islamic life	1985
36	<i>Islam aur Asr e Haazir</i>	144	Islam in the modern world	1985
37	<i>Tazkeer ul Quran</i>	1600	The Exegesis of Holy Quran	1986
38	<i>Islami Ta'limaat</i>	143	The Islamic Studies	1986
39	<i>Azmat e Quran</i>	151	The greatness of Quran	1986
40	<i>Tablighi Tehreek</i>	96	The Tabligh Movement	1986
42	<i>Haqeeqat e Hajj</i>	113	The Spirit of Hajj	1986
43	<i>Ta'adud e Azwaj</i>	12	The Polygamy	1986
44	<i>Allah o Akbar</i>	287	Allah the Greatest	1986
45	<i>Zalzala e Qiyamat</i>	63	The Quake of Doomsday	1987
46	<i>Khatoon e Islam</i>	287	The Woman in Islam	1987
47	<i>Raaz e Hayat</i>	292	The Secret of life	1987
48	<i>Islami Daawat</i>	47	The Calling to Islam	1987
49	<i>Aakhri Safar</i>	48	The Final Journey	1987
50	<i>Rahen Band Nahi</i>	48	The Unlimited Avenues	1987
51	<i>Sabaq Aamoz Waqeyat</i>	48	The lessons from life	1987
52	<i>Tajdid e Din</i>	87	The Islamic Revival	1987
53	<i>Islam Din e Fitrat</i>	47	Islam the Religion of Nature	1987

54	<i>Taarikh ka Sabaq</i>	47	The Lesson from History	1987
55	<i>Itehad e Millat</i>	48	Uniting Muslim Ummah	1988
56	<i>Mewat ka safar</i>	219	A journey to Mewat(India)	1988
57	<i>Azmat e Sahaba</i>	50	Prophet's Companions	1988
58	<i>Taamir ki Taraf</i>	63	Towards Reconstruction	1988
59	<i>Islam Daur e Jadid ka Khaliq</i>	111	Islam the Creator of Modern Age	1989
60	<i>Din e Kaamil</i>	367	The Perfect Religion	1989
61	<i>Aqwal e Hikmat</i>	196	The precious Quotes	1989
62	<i>Rah e Amal</i>	151	The Practical Approach	1990
63	<i>Imaani Taaqat</i>	47	The Power of Faith	1990
64	<i>Naar e Jahannum</i>	48	The Hell Fire	1990
65	<i>Roshan Mustaqbil</i>	48	The Bright Future	1991
66	<i>Khaleej Diary</i>	72	The Gulf Diary	1991
67	<i>Rehnuma e Hayat</i>	50	The Guide to Successful life	1992
68	<i>Tarikh e Daawat e Haq</i>	32	History of the Call to Truth	1992
69	<i>Karwan e Millat</i>	239	The Caravan of Community	1992
70	<i>Ulama aur Daur e Jadid</i>	58	The Muslim Scholars and New Era	1992
71	<i>Al Rabbaniya</i>	223	The Godliness (Spirituality)	1992
72	<i>Ghair Mulki Asfar (Part I)</i>	521	The Travels Abroad-Part I	1992

73	<i>Saum e Ramdhan</i>	50	The Fasting during Ramdhan	1992
74	<i>Hadith e Rasool</i>	72	The Sayings of Holy Prophet	1992
75	<i>Talaque Islam Men</i>	15	'Divorce' in Islam	1993
76	<i>Azmat e Islam</i>	50	The Greatness of Islam	1993
77	<i>Hindustani Musalman</i>	216	The Indian Muslims	1993
78	<i>Matala e Seerat</i>	50	A Study of Prophet's Life	1994
79	<i>Azmat e Momin</i>	50	Greatness of a True Muslim	1994
80	<i>Azmat e Quran</i>	50	Greatness of Holy Quran	1994
81	<i>Azmat e Islam</i>	292	Greatness of Islam	1995
82	<i>Diary 1983-84</i>	397	Diary 1983-84 (397)	1995
83	<i>Yaksan Civil Code</i>	32	Uniform Civil Code	1995
84	<i>Kitab e Zindgi</i>	251	The Book of Life	1996
85	<i>Qayadat Nama</i>	203	The Leadership	1996
86	<i>Shutam e Rasul ka Masala</i>	191	The Blasphemy Issue	1997
87	<i>Din e Insaniyat</i>	319	The Religion of Humanity	1997
88	<i>Daawat e Islam</i>	196	Calling to Islam	1997
89	<i>Islam Kya Hai</i>	50	What is Islam	1997
90	<i>Tasweer e Millat</i>	368	The Image of Muslims	1997
91	<i>Daawat e Haque</i>	160	Calling to Ultimate Reality	1998
92	<i>Islam-Ek Taaruf</i>	235	An Introduction to Islam	1998

93	<i>Safarnama Spain o Falasteen</i>	199	Travel to Spain & Palestine	1998
94	<i>Fikr e Islami</i>	239	The Islamic Thought	1998
95	<i>Nashri Taqreeren</i>	240	A Collection of Audio Talks	1998
96	<i>Mazameen e Islam</i>	173	Essays on Islam	1998
97	<i>Matala e Seerat</i>	208	A Study of Prophet's life	1999
98	<i>Qal Allaho wa Qala Rasul</i>	320	Word of Allah & Word of Prophet	1999
99	<i>Taameer e Insaniyat</i>	224	Rebuilding Humanity	1999
100	<i>Asfar e Hind</i>	563	Travels within India	1999
101	<i>Asbaq e Tarikh</i>	368	Lessons from History	1999
102	<i>Diary 1989-90</i>	439	Diary 1989-90	1999
103	<i>Diary 1991-92</i>	351	Diary 1991-92	2000
104	<i>Ghair Mulki Asfar Part II</i>	696	The Foreign Visits Part II	2000
105	<i>Taamir e Hayat</i>	256	Rebuilding Life	2000
106	<i>Matala e Quran</i>	272	A Study of Quran	2001
107	<i>Din o Shariat</i>	353	The Religion & Religious Law	2002
108	<i>Masail e Ijtihad</i>	255	The Matters of Ijtihad	2003
109	<i>Matalae Hadith</i>	320	A Study of Prophet's Sayings	2003
110	<i>Kashmir men Aman</i>	40	Peace in Kashmir	2004
111	<i>Aurat, Maamar e Insaniyat</i>	208	Woman the Builder of Humanity	2004
112	<i>Seerat e Rasul</i>	174	A Study of Prophet's Life	2004

113	<i>Aman e Aalim</i>	208	The World Peace	2004
114	<i>Rehnumay e Hayat</i>	208	The Guide to Life	2005
115	<i>Diary 1993-94</i>	387	Diary 1993-94	2005
116	<i>Insan ki Manzil</i>	144	The final Destination of Man	2006
117	<i>Hind-Pak Diary</i>	264	Indo-Pak Diary	2006
118	<i>Dawat el Allah</i>	48	Calling to Allah	2007
119	<i>Maqsad e Hayat</i>	48	The Purpose of Life	2008
120	<i>Hikmat e Islam</i>	348	The Wisdom of Islam	2008
121	<i>Saum e Ramdhan</i>	48	The fasting during Ramdhan	2008
122	<i>Asma e Husna</i>	48	The Beautiful Names	2008
123	<i>Aakhirat ka Safar</i>	48	The Final Journey	2008
124	<i>Tarjuma e Quran</i>	488	Translation of Quran	2010
125	<i>Khandani Zindgi</i>	48	The Family Life	2010
126	<i>Qayamat ka Alarm</i>	62	The Alarm of Dooms day	2010
127	<i>Maarfat e Ilahi</i>	48	The Divine Experience	2011
128	<i>Tazkiya e Nafs</i>	48	Purity of Self	2011
129	<i>Subha e Kashmir</i>	64	The Dawn over Kashmir	2012
130	<i>Kitab e Maarfat</i>	623	The Book of Spirituality	2012
131	<i>Islam aur Khidmat e Khalq</i>	24	Islam and Social Service	2014
132	<i>Izhar e Din</i>	640	The Religion Expressed	2014

English Works¹¹⁴

S.No.	Name of Book	Pages	Year
1	Muhammad The Ideal Character	23	1984
2	Man Know Thyself	26	1984
3	<i>Hijab</i> and Islam	18	1984
4	Islamic Fundamentalism	31	1984
5	An Intellectual Transformation	22	1984
6	The Revolutionary Role of Islam	23	1984
7	The Garden of Paradise	36	1984
8	The Good Life	58	1984
9	The Teachings of Islam	68	1984
10	Way to Find God	32	1984
11	The Fire of Hell	62	1984
12	Non-Violence and Islam	46	1984
13	Search for Truth	32	1984
14	The Road to Paradise	16	1984
15	God arises	288	1985
16	The Tabligh Movement	68	1986
17	Muhammad: A Prophet for All Mankind	314	1988
18	Islam AS it IS	114	1992

¹¹⁴ All of the books by Maulana Wahiduddin Khan are originally authored in Urdu language and the literature available in English, Arabic, Hindi and many other languages is a translation of the corresponding original titles in Urdu.

19	God Oriented Life	186	1992
20	Indian Muslims	192	1994
21	Islam: Creator of Modern Age	128	1995
22	Islam: The Voice of Human Nature	60	1995
23	Women in Islamic Shariah	159	1995
24	Women Between Islam And Western Society	252	1995
25	Words of The Prophet Muhammad	112	1996
26	Religion and Science	93	1998
27	Principles of Islam	170	1998
28	Moral Vision	206	1999
29	Call of The Quran	91	1999
30	Quran For All Humanity	98	1999
31	Quran: An Abiding Wonder	127	1999
32	Islamic Treasure of Virtues	289	1999
33	Introducing Islam	246	1999
34	Islam And Peace	197	1999
35	Islam Re-Discovered	297	2001
36	The Creation Plan of God	32	2001
37	The Man Islam Builds	32	2001
38	Islam In History	38	2001
39	Islam Stands the Test of History	38	2001
40	Islamic Activism	24	2001
41	Manifesto of Peace	22	2001

42	Polygamy AND Islam	23	2001
43	Concerning Divorce	36	2001
44	The Concept of God	31	2001
45	A Case of Discovery	32	2001
46	God and The Life Hereafter	15	2001
47	Spirituality in Islam	16	2001
48	Uniform Civil Code	69	2001
49	The <i>Shariah</i> And Its Application	24	2002
50	Prophet Muhammad: His Life	220	2002
51	Treasury of The Quran	91	2002
52	The Ideology of Peace	136	2003
53	Building A Strong and Prosperous India	72	2003
54	In Search of God	48	2003
55	The Reality of Life	47	2006
56	Calling People to God	46	2006
57	True Jihad	112	2006
58	Simple Wisdom	631	2006
59	The Prophet of Peace	226	2009
60	The Quran (Translation)	486	2009
61	The Secret of Successful Family Life	71	2010
62	Jihad Peace and Inter Community Relations (Ed. Yoginder Sikand)	120	2010
63	The Quran (Commentary)	1770	2011

64	The Alarm of Doomsday	64	2012
65	The Dawn Over Kashmir	64	2012
66	The Purpose of Life	44	2013
67	What Is Islam	53	2013
68	<i>Tazkiya: The Purification of Soul</i>	64	2013

Thematic classification of Published Works¹¹⁵ *

Maulana's vision and approach to Islam is comprehensive and holistic, in contrast to most of the writers, who, in search of parts often miss the whole. The major themes in Maulana's writings include the following:

1	Introduction to Islam	<i>Islam Kya he, Islam ka Ta'aruf, Taaruf e Islam, Din Kya he, Islami Ta'limaat, Dawah Pack. Etc</i>
2	Revivalism and Reform	<i>Islam Rediscovered, Tajdid e Din, Ahya al Islam, Masail e Ijtihad, Taqlid o Ijtihad, Din o shariat, Fikr e Islami, Izhar e Din.</i>
3	Islam in the Modern World	<i>Al-Islam, Islam aur Asre haazir, Secularism, Socialism, Marxism, Zahur e Islam, Islam the Creator of Modern Age.</i>
4	Scientific Theology	<i>Mazhab aur Science, Mazhab aur Jadid Challenge, Islam the Creator Modern Age.</i>
5	Islamic Studies	<i>Tazkeer ul Quran, Paighambr e Inqilab, Tajdid e Din, Din o Shariat, Dini Madaaris, Taqlid o Ijtihad</i>

¹¹⁵ Note: Since views of Maulana on different aspects of Islam are interspersed in various writings with great repetitions of ideas and subjects, the classification is tentative with possibility of many overlaps.

6	Woman in Islam	<i>"Khatoon e Islam" Woman between Islam And Western Society, Polygamy, Divorce, Woman in Islamic Shariah, Aurat: Maimar-i-Insaniyat</i>
7	Indian Muslims	<i>Indian Muslims, Fasadat ka Masala, Hal Yahan he, Dawn over Kashmir.</i>
8	Peace and Dawah	<i>The Prophet of Peace, Islam and world Peace, Peaceful Jihad, Islam and Peace, The ideology of Peace, Peace, Jihad & Inter-community Relations in Islam, A Manifesto of Peace, The True Jihad, Age of Peace.</i>
9	Philosophy of Life	<i>Raaz e Hayat, Rehnumaye Hayat, Kitab e Zindgi, Taamir e Hayat, Aqwal e Hikmat.</i>
10	Spirituality	<i>Insan apne aap ko Pehchan, Allaho Akbar, Al-Rabbaniya, kitab e Maarfat.</i>
11	Travelogues and Diaries	<i>Safarnama Spain o Falastin, Asfar-i-Hind, Ghair Mulki Asfar, Khaleej Dairy, Hind-Pak Dairy etc.</i>

Honors and Awards

Maulana Wahiduddin Khan (b.1925) is a noted Indian Islamic scholar, scholastic theologian, philosopher and peace activist. He has authored over 200 books on Islam, including *Mazhab aur jaded Challenge*, *Prophet of Revolution*, *Tazkeerul Quran*, *Islam the Creator of Modern age*, *Prophetic Wisdom*, *Islam Rediscovered*, *Jihad, Peace and Inter-Community Relations in Islam and The Ideology of Peace*. He was honored by Government of Pakistan for writing "*Paighambar e Inquilab*" the best book in *Seerah* literature in 1984.

He has received many national and international awards; in recognition of his contribution to world peace including the 'Demiurgus Peace International Award'; the 'National Amity Award' and 'Padma Bhushan'. He has also been awarded the title of 'Ambassador of Peace' by the International Federation for World Peace, Korea.

Recently in 2015, he was conferred with 'Sayyidina Imam al-Hassan ibn Ali Memorial Peace Award' by the 'Forum for Promoting Peace in Muslim Societies' in Abu Dhabi(UAE), in recognition of his contribution to world peace particularly promoting peace in Muslim societies.¹¹⁶

{An early history of Maulana's ancestors reveals that his great grandfather was Hassan khan a brother of Hussain khan. Interestingly enough; it is a coincidence or a genetic predisposition that Maulana has always followed the footsteps of Imam Hassan in ideology and practice, in preaching peace and pacifism. }

¹¹⁶ Milli Gazette, New Delhi, April 30, 2015

CHAPTER- IV

**CONTEMPORARIES
OF
MAULANA WAHIDUDDIN KHAN**

INTRODUCTION

Context of events and ideologies carries great importance for deeper insight and clarity of vision. Further it is not sufficient to enumerate some events and dates to understand a prominent person, and his mission. That is why it is customary to have an account of major trends of that era as well as the literary efforts of his contemporary writers. However, a detailed discussion of all of them runs out of scope of the present section and some of them have been discussed in chapter I & II of the present work; I have thus restricted to brief introduction of some scholars according to their points of convergence and divergence.

The Prominent contemporaries of Maulana Wahiduddin Khan include, Allama Sir Sheikh Muhammad Iqbal(1877-1938) Maulana Abul Kalam Azad (1888-1958), Badiuzzaman Said Nursi (1877-1960), Maulana Abdul Majid Daryabadi (1892-1977), Maulana Abdul Bari Nadwi(1886-1976), Maulana Abul A'ala Mawdudi (1903-1979), Amin Ahsan Islahi (1904-1997) Maulana Muhammad Manzoor Nomani (1905-1997), Maulana Abul Hassan Ali Nadwi (1913-1999), Fazlur Rehman (1919-1988), Ismail Raji al-Faruqi (1921-1986), Yusuf al-Qardawi (b.1926), Asghar Ali Engineer(1939-2013), Fatehullah Gullen (b.1941), and Javed Ahmed Ghamidi (b.1951).

Badiuzzaman Said Nursi (1877- 1960): A Turkish Muslim Scholar, Said Nursi is known worldwide for his revivalist modernist thought in Islam. He wrote the *Risala e Nur* (Letters of Divine Light), a body of Quranic commentary exceeding six

thousand pages. Believing that modern science and logic was the way of the future, he advocated teaching religious sciences in secular schools and modern sciences in religious schools. Nursi inspired a faith movement that has played a vital role in the revival of Islam in Turkey. Stressing need for a synthesis of Classical with modern knowledge he writes:

"The religious sciences are the light of the conscience; the modern sciences are the light of the mind; only on the combining of the two does the truth emerge. The students' aspiration will take flight with those two wings. When they are parted, it gives rise to bigotry in the one, and skepticism and trickery in the other."¹¹⁷

Nursi was against the communist ideology and described as a major challenge for Muslim World. Besides these writings themselves, a major factor in the success of the movement may be attributed to the very method Nursi had chosen, which may be summarized with two phrases *Maánwi Jihad*, that is, 'Jihad of the word' or 'non-physical jihad', and 'positive action.' Nursi considered materialism and atheism and their source materialist philosophy to be his true enemies in this age of science, reason, and civilization. He combated them with reasoned proofs in the *Risale-i Nur*. In order to be able to pursue this 'jihad of the word,' Nursi insisted that his students avoided any use of force and disruptive activity. Here the idea of 'peaceful *Jihad*' propounded and practiced by Maulana Wahiduddin Khan through his Al-Risala Movement is very comparable with Nursi Movement as both focused on peaceful

¹¹⁷ Bediuzzaman Said Nursi, *Munazarat*, p. 86

reform of Community without indulging in confrontation with powers that be.¹¹⁸

Another characteristic Nursi displayed from an early age was an instinctive dissatisfaction with the existing education system, which when older he formulated into comprehensive proposals for its reform.¹¹⁹

Mawlana Abul A'ala Mawdudi

Mawlana Mawdudi (1903-1979) was a celebrated Muslim scholar and *Jamaat e Islami* ideologue; who played a significant role in saving Muslim lands from onslaught of communism and socialism in 20th century. Another of his special contributions was re-establishment of the shaken belief of beleaguered Muslims *ummah* in Islamic values in modern world particularly those Islamic scholars who had earlier adopted an apologetic stance to west.

Mawlana Sayyid Abul Aala Mawdudi was born on September 25, 1903 in the famous city of Aurangabad; the then princely state of Hyderabad Daccan. His father Sayyid Ahmed Hassan was among the first students of Madrasatul uloom Aligarh established by Sir Sayyid Ahmed Khan. He later studied law at Ahmedabad and started his practice as lawyer at Meerut, Ghaziabad and Aurangabad. Maulana Mawdudi was thus born and brought up in complete Islamic environment; his early

¹¹⁸ Irfan A Omer "Scope of Inter-faith dialogue; a comparison of Badiuzzaman Nursi and Maulana Wahiduddin Khan" International Conference, Istanbul, Turkey Mar 29,2012.

¹¹⁹ www.bediuzzamansaidnursi.org. Retrieved 24 August 2015.

education being taken care of by his father himself. Later he was admitted to *Madrassa Furqania*, Aurangabad which attempted to combine the modern Western education with the tradition Islamic education. After death of his father Mawdudi took to journalism for his living but continued his self study of English, History, philosophy, politics and sociology. Thus, most of what Mawdudi learnt was self acquired.¹²⁰ While young he was influenced by Altaf Hussain Hali's *Mussaddis* and Maulana Abul Kalam Azad's *Al-Hilal* that inspired him to become what he is known today. After brief stints with journals like, *Medina* (Bijnour), *Taj* (Jabalpur) and *Muslim* and *al-jamiyat*, Mawdudi finally undertook editorship of *Tarjuman-ul-Quran* in 1932 that became mouth-piece of his ideology in later life. Therefore, Maulana Mawdudi's twelve years in Journalism proved to be the formative years of his life and played vital role in shaping his world view in later years. His faith in Islam was temporarily shaken until restored by self study of the Quran and Hadith.¹²¹

Maulana Mawdudi was a prolific writer and has authored dozens of books on various aspects of Islam, including his magnum opus, *Tafhim ul Quran, Khilafat o Maukiat, Al-Jihad fil Islam, A Short History of Revivalist Movements in Islam, towards understanding Islam, Tanqihat, Talimat, Musalman aur Maujuda Siyasi kashmakash, Quran ki char Bunyadi Istalachen, and Masala e Qaumiyat etc.*¹²²

¹²⁰ Mawlana Sayyid Abul Ala Mawdudi, *Khud Nawisht*, p-33-34

¹²¹ Sheikh Jamil Ali, *Islamic Thought in the Sub-continent*, DK Printworld Ltd. 2010, p-154-57

¹²² *Ibid.* p-167

In 1941 Maulana Mawdudi, to give full expression to his political thought, launched his political party, *Jama'at e Islami*. Maulana Mawdudi presented Islam in the modern world as a complete system encompassing all aspects of sociopolitical life and considered establishment of Islamic political system as essential for Muslims. Though Maulana's refutation of western ideologies, defense of Islamic faith and non-sectarian approach were universally appreciated, it was the political interpretation of Islam that estranged many of his friends like Ali Miyan Nadwi, Maulana Manzur Noamani and Wahiduddin Khan. After Indo-Pak Partition Maulana Mawdudi migrated to Pakistan and died in 1979, after a turbulent political life.¹²³

Maulana Mawdudi was a senior contemporary of Maulana Wahiduddin Khan and founder-patron of *Jamaat e Islami* a Religeo-political organization (estd.1941); which Maulana Wahiduddin Khan joined in November 1947, though, after migration of Maulana Mawdudi to Pakistan. Maulana Mawdudi's books had a lasting impression on the mind of young Wahiduddin Khan, as regards his future molding into a prominent Islamic scholar. It was in fact with *Jamaat e Islami* that Maulana Wahiduddin Khan's abilities as a scholar came to full bloom. He made a detailed study of *Jamaat* Literature for a decade (1947-1957) before he turned to studies of *Quranic Tafseer* literature and Western philosophy and science.

Though Maulana Wahiduddin Khan developed ideological differences with *Jamaat e Islami* for latter's overemphasis on political aspect of Islam which he calls political interpretation

¹²³ The Ideology of Maulana' Mawdudi and Ali Miyan Nadwi has also been discussed in Chapter II of the present work titled: Islamic Thought in India in early 20th Century.

of Islam; he nevertheless always acknowledged Maulana Mawdudi's capabilities and contributions to Islam. Though Maulana Wahiduddin Khan personally met Maulana Mawdudi a couple of times in Pakistan but had a long association with him in form of epistles that the duo exchanged on various issues facing Islam particularly the political differences. Maulana Wahiduddin Khan has even acknowledged his influence and guidance in preface of his celebrated book, *'Ilm e Jadid ka Challenge'* first published from Lucknow in 1964, which was later revised, and renamed as *Mazhab aur Jadid Challenge* (1966).

"It is indirectly because of Maulana Mawdudi that, fifteen years ago, during a critical stage in my life, my heart was overwhelmed by the desire to devote my life to the service of the Din, one expression of which is this book".

Maulana writes: "Although I have ideological differences with the Maulana Mawdudi, I do not think that such differences should lead one to refuse to recognize that there may be truth in some things a person with whom one has differences says."¹²⁴

Sayyid Abul Hassan Ali Nadwi (1913-1999), popularly known as 'Ali Miyan' was one of the leading Indian Muslim of modern times, recognized worldwide for his scholarship and his dedication; to the cause of Islamic Revival. He is credited with having written almost 180 books mostly in Arabic and some in Urdu on different aspects of Muslim life and culture. Besides his voluminous scholarly output Nadwi was occupied with

¹²⁴ Maulana Wahiduddin Khan, *'Political interpretation of Islam'* Good word Books New Delhi; p71

several Indian and international Islamic organizations including 'All India Muslim Personal Law Board', *Muslim Majlis e Mashawrat*, *Payam e Insaniyat*, *Rabita al-Alami al Islami Makkah*, and Chairman of Oxford Centre of Islamic Studies. In recognition of his outstanding contribution to Islamic Studies and to the Cause of Islam, he was awarded the 'Shah Faisal Award' in 1980.

His father Sayyid Abul Hai Hasani was an accomplished Islamic scholar in his own right and the rector of *Nadwatul Ulama* Lucknow for many years.¹²⁵ It was here that Ali Miyan was born and brought up in a highly religious environment receiving his early education and commitment to cause of Islam. A major turning point came in the life of Ali Miyan Nadwi in 1934 when he was appointed to teach Arabic and Quranic Commentry at the Nadwat ul Ulama. He continued to teaching there even after he was appointed its rector in 1961 after the death of his brother, a post that he occupied till his own death in 1999.¹²⁶

Maulana Nadwi's interest particularly lay in Islamic Movements and his five-volume '*Tarikh-e Dawat-o-Azimat*' a history of revivalist movements forms his magnum opus. His other notable works include, *Asr e Hazir men Din ki Tafhim o*

¹²⁵ Sayyid Abul Hai Hasani was the author of the '*Nuzhat ul Khawatir*', an eight-volume encyclopedia containing details of over 5000 Indian ulama, and the '*as-Thaqafat ul-Islamiya fil-Hind*' a history of Arabic learning in India. He headed the Nadwat ul Ulama from 1915 till his death in 1915.

¹²⁶ Yoginder Sikand, 'Sayyid Abul Hassan Ali Nadwi and contemporary Islamic thought in India' in, *The Blackwell Companion to Contemporary Islamic Thought*, ed. Abu Rabi M. Ibrahim. 2006.p-88

Tashrih', Muslims in India, Karwan e Zindgi and *Maza khasiral Alam be inhitat al-Muslimeen* (What did the World Lose with the Decline of Muslims).

Ideology of Maulana Abul Hassan Ali Nadwi: Maulana though firmly grounded in Islamic tradition was not averse to modern developments and strived to convince Muslim world to avail of the fruits of modern values and science and technology that is helpful in propagating the Islamic teachings to the world. He is critical of the Marxism, materialism, Socialism and Communism and appreciates efforts of his contemporaries Maulana Mawdudi and Maulana Wahiduddin Khan in refuting these western ideologies. He was also critical of such ideologies as nationalism and pan-Arabism, which he saw as having taken the place of Islam as the guiding light of the Arabs and as having caused their downfall.¹²⁷ He suggested modernization of Arabs as essential for Revival of Islam as they are destined to lead the Muslim world.¹²⁸

In Indian context Nadwi is critical of two-Nation theory like Ulama of Deoband and felt that only in a united India would Muslims be able to carry on with their duty of missionary work.¹²⁹ He is equally critical of Maulana Mawdudi for equating the Islamic duty of '*Iqamat e Din*' with the setting up an Islamic State.¹³⁰ Instead; Nadwi stressed the importance of

¹²⁷ *ibid.* p-90

¹²⁸ Nadwi, Maulana Sayyid Abul Hasan Ali. *Aalam e Arabi ka Almiyya*, 3rd.edn. Lucknow, Academy of Islamic research and Publications 1980.

¹²⁹ Sayyid Abul Hassan Ali Nadwi, 'Muslims in India', Academy of Islamic Research and Publication, Lucknow, 1998, vol.1, p-121

¹³⁰ Sayyid Abul Hassan Ali Nadwi, *Asr e Hazir men Din ki Tafhim o Tashrih*, Dar ul Arafat, Lucknow, 1980, p-20-73

reforming individuals to establish Islamic Societies as did all the prophets.¹³¹ He equates post-partition India to Makkan period¹³² of early Islam and exhorts Indian Muslims to adopt a pragmatic approach that would enable them to reconcile their commitment to their faith on the one hand and their responsibilities to their country on the other.¹³³

In cases of difference of opinion Nadwi advised dialogue and restraint rather than retaliation and conflict. He called for inter-religious dialogue between Muslims and others particularly Hindus, envisaging this as going beyond mere theological exchange to take the form of joint efforts for building a more harmonious and just society. The '*Payam-i-Insaniyat*' was Nadwi's principal vehicle for the promotion of better relations between Muslims and others.¹³⁴

A comparative study of Maulana Mawdudi, Maulana Abul Hassan Ali Nadwi and Maulana Wahiduddin Khan has been made by C.W. Troll a German orientalist while discussing 'The Meaning of Din: Recent Views of Three Eminent Indian Ulama'.¹³⁵

¹³¹ Nadwi, Sayyid Abul Hasan Ali. 'Payam e Insaniyat' Urdu, 5 Lectures, Academy of Islamic Research and Publication, Lucknow, 1991

¹³² Sheikh Jamil Ali, 'Trends in 20th Century Islamic Thought' in 'Insight Islamicus, 2009, p-187.

¹³³ Sayyid Abul Hassan Ali Nadwi, Karwan I Zindgi, Maktaba al-Islam, Lucknow, 1998, vol.3, p-82

¹³⁴ Sayyed Kalb e Sadiq." Maulana Sayyid Abul Hassan Ali Nadwi: Ek Nazre Aqidat" in Rabita, Delhi-200, p-47.

¹³⁵ Dr. Christian C. Troll, ed. "Islam in India: Studies and Commentaries",

Prof. Fazlur Rahman (1919-1988)¹³⁶ Fazlur Rehman is, arguably one of the most important thinkers of 20th century Islam. He was 'Professor of Islamic Thought' at the University of Chicago at the time of his death in July 1988. Born in Punjab, Pakistan in 1919 he received his early education in traditional Islamic sciences. He obtained an M.A. in Arabic from the University of Punjab, and his D. Phil. in Islamic Philosophy from Oxford in 1951. He began his teaching career in Durham, England and later joined the Institute of Islamic Studies at McGill University in Montreal, Canada. From 1961 to 1968, he served as the Director of the Islamic Research Institute in Islamabad, Pakistan; a position from which he had to resign as a result of a politically-motivated campaign by some influential *ulama* against his modernist interpretations of some traditional Islamic beliefs and practices.

A prolific writer and an outstanding scholar of Islam in the tradition of classical Muslim Reformers, Dr. Fazlur Rahman influenced generations of young Muslim intellectuals and students and, more importantly, his Western colleagues and students in the fields of Islamic studies and Islamic philosophy. His influence spread far and wide; several of his former students, both Muslims and non-Muslims, are outstanding scholars in their own right, and are advancing the intellectual tradition of their illustrious teacher.

Although it is considered controversial by traditional Islamic scholars on certain issues- like the, the distinction between Hadith and Sunnah, the methodology of Quranic interpretation, and the distinction between *riba* and bank interest, for example-Prof. Fazlur Rahman's critique of the

¹³⁶ Mumtaz Ahmad, Professor of Political Science at Hampton University, VA, was a student of Professor Fazlur Rahman at the University of Chicago from 1976 to 1981.

historical formulations of Islamic theology and jurisprudence remained firmly rooted in his deep respect and discerning appreciation of Islamic tradition. It was this quality that distinguished Fazlur Rahman from many other Islamic modernists.

Fazlur Rahman was a scholar of encyclopedic breadth in the true tradition of classical Islamic scholarship. His interests ranged from the classical period to modern times; from the Quran and Hadith to *fiqh* and ethics; from philosophy and science to theology and medicine; and from education and history to the contemporary socio-political and intellectual developments in the Muslim world. His scholarship of classical Arabic, Persian, and Ottoman Turkish was equally matched by his easy access to the Greek, Latin, German, and French languages.

Throughout his scholarly career, however, his first and foremost loyalty and devotion was to the Quran and to the understanding of its worldview, its metaphysics, and its socio-economic teachings. He was a brilliant student of, and an extraordinarily perceptive commentator on, the Quran. He lived, wrote and thought for most of his life within a framework that was defined by his love and study of the Quran. *Major Themes of The Quran* (Bibliotheca Islamica, 1980) is a living testimony to his Quranic scholarship and his interpretive methodology that seeks to elucidate the theological, moral, and social teachings and principles of Islam on the basis of a systematic study of the overall thrust of the sacred text, rather than looking haphazardly at individual verses.

His was a mind of a logician and philosopher, and a heart of a devout Muslim. His writings on Islam are not only the product of a meticulous scholar with great intellectual rigor and

analytical skills, but also that of a passionate Muslim who was deeply concerned about the spiritual, moral and socio-economic and political well-being of the *Ummah*. He believed in the fundamental importance of intellectual renaissance as the most important prerequisite for Islamic revival. Revival and reform was therefore a central theme in Fazlur Rehman's scheme of thought.¹³⁷

Fazlur Rahman was sharply critical of both the Atatürk model of reform, which sought to build a future for Muslims without historic Islam, as well as that of Islamic modernists, due to their haphazard and atomistic methodology. At the same time, he was equally critical of the "neo-revivalist" who, in his view, is "shallow and superficial"-really rooted neither in the Quran nor in traditional intellectual culture, of which he knows practically nothing.

A careful examination of his writings reveals a vigorous mind working in the highest traditions of the humanities of East and West and providing the intellectual and moral underpinnings for the revitalization of the Islamic Ummah.

Prof. Fazlur Rahman's notable works include:

- Islamic Methodology in History, Islamic Research Institute, 1965.
- Islam, 2nd edition, University of Chicago Press, 1979.
- Major Themes of the Quran, Bibliotheca Islamica, 1980.
- Islam and Modernity, University of Chicago Press, 1982.
- Revival and Reform in Islam, Oneworld Publications, 1999.

¹³⁷ Ebrahim Moosa, Introduction to 'Revival and Reform' by Fazlur Rehman, Oneworld Publications England 2003. P-6.

Yusuf al-Qardawi (b.1926), is an Egyptian Islamic scholar; best known for his encyclopedic knowledge of Islam and his sincere attempts at seeking application of the same to modern conditions through exercise of *ijtihad* while still remaining firmly grounded in the Islamic primary texts. Al-Qaradawi has published more than 120 books including the world famous, 'The Fiqh of Zakah' and the 'Lawful and the Prohibited in Islam'. He is one of the most influential living scholars of Islam. Qaradawi is a revivalist, reformist and modernist but with a difference. His approach is inclusive. He remains firmly grounded in traditional Islamic sources and at the same time not averse to assimilate what is compatible and useful in the modern knowledge. He is a versatile genius of modern times, combining skills of a writer an eloquent speaker, a devout Muslim, a legal expert, a *Dai* of Islam and a poet; all in one, who knows how to put thought into action.

Born in Turab, Egypt, he was orphaned at 2 years of age, and brought up by his uncle. He studied and memorized Quran at age 9 and went on to graduate from Institute of Religious Studies at Tanta. It is here that he had an intellectual encounter with Hassan al Banna the founder of '*Muslim Brotherhood*' movement; that had a lasting effect on Qaradawi's future moldings. He then moved to Al-Azhar, Cairo, to Study Islamic theology graduating in 1953 and getting his Masters in Quranic Studies in 1960. He shifted to Qatar in 1962 for teaching Islamic Sciences but continued his studies getting his Ph. D from Al-Azhar in 1973 on the topic: 'Zakah and its effect on solving social problems'. In 1977 he laid foundation of 'Faculty of Shariah and Islamic studies' in

'University of Qatar' and also founded the 'Centre of Seerah and Sunnah Research'. In 1997 he helped found the 'European Council of Fatawah and Research'. Qaradawi also served as trustee of the 'Oxford Centre of Islamic Studies'.¹³⁸

Al Qardawi is one of the most influential Muslim Scholars in the world and has been felicitated with prestigious '*King Faisal International Award for Islamic Studies*' in 1994 and '*Islamic Development Bank Prize for Islamic Jurisprudence*' besides many other honors and awards.¹³⁹ His prominent works on Contemporary Islam include:

'Islamic Awakening between Rejection and Extremism', 'Lawful and the Prohibited in Islam', '*Fiqh al zakat*', '*Fiqh al Jihad*', 'Islam an Introduction', 'Economic study in Islam', 'Applying the Sunnah' and 'Non-Muslims in Islamic Societies'.

Ideology of Yusuf al-Qaradawi is explicit in his works as well as views and statements issued over his long career with Islam in modern times. He is an advocate of non-sectarian approach and tolerance among different groups. He has often called for dialogue with Non-Muslims and better relations with the West. He writes that this effort should differentiate itself from a debate, for the latter does not often result in mutual cooperation. Al-Qaradawi speaks for democracy in the Muslim world.

¹³⁸ Yusus al-Qardawi, '*Din men Tarjeehat*', Tr. Gulzada Sher Pau, *Manshurat Publishers New Delhi*, 2012, p-406-408

¹³⁹ *Ibid.* P-406.

Al-Qaradawi is critical of the ever-increasing human bloodshed in the contemporary world on one pretext or the other. Describing Islam as a religion of peace and tolerance that holds human soul in high esteem; Qardawi quotes from the the Holy Quran disprove bracketing of Islam with terrorism:

"Who so ever kills a human being for other than manslaughter or corruption in the earth, it shall be as if he has killed all mankind, and who so ever saves the life of one, it shall be as if he had saved the life of all mankind"¹⁴⁰

Similarly, the Prophet of Islam ﷺ is reported to have said, 'A believer remains within the scope of his religion as long as he doesn't kill another person illegally.' Islam never allows a Muslim to kill the innocent and the helpless.

Asgar Ali Engineer (1939-2013), was an Indian reformist-writer and social activist; known for leading a reform movement, critical of authoritarianism priesthood in Bohra Muslim Community. As a child he was trained in Qur'anic *tafsir* (commentary), *tawil* (hidden meaning of Qur'an), *fiqh* (jurisprudence) and *hadith* (Prophet's sayings), and learnt the Arabic language. He graduated with a degree in civil engineering and served for 20 years as an engineer before taking voluntary retirement in 1972, to devote himself to the Bohra Reform Movement.¹⁴¹ An advocate of peace, non-violence and communal harmony he always expressed grave concern in his writings and speeches for ethnic and communal

¹⁴⁰ Al-Quran, 5:32.

¹⁴¹ Riffat Hassan, "Islamic Modernist and Reformist Discourse in South Asia" in Hunter, Shirin T. (Ed.) 'Reformist Voices of Islam-Meditating Islam and Modernity', New Delhi Pentagon Press,2009. p-179

violence in India. He served as head of the Institute of Islamic Studies and the Centre for Study of Society and Secularism, both of which he founded in 1980 and 1993 respectively.

He became a scholar and, eventually, a reformer; an advocate for gender equality and secular democracy. The two causes close to his heart were communal harmony and rights of Muslim women. Engineer meticulously visited every place where riot took place for fact finding and wrote about it. He used to try to bring calm and dialogue between the conflicting communities. He came to conclude that it was a clash of interests, not of religions, that led to violence.¹⁴²

Engineer is convinced of compatibility of reason and faith and rather complementary nature of both to each other. He states, "While reason helps us understand the physical aspects of this universe, revelation helps us find the ultimate answers to our origin and destination. He stresses the need to maintain a balance between reason and faith."¹⁴³ On modern values like Democracy and Secularism, Engineer holds views in line with contemporary Muslim Modernists. Engineer believes in the democratic spirit of Islam as exemplified by the Quranic emphasis on the principle of *Shura*.¹⁴⁴ Similarly he believes that Secularism in a system that creates a social and political space for all religious communities.¹⁴⁵

¹⁴² Dr. Asghar Ali Engineer's autobiography A Living Faith: My Quest for Peace, Harmony and Social Change,2011

¹⁴³ Ibid.

¹⁴⁴ Asghar Ali Engineer, " Islam and Pluralism" 2006.

¹⁴⁵ Asghar Ali Engineer, " Islam and Secularism" 2000.

Again, Engineer was an advocate of Women's rights and Women's inequality topped his priority list of injustices. He argues that, from a Quranic perspective, women and men are equal and women should not be regarded either as inferior or subordinate to men. Similarly, like other modernists, stressing a need for change Engineer states, "I have been an advocate for the modernization of madrasa education, but for mullahs, modernization means what? Computers? But computers are a tool. The computer is not a sign of modernity if you are not modernizing knowledge."

Asghar Ali Engineer authored more than fifty books and numerous articles and reviews in leading academic journals at national and international level. Some of his notable works include:

- Islam and Its Relevance to Our Age, 1984
- Indian Muslims: A Study of Minority problem in India, 1985.
- Rights of Women in Islam, 1992
- Islam in Contemporary World, 2007.

Fatehullah Gullen (b.1941)

Fatehullah Gullen, is an authoritative mainstream Turkish Muslim scholar, opinion leader and educational activist and a modernist who supports interfaith and intercultural dialogue, democracy, spirituality and opposes violence and turning

religion into a political ideology. He supports cooperation of civilizations towards a peaceful world.¹⁴⁶

Born in a religious family in northeastern part of Turkey Gullen acquired his religious education from his parents and then went on to learn all modern subject of his own. He was greatly influenced by the ideology of Said Nursi (d.1961) and put his ideas to practice when he grew up. He was also influenced by mystic dimensions of Islam but not subscribing to the excesses of Sufism and its institutionalizing.

He studied French philosophers and sociologists like Kant and Muslim scholars like Al-Ghazali, Abu Hanifa, Rumi, Shah Waliullah and Said Nursi in particular. He had a lengthy teaching and preaching career from which he retired in 1986; devoting his life to writing and social service through his *Hizmet Movement*. Never married Gullen is living a simple life in USA since 1999; facing ire of Turkish Government for his alleged involvement in unsuccessful Military Coup of Turkey in 1916; which he has repeatedly denied.

Gullen does not advocate a new theology. His understanding of Islam tends to be moderate and mainstream. Gullen sees science and faith as not only compatible but complementary. He therefore encourages scientific research and technological advancement for the good of all humanity. In his sermons, Gullen has reportedly stated: "Studying physics, mathematics, and chemistry is worshipping God."

¹⁴⁶ Journalists and Writers Foundation, ed. "Understanding Fatehulla Gullen" p-7

He recognizes democracy as the only viable political system of governance and stresses the flexibilities in the Islamic principles and their compatibility with a true democracy. The most striking feature of Gullen's life is that his vision and ideas have not remained rhetorical but instead have been realized globally as civic projects. Best known for his Hizmat Movement also known as Gullen Movement he has been successful in establishing a worldwide network of Educational institutes globally particularly in South Turkey, Africa, Central Asia and Afghanistan. Gullen's followers have built over 1,000 schools around the world. In Turkey, Gülen's schools are considered among the best: expensive modern facilities and English language is taught from the first grade.

He has also addressed the social religious and economic issues of Muslims with successful strategies; that are viable, practicable and replicable in Muslim world. He has been described in the English-language media as an imam "who promotes a tolerant Islam which emphasizes altruism, hard work and education" and as "one of the world's most important Muslim figures."

Publications: Out of his over 40 publications following have earned him worldwide acclaim:

- *The Messenger of God: Muhammad*, Tughra Books, 2nd edition, 2008. ISBN 1597841374
- *Reflections on the Qur'an: Commentaries on Selected Verses*, Tughra Books, 2012. ISBN 1597842648.
- *Toward Global Civilization Love and Tolerance*, Tughra Books, 2010.

Javed Ahmed Ghamidi (b.1951). Ghamidi is a well known Pakistani Muslim theologian, Quran scholar and educationist. A former member of the *Jamaat e Islami*, who had a long association with his tutor, Amin Ahsan Islahi, finally parted his ways with *Jamaat* and founded his own, *Al-Mawrid* Institute of Islamic Sciences, its sister organization *Danish Sara* and the *Mus'ab* School System.¹⁴⁷

Javed Ahmed Ghamidi born in *Kakazai* tribe at Daud near Sahiwal, had his early traditional education blended with modern, passing his matriculation from Pakpattan and then graduating from Government College Lahore in 1972. From 1973 to 1995 he was a pupil of Amin Ahsan Islahi, author of the famous tafsir, '*Tadabbur-i-Quran*' who himself had been a student of Hamiduddin Farahi (1863-1930).¹⁴⁸ Though initially inclined to literature and philosophy he turned to Islamic Scholarship, particularly Exegesis and Islamic Law, under influence of Maulana Mawdudi (1903-1979) and Maulana Amin Ahsan Islahi (1904-1997).

Ghamidi worked closely with Maulana Mawdudi for nine years before airing his differences and finally leaving *Jamaat e Islami* in 1977. Ghamidi's critique of Mawdudi's thought is seen as an extension of Maulana Wahiduddin Khan's criticism of

¹⁴⁷ Riffat Hassan, "Islamic Modernist and Reformist Discourse in South Asia" in Hunter, Shirin T. (Ed.) '*Reformist Voices of Islam-Meditating Islam and Modernity*', New Delhi Pentagon Press, 2009, p-178

¹⁴⁸ Hunter, Shirin T. (Ed.) '*Reformist Voices of Islam-Meditating Islam and Modernity*', New Delhi Pentagon Press, 2009, p-177

Mawdudi for his political interpretation of Islam. Ghamidi for his part agrees with Maulana wahiduddin Khan that the basic obligation in Islam is not the establishment of an Islamic world order but servitude to God. In fact, according to Ghamidi, even the formation of an Islamic state is not a basic religious obligation for Muslims.¹⁴⁹

Having served as a member of 'Council of Islamic Ideology', the advisory committee on Islamic Issues to the Government of Pakistan and a tutor at Civil Services Academy (1980-1991), Ghamidi is presently running an intellectual movement similar to *Wastiya* of Egypt on the popular electronic media of Pakistan.¹⁵⁰ Prominent among his writings include, *Al-Bayan*, *Mizan*, *Maqamat* and *Burhan*, besides Monthly journals, *Ishraq* and *Renaissance*.¹⁵¹ Ghamidi's discourse is primarily with the traditionalists on the one end and *Jamaat e Islami* on the other. In Ghamidi's arguments, there is no reference to the Western sources. He comes to conclusions which are similar to those of Islamic modernists on the subject, but he never goes out of the traditional framework.¹⁵²

Over the years, Ghamidi has developed his own view of religion based on hermeneutics and *ijtihad*. Ghamidi distinguishes between the content of the Quran and its interpretation. While the former is immutable, the latter is

¹⁴⁹ Ghamidi's resume Archived 1 August 2009 at the Wayback Machine.

¹⁵⁰ "Ilm-O-Hikmat-part ALL-2017-01-15-Javed Ahmad Ghamdi joins Zu | Dunya News". video.dunyaNews.tv. Retrieved 2017-01-21.

¹⁵¹ Shah Imran Hassan, Hayat e Ghamidi, Rehbar Books New Delhi, 2017, p,126.

¹⁵² Ibid. p-12

always subject to critique and analysis.¹⁵³ Ghamidi's understanding of Islamic law has been presented concisely in his book, *Mizan*,¹⁵⁴ and he holds views on various contemporary issues that don't conform to traditional ones. According to him Jihad can only be waged by an organized Islamic State; and no person, party or group can take arms into their hands under any circumstances. The only valid basis for Jihad through arms is to end oppression when all other measures have failed.¹⁵⁵ Similarly the formation of an Islamic state according to Ghamidi is not a religious obligation, *per se* upon Muslims. However, he believes that if and when Muslims form a state of their own, Islam does impose certain obligations on its rulers like *Salat*, *zakat* and '*amr bil ma'aruf wa nahi anil munkar*.¹⁵⁶

Ghamidi holds only Quran and Sunnah as the valid sources of Islamic Law and distinguishes Shariah from Fiqh. According to him, fiqh is characterized as a human exercise and therefore subject to human weakness and differences of opinion.¹⁵⁷ Thus a Muslim is not obliged to adhere to a school of fiqh according

¹⁵³ Hunter, S op.Cit.178

¹⁵⁴ Ghamidi, Javed (2000). *Burhan* (pdf) (in Urdu). Danish Sara. OCLC 50518567.-A dissertation in which contemporary religious thoughts have been critically analysed

¹⁵⁵ Iftikhar, Asif (2005). *Jihad and the Establishment of Islamic Global Order: A Comparative Study of the Interpretative Approaches and Worldviews of Abu al-A'la Mawdudi and Javed Ahmad Ghamidi*. (Master's Thesis). Montreal: McGill University. OCLC 61742999.

¹⁵⁶ Ghamidi, Javed (2001). *Mizan*. Dar al-Ishraq. OCLC 52901690. – A comprehensive treatise on the contents of Islam.

¹⁵⁷ Ghamidi, Javed (2000). *Al-Bayan*. Danish Sara.—An annotated translation of the Divine message with a view to unfold its coherence.

to Ghamidi. Similarly, he holds democracy as a valid and rather preferred mode of governance in Islam.^{158 159}

Ghamidi, thus shares many of the modernist reformist views with his senior contemporary Maulana Wahiduddin Khan on issues like, ijtehad, jihad, individual reform, democracy, nationalism, khilafa, intercommunity relations, organ donation, *tasawwuf* and on struggle for establishment of Muslim state etc.¹⁶⁰

Inference:

Maulana Wahiduddin Khan is one of the prominent contemporary Muslim scholars, unique in his thought and bold in expression. A detailed study of his literature reveals that he is a Revivalist and modern reformist well aware of the demands and developments of modern era. In his effort to bridge the gap between traditional Islamic learning and modern knowledge, he set out to contemplate and construct a new style of thinking which resulted in a rather bold interpretation of Islamic textual resources.¹⁶¹

¹⁵⁸ Masud, M.K. (2007). "*Rethinking shari'a: Javed Ahmad Ghamidi on hudud*". Die Welt des Islams. Brill Publishers. 47 (3-4): 356-375. doi:10.1163/157006007783237455. Retrieved 21 February 2008.

¹⁵⁹ Javed Ghamidi, Javed, Monthly Ishraq, Lahore, July, 2011, pp, 3-4

¹⁶⁰ Shah Imran Hassan, Hayat e Ghamidi, Rehbar Books New Delhi, 2017, pp, 95-107.

¹⁶¹ Irfan A Omar, "Towards an Islamic theology of Nonviolence: A critical appraisal of Maulana Wahiduddin Khan's view of Jihad" in' *Vidyajyoti Journal of theological Reflections*, vol 72/9 Sept. 2008. p-671

Though Maulana refuses to admit any influences of earlier Muslim scholars and contemporaries, we have noted some points of convergence and divergence with other Muslim Scholars.

While he shares the bold voice of Ibn Taimya in calling to the basic sources of Islam, the Quran and Sunnah, he has touched upon almost all aspects of Islam from Exegesis, seerah, kalam, fiqh, Spirituality, Jihad and Ijtihad like Shah Waliullah. However, in the matter of Ijtihad he is closer to Sir Sayyid Ahmed Khan. Sir Sayyid Ahmed Khan once remarked that Islam would not be understood by west unless presented in scientific idiom; and that is what Maulana Wahiduddin Khan has been doing for last many decades. Maulana shares views of Jamaluddin Afghani and Muhammad Abduh about compatibility of faith and reason and a need to learn science and technology, however he remains silent over utopic idea of pan-Islamism.

Maulana endorses Muhammad Abduh's division of issues related to worship (ibadat) and social dealings (muamlat); and considers the latter as subject of reinterpretation according to changing circumstances.

Maulana Wahiduddin Khan studied Al-Hilal and Al-Balagh of Maulana Abul-Kalam Azad while still in Madrasatul Islah, but he didn't show any interest in Azad's political discourse. However, Maulana's writings about causes of Muslim decline, Pluralism and advice to Muslims to be useful members of society (*Givers not takers*) are in line with Maulana Azad's

theory of '*baqa-i-anfa*'.¹⁶² Again in making valid arguments Azad depends on Quran, Hadith, Examples from Sahaba and History; again, the same is followed by Wahiduddin Khan.

Maulana Wahiduddin Khan stresses for reform of individuals leading to a reformed society as also preached and practiced by Tablighi Jama'at and Maulana Abul Hassan Ali Nadwi. Maulana's criticism of Jama'at e Islami and political interpretation of Islam is also shared by Maulana Nadwi and Maulana Manzoor Nomani, the one-time confederates of Maulana Mawdudi. However, he has followed the pattern of Mawdudi in defending Islam against onslaught of western materialistic ideologies, writing copiously about communism, Marxism and socialism as un-Islamic ideas.

Maulana Wahiduddin Khan is in favor of reform in Madrasa education including need for changes in curricula, bringing Hadith to fore front and relegating outdated Kalam. This modernizing project was originally envisaged by Shibli and we find in Javed Ahmed Ghamidi a strong advocate of reform in religious education.

Maulana's stress on Spirituality, tadabbur and tafakkur could be seen as a reflection of Islahi's thought, whom Maulana adores a lot as a teacher. Maulana has never exhibited any acquaintance with Said Nursi, Al-Farooqui and FazlurRehman but we find Maulana's attempt at Islamization of Knowledge and stress on 'Revival and Reform in Islam' as a common objective.

¹⁶² Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, 'Quran ka Qanun e Urooj o Zawal' p-100

Similarly, the movement of *Risala e Noor* is reflected in *Al-Risala* Movement based on peaceful individual reform. This connection has been traced by Irfan A. Omar an Islamic Scholar based in USA.

A contemporary of famous Egyptian Muslim Scholar Yusuf al-Qardawi, Maulana shares similar views on need for revival and reform, *taqlid and ijihad* and priorities in Islam but Qardawi is more focused on Islamic law and they differ on definition and manifestations of Jihad.

He shares many similarities with his Turkish contemporary Fatehullah Gullen, for example on necessity of modern education, science and technology, interfaith dialogue as also the views on eschatology.

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CHAPTER- V

CONTRIBUTION OF MAULANA WAHIDUDDIN KHAN TO MODERN ISLAMIC THOUGHT

INTRODUCTION

The 1947 Indo-Pak partition was the third major setback for Indian Muslims after the collapse of Mughal Empire (1857) and the disintegration of ottoman caliphate (1924). The Muslims after thousands of years of domination landed into a political abyss never thought of by anyone. They were beleaguered with lowest morale, not in a position to reconcile with the changing world order.

The process of this change had started much earlier in 18th century, but due to no uniformity in formulating a response to religious and socio-political threats, they were lagging behind world nations in all fields; education, science and technology in particular, coupled with leadership crises.

The Indian Muslims, in addition to the challenges mentioned above, had added wows of partition, migration, divided families, communal riots and an environment of skepticism and hostility after centuries of harmonious intercommunity relations. The challenges faced by Indian Muslims in post-partition era can thus be summarized as:¹⁶³

- Islam's universal ideology faced with the nation-state concept.
- Reality of secularism and pluralism in place of Muslim dominance.

¹⁶³ Yoginder Sikand, Analysis of the writings of Maulana Wahiduddin Khan, Milli Gazette, New Delhi, Feb.2001

- How should revelation be understood in the light of reason and science?
- Separation of religion and politics and relegation of religion to the private realm.
- Scope of Islamic *Shariah* in a politically subdued position.
- Educational backwardness and response to modern education.
- How should Muslims relate to people of other faiths and ideologies?
- How can Muslim minorities remain faithful to their faith while at the same time staying loyal to their respective homelands?
- Muslim leadership crises.

Such was the sociopolitical environ in post-partition India when Maulana Wahiduddin Khan appeared on the Muslim intellectual scene. Maulana, born and brought up in a serene rural atmosphere of rural India, got his early education under Farahi-Islahi school of thought and acquired modern knowledge of English, science and history on his own. He was thus not inclined to a particular tradition and was free to contemplate on the situation and formulate his own response suited to the Indian conditions in particular and practicable for Muslim *ummah* in general. It is in this backdrop that his philosophy and religious thought needs to be studied and evaluated as he often boldly claims that 'he is not an extension of any particular ideology or ideologue'.¹⁶⁴

¹⁶⁴Interview with Maulana Wahiduddin Khan, by researcher, January 13, 2016.

After Madrasa education, he realized its inadequacy to face the modern world. In search of truth, Maulana Wahiduddin Khan was first attracted to Maulana Mawdudi's forceful and logical presentation of Islamic literature before the world in a systemic manner and its positive impact on Indian youth but *Jama'at e Islami's* political solution to problems of Indian Muslims, disappointed Maulana Wahiduddin Khan. He now found some solace in Tablighi Jama'at a reformation movement of Indian Muslims that stressed on *Akhirat oriented life* showing little concern for temporal issues. Soon, Maulana realized that their formulation suits a particular stratum of Muslim society having no fodder for intellectual growth and logical thinking. It is here, that Maulana Wahiduddin Khan started his independent original thinking which led him to the present stature and eminence.

When he turns to Quran for guidance, his gaze is fixed on his favorite and oft quoted *Hudaibya Pact*; contemplates its universal relevance and he finds the solution for Indian Muslims living in a pluralistic society.

As rightly analyzed by Yoginder Sikand:

"Maulana Wahiduddin Khan has developed his own, in some respects, unique, understanding of Islam and its place in the modern world. He suggests Indian Muslims how to create a balance between their conflicting loyalties to the state, on the one hand, and to their religion, on the other. Although the Muslims of India are Maulana's primary focus, and the development of his own thought must be located in the

specific Indian context, He seeks to address the Muslim *ummah* as a whole.¹⁶⁵

Al-Risala forms the back bone of Maulana's thought and mission. Small one-page articles of Maulana in simple lucid persuasive and epiphany style fortified with scientific references and vivid presentation are sufficient to tie down readers. An uninterrupted stream of such lessons over last forty years from Maulana's pen have definitely impressed and guided young Indian minds and have spilled over beyond borders. It may be important to note that most of the books by Maulana are in fact collection of Maulana's articles relevant to a particular subject, already published in different issues of *Al-Risala*.

Major Themes in Maulana's Thought:

- Scientific Theology
- Peace and Dawah:
- Islam in the Contemporay world
- Revival and Reform in Islam
- Islamic Studies: *Need for Ijtihad*
- Indian Muslims: Need for Reform
- Woman in Islam
- Spirituality & Philosophy of Life

Maulana Wahiduddin Khan's interest particularly lay in Science and Islam, and his first detailed book on a particular subject

¹⁶⁵ Yoginder Sikand, Analysis of the writings of Maulana Wahiduddin Khan, Milli Gazette, New Delhi, Feb.2001

was "*Mazhab aur Jadid Challenge*" published in 1966, translated into English as *God Arises* and into Arabic as *Al-Islam Yatahada* that is included in syllabi of many gulf universities. Acclaimed as Maulana's one of the best books it not only explained the compatibility of science and religion but it also dispels and clarifies the doubts in western educated minds particularly the question of God as Creator of Universe; who manages the delicate and calculated balance between heavenly bodies and finally will bring an end to the cosmos as predicted in all divine revelations.

He places Islamic *Dawah* as the supreme responsibility of every Muslim which of course, needs a peaceful environment. According to Maulana the responsibility of creation of a peaceful environment thus lies on Muslims as *dais of Islam* and they should go extra mile in establishing peace and making bridges with other communities and nations. He is a strong advocate of world peace and interfaith dialogue. In this connection he has travelled extensively in India and around the globe involving with different world peace organizations and religious groups.

Maulana is particularly critical of such ideologies as Marxism, socialism, communism, and materialism, and have written several books on these subjects. He is equally critical of Muslims for not taking to modern education, science, and technology that has left them far behind the world nations while they were supposed to be the world leaders in this world and the hereafter. Whereas he is critical of the Godless materialistic, philosophy of the West; he is equally

appreciative of their advancement in fields of research, science and technology. He impresses upon Muslims not only to benefit from scientific achievements but to be a part of research teams. Maulana Wahiduddin Khan's writings are concerned to present Islam as a comprehensive world view and the only ideology that can fill the vacuum of future world.

Another area of his scholarly achievements is exegesis of holy Quran titled *Tazkeerul Quran* distinguished from other exegetic literature by its particular reminder and warning aspect of Quranic teachings as the name itself implies. It focuses itself on the creation plan of God that needs to be conveyed to each and every individual on earth irrespective of outcome or impact-only as a responsibility of a member of Muslim *ummah* of the last Holy Prophetﷺ. The exegesis deliberately avoids legal aspect of Quranic teachings.

Maulana has penned down several books on Islamic studies i.e. *Tafseer, Seerah, Hadith, Kalam, fiqh & tasawwuf* and particularly on Islam in contemporary world, condemning the Muslim practice of clinging to the past and not giving due place to exercise of *ijtihad*; that only can solve most of their problems. On the issue of *ijtihad*, he stresses for reinterpretation primary texts and re-application of Quranic principles to find answers to modern challenges. Having come to the conclusion that the need of the hour was to present

Islamic teachings in the style and language of the present day, Maulana has written over 200 books on Islam. ¹⁶⁶

Notable Works of Maulana that need to be studied for a profound knowledge of his thought and mission include:

- *Mazhab aur Jadid Challenge*
- *Tazkir ul Quran*
- *Paighambar e Islam* (The prophet of revolution)
- *Khatoon e Islam* (The woman in Islam)
- *Islam the Creator of Modern age*
- *Tajdid e Din* (revival of the Faith)
- *Fikre Islami* (The Islamic Thought)
- *The Indian Muslims*
- Islam Rediscovered
- *The Political Interpretation of Islam*
- *The prophet of Peace*
- *Izhar e Din*

Mazhab aur Jadid Challenge (*Al Islam Yatahada*)

This is one of the best books by Maulana Wahiduddin Khan, acknowledged across the globe for selection of its subject and the scholarly treatment of the subject particularly in terms of methods of argument and the conviction, with which it calls the modern man to God.

This book, the result of exhaustive research by author, attempts to present the basic teachings of religion in the light

¹⁶⁶ Yoginder Sikand, Analysis of the writings of Maulana Wahiduddin Khan, Milli Gazette, New Delhi, Feb.2001

of modern knowledge and in a manner consistent with modern scientific method. After a thorough investigation of the subject, the writer has reached the conclusion that religious teachings are, academically valid, and as understandable and intellectually acceptable as any of the theories propounded by men of science.¹⁶⁷

Before the advent of Islam, Polytheism had held the sway all over the world. Despite a series of prophets from Noah to Jesus, only a tiny minority responded to their call, while polytheism continued to dominate the world. It was in seventh century C.E. that God sent his final messenger, Muhammad ﷺ with exactly the same message of *Tawheed* (Monotheism) as had been brought by his predecessors.¹⁶⁸ But being the last in chain of prophets God decreed that he should bring the monotheistic revolution in the history of mankind with Divine assistance-that did happen and continued for about one thousand years.

Again, history witnessed an age of atheism. It was in 18th and 19th century that it reached its culmination point. During this epoch, it was asserted on the strength of scientific findings that modern research had destroyed the foundations of religion. But today that very same weapon-science has at last been turned against the scoffers and atheists and we are at the moment witnessing the same momentous revolution in thinking as took place in the seventh century with the advent of Islam.

¹⁶⁷ Maulana Wahiduddin Khan, *God Arises*, Good Word Books, Reprint 2016, Title Introduction.

¹⁶⁸ Al-Quran, 42:13

This book attempts and successfully explains this new revolution. It also demonstrates as how 20th century research has, on academic grounds, demolished the atheistic claims put forward in 18th & 19th centuries.

In the seventh century God had opened up new possibilities that were aptly availed by Prophet of Islam and his companion. As a result, monotheism attained intellectual dominance and polytheism of the civilizations was banished. In a similar manner, through a modern scientific revolution; God has once again created new opportunities. If people of religion-the Muslims, rise to seize those opportunities, they can replace the modern materialistic and atheistic ideologies with monotheistic ideology of Islam. That is the core message of this book.

The beauty of the book lies in the fact that Maulana demolishes the claims of western social philosophers and scientists with the same tools of modern knowledge that they boasted off. The unfolding of new scientific facts in different branches of knowledge; may it be astronomy or biology or any other modern subject, support the Quranic explanation of universal phenomena with rather more clarity and conviction. With logical and scientific methods of arguments Maulana not only proves the existence of an ineffable Creator of the universe but also justifies the prophet-hood and life after death as enshrined in Quranic text. That is what this book is all about.

This book was first published by *Idara e Tehqiqaat o nashriyat e Islami* Lucknow in 1964 as "*Ilm e Jadid ka Challenge*" and later its revised and enlarged version was renamed as "*Mazhab aur Jadid Challenge*" and published in 1966. The book has since been translated in many languages of the world particularly Arabic (*al-Islam Yatahadda*) & English (God arises) and forms a part of syllabi in various Arab and western Universities.

Islam Rediscovered: (Discovering Islam from Original Sources)

The theme of this book is evident from its title; "*Islam Rediscovered: Discovering Islam from Its Original Sources*". Its purpose is to present Islam in its pure and pristine form drawing on its original sources rather than judging it by the later day interpretations, making a clear distinction, through scientific methods, between Essential Islam and the Historical Islam.

We are living in the age of information-an age of knowledge explosion as it is called. Today everyone wants to know more and more about everything including religion. As a result, people are far better informed about religion than ever before-but with a difference. About other religions they know what is enshrined in their religious books; whereas their information about Islam is derived from unauthentic sources. e.g. They judge Islam by the actions of Muslims and not the other way round.

The Muslims of modern times are engaged in violence everywhere in the name of Islam. In practice only, a tiny minority of Muslims is engaged in such violent activities.

However, since other Muslims, neither condemn these actions nor disown them outright; it is but natural for people to attribute their violence to Islam.

The aim of this book is to present Islam as it is enshrined in its sacred scriptures. The authentic source of information about Islam is Quran: the word of God revealed to Arabian Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ). The second source of knowledge about Islam is the *Sunnah*: the words, deeds and sanctions of the Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ).

The book, *Islam Rediscovered*, consists of twenty-five chapters arranged in such a way that reality unfolds to the reader in a systemic way. It contains chapters such as; in search of truth, faith and reason, concept of God, Islam in brief, non-violence and Islam, spirituality in Islam and Islam stands the test of history.

A fundamental introduction and proper background is thus provided in this book, in light of which the original sources of Islam may be studied. It also calls for a distinction to be made between Islam and the practices of Muslims. Taking a scientific attitude, one has to see Islam in the light of Islamic scriptures and not judge it by Muslim conduct.

Fikre Islami (The Islamic Thought)

Fikr e Islami or 'Islamic Thought' is another important book by Maulana Wahiduddin Khan published first in 1998 by Good Word Books. It focuses on some important issues facing Muslim *Ummah* in modern times and an attempt to formulate

an appropriate response-drawing guidance from the principles laid down in primary texts of Islam rather than later day interpretations and the stereotyped frozen stance of Muslims. Chapter one of the book deals with issue of *Ijtihad* in Islam- its history, legal status, present scenario and scope; all explained with examples. It includes a need for reconstruction of Islamic thought, its ways and means as well as call to Muslim scholars to come forward and shoulder the responsibility rather than clinging to past or retreat into self made cocoons of solace.

Whereas other religions started reform movements to make their laws compatible with later day developments; Islam according to Maulana is an exception as it doesn't need such reforms. The principles of Islam have eternal relevance that can be traced from original sources and re-applied to modern circumstances. It is the medieval interpretations and law schools that fall short of expectations not Islam itself; which is still preserved in primary texts-containing universal and eternal principles laid down by none other than the Creator of the universe Himself.

The second chapter deals with the compatibility of faith and reason. While western religious philosophers felt that faith could never be placed on the same level of certainty as scientific knowledge,¹⁶⁹ Maulana Wahiduddin Khan doesn't subscribe to this view. According to Maulana science conventionally supported only observable phenomena as valid facts but many realities remained unexplained. Of late the

¹⁶⁹ Paul Badham "The relationship between faith and reason" in "Faith and reason"; Manchester College England, No134-p6-1992)

inferential method is approved as a valid argument in science as well. So, the dichotomy of scientific and religious truths fades away as the religion already supported the inferential argument. So, it is postulated that reason is not only complementary to faith but it is through reason that faith can be defended.

The chapter also includes an enlightening account of Tasawwuf (Mysticism) and Spirituality in Islam. The Tasawwuf or meditation, entered in Islam as a supportive faculty but in its extremist, form eclipsed the Islam itself.¹⁷⁰ Maulana approves the contemplation mode of spirituality as a genuine form in Islam that is referred to in the Quran at number of places in terms like *tawassum*, *tadabbur* and *tafakkur*; i.e. reaching out to Creator through contemplation on nuances and wonders of His creation.

The third chapter of *Fikr e Islami* is titled as 'Islamic Activism'. According to Maulana, Muslims today are up in arms against incumbent rulers all over the world in an attempt to establish Muslim governments. Their movements are focused on regaining the political glory of Muslims that is a thing of the past, having nothing to do with the service of Islam. Instead of reestablishing a Muslim *khilafah* or political empire they should according to Maulana strive for spreading the word of God to the remotest corner of the globe-that is ordained by Allah and predicted by Holy Prophet of Islam in an authentic *hadith*. Muslims according to Maulana, despite political losses are still in a position to establish a '*Dawah Empire*'.

¹⁷⁰Maulana Wahiduddin Khan, 'Fikr e Islami' Good word Books, New Delhi, p-133

He exhorts contemporary *ulama* to equip them-selves with modern knowledge as an obligatory duty and avail the present-day ways of communication and technological advancements to spread the word of God. Maulana argues that there is an ideological vacuum in the world that can only be filled by Islam.¹⁷¹

The book '*Fikr e Islami*' thus deals with issues of ijthihad, the reinterpretation of original Islamic texts; applying the relevance of rediscovered Islam to modern world, utilizing the faculty of reason in service of faith and adopting a pragmatic approach focusing on serving Islam through establishment of a '*Dawah Empire*' instead of struggling to regain the past political glory of Muslims.

Tazkir ul Quran

Tazkirul Quran is the translation and commentary of the Holy Quran by Maulana Wahiduddin Khan (b.1925), a Delhi based Indian Muslim scholar of international repute for his vast knowledge and literary erudition having authored over two hundred books on 'Islam in the Modern World'. The translation first appeared in *Al-Risala* monthly in 1979 in installments that were later completed and compiled in a 2-volume book form in 1986. It was later combined into a concise single volume in 1998. It has since been translated into many languages particularly English and Arabic.

¹⁷¹ Ibid. pp-147,217,238

This commentary of the Quran is a concise, easy-to-read guide that enables today's readers to understand the deeper meanings of the Quran, and to reflect upon its relevance in the present world. It focuses on the main themes of the Quran such as God realization, enlightenment, and closeness to God, remembrance, prayer, peace and spirituality. It lays stress on spiritual development through contemplation and reflection, and by the activation of one's own thinking process.

Maulana in the preface to this monumental work doesn't forget to incorporate his oft quoted 'Creation Plan of God' for each new reader. 'Every book has its objective and the objective of Quran, according to Maulana is, to make man aware of the 'Creation plan of God'. That is to tell man, Why God created this world; what is the purpose of setting man on earth; what is required from man in his pre-death life span and what he is going to confront after death. The purpose of Quran is to make man aware of this reality, thus serving to guide man on his entire journey through life into the afterlife'.¹⁷²

When God created man as such, he divided his life span into two periods, the pre-death period, which is a time of trial, and the post death period, which is the time for receiving the rewards or punishment merited by one's actions during one's lifetime. These take the form of eternal paradise or eternal hell. The secret of man's success in this life is to understand God's creation plan and map out his life accordingly.

¹⁷² The Quran, translation and commentary by Maulana Wahiduddin Khan, GoodWord Books, New Delhi, 2014, p-x

Tafseer methodology: *Tazkirul Quran* is prefaced by a scientific introduction on approaches to Quranic sciences and methodology for interpretation of Quran. *Tafseer* methodology of *Ibn e Taimya* (1263-1328) as adopted by *Ibn e Kathir* has been followed by Maulana Wahiduddin Khan also; i.e. explanation of Quran by Quran, the authentic *ahadith* and the opinion of *sahaba*.¹⁷³

Though having a vast knowledge of *Tafseer* literature, Maulana doesn't rely on a single work by his predecessors or medieval thinkers or any particular school of thought. He rather tries to understand things scientifically and rationally from original sources though he is at places appreciative of, and often quotes *Ibn e Kathir* and *Allama Al-Qurtbi*.¹⁷⁴

Language of the *Tazkirul Quran* is simple lucid, eloquent and persuasive and direct, closest to the spirit of original text; neither liberal nor exclusively literal –rather an idiomatic middle path has been adopted. Having good erudition in Arabic language and literature Maulana Wahiduddin Khan is also well versed with other domains of knowledge which are helpful to understand deeper meanings of the difficult Quranic *ayah*. He has equipped himself with knowledge of modern sciences which help him filter facts from fiction. That is why we don't find any element of *Israilyat* in Maulana's commentary.

¹⁷³ Maulana Wahiduddin Khan, *Islam Rediscovered*, Good word Books, 2010, p-10

¹⁷⁴ *Al-Risala*, January 2005, p-36

The commentary of *Tazkirul Quran* has been arranged in such a way that a portion of Quranic text (*related ayah*) is followed by its translation in parallel column followed by commentary of the paragraph. This pattern has been repeated throughout the volume. The paragraphs of *Tazkirul Quran* are selected and arranged in such a way that each one contains an independent and complete message and reader gets a complete message whether he reads only one paragraph or more of it. The paragraph style is somewhat similar to one adopted by Mawulana Mawdudi in his prestigious work *Tafheemul Quran*. Similar to *Tarjumanul Quran* by Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, Maulana Wahiduddin Khan recommends removing all veils of earlier interpretations and advocates a study of Quran with a pure and unbiased mind, what Azad called "*we should venture to find out Quran in the pages of Quran itself*"; an approach to understand Quran from Quran without crutches of earlier interpretations.

Like Sir Sayyid Ahmed Khan and Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, Maulana Wahiduddin Khan considers Quran as based on wisdom and truth and explains it in light of modern sciences e.g. cosmology, physics and biology, with frequent references to natural phenomena.

Maulana Wahiduddin Khan has adopted a nonsectarian approach in translation and commentary; drawing spirit of the Quranic message directly from original source, not the later day interpretations. There are no sectarian controversies rather non-jurisprudential, literal approach is adopted in juristic matters.

Justification for peaceful jihad is sought in explanatory notes wherever applicable, denouncing the political interpretation of earlier scholars. According to Maulana Wahiduddin Khan the Quran addresses man and it is through individual reform that a dream of reformed society can be realized in the longer run.

The Quran is a reminder for man which continuously through glad tidings and admonishment, guides man to the right path leading him to a successful life after death. This aspect assumes primary place in *Tazkirul Quran* and the exhaustive volume never deviates from the primary focus.

The Quran at number of places calls man to contemplate on creation of God to realize the grandeur of the creator and turn to him for guidance that leads man to a successful after life. *Tazkirul Quran* focuses on this aspect of Quran as its primary and essential aims. The Quran uses several terms-*tawassum*, *tadabbur*, *tafakkur*; which indicates the learning of Divine lessons through reflection, deep thinking and contemplation on the signs of God scattered across the world. The present translation of the Quran refreshes in mind these very themes.

It brings out for the people of today's world the underlying lessons and message of the Quran in addition to explaining the wisdom, beauty and essence of the teachings of the Quran. This commentary thus explains the meaning of the Quran in such a way as to give readers a clearer understanding of the message of the Quran and helps them in finding their own way of making it relevant to themselves.

The *Tazkirul Quran* commentary is a concise volume avoiding too much details lest the reader get distracted from the

primary message of Quran and his focus on *akhirah*. *Dawah* aspect forms the core message of *Tazkirul Quran* in line with original text. Further, it forms a translation pattern for future generations to understand Quran correctly.

Paighambar e Inquilab (The Prophet of Revolution)

Though a lot has been written about life and mission of the 'Prophet ﷺ of Islam' over past 1400 years; Maulana's treatment of the subject is unique in more than one ways. Scholars have often highlighted one or the other aspects of prophet's life-But Maulana Wahiduddin Khan making full use of his vast knowledge of history has tried to present the important aspects of life and mission of prophet in a compact and convincing format focusing particularly on *Dawah* aspect and the revolutionary role played by him in reshaping the history of modern world.

One of the must-read books by Maulana Wahiduddin Khan, '*Paighambar e Inquilab*' was first published in 1982 and well received across the globe, earning him the award for best book on *Prophet's Seerah* in 1983 by Government of Pakistan. The book was translated in English as "Prophet of Revolution" and again awarded the best book in English on the subject in 1988. The book has been reprinted by Good Word books in 2014 and its English version renamed as '*Muhamma ﷺ: A prophet for All Humanity*'.

The '*Paighambar e Inquilab*' a 208-page treatise is divided into four major parts, each in turn consisting of 3-4 sub-chapters.

Part One of the book presents an over view of the history and purpose of creation of man and his landing on earth; as also the chain of prophets deputed by Almighty Allah for guidance of mankind. Maulana reasserts that all the prophets came with same mission of making man aware of creation plan of God; and with same *din* based on fundamental beliefs in *Tawhid*, *Risalah* and *Akhira*, though there were differences in *Shariah* or legal aspects of social life taught by some prophets. Whereas other prophets, Adam to Jesus came with instructions for specific periods and particular nations; Almighty Allah designed the mission of His last messenger, Prophet Muhammad ﷺ for the whole humanity and for all times to come.

This part of the book also discusses in detail the historical background of Arabia at the time of advent of Islam as well as elaborations on the life and mission of the Prophet of Islam ﷺ including his early testing times in Makah, migration and then establishment of a Muslim state in Madina.¹⁷⁵

In Part two of the book Maulana explains that it was the result of a wistful prayer made by prophet Ibrahim (ؑ) that such a universal prophet was sent by God, though after a lapse of 2500 years of ground work; who could bring about revolutionary changes in the world history. These changes affected not only the religious but even social, political and futuristic outlook of the world, paving way for a transformed world that is before us today. It made monotheism the

¹⁷⁵Maulana Wahiduddin Khan, 'Paighambar e inquilab' p-78

dominant ideology of the world, dethroning polytheism to oblivion; which had held sway over centuries. It was this major change that led to new developments like freedom of thought and expression, a democratic system of governance based on piety and justice in society as also the opening up of avenues for knowledge and research encouraged by Quranic teachings. It was through this change that all modern developments in knowledge, science and technology could take place.

Part Three of the book deals with the essential divine declaration that there would be no prophet of God after Muhammad (ﷺ) and the Muslim *Ummah* is henceforth assigned the prophetic mission of conveying the world message of God to whole mankind. Muslims have been assigned this responsibility according to teachings of the Quran and the last sermon of Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ). This chapter also includes the exemplary role played by companions of holy prophet in making his mission a success and also leaving an all-time role model for Muslims to follow.¹⁷⁶

The Fourth and the final chapter of the book deliberates on the avenues for *dawah* work in the modern world, particularly in the light of recent developments in form of freedom of thought and expression, newer ways of communication and a world free of superstitions and irrational thinking of the past. Here Maulana exhorts Muslims to make all out efforts in

¹⁷⁶ Ibid.p-182

equipping themselves with modern knowledge and technology as also to grab the available opportunities to spread the word of God to whole humanity making Prophet's prediction a reality.¹⁷⁷

Indian Muslims: The Need for a Positive Outlook

This is another important book by Maulana Wahiduddin Khan often overlooked or ignored by readers. Published for the first time in 1994 by Al-Risala Books, this hard bound 191-page book is a collection of Maulana's articles on issues relating to Indian Muslims earlier published in *Al-Risala* and other booklets from time to time. This book is an English rendering of the book "*Hindustani Musalman*" translated by Dr. Farida Khanam.

The book comprises of seven full length chapters titled The New India, Indian Muslims-priorities, and Muslims in Post-Independence Era, Cure for Communalism, *Mandir-Masjid* Issue, Minorities in India & Islam and Peace. Maulana has deliberated on each issue in detail, in light of historical perspective and scientific analysis, yet remaining focused on future of India and the Indian Muslims.

While Maulana terms the Indo-Pak partition (1948), assassination of Mahatma Gandhi (1948) and demolition of *Babri Masjid* (1992) as the most unfortunate events in Indian History, and condemns the upsurge of fanaticism, he is equally

¹⁷⁷ Ibid.p-203

critical of the planning failure on the part of Indian Intelligentsia and Muslim leadership.¹⁷⁸

Indian leaders successfully led the struggle for independence but failed to envisage and plan for progress and prosperity of a strong nation. While Gandhi's efforts failed to stop anti-Muslim wave in post-partition era, J.L. Nehru complained a lack of scientific temperament in Indians. Progress of nation was derailed first by a leaning towards socialism and in later part by the *Hinduvta Model* in the name of Cultural Nationalism; a misconceived idea and against the law of nature as Maulana calls it.¹⁷⁹

Maulana on the basis of his analysis of different events and issues and his futuristic visions draws certain conclusions and advises Indian Muslims accordingly:

In anti-Muslim incidents it is always a handful of fanatics that create the situation while there is no dearth of right thinking Hindus. He advises Muslims to focus and win over these no-problem Hindus.

The incidents like *Babri Masjid* are not going to recur as the collective conscious of the majority community leads them to repentance not the repetition. Quoting Toyn Bee from his great work "Study of History", Maulana shows positivism that even the 'blackest nights are followed by sun rise' according to law of nature.

¹⁷⁸ Maulana Wahiduddin Khan, *Indian Muslims*, P-10

¹⁷⁹ *Ibid.* p-32

In case of unpleasant incidents Muslims will have to take the initiative in putting an end to all mutual discord on unilateral basis, not insisting on reciprocal terms.¹⁸⁰

In India there are more opportunities now than ever before, for Muslims to play a creative role.¹⁸¹ According to Maulana the need of the hour is for Muslims to put the memory of all distasteful events behind them and seize every possible opportunity for re-construction and consolidation. They must strive particularly to make progress in the fields of education, commerce & industry, science and technology etc. and prove themselves to be *assets* to the nation not *liabilities*.

Muslims are the custodians of Divine message that they have to deliver to the world nations as a Divine trust. It is possible only in a peaceful environment and creation of such a peaceful atmosphere is primarily the responsibility of a *Dai* group. In so doing they will have to stop "*Othering*" their fellow citizens and treat them as *madu'u* (Customers of Truth) and not as enemies.¹⁸²

Maulana is sure that religion of Muslims gives them enough moral stature to play a real and effective part in tackling grave problems that India is facing these days. Maulana repeatedly reminds Muslims of the relevance of *Hudaibya* to Indian circumstances particularly.

¹⁸⁰ Ibid. p21

¹⁸¹ Ibid. p-23

¹⁸² Maulana Wahiduddin Khan, Hindustani Musalman, P-144

Maulana is not unaware of the designs of few extremist Hindu factions for future course of Indian polity or the shrinking space for minorities in India. He is equally cognizant of the negligence on the part of ruling machinery in controlling unpleasant situations. But he always advises Muslim to be positive and patient in planning their responses; and he does not do so being a partisan to offenders as Muslims believe; but on the basis of firm foundations of such a thought stemming from religious texts and his pragmatic and futuristic vision.

Khatoon e Islam (woman in Islam)

It is one of the very important, internationally acclaimed books on the subject of woman in Islam; by Maulana Wahiduddin Khan, that forms a part of syllabi in various national and international universities. The book first published by *Maktaba Al-Risala Delhi* in 1987 has since been translated into various languages. Its English version is titled "*Woman between Islam and western Society*" exactly according to the subject matter and has translated by none other than Dr. Farida Khanam (*Jamia Millia Islamia New Delhi*).

It is a well researched book by Maulana that takes historical, social, and scientific facts, in account while analyzing while analyzing different arguments on the subject and draws conclusions on the basis of modern research methodology.

The book consists of twelve major chapters, including, general survey of the laws of nature governing social life, a historical account of the status of woman in different societies, the western women and their liberation movements, the problems facing modern women and the position of women in

Islam. Maulana has deliberated on each topic with full confidence quoting relevant laws of nature, the lessons of history and the scientific findings drawing conclusions fortified with valid arguments.

Maulana particularly blasts the myths prevalent in western world regarding a lower status of woman in Islam; quoting abundantly from history while at the same time comparing with the problems of western women, which have only multiplied after the liberation movements. In fact, these movements only dragged women out of their strongholds of family spheres and displayed unveiled, in market places leading to terrible problems unimaginable to human mind in the past. For instance, unrestricted social intercourse leading to unmarried couples, increasing rate of divorce, children deprived of guardianship and family atmosphere, suicides and delinquency coupled with problems of artificial insemination and surrogate mothers.

According to Maulana, various feminist movements in post-industrial society tried to bring woman at par with man in all spheres of social life from economical to technological and even warfare. But despite a lapse of 200 years the results are nowhere in sight. The reason is that they ventured to go against the laws of nature forgetting that patriarchy is an unalterable law of nature, a must for organized social and family life. They even turned blind eye to scientific evidences that the differences in both the sexes exist at cellular level and even in prenatal period (while still in the womb of mother) through interplay of various hormones.

The conclusions drawn by Maulana are in line with the reflections by Lebanese-American philanthropist, Kahlil Gibran (1883-1931) that:

*“Modern civilization has made woman a bit wiser but it has increased her sufferings because of man’s covetousness. The woman of yesterday was a happy wife but the woman of today is a miserable mistress”*¹⁸³

Turning to Muslim women, Maulana while quoting from holy Quran and the authentic *ahadith* of Prophet of Islam (ﷺ), concludes that man and woman are in their bio-physiological make up different but not superior or inferior to each other.

“The status of woman in Islam is the same as that of man. Injunctions about honor and respect enjoined for one sex are enjoined equally for other sex. So far as rights in this world and rewards in the hereafter are concerned, there is no difference. Yet Islam sees man as man and woman as woman, and considering the natural differences, it advocates the principle of division of labor between the two sexes rather than the equality of labor.”¹⁸⁴

Maulana has also dealt with contemporary issues like Divorce, polygamy and *Hijab in Islam* with great erudition and draws conclusions with the help of his vast knowledge of history, philosophy and modern social scientific developments. These topics forming a part of this book have also been published as separate booklets, keeping in view their contemporary socio-legal importance.

¹⁸³ Khalil Gibran, “Broken Wings”

¹⁸⁴ Maulana Wahiduddin Khan, *Khatoon e Islam*, Title Intro.

Islam the Creator of the Modern Age

This is a small book but one of the important works of Maulana Wahiduddin Khan. Though the theme of this book is very clear from title itself but it is not merely an emotional slogan often we come across. Maulana has substantiated his thesis with valid arguments quoting abundantly from theories of world history and science. This book is in fact the English version of Maulana's Urdu book, "*Islam Daure Jadid ka Khaliq*".

The book consists of four broader chapters on impact of Islam on world history of knowledge and modern developments; the scenario before advent of Islam; the Muslim contribution to sciences and the modern secular values like liberty, equality and fraternity.

The chapter one titled *Islam, creator of the modern age*; discusses with references to holy texts of Islam and the world history, the role of Islam in bringing about the long-awaited revolution in the history of the world religions. The components of this revolution were; making monotheism the dominant ideology of the world, the liberation of mind from shackles of ideological and political slavery of polytheist kings and rulers as well as sacredness of objects, the progress of knowledge in different fields and attitude of Islam to learning and advent of a scientific era.

The second chapter takes stock of the intellectual environment before the advent of Islam. The basic point of discussion and stress is that before Islam the polytheism was

the dominant ideology of the world that has raised the status of created objects of the world like rivers mountains moon and stars as deities to be worshiped. This resulted in diminution of the status of an Almighty, Omniscient God; or at least his relocation to position of merely a passive agency. Maulana also makes a point that Christianity though a monotheistic religion, through its manipulation of original teachings of bible and introduction of tenets like trinity had assigned a status of deity to earth. They supported the Ptolemy's geocentric theory preventing any study of astronomy that could relegate earth to a subsidiary position in solar system. The second impact was that natural objects that were subjects of enquiry and investigation were treated too sacred, and not attempted at for centuries together thus causing an undue delay in the field of knowledge and human development.

The third chapter deals with Islamic contribution of making monotheism as the dominant ideology of the world; thus, releasing the planets and physical forces of nature from sacred status and making them rather the subject of study and investigation. This is what made possibly the advent of modern developments. This chapter further discusses the role of Muslim scientists in various sciences like medicine, astronomy, physics, chemistry, biology, geography and historiography.

The last chapter of the book deals with the modern values like freedom, equality, democracy and human rights etc. Maulana proves that these are all but indirect results of the Islamic teachings embedded in Quranic text and the actions of prophet of Islam ﷺ and his colleagues in the first phase of Islamic history.

“The Political Interpretation of Islam” (*Din ki Siyasi ta’abeer*)

This is a small in size but very significant book as regards its subject and implications. It is a summary of the famous book “*Ta’a beer ki Ghalti*” published first in 1963; that raised questions on *Jama’at e Islami’s* ideology.

The 72-page book “The Political Interpretation of Islam or *Din ki Siyasi Ta’abeer*” first published in 1985 has been reprinted by Good Word Books New Delhi in 2013. It consists of four chapters preceded by a preface and introduction and followed by conclusion and implications.

In its preface Maulana Wahiduddin Khan referring to Mawlana Mawdudi’s book “*Khilafat o Mulukiyat*” (*The caliphate and Monarchial despotism*), points out the difference in two systems of governance as ‘Freedom of Expression’ which was hallmark of the former and missing in the latter. Even the Constitution of *Jamaat e Islami* mentioned that nobody would be treated as above criticism. But when Maulana pointed out some basic errors in interpretations of Mawlana Mawdudi, he according to Maulana behaved in very same manner as Monarchs would do and not in accordance with Islamic tradition of Khilafa.¹⁸⁵

In the Introduction to this book Maulana quoting example of Marxism clarifies the difference between relative importance of a particular aspect of life like economy or politics and making it fundamental principle of the entire system of human life. Maulana infers that Mawlana Mawdudi through political

¹⁸⁵Maulana Wahiduddin Khan, Political interpretation of Islam, p-8

interpretation of Islam has repeated the same mistake of Karl Marx and it is going to meet the same end as former ideology.¹⁸⁶

In chapter one Maulana elaborates this point with the argument that emphasis on a particular aspect of *din* is a practical necessity before a *dai* or missionary where the stress given to one point doesn't negate the importance of remaining aspects. Maulana writes:

"I do not object to his including politics in the *din*. Everyone knows that politics, too, is included in Islam. I don't consider it wrong that Mawlana Mawdudi stressed political aspects in his writings. But in giving importance to the political aspect of Islam; he has exaggerated it to the extent that he has made it the basis of an entire interpretation of Islam."¹⁸⁷

In chapter two Maulana quoting profusely from writings of Mawlana Mawdudi has deliberated on the issue in detail. He explains how, bestowing a central place to politics in interpretation of *din*, has effected changes in interpretation of many more Islamic concepts, like life and universe, concept and purpose of life, understanding of the *din* of Islam, Prophethood, purpose of worship, piety or God-consciousness, bearing witness to truth and even ascension of prophet to heavens. Through political interpretation, thus, every aspect of Islam comes to assume a political dimension. Maulana Wahiddudin Khan while quoting Mawlana Mawdudi from his '*Tafheemat*' mentions his view of *Jamaat e Islami* as:

¹⁸⁶ Ibid. p-68

¹⁸⁷ Maulana Wahiduddin Khan, Political interpretation of Islam, p-23

“The ‘Islamic party’ is not a party simply of ‘religious preachers, ‘lecturers’ and people who spread good news’ rather, it is a party of soldiers of God, and its work is to forcibly wipe out oppression, strife, immorality, disobedience and replacing evil with good. Hence this party has no choice but to capture the powers of Government’.”¹⁸⁸

Maulana further clarifies that there is no sanction of such a political interpretation in Quran and Hadith; and the Quranic verse ‘*aqimuddin*’ (42:13) quoted by *Jamaat e Islami* in support of their ideology has not been interpreted in such a way by any of earlier exegetes like, *Imam Razi, Alusi Baghdadi, Allama Qurtubi, Ibn e Kathir, Shah Rafiuddin or Maulana Ashraf Ali Thanvi*.¹⁸⁹ And Similar is the case of *Hadith* quoted in this case.¹⁹⁰ According to all these scholars ayah referrers to following the essential teachings of Islam like *Tawhid, Risalah & Akhira* that were common to all divine religions rather than implementation of Islamic *Shariah* as claimed by *Jamaat e Islami*.

Maulana quotes a Quranic Ayah ‘*God does not charge a soul with more than it can bear*’ (2:286) and infers that ‘there are some aspects of Islam that relate to individual and these are to be followed under all circumstances, as long as one is in a position to do so. As the sphere of believers expands to family,

¹⁸⁸ MaulanaMawdudi, Tafheemat (quoted by MaulanaWahiduddin Khan, Political interpretation of Islam, p-34)

¹⁸⁹ Maulana Wahiduddin Khan, Political interpretation of Islam, p-17

¹⁹⁰ Ibid.p-18

society or a state the more and more *shariah* laws will become applicable. And if the society possesses a political authority, in that case it would need to appoint a leader or *amir* who will ensure implementation of all *shariah* laws.¹⁹¹

In chapter three, Maulana talks about Mawlana Mawdudi's "*Quran ki Char Bunyadi Istilahun*" or the 'Four Quranic terms'; *Ilah, Rabb, Ibadat and Din*. According to Mawlana Mawdudi these four terms have not been understood in right perspective in past and as such 3/4th of the teachings of Quran remained hidden from view. This negates the efforts of all the revivalists (*mujaddids*) and earlier Islamic scholars.¹⁹² This is how a minor deviation can change one's whole conception of things; argues Maulana.

In chapter 4 Maulana concludes that the literature, on and about the political interpretation of Islam, has not been deliberately written with the aim of promoting deviation in Islam. Rather this happened unconsciously and due to motivation and passion for serving the *din*. But the fallacy once pointed out should have been rectified or accepted in the right perspective.¹⁹³

"Tajdid e Deen" (Revival of Islam)

This book by Maulana is small in size but very important as regards its influence and applications. This 87-page book was first published by *Maktaba Al-Risala* New Delhi in 1987 and

¹⁹¹ Ibid., p-56

¹⁹² Ibid.p-61

¹⁹³ Ibid.p-66

reprinted in 2008. Consisting of Ten small, but significant chapters, it deals with issue of Revival or renewal of Islam in modern times.

Revival of Islam according to Maulana is the return to the pure and pristine form of Islam that existed in the times of prophet of Islam, purging it of the dust that has gathered over the centuries. The later day interpretations in the name of explanations have made a very simple divine creed into a very complex, formal and ritualistic religion with its spirit missing altogether. This is because of shift of emphasis from essential and core concepts to ritualistic aspects. E.g. the revolutionary concept of *Tawhid* is reduced to mere utterance of few words, faithful following of prophet's example gets replaced by lip service in the name of love, *hadith* is taught under discipline of *fiqh*, religious personalities are adored as infallible and above all the *dawah* aspect of Islam, as an obligation, is forgotten. The real job of a revivalist according to Maulana would be to revive the essence of Islam so that it conforms to the originality of the Prophetic period.

Maulana expresses reservations about the development of *tasawwuf* and *fiqh* in Islam and the way these branches have made progress. Maulana, like Muhammad Abduh of Egypt makes a very important distinction between two spheres of activity of Islam, one of which is badly in need of reform. The first sphere of activity was worship as embodied in the five pillars; this formed the core of Islam and is unchangeable. What remains is then a vast body of social relations and matters: commercial transactions, legal matters and public

relations that are subject to reform. He argues that the elaborate legal system that had grown up concerning these matters was conditioned by historical circumstances; as historical circumstances changed, the old legal rulings should be subjected to reinterpretation to reflect the new social realities.

Maulana exposes the paradox that Muslim scholars have introduced new concepts in sphere of worship which was unwarranted while exercise of *ijtihad* in the social sphere is considered as a taboo.¹⁹⁴ He wants this development to be undone and the status of Prophetic period to be restored. Maulana's thought despite hurdles has been enormously influential among reform-minded Muslims. Maulana is even critical of the *Ilm al kalam* or scholastic theology of medieval periods that has outlived its utility and surprisingly enough, is still being taught in Islamic institutes. He argues that Science is the *Ilm al kalam* of modern world and it should be made full use of in *dawah* work.

Maulana has his own unique and scientific explanation of western challenges and Muslim response during 19th and 20th century. He traces the history of western dominance to development of Science and Technology as also the opening up of Suez Canal between Mediterranean Sea and the Red sea in late 19th century; that tilted the balance of power in favor of west. And from there onwards they continued their march uninterrupted; subduing, colonizing and dominating the Muslim lands particularly in Asia and Africa.

¹⁹⁴Maulana Wahiduddin Khan, '*Tajdid e Din*' Maktaba Al-Risala, New Delhi, 2015. p-51.

Maulana divides the Muslim response movements to western dominance in four categories: independence movements, conservative movements, revivalist movements and Reconstruction or positivism.

The confrontational movements became freedom movements for their respective territories which achieved their goals in the long run. But according to analysis by Maulana, it was more because of internal weakness of the colonizers as a result of defeat in world wars, that they could not hold foreign lands any longer. As such despite territorial freedom, Muslims are still being ruled by west through economical, technological and cultural dominance.

The Conservative movements mainly took the form of religious education and a network of Madrasas was laid in Indian subcontinent. It was a partially successful strategy as it produced innumerable religious graduates' expert in Islamic *Fiqh* and Medieval *Ilm al kalaam* but lacking in the modern scientific know-how and economic support.¹⁹⁵

The Revivalist movements started in the name of Islam; e.g. *Ikhwan al Muslimun* of Egypt and *Jamaat e Islami* of Pakistan, turned out to be Politically motivated and struggled for re-establishment of Islamic governments in place of secular ones; not even shying away from armed conflict with their own incumbent Muslim rulers, fearing them to be agents of west.

¹⁹⁵ Ibid.p-61

These movements also failed miserably as they failed to read the public mood in favor of modern values like democracy and secularism.

The Positive or Reconstruction movements though right in concept failed at execution level, due to mismanagement by propounders and lack of public support. Maulana cites example of Muhammad Abduh who once (1877) suggested his mentor Jamal al-Din Afghani to stop confrontation with west and make progress in *dawah* among westerners; a field wherein we are better placed and can make good dividends. But he dismissed Abduh's idea labeling it an act of cowardliness. Sir Sayyid Ahmed Khan; rightly concluded that though Britishers have blocked our political progress, we can still make advancements in the fields of education, science and technology. As Muslims viewed his attempts with suspicion he turned to interpretation of Islamic sources in the popular western idiom of 18th century to find justifications for his view point. As a result, his energies got wasted in refuting the charges levelled against him by Indian '*Ulama*', though still he could make valuable contributions in the field of education.

Another example according to Maulana was that of Ghulam Ahmed Qadiyani who persuaded Indian Muslims to stop confrontation with Britishers in political field and better take to *Dawah* among westerners as a more suitable campaign. But Qadiyani according to Maulana, while trying to explain his pacifist preaching, overstepped to the extent of declaring jihad as not a permanent feature of Islam, then allowed only in defense and finally calling *jihad* as abrogated in modern times.

Again, when Muslims viewing him as an agent of Britishers objected to his utterances; he first claimed that he received *Wahi* (revelation) from Almighty Allah and then declared himself to be a prophet of God. This according to Maulana was a manifest case of apostasy or infidelity after concept of "*khatam e Nabuw Watt*" in Islam. Thus, his right vision ended up in disaster.¹⁹⁶

Maulana proposes reorganization and recompilation of Islamic sciences in their purest form as in the Prophetic period; as also the inclusion of modernization of syllabi of Islamic institutions in light of modern knowledge laying more emphasis on teaching of Arabic, Quran and *Hadith* only so that more committed and competent *dais* could be produced. He finally concludes that modern knowledge and methods of communication are powerful tools that Muslims should make use of, in spreading the word of God to whole Mankind.

Prophet of Peace

It is one of the important books by Maulana on the theme of Islam and peace in the modern world. The book first published by Penguin Books, India in 2009; consists of 29 small chapters on subjects relating to Islam, peace, *Ijtihad*, and terrorism.

The "Prophet of Peace" deals with the main events associated with life of Holy Prophet relating to Jihad, *Ijtihad*, the concept and ethics of war and the dealings with other religious communities. Maulana further argues that it is lack of exercise of *Ijtihad* that has led the dynamism of Islam into stagnant ritualism.

¹⁹⁶ Ibid.p-80

Maulana, drawing lessons from the Quran and the *Sunnah* of Holy Prophet of Islam ﷺ, proves that 'in Islam, peace is the rule and war only a rare exception'. He demonstrates that Islam allows only defensive wars and that denial of justice is no justification for aggression. Maulana believes that armed struggle against Muslim rulers in the name of jihad is unjustified and the act of suicide bombing is un-Islamic.

Quoting extensively from Quran and *Hadith*, Maulana illustrates the Islamic view of modernity, democracy, secularism, freedom of speech and the relevance and scope of the Islamic values in the modern age. Maulana clarifies that Islam as revealed in the Quran is not anti-modernity nor does it advocate violence. He recommends that ideology of violence, prevalent around the globe, cannot be countered by guns and bombs but only with the alternative ideology of peace.

The political interpretation of Islam in recent past has hijacked the basic peaceful ideology of Islam and taken to extremism that has in fact nothing to do with Islam.

The misplaced priorities with Muslim thinkers and ideologues, according to Maulana have led the Muslim *ummah* to present mess. The foremost duty of Muslims was to spread the message of God but they are engaged in non-missionary activities with missionary spirit.

According to Maulana, there is presently an ideological vacuum in the world that can only be filled by Islam; and the Muslims having lost their political empire can still avail the opportunity and build a '*Dawah Empire*'. The Maulana believes that Muslims should come out of the shell of past and

channelize their energies in fields like education, science and technology, industry and above all the *Dawah* work for which this *ummah* was in fact raised.

Further he advises Muslims not to treat western nations as their enemies. Rather, they should acknowledge the contributions of west to humanity in the form of advancements in the fields of knowledge, science and technology, social sciences and modern political values like, democracy, secularism and human rights. Still if they have any differences these should be met at intellectual level and not through violence.

Though Maulana has written extensively on subject of Peace and Islam and there are half a dozen more books on same subject; the 'Prophet of Peace' is unique in the sense that it summarizes Maulana's ideology on many more related topics like, sectarianism, modernity, blasphemy and eschatology. Overall the book is a summary of Maulana's ideology of Peace and Dawah.

Views of Maulana on Important Issues

- Revival and Reform
- Peace and dawah
- Peaceful Jihad
- Ijtihad
- Pluralism and Intercommunity Relation
- Muslims in the Modern World
- Spirituality in Islam

Revivalism and Reform:

Although Maulana has touched upon this subject comprehensively in most of his writings, like *Masail e Ijtihad*, *Din o Shariat and Taqlid o Ijtihad*, yet his *Tajdid-i-Din* is exclusively devoted to this theme. It discusses the concept of *tajdid* critically and makes some departures from the views of other modern scholars.

Islam according to Maulana needs to be relieved of its political and historical baggage, rediscovered from its original sources and re-introduced to the modern world in its pure and pristine form in essence; but of course in modern idiom in the light of available intellectual tools. Maulana's Revivalist thought is concentrated in '*Tajdid e Din*', *Ahya al Islam*, *Islam Rediscovered* etc. In this regard he seems in consonance with Allama Iqbal's view:

"The tendency to over-organization by a false reverence of the past, as manifested in the legists of Islam in the thirteenth century and later, was contrary to the inner impulse of Islam, and consequently invoked the powerful reaction of Ibn Taimiyah (1263-1328)".¹⁹⁷

Taqlid and Ijtihad

Taqlid is an Arabic term that literally means to follow. In Islamic legal terminology refers to the practice of following the decision of a religious authority without necessarily examining the scriptural basis or reasoning of that decision. It is opposite

¹⁹⁷ Allama Dr. Muhammad Iqbal, *The reconstruction of religious Thought in Islam*, Lahore, p-120.

of term *ijtihad* or re-interpretation of primary texts through independent reasoning, for drawing guidance for Muslims with changing times. Allama Iqbal rightly and aptly defines it as:

"The word *Ijtihad* literally means to exert. In the terminology of Islamic law, it means to exert with a view to form an independent judgment on a legal question. The idea I believe has its origin in a well-known verse of the Qur'an- 'And to those who exert, we show our path.'¹⁹⁸We find it more definitely adumbrated in a tradition of the Holy Prophet relating to Mua'adh bin Jabl when he was appointed as governor of Yemen...."¹⁹⁹

Further, like Sir Sayyid, Maulana also believes that Islam would not be understood by Muslims and appreciated by others unless it was presented in modern idiom. According to Maulana, as Islam utilized the scholastics of philosophy in former intellectual movements, in the same way, keeping in mind the scientific spirit of the modern age, scientific idiom is the theology of modern times in which Islam needs to be presented before the modern world. Referring to practice of earlier Muslim scholars and *fuqha* Maulana wonders as how, in presence of Quran and *Sunnah*, the *ijtihad* was thought necessary and practiced within 200 years of advent of Islam and is not allowed in present age when world has leaped forward more than a thousand years and transformed into altogether a new world posing new challenges to be solved in light of Quran and *Hadith*. Similarly, he finds no authority putting an end to exercise of *ijtihad* after the *fuqha* of earlier

¹⁹⁸ Al-Quran, 29:69.

¹⁹⁹ Op. cit. Allama Iqbal, The Reconstruction.

period as none of them claimed to be final or infallible. In this regard Maulana's thought falls in line with the observations of Allama Iqbal:

*"The theoretic possibility of absolute ijtiḥād is admitted by Sunnis but in practice it has always been denied ever since the establishment of the schools (of Islamic Jurisprudence), in as much as idea of complete ijtiḥād is hedged round by conditions which are well-nigh impossible of realization in a single individual. Such an attitude seems exceedingly strange in a system of law based mainly on the groundwork provided by the Quran which embodies an essentially dynamic outlook on life."*²⁰⁰

According to Maulana the body of Islamic law as it stands today was developed and codified during Abbasid period when Muslims were in a politically dominating position and it suited only to such positions; having little to offer for pluralistic societies where Muslims are in subordinate positions.²⁰¹ The present day Muslims; instead of exerting to draw rulings for their present day problems from Quran and *Hadith* through *ijtiḥād*, are rather unnecessarily bound to rulings of Abbasid period as sacred²⁰². As Maulana puts it:

"Many Muslim clerics; believe that the doors of Ijtiḥād directly from the Quran and the Sunnah have been shut; and that they can only engage in very limited ijtiḥād or ijtiḥād e muqayyid. In other words, they have been wrongly led to believe that Muslims can no longer derive answers to issues

²⁰⁰ Allama Dr. Muhammad Iqbal, *The reconstruction of religious Thought in Islam*, Lahore, p-118

²⁰¹ Yoginder Sikand, ed. *Jihad Peace and Intercommunity Relations in Islam*, Rupa, new Delhi, p-91

²⁰² *Ibid.* p-94

directly from the the Quran and the Sunnah. They feel that all they can do is to study the fatwas (rulings) of the past fuqha (jurists) and blindly imitate them. " ²⁰³

Here he comes closer to the Allama Iqbal's view that *Taqlid* is a major factor in stagnation of Islamic thought. In changing legal systems, the rulings by Muslim clerics (*fatwas*) are not followed by secular governments and generating more and more such *fatwas* that are not practiced or practicable do more harm to Islam than good. They need to adopt a more pragmatic approach suited to the present scenario than the idealistic stance.

Maulana Wahiduddin Khan feels that the essential spirit of Islam, enshrined in the Holy Quran and exemplified in practice of Prophet of Islam and his worthy companions was eclipsed in *Fiqhi* literature of Abbasid Period that is still being followed as infallible guide. Furthermore, the same along with the outdated philosophy of *Kalam* is being taught in Islamic Institutions Particularly *Madrassa and Darul- Uloom*s.²⁰⁴

Jihad

Maulana considers Jihad as a peaceful ideological struggle and explains the same in his preface to *Tazkirul Quran* as:

"Those who are introduced to the Quran only through media, generally have the impression that the Quran is a book of *jihad*, and *jihad* to them is an attempt to achieve one's goal by means of violence. Anyone who reads the Quran for himself is

²⁰³ Ibid. p-95

²⁰⁴ Maulana Wahiduddin Khan, *Tajdid e Din*.

soon relieved of this misunderstanding and will easily appreciate that its message has nothing to do with violence.

The Quran; in fact, promulgates peace throughout its textual messages. It is true that *jihad* is one of the teachings of Quran. But *Jihad* taken in its correct sense is the name of peaceful struggle; rather than any kind of violent action. Obviously, he Quran is not a weapon but a book which gives us an introduction to the divine ideology of peaceful struggle.²⁰⁵

Islam is a religion of peace in the fullest sense of the word. Quran calls its way 'the path of peace'²⁰⁶; it describes reconciliation as the best policy;²⁰⁷ and states that God abhors any disturbance of the peace.²⁰⁸ It is no exaggeration to say that Islam and violence are contradictory terms. The fact that violence is not sustainable in the present world is sufficient indication that violence as a principle is quite alien to the scheme of things in Islam. Islam claims to be an eternal religion and as such could never afford to uphold a principle which couldn't stand the test of time. Islamic terrorism as such is a contradiction in terms much like pacifist terrorism. Islam is a religion of peace in the fullest sense of the word.²⁰⁹

The word Jihad in terms of war or war tactics forms one of the major obligatory duties on Muslim *ummah* with precedence in

²⁰⁵ The Quran, translation and commentary by Maulana Wahiduddin Khan, GoodWord Books, New Delhi, 2014, p-xiii

²⁰⁶ Al-Quran, 5:16

²⁰⁷ Al-Quran,4:128

²⁰⁸ Al-Quran,2:205

²⁰⁹ This aspect is prominent and palpable throughout the *Tazkirul Quran*.

the early period of Islam and unequivocal predictions of its lasting value till the Day of Judgment. It also finds favor with traditional *ulama* and political ideologues, many of whom exploit it for political gains rather than upholding and propagating the word of Allah.

Muhammad Hamidullah explains the truth about war in Islam: 'The life of Prophet Muhammad provides references to only three kinds of wars; defensive, punitive and preventive'.²¹⁰ Maulana contends that Islam is a non-violent religion; violence or armed struggle is only an exception to this rule. Maulana points out a subtle distinction and clarifies that ultimate aim of Islam is to spread the word of God *and not the* establishment of political empire as being attempted unsuccessfully throughout the world for couple of centuries.

Maulana Wahiduddin Khan takes the term *jihad* in literal meaning of struggle for spreading the divine message to the remotest corner of the world. He argues that it is just possible to achieve this goal utilizing the modern advancements in the field of science and technology.

Muslims all over the world are said to be engaged in violence whether active or passive. According to Maulana, just thinking in extremist terms may be described as passive violence while adopting the gun culture may be described active violence. This phenomenon pertains to Muslim practices and has nothing to do with Islamic teachings. Jihad literally means

²¹⁰ Muhammad Hamidullah, Introduction to Islam, Paris. Centre Culturel Islamique, 1969.

'utmost struggle'.²¹¹ The true interpretation of this word is 'a peaceful struggle for the dissemination of the message of God to mankind.'²¹²

The problem has however, assumed enormous volume through its association with Islam, in the name of jihad. Those engaged in violent acts have adopted it as an ideology through sanction from some ideologues who justify it for establishment of divine rule. Today the armament industry is one of the most flourishing enterprises in the world. But this problem can't be tackled through use of superior or more deadly weapons. In fact, it needs a counter-ideology. They legitimize their actions through wrong interpretations of the religious scriptures. We have to delegitimize it by replacing it with right interpretation and giving them a peaceful alternative. No other strategy will work.²¹³

Modern terrorism in the name of Islam is based entirely on the basis of misinterpretation of Islamic texts. It can be eradicated only by a right interpretation of the text being universally publicized. Giving a correct picture of Islam is undoubtedly the greatest need of today. It is better to have recourse to education than to guns if present day terrorism is to be countered.²¹⁴

²¹¹ Irfan A. Omer "Rethinking Jihad: Wahiduddin Khan, theology of non-violence" annual meeting of the Association of Asian Studies, Chicago, 12 March 2001.

²¹² Yoginder Sikand, ed. Jihad Peace and Intercommunity Relations in Islam, Rupa, new Delhi, p-94

²¹³ Maulana Wahiduddin Khan, The Age of Peace, pp-94-95

²¹⁴ Ibid. p-155

They wrongly consider others as enemies. They are not *adu* but *mad'u*, people to whom God's message is to be conveyed. Muslims are ordained to convey divine message to mankind.²¹⁵ He further advises Muslims to stop dichotomous thinking in terms of *Darul Islam* and *Darul Harb* keeping in mind the possibility of a *Darul Dawah*.²¹⁶

There has always been a discrepancy between essence and manifestations of all religions and the symptom is probably not going to disappear in near future. Though the phenomenon is not unique to Islam, it, in recent times has been bracketed with Islam by world media, for some vested interests. Of course, the misinterpretation of Islam and ignorance of the Muslim youth is another important factor. Justice calls for a clear distinction between principles of Islam and the practices of Muslims and judging the latter by former and not vice versa.

On the concept of peace, Tolerance and non-violence in Islam, Maulana, Summarize his view point as:

"It is no exaggeration to say that Islam and violence are contradictory to each other. The concept of Islamic violence is so unfounded that that prima facie it stands rejected. The fact that violence is not sustainable in the present world is sufficient indication that violence as a principle is quite alien to the scheme of things in Islam. Islam claims to be an eternal religion and as such, could not uphold any principle which could not stand up to the test of time. Any attempt to bracket

²¹⁵ Al-Quran,85:3

²¹⁶ Maulana Wahiduddin Khan, The Age of Peace, p-96

violence with Islam amounts, therefore, to casting doubt upon the very eternity of the Islamic religion. Islamic terrorism is a contradiction in terms, much like 'pacifist' activism. And the truth of the fact is that, all the teachings of Islam are based directly or indirectly on the principle of Peace."²¹⁷ Talking about suicide bombing Maulana observes: 'Suicide is held illegal in all religions and legal systems of the world. There is a tradition of the prophet of Islam according to which one who committed suicide would have to face eternal hell. He further declares: The truth of the matter is that suicide is totally forbidden (*haram*) in Islam."²¹⁸

Peace:

The peace spirituality and Dawah are the values that occupy a place very close to the heart of Maulana. These in fact form the very core of his religious philosophy. Peace according to Maulana is the essential law of nature encompassing the whole known universe and is imbedded in the very nature of man. According to Maulana, '*Peace is a rule and war only a rare exception in Islam.*' He describes peace as the greatest good or *summum bonum* which is an end itself and at the same time contains all other goods and no negative results. Most people hold that freedom is the greatest good but that can't be so described. The unchecked freedom leads to anarchy, with all its attendant problems. Peace brings normalcy. That is the best thing about it, for all developments and progress can take place only in a normal atmosphere.

²¹⁷ Maulana Wahiduddin Khan, *The True Jihad*, p-29-30

²¹⁸ Maulana Wahiduddin Khan, *"The Prophet of Peace"* Penguin Books, 2009. P-96.

The 'World Peace' is one of Maulana's major concerns. He has written many volumes on the subject including: 'The True Jihad', Islam and Peace, The ideology of Peace, the Prophet of Peace: Teachings of the Prophet Muhammad, Jihad, Peace & Inter-community Relations in Islam, a Manifesto of Peace, and age of Peace etc.

Drawing on original sources of Islam, Maulana has devised a pacifist ideology of Islam for world peace. He believes that it can be achieved through individual reform by making man spiritually conscious of his status. Towards this end he established a CPS in 2001 at Delhi which undertakes various spiritual and missionary *dawah* activities at international level. He denounces the political interpretation of Islam that has, according to him, defamed Islam and has proved futile, counterproductive and rather a mirage for beleaguered Muslims all over the world²¹⁹. Whereas the whole world puts justice as a precondition for peace, Maulana differs on the subject with valid arguments. He advocates 'Peace for Normalcy and *Dawah*' not for justice. E.g. the constitution of I.L.O (The International Labor Organization) affirms that: "Universal and lasting peace can be established only if it is based on social justice"

But this assumption is unrealistic according to Maulana. Peace is not desirable for the sake of justice but for the sake of normalcy. Setting justice as a precondition for peace is unnatural according to Maulana. The correct approach he

²¹⁹Jamal al sawaidi, The Mirage, UAE, 2015.

suggests is first of all to establish peace on a unilateral basis. The fact is that in this world one can have only a working justice but not the ideal justice. Working justice is possible in all situations whereas ideal justice is not. Maulana concludes that peace can be achieved by the acceptance of *status quo* or '*qana'at*' (Contentment) in Islamic terms. Through peace the opportunities open up and it is by availing these opportunities that justice can be achieved.

The peace can be attained only on a unilateral basis, without confrontation with others. But when we want to establish social justice and human rights, it becomes a bilateral issue because we have to fight other groups that we think are responsible for injustice and violation of human rights. Therefore, peace for social justice is not a practicable formula. The only workable formula is peace for normalcy. Normalcy gives us the opportunity to achieve our goal through wise planning. One example of this peace strategy is *Hudaibyah* treaty entered into by prophet of Islam in 628CE. This entailed the prophet having to agree to all of the conditions laid down by his opponents. That has a universal and eternal relevance.²²⁰

Dawah

Muslims have been faced with problems on diverse fronts for more than a hundred years and have been struggling to meet the challenges since the second half of the 19th century. Over the last hundred years countless political sacrifices have been

²²⁰Maulana Wahiduddin Khan, *The Age of Peace*, p-11-13

made, without any real gain. The sole answer offered by history is that on each occasion of adversity success was achieved through the *da'wah* power of Islam. The importance of *da'wah* has been established in both theory and practice. The need of the hour is, therefore, the adoption of *da'wah* work as our most important program, and the diversion of all our strength and resources towards this end.

So far as human 'isms' are concerned, they have all been failures, the most obvious example being the collapse of the communist empire. Islam, of all religions, is the most beneficial. It provides the answer to man's search for truth. It furnishes man with a true ideology of life. It gives man mental peace. It is exactly in accordance with human nature.

The opportunities to revive this *da'wah* process of Islam have increased to an extraordinary degree. Muslims must rise today with the help of this *da'wah* power of Islam. If they were to perform their *da'wah* work properly, their condition would certainly change for the better. They would themselves benefit as has been expressed in the Qur'an in these words: "Good and evil deeds are not alike. Requite evil with good, and he, between whom and you are enmity, will become your dearest friend."²²¹

The basic error with the contemporary Muslim thinkers according to Maulana is a case of misplaced priorities. He feels that in medieval writings there was shift of emphasis on jihad as armed struggle ignoring the essential responsibility of

²²¹ Al-Quran, 41:34

dawah to the extent that there is not a chapter on *Dawah* even in books of Hadith collections.²²² While stressing on the need for *dawah* he writes:

*"The need of the hour is, therefore, the adoption of 'dawah' work as our most important program and the diversion of all our strength and resources towards this end".*²²³

The modern world at present is having all material strength and facilities of life but lacking in the most essential one 'an ideology for life' that according to Maulana can be provided by Islam only. Thus, need of the hour is making whole mankind aware of the Creation Plan of God; that is, the present world is temporary and a testing ground for man with a limited lifespan whereas the life in the hereafter would be everlasting. That will be an ideal world (*Jannah*) for those who complete the test of this life successfully but a failure to envisage beyond present with an 'eat drink and be merry' attitude is sure to land him in an abode of perpetual suffering (The Hellfire).

It is our firm belief that Islam offers guidance at all times and in all situations. Therefore, it must certainly offer us clear guidance on the present state of affairs.

The first guiding principle can be drawn from the famous *Hudaibya* treaty in the early phase of Islam. This meant a creating an atmosphere conducive to peaceful *Dawah* work. This peace treaty changed the area of encounter between Islam and its rivals from battlefield to the *Dawah* field.²²⁴

²²² Maulana Wahiduddin Khan, The Creation Plan, p-31

²²³ Maulana Wahiduddin Khan, The Ideology of Peace, p-149

²²⁴ Ibid. p-119

Describing the power of *Dawah*, Maulana cites the example of fall of Baghdad to Mongols in 1258.²²⁵ He Writes:

“The Mongols, barbarous and bloody in the methods of warfare and invincible as they looked devastated the mighty Muslim empire at Baghdad in 1258 CE. But then, miraculously *Dawah* power of Islam emerged and the Mongols were conquered. They had all worldly powers but no ideology, which was provided by Islam through peaceful *Dawah* work at their domestic levels. Referring to this event P.K. Hitti the well-known historian remarks, in his famous book, ‘The History of The Arabs’: “The religion of the Muslims had conquered where their arms had failed”²²⁶.

Maulana recommends a Japanese model of development for Muslim nations. In 1945 America dethroned Japanese from its political pinnacle but they didn’t complain, protest or take to arms. Rather they shifted their focus to technology and soon with a little wise planning became world leaders in that field. The Muslims after a long spell of rule for over 100 years lost their political empire; which they are trying all over the world to regain through armed struggle, in the name of Islamic jihad. According to Maulana if they are not averse to modern education and plan wisely they have a fairly good chance of building a ‘*dawah* empire’; as the contemporary world is looking for a viable ideology which only Islam can provide.

According to Maulana when the modern developments in information and communication have turned the vast world

²²⁵ Ibid.p-127

²²⁶ PK Hitti, The History of the Arabs, p-448

into a global village, nothing should prevent Muslims from spreading the word of God which is obligatory on them after the '*khatm e nabuwwat*'. Having lost their ideal political empires, they are still in a position to establish a *Dawah* empire in the modern world; argues Maulana. And there is a reason to believe that.

Based on his vast knowledge experience and analysis of contemporary world view Maulana concludes that presently humanity is experiencing an ideological vacuum that can only be filled by Islam. The man-made ideologies and-isms like materialism, Marxism, socialism and communism have all been rejected with the passage of time while it is only Islam that stands the test of history.

Whereas Maulana debates the place and relevance of armed struggle in present world full of opportunities for *Dawah* work, his opponents blame him for pacifist preaching and blunting the martial acumen of Muslim youth. He is very explicit in denouncing violence and upholding peaceful *Dawah* drawing on Quranic assurance for *dais* of Islam:

"Violence is absolutely not an option for Muslims, nor should struggling to achieve political gain be their goal. Muslims have only one choice before them that is to engage in peaceful Dawah work to gain God's favor as promised in the Quran:²²⁷ 'God will surely help him who helps his cause; God is indeed powerful and mighty.'²²⁸

²²⁷ Maulana Wahiduddin Khan, *The Age of Peace*, p-132

²²⁸ Al Quran, 22: 40

Spirituality

Maulana Wahiduddin Khan with a God given clarity of vision addresses all contemporary issues facing modern world. Materialistic life style has almost turned the common man blind to religious values and his failure to look and think beyond daily requirements. In such a scenario Maulana comes up with spirituality as a panacea for all ailments of modernity right from erosion of ethical values, immoral life style, materialistic leanings and atheistic notions. But his concept of spirituality is not something elitist property. It is open to achievement by common man unlike church and priesthood in other religions or hierarchy of Sufism among Muslims.

It is a sort of democratizing of Spirituality in contrast to conventional ways of *Sufism*. We can thus infer that the spirituality propounded, practiced and propagated by Maulana has its firm foundations in Quran itself, is based on Contemplations (*tadabbur, tafakkur and tawassum*), having nothing mysterious and is democratic in nature in contrast to ecstasy and meditation based conventional hierarchical system of *Tasawwuf*.²²⁹

Indian Muslims

Maulana has dared to analyze the situation objectively and then suggest out of box solutions for issues of contemporary relevance facing Muslim *Ummah*. Emotional sloganeering and road activism have no place in Maulana's dictionary. According to Maulana:

²²⁹Maulana Wahiduddin Khan, Spirituality in Islam, pp,5,8,9,13,15,16.

Islam and Hinduism both representing two great traditions, have coexisted for more than one thousand years. It would be more intellectually and academically productive to assess the merits of the two religions in the context of intellectual development. Such development can come about only as a result of social interaction and intellectual exchange.

The Arabs came to India in the 7th and 8th centuries. At that time India was dominated by superstition. Most Indians worshipped nature. It was their belief that everything, from stars to planets, rivers and trees, was divine in nature. According to Islamic belief, God is the creator and the whole of nature is His creation. This ideology was revolutionary at the time. It brought about a change in the Indian mind-set, introducing scientific thinking into Indian society. After the introduction of this ideology, the Indian people tried to explore nature, instead of worshipping it and treating it as divine. The second impact of the advent of Islam in India was to introduce the concept of universal brotherhood. At the time, Indian society was dominated by the caste system. The Islamic concept of equality changed this system to a great extent.²³⁰

Not allowing oneself to be provoked in spite of provocation is a forgotten teaching of Islam. In my experience, differences in religion are not an evil but a blessing. We require only an acceptance of these differences with a positive mind, so that we can learn from each other and live as partners, rather than

²³⁰Dr. Tara Chand, "The Influence of Islam on Indian Culture"

as rivals. Life is all about cooperation and coexistence, and the relationship between different religions must be based on the acceptance of this principle.²³¹

On the issues like communal riots, cultural invasion by extremists in the name of patriotism or national interests, demolition of *Babri Masjid* and assertion for a common civil code; the feelings of Maulana are no different than any committed common Muslim of India and he vehemently rejects the idea of Common Civil Code, compulsory *Sarswati Vandna* and *yoga* as absurd and impracticable as well as unwarranted. But the difference lies in methodology being applied in formulating an appropriate response. While the existing paradigm is a stereotyped violent response, Maulana recommends a more patient and reasoned response in light of teachings of Islam based on a scientific analysis of the factors leading to such eruptions and weighing the *pros and cons* of different available options.

The solutions presented by Maulana may not sound ideal to a common man, but once given a serious thought keeping in view the long term futuristic interests of Muslim community as well as a great nation in evolution, his pragmatic solutions stand out as the only viable options.

²³¹[http://www.newageislam.com/spiritual-meditations/maulana-wahiduddin-khan/ islam- and- hinduism/ d/13125](http://www.newageislam.com/spiritual-meditations/maulana-wahiduddin-khan/islam-and-hinduism/d/13125)

Islam and the West:

According to a *Sahih al Bukhari* the prophet of Islam (ﷺ) once observed: God will strengthen this religion through the wicked, as well as good.²³²

If we could extricate ourselves from the rigid pattern of dichotomous thought, we would find that western civilization was neither friendly nor hostile to Islam, but rather, in the words of *hadith*, 'a potential supporter of Islam'.

It is undisputable fact that many political and economic policies of west are detrimental to the collective good of Muslims; but in reality, this has nothing to do with any enmity towards Islam. According to Maulana the *hadith* which mentions *Dajjal* appearing close to doomsday is doubtless correct but certainly it doesn't apply to modern western civilization.

Another *hadith* of the prophet predicts that close to the doomsday the message of Islam will enter every hut or mansion (*Idkhal e kalima*). This in fact has been made possible in the modern world, truly speaking only with the help of west. The pre-conditions for *Idkhal e kalima* include a system of global communication, complete religious freedom, unbounded resources, free enquiry into knowledge including religious, and all these factors are now a reality –thanks to the west. It has thus produced all the means and resources essential to the successful carrying out of Islamic *dawah*, all

²³²Maulana Wahiduddin Khan, "Islam and Peace" pp-122-126

over the world. Further it is west that scientifically unraveled the nature's secrets, testifying to the veracity of the Quran:

*"We will show them our signs in the universe, and in their own-selves, until it becomes manifest to them that this is the truth"*²³³

Religious Pluralism and Inter-Community Relations:

In contrast to most Indian Muslim leaders, Maulana sees the Muslim predicament as almost entirely of their own making. While recognizing that Muslims in India are indeed, facing hostile environment, he argues that the problems that Muslims face stem, at root, from having abandoned the path of Islam and having strayed from the teachings of their religion. Because of this, he insists, God has appointed others as an instrument to express His anger with them, punishing them for their dereliction of their divine responsibilities as the *khair ummat*, Muslims must not seek to blame others for their plight, and must, seek to win God's favor, instead.²³⁴

Maulana is among the few Indian *'ulama* to have taken seriously the issue of pluralism and inter-community relations, free from the polemics and negative stereotypes that generally characterize the response of many Muslims to people of other faiths. He insists that Muslims must come out of their paranoia or *'persecution complex'* and separatist

²³³ Al Qur'an, 41:53

²³⁴ Yoginder Sikand, "Analysis of the writings of Maulana Wahiduddin Khan"

mentality²³⁵ search for opportunities that exist despite the odds that seem to weigh heavily against them; they should be guided by pragmatic considerations rather than by a misplaced idealism.

According to Maulana, Muslims must turn to internal reform rather than seeking external solutions to their problems through conflict with the state or with the dominant Hindus. It in his view needs to be attempted through the path of construction rather than confrontation. Maulana writes that the Muslims of India today find themselves in a position similar to that of the Prophet and his followers in Makkah, when the nascent Muslim community was small and relatively powerless. Just as the Prophet, at this stage, concerned himself only with peaceful preaching, so too must the Muslims of India eschew all confrontation with others and, instead, seek to win them over through dialogue and peaceful propagation of Islam.²³⁶

What is required, then, is a contextual reading of the Qur'an and the Prophetic tradition, the Makkan model providing the basic source of inspiration for Muslims today.²³⁷

It is only by 'proving their usefulness' to society as a whole that others would not only come to regard Muslims as

²³⁵ Wahiduddin Khan, 'Factors Hindering Hindu-Muslim Unity', The Times of India, Bombay, 23 March, 1993.

²³⁶ Irfan A. Omer, "Scope of Inter-faith dialogue: a comparison of Badiuzzaman Nursi and Maulana Wahiduddin Khan" International Conference, Istanbul, Turkey Mar 29, 2012.

²³⁷ Wahiduddin Khan, Islam and Peace, p-163.

valuable allies, but would also appreciate Islam as a religious option. Muslims should be able to contribute their services to society and transform themselves from the status of 'takers' to that of 'givers'.²³⁸

Based on Prophetic Hadith; 'خير الناس من ينفع الناس'²³⁹ on the same subject, Maulana advises Muslims to become givers not takers as they were in the first phase of History of Islam.

One of the ironies of this era is that although the means of communication have greatly advanced, people still have difficulty in a meaningful communication and dialogue with other cultures and religions. There is a lot of misinformation and misunderstanding of the Islamic faith. It is essential that Muslims be judged in the light of Islamic ideals; Islam should not be judged in the light of what Muslims do in the name of Islam.²⁴⁰

Religious differences have always existed between people. That is why the history of dialogue is also as old as that of mankind. Drawing lessons from the life of Prophet (ﷺ) of Islam we come across the events of *Hudaibya* and the '*Mithaq e Madina*' or the first written constitution of the world. This was the first religious conference involving religious issues involving Jews, Christians and Muslims-in modern terms-a dialogue to exchange views. It had a divine sanction in the form of two principles described in the holy Quran:

²³⁸ Wahiduddin Khan, Islam and Peace, p-69.

²³⁹ Kanzulummal Vol.8, p-201

²⁴⁰ Maulana Wahiduddin Khan, The Creation Plan, p-21

- **Finding a common ground**

“Say O People of book, let us come to a word common to us and you that we will worship none but God.”²⁴¹

While referring to above Maulana infers that subjects of common interests are in abundance in modern secular fields for creation of peaceful and congenial atmosphere of mutual understanding and to engage others in dialogue. It also ensues from this that even if we have nothing in common with a group still we can live peacefully by lesson of tolerance vide infra.

- **Pragmatism and Religious Tolerance:** “To you your religion and to me mine”.²⁴²

For successful inter-community relations; Maulana recommends some principles drawn from life of the ‘Prophet of Islam’²⁴³

It is a well-known fact that the Prophet of Islam (ﷺ) was a supremely successful man in the entire human history.²⁴⁴ But he was not just a hero, as Thomas Carlyle has called him. According to the Quran, he was a good example for all mankind.²⁴⁵ He has shown us the way of achieving supreme success in this world. By studying the life of the prophet, we can derive those principles which were followed by the prophet.²⁴⁶

²⁴¹ Al-Quran,3:64

²⁴² Al-Quran,109:6

²⁴³ The True jihad: Goodword Books New Delhi 2012

²⁴⁴ Michael Hart, The Hundred.

²⁴⁵ Al-Quran,33:21

²⁴⁶ Maulana Wahiduddin Khan, “Islam and Peace” GoodwordBooks west New Delhi 2008,p-69

- To begin from possible. Hazrat Aisha RA narrated: “whenever the prophet had to choose between two options, he always opted for the easier choice”²⁴⁷
See advantage in disadvantage. (“With every hardship there is ease; with every hardship there is ease”²⁴⁸)
- To change the place of action as exemplified in event of *Hijrah* to Madina.
- Make a friend out of foe. (Return good for evil, you will see your direst enemy has become your closest friend.²⁴⁹)
- Turn minus into plus. (Seventy unbeliever prisoners after the battle of *Badr* were asked to teach 10 Muslim children.)
- Power of peace is stronger than power of violence. After conquest of Makkah, no revenge was taken by Prophet (ﷺ).
- Not to be dichotomous thinker. Strategic retreat is not retreat in normal sense as evident from example of Khalid bin Walid *at Mauta*.
- Bring battle in one’s favorite field. E.g. In *Hudaibya* the meeting place was changed from battlefield to dialogue.
- Gradual not abrupt implementation of Shariah laws in Madina after many years of Quranic verses on Hell and Heaven in Makkah.

²⁴⁷ Sahih al-Bukhari

²⁴⁸ Al-Quran, 94:5-6

²⁴⁹ Al-Quran, 41:34

- Be pragmatic in controversial matters. It is greatest wisdom to be content with pragmatic goals when the ideal goal is not achievable. E.g. omitting word 'prophet' in *Hudaibya* for larger interest.²⁵⁰

While advising Muslims not to treat non-Muslims as their enemies (*adu*) but as potential Muslims or customers of truth (*madu'u*); he at the same time requests other nations to judge Muslims in the light of Islam and not to judge Islam through actions of Muslims.²⁵¹

Muslims in the Contemporary World

About the predicament of contemporary Muslim world, Maulana is of the view they are in a mess of their own making. They have forgotten the lessons of history and the repeated warnings of Holy Quran. The Quran clearly mentions: "Nothing befalls man but is the earning of his own hands"²⁵² Muslims according to Maulana have forgotten their primary role of *dawah* as an extension of prophetic mission after *Khatm a nabuwwat*; and thus, lost the divine protection that is promised and preconditioned with *dawa* work. Quran says that if they don't perform their assigned duty Allah may bring another people in their place as is evident from many examples from world history quoted in holy Quran.²⁵³

²⁵⁰ Maulana Wahiduddin Khan, "Age of Peace" Goodword Books west New Delhi 2008, p-67

²⁵¹ Maulana Wahiduddin Khan, Islam Rediscovered, p-09.

²⁵² Al-Quran, 42:30

²⁵³ Al-Quran, 35:16-17

The Holy Quran further says that Allah destroys one nation at the hands of other and if that is not done the world will be full of *fasad* or disorder.²⁵⁴

Maulana expresses surprise that contemporary Muslims see hands of east or west in their decline and destruction but fail to perceive the Hand of Almighty Allah as admonishment for dereliction of their pledged role of *Dawah*. Whereas Muslims as best people *khairul ummah*²⁵⁵ were supposed to tell the whole world (*shahadah alannas*) that they should struggle for an ideal world (*Jannah*) in the after-life; they are themselves busy with the materialistic pursuits of the present world ignoring the assigned job.²⁵⁶

Maulana further explains that, the contemporary materialistic world is passing through a spiritual vacuum that can only be filled by Islam if presented in its purest and pristine form. Whereas the scope of Islam is increasing with each passing day-the Muslims have lost their utility and are being punished at the hand of other nations. Here he seems to be in line with the teachings of Tablighi Jama'at and the concept of the (*baqaaye anfaa*) by Maulana Azad.²⁵⁷ According to Maulana the establishment of Muslim states in this world is not the primary goal of Islam, and Muslims by engaging themselves in armed struggles for such a cause are doing more harm to Islam than any real service. Muslims by doing so are only increasing

²⁵⁴ Al-Quran,2:251

²⁵⁵ Al-Quran,2:143

²⁵⁶ Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, Quran ka Qanun e Urooj o zawal," pp 105--08

²⁵⁷ MaulanaAbulKalam Azad, Quran kaQanun e Urooj o zawal," pp 103-04,08

their nuisance value instead of the traditional usefulness of Muslims prescribed and preached by Quran and Hadith.²⁵⁸ The same concept we come across in pages of Azad's book *Quran ka Qanun e Urooj o zawal* describing the principle of order and disorder in the world. The present hardships faced by Muslim world are a warning and final call by Almighty Allah, for them to take heed and return to the role of *dawah* if they wish to avail of His blessings in this world and the hereafter.

Maulana Wahiduddin Khan makes a clear distinction between cause of Islam and the cause of Muslims. According to Allah's *Sunnah*, the cause of Muslims is served naturally and automatically, once they engage themselves with serving the cause of Islam through spreading the word of God and explaining his plan of creating this world to the whole humanity. But the Muslims to everybody's surprise seek to safeguard their individual, organizational and national interests in the name of serving Islam. This paradox in essence of Islam and praxis of Muslims is preventing other nations from approaching Islam with a clear vision, necessary for accepting the higher values of essential Islam.

Special contributions of Maulana:

- Scientific Theology
- Creation Plan of God
- Revival and Reform
- Pragmatism and paradigm shift
- Spirituality in Islam
- Art of Life Islamicised
- Contribution to Urdu Literature

²⁵⁸ Al-Quran, 2:143, and Hadith 'Kanzul ummal vol.8. p-201

Scientific Theology

Maulana Wahiduddin Khan believes that Science is the *Ilm-al-Kalam* of modern times and applies the same in furthering the argument of Islam with the west as well as modern educated mind. He has successfully put his theory into practice as evident in works like, *Al-Islam* and *Mazhab aur Jadid Challenge*. The subject of science and Islam is not specific with Maulana Wahiduddin Khan and many scholars have made attempts on different aspects but the way Maulana has put science in the service of Islam is something unique and appreciable.

Creation Plan of God

The term 'Creation Plan of God' coined and oft quoted by Maulana has often been misunderstood and alleged as some innovation in Islam; while the reality remains contrary to common belief. Explaining the same, in preface to the English translation of Quran, Maulana writes himself:

"Every book has its objective and the objective of the Quran is to make man aware of the creation plan of God. That is to tell man why God created this world; what the purpose is of setting man on earth and what he is going to confront after death. The purpose of the Quran is to make man aware of this reality, thus serving to guide man on his entire journey through life into the after-life."

It makes the things amply clear and leaves no doubt about the contents of this basic objective of the Quran which was primary focus of all Prophets to make their respective *ummah* aware about the Divine Will. That is a modern idiomatic representation of the prophetic mission to be conveyed to the

whole world by Muslims according as a responsibility after the final prophet.

Priorities in Islam: *Dawah* First

On political decline of Muslims in the contemporary world, Maulana is of the opinion that it is all because of dereliction of their duty as *dais* of Islam and subsequent moral decay that they have landed in present mess. They have made political interpretations of Islam and are busy in conflicts for establishment of political states instead of *Dawah* work. *Dawah* in fact is placed as topmost priority in Maulana's scheme of thought.

Ijtihad: Reinterpretation and reapplication of Islamic Texts

Maulana Wahiduddin Khan is a strong advocate of *ijtihad* and refuses to accept that doors of *ijtihad* have been closed. He is for reinterpretation of primary Islamic texts to find answers to the new challenges. For example, he agrees with Asghar Ali Engineer and Javed Ahmed Ghamidi that the very spirit of Islam is democratic and modern values like Democracy and secularism have grown out of Islamic texts through efforts of western scholars. These realities according to Maulana, though not ideal in their present form, need to be availed of rather than frowned upon.

Peace and War in Islam

According to Maulana Wahiduddin Khan Peace is the rule in Islam and war only a rare exception. He takes *jihad* in its literal meanings of struggle and hard work and not the armed combat for which he prefers the Quranic term, *Qital*. He is further of the opinion that it is only the defensive war which is

allowed in Islam; and use of force was indicated only in case of religious persecution and violation of human rights. Now that international organizations like UNO provides safeguards for equality, justice and freedom of thought and expression including profession, practice and preaching of a religion of one's choice; an armed battle is no more indicated in modern world.

Maulana suggests Muslims to divert their energies for *Dawah* work utilizing the modern communication facilities. Since *Dawah* needs a peaceful environment; he places the responsibility of creating a congenial peaceful environment on Muslims as *dais*, and that they must be prepared to go extra mile in achieving their goal.

Pragmatism and Paradigm Shift

According to Maulana Wahiduddin Khan, religious pluralism is the reality of modern life and Muslims should learn to live in peace and maintain intercommunity relations with fellow citizens, in the larger interest of *Ummah*. He advocates dialogue in place of debates of the past.

In case of disagreements and conflict he suggests scientific analysis and reasoned response to the problems instead of emotional violent reactions and road activism. This is the ideology he has been propagating over past midcentury through his *Al-Risala* movement with encouraging results. His response to voices for application of Common Civil Code in India is a bright example of reasoned response appreciated even by stalwarts like Ali Mian Nadwi.

Maulana Wahiduddin Khan is a realist who always talks of pragmatism. Rather than struggling for political positions he stresses upon his fellow religionists to engage themselves in missionary efforts and try to build Islamic societies. He is rather for individual reform and *Akhirat oriented life*.

Spirituality in Islam

Spirituality is an established way of controlling the onslaught of modern materialistic ways of life in almost all religions. But the methodologies adopted often conflict with the basic teachings of religion. The spirituality propounded practiced and preached by Maulana Wahiduddin Khan is unique in the sense that it has firm foundations in Quran itself, in terms like *tadabbur and taffakur*.

Further there is democratization of spirituality and anyone through mind based focused study of Quran and nature can experience the divine presence; unlike a ecstasy or asceticism based hierarchical system of conventional Sufism.

Art of Life Islamicised:

Art of life is a modern subject of interest for achieving success in life. Being preached and practiced throughout the world in form of a large body of literature including quotes and parables from life of successful people. In India for example; Swami Shri Shri Ravi Shankar is running an institute in the name of ART OF LIVING.

Maulana Wahiduddin Khan, well aware of the scope of such teachings and leanings of youth all over the world has made significant advancement in this direction also. From his well-known quotes on the title pages of Al-Risala over past forty

years, he has written copiously on this subject in his favorite epiphany style attracting young generations Islamic ways of achieving success.

It needs a special mention that Maulana never forgets to tell his audience that that the real success according to Islam is the success in afterlife. However, Islam disapproves of ascetism and is not averse to availing the fruits of a successful worldly life remaining focused on the eternal success in life after death. This, one, often comes across in his speeches, audios, videos, addresses, weekly classes and the write-ups in 'Speaking Tree' sections of print media. It has been included as a special contribution of Maulana to a contemporary subject often ignored by conventional preachers of Islam.

It may be recalled that Islamic teachings of *Tawhid* and Equality had attracted large number of Indian Non-Muslims in earlier phase of history of Islam. As a response to this phenomenon, many non-Muslim individuals and organizations flourished in 19th and 20th century to reverse this trend. Sawami Dayanand Saraswati's *Arya Samaj*, Raja Ram Mohan Roy's *Brahmo Samaj*, Ramakrishna Mission and *Sat Sang* movements all talked of monotheism as a primary teaching of Hinduism, in an attempt to hold back the youth eager to listening Islamic discourses. Similar are the ambitions of many contemporary schools and movements; the likes of ART OF LIVING.

In this background Maulana Wahiduddin Khan is the most prominent Muslim thinker who has taken note of it; and made significant contribution in this direction. His speeches, articles, pamphlets and books on this subject fortified with spirituality, have been translated in many Indian languages particularly in

Hindi and English satisfying a sizeable population of Indian youth. Books like *Raaz e Hayat*, *Rahen band Nahien*, *Manzil ki Taraf* etc. talk about this aspect of life.

Woman in Islam and Feminism

Keeping in view its contemporary relevance, Maulana has written copiously on this subject. His major work in this direction was *Khatoon e Islam*; an account of status of woman in Islam as compared with western society. It was in fact a response of Maulana to dispel the clouds of misconception in western minds who tried to blame Islam for (*alleged*) degradation of woman. Maulana utilizing the weapon of western modern knowledge and statistical data had replied in a befitting manner. It was well received across the globe and proved to be an eye opener not only for those who condemned Islam but also majority of Muslim scholars who had earlier adopted an apologetic approach. Maulana didn't stop here- he has authored many more volumes on the subject like: *woman in Islamic shariah*, *Aurat Maamar e Insaniyat* (Woman the builder of humanity), on role of woman in world history with evidences and examples. Maulana has also deliberated on some other issues of contemporary relevance like divorce, polygamy in Islam, *Hijab* in Islam etc. in form of separate booklets.

Contributions to Urdu Literature

Maulana has, over the past almost one century, expressed his heart out primarily in Urdu language. Though his basic concern is Islam and Islamic Dawah, but alongside his core mission of presenting Islam in modern scientific idiom; his services to

Urdu language and literature, often ignored, need special appreciation. His lucid and convincing literary style, translation of scientific and modern terminology and body of Urdu literature in the fields of travelogues, diaries and journalism needs attention of scholars and researchers.

Inference:

Maulana Wahiduddin Khan is in fact an original Muslim thinker and philosopher, committed to fulfill the Quranic injunction of spreading the word of God to whole of humanity, irrespective of responses. He can be classified as a Revivalist, reformist modernist Islamic Scholar exercising great influence on modern educated generation both at national and international levels. Though Maulana's ideology and views on different aspect of Islam have been discussed at length in preceding pages, a mention of some specific aspects of his thought were felt appropriate and hence presented here as brief notes.

Whereas Maulana's works on scientific theology earned him acclaim globally, some of his views especially on speculative theology, political thought and some debatable issues have been cause of concern for many, which would be discussed in the ensuing pages.

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CHAPTER VI

ANALYSIS OF THE CRITIQUES OF MAULANA WAHIDUDDIN KHAN

INTRODUCTION:

Maulana Wahiduddin Khan is a prolific writer who has produced a sizeable body of Islamic literature in recent times. Whereas his works on scientific theology earned him acclaim globally, his non-conformist approach in Islamic sciences particularly on eschatology or speculative theology earned him criticism from various organizations and individuals in Indian subcontinent.

This section deals with the criticism of Maulana's works, the grounds and merit of major objections and the way things have been presented in regards to ethics of disagreement. Extreme care has been exercised to genuinely present his ideas followed by the views of his opponents taking into account the counter arguments of Maulana. Finally, a fair assessment of both the viewpoints has been attempted in light of facts, with objective intentions believing in the famous Aristotelian saying: "*Dear is Plato but dearer is the Truth!*"

Ethics of disagreement in Islam

The Arabic term *Ikhtilaf* denotes taking a different position or course from that of another person either in opinion, utterance or action. The related term *Khilaf* from same root means difference, disagreement or even conflict.

Allah has ordained differences between human beings, in their mental capabilities, their languages, the color of their skins and their perceptions and thoughts. As such, disagreements, if confined to their proper limits would have several positives. In other words, if differences of opinion operate in a healthy

frame work, they can enrich the Muslim minds and stimulate intellectual development.

The agreement to disagree under high ethical norms is one of the salient features of Islam.²⁵⁹ Early Muslims did have disagreements but theirs were differences of opinion and not reasons for estrangement and schism. The matters relating to the tenets of Islam were not the subject of disputation; rather the disagreements were confined to subsidiary matters. They adhered steadfastly to the Islamic norms of behavior during argumentation. They discussed matters politely and amicably, avoiding the use of vile and insult. They made all efforts to analyze the issues objectively and address them on merit. This practice of observing basic ethical norms and objective analysis would force the disputant into either accepting the other's view point or advancing a better opinion.²⁶⁰ In this regard the golden words of *Imam Shafii* need to be reiterated and followed in letter and spirit. While giving his legal opinion he would conclude as:

" My opinion is right with a possibility of it being wrong; and the opinion of others is wrong with a possibility of being right" .

A Survey of Polemic Literature

Despite a sizeable body of Islamic literature produced by Maulana; he faced severe criticism from various quarters particularly in Indian subcontinent. Whereas his works on

²⁵⁹AlwaniTaha Jabir Fayyad, 'The ethics of disagreement in Islam'International Institute of Islamic thought, 1993.

²⁶⁰Ibid.

scientific theology earned him acclaim globally, his views and speculative explanations of obscure phenomena and some debatable issues have been cause of concern for many.

The main body of literature criticizing Maulana Wahiduddin Khan comes from Pakistan and Kashmir, particularly after 2007 issues of *Al-Risala* wherein Maulana had expressed his views relating to *Qayamat* (the doomsday) like "*Maseehi model ki Aamed e Sani*" in *Al-Risala* May-June and August 2007 and "*Qayamat ka Alarm*" in *Al-Risala* May, 2010.

Maulana Ateeque Ahmed Qasmi, a teacher at Darul Ulum Nadwatul Ulama Lucknow authored the book '*Fikr ki Ghalti*' in 1990, criticizing the views of Maulana Wahiduddin Khan contained in his book '*Tabeer ki ghalti*'.

Mohsin Usman Nadwi (India) has tried to summarize and analyze Maulana's writings from scholars view point in his book "*Wahiduddin Khan; Ulama aur Danishwarun ki Nazar Main*" published in 1997.

Ashfaq Ahmed Hussain published "*Wahiduddin Khan ki Fikri Qalabazian*" from Hyderabad, in 2004; criticizing Maulana's views on wide range of issues facing Muslim *Ummah* particularly on contemporary politics and *Ijtihad*.

Gh. Nabi Kashafi from Kashmir, a staunch supporter of Maulana's *Al-Risala* Mission for decades; aired his differences with Maulana's views expressed in *Al-Risala* May-june 2010, regarding signs of *Qayamah*, *Maseeh* and *Mehdi*. He published his first, 64-page booklet "*Wahiduddin Khan: Dawa e Maseehiyat o Mehdviyat*" from Noamani Academy Lucknow in 2011.

Zeeshan Ahmed Misbahi published a review of above mentioned book by Kashafi, which was published in "*Jaam e Noor*" Delhi 2011. He tried to rationally analyze the validity of Kashafi's argument and points of genuine concern raised by Kashafi.

Mufti Muhammad Sayyid Khan published "*Wahiduddin Khan ki be-khabri ya tajahil e aarifana*" from *Nadwatul Musannifeen*, Nadwa Educational Trust Islamabad, Pakistan; criticizing Maulana Wahiduddin Khan for his views on Mirza Ghulam Ahmed Qadyani and his claim to Prophet-hood. The book has been reproduced as a chapter in Ghulam Nabi Kashafi's book (p 258-276) vide infra.

Haafiz (Dr.) Muhammad Zubair an Assistant Professor at University of Sargodha, Pakistan; published "*Wahaduddin Khan, apne alfaaz ke aayene men*" analyzing various views of Maulana Wahiduddin Khan on issues like Jihad, Qayamat, Maseeh Mehdi and Dajjal, etc. It has been included in Ghulam Nabi Kashafi's book (p167-258) vide infra.

Maulana Nadeemul Wajidi has written a booklet "Signs of Doomsday and Ideas of Maulana Wahiduddin Khan" analyzing Maulana's views expressed in Qayamat ka *Alarm* and *Maseeh ki Aamad e Thani*. In the preface to the book Maulana Abdul Hamid Naumani writes that the author has encompassed the topic under consideration in such a way that the whole matter becomes absolutely clear to the reader. The book is published by *Darul Kitab*, Deoband.

Gh. Nabi Kashafi (Srinagar-Kashmir), edited and published another book "*Wahiduddin Khan ki Tanquidi Moshgaafiyan*" in

2012, which includes articles authored by different scholars of Indo-Pak sub-continent, mostly criticizing Maulana Wahiduddin Khan's thought and expression. He has incorporated the articles from Maulana AamirUsmani, Mufti Muhammad Sayyid Khan and Hafiz Muhammad Zubair besides his own editorial and article, "*Wahiduddin Khan ki Tanqidi Qalabazian*".

Muhammad Ashraf Andrabi produced another 40-paged polemic pamphlet "*Wahiduddin Khan ka Scientific Islam ya Modern Irtdad*" (Wahiduddin Khan's Scientific Islam or a modern apostasy), published by *Shah e Hamdan* Memorial Trust, Pampore -Kashmir in 2012.

Muhammad Mateen Khan of Pakistan has in recent past published a book "*Maulana Wahiduddin Khan, ek Islam Dushman Shakhsiyyat*" in 2013, surfing only controversial points from his large body of Islamic literature with no mention of his contribution to modern scientific theology, world peace, and Islamic *Dawah*.

Further there are lot of hot discussions on Maulana's views on topics relating to contemporary issues like veiling, organ donation, kidnapping, terrorism and suicidal bombing etc. over internet and social media like www.sunniforum.com, www.milligazette.com, www.monthlyalhayat.com and www.newageislam.org.

Selected Polemic Works

1. *Fikr ki Ghalti*²⁶¹:

Fikr ki Ghalti is a book authored by Maulana Ateeque Ahmed Qasmi, a teacher at Darul Ulum Nadwatul Ulamaa Lucknow. The book, criticizing the religious thought of Maulana Wahiduddin Khan was first published by Qazi Publishers and distributors B-35 NizamuddinEst, New Delhi-13 (an address next door to Maulana's C-29 Nizamuddin west New Delhi-13). Its first edition was published in 1990 and the present & 3rd one in 2015.

Maulana Ateeque Ahmed Qasmi has surfed through the whole, up-to-date (till 1990) literature of Maulana and brought out the views that, according to him, don't conform to the conventional beliefs of *Ummah* in general and the stance of Indian *Ulama* in particular.

Maulana Ateeque Ahmed Qasmi as opposed to other polemic literature has taken a more sophisticated approach giving due regards to ethics of disagreement and has supported his arguments with valid references from Islamic literature. He has further endeavored to make an analysis on merit and has excluded Maulana's works on scientific theology and presentation of Islam in modern world, from the purview of criticism.

²⁶¹ Maulana Ateeque Ahmed Qasmi, *Fikr ki Ghalti*, Qazi Publishers, New Delhi, 1990.

Maulana Ateeque Ahmed Qasmi has acknowledged Maulana's approach, style, language and his significant contribution to Islam particularly his defense of Islam against western allegations and challenges.²⁶² At the same time Maulana Qasmi has pointed out flaws in Maulana's writings which could be summarized as:

- Maulana stresses on Individual reform, neglecting the collective social life of Muslims.
- Maulana undermines the significance of *Jihad*, making it impracticable in present scenario, prescribing stringent preconditions for *Jihad*.²⁶³
- Blasphemy Issue: Qasmi describes Maulana's stand on this issue similar to *Qadyanis* and against the *Ijma'* of earlier Muslim scholars.
- He has been blamed for undue criticism of *Sahaba* (Prophet's Companions) and earlier Muslim scholars and personalities.²⁶⁴
- *Flaws in Interpretation* of Holy texts. The Quran and the prophetic *Ahadith* are alleged to have been misquoted by Maulana, out of context and that he has overstepped the evidence in justifying his own ideology on Islam.²⁶⁵
- While criticizing Maulana Mawdudi for political interpretation of Islam, Maulana Wahiduddin Khan

²⁶² Maulana Ateeque Ahmed Qasmi, '*Fikr ki Ghalti*, Qazi Publishers', New Delhi, 3rd.Edn. 2015

²⁶³ Ibid.p-110

²⁶⁴ Ibid.p-210

²⁶⁵ Ibid.pp-163,195.

according to Qasmi has failed to present any alternative to Mawdudi's political model.

- Qasmi advises Maulana to Concentrate on his own *Aakhirat*, lest he make any un-Islamic claim like *Qadyani* annulling his valuable contributions made in defense of Islam.

While pointing out Maulana's errata, Qasmi however ignores his contribution in *Seerah* literature, *Tazkeer* aspect of exegesis, his stress on *tadabbur and tafakkur* for contemporary materialistic world, spiritual and *akhirat* orientation of life etc. making at places, some prickly statements. Further the book was first published in 1990; therefore, there is no mention of Maulana's works published in last over 25 years (1990-1918).

2. "Maulana Wahiduddin Khan: Ulama aur Danashwarun ki Nazar Main"

This book is one of the early polemics edited by Mohsin Uthmani Nadwi (the then Lecturer, Deptt of Arabic, Delhi University) a one-time confederate of Maulana Wahiduddin Khan Khan. It was first published in 1997 by *Majlis-i-Ilmi*, Okhla New Delhi. The book consists of 173 pages and 16 chapters contributed by different writers about one or the other aspect of Maulana's works and views. Though a few of them deal with Maulana's thought and his vision of Islam in ethical way while others articles are devoid of ethics of disagreement and still some others dealing with his personal life or a derision of his views. The contributors include; Sultan Ahmed Islahi, Mujibullah Nadwi, Ateeq Ahmed Qasmi, Wahiduddin Salim,

Ashfaq Hussain, Prof. Sayyid Haamid, Ikhtlaq Hussain Qasmi Abdul Qadir and Hakim Ajmal Khan.²⁶⁶

Since it is out of scope of present volume to take up each objection and establish its merit in reference to Maulana's works; we will try to find out and summarise the major objections raised by different writers and then find out the explanations from Maulana's writings and interviews.

- Maulana's Pacifist ideology; his frequent references to *Hudaibya* treaty and his views on peace and war as well as tolerance have been dubbed as pessimism and blunting the efficiencies of Muslim youth.²⁶⁷
- Maulana's criticism of earlier scholars and personalities like Tipu Sultan,²⁶⁸ Allama Iqbal²⁶⁹ and Mawlana Mawdudi.²⁷⁰
- Hakim Ajmal Khan associates him with Guru Gawalkar while Sayyid Hamid blames him of lacking self esteem and making Muslims pessimists.
- Ashfaq Hussain and Ikhtlaq Hussain Qasmi find faults with his *Al-Risala* Movement.²⁷¹
- Wahiduddin Salim criticizes Maulana for lack of literary acumen and taste.²⁷²

²⁶⁶ Mohsin Uthmani Nadwi "Maulana Wahiduddin Khan Ulmaaur Danashwarun ki nazar Men" Majlis e Ilmi New Delhi, 1997

²⁶⁷ Ibid., pp. 48,61,75,87).

²⁶⁸ Ibid., (p165),

²⁶⁹ Ibid., (p135)

²⁷⁰ Ibid., (p8)

²⁷¹ Ibid., (pp 115,121).

²⁷² Ibid., (p146).

- Maulana Ateeq Ahmed Qasmi criticizes Maulana for appreciating Mughal rulers, Akbar and Jehangir for their role in creating a peaceful environment that provided a better atmosphere for spread of Islam.

3. ***“Maulana Wahiduddin Khan, ek Islam Dushman Shakhsiiyat”***²⁷³

This book is edited by Muhammad Mateen Khalid of Pakistan, surfing controversial points from Maulana’s large body of Islamic literature with no mention of his contribution to his scientific theology, Islamic sciences, world peace and Islamic Dawah. It is spread over 360 pages and 22 chapters contributed by different writers. The main objections raised by different scholars include:

- Blasphemy Issue:²⁷⁴ This is the most prominent point in writings of most of the contributors that finds a place on the title page itself. The writers have quoted from Maulana’s *“Shutam-i-Rasul ka Mas’ala”* decreeing a death sentence for anyone who reviles or insults prophet, in the name of freedom of speech.²⁷⁵ Maulana has been portrayed as a defender or pleader of *Salman Rushdie* and likes, or a partisan to such offenders.²⁷⁶

²⁷³ Muhammad Mateen Khan, ed. “Maulana Wahiduddin Khan, Islam Dushman Shakhsiiyat-2005”

²⁷⁴ Ibid. pp- 21,74,113,158,177

²⁷⁵ Ibid.pp-54,156,218,272

²⁷⁶ Ibid.pp-25,143

- Jihad is the second important issue of discordance. Writers have raised questions on Maulana's concept of peaceful jihad, defensive jihad and irrelevance of armed struggle in modern world. Maulana's stance on Palestine and Kashmir have also invited displeasure.²⁷⁷
- Qadiyani factor: Maulana's stress on a peaceful struggle to spread the word of God across the globe has been translated as an attempt to preach passivism and erase the concept of jihad from Muslim minds just on the lines followed by Ghulam Ahmed Qadiyani.²⁷⁸
- Anti-Muslim attitude: It has been put forward by some writers that in cases of communal riots Maulana always blames Muslims and advises them to ignore the intrigues.²⁷⁹
- New Sect. A few writers are of the opinion that Maulana is spreading a new creed among Muslims on the pattern of *Deen-i-Ilahi*²⁸⁰ while some others brand him as a paid-agent²⁸¹ of national and international agencies engaged in weakening the Muslim *Ummah*.²⁸² Some have even dubbed him as re-incarnation of Gandhi.²⁸³

These objections along with some others shall be discussed under Major objections vide infra.

²⁷⁷ Ibid. pp-274,295,344.

²⁷⁸ Ibid. pp- 14,281.

²⁷⁹ Ibid. pp-287,307

²⁸⁰ Ibid. p292

²⁸¹ Ibid., P. 142

²⁸² Ibid. pp-213,215

²⁸³ Ibid. p 330

4. "*Maulana Wahiduddin Khan ki Tanqeedi Maushgafiyan*"

This is the second book edited by Gh. Nabi Kashafi, and published by Al-Qalam Publications Baramulla-Kashmir in 2012. Spread over 280 pages, it includes many other booklets published earlier by different authors and publishers; like Maulana Aamir Usmani's "*Maulana Wahiduddin Khan ki Tabeer ki Ghalti*", Mufti Muhammad Sayyid Khan's "*Maulana Wahiduddin Khan ki be khabri ya tajahil-i-aarifana*" and Hafiz Muhammad Zubair's "*Maulana Wahiduddin Khan apne alfaz ke aayene men*"; besides his own editorial and article, "*Wahiduddin Khan ki Tanqidi Qalabazian*". The book contains some more articles by Muhammad Nawaz and Muhammad Ashraf wani.²⁸⁴

- Maulana Aamir Usmani has criticized Maulana *Wahiduddin Khan* for criticizing Maulana Mawdudi for his political interpretation of Islam. Whereas Maulana Wahiduddin Khan believes, the primary duty of a Muslim is *Dawah* and not the establishment of a Muslim empire; Aamir Usmani backs the later interpretation of Mawlana Mawdudi and criticizes Maulana Wahiduddin Khan for spreading passivism in the name of spirituality.²⁸⁵
- Hafiz Muhammad Zubair in his article "*Maulana Wahiduddin Khan apne alfaz ke aayene men*" mainly focuses on Maulana's views on eschatology or end times; like *Dajjal*, *Maseeh* and *Mehdi*, as also the issue of blasphemy and Maulana's concept of Jihad. He

²⁸⁴Ghulam Nabi Kashafi, *Maulana Wahiduddin Khan ki Tanqeedi Maushgafiyan*

²⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, (p 95-97).

criticizes Maulana for approving only pacifist struggle and declaring armed struggle as invalid in modern times²⁸⁶ and proves with authentic Hadith that peaceful *Dawah* and armed struggle will continue till Qayamah, as and when each is indicated.²⁸⁷ He appreciates Maulana's contribution to Tazkeer aspect of Islam and advises him to restrict himself to that field only rather than indulging in political and ideological guidance of Muslim *ummah*.²⁸⁸

- Mufti Muhammad Sayyid Khan in his article "*Maulana Wahiduddin Khan ki bekhabri ya tajahil-i-aarifana*" focuses on Maulana's views about Ghulam Ahmed Qadiyani and proves with references that *Qadiyani* made claims to prophet-hood that is a clear violation of primary Islamic texts and popular Islamic belief.²⁸⁹
- Ghulam Nabi Kashafi in his own article focuses on return of Maseeh in-person to present world before Doomsday, and quotes authentic Hadith in support of popular Islamic belief,²⁹⁰ thus criticizing Maulana for holding a view that Dajjal and return of Maseeh are symbolic of such ideologies and not the physical characters. Kashafi also believes and alleges that *Maulana Wahiduddin Khan claims himself to be Maseeh or Mehdi, though in allusion or veiled manner*.²⁹¹

²⁸⁶ Al-Risala, September, 2007, p.15

²⁸⁷ Op. Cit., Kashafi P (p228, 230).

²⁸⁸ Ibid., (p258).

²⁸⁹ Ibid. (p259-74)

²⁹⁰ Ibid. (p 278),

²⁹¹ Ibid. (P 164).

5. 'Tauheen-e-Risalat' (Revilement of Prophet) sub-titled as '*American terrorism to Wahiddudin Khan's Incoherence*' is another 344-page book on blasphemy issue authored by Altaf Hussain Nadwi and published by *Shah-i-Hamadan Society* Islamabad, Kashmir (India) in 2015. The author while dealing with the issue in detail has presented historical aspect of the case, right from initial phase of Islam to the present day with special stress on the recent mushrooming of anti-Islam individuals and organizations engaged in insulting prophet of Islam in organized ways.²⁹²

The book is spread over twelve chapters on different aspects of Blasphemy in Islam and its punishment as prescribed in Islamic *Shariah* including views of different scholars. Chapter Ten deals with, the views of Javed Ahmed Ghamidi and Maulana Wahiduddin Khan, denouncing the death penalty in cases of blasphemy.²⁹³ The author on the other hand justifies capital punishment for the offender quoting from the Quran.²⁹⁴

6. "Wahiduddin Khan ka Scientific Islam ya Modern Irtidad" (*Wahiduddin Khan's Scientific Islam or a modern apostasy*): Muhammad Ashraf Andrabi who has preferred not to disclose his credentials; produced another 40-paged polemic pamphlet "*Wahiduddin Khan ka Scientific Islam ya Modern Irtidad*"

²⁹² Altaf Hussain Nadwi, "*Tauheen e Risalat*" (Revilement of Prophet) subtitled as '*American terrorism to Wahiddudin Khan's Incoherence*' 2015, Kashmir.

²⁹³ . Ibid. (P215-270).

²⁹⁴ . Al-Quran, (9:12-14)

published by *Shah-i-Hamdan* Memorial Trust, Pampore-Kashmir in 2012. He believes that Maulana is a hired agent of West (p-3); like Ghulam Ahmed Qadyani (p-20) and is working on same lines especially in matters of undermining the importance of *Jihad*(p-13,38) and encouraging Blasphemy in the name of freedom of speech(p-4,13). He has raised objections on interpretations of Quran by Maulana particularly the *Surah Al-Saff* regarding *Jihad* and Finality of Prophet. Maulana's article on *Maseehi Model ki aamade Saani (Al-Risala June 2007)* has again been under fire like many other writers, and Maulana has been blamed of following Qadyani's footsteps (p-20, 36). Referring to Al-Quran Mission of Maulana, he has raised questions on permissibility of Quranic Translations without Arabic Text.

7. "Aalam e Islam ke Chand Mashaheer". Ghatreef Shahbaz Nadwi, a one-time confederate of Maulana Wahiddudin Khan in his article, "*Maulana Wahiduddin: Ilmi o fikri khidmaat*" in his edited book "*Aalam e Islam ke chand Mashaheer*" published by Rehbar Book Service New Delhi in 2014; makes an assessment of Maulana's life, works and mission, in a more scholarly way.

Nadwi writes that most of Maulana's books, barring a few, are compilations of articles already published in *al-Risala* over the years. Nadwi is particularly appreciative of Maulana's unique, lucid and fascinating literary style, his efforts in defending Islam against western challenges as evidenced in *Mazhab aur Jadid challenge* and *Khatun-i-Islam* for example. He again applauds Maulana's bold initiatives on *Ijtihad* to meet the

demands of modernity and his role as *Dai* among non-Muslims, especially his sympathetic approach and his methodology of dialogue not debate. But at the same time, Nadwi is critical of Maulana for blaming Muslims in case of communal riots, laying more stress on individual reform and *dawah* at the cost of sociopolitical life of Muslims, his criticism of Muslim scholars and historical personalities and repetition of articles and subjects in various books. He concludes that despite all this Maulana is a bridge between tradition and modernity; and contemporaries must come forward to avail of his Islamic scholarship.²⁹⁵

8. “*Ahya-i-Deen Aur Hindustani Ulama*” Dr. Ubaidullah Fahd, in this book, published by Al-Qalam Publishers Kashmir in 2011, has dedicated a chapter to Maulana Wahiddudin Khan besides other contemporary Islamic scholars of Indian Sub-continent.

The book, is in fact, a collection of articles written by Fahd, on different scholars and at different occasions. Whereas he has written generously about Maulana Mawdudi and his movement, he is critical about Maulana Abul Hassan Ali Nadwi, Maulana Manzur Noamani and Maulana Wahiddudin Khan who had expressed differences with Mawlana Mawdudi about his political views particularly the objectives of *Jamaat-i-Islami*.

²⁹⁵Ghatreef Shahbaz Nadwi, “*Aalam e Islam ke chand Mashaheer*” p291-300

About Maulana Wahiddudin Khan, Ubaidullah Fahd quoting from Maulana's writings; has in fact kept himself confined to an article written by an Egyptian Scholar, Yusuf Kamal, in which Maulana Wahiddudin Khan has been criticized for his views on political interpretation of Islam, *Jihad and Ijtihad*.²⁹⁶ Further, his pacifist ideology is taken as pessimist and termed as Maulana's "Intellectual Retreat".²⁹⁷

A fair analysis reveals that Maulana's writings have not been taken in right spirit and mostly out of context with a perceivable tinge of prejudice, unbecoming scholarship of Ubaidullah Fahd's stature. E.g. the blames of communism²⁹⁸ etc. look contradictory to Maulana Wahiddudin Khan's actual ideology verifiable from his books on the subject. However, Ubaidullah Fahd's moral courage, exhibited in responding to some of the critics of first edition of this book²⁹⁹, however, deserves salutation and genuinely forms a guide for young scholars to follow in facing differences of opinion.

Major Objections (Common to most of the critics)

- Political Interpretation of Islam, (Tabeer ki Ghalti).
- Eschatology.
- Blasphemy.
- Communal riots and Indian Muslims.
- Jihad.

²⁹⁶Dr. Ubaidullah Fahd, "*Ahya e Deen Aur Hindustani Ulama*"2011, pp-217-

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²⁹⁷Ibid.p-216.

²⁹⁸Ibid.p-233.

²⁹⁹Ibid.pp-XI-XXVII.

- Criticism of *Sahaba* and Islamic Scholars.
- Ijtihad.
- Arabic Language.
- Similarity with Ghulam Ahmed Qadiyani.
- Maulana's Appreciation for Akbar and Jehangir.

Maulana's Responses and Discussion

Political Interpretation of Islam, *Tasawwur e Deen and Tabeer ki Ghalti*: "Maulana Wahiduddin Khan while criticizing Mawlana Mawdudi's model of Islam in modern world has failed to provide an alternate model"³⁰⁰

Maulana Wahiduddin Khan calls Mawlana Mawdudi's concept of *Iqamat e Deen* or establishment of a Muslim Governments as political interpretation of Islam. He believes that primary focus of Islam is individual reform only and when such reformed individuals are in good numbers, formation of a reformed society or polity is a natural outcome. Making struggle to establish a Muslim Government is not among targets of Quran. He believes that sovereignty of a land is bestowed on someone as a gift from Allah whom he pleases.³⁰¹ Even all the prophets didn't struggle for political ends and it was only with Prophet Dawud (David), Sulaiman (Solomen), Yousaf (Joseph) and Muhammad ﷺ that they were bestowed with this responsibility; argues Maulana.

³⁰⁰ Maulana Ateeque Ahmed Qasmi, *Fikr ki Ghalti*, Qazi Publishers, New Delhi, 3rd Edn. 2015

³⁰¹ Al-Quran, 3:26

Maulana believes that among Islamic scheme of things *Dawah* finds the prime position and it should form the first priority of Muslim *Ummah* to spread the word of God to whole humanity (*Jihad bil Quran*). Maulana makes appreciates subtle difference between *Izhar e Din and iqamat e Din* and stresses on former as a natural responsibility of Muslims after finality of prophethood. He further makes a clear distinction between cause of Islam and cause of Muslims; considering latter as subservient to former and not vice versa. Maulana's concept of *Dawah* among non-Muslims only has also been criticized by his opponents; stressing that the term *dawah* could be used for both Muslims and non-Muslims as against *amr-bil-maruf* and *islah* etc as stated by Maulana.³⁰² About critiques by members of *Jama'at-i-Islami* Maulana writes:

"All the arguments forwarded by the *Jama'at e Islami* against my critique, in written, verbal, published and unpublished form, were either about completely irrelevant issues or else based on a complete misrepresentation of my position."³⁰³

Eschatology: Maulana's views about *Dajjal*, Return of *Maseeh* and *Mehdi* have been criticized by most of the critics. Some writers have even alleged him of claiming himself to be the promised *Mehdi or Maseeh*³⁰⁴. Ghulam Nabi Kashafi writes: "This journey of Maulana's thought reached its final stage in 2010. The May 2010 issue of Maulana's *Al Risala* came as *Qayamat ka alarm* (The Alarm of Day of Judgment) in which discussing the signs of *Qayamat* (Day of Judgment), he

³⁰² opcit. Qasmi

³⁰³ Maulana Wahiduddin Khan, "Political Interpretation of Islam" p 23

³⁰⁴ Kashafi Ghulam Nabi, "Dawa e Maseehiat o Mehdviat" 2011

suggestively and subtly likened himself to Messiah and Mehdi the promised. Not content with that he went on to say in the June issue of Al-Risalah that 'signs tell us that the Day of Judgment is imminent and so it would be right to infer that the *Dajjal* and the *Messiah and Mehdi* have appeared.'³⁰⁵

'The Messiah or Mehdi who has appeared have the following personality traits:

'In this situation the first task of Messiah or Mehdi would be to discover a non-military ideology of Islam.' (Al Risala, Aug 2010)

'The confrontation with *Dajjal* will be in the sense that Messiah will expose him by intellectually analyzing his *dajal* (mischief).'³⁰⁶

'Contrary to his antecedents, *Mehdi* will exceptionally be a rightly guided manHe will neither claim himself to be the Mehdi nor a voice from the heavens will announce that he is Mehdi and will ask people to believe in him and follow him.' (Al Risala May 2010; p 36)

'About Mehdi, the hadith says that 'his name would be similar to mine (ﷺ).' Here name denotes character.' (P 38)

'Mehdi's task would not be akin to a political revolution but a revolution on the intellectual level among individuals. (p 39)

'From the study of *ahadith*, it becomes evident that *Dajjal* or Dajjalism is in fact a *fitna* (mischief) of the scientific age. It will be for the first time in the scientific age that some people would create the impression that Truth cannot survive in the face of the progress in learning and knowledge. Then with the blessing of God a man will emerge who will destroy this *Dajjalism* with scientific arguments'. (P 18)

³⁰⁵ Maulana Wahiduddin Khan, Al Risala June 2010; p5

³⁰⁶ Ibid. p-53

'The promised Messiah and Mehdi are symbolically different names of the same personality.' (P 41)

On issues of Dajjal, coming of Mehdi or return of Maseeh before Qayamat; Maulana holds a view that departs from the popular Muslim belief. Whereas Muslims take these characters in anthropomorphic sense, Maulana believes that these words are symbolic in nature. It may be of interest to note that similar views are held by contemporary Muslim Scholar, Fatehullah Gullen of Turkey³⁰⁷.

According to Maulana *Dajjalism* is a modern materialistic *fitna* of scientific age that would be countered by some Godly figure with a powerful Islamic ideology; thus, reposing the faith of Muslims in truth of Islam. Similarly, he believes that return of *Massih* won't be physical or anthropomorphic but symbolic in form of a '*Maseehi model*' or peaceful preaching as he did in the first coming.

He further quotes from early Muslims that whenever in prophetic period there was any powerful meteorological phenomenon; *sahaba* (The Prophet's companions) would gather together and pray to Almighty fearing onset of *Qayamat*, without waiting for *Mehdi* or *Maseeh*. He believes that an anthropomorphic concept of these characters has made Muslims complacent about their duties towards world

³⁰⁷ Fatehullah Gullen, *Interfaith dialogue in Islamic Perspective*, The Light Inc. Somerset, USA, 2004. P-5

community. He further clarifies that such a belief is not a new concept but many earlier scholars held such opinion.³⁰⁸

As regards his own claim he has refuted such allegations outrightly in his speech and writings, more than once.³⁰⁹

A fair assessment of the case reveals that the basic problem lies in 'an established scientific theologian entering into realms of speculations' that was for anyone unwarranted and fraught with danger.

Blasphemy (Reviling Prophet ﷺ: Maulana Wahiduddin Khan has been criticized by almost all in the list of polemic literature for denouncing a death sentence for offenders of Prophet ﷺ. Whereas his critics, quoting from Ibn Taimiyya justify assassination of offender; Maulana believes that Prophet ﷺ has been mentioned as Mercy for the whole world;³¹⁰ and that there is no such instruction in Quran and the Prophet himself pardoned many during his lifetime and those sentenced to death had other reasons necessitating this kind of treatment.³¹¹

In response to these allegations, Maulana, quoting incidents from *Taif, Hudaibiyya* and conquest of Makkah describes how some fierce enemies of Prophet were, despite power to annihilate them, forgiven by visionary prophet in the larger

³⁰⁸ Maulana Wahiduddin Khan, Interview with author, New Delhi, January, 13, 2016.

³⁰⁹ Ibid.

³¹⁰ Al-Quran, 21:107

³¹¹ Maulana Wahiduddin Khan, "Shut m e Rasul ka Mas'ala"

interest of Islam. This reaction was unthought-of for Muslims in general but all were convinced of the right steps taken by Prophet ﷺ when these forgiven enemies protected Islam at some crucial junctures. He points to *Taif*, Suhail bin Amr and Ikrimah for example.

During the journey to *Taif* (620CE) the holy Prophet ﷺ faced one of the hardest days of life; people rejecting his call to Islam, forcing him to return and then pelting stones at him hurting his body and soul. As Almighty Allah offered him to destroy the people of *Taif*, the Prophet (ﷺ) preferred to forgive them with the hope that their newer generations might accept the faith and strengthen Islam in many possible ways; and the prophecy ultimately proved right after conquest of Makkah. The next generations of Taif produced generals like Abu Ubaid Thaqfi the conqueror of Persia and Muhammad bin Qasim the conqueror of Sindh (711 CE) who spread Islam to Indian Sub-continent.³¹²

Similar was the case of Suhail bin Amr a vibrant Makkan disbeliever who had participated in battles of *Badr* (2AH) and *Uhud*(3AH) and above all had dictated humiliating terms to Muslims in *Hudaibya* (6AH) forcing them to recede to Madina instead of moving forward to Makkah for performing *Umrah*. Despite all this Prophet of Islam after conquest of Makah (8AH) forgave this man who accepted Islam and subsequently played a vital role (*according to Ibn Hisham v4 p 346*) in preventing Muslims from slipping into apostasy after

³¹²Maulana Wahiduddin Khan, "Shut m e Rasul ka Mas'ala" p-157

departure of Holy prophet.³¹³ Similar was the example of Ikrimah who defended Islam valiantly after conversion to Islam. The holy prophet had even forgiven *Hinda* who ordered mutilation of body of *Hamza* the revered uncle of Prophet ﷺ during the battle of *Uhud*.

The points Maulana makes in this regard are:

There are no clear instructions in Quran and Prophet's example, for death penalty to those who reviled prophet or expressed desecration to him.³¹⁴ According to Maulana:

"The malicious defamation of prophets by their contemporaries has been referred to in Quran at a number of places like 15:11, 36:30, 43:7, 9:65, and 2:14; but not a single mention of death for the offender. In this regard Quran mentions only two reactions: either to reject their blames with valid arguments or leave the matter to Allah for their appropriate punishment."³¹⁵

The few examples quoted by his critics according to Maulana had other indications for such a treatment, particularly the criminal conspiracy of plotting against Islam and Muslim state that necessitated their annihilation.³¹⁶ Had it been a general rule; the history of Islam would have been deprived of many companions of prophet".³¹⁷

³¹³ Ibid.p-155

³¹⁴ Ibid.p-164

³¹⁵ Ibid.p-152

³¹⁶ Ibid. p-162

³¹⁷ Ibid.p-153

According to Maulana the body of Islamic law as it stands today was developed and codified during Abbasid period when Muslims were in a politically dominating position and it suited only to such positions; having little to offer for pluralistic societies where Muslims are in subordinate positions.³¹⁸ The present day Muslims; according to Maulana, instead of exerting to draw rulings for their present day problems from Quran and *Hadith* through *ijtihad*, are rather clinging to rulings of Abbasid period as sacred.³¹⁹ Further, Maulana believes that in changing legal systems, the rulings by Muslim clerics(*fatwas*) are not followed by secular governments and generating more and more such *fatwas* that are not practiced or practicable do more harm to Islam than good. They need to adopt a more pragmatic approach suited to the present scenario than the idealistic stance.

According to Maulana:

“The prophet’s actions indicate that in a matter concerning vilification of the prophet, the practical consequences of ordering the death of the criminal must be considered. If the followers of Islam don’t have the sort of control on the situation to prevent the negative consequences of slaying the criminal, they should not inflict this punishment on him. Rather they should leave the matter to God.”³²⁰

³¹⁸ SikandYoginder, Ed. “Jihad Peace and Intercommunity Relations in Islam”, p-91

³¹⁹ Ibid.p-94

³²⁰ Ibid. pp-94-95

Again, according to Maulana:

“In reference to the case of Salman Rushdie, if the Muslims had adopted the method of *Ijtihad e mutliq* or Absolute *Ijtihad* and had accordingly sought guidance directly from Quran and Hadith instead of following opinions of the past, they would have realized that the right solution to the controversy was not to issue a *fatwa* calling for Rushdie’s death, but rather to, abstain from any violent reaction and instead engage in peaceful *Dawah* work to explain the truth to people about Islam and Prophet ﷺ.

Muslim scholars and preachers according to Maulana will have to reset the priorities in Islam placing call to Allah or the *dawah* work as topmost priority and by doing so their thinking will change altogether- viewing others as not their enemies but as potential Muslims or customers of Islamic message. This according to Maulana is not only a suggestion but a forgotten pledge made to prophet on the occasion of last congregation of *hajj* when Muslims en-masse promised to spread the message of God to the remotest corner of the world-that is an obligation and a natural consequence of the cessation of prophet-hood or '*khatm e nabuwwat*'.

He further argues that in present circumstances when Muslims are not in commanding position, they should refrain from making such demands and *fatwas*. However, his plea for “freedom of expression” doesn’t sound justified as in face of such voluntary overages; this freedom can’t be treated as a holy cow that can’t be sacrificed. At the same time labelling Maulana as a defender of Salman Rushdi or his likes is not

justified. Maulana is in fact the only scholar who has condemned Rushdi's book on point to point basis quoting from world history of religions labelling Rushdi's work as a misconceived misadventure.

Jihad: Whereas *Jamat I islami and Ikhwan al Muslimoon* exhort Muslims to struggle for political establishment, Maulana Wahiduddin Khan believes that Jihad should be reserved only for peaceful struggle to spread the word of God. Maulana Ateeque Ahmed Qasmi and others challenge him with references from primary Islamic texts and history of Islam blaming him of propagating pessimism among young Muslims. In a dispassionate analysis a need is felt to seek a synthesis between the two. Whereas the need for an armed struggle can't be ruled out in certain circumstances; its indications need to be ascertained restricting the indiscriminate misuse of term *jihad* to the extent of terrorism and suicide bombing.

Communal riots and Indian Muslims: Maulana Wahiduddin Khan is said to, always blame Muslims, for such incidents. A study of Maulana's "*Fasadaat ka Masa'la*" and "*Hal yahan hai*", one concludes that Maulana is not unaware of the intentions of anti-Muslim forces and their agenda. He is equally cognizant of the laxity on the part of management in controlling such situations. But what Maulana suggests is; advising Muslims not to get provoked. If they ignore step one, may be a long chain or vicious circle of riots is averted. That ultimately goes in favor of Muslims saving their lives and property.³²¹

³²¹ Al-Risala, May 1986,p-18

In such situations Maulana always keeps two points in mind: one is not to treat their fellow Indians as others or opponents (*adu*) but rather as *madu'u* or potential customers of Islam. Secondly, he simulates situation of Indian Muslims to Makkan period of Islam when they were in minority. The Sunnah of the prophet during that period is more appropriate for Indian Muslims to adopt, rather than applying examples from later part of Islamic history. It may be of interest to many that a similar approach was adopted by Maulana Abul Hassan Ali Nadwi in his discourses. About pacifism Maulana Writes: I am a pacifist but my pacifism is not of a strategic nature. My pacifism is an absolute good; it has the status of a *summum bonum* for me. It is not simply a theory. It is a part of my flesh and blood.³²²

Criticism of *Sahaba* and Islamic Scholars: In his books "Islam rediscovered" and "*Tajdid e Deen*" Maulana mentions the Quran, the Hadith and opinions of Sahaba as the only authentic sources of Islamic law. Remaining silent on *Qayas or Ijmah*, the need for *ijtihad* has been stressed time and again. He further quotes from *Sahaba* in several of his write ups. Further about *Sahaba* he has enumerated a dozen of qualities of *sahaba* that we don't find among later day Muslims.³²³ His approach in general is rational and objective; so we often find remarks about some Islamic scholars that sound unpleasant.

³²² Maulana Wahiduddin Khan, "The Ideology of Peace, New Delhi 2003, p-7-9

³²³ Maulana Wahiduddin Khan, "Ahya al Islam" p-107

It is however, strange to note that in communal tensions and intercommunity relations Maulana advises Muslim to exercise restraint in larger interest of Muslim *ummah*; but forgets the same himself, while dealing with Islamic personalities of yester years. Similarly, his statement about Hazrat Asma (RA) is one such example which appears offensive prima facie, that none can justify. Revisiting the context, it appears an unwarranted allusion.

Ijtihad: Maulana's revivalist efforts e.g. Rediscovery of Islamic teachings from Quran and *Hadith* (as mentioned in Prophet's last sermon has also been challenged.³²⁴ Maulana Ateeq Ahmed Qasmi's argument is that *Fiqh* literature is an important development in Islamic history that can't be labeled as an unwanted appendage as believed by Maulana Wahiduddin Khan. Qasmi while admitting that sectarian differences are fatal for Muslim *ummah*; tries to justify presence of Fiqh schools keeping silent on issues of *taqlid and ijthihad* for reasons unknown. It may be remembered that need for *ijtihad* is not a concept unique to Maulana Wahiduddin Khan only. We find it with Sir Sayyid Ahmed Khan, Sir Muhammad Iqbal, Jamaluddin Afghani, Muhammad Abduh and many more Muslim Scholars.

Similiarity with Ghulam Ahmed Qadiyani or extension of his thought. Maulana has been likened to Mirza Ghulam Ahmed Qadyani or following his footsteps in taking a similar stance on blasphemy issue and jihad, his appreciation in dealing with

³²⁴Opcit. Qasmi

west and claims to be Mehdi.³²⁵ In this regard it would be appropriate to revisit Maulana's writings with reference to Qadiyani.³²⁶

After 1857, when Britishers took over the reins of Mughal Empire, Muslim in general treated them as their enemies, tried to regain their political empire; and hated everything that belonged to west. In this scenario Sir Sayyid Ahmed Khan tried to convince Muslims not to hate west but strengthen themselves better through adoption of best with the west that translated to accepting western education, science and technology. Similarly, in initial stages; Qadiyani who had defended Islam against Christianity also wanted Muslims to treat westerners as *madu'u* or potential Muslims and thus learn their language for effective *Dawah*. It was later that he drifted from his stand, made a claim to be Mehdi and later as a Prophet making a mess of his writings, preaching and proclaiming un-Islamic faith.³²⁷

On Jihad and Peace Maulana's stand is very clear. He advocates full use of Modern values and ways of communication for calling people to God without confrontation; as creation of a peaceful and congenial atmosphere for *Dawah* work according to Maulana is primarily a responsibility of *Dai* and not the *Madu'u*. On issue of abuse

³²⁵ Khalid, Muhammad Mateen, "Maulana Wahiduddin Khan-ek Islam dushman Shakhsiyat" 2015

³²⁶ Maulana Wahiduddin Khan, "Tajdid e Deen" Maktba Al-Risala, ne Delhi, 1987. pp-67-69

³²⁷ Ibid.

of prophet, Maulana quoting from Quran and Hadith holds a view that killing a person for alleged insult is not justified. With this background, it appears unjustified to club Maulana with someone else in history that held anti-Islamic claims and faith. Further such an allegation runs counter to Quranic instructions of clarification of a news and *Zann* in case of a Muslim brother.³²⁸

Maulana's Appreciation for Akbar and Jehangir, has also been criticized by his opponents. A neutral environment is essential for Dawah work wherein social intercourse of different communities is possible. That was provided by Akbar and *Sufis* as noticed by Maulana Wahiduddin Khan in his analysis of Mughal period. The same has not been taken in right perspective by reactionary writers failing to perceive the spirit behind the reference.

Arabic Language: Some critics have raised questions about Maulana's knowledge of Arabic Language and blamed him of misinterpretation of Holy texts.

Though a detailed discussion on the subject is out of scope of this volume; it is interesting to note that one of the Arab Scholar, Tariq Hassan Mohammad Alkhidery has completed his dissertation on 'Critical Studies on Wahiduddin Khan: His Religious Beliefs, opinions and Thought'. While appreciating Maulana's great contributions to contemporary Islamic Thought; he remarks that Maulana Wahiduddin Khan is an

³²⁸ Al-Quran, 49:12

exception in modern scholars who has attempted a reinterpretation and reapplication of Holy texts without tempering with the original text in letter and spirit.³²⁹ That is a statement from native Arabic speaker and a Muslim scholar with fair understanding of Quran, and Hadith as well as Arabic language.

Assessment:

It is a common observation verifiable from critiques that his critics often:

- Forget ethics of difference of opinion (except Hafiz Zubair, Muhammad Sayeed Khan, Ghatreef Shahbaz Nadwi and Maulana Ateeq Ahmed Qasmi)
- Most of them have adopted a fault-finding approach to his works; ignoring mountains in search of a particle.
- Opponents often quote him out of context.
- Pick up his letters not spirit while making analysis.
- Adopt double standards; credit earlier scholars for even wrong *ijtihad* but forget the same in case of Maulana.
- They often react to his views and fail to make a reasoned response.
- Make prickly statements as evident from their titles, headings and the lists of contents.

Any unbiased scholar can have a look at the title pages of polemic books and judge for himself the intent and approach of his critics that nowhere comes closer to the ethical norms of

³²⁹Tariq Hassan Mohammad Alkhidery, 'Critical Studies on Wahiduddin Khan: His Religious Belief, opinions and Thought' Thesis Submitted to Ummul Qurah University Makkah, 2009-2010.

any secular research not to talk of an Islamic subject and treatment.

In fact, anybody could have ignored such writings for violating ethical norms of disagreement but this dispassionate researcher placed these remarks on record for the readers to judge for themselves the credentials of critics as also the literary merit of their works.

Inference:

Maulana's works fall primarily under two categories:

- Defence of Islam against modern or western challenges: E.g. Al-Islam, Mazhab aur Jadid Challenge, Islam Daur e Jadid ka Khaliq, Khatoon-i-Islam, Socialism ek Ghair Islami Nazriyya, Communism, Religion and Science.etc
- Internal Reform of Muslim societies, *ulama and Madaaris and* Revival of Islam e.g. in 'Islam Rediscovered', '*Ulmaa aur Daure Jadid*', *Qayadat Nama*, Indian Muslims, *Masail e ijtehad* and *Tajdeed e Deen*.

It is observed that the books in class one are appreciated alike by friends and foes attracting no adverse remarks from any quarters (e.g. Ateeque Ahmad Qasmi, Ghatreef Shahbaz Nadwi, Hafiz Zubair Ahmed and Muhammad Sayeed Khan); whereas the reaction flares up as soon as he turns to internal reform of Muslims; as over the centuries the medieval interpretations have assumed sacred status and people are holding fast onto them as it were revealed texts.

Responding in a line to objections raised by many about Maulana Wahiduddin Khan and his mission, Maulana states that as a Golden rule the standard for validity of any idea or mission is Quran the Word of Allah and the authentic Hadith of Prophet of Islam (ﷺ). The critiques must come up with valid objection to our mission or else should stop adopting double standards.³³⁰

Similarly, Maulana objects to calling him a controversial personality by some critiques.³³¹ Maulana describing it quite unfair, quotes historical figures like Imam Abu Hanifa, Fakhruddin Razi, Ibn Taimiya or our own Shah Waliullah and Sir Sayyid Ahmed Khan who were dubbed as controversial by their respective contemporaries but emerged as Imams and legends in centuries to come.³³²

It seems pertinent to quote a summery of Maulana's own words that conclude his mission:

*'For last forty years (Now 60), I have been serving Islam. I have always concentrated on Tawheed, the validity of Islam as the only acceptable religion, the infallibility of Quran as a book of Guidance and the Prophet of Islam as an ideal and eternal guide for the whole mankind; along with proving polytheism as an unscientific ideology. In brief my mission is to prove logically and scientifically that all man-made-isms are false and Islam is the only religion that can fill the ideological vacuum in modern world.'*³³³

³³⁰ Maulana Wahiduddin Khan, Diary: June 13, 2007

³³¹ Muhammad Mateen Khan, ed. "Maulana Wahiduddin Khan, Islam Dushman Shakhsiyat-2005"

³³² Al-Risala, February 1999, p-45-46.

³³³ Al-Risala, March 1999, p-15

CHAPTER VII

CONCLUSION

Coming to terms with new challenges has always been a daunting task for Muslim scholars in all ages; and over the centuries they have responded positively to their fullest capabilities in their respective ages. But the ever-changing and dynamic nature of the world poses new challenges with each passing moment, particularly in the present times when the world is moving as if in a fast forward motion. Improved ways of communication and modern information technology has transformed the vast world into a global village. Thus, the issues don't remain confined to a particular geographical area or a social group but assume international significance, warranting fresh look at the problems and possible solutions more frequently than earlier periods.

Consequently, it may be inferred thereby that the readymade solutions fall short of relevance regarding their application in toto; though these could be best suited for the particular ages when framed.

With the turn of 20th century, in Indian sub-continent, the fall of Muslim empire as a part of world scenario, posed new challenge and the worthy Muslim scholars like Sir Sayyid Ahmed Khan, Sir Muhammad Iqbal, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad and Maulana Mawdudi responded to the need of the hour with their respective visions and capabilities. The need for *ijtihad* propounded by Sir Sayyid Ahmed Khan and Sir Muhammad Iqbal is more relevant today than yester years. The call for return to Quran and "*Let the Quran speak for itself!*" by Maulana Azad, made the Muslims more comfortable in a pluralistic society; though the political deprivation still haunts

the Muslim leaders. There had been similar voices in Muslim world e.g. in Muhammad Abduh of Egypt and BadiuZaman Said Nursi of Turkey with variable results.

Maulana Wahiduddin Khan appears on the Indian intellectual scene, strictly speaking, in the post-partition era. It was the experience of developments in early part of 20th century that made Wahiduddin Khan what he is today. He analyzed the causes of Muslim decline and could very well visualize the future situation. Reading inadequacies in the response of his contemporaries to modern developments; he undertook to formulate his own response suited to new situations; based on positive thinking and scientific temperament. Through his self-study of modern subjects; he is fully convinced that the only way to rehabilitate Muslims is to provide them with the weapon of modern education.

Maulana could receive only a conventional madrasa education in his early life but excelled to achieve present eminence only through his self study of English, Science, Philosophy and other related disciplines. With Divine blessing of a powerful art of writing and analytical capabilities; he could present his ideas to the world with a blend of intellectual creativity and impressive literary style. Though a proponent of Madrasa education; he is dissatisfied with their syllabi and formulates proposals for reform in religious education making full use of modern facilities and methods.

Maulana Wahiduddin Khan, a creative thinker, a philosophical and scientific theologian and a modernist reformer is of the

opinion that there is a need for Muslims to take to primary Islamic texts for guidance on response to modern challenges. That will not only revive the original Islam but will also change their outlook to modern world; he asserts.

Like Sir Sayyid Ahmad Khan and Muhammad Abduh, he calls for a bold new theology or reinterpretation of Islam and acceptance not rejection of best in the west. In his revivalist efforts he wants to show that through his rediscovery, he was reclaiming the original Islam that God disclosed through His last Prophet ﷺ; not the one that evolved over the centuries of explanations and ambiguous commentaries in period of philosophical and juristic discussions. Like Sir Sayyid Ahmed Khan, and the Egyptian reformer, Muhammad Abduh he has a strong conviction about compatibility of Islam with scientific thought. He doesn't stop just here; in fact, he exhorts Muslims to exploit the modern developments of science and technology, particularly the ways of communication, in favor of Islam for its peaceful propagation to the remotest corner of the globe.

Through his study of modern subjects, Maulana Wahiduddin Khan could gain an insight into the secrets of success in the west and their methods of arguments; particularly their spirit of free inquiry with critical mind and logical thinking, which helped them to make great progress. Maulana, aware of this situation takes to study and presentation of science and religion in such a way that convincing proofs emerge automatically from his arguments. He is convinced of the rational demonstration of the truth of science. He thinks that

we can similarly demonstrate the truth of religion as well. This approach with a lucid epiphanic style of Maulana's pen attracts younger generations. His thought is thus motivated by his desire to reconcile religion with science; and he has done it successfully proving beyond doubt that Islam is the only religion that stands the test of time (history) as well as modern scientific temperament (science). He has made monumental efforts to resolve a universal and profound dilemma-'the conflict between science and religion'. Though he acknowledges the importance of reason to the extent of its role in defense of faith; aware of its inadequacies, Maulana refuses to accept reason as a substitute for religion.

Maulana Wahiduddin Khan; like Ali Miyan Nadwi is an advocate of individual-reform in sharp contrast to the movements aiming at political establishment of Muslim governments. He believes that politics is a part of Islam but not the essential or guiding spirit of Islam. That shows the influence of his earlier associations with Jamaát e Islami and Tablighi Jama't, resulting into his distaste for the former and a subtle leaning to the latter. But his frequent stress on need for *ijtihad* and reform in madrasa education, his concept of Spirituality in Islam or approaches in Islamic *Dawah*; he stands distinct even from the *Tablighis*.

One of the major concerns of Maulana is to present Islam as a perfect ideology for modern world. He thus, discusses in detail about realities of life and the issues facing Muslim ummah in particular. We find in his deliberations frequent references to modern pluralistic societies, peace building, interfaith dialogue

and intercommunity relations. He is equally cognizant of the implications of modern social values like democracy, secularism, globalization and advancements in science and technology and thus stresses a need for exercise of *ijtihad* to address these issues; while most of the traditionalists refuse to look beyond formulations of medieval *fiqh* literature. With this background, the distinct understanding of Maulana Wahiduddin about Islam, gains more authenticity and contemporary relevance.

Like a one-man army fighting on many fronts, Maulana, had jobs to respond to; challenges of modernity, misinterpretations by orthodoxy and the challenges to Muslim polity. Maulana Wahiduddin Khan literally responding to Sir Sayyid's desire for presenting Islamic teachings in the modern scientific format; has performed the job in a commendable way. With special focus on rediscovering Islam from its original sources and finding ways for its reapplication to new situations; Maulana has authored over 200 books on subjects of contemporary relevance with the central idea of 'Islam in the Modern World'. His writings are thus concerned with presenting Islam as a comprehensive world view and the only ideology that can fill the ideological vacuum of the future world.

In regard to comprehensive treatment of different aspects of Islam or holistic approach to Islam, he comes closer to the Indian theologian Shah Waliullah. However, he differs considerably with him on his synthetic approach regarding tradition and modernity and his limited exposure to western

developments in social, political and scientific fields; while Maulana has a non-conformist, objective and rational approach. He prefers to rediscover facts directly from original texts and their reapplication to modern situations, often bypassing medieval commentaries and super-commentaries, through a bold application of the principle of *ijtihad*. He tries to eliminate from his principles all additional material, like old corpus of *fiqhi commentaries*, dialectics (*kalam*) and syllabi of Islamic mysticism (Sufism) confining himself only to Quran and authentic *Ahadith* besides need and practice of *ijtihad*.

Every religion including Islam has two sides the moral part (*adaat*) and the faith part (*ibadat*). The moral part is profound ethics in all religions but the faiths are different often leading to controversies and confrontation. Our customs and social habits are so intertwined with religion that it is impossible to take any step forward to social reform without starting some religious controversy. It needs de-conditioning for which *Ummah* is not ready. Islam according to Maulana needs to be relieved of its political, historical and cultural baggage; rediscovered from its original sources and re-introduced to the modern world in its pure and pristine form in essence; but of course, in modern idiom in the light of available intellectual tools.

Whereas in matters of *ijtihad* Maulana holds views similar to Sir Sayyid, Allama Iqbal and Muhammad Abduh; he shares with Ali Mian Nadwi the idea of Individual reform and Makkan Model for Indian Muslims. Similarly, like Maulana Azad he advises Muslims to engage in useful social activities if they

want to survive in a pluralistic society. Showing many similarities with Sir Sayyid Ahmed Khan; he is one of the modern reformers who successfully negotiated medievalism to modernism through new hermeneutical framework of Islam. His exegetical vision coupled with his exposure to modern knowledge present him as one of the most important Muslim intellectuals of the modern world.

Sir Sayyid Ahmed Khan had once remarked that Islam won't be understood by west unless presented in modern idiom- and that is what Maulana has been doing successfully over the past century. Though Maulana couldn't set into motion any elaborate educational system like Sir Sayyid, he scores over the former in field of spirituality. Sir Sayyid almost ignores the mystical dimensions of human consciousness and its moral and spiritual role in the ongoing march of human civilization. The spirituality propounded, practiced and propagated by Maulana has its firm foundations in holy Quran itself. It is based on contemplation (*tadabbar* and *tafakkur*), having nothing mysterious and is democratic in nature; in contrast to the ecstasy and meditation based conventional hierarchical system of *Tasawwuf*.

Maulana, ahead of his times does have a good share of critiques. There had been controversies regarding his views for example on eschatology, blasphemy, *jihad*, political interpretation of Islam and interest of Indian Muslims. On politics he holds views different from his senior contemporaries especially Mawlana Mawdudi, and Hassan al Banna. Though he realizes and admits the place of politics in

Muslim social life, he is critical of presenting Islam as a political theory and making violent struggle to establish Muslim governments. He likens it to importance of material aspect of life and presenting it as a materialistic philosophy of life like Marxism and Socialism. It may be of interest to note that even Ali Miyan Nadwi, Manzur Noamani and *ulama of Deoband* didn't subscribe to *Jamaat's* ideology but he has been singled out for severe criticism on his stand. Recently, in 2015, Jamal al Sawaidi of UAE has come up with a detailed response on *Jama'at e Islami* and *Ikhwan ul Muslimun* labelling their blueprint as merely a 'Mirage' for Muslims.

Maulana Wahiduddin Khan makes a clear distinction between cause of Islam and that of Muslims. Muslims, according to Maulana, in fact sought consolidation and reaffirmation of Muslim culture and political dominance, making failed attempts at sociopolitical resuscitation of Muslims rather than revival of Islam. The decline of Muslims according to him was a natural outcome of their laxity in performing the prescribed role of *dais* as per Ibn Khaldun's historical phenomena.

He believes that Jihad means a peaceful struggle to propagate the word of God to whole humanity and that violence has no place in the modern world. An early history of Maulana's ancestors reveals that his great grandfather was Hassan khan a brother of Hussain khan. Interestingly enough; it is a coincidence or a genetic predisposition that Maulana has always followed the footsteps of Imam Hassan in ideology and practice, in preaching peace and pacifism. He even earned Sayyidina Imam al-*Hassan ibn Ali* Memorial Peace Award in

U.A.E. a couple of years back in recognition of his contribution to world peace, particularly promoting peace in Muslim societies.

Maulana, in situations of conflict advises Muslims to shift from existing paradigm of violent reaction to a reasoned intellectual response instead of violent activism, which is must to break the vicious circle of violence begetting violence. Education, according to Maulana is the panacea of all ailments of *ummah* and he thus exhorts Muslims to reorient their energies from battle fields to education, science, technology, welfare activities and Islamic *Dawah*.

Maulana through his presentation of Islam in modern format has relieved ummah of a great obligatory duty (*fardh kafaya*) but at the same time rendered Muslims accountable before Almighty Allah for their negligence in delivering the divine message to humanity; the job entrusted to them as a natural consequence of *Khatm- e- Nabuwwat*.

A fair analysis shows that Maulana's thought focuses on three aspects:

- External defense of Islam on ideological front;
- Internal reform of Muslims (against decadence)
- Reinterpretation and Re-application of broader principles contained in primary texts to the modern conditions through exercise of *ijtihad*.

Whereas the former is unanimously approved by all sections of Muslims; the next two aspects are frowned upon, resented or objected by Muslim leaders and *Ulama* alike.

He recommends an exclusive approach to the interpretation of Primary texts with no burden of history at the back of scholars' minds; which he believes is bound to obscure the clarity and add bias to the scholar's cache of meaning. That is purely a scientific way of thinking and a novel method in Islamic sciences. This is the point Maulana wants to bring home through his recommendation of de-conditioning in religious and political Muslim thought.

From preceding pages; it may be inferred that the ideology of Islamic *Dawah* and revival of Islam propounded by Maulana remain a source of inspiration for all reformist and modernist thinkers globally as it is not only relevant and appropriate but essentially based on firm foundations (re-application of Islamic primary texts i.e. the holy Quran and the *Sunnah* of holy Prophetﷺ.) It further follows that like Sir Sayyid Ahmed Khan; the rejection of Maulana Wahiduddin Khan by some contemporaries have in fact deprived Muslims of the fruits of their healthy criticism and positive vision pushing them further down the ladder of progress in modern history. The contemplation and reasoning advised by Maulana has been adopted by many junior contemporaries, youth and even opponents mostly without references or acknowledgements. Reverberations of Maulana's ideology are audible in society often without references.

He addresses intellect from a higher plane and those who are not actual addresses find it a bit difficult to grasp the message in right perspective. Most of critiques approach him with prejudiced minds and meet him at personal level. They fail to make a dispassionate analysis of his writings. Instead of fact-finding approach they take to fault finding.

As such despite his wonderful job of scientific theology, need and revival of *ijtihad*, Muslim reform and contributions towards making man spiritual in the age of modern materialistic life; his views on matters relating to end times, have been criticized even by his associates. Though the ethics of disagreement have not been followed by most of the critics, their view point in this regard is not without merit. An assessment of the case reveals that the basic problem lies in 'an established scientific theologian entering into realms of speculations' that was unwarranted and fraught with danger. However, it should not minimize his importance as a revivalist, reformist and modernist of great eminence, who has made significant contributions to modern Islamic thought.

Interestingly many individuals and organizations have adopted his policy of peaceful struggle and positive thinking without acknowledgement. Now it is for the succeeding generations of Muslim thinkers to stand upon his shoulders and look taller by adopting his suggestions to problems of Muslim *Ummah*.

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MUST READ BOOKS

By

MAULANA WAHIDUDDIN KHAN

- *'Mazhab aur Jadid Challenge'*
 - *Islam aur Science*
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- *Marxism Tarikh Jise Radd kar Chuki Hai*
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 - *Uniform Civil Code*
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