

**Syyid Abul Hasan Ali Nadvi  
And His Arab History Writing  
(An Analytical Study)**

**Dissertation Submitted to the Jawaharlal Nehru  
University in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements  
for the Award of Degree of Master of Philosophy**

*Submitted by*

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Date: 20<sup>th</sup> July, 2004

**DECLARATION**

I declare that the material in this Dissertation entitled "*Sayyid Abul Hasan Ali Nadvi and his Arab History Writing (An analytical study)*" submitted by me is my original research work and has not been previously submitted for any other degree of this or any other University/Institution.

  
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## INTRODUCTION

The Muslim forces from Central Asia, Iran, and Afghanistan entered the Indian sub-continent and established their rules. These people were having rich culture and tradition. Their culture and traditions flourished in India during their rules in different periods. Muslim rulers appreciated the old traditions of art, culture, scholarship and intellectualism. In course of the time, many eminent writers, poets, scholars, religious leaders musicians and artists emerge in the country. The Indian intellectuals made their efforts to present a very innovative kind of analysis and explanation of Islamic sciences. That is why we observe that the Arab writers have recognized and conceded these exceptional efforts made by Indian scholars to spread Islamic education values, prophet's traditions, Arab Islamic sciences as well as the role of Islam in changing the situations of the Arabian Peninsula.

Beside, all these efforts, Indian scholars equally paid their attention to preserving their traditions, social and cultural activities and political situations in different periods. The efforts of these scholars resulted in writing of many books on Arab Islamic history.

As far as the Arab Islamic history writing in India is concerned, we find that this topic has particularly attracted the minds of Indian Muslims. When India came under the control of Muslim rulers, Persian became the official language of the country. Then all research works were being presented in Persian with no exceptions to history. There were huge materials and some original resources of Arab-Islamic history in Persian. Urdu replaced the Persian in the second half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. From those days till our period there have been many eminent writers of Arab Islamic history. Sayyid Abul Hasan Ali Nadvi is undoubtedly one of these prominent historians who have played a significant role in the development of Islamic history writing in India. Although he has greatly contributed to the Arab-Islamic history writing but to the best of my knowledge, no specific

work has been done hitherto on this particular aspect of Sayyid Abul Hasan Ali Nadvi to highlight his efforts and evaluate his works in this field I have dared chose "Sayid Abul Hasan Ali Nadvi and his Arab History Writing: An Analytical Study" as title of my M.Phil dissertation.

I have divided this dissertation in 3 main Chapters. Every chapter comprises on some sub-chapters. The first chapter is about "Islamic History Writing in India". The Second Chapter covers "Abul Hasan Ali Nadvi: Life and Works". The third and last chapter focuses on the "Contribution of Sayyid Abul Hasan Ali Nadvi to the Arab-Islamic History Writing". Before my discussion about style, methods and principles of Sayyid Abul Hasan Ali Nadvi is historiography, I have presented a general survey of the Islamic history writing in India from second half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century till Sayyid Abul Hasan Ali Nadvi. In this regard, I have tried to show the periodical development in the style, objectives, and methods of Islamic history writing. I have also made efforts to cover all those institutions and individuals, such as Fort William College, Dilli College, Sir Syed Ahmad Khan and others who have been considered pioneers of Arab-Islamic history writing in India. I have given a brief introduction of their works in this dissertation as well.

In this context, I have specially highlighted the contribution of Maulana Shibli Nomani and Syed Sulaiman Nadvi who are the main architects of the Arab-Islamic history writing. I have comprehensively mentioned their styles approaches and methods and have compared them on the basis of their methods and principles in history writing. By this way, I have pointed out some differences in their approach and styles.

After these discussions and analyses, I have switched to Sayyid Abul Hasan Ali Nadvi, covering his life and works. There, I have given a brief introduction of his family background. I have chosen only those personalities who are directly attached with him. Beside, this, I have

mentioned key factors which have their different roles in the development of his personality along with his major academic works.

He has written books on different aspects of history. He has composed biographies, history of reforms in India and Arab countries and Islamic history of India. From all these significant works, I have selected those which contribute to the Arab-Islamic history writing. I have studied and presented his contribution in this field in light of his three major books related to the topic. These are "Ma dha Khasira al-Alam bi in Hitaatil Muslimien", Al-Sirah-Al-Nabaviyah, and "Tariekh-e- Dawat-o-Azimat", I have selected only first two parts of this book which are related to the Arab-Islamic history writing. After highlighting relevant historical features and coverage of these books, I have tried to compare his methods and his approach to the history with those of Maulana Shibli and Syed Sulaiman Nadvi to find out his place among other writers of Arab-Islamic history in India. In the last of these three major chapters I have given a conclusion, in this way my dissertation comes to an end.

I have tried every thing in my capacity to make this dissertation a valuable research work. Being a student of Arab language and literature, I have chosen English to present my works, so that I can introduced Sayyid Abul Hasan Ali Nadvi and his works, especially his works on History among non-Arabic speaking people. Because I noticed that there is no sufficient materials in English on Sayyid Abul Hasan Ali Nadvi and his works. I hope that this dissertation will pave the way for his introduction and familiarization of his thoughts among English knowing sections.

I am highly thankful to Dr. Zohurul Bari Azmi, without his invaluable guidance, the completion of this dissertation would have been a difficult task. He has been a great source of inspiration for me I am also very much thankful to all my teachers, especially Prof. S.A. Rehman, Prof. M.A. Islahi, and my beloved teacher Prof. Farhana Siddiqui of Jamia Milia Islamia, who gave me suggestion and advices in this regard.

My thanks are due to the librarian of Shibli Library at Nadva, who gave me access to the special section of Sayyid Abul Hasan Ali to collect required materials.

I am equally thankful to my numerous friends who helped me in many ways. I am especially indebted to Salman, Anis, Maulana Javed, Hafeezbaba, Sajid, Shahid, Obaid, Arif, Rashid, Nabeel Mirza, Shah Alam, Nabeel jr. who gave their valuable times during preparation of this work.

I am especially thankful to my elder brother Arafat Zafar who has always encourage me and has given some valuable suggestions and advices in preparation of this dissertation.

I must express my heartfelt thanks to my parents who have been supportive in every stage of my life. For the same I am also thank full to my brothers sisters, and all other family members.

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## **Chapter 1**

### **Islamic History Writing in India**

- 1. Development of Islamic history writing in India during 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century.**
- 2. Methods of Allama Shibli and Sayyid Sulaiman Nadvi in History writing**

**Chapter I**  
**DEVELOPMENT OF ISLAMIC HISTORY**  
**WRITING IN INDIA**  
**DURING 19<sup>TH</sup> AND EARLY 20<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY**

As it is described and widely known that history in itself is as old as the existence of human being on the earth. It is human nature that it preserves all significant-development and changes which take place in his life. This preservation of periodical changes and developments is called of history. As far as the Islamic history writing in India is concerned, it have started with the advent of Muslim rule in India but all research work were being done in Persian. The 2<sup>nd</sup> half of 18<sup>th</sup> century witnessed in revolution in this regard as we find different names of books on history about Muslim rule and different Muslim rulers across India such as we find name of "Rustam Ali Bijnauri" who wrote "story of Rohilas" and Monam Khan's "History of Deccan" and "History of India".

Although, there were many books written on this subject in Persian but these were dealing with individuals and oftenly full of praise and appreciations to get financial aid from the ruler.

This was the period when Urdu was prevailing over Persian and research works were being done and transformed into Urdu. Along with other subjects history was being composed with great research and analyses in 18<sup>th</sup> century. Through few books of Islamic history were returned in this period but a very broad foundation was laid for the works on history during this period.

19<sup>th</sup> century is considered the golden period of history writing in Urdu.<sup>1</sup> several methods and means were adopted to write history. There was no free hand to collect whatever approached and who ever

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<sup>1</sup> Darul- Musannefir Ki Tarikhi Khidmat, Ilyas Azami, p.12



provided. But historians in this era adopted some principles for a reliable and considerable history works. Writers took this subject into consideration and composed or translated hundreds of books on history. There were individual and collective efforts to develop this subject. When we talk about collective efforts we have to mention names of "Fort William College Calcutta" and "Dilli College". These two institutions played significant role in the development of history writings. After all there was Sir Syed Ahmad Khan who not only extended the tradition of history writing but established a scientific society to introduce new method of research thought and style. He also tried to attract people towards history. We can say that personalities like Maulana Shibli got influenced by his thoughts. As Maulana Shibli himself conceded the fact Specially the thing which changed the course of Shibli, was presence of history books by European scholars on modern patterns of research and analysis in Sir Syed's Library. Though Shibli was not agreed with European historians on different points but he was highly influenced by their way of expression and research methods.

To asses the works on history writing, we have to begin with the "Fort William College" which was a premier institution of its time to introduce education and learning in regional languages. Whenever we will talk about the Islamic history writing in India during 19<sup>th</sup> century we will have in mention Fort William and its contribution to the promotion of Islamic History writing in India.

### **CONTRIBUTION OF FORT WILLIAM COLLEGE TO THE HISTORY WRITING:**

The ruler of British India established Fort William College on 10/7 /1800 A.D. in Calcutta. The aim and objective of the college was to teach newcomer Britishers Urdu. There was a pressing need of some easily read and learnt books. So college authority decided to set

up a department of translation and creative writings. This department translated and composed many books on different subjects.

Here I am specifically giving brief introduction of history books came under the banner of Fort William College in 19<sup>th</sup> century.

### **(I) Intikhab e- Sultania:**

This book is written by Khalil Ali Khan Ashk in 1805 but unfortunately it could not be published due to some reasons. This book has 153 pages and its manuscripts peace is preserved in the Asiatic Society of Bengal Calcutta. This book deals with the Sultans of Delhi till the period of Shah Alam. After a brief introduction of Delhi, the writer has mentioned name of Sultan Moizuddin Shah, his arrival in India, his victory over local rulers, his system of governance, till Qutubuddin Aibek period. "Then he describes, slave dynasty along with Khliji, Tughlaq, Lodhi, Pathans and Mughals dynasties. The distinction of this book is that it is written in accordance with time and period in a sequel.<sup>1</sup> Dr. Obaida Begum writers that "Intekhab-e-Sultaniya" is a very short but compact history. Mr. Ashk has mentioned every valuable story of the period as well as he has written about traditions and rites, policies, way of governance and administrative skills of Sultan<sup>2</sup>. The merit of this book is that the author has quoted things from reliable and well-known historical references. Despite the book has been written in 19<sup>th</sup> century, the sources and references of book are well known and its style of writing is same as it should be for a history book, not a philosophical or literary style.

### **(II) Aaraish-e-Mehfil:**

It is a summary of a Persian book named "Khulasat-Al-Twarikh" of Munshi Sajan Rai. This summary was composed in 1805 by Mir Sher Ali Afsos and published in 1808 from Hindustan Press Calcutta

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<sup>1</sup> Darul Musnnefin Ki Khidmat, P. 14

<sup>2</sup> Fort William College Ki Adbi Khidmat, P. 517

with the title of Araish-e-Mehfil. This book is a detailed history of India with authentic sources.<sup>1</sup>

### **(III) TARIKH-E-SHER SHAHI:**

This is the Urdu translation of 3<sup>rd</sup> volume of the book "Tohfa-e-Akbar Shahi" of Mr. Abbas Khan Shervani. This book was written on demand of Mughal emperor Akbar. The author of the book was a contemporary of Sher Shah that is why it has great importance. The book contains every major incident from birth till death of Sher Shah. The third volume of the book was translated from Persian into Urdu by Mazhar Ali Khan Walla on demand of Captain Mount in 1805. Scholars say that there is no way of denying reliability and authenticity of the book but the way of translation is complicated and word to word translation has made it in explicable<sup>2</sup>.

### **(IV) Tarikh-e-Asam:**

This book is a comprehensive history of military mission undertaken by Umdatul Mulk Mir Mohammad Sayeed, who was a very close noble of Aurangzeb in Assam. This mission was carried in 1444 and ended with the fall of Assam under Mughal Empire. The writer Shahabuddin Talish was accompanying in the Nawab in this mission. He experienced every thing by himself and observed every valuable thing and noticed it. He has divided the book into two parts. The first one deals with causes of this military mission in the area and the second part is basically an account of political situations, social status, and way of life in the region as "Dr. Obaida Begum herself describes".

”اس سے وہاں کی آب و ہوا، پھولوں، پھلوں اور پیڑ پودوں وغیرہ کا حال معلوم ہوتا ہے۔ اس کے علاوہ طرز معاشرت، رسم و رواج اور رہن سہن کا بھی پتہ چلتا ہے۔“<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Darul Mussannefin Ki Tarikhi, Khidmat, P. 16

<sup>2</sup> Darul Musannefin Ki Tarikhi Khidmat, P.17

<sup>3</sup> Dr. Obaida Bgum: Fort William College ki Adbi Khidmat, p549

“The book mentions weather, atmosphere, fruits, flowers, society, rituals and way of living”.

We observe that in 18<sup>th</sup> century there was general trend among historians to mention wars, acts of bravery and praises for the ruler, but we find in books written in 19<sup>th</sup> century that writer have showed their interests to cover major things, such as society, life style and political situation. This trend is very much clear in “Tarikh-e-Assam” in which the author has described things with references and has discussed reasons behind every development in the ruling class of society. The real importance of the book “Tarikh-e-Assam” is that besides political history it has covered social and cultural history of Assam.

**(V) Tarikh-e-Nadiri:**

This is the Urdu translation of the book “Tarikh-e- Nadiri” basically written in Persian by Mehdi bin Mohammad Naseer. The book has been translated by one of the most prominent writers of Fort William College Mr. Sayyid Haider Bakhsh Haidri in 1908. The book covers different aspects of Nadir Shah, his rule and condition of Iran during his period. It specially has highlighted the infighting in the region and some major developments carried out by Nadir Shah in Iran.

**(VI) Iqbal Nama:**

This book is also the Urdu translation of a volume of Siyar-e-Mutaakherian by Munshi Ghulam Hussain. The translation work was done by Sayyid Bakhsh Ali Faizabadi. This book begins from Situation and condition in the period of Sirajuddaula. It also gives some informative details about situation in political circle and major incidents in battle ground. It also has words of praise about Britisher’s policies and their intellects. The book also has chapter on treason of Meer Jafar, East India’s victory over Meer Qasim, the battle

between Sirajuddaula and Britishers and peace pact between them. Najamuddin's rule on Bengal and East India Company's interference in the state of Bengal. This book is a very good history of Bengal, though there are extra appreciations for Britisher's and their rule in India. But it was natural keeping in view the fact that the book was compiled on demand of British officer. Apart from these, there are many books on history composed under the banner of Fort William College. Even if the college contributed only to the translation of book but by this way history of this era was presented and transferred to the coming generation.

At a time when the Fort William College was at its last stage and was officially abandoned in 1854, the Dilli College in Delhi flourished with its outstanding scientific and literary works. Dilli College was established as Madrasa by Nawab Gaziuddin Khan Firoz Jung Thani<sup>1</sup> in 1872. In 1925 Britishers converted this Madrasa into college to educate Indian modern subjects by Urdu Language. To teach Indians modern subjects in Urdu Language. To achieve this goal, a translation society was formed because the books on modern subjects and sciences were not available in Urdu at that time. History was considered as one of the modern subjects History that is why many books on history were written or translated by the society.

#### **Contribution of Dilli College to History Writing:**

Here I present a brief introduction of Dilli College's contribution to the promotion of history as a modern subject. First of all I will take some books written or translated on demand of college administration, and then I will discuss the contribution of the college. It is necessary to say that most of the books covering on different subjects were prepared as per college curriculum so these are not huge but fulfill what was required at that time.

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<sup>1</sup> Darul Musannefiyen Ki..... P. 24

### **(I) Tarikh Abul-Fada:**

This book is translation of 2<sup>nd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> volumes of the book written by Abul Fada. Maulvi Karimuddin has translated it into Urdu. It was published in 1847 by Ashraf Ali from a publishing house "Matabaul Uloom". There is no innovation of history. Though the translation is simple and the text shows quality of history writing<sup>1</sup>. Infact the Dilli College had aims to provide students books in their mother tongue and this is the main reason that we find a few books of history as well as on other subjects, which were translated or composed. There were some reference books of history, which were summarized or translated by some scholars of the college. I only could find a brief introduction of these books.

### **(II) Tarikh-e-Bengal:**

This book is a translation by Maulvi Subhan Bukhs, the original writer of the book is unknown.

### **(III) Tarikh-e-Agra:**

We could not get much information about this book also, the only thing about this book is that it is translation work by Maulvi Karimuddin.

### **(IV) Qisas-e-Hind:**

This book is not a translation work. It was written by Master Pyare Lal Ashob in three volumes. It covers nearly all major events occurred in India till that time. These books were composed specifically for the syllabus of the college. So, their language is very simple and easy to understand in comparison with the books of Fort William College, which were in the language of fiction and literature clearly reflects.

We know that just like Fort William College there was a special center for research and analysis in Delhi College, there were some

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<sup>1</sup> Darul Musannefien Khidmat, P. 25

personalities in that period who have played remarkable contribution in promotion of history.

### **Ram Chandra:**

One of them is master Ram Chandra, though Mr. Ram Chandra is not a writer of any specific book but his articles on history are considered much important and precious in this regard. Master Ram Chandra was the editor of a fortnightly magazine namely Fawaid Al Nazerin, and he personally was in charge of history related portion of that magazine and wrote many articles. His articles are based on Sultanat period and Mughal kings. It is said that his articles played big role to create high taste of history among people.<sup>1</sup>

### **Munshi Zakaullah:**

He was one of the eminent personalities of Dilli College and has more research work than his other contemporaries. He has books on subjects other than history to his credit. His most famous book on history is Tarikh-e-Hindustan in 14 or 15 volumes. This book is still considered important for Indian History. The most important thing about his history writing is that his language is very simple and easily understood, and above all in this book he has observed some principles of history writing.

### **REVOLT OF 1857 AND HISTORY:**

The year 1857 witnessed first serious struggle for India's independence, which was named as "Ghadar". At that time there were many writers who compiled books on this events such as Fazl-e-Haq Khairabadi's "Baghi Hindustan" is considered an important books on this topic. The most reliable and widely known important book in this regard is "Asbab Baghawat-e-Hind" by Sir Syed Ahmad Khan. This revolt against British occupation had deep impacts. Britishers made propaganda to insure Indians that they only can provide a good

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<sup>1</sup> S.R. Kidwai, Master Ram Chandar, Adabi Printing Press, Mumbai, P.71

system of governance and no body is able to do that. They also made efforts to highlight that former rulers of India were cruel brutal and oppressors.

At this crucial juncture, the inner voices of Indian intellectuals could not agree with this propaganda and raised their objections to this false propaganda by presenting many authentic books on this issue<sup>1</sup>. Hence, I am giving some example of history writing in this era. During the same period Munshi Naval Kishore, who is also the prominent historian of this period, established a publishing house Lucknow capital of Awadh. This press got eternal fame by publishing many more books on religion, sciences and history. Apart from these history books published by Naval Kishore press, he himself wrote "Twarikh Nadirul Asr" which published in 1863. The book is a details account of Nawab's of Awadh, their life style, the system of governance and the culture. This book of Munshi Naval Kishore is considered an important and valuable document on the history of Awadh.

The second important book of this period is "Twarikh Swanehat Salatin-e-Awadh". This valuable book of history is written by Sayyid Kamaluddin Haider. First time it was published by Naval Kishore press in 1879. This book also has discussed the political and cultural history of Nawabs in Awadh. This book comprises on two volumes, the second volumes has been named "Qaisarut-Tawarikh" in the 2<sup>nd</sup> addition of the book. This book is considered the most valuable book of history in Urdu<sup>2</sup>. In fact these individual efforts in the filed of history writing during the first half of 19<sup>th</sup> century paved the way for standard history writing.

### **SIR SAYED AHMED KHAN AND HIS HISTORY WRITING:**

In the same period, Sir Syed Ahmad Khan (1817-1898) paid his attention towards history writing and wrote many important books on

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<sup>1</sup> Darul Musannefien Ki Tarikhi Khidmat, P.34

<sup>2</sup> Darul Musannefien Ki Tarikhi Khidmat, P. 37



the subject. He not only promoted history writing but also gave it new dimensions and adorned it with modern thoughts, methodology and styles. He formed a scientific society to write or translate scientific or historical books. Infact, he had deep interest in history as the writer of "Mauj-e-Kausar" Shekh Mohammad Ikram points out.

”تاریخ اور مذہبی مباحث سے انھیں خاص طور پر دلچسپی تھی اور انکی اکثر مشہور کتابیں انھیں مضامین کے متعلق ہیں۔ اسلامی ہندوستان کی اہم ترین تاریخی کتب کی اشاعت اور بادشاہان دہلی کے آثار باقیہ کی یادداشت اور بقا کے لیے جو کوششیں انھوں نے کیں شاید ہی کسی اور فرد واحد سے بن آتی ہو۔ بلکہ شاید ہی کسی اور کو اس کی ضرورت کا پورا احساس ہوا ہو۔“<sup>1</sup>

“He had special interest in religious and historical discussions and most of his famous books deal with these subjects. No body could do what he has done by publishing the most important historical books of Muslim India, and for safety, security, and authentic reality of monuments of Delhi rulers even nobody had ever thought about the need to do these valuable works”.

This interest in the history remained in all stages of Sir Syed's life, though his reformative works prevailed over his interest and works on history. In spite of his busy schedule and hectic activities, his contribution to the history of Muslim India is invaluable. Besides this, Sir Syed Ahmad Khan had deep knowledge of historiography and its principles. As we see in the preface of "Almamoon" of Maulana Shibli in which Sir Syed writes

”ہمارے لائق مصنف نے اس بات کا بہت کچھ خیال رکھا ہے اور باوجود تاریخانہ مضمون ہونے کے ایسی خوبی سے اسکو ادا کیا ہے کہ عبارت بھی فصیح اور دلچسپ ہے اور تاریخانہ اصلیت بھی بدستور اپنی اصل صورت پر موجود ہے۔ جو خوبصورت ہے خوبصورت ہے جو بھونڈی ہے بھونڈی ہے۔ نہ خوبصورتی کو زیادہ خوبصورت بنایا اور نہ بھونڈے پن کو بھونڈ اور حقیقت یہی کمال تاریخ نویسی ہے“<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Shaikh Mohammad Ikram, Mauj-e-Kausar, P. 82

<sup>2</sup> Al Mamoon, Shibli Nomani, P. 3

“Our respected writer has some principles and has described the subject like history in a manner that the content is interesting and the historical fact has taken its own real place as well. The good is good and the bad is bad. He has neither extolled goodness of good nor exaggerated the negative things, in fact this is the perfection of historiography”.

These lines of Sir Syed Ahmad Khan clearly indicate that he considered the truth, balance, simplicity and seriousness and the great part of history writings. He also viewed that research; analysis and impartiality must be the essential part of this subject. Sir Syed Ahmad Khan has expressed his thoughts about history writing in his book “Tarikh Sarkashi Zila Bijnaur” where he has expressed his view on the matter He writes

”الہی مجھے توفیق دے کہ یہ تاریخ میری پوری ہو اور صحیح بات لکھنے کی ہدایت کر  
کیوں کہ طرفداری کی تاریخ لکھنا ایسی بے ایمانی کی بات ہے کہ اس کا اثر ہمیشہ  
رہتا ہے اور اس کا وبال قیامت تک مصنف کے گردن پر ہوتا ہے۔“<sup>1</sup>

“God bless me to complete this part of history and guide me to present right things because partiality in history is that defaultness which always has its impact, and the writer would be accountable responsible for all negative impacts till the last day of the world”.

Sir Syed Ahmad Khan was also adhered to the principles that historians should try to find out reasons and causes in every historical event and the historian has moral obligation to analyze important events in history keeping in view all aspects of society, and because of this specific thing he has appreciated the book “Al-

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<sup>1</sup> Sir Ahmad Khan, Tarikh Sarkashi Zila Bijnaur, Salman Academy Karachi, 1964, P. 37

Mamoon” by Shibli

”تاریخانہ واقعات لکھنے چنداں مشکل نہ تھے مگر وہ باتیں لکھنے کا اس زمانہ کے مورخوں کو بہت کم خیال تھا۔ یا انکی قدر نہیں کرتے تھے اور اس زمانے میں انھیں کی تلاش اور انھیں کی قدر کی جاتی ہے، تلاش کرنی مشکل تھی۔ مولانا اس میں پوری یا جہاں تک ممکن تھی کامیابی حاصل کی ہے۔ پہلے حصہ میں انھوں نے تاریخانہ واقعات لکھے ہیں اور نہایت خوبی و اختصار سے دکھایا ہے کہ خلافت کا سلسلہ کیوں کہ اور کیوں خاندان بنو امیہ کو برباد کر کے عباسی خاندانوں میں پہنچا اور کیا اسباب جمع ہوئے جس سے امین اس کا بھائی مقتول اور خود مامون تمام مملکت اسلامی کا مالک اعلیٰ الشریک لہ بن گیا۔“<sup>1</sup>

(“There was no difficulty to write about the historical events but things, which seldom came in minds of historians of past, and the same are being searched and have importance in present time, where only brought out and searched by Maulana Shibli and he has achieved complete or possible success in this regard. In the first volume he has showed very successfully the causes which led to the decline of Umayyad Empire and transfer of power and governance to Abbasid dynasty and what were other reasons which made Amin and then Mamoon the sole controller of power”).

Infact Sir Syed is very careful of the fundamental principles in his book on history and his style of writing is very simple and suitable for history. Thus, he has maintained balance and impartiality in his book on history alongwith research, analysis and truth.

We can observe this specialty of Sir Syed Ahmad Khan by quotation from his own book “Tarikh Serkashi Zila Bijnaur” as he says:

”اس تاریخ میں جو کچھ لکھا ہے بہت سا اس میں میری آنکھوں کا دیکھا اور بہت سا اپنے ہاتھ کا کیا ہوا ہے اور اس کے سوا جو کچھ لکھا ہے وہ نہایت تحقیقات سے اور بہت صحیح اور نہایت ہی سچ لکھا ہے۔“<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Al Mamoon, P. 7

<sup>2</sup> Tarikh Sarakashi Zila Bijnaur, P. 132

I have been either eyewitness or participant in most of the events described in this book of history, and other remaining things have come in the book only after research, and are true and reliable.

Sir Syed Ahmad Khan began this mission of writing correct and balanced history in Persian and his first book in this regard is "Jam-e-Jamm". This book presents brief introduction of 43 Mughal kings from prince Tamore to the last Mughal emperor Bahadur Shah Zafar. This is his only history book in Persian after that he concentrated on Urdu which was also in accordance with his reform works and a guidance to the changing trends of history writing in that period.

Here I am giving a brief introduction of some of his books in history.

**(I) Aasar Al-Sanadid:**

This is a very important book on history and specially on monuments and this is a primary source to study about history and monuments of 150 years of Delhi.

Sir Syed Ahmad Khan completed this book in 1847 and it was published in the same year from "Moasserul Akhbar Press" in Delhi. The book is divided in 4 chapters; the first chapter deals with 130 monuments and buildings, which were out of Delhi at that time. It includes all buildings built by Hindu or Muslim Kings. Besides it has sketches and maps of several buildings which provide authenticity to his work. The second chapter focuses Lal Qila and its inner buildings. This chapter gives us details about 32 building including their sketch and photographs. The third chapter specially covers buildings, Havelies, mosques, temples, markets, ponds, and wells which were inside the then city of Delhi. The fourth and the last chapter of the book gives brief geographical and historical conditions of Delhi. Then he describes about 120 nobles, Ulemas, saints, Doctors, Huffaz (those who have learnt holy Quran by Heart), special authors, photographers

and musicians who were contemporaries or were just seniors of Sir Syed Ahmad Khan. This book has been translated in many languages and got status of a global fame and has been published from some very famous presses of the world.

### **(II) Tarikh Sarkashi Zila Bijnaur:**

In this book Sir Syed Ahmad Khan has written all events and conditions, which occurred in connection with the first Indian uprising against the British Empire, which was named "Ghadar". He has maintained balance and impartiality in describing these events. Though this book has only one part of 1857, which was full of chaos and uncertainty, but historically it is important because it is considered one of the reliable sources of 1857's events. This book published first in 1858 from Mufasalyat Press Agra, and then Dr. Moinul Haque published with some comments and footnotes from Salman Academy Karachi.

### **(III) Asbab Baghwat-e-Hind**

This is one of the most famous books of Sir Syed Ahmad Khan and according to some writers; it is the most important book on 1857 events. Syed Ahmad Khan has proved in this book with ample evidences that that faults and misdeeds of British officers were also big reasons of behind this apprising and armed struggle. He has given sound evidence and proofs, which make Britishers also responsible for bloody events of 1857.

This book is considered a commendable research and a great work by Syed Ahmad Khan. This is also has importance to note that Syed Ahmad Khan took this topic at a time when it was impossible to write about such things and in spite of this reality, he adopted a critical approach on government's actions and policies. In this Sir Syed Ahmad Khan showed courage by highlighting some mistake on part of Britisher. There was anger eyebrows were raised against Sir

Syed but general it was accepted, and as well as some reforms were made on the basis of his criticism on officer's way of action. At first, it was published from Agra in 1859 and so far different editions have come in the market.

From the beginning to this point of discussion it is quite clear that history before Sir Syed Ahmad Khan was not a history, which was composed with its principles and basic methods. There were few books of history, which were reliable in academia. We have seen with sequence that the first Urdu book was "Qissa-wa-Ahwal-e-Ruhila". By Rustam Ali Bijnauri. The Fort William College played a significant role in this arena by translating and preparing some books of history. Then comes the role of Dilli College which only could provide some books in the shape of translation and it was aiming to produce books according to its curriculum. We have also observed in the discussion that those history books, which were translated from Persian or English into Urdu, could not get rid of impacts of these languages and a particular approach to the historiography, though the books which were prepared in Fort William College have simple and easy language but influence of the original languages are quite existent even here. The books which were written or compiled before Sir Syed Ahmad Khan could not be described as history books but they should be called as books of different events. This is Syed Ahmad Khan who laid some principles and requirements for history writing, and he is successful in his goal. He is considered the pioneer of this field. He is the only person before Maulana Shibli who has applied and observed some rules and principles in history writings in Urdu.

Although Sir Syed Ahmad Khan had great interest in history and composed many books but there are some writers, who rule-out the idea that Syed Ahmad Khan had a better understanding of history.

One of these writers is Syed Abdullah who has raised some questions about his understanding of history. He has given proof for

his particular view by stating that Syed Ahmad Khan had pursued Maulana Shibli not to write "Al-Farooq" and also has quoted some lines from his book "Tarikh-e-Bijnaur" to prove that Syed Ahmad Khan had not realised the importance and benefit of history.<sup>1</sup>

### **Maulana Shibli Nomani:**

When we talk about the Islamic history writers in India during nineteenth and early 20<sup>th</sup> century, and when we discuss the development of Islamic history i.e. history writing in India, we can never avoid the name of Maulana Shibli who is considered the pioneer of Islamic history writing. There were many books composed and translated before Maulana Shibli and there was a group of writers and intellectuals before him, who presented some valuable book on history and, always, whether it was the troubled time of 1857 or complete British control over the Indian subcontinent, books on history were written and published but as it has been mentioned earlier that all these books can be called as collection of events and nothing more because most of these books were written either under the supervision of British officials or were composed to earn goodwill and praise from the government or to get financial aid as well.

In comparison with other historians only there is Sir Syed Ahmad Khan who paid his attention towards writing reliable books of history with all its fundamentals and principles. He is successful to a an extent in his objective as has laid foundation stone in this regard. Even Shibli Nomani has personally benefited from Sir Syed Ahmad Khan thoughts and his personal library during his stay in Aligarh. Maulana Shibli was a very learned scholar and a versatile figure of his period. He was well versed in Persian, Urdu Arabic logic and other different subjects. His inclination towards history began when he associated himself with M.A.O. College Aligarh as an assistant Prof. of Arabic. Now he was in a different world. There were Sir Syed Ahmad

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<sup>1</sup> Sir Syed aur Unke Namwar Rofaqa, Syed Abdullah P.44

Khan and Prof., T. W. Arnold he got some new books on modern subjects including history. Sir Syed, his library and Prof. Arnold give different dimensions to his thoughts and ideas thus he turned towards studying Islamic history with an open mind and considering deeply on all aspects of Islamic history keeping his eyes and mind open and thinking deeply overall aspects of Islamic history, and intentions of Western writers while writing on any aspects of Islamic history. According to Maulana Sayyid Sulaiman Nadvi

”جب وہ علی گڑھ پہنچے اور سرسید کے کتب خانے میں عربی تاریخ و جغرافیہ کی وہ نادر کتابیں نظر آئیں جو یورپ یا مصر و شام قسطنطنیہ میں چھپی تھیں تو ان کی آنکھ کھل گئی اور یہیں سے تاریخ اسلام کے مطالعے کا نیا دور شروع ہوا“<sup>1</sup>

“When he arrived in Aligarh and saw rare books of Arab history and geography, published in Europe, Egypt, Syria, and Turkey, in Sir Syed’s Library he was very much impressed by it. And this is how he started new round of his of studying Islamic history”.

Although Maulana Shibli has made this presence felt in different, he was a good poet a well-known and widely read writer and a master of Persian literature. He also got fame and celebrity as a great scholar of Islamic history. But his real field of work and interest was history as we see;

”علامہ شبللی کو اگرچہ فطرت نے گونا گوں اوصاف سے متصف کیا تھا جس کی وجہ سے وہ علوم اسلامیہ کے منفرد عالم و محقق ہوئے۔ لیکن درحقیقت ان کا اصل میدان فن تاریخ تھا۔“<sup>2</sup>

“Though the nature had bestowed him different skills and that’s why he was considered the scholar and researcher of the Islamic sciences, but in fact his real filed was history”.

<sup>1</sup> Syed Sulaiman Nadvi, Hayat-e-Shibli, P. 136

<sup>2</sup> Hyat-e-Shibli, Syed Sulaiman Nadvi, P. 86



When he "Shibli" arrived in Aligarh and started a different and new style of writings, then history became the main subject of his research and analysis and this inclination towards history especially Islamic history remained with him till the last breathe of his life. Actually he was intended to write a comprehensive and complete history of Islam. But death did not spare more time to realise his dream of a clean and standard Islamic history, a history without suspicion biasedness research, false propaganda, and confusion. He composed different books and wrote many articles on historical topic, which are considered milestones in Islamic and Muhgal Indian history. But his first and most important work that distinguishes him with other historians of that period is that he was the first, who made some principles parameters and basic rules for history writings in Urdu. This thing made him the most prominent among all the history writers in Urdu. In fact this was the reason why the famous writer and critic "Mehdi Ifadi" has dubbed him as the first history teacher in the country.<sup>1</sup>

#### **REASONS OF HIS CONCENTRATIONS ON ISLAMIC HISTORY:**

Maulana Shibli Nomani concentrated on Islamic history and studied it with great earnestness. After going through the history books of contemporary historians, Maulana Shibli sensed that there were lies, suspicions, propoganda and biasedness in most of the books written by European writers. Then he decided that there is no better service to Islam these days than giving answer to these, base-less things in the same way it has surfaced. It is well known that in 18<sup>th</sup> century, Europeans specially used history as a tool to gain their political objectives. They were of view that history is the important part of scientific research. They decided to teach history as compulsory subject in their curriculum because they wanted their political objective to be served by putting some biased thoughts and their

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<sup>1</sup> Ilyas Azmi, Darul Musannefien Ki Tariekh Khidmat, P. 49

ideology and agenda to influences the minds of their new generation generally and the people of their colonies specially.<sup>1</sup>

1. Their first objective of this kind of history was to influence the mind and thoughts of people in their colonies. When Muslim countries fell to Western armies and Europe occupied most of Islamic kingdoms, the Western rulers strategically adopted history as an tool to make people of Islamic countries believe that their rulers were too bad to be mentioned and were deserving to what they got.
2. In countries where, Europeans were rulers and Muslims were ruled by, the European writers and historians created some false propaganda to prove their ability and their scientific development. They also tried to present Muslim rulers as uncultured, oppressors and barbaric by targeting Islamic sciences, arts and cultures Muslim rulers, even they criticised Prophet Mohammad, and to bring evidences against these things they opted every kind of falsification, forgeries and misleading researches.
3. The third reason which attracted him the most was that new Muslim generation will ignore its religion, its history and their former Muslim rulers and naturally there will be sentiments of hate and this regard in the hearts of Muslims against their won glorious and proudable history. Some oreintalist were of view that by this way their national and religious pride will not sustain this setback and they would be compelled to forget it.<sup>2</sup>

These three were the main reasons which made the commitment of Maulana Shibli Nomani stronger to his mission of thwarting these baseless allegations and downing all fingers of accusation which were

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<sup>1</sup> Darul Musannefien Ki Tariekhhi Khidmat, P. 51

<sup>2</sup> Darul Musannefien Ki Tarikhi Khidmat, Ilyas Azami, p.52

raised against famous Islamic personalities and even against the Prophet. He is considered the pioneer of this particular field. He is the first person who answered Europeans in their own language. In this regard Maulana Sayyid Sulaiman Nadvi writes.

”ایسے ہوشمند حریفوں کے لئے ساری دنیائے اسلام میں جو شیر دل اسلام کی صف میں سب سے پہلے نکلا وہ مولانا شبلی ہی تھے جنہوں نے ان ہی کے طریقے سے انہیں کے اسلوب پر ان کو جواب دینا شروع کیا اور بتایا کہ اسلام کے فیض و برکت کی فرح بخش ہواؤں نے دنیا کے علم و تمدن کی بہاروں کو کیسے دوبالا کیا اور یونانیوں، ایرانیوں اور ہندوستانیوں کے مردہ علوم میں کیوں کراپنی محنتوں اور تحقیقوں سے جان ڈال دی۔“<sup>1</sup>

“For these clever opponents the lion hearted man who came out first in the whole Islamic world, was Maulana Shibli. Who gave them befitting answers in their own styles and language and informed them that how Islam has contributed in promotion of society, culture, and education of the worlds, and how Islam gave new lease of life to the dead sciences and arts of Indian, Iranians and Greeks”.

#### **OBJECTIVES OF MAULANA SHIBLI:**

When Maulana Shibli decided to write an authentic and clean Islamic history, it was a very decisive period because Islamic history and other Islamic sciences were confined to Persian and Arabic. Although these two languages were also our own languages but now they had lost their importance and the language which replace them, was a language of masses, and was near-about empty of these stuff. So Shibli thought that now Urdu should be filled with these materials<sup>2</sup>.

Maulana Shibli was of view that Urdu has become our national language replacing Arabic and Persian but still it is deprived of its right of new official language it is because of Ulema's negligence. They

<sup>1</sup> Syed Sulaiman Nadvi, Hayat-e-Shibli, P. 25

<sup>2</sup> Al-Mamoon, P. 7

had great stuff of history but they did not show interest in Urdu even they disliked to write letters in Urdu. Maulana Shibli had also sensed that new generation has desire and ambition to promote Urdu and evolve it to the height of other developed languages. There was a wave of writing and composing books in Urdu in the country only because of new generation's efforts and struggles. But the new generation did not have the required knowledge of Arabic, so the real sources of history could not come before them and they were compelled to read stories and fictions and not real history. This was the prime objective of Shibli. <sup>1</sup>

It was also one of his main objectives that his history should be complete answer in the same way and style to those who have made allegation and tried to distort face of Islam by accusations and suspicions on principles of Islam, its belief, Islamic arts and sciences, Islamic culture, Muslim rulers and different illogical allegation against Prophet Mohammad. So, Shibli was committed, to pull down evils of research and analysis from those allegations against Islam, and to highlight their mentality and bad intentions behind these accusations. It was also in his plan to inform the new young Muslim generation which was crazy to every and good things from Europe, that their past was shining, their history is glorious and full of commendable and high profile works and their forefathers have played key and unforgettable role in the development of culture, arts and sciences.

After 1857, when the rebellion was crushed by the British government, and Muslims were considered the main force behind the same, the curse of the British government fell on Muslims. Many were beheaded, hung from trees and punished severely. These all things had made them inferior to others and they considered themselves low against other citizens of India. So it was also one of his main

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<sup>1</sup> Al-Mamoon, P. 8

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objectives that Muslim's morale should be boosted by presenting their glorious past in the shape of history.

On the other front, British rulers were propagating their own agenda by rewriting history in a way that could create rifts and differences between Hindu and Muslim, and which could make a united struggle impossible against the British rulers. They made forged allegations against Muslim rulers specially Aurangzeb to achieve their goal. Maulana Shibli was adhered to defend any attack on the communal harmony of India.

### **SHIBLI'S PLAN FOR HISTORY WRITING:**

When Maulana Shibli decided to write a standard history of Islam, Muslim rulers, Islamic culture and biography of Prophet Mohammad (P.B.U.H.) there was a compact and complete plan. He preferred in his plan to write a detailed and comprehensive history of Islamic governments. But when Maulana analyzed the lengths and depth of this plan he concluded that it is not possible then he agreed to write only the history of Abbasids, and at a time when he was writing about the Abbasid caliph Motasim Billah, he felt that this plan also would take much time. He once more changed his view and confined his plan only to famous Islamic rulers<sup>1</sup>. He himself mentions!

”ایک مدت سے میرا ارادہ تھا کہ اسلامی حکومتوں کی نہایت مفصل اور بسیط تاریخ لکھوں، مشکل یہ تھی کہ نہ میں تمام خاندان کا استقصا کر سکتا تھا نہ کسی خاص سلسلے کے انتخاب کی مجھ کو کوئی وجہ مرع ملتی تھی آخر میں نے یہ فیصلہ کیا کہ رائل ہیروز آف اسلام یعنی نامور فرمانروایان اسلام کا ایک سلسلہ لکھوں، جس کا طریقہ یہ ہوا کہ اسلام میں اب تک خلافت و سلطنت کے جتنے سلسلے قائم ہوئے ان میں سے صرف وہ نامور انتخاب کر لیے جائیں جو اپنے طبقے میں عظمت حکومت کے اعتبار سے اپنا ہم سر نہ رکھتے ہوں اور ان کے حالات اس ترتیب سے لکھے جائیں کہ تاریخ کے ساتھائف کا مذاق بھی موجود رہے۔“<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Darul Musannefien Ki Tarikh Khidmat, p.56

<sup>2</sup> Al Mamoon P. 8

“From a long time I had intention to write a detailed and comprehensive history of Islamic governments. But the problem was that I was unable to cover all dynasties and there was no logic to opt any special dynasty. At last I came to a conclusion that I should opt only royal Hero's of Islam. I adopted a method that I will choose only those ruler of so far Islamic dynasties who were second to none in their status and good governance I also decided to write their biographies in a style that makes history touching the taste of life.”

Maulana Shibli had a list of some very famous Muslim rulers. This list includes names of second Caliph Umer Al Farooq, Walid bin Abdul Malik from Umayyad dynasty, Mamoon al-Rasheed from Abbasids, Abdul-Rehman Nasir of Spanish Umayyad rulers, Saifuddaulah from Hamdan, Malik Shah from Saljuq Nooruddin of Noorya dynasty, from Ayyubia dynasty he choose Salahuddin Ayyubi, and from Mowahhedin of Andlus “spain” and Turk of Rome, he selected Yaqub-bin-Yusuf and Sulaiman Azam respectively.<sup>1</sup>

Apart from governments and rulers, Maulana Shibli wanted to present biographies and conditions of intellectuals and writers along with biography of Heroes of Islam, as preface of Sirat-un-Noman indicates to it.

”اول اول جب مجھ کو ”اس نامور فرما زوایان اسلام“ کا خیال پیدا ہوا تو نہایت وسیع بنیاد پر ہوا۔ جس طرح میں نے خلافت و سلطنت کے مختلف خاندانوں سے ہیروز انتخاب کیے۔ ارادہ تھا کہ اسی طرح علوم و فنون کے جدا جدا خاندان قائم کیے جائیں اور جو لوگ ان خاص خاص فنون میں اپنا نظیر نہیں رکھتے تھے ان کو اس سلسلے کا ہیروز قرار دیا جائے مگر اتنا بڑا کام تھا میرے بس کا نہ تھا۔ مجبوراً حیثیت حکومت کی قید لگا کر میں نے اس خیال کو بہت کچھ محدود کر دیا۔ بلکہ سلسلہ حکومت سے بہت سے خاندان چھوڑ دیئے۔ تاہم وہ خیال دل سے نہ گیا کہ فرصت ہو تو اہل کمال کا دربار بھی سجایا جائے کہ  
السیف، القلم، تو امان۔<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Al-Mamoon p-8

<sup>2</sup> 29 Maulana Shibli Noman, Seerat-Al-Noman P-7

“First of all when I thought about writing about famous Muslim rulers, I thought of a broad based plan. I intended to divide Muslim intellectuals and writers in different dynasties and then choose from these dynasties, those who have no match in their special fields as I did in case of “Royal Heroes of Islam”. But I felt myself unable to do this huge and wide assignment and confined myself to those who were associated with the government. Moreover, I limited this option also and left so many royal families. After all I always felt that if luck provided me a chance, I shall write about the heroes of arts and luminaries in the fields of arts and sciences and towering personalities because, where there is sword and pen, there is peace.”

Maulana Shibli was highly charged and had a strong will about his plan that if the life gave him a chance and situation remained normal and conducive, he must complete his plan. But alas! Neither the life spared time for him nor the situations remained calm and supportive, the result was clear both channels of history left out incomplete. He only could write “Al-Mamoon” and “Al-Farooque” from his plan of “Royal Heroes of Islam” and “Sirat-Al-Noman” “Al Ghazali” and Swaneh Maulan Room from the other channel of his plan of “Heroes of Islam”. He also wrote some articles in “Ibne-Rushd” and “Ibn-e-Taymia”. Though, he could not complete his plan of Royal Heroes and heroes of Islam. But he presented ‘a first of its kind’ biography of Prophet Mohammad, which is considered the magnum opus of Maulana Shibli Nomani.

## **THEORY AND METHODS OF MAULANA SHIBLI**

Maulana Shibli was pioneer of Islamic history writing in India. He was the first person who made some principles and methods for history writing. Nobody before him except Sif Syed Ahmad Khan was committed to any method or principle in history writing; earlier history books were merely collection of events, stories of war, triumph and defeat. Historians used history writing as tool to earn money and not to give historical facts. But Maulana Shibli adopted a very modern and scientific methods in history writing. He learned these modern methods and style by critically studying the books of European historians specially those orientalist, who had strongly criticised the Prophet Mohammad. Like an expert of Islamic history, Maulana Shibli decided to respond Europeans in their own language and style. He chooses a moderate way to achieve his target. If he was committed to expose their lies, misinterpretations and biasedness against Islam and Muslims, on the other hand he was very keen to adhere the modern principles of history writing. His moderateness becomes very clear when he extracts his principles and methods by criticising both Muslim and European historians. Muslim historian neglected logic, reasons and causes behind any historical event. They have simply mentioned events, without giving reasons that why it occurred. On the other hand European historians, as he said that they are over in their logics and rational approach. They collect all rumors and cooked stories from the market about any event and then select few of it, which suit most to their aims and objectives. After some times these rumors become interesting and controversial historical facts. In his theory of history, Maulana Shibli has benefited from both European and Muslim historians. In this regard Sayed Abdullah says



”وہ صرف مورخ ہی نہ تھے بلکہ ایک خاص فلسفہ تاریخ کے واضع و نقاد بھی تھے۔ انھوں نے مغرب اور مشرق کے تاریخی سرمائے پر جو تنقید کی ہے وہ بلاشائبہ مبالغہ اصول تاریخ کے لئے ایک فاضلانہ اور عالمانہ دستور اساسی کا حکم رکھتا ہے۔“<sup>1</sup>

He was not only an historian but also founder of a particular trend in history writing and its critic. His criticism, on the existing historical materials in the East and west, is in itself a very valuable basic principle of method of history writing.

About his philosophy of history the noted historian of modern period Mr. Khaliq Ahmad Nizami writes”

”فمن تاریخ نویسی میں مولانا شبلی کا سب سے عظیم الشان کارنامہ یہ ہے کہ انھوں نے عربی ایرانی اور مغربی نظریہ ہائے تاریخ کو ایک فکری وحدت میں ڈھال کر اس طرح پیش کیا کہ اس میں عربوں کی حقیقت نگاری، ایرانیوں کا ذوق اور مغرب کا رند مزہ تحقیق جمع ہو گیا۔“<sup>2</sup>

“Maulana Shibli’s great contribution to the historiography is that he has shaped Arab, Iranian, and Western theories of history in such a unit that has realism of Arab, literary aspects of Iranians and research style of Western writers.”

His philosophy of history is based on some basic principles, which according to him must be applied while writing on any aspects of history. He has explained his philosophy in all his history related books and articles. That’s why there is a general view that Shibli has written Islamic history in modern style, and even some persons have their views that “The biography of the Prophet” by Shibli is the first of its kind and has no match at least in India.

It was his modern style open mind approach that created some confusion in the mind of some persons, who tried to stop him from

<sup>1</sup> Sayed Abdullah: Sir Syed Aur Unke Namwar Rufaqa, (educational book house), p137

<sup>2</sup> Maarif, Montly Magazine, Darul Musannefien, March 1986, p188

writing the biography of the Prophet and even they issued fatwa against him. They also sent written complaints to "Begum of Bhopal" to stop financial aid for this mission. But Shibli never bowed down against these pressures and carried out his mission of a modern, clean, widely acceptable and just biography of the Prophet. He neither exaggerated nor downgraded any thing in this process. He argued all kinds of blames leveled by Europeans on Prophet Mohammad and proved with concrete evidences and historical facts that their history is biased, and they have written all those things to achieve their pre decided objectives. Maulana Shibli never wrote any thing without logic or avoiding methods and standard of modern historiography. After going through style and ways of earlier Muslim historians and deeply observing methods and principles of Europeans, he adopted some methods and principles, which are required for standard historiography.

His basic methods are as follows:

- I. It is necessary for historian, who is writing history of an era, that he should write conditions and events of that particular period and should give complete information of life, ethics, rituals religions and all other things. They should not be confined to political situations, defeat and victory, battlefronts and infightings.
- II. The second obligation of an historian is that he should search a chain of reason and its impact. Because without reasons no event can appear before readers with its real face. Every event of history has to be associated with different events in the past. Fro example it is necessary to know how some men of Arabian Desert have conquered the greatest governments of the time. I.e. Persian and Roman empires and why Umayyad dynasty took over control of government in the presence of Abbasids and Sadat families.

- III. The third method of historiography according to Maulana Shibli is that to continue the channel of reason and causes in event, a historian has to be dependent on guesses and his personal choice. No historian can avoid this method, while writing on any issue related to history. At this stage he will have to be careful that the real story and his own guess should not be intermingled to a point that other persons could not clarify what is real and what is based on the personal guess and analysis of historians. In this regard Maulana Shibli has written in the preface of "Sirat Al-Nabi" (Biography of Prophet) that due to excessive cautionary measures Muslim historians have only described that Prophet Mohammad sent Islamic armies here and there and avoided causes and reasons behind the deployment of forces in different regions. This minor neglect has caused negative feeling among masses that Islam has spread with the might of sword and not by its high values and appealing principles and it allows to attack any non-Muslim community or country only because they are not Muslim.<sup>1</sup>
- IV. Any historical event described by any historian should be true and complete. There should be no point of suspicion. The European historians have no permanent methods to check the reality and truth of historical facts. But Muslim historians have a very tested pattern to check and test the reality of any event in the past and that is called "Rivayat" and "Dirayat"
- V. Maulana Shibli has made this method of check and balance necessary for historians while writing on any issue related to history.<sup>2</sup>
- VI. Any thing related to any event of history should be quoted from a person who was participant or has been an eyewitness of the

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<sup>1</sup> Shibli Nomani: Sirat Al-Nabi, vol I, p39

<sup>2</sup> Ilyas Azmi: Darul Musannefien ki Taarikhi Khidmaat, p84

event if not so then all narrators of the event should be mentioned in sequence. It is also necessary that there should be a deep observation on their habits, way of life, status of mentality and their reliability.

Maulana Shibli has described this method as the first principle of Islamic historiography. This method of check and balance was made by Muslim scholars to check the standard of Prophet's traditions and its narrators. Muslim historians used this method in their history writings and were very cautious about every thing related to the subject of history<sup>1</sup>.

Different events have links with different professions and arts. So it is necessary for a historian that he should be well versed in arts or profession related to the event if he writes about a war he should be aware of every aspects of war, and for administrative affairs he should have sufficient knowledge of administrative system. As he says in "Al-Farooq"

”مورخ اگر ان تمام امور کا ماہر ہو تو واقعات کو علمی حیثیت دیکھ سکتا ہے ورنہ اس کی نظر اس قسم کی سطحی ہوگی جیسا کہ ایک آدمی کی ہوتی ہے۔“<sup>2</sup>

“If the historian is expert of these affairs he can see the event scientifically otherwise his thought would be as usual as of common man”

Maulana Shibli has quoted a Prof. of history Mr. Reneke as saying:

”اس نے تاریخ میں شاعری سے کام نہیں لیا وہ نہ ملک کا ہمدرد بنا نہ مذہب اور قوم کا طرفدار ہوا۔ کسی واقعہ کے بیان کرنے میں مطلق پتہ نہیں چلتا کہ وہ کن باتوں سے خوش ہوتا ہے اور اس کا ذاتی اعتقاد کیا ہے۔“<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Ilyas Azmi: Darul Musannefien ki Taarikhi Khidmaat, p85

<sup>2</sup> Shibli Nomani: Al Farooq, vol I, p11

<sup>3</sup> Ilyas Azmi: Darul Musannefien ki Taarikhi Khidmaat, p88

“He neither used poetry nor favoured the country he never became partial to the religion and nation, nobody can find out, which things make him glad or what is his personal belief while criticising on any aspects of history.”

This quotation by Shibli indicates that Maulana was of views that an historian should not be influenced by poetry or literary style of writings. Nationalism, sorrow, happiness and personal belief should not have its impact on history writings. All this mean that Maulana was considering impartiality as integral part of historiography.

Events of past should be seen in prospects of those days. Nobody should see erstwhile Asian governments in comparison with the contemporary governments. By this way we can't find a just conclusion of any event....<sup>1</sup>

Maulana Shibli has applied all these methods and principles in his biography of Prophet “Sirat al Nabi” if some where he has adopted principles and methods of Western historians, on the other hand he has appreciated Muslims historians on their precautionary measures to prevent any wrong thing in the biographies. He has made good efforts to present a very just and balanced biography of Prophet Mohammad. He planned to write a biography of Prophet Mohammad, which according to him would be like a fact finding document and ultimately a bold answer to forgeries and fabricated stories of European historians. To achieve his objective he made some principles collected materials and made a compact plan. He also made some very thorough research and minutely studied the allegations of Europeans on the Prophet, Caliphs and Muslim rulers and tested them on method of check and balance and exposed their targets and objectives.

In spite of all these things there is some criticism by some scholars saying that though Maulana Shibli has presented a very good

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<sup>1</sup> Ilyas Azmi: Darul Musannefien ki Taarikhi Khidmaat, p88

and reliable book on “Sirat”, but there are some weak points in his book. Some have their views that despite all these principles and methods, Maulana Shibli has also avoided some of it while quoting traditions of Prophet to prove any point. At this place he has neglected his own principles that for “Sirat” writing.

Some critics have said that at some places in “Sirat” Maulana is impressed by Western writers and has become very defensive for example Dr. Sayed Abdullah writes.

”سب سے پہلے تو یہ محسوس ہوتا ہے کہ اپنے بار بار کے دعوے کے باوجود بہت سے مقامات پر شیبلی کی رائے معذرت خواہانہ و مدافعانہ ہے، شیبلی نے مورخین یورپ کے اعتراضات سے دب کر آنحضرتؐ کے غزوات کے سلسلے میں ضرورت سے کچھ زیادہ معذرت کا لہجہ اختیار کیا ہے اسی طرح غلامی اور تعدد ازواج کے سلسلے کے تجزیے میں بہت کچھ دبے دبے نظر آتے ہیں اور ہر چند کہ وہ پیغمبر کی سوانح عمری لکھ رہے ہیں بار بار مغربی نقادوں کی اس رائے سے مرعوب ہو کر چلتے ہیں کہ حضور کا ہر قول و فعل عام بشریت کے مطابق تھا، حالانکہ حضور عام بشر نہ تھے خاص بشر تھے۔“<sup>1</sup>

First of all I felt that despite his repeated claims, Shibli has chosen defensive and apologetic views at many places. He has adopted more than required apologetic stand on war in Prophet Era “Ghadhwat”. In the same way, he is very cautious while analysing issues of slavery and polygamy. Although, he is writing biography of Prophet, he is constantly impressed by the views of Western critics that every word and work of the Prophet is matched with general human being. But the fact is that the Prophet was not usual human being but he was a special one.

As far as his contribution to the Indian Islamic history is concerned, he has written some book and many valuable articles related to Muslims rulers in India like “Aurangzeb Alamgir per Aek Nazar”. In this book Maulana Shibli has defended Aurangzeb and

<sup>1</sup> Fikr-o-Nazar, Islamabad, 1976, p831

proved by some very authentic sources and references that allegations against him are baseless and have no reality. Maulana Shibli has given some logics while defending Aurangzeb on his policy to ban fairs and melas, saying that Melas and fairs were causing security problems. Besides, Aurangzeb was also not interested in this thing, that's why he banned them as he had banned Muharram processions in some places.

But only administrative problems and fair of right and clashes cannot be the justification to ban any cultural and religious activity. It is up to the ruler to maintain law and order situation. Any way it is not a solution to ban an activity, which is attached with the sentiments of others.

It seems that while writing on some aspects of Indian Islamic history the main and primary objective of Maulana Shibli was to expose European writer's hidden agenda.

### **Sayyid Sulaiman Nadvi as a Historian:**

Maulana Sayyid Sulaiman Nadvi was a sincere and obedient Pupil of Maulana Shibli, his real successor, a learned scholar and a great historian of Urdu. He got the real taste of history from his teacher Maulana Shibli. The hard working and strong had created another kind of spirit and willingness in Maulana Sayyid Sulaiman Nadvi. His personality was a collection of different traits and virtues. He was writer, poet, biographer, researcher, critic, educationist, commentator of Quran, and above all he was the writer of biography of Prophet Mohammad. He was expert of these subjects. Due to his deep knowledge and scientific approach to these subjects, Allama Iqbal described him as a teacher of every subject and a celebrated of Islamic sciences.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Mashaher Ke Khatoor Ziaduddin Islahi , P. 98

Sayyid Sulaiman Nadvi was specially associated with the subject of history. He was of views that history is the spirit of nations and country. He compiled different books and wrote hundreds of articles on history related issues. He had a plan to complete a series of Indian history. He oftenly criticised the wrong and distorted face of history and gave heartfelt advices to historians. Whenever he noticed wrong and misleading interpretations of Islamic or Indian history, Sayyid Sulaiman Nadvi prepared himself to rebuff these kinds of things, usually brought out by orientalist. He highlighted different aspects of Islamic arts and sciences and Islamic civilization. This is the great contribution by Sayyid Sulaiman Nadvi through his history writing skill to the Islamic history.<sup>1</sup>

In 1914, when Maulana Shibli was on his bed taking last breath of his life, he called Sayyid Sulaiman Nadvi by telegram. When he arrived the death was nearer to Shibli than life. In this condition, Maulana Shibli expressed his last will to him to complete his unfinished work of Prophet's biography. Shibli left this mortal world on 18<sup>th</sup> November 1914. After his death, Maulana Hameeduddin Farahi and Sayyid Sulaiman Nadvi formed a committee; named "Ikhwan-al-Safa" to complete all unfinished works of Shibli. Sayyid Sulaiman Nadvi was selected as head of this committee. He accepted this assignment and left the Professorship of Pune College and arrived in Azamgarh again with some great commitments. He realised the dream of his teacher Maulana Shibli about "Darul Musannefien" and developed it in a shape that it was considered as one of the most famous centre of research and analysis in India.

Sayyid Sulaiman Nadvi remained associated with Darul Musannefien for 32 years. Here he wrote more than two dozen books on history, literature, and some highly research articles. He invited some of his qualified colleagues and pupils of Maulana Shibli and

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<sup>1</sup> Ilyas Azmi: Darul Musannefien ki Taarikhi Khidmaat, p179



shaped "Darul Musannefien" as great centre of research and analysis during his tenure as a director of Darul Musannefien, it got the fame of a great institution and research centre of Islamic history, civilization and Islamic arts and sciences across the world<sup>1</sup>. In accordance with Shibli's desire, Sayyid Sulaiman Nadvi brought out a magazine namely "Maarif" an organ of Darul Musannefien.

One of many objectives of this magazine was to compose the history of Islamic arts and sciences, and to present it with modern style and standard (1) that is why Sayyid Sulaiman Nadvi himself wrote many articles on different aspects of Islamic and Indian History and culture. He also countered lies and forgeries of orientalist.

#### **His Approach to the Indian History:**

It was a constant effort by the British government in India to justify their colonial establishment as a real rule, God gifted government and a just and unquestionable system of governance. This was the real reason why they presented previous Muslim governments and its rulers as oppressors barbaric and uncivilized. They also fabricated some stories in line with their agenda where they tried to highlight Muslim rulers as killers of Hindus and breakers of idols. This propaganda was only to create hate and anger in the particular community against Muslim rulers as well as the community, and to get an ultimate result in favour of British rule and also to create a sense in Hindus, that British rule is like blessing of God for them against the Muslims oppressions, killing and honour killings. On the other side, they were also trying to create a rift between Hindus and Muslims so they could not be united against the British government.

The British government especially included history in school curriculum and incorporated these perverted views and thoughts in the course. This particular type of history was severely damaging the

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<sup>1</sup> Darul Musannefien Ki Khidmat,

communal harmony of the country. Muslim students felt shame and a sense of guilt after reading these stories while Hindus were getting a sense of hate and hatred against Muslim rulers. Sayyid Sulaiman Nadvi sensed the dangerous impact of this British ploy, as he mentioned it in the monthly magazine "Maarif" of Darul Musannefien.

”سرکاری مدارس میں تاریخ ہند کی تعلیم کا اضافہ بظاہر علم کے اضافہ کے لئے ہے مگر درحقیقت جیسا کہ معارف میں بار بار کہا گیا ہے کہ یہ اقدام ہند کے قدیم اختلافات و نزاعات کے اضافہ کے لئے کیا گیا ہے۔ حالانکہ ہندوستان کو آگے چلنا ہے تو پیچھے مڑ کر نہیں دیکھنا چاہئے آج اس بحث سے کہ سلطان محمود کا حملہ ہندوستان پر جائز تھا یا ناجائز شہاب الدین غوری نے کتنے مندر عارت کیے اور عالمگیر نے ہندوؤں پر کیا کیا ظلم کیے۔ سوراخ کی منزل میں ایک قدم آگے نہیں بڑھ سکتا۔ ہند کی کتابوں میں ڈھونڈ ڈھونڈ کر ایسی ہی باتیں جمع کی جاتی ہیں جس سے ان دونوں قوموں کے جذبات میں مزید اشتعال پیدا ہو اور اس کا اتفاق آئندہ مشکل سے بڑھ کر محال ہو جائے۔ حالاں کہ اس ملک کی تاریخ میں ایسے واقعات کی کمی نہیں جن کے پڑھنے سے ان دونوں قوموں کے درمیان اختلاف و محبت کے جذبات پیدا ہوں۔“<sup>1</sup>

The inclusion of history as a subject in the curriculum of government school curriculum seems to be an extension of the school syllabus. But infact as it has been mentioned again and again in 'Maarif' that this addition is only a ploy to raise old controversies and differences between the different communities of India..... if India wants to march forward, it should not see behind today. The discussion, on legality and illegality of invasion of Sultan Mohmood on India or how many temples were destroyed by Sultan Shahabuddin Ghauri or Aurangzeb's treatment with Hindus can not take us forward towards independence. Will our co-nationals understand this point? The books on Indian History, which are being taught in universities, are filed with every possible things, which only can increase more tension between Hindus and Muslims and the communal harmony could become larger than a problem. Though there is no dearth of

<sup>1</sup> Ilyas Azmi: Darul Musannefien ki Taarikhi Khidmaat, p181

such stories in the history of this country, which can create sense of love and harmony between the two communities.

There were some Hindu historians as Jadu Nath Sarkar, who adopted the line of Britishers to distort the history and tried to keep his voices with Western writers. They presented Britisher's misleading and distorted history with some more additions. Sayyid Sulaiman Nadvi gave due response to such things and advised these historians to write correct and authentic history. He also tried to inform them that Western historians have intentionally added some baseless things to the Indian history to pursue their political agenda. If we ignore it, this only will create hate, anger and enmity between Hindus and Muslims and then they cannot carry out a successful effort for the independence of their country.

At that time there were not only some Hindu historians but some Muslim historians also were expressing their views in the same line of Western writers. There was a Muslim historian Dr. Shafat Ahmad Khan, who composed some books of history for school curriculum and his views were matching with that expressed by European historians. Muslim's sentiments were hurt across India over this act of a Muslim. Sayyid Sulaiman Nadvi criticised that act and advised Muslim historians to follow those Hindu historians instead of Europeans, who present their own history filling some new colours in every new additions of their books and they do not shy to make their history dignified and glorious. So why should we feel shame on our weak points<sup>1</sup>.

Sayyid Sulaiman Nadvi not only criticised and warned against the impacts of false history writings and mal practices in this direction but always tried to give befitting response to the forgeries and

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<sup>1</sup> Monthly, Maarif, September, 1930

falsifications of European historians through Darul Musannefien's monthly organ Maarif.

Maulana Shah Moinuddin Nadvi writes in his book

”ہندو مسلمانوں میں اختلاف پیدا کرنے کے لئے انگریزوں نے ہندوستان کی تاریخ میں جو زہر بھرا تھا اس کی تصحیح و اصلاح ہندوستان کے ہی خواہ مورخین کے ہمیشہ پیش نظر رہی۔ سید صاحب کا تو یہ خاص موضوع تھا وہ خود بھی اس پر لکھتے رہتے تھے اور دوسرے مورخین کو بھی توجہ دلاتے رہتے تھے۔“<sup>1</sup>

“The honest Indian historians always did their best to flush out the poison filled in the Indian history by Europeans. Sayyid Sulaiman Nadvi was specialist of this topic. He himself used to write on this issue and encouraged others towards these important issues.”

Due to these reasons it was strongly felt among the Muslim intellectuals of India that correct and impartial history of India should be composed. The first person, who took initiative in this regard, was Prof. Abdul Qadir from Pune. He wrote to Sayyid Sulaiman stressing the need to this important work. He also suggested that a committee should be formed to check false and fabricated additions in Indian history. (1) Sayyid Sulaiman Nadvi appreciated the initiative taken by Dr. Abdul Qadir and commented over this in an issue of monthly “Maarif” which is as follows.

”اسمیں کوئی شک نہیں کہ ہندوستان کی ایک محقق تاریخ لکھنا آج مسلمانوں کا سب سے بڑا فرض ہے دارالمصنفین اپنے مقدر بھر اس کے لئے سب کچھ کرنے کو تیار ہے۔ لیکن ضرورت ہے کہ دوسرے دردمند اہل علم بھی ہمارے کاموں میں حصہ لیں اور اپنی سعی و تحقیق سے ممنون فرمائیں۔ ہمارے نزدیک یہ مناسب ہے کہ تاریخ ہند کے مختلف حصے کر دیے جائیں اور ایک ایک حصہ ایک ایک ایسے شخص کو دیا جائے جس نے اس دور تاریخی پر کچھ تلاش و جستجو کی ہے اور اگر سرمایہ اجازت دے تو انکو انکے کاموں کا مالی معاوضہ بھی دیا جائے۔“<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Shah Moinuddin Ahmad Nadvi: Hayat Suleman, p504

<sup>2</sup> Ilyas Azmi: Darul Musannefien ki Taarikhi Khidmaat, p182

“No doubt that today it is the biggest obligation for Muslims to write the real and correct history of India. Darul Musannefien is ready to do its best in this regard. But it is necessary that other sincere learned persons should come forward and participate in our works and efforts and give us due opportunity to thank them for their efforts and research in this direction. In our view it is suitable to divide Indian history into different parts and every part should be handed over to a person, who has some deep research and required knowledge of that particular period and topic, and if financial condition allows they should be given some rewards for their works.”

Then Sayyid Sulaiman Nadvi prepared a complete plan to compose Indian history. He presented this plan before the nation as saying

“The need of a detailed and complete history of the advent of Islam in India, governance of Muslim Sultans, developments and progress achieved by them, and the culture and civilization promoted by Muslims in the country, is increasing day by day on every level whether it is historical scientific and national or political. But this mission is so important that only personal courage is not enough at all. Peoples are constantly eying on Darul Musannefien to take up the responsibility and every time Darul Musannefien has avoided their request. It was only because that this great mission requires huge finance and present financial conditions of this institution can't afford this. <sup>1</sup>

Sayyid Sulaiman Nadvi wanted to complete history of India in 15 parts having cultural, scientific, social and political history of Muslim rulers of Deccan, Gujarat, Malwah Khandesh, Kashmir, Multan, Jaunpur, Bengal, Hyderabad, Murshidabad, Azimabad,

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<sup>1</sup> Ilyas Azmi: Allama Sayed Suleman Nadvi Bahathiate Moarrikh, p36-37

Awadh Ruhel-Khand, Bedar and Arkat alongwith the history of Arabs, Gaznavis, Ghauris, Khiljis, Tughlaqs, Lodhis and Mughals.

The implementation of this plan has required a great amount of money. In the beginning there were some offers of financial support from Bhopal and Rampur, and some Muslim intellectuals, and a few eminent personalities proposed themselves to contribute in this mission such as Prof. Najib Ashraf Nadvi, Prof. Ibrahim from Usmania College Aurangabad and some scholars of Usmania University. Finally Sayyid Sulaiman Nadvi started this mission in Darul Musannefien and some books like Tariekh-e-Sind were composed. But despite a strong sense of its importance, need and benefits but there was no practical and encouraging participation in this mission.

Maulana Shah Moinuddin Ahmad Nadvi writes about about it!<sup>1</sup>

“Though, this proposal had been published for a long period of time, but it could not be forwarded with collective coordination and cooperation. Darul Musannefien took the assignment to the point where its resources permitted it to do. Due to some unavoidable reasons, the mission could not be completed according to its original plan. But Darul Musannefien has published more than two dozen books on different aspects of Indian history, and this is still going on.”

In December 1944 National Congress o history held its conference in Madras. Sayyid Sulaiman Nadvi was offered to preside over the session of medieval India history. Sayyid Sulaiman accepted that offer and gave a precious and informative lecture before the participants on the history of medieval India. He pointed out different sources of medieval India history and made a critical comment on it.

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<sup>1</sup> Shah Moinudding Nadvi: Hayate Suleman, p427

During this lecture, Sayyid Sulaiman Nadvi said :

”مجھے کہنا ہے کہ تاریخ کے فن کو قوموں کے پھوٹ اور میل میں بہت کچھ دخل ہے اسلئے وہ لوگ جن کی نظر میں اس ملک کا مستقبل ہے اور جن کے ہاتھوں میں اس کے مستقبل کا بنانا یا بگاڑنا ہے انکو اپنی ذمہ داری کو سمجھنا چاہئے۔ اور اس حالت میں جب کہ ہم سب کو معلوم ہے کہ ہم کو اب اسی ملک میں جینا اور مرنا ہے تو عداوت اور نفرت کی پچھلی باتوں کو اس طرح دہراتے رہنا جس سے یہ جذبہ اس طرح پلتا اور بڑھتا اور پھیلتا پھولتا رہے اپنے ملک کے ساتھ بڑی بے وفائی ہے۔“<sup>1</sup>

“I want to say that history has its own role in differences and unity among different communities of nations. So those who foresee the future of this country or those, who can play role in the future of this country should understand their responsibility; and in a situation when every one knows that we have to live and die in this country, it is unfair to repeat past stories of hate and enmity, which evolve negative feelings”.

At the end of his address Sayyid Sulaiman Nadvi gave some suggestions to historians.

”ہندوستان کی جو تاریخ لکھی جائے اس کا مقصد ہندوستان کے متفرق اجزا کو باہم جوڑنا ہو توڑنا نہ ہو حال کو ماضی کی ناگورائی کی تلخی کو بڑھا کر کیوں برباد کیا جائے اور کیوں مستقبل کے لئے یہ کوشش جاری رہے کہ وہ خوشگوار نہ ہو۔“<sup>2</sup>

The history of India in future should have a target of unifying different aspects of India and not to divide it. Why should we destroy the present by raising bad things of the past and why should we continue to make our efforts in a direction that does not make our future prosperous.

This is a brief explanation about his approach towards especially Indian history and his views on the contemporary history.

<sup>1</sup> Sayed Sulmeman Nadvi, Maqalat-e-Suleman, vol I, p283

<sup>2</sup> Sayed Sulmeman Nadvi, Maqalat-e-Suleman, vol I, p283

## **Theory and Methods of Sayyid Sulaiman Nadvi:**

History remained the favorite subject of Sayyid Sulaiman Nadvi during his whole life. His approaches and methods of history writing are similar to the methods of his teacher Maulana Shibli except some differences. Though Sayyid Sulaiman Nadvi did not write on any special aspect of history but what he has written on different aspects of history has become the integral part of Islamic history. Similar to the taste of his period's history writing, he has stressed on cultural and social history alongwith political history. Even in his plan of history writing, he has concentrated on cultural and social aspects with political history. Only his two articles deal with political history. He had a view that history does not mean achievements of kings, but ethical, social, cultural and scientific conditions of the period, have been essential parts of history.<sup>1</sup>

Sayyid Sulaiman Nadvi was committed to his principles and methods even when he was writing the "biography of Prophet" Mohammad (P.B.U.H.). Maulana Shibli had made some principles and when Sayyid Sulaiman Nadvi took this assignment after the death of his teacher, he made all out efforts not to compromise on any of the principles set by Maulana Shibli. Maulana Shibli could complete only two volumes of the biography of Prophet Mohammad. According to his teacher's desire, Sayyid Sulaiman Nadvi completed this great work applying all principles and methods, which are recognised and accepted in historiography.

In Sirat-al-Nabi "Prophet's Biography" he has adopted almost all the methods of Maulana Shibli.

Here I will state some principles of Sayyid Sulaiman Nadvi applied in "Sirat-Al-Nabi." Like Maulana Shibli; Sayyid Sulaiman

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<sup>1</sup> Maqalat-e-Sulaiman VIII. 398



Nadvi has also made Quran and traditions of Prophet as the basic source of Prophet's Biography.

He writes:

”سیرت نبوی کی ہر بحث میں قرآن پاک میری عمارت کی بنیاد اور حدیث نبوی اس کے نقش و نگار ہیں۔“<sup>1</sup>

“In every part of discussion in “Sirat-Al-Nabi” Quran is the base of my building and traditions are its inscriptions and paintings.”

Apart from these two basic sources, he has consulted several source books of biographies and history but only in those matters and events, which are not mentioned in the two basic sources. In this regard, he remained extra cautious to avoid any unauthentic event. He has also applied all methods to check the authenticity of source and narrators of the traditions. In this process he is strict to the principles of narration and acquaintance.

In the last four volumes of Sirat-Al-Nabi compiled by him, he has adopted a very simple style of history writing. He has never gone beyond his natural style.

Like his teacher Maulana Shibli, Sayed Nadvi has tried to thwart and reject all allegations, lies and forgeries of European historians with concrete evidence and in unique style, which has no other example in India ‘at least’ in field of Islamic history writing.<sup>2</sup>

Apart from his methods and styles, Sayyid Sulaiman Nadvi was committed to bridge the gap between Hindus and Muslims, which was continuously widening due to the baseless propaganda and wrong presentation of Muslim rulers and Islam. Although it was not his objective of history writing but writing a history, which could maintain

<sup>1</sup> Ilyas Azmi: Darul Musannefien Ki Taarikhi Khidmaat, p194

<sup>2</sup> Maarif, Sulaiman, Special Issue, p. 178

the communal harmony of the country was basically, one of the aims of Darul Musannefien.<sup>1</sup>

To achieve his objectives Sayyid Sulaiman Nadvi has written many important books, which show his deep knowledge of Indian history and his right approach to the historiography. His most important book of this series is "Arab-o-Hind Ke Taaluqat" (Indo-Arab relations). This book comprises on 5 chapters, which cover five most important topics. In this book Sayyid Sulaiman Nadvi has emphatically proved that though the Muslim rulers of India were Muslims by religion but they were not the real representatives of Islam in the country, neither their governments were the true Islamic governments. Therefore their behaviour and their systems should not be associated with any aspect of Islam. The other important thing of this book is that Sayed has equally described the influences of Islam on Hindus and their influences on the Muslims.

The fifth and last chapter of the book has some very much interesting information. Sayed has written that Deccan and south India, which came later under Muslim establishment, had some Muslim pockets. No important city and town was empty of them. In addition to it, Sayed has given some introductory notes about Muslim population of Multan and Sind.

Now there are many books on this topic, but this book of Sayed has its own importance because it was the first of its kinds of book when it was composed. Though this book was directly attached to the history of Islam in India and Indo-Arab relations, but Sayed has applied all his methods in this book.

1. Even if this book is not a particular history of any era but it deals in detail with every kind of indo-Arab relations whether it

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<sup>1</sup> Aurang Zeb Alamgir Per Aek Nazar, p. 1

is political, social, religious and educational alongwith cultural and social conditions and life styles of both Indians and Arabs.

- II. He has adopted just and right principles to reach truth and fact, and has tried his best to find out realities.
- III. According to Maulana Shibli it is necessary to find out reasons and causes behind any event in the history, Sayed has applied these principles in this book very well.
- IV. He has consistently concentrated on primary and secondary sources.

These are the methods and principles of Sayyid Sulaiman Nadvi, which he has applied in his different books on history. Sayyid Sulaiman Nadvi has adopted most of the principles of his teacher Maulana Shibli, but as far as the Indian Islamic history is concerned, Sayyid Sulaiman Nadvi has made his approach a slight different from Maulana Shibli. Infact Sayyid Sulaiman Nadvi's new approach was in accordance with Darul-Musannefiyen's main objective of history writing, and that was to remove suspicions and gap between the tow major communities of India. As he had said while presiding over a session of the National Congress of history, held in Madras in December 1944.

In contrary to this, Maulana Shibli has never criticised any thing related to Muslim rulers of India, he has always defended their decisions and actions. When it comes to Aurangzeb's decision to ban melas and other religious gatherings, Maulana Shibli has defended Aurangzeb saying that the ban came into force only after the grave threat of violence, and in this condition it was reasonable even, and necessary to ban these kinds of activities. Maulana Shibli also clarifies that this action was based on social reforms not on religious basis or

on the basis of biasedness.<sup>1</sup>

When Sayyid Sulaiman Nadvi was presenting his plan to write Indian history, he pointed out few reasons behind this plan, one of these causes, which attracted his attention to this plan, was the misleading and wrong interpretation of some events in Indian history to distort the face of Islamic rule in India. When he highlighted some of these lies, unauthentic views and unnecessary things, some Hindu writes, who were with European historians in their mission to reinterpret Indian history especially those events which can widen the gap and hurt the sentiments of Hindus and Muslims, came under his criticism. This criticism on Hindu historians was not accepted completely by some Hindu intellectuals. These Hindu intellectual were of view that Sayyid Sulaiman Nadvi wants a pro-Muslim history. In connection to this criticism by Sayed; Pandit Manohar Zatshi the Principle of Training College Lucknow, wrote a detailed letter to Sayed expressing his reservation over his criticism. Sayyid Sulaiman Nadvi published this letter in "Maarif" and replied it saying:

”افسوس ہے کہ ہمارے بعض ہندو دوستوں کو ہماری گزشتہ تحریر بزم تاریخ ہند کے بعض  
نقدوں یا اشاروں سے بدگمانی پیدا ہوئی ہے ہمارا منشا یہ نہیں ہے کہ ہم ہندوستان کی  
ایسی تاریخ لکھیں جس میں یہاں کے مسلمان بادشاہوں کو معصوم و بے گناہ ثابت  
کریں۔ بلکہ یہ مقصد ہے کہ ایسی تاریخ لکھیں اور ایسے طرز میں لکھیں جس سے ہندو  
مسلمانوں میں منافرت پیدا ہونے کے بجائے یکجہتی اور اتحاد پیدا ہو۔“<sup>2</sup>

It is regrettable that some of our Hindu friends have reservations over some points in my book "Bazm-e-Tarikhe-Hind". It is not our aim at all to write a history of India, which exonerate Muslim rulers of India but our main objective is to write such a history and in such a way, which helps us bring unity and harmony instead of hate and anger between Hindus and Muslims.

This paragraph clearly shows the objectives of Sayyid Sulaiman Nadvi in history writing especially the Indian Muslim History

<sup>1</sup> Aurang Zeb Alamgir Per Aek Nazar, P.67

<sup>2</sup> Ilyas Azmi: Darul Musannefein ki Taarikhi Khidmaat, p185

## **Chapter 2**

### **Sayyid Abul Hasan Ali Nadvi: Life and Works**

- 1. A brief history of his family background**
- 2. His life and development of his personality**
- 3. Brief introduction of his academic works**

**CHAPTER II**  
**SAYYID ABUL HASAN ALI NADVI:**  
**LIFE AND WORKS**  
**A BRIEF HISTORY OF HIS FAMILY BACKGROUND**

Sayyid Abul Hasan Ali Nadvi was born in a family, which was well known for its nobility, education, piousness, its dedication for Islamic causes, and their sacrifices for Islam. It is widely accepted that the impact of the family background was obvious in the personality of Sayyid Abul Hasan Ali Nadvi. Some persons are of view that no period in the history of this family passed without a great name in the field of learning, reforms and the preaching of Islam. Some of them were so great and their ideas were so highly valued that they were ideals of their field for centuries. Reformists see them as torchbearer and emulate them in their works of preaching and reform.

The branch of Hasani family in India starts from Shiakhul Islam Qutubuddin Mohammad Ali Madni, who migrated to India in the zeal of spreading Islam in Indian subcontinent. He came to India in the beginning of sixth century with his thousands of followers and stayed near "Karad Manak Pur". This is the first place where he introduced Islam and hundreds of people embraced it.

Due to his piousness and devotion, the Sultan of Delhi at that time Qutubuddin Aibak was among his followers. This was the beginning of the Hasani family in India and the beginning of a family, which dedicated itself for Islamic causes. It is said that Hasani family is one of the few families which produced so many luminaries, Islamic scholars, preachers and true devotees of Islam. Some very prominent names among them are Sayeed Qazi Sayyid Ruknuddin, Qazi Sayyid Ahmad Nasirabadi, Khwaja Ahmad Nasirabadi, and Shah Ilmullah etc. The most famous name of this family is Sayyid Ahmad Shaheed, who

played unforgettable role for the cause of Muslims and to protect them and their religion from the alien influences.<sup>1</sup>

There is a long list of the great personalities who emerged in this family in course of time, as my objective is to give a brief introduction of his family background. It is better for me to start this topic from the grand father of Sayyid Abul Hasan Ali Nadvi.

**His grand father Maulana Hakim Sayyid Fakhruddin Khyali:**

Maulana Fakhruddin was born in 1256 A.H. in Daera Shah Ilmullah in Rae Bareli. His father died when he was a child. His maternal grand father took him in his custody. He got primary education from Maulana Mohammad Naeem Frangi Mahli. He also got some lessons in Unani Medicines.

After completing his education, Maulana left home in search of a suitable job. He spent a long period of his life in Rajputana, Hyderabad, Tonk and Bhopal. He specially stayed for a longer time in different districts of Hyderabad, but he failed to get any suitable job. At last, he got himself associated with a medical team of Nawab of Tonk.

He was fond of reading and teaching. He has written many books in Urdu and Persian, besides he has composed some poems in Arabic. His most important book is "Maheer Jahan Tab", which has 1300 pages in three volumes. The first volume deals with different arts and sciences, the second has brief biographies of Prophet Mohammad and his companions and Ulemas etc. the third chapter comprises on lives and works of poets of Urdu, Arabic Persian and other languages. He died on 10<sup>th</sup> of Ramadhan in 1326 A.H.

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<sup>1</sup> Savaneh-Mufakkir-e-Islam, Bilal Hasani Nadvi, p. 50

**His maternal grandfather Sayyid Shah Zia-un-Nabi:**

Maulana Abul Hasan Ali Nadvi couldn't see him because he was born 5 years after his death. He was born in Daera Shah Ilumullah in 1242 A.H. and got his early education in Rae Bareli. He was inclined to religious activities from his childhood. Hazrat Shah visited Delhi and stayed there for two years and learnt much from the two very learned and piousmen of the time. Hazarat Shah Ahmad Saeed and Maulana Shah Abul Ghani.

He performed Haj in 1293 A.H. where he met some great scholars and benefited from them. He was very famous in Rae Breli and adjacent districts for his great devotion to Namaz and other religious activities. He died in 1908 A.D. He was survived by two sons and five daughters, one of them is the respected mother of Sayyid Abul Hasan Ali Nadvi namely Mrs. Sayyida Khairun Nisa Behter Sahiba.

**His father Maulana Hakim Sayyid Abdul Hai Hasani:**

His father Maulana Sayyid Abdul Hai Hasani was a well known historian, a great scholar of the Prophet's traditions and a renowned Islamic scholar of India. He was born in Daera Shah Ilmullah in 1286 A.H. Since his childhood, he was a very sincere and obedient student. He got his early education at Hanswa, the hometown of his maternal grandmother. Munshi Mohammad Taliq was his Persian teacher and he learnt Arabic fundamentals from Maulana Shah Abdul-Salam. He visited Allahabad and Lucknow also for education. He especially studied famous books of that period from the Ulemas of Frangi Mehal. Apart from the religious and Arabic studies, he excelled in different modern subjects like Mathematics and Medicines.<sup>1</sup>

He was a very dynamic person who had a deep sense and concern in his mind for the upliftment of Muslims. He opened his eyes

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<sup>1</sup> Hayat-e-Abdul Hai, p.1



in an era, which witnessed some radical changes at all level from public to the government. This was the era when Muslims were facing a hard time in the history of India. Maulana Abdul Hai was keen at that time to participate in all kinds of revolutionary and reformative activities. Even as a student at Darul Uloom Nadvatul Ulema, he started participating in the meetings of Nadva. He formally associated himself with Nadva in 1313 A.H. He did not take any salary or compensation for a long time for his services to Nadva only after the mounting pressure of the management of Nadva. Maulana accepted his salary for a very short period, because he had a clinic that was sufficient for his expenditure.

When voices of service inner differences were heard in Nadva, Maulana was handed over the command of Nadva on 13<sup>th</sup> April 1915. The initial period of his rectorship passed in fending off inner differences, improving Nadva's image around the country and more over tackling financial problems of Darul Uloom Navatul Ulema.<sup>1</sup> Apart from his engagements in Nadva and clinic, Maulana spent his times in reading and writing also. He delivered regular lectures on traditions of the Prophet, commentary of Quran, Literature and Tib (Medicine). His teaching of the traditions was continued even till the last day of his life. Maulana Sayyid Sulaiman Nadvi has been a participant in his lectures on Maqamat.<sup>2</sup>

He was well versed in Persian, Urdu and Arabic and had special interest in the history. Even we can say that he was the first to pay attention on the Islamic history writing in India at that time. He was inclined towards the traditions of the Prophet so much that he had decided to handover the clinic to his elder son Dr. Abdul Ali, so that he can give due concentration on the traditions. But it could not be possible because of his untimely death on 2dn February 1923.

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<sup>1</sup> Swanchi Muhakkir-e-Islam, Bilal Hasani Nadvi p.56

<sup>2</sup> Swanchi- Muffakkir-e-Islam, p.56

He left some very important books behind him. His most celebrated work is "Nuzhatul Khwatir" comprising on 8 huge volumes. This book contains the biographies of 4500 eminent personalities of India. The book is excellent in terms of its language, coverage, material collection and historical authenticity. The other famous books are "Al-Hind Fil Ahad-al-Islami" and "Al-Thaqafa-al-Islamia fil-Hind." He has also prepared a collection of traditions named "Talkhul Akhbar" and commentary and explanatory note on this book in tow volumes called "Tahzibul-Akhlaq" which were published and got appreciations and acceptance form academics. The second volume is "Muntaha-Al-Akhbar" it is yet to be published.<sup>1</sup>

Maulana Abdul Hai Al Hasani was married twice. The first wife was Sayyida Zainab daughter of Maulana Sayyid Abdul Aziz Hansvi. There was only one child Dr. Abdul Ali from her. When Dr. Ali was only 5 years old she expired. Maulana was very shocked and had decided not to marry again. But pressures of the family compelled him to remarry. This time he tied the knot with the daughter of Hazrat Shah Zia-ul Nabi. She became the mother of two daughters and a son and that is Sayyid Abdul Hasan Ali Nadvi.<sup>2</sup>

### **His Mother:**

The mother of Sayyid Abul Hasan Ali Nadvi was a very pious lady of her era. She devoted most of her time in religious activities. She was fond of prayers and meditations. She was born in June 1778 in a family that was example of renunciation and godliness. She grew up under the able guardianship of her parents. Father loved her very much due to her docile nature, ethical observance and her desire for prayers and zikr. She was interested in reading books had deeply impressed her such as, "Qisas-al Ambiya" "Maathar Al-Salehien" and "Tarieq-Al-Najat".

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<sup>1</sup> Yad-e-Ayyam-Abdul Ali

<sup>2</sup> Swanch Muffakkir-e-Islam, Bilal Hasani. P.57

Hifze Quran (Memorisation of Quran) was the tradition in her family's male members. But she started a new tradition by memorising Quran herself. It was so inspiring that 5 other ladies of the family memorised the Holly Quran. During the month of Ramadhan, these ladies had their own "Jamat of Travieh" (special prayer during Ramadhan). They used to start this prayer just after the evening Namaz till the time of Sehri.<sup>1</sup>

Sayyid Abul Hasan Nadvi himself writes

”اس اجتماعی ختم قرآن کے زمانے میں میں بہت بچہ تھا لیکن والدہ صاحبہ کے قرآن مجید سنانے کا سلسلہ میرے شعور کے بہت بعد تک جاری رہا۔ میں کبھی دروازہ میں کھڑا ہو کر سنتا۔ ایسا معلوم ہوتا کہ پانی برس رہا ہے۔“<sup>2</sup>

“I was a child in that period when my mother and her companions used to recite whole Quran during the month of Ramadhan. My mother continued reciting Quran in Ramadhan untill I got complete sense of every thing. Whenever I listened her standing behind the door I felt as it is raining.”

When she reached the age of marriage there were many offers for marriage from relatives but her father was searching a suitable match, who can tally with all her habits and religious activities. It was the time when the first wife of Maulana Abdul Hai Hasani had expired. Although Maulana had decided not to marry again, but Shah Ziaun Nabi persuaded his father and so he agreed. The economic condition of Maulana Abdul Hai was not so good; therefore her mother was reluctant on this issue. During this period of uncertainty, she (the mother of Abul Hasan Nadvi) saw many dreams which were indicating that this marriage would be auspicious not only for the couple but for the whole Muslim world. She has written these dreams by her hand,

<sup>1</sup> Swanch- Muffakkir-e-Islam, p. 59

<sup>2</sup> Abdullah Abbas Nadvi: Mir-e-Karwan, p47

which is preserved in the manuscript section of Shibli library at Nadva. She writes:

”ایک رات کو میں نے خواب دیکھا کہ خاص اس مالک کریم رحمن و رحیم کی عنایت و مہربانی سے ایک آیت کریمہ مجھے حاصل ہوئی ہے۔ صبح تک وہ زبان پر جاری تھی۔ مگر کچھ خوف ایسا تھا کہ میں بیان نہ کر سکی، منہ سے نکلتا دشوار تھا اور اس کے معنی بھی مجھے معلوم نہ تھے۔ جب معنوں پر غور کیا تو خوشی سے پھول گئی اور تمام فکر و غم بھول گئی۔ اپنی اس خوش نصیبی پر فخر کیا اور اس خواب کو بیان کیا۔ ہر شخص سن کر رشک کرتا اور والد مرحوم خوشی میں رونے لگے۔“<sup>1</sup>

One night I dreamed that I have got a verse of Quran through special blessing of Allah who is beneficent and merciful. That verse was repeatedly coming on the tongue till the morning. Some kind of fear was prevailing over me. I was unable to disclose it. I also had no knowledge of the meaning but when I concentrated on the meaning, I was filled with happiness, all fears got off from the mind, and I was proud of my luck. When I told it, every one was crazy. Above all when my father listened it, tears of happiness rolled down his cheeks.

There were all kinds of happiness, prosperity and crowd of guests at their home and life was going well on its track. But every one especially mother was shocked and crumbled after the sudden demise of her husband Maulana Abdul Hai Hasani. Then the family faced various ups and downs but their commitment and morale were not down. They faced every thing with courage.

After the death of his father, his mother had two main engagements; one of them was paying full attention on bringing up, who was a child at that time. The other was prayers, meditations and some household works.<sup>2</sup> To avoid the loneliness she began to compose poems and engaged herself in meditations. Beside all these she started teaching and training the family girls. The first collection of

<sup>1</sup> Bilal Hasani Nadvi: Sawanch Mufakkir-e-Islam, p61

<sup>2</sup> Swanch- Muffakkir-e-Islam, p. 65

her poems and meditations was published with the name of "Bab-e-Rehmat" in 1925. She also wrote a book for girls with the title of "Husn-e-Muasharat". She had expertise in cooking food as well. So she compiled a book in this field also with the title of "Ziqa" in this book she has given some innovative tips of delicious and tasty dishes.<sup>1</sup>

Her only desire from Sayyid Abul Hasan Ali Nadvi was that he should become a great preacher "Daai" of Islam and play a greater role in spreading Islam from East to West and large numbers of people should embrace Islam on his hands.<sup>2</sup>

This great lady died on 31<sup>st</sup> August 1968. Despite her acute weakness, she continued her daily prayers timely. During her last days of life when she was on the bed she called Sayyid Abul Hasan Ali Nadvi and advised him not to postpone his programs for spreading and preaching Islam due to her illness.

#### **HIS ELDER BROTHER, DR. SAYED ABDUL ALI:**

His elder brother Dr. Abdul Ali was a different kind of person. He was a combination of old and new civilization and cultures and confluence of Eastern philosophy and Western sciences.

He was born on 1<sup>st</sup> December 1893 at Hanswa, the home of his maternal grandmother. His mother died when he was a child of 8 years. His maternal grandmother took him in her custody. When his father Maulana Abdul Hai Hasani got remarried, he came under the supervision of his second mother.

He received his early education at home and learnt Persian and Arabic grammar. Then he studied different subjects from the qualified teachers of Nadvatul Ulema. After completing his education, he went to Deoband to have a specialisation in Prophet's tradition. During his

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<sup>1</sup> Bilal Hasani Nadvi: Sawaneh Mufakkir-e-Islam, p67

<sup>2</sup> Bilal Hasani Nadvi: Sawaneh Mufakkir-e-Islam, p67

stay in Darul Uloom Deoband, he studied Bukahari and Trimizi from Shaikul Hind Maulana Mahmoodul Hasan and Sunan Abu Daud from Allama Anwar Shah Kashmiri. He had noted down and preserved their speeches in Arabic during the period of his studentship in Deoband. Maulana Anwar Shah Kashmiri had appreciated this effort but unfortunately it was misplaced never to be traced again. His father sent him to Hakeem Ajmal Khan to learn Unani Tib. His father had also suggested him to learn modern medicine from Dr. Mukhtar Ahmad Ansari. His six months stay in Delhi created a desire within him to learn English and modern medicine. He completed intermediate and B.Sc. and was the second topper of Allahabad University.

In 1920 Maulana got admission in the famous King George Medical College. He was on a study tour to Madras when he heard the sad shocking news of his father's death. He came back and now the question of continuing his education began hunting him. But with support of a family friend Nawab Nurul Hasan, he completed his education and started his practice at Goin Road in Lucknow.

After the death of his father, he was selected as a member of the administrative council of Nadvatul Ulema. He was promoted to the Deputy Rector in 1928 and then Rector of Nadva in 1931, in this way he served Nadva particularly and whole Muslim community generally from 1931 to 1961. During his Rectorship Nadva witnessed multidimensional progress and got eternal fame not only in India but in other countries as well. In 1958, he was selected as a member of "Majlis-e-Shura" (consultative council) of Darul Uloom Deoband. But due to his engagements, he could not participate in any meeting of the council. He was also very keen to introduce Islam among non-Muslims. He always thought of that and made efforts in this regard during his lifetime. For example he sent Sayyid Abul Hasan Ali Nadvi to Bombay to invite Dr. Ambedkar to embrace Islam.

He was interested in Tablighi mission of Maulana Ilyas. He used to appreciate his mission. Once he stayed at the centre of Jamaate Tablighi at Nizamuddin in Delhi, Maulana Ilyas was very much happy on this unexpected arrival of Maulana Abdul Ali. Whenever Maulana Ilyas had been in Lucknow Dr. Abdul Ali used to attend his meetings regularly.

Due to the sudden death of his wife in 1957, his health was badly affected. During 1956-57 he had high blood pressure and because of it he suffered a severe heart attack on 7<sup>th</sup> May that ended his life and it was the end of an era.<sup>1</sup>

This is the brief introduction of his family background, whose members are direct descendent of Hazrat Hasan bin Ali. This branch of Hasani family had come to India from the Arabian Peninsula and settled here for all times to come. History has been a witness throughout the ages that whenever the Muslim Umma needed, this family made sacrifices regardless of personal objectives keeping the length and capacity of the dissertation into mind, I have chosen only few names who were highly renowned and associated with Sayyid Abul Hasan Ali Nadvi, otherwise the whole Hasani family is star studded and famous for deep knowledge of Islamic sciences, scholarly works and famous for their piousness and great services to the Islam and Indian Muslims. This glorious family background, the tradition of sacrifices for Islamic cause, their great contribution to protect Islam from other influences, and their outstanding performance in spreading Islam across India, had infused a commitment, a passion and an ambition in Sayyid Abul Hasan Ali Nadvi.

All these factors contributed greatly in the development of his unique personality.

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<sup>1</sup> Mufakkir-e-Islam, plo

## **HIS LIFE AND DEVELOPMENT OF HIS PERSONALITY**

Maulana Abul Hasan Ali was born on 15 December 1913 in a small village of Rai Bareli, named Daera Shah Ilmullah and known as "Takya Kalan". It has also got fame as a centre of Islamic learning and spiritualism. He was born at a time when East was meeting with the West and past was meeting with the present. Britishers has complete control over the Indian subcontinent and the Western culture was prevailing over the Eastern values and culture. It was the time when the materialistic development and scientific progress of the West was dazzling the Eastern people. The family of Sayyid Abul Hasan was also inclined to the Western education; many youths of the family were away in west to get modern education. The children, who were considered brilliant, choosen for English education. Meanwhile his cousin Sayyid Mohammad Ahmad went to England and completed his Master degree in Philosophy from the Edembra University. There was enthusiasm in the family; every one was inspired by him. His name was an example of excellence for every member of the family. When he retuned from England, a large gathering was present to receive him and that was the general expression of the tendency of the family to the modernity.

Maulana him self writes:

"On his arrival there was a grand reception and arguement in the family and in the small village at that time in the whole district or at least in the higher Muslim families adn land lords perhaps there was nobody who had this digree."<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Karvanc-c-Zindagi/ Abul Hasan Ali, P. 51



### **EARLY EDUCATION:**

He started his education at age of 4 years. His uncle Maulana Syed Azizur Rehman became his first teacher. His first school was the Maktab of the village run in a room of the mosque. The Imam of the mosque was also serving as teacher and he taught him Quran's reading, initials of Urdu language. At the age of 7 years he completed his reading of Quran and father arranged a ceremony at this occasion. He got the formal education of Urdu from Maulana Azizur Rehman who was working in rituals. He started learning Persian from Maulvi Mehmood Ali.<sup>1</sup> As a child Maulana Abul Hasan Ali was fond of books, At an age when children usually have interests in the playing, he was interested in reading book. He himself writes, "Our house was house of Ulemas and scholars, father was among noted writers of his period, family impacts have deep roots and transfer from one to another generation. Some times when we got money for our personal expenditure we would buy books from that money."<sup>2</sup>

"He could not enjoy the guardianship of his father for a long time. He was ten years old when his father died, but during these years, he took care of him (Abul Hasan Ali) and he was brought up under his supervision and under his mother's caring and kind attention. After the sudden death of his father, his elder brother Maulana Abdul Ali was the guardian of house, who was at that time, pursuing Medicines course from the King George Medical College, Lucknow. Now he was the sole responsible for his family and its members. He continued his education with the support of some family friends. Maulana and his mother shifted to Rae Bareilly because now there was no reason to stay in Lucknow after death of his father, now his mother concentrated on his education and upbringing. Her kindness and affection over him was an example in the family, but she never compromised on religious activities, especially in performing

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<sup>1</sup> Karwan-e-Zindagi, P. 57

<sup>2</sup> Karwan-e-Zindagi, P.70

Namaz.<sup>1</sup>

**Formal Education:**

Maulana started his formal education at a time when the country was going through changes in every field of life. Earlier the education of Arabic meant understanding the traditions and Holy Quran and Persian was considered the main language having a bright future and good job prospects in the country but Abdul Ali on the basis of his farsightedness, stopped Abul Hasan from the learning of Persian language and literature. He perceived during the next few years Persian will lose its importance and place in the country. He made arrangements for him to learn English. So he started learning English. On the other hand Dr. Abdul Ali arranged some teachers to teach him Arabic. There was special attention on Arabic. It was supposed that after this initial stage of learning, Abul Hasan Ali will get admission in Nadva, but Dr. Abdul Ali sent him to the great scholar of Arabic Shaikh Khalil bin Mohammad Arab Yemani, who was a famous teacher of Arabic at that time and according to Sayyid Abul Hasan Ali Nadvi, he had not only wide knowledge of Arabic but had the deep taste of the language as it has been mentioned earlier that modern education and values were gripping over the thoughts of his family members, they criticised Dr. Abdul Ali for teaching Abul Hasan Ali Arabic and suggested him to prepare this brilliant boy for I.C.S. But Dr Abdul Ali replied them frankly that I am giving him the kind of education which my father would have preferred for him if were alive. The time has proved that this decision was perfect and based on wisdom.<sup>2</sup>

In 1924, Maulana Abul Hasan Ali formally started learning Arabic Language and literature from his teacher Shaikh Khalil Arab. Shaikh taught him "Al-Mutalaa-Al-Arabia" then "Madarijul Qiraat". And then other standard books of Arabic literature. During this period

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<sup>1</sup> Swanch Mofakkir-e-Islam, P. 96

<sup>2</sup> Swanch Mofakkir-e-Islam, P.101-110

Maulana learnt Urdu language and literature and had become comfortable and very versed in this language.

In 1927, his elder brother Dr. Abdul ALI admitted him in the University of Lucknow, and probably on the request of Khlil Arab Shaikh. Despite his admission in the university, he continued learning Arabic from Shaikh Khalil Arab. Two subjects in the university curriculum did not suit Maulana Abul Hasan Ali. He had problem with them. These two subjects were Al-Arooz and Arabic Grammar. That was the reason that despite his distinction in other subjects he failed in Arabic grammar. Maulana says that this was the first experience of failure and it enabled me to face this kind of problem in the next academic year, Maulana was the topper and awarded the University scholarship and medal.<sup>1</sup>

On this success his aunt called him to Lahore. In June 1929 Maulana traveled to Lahore, which at that point of time was the centre of cultural, literary and journalistic activities in the Indian subcontinent. During his stay in Lahore, Maulana met all distinguished personalities of the city such as Allama Iqbal, Hafeez Jalandhari and Maulana Ali Ahmad Lahori. Maulana says that this trip was very successful and I benefited a lot from it. The impact of this visit was very deep and longlasting on my personality.

Although Maulana was attached with Nadva since his childhood but the direct link could be possible only when he started studying Islamic jurisprudence from a teacher of Nadva Maulana Shibli Jairajpuri, who was also spiritually attached with Hasani family.

After coming back from Lahore in 1929, Maulana started taking lessons in traditions of the Prophet from Maulana Haider Hasan Khan who was very famous teacher of this subject and had expertise in this subject. Maulana Sayyid Abul Hasan Ali studied Bukhari, Muslim,

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<sup>1</sup> Karwan-e-Zindagi, P. 104

Tirmizi , Abu Daud and some parts of Bedhavi form him. He has accepted in his autobiography “that for my all knowledge of tradition credit goes to my teacher Maulana Haider Hasan Khan and his special love and affection for me”<sup>1</sup>.

It is worthy to mention here that Maulana Abul Hasan Ali Nadvi had completed his studies in Arabic language and literature from the great scholar of Arabic, Allama Taqiuddin Hilali. Allama arrived in Nadva in September 1930 and started teaching Arabic there. Maulana Abul Hasan Ali utilised this opportunity and learnt much more from him about Arabic language. He formally participated in his teaching of Diwan Al-Nabigha and “Sharho Shozoor -iz-Zahab”.

His elder brother had God gifted knowledge in education and training. He was concentrating now to train Abul Hasan Ali to express and convey his thoughts on papers and specially write something in Arabic. He had gauged that the time has come to awake Arabs from their deep sleeping and to remind them of their status in leading the world. He thought that it is better if they are reminded and informed in their own language. When Maulana was 13 or 14 years old his brother Abdul Ali handed over him an article of the Magazine ‘ummul Qura’ for translation. Maulana translated it; and it was published in the famous newspaper of that time “zamindar”. His first published work was “Al-Sayyid Ahmad bin Irfan Al-Shaheed”. According to Maulana Abul Hasan Ali it was a translation work assigned to him by the elder brother Dr. Abdul Ali, when he showed the translation to Allama Hilali, he made some corrections and then sent it to Allama Rasheed Raza for the publishing in his magazine “Al-Manar.” Allama Rasheed Raza not only published it in the Magazine but he also published it separately in shape of a book, that was very encouraging for him.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Swanch Mofakkir-e-Islam, P.111.

<sup>2</sup> Swanch Mofakkir-e-Islam, P.118

In 1932, Dr. Abdul Ali specially brought him to Maulana Madni at Deoband. Maulana Madni suggested him to stay in Darul uloom at Deoband. Maulana Abul Hasan Ali stayed in Deoband as a guest of Maulana Madni. He learnt a lot from him and especially some lessons in interpretation of Quran. For Maulana Madni had fixed Friday to seek some clarifications regarding commentary of Quran. He also participated in the class of Hazarat Madni, which used to be held after the Asr prayer. During his stay of Darul Uloom Deoband, he also participated in the lectures of Maulana Aezaz Ali whose command over Arabic language and literature is widely known.<sup>1</sup> In addition to it he had specially visited Shaikh Ali Ahmad Al-Lahori in 1929 and again in 1934. Shaikh Ali Ahmad took special care of him. Sayyid Abul Hasan Ali gained knowledge of Quran its interpretations and commentaries from him. Although he kept on in reaching and diversifying his knowledge and information but formally his education had come to an end. After completion here were many fields before him to serve the Muslim umma as whole, specially the Muslims of India. He made many plans and consulted his teachers and elders in this regard. Once in 1931, he accompanying Allama Hilali, visited Azamgarh and stayed in Darul-Musannefien. Sayyid Abul Hasan Ali Nadvi wanted to stay there longer and serve that academy. But

When he consulted Shaikh Hilali in this matter, he very frankly advised him that Nadva is better for you. Maulana later recognised it saying that if I had stayed at Darul Musannefien my all activities and abilities would had confined within writing books and reading their resources.

#### **Some major factors in shaping his personality:**

Maulana Sayyid Abdul Hasan Ali Nadvi possessed a multidimensional personality; he was a great scholar of Arabic and

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<sup>1</sup> Swanch Mofakkir-c-Islam, P.133

Islamic Studies a determined reformist, a well-known writer and a devoted preacher of Islam.

From the beginning till the end, there have been many factors in the developments of his personality to carry out this great mission together successfully. Here I am analysing some of these factors.

Maulana had a very good family background, a family which had fame all over India and a family which had made great sacrifices for the sake of Muslims and Islam in India, a family proud of its sons for their devotion to the Islamic mission. This family background played a greater role in the shaping and moulding of his personality. This family preserves its origin and kept the names of their ancestors alive in the mind every time. Mothers used to tell the stories of these great personalities and their unforgettable sacrifices to their children. As far as Maulana Abul Hasan was concerned, his parents had desire to make him a great preacher of Islam. His mother used to tell him the story of Sayyid Ahmad Shaheed. The time has proved that this child (Abul Hasan Ali) became a great scholar and a great preacher of Islam.

The other major factor in this process is the special attention of his elder brother Dr. Abdul Ali on his education and spiritual training. For being well equipped with the religious and modern education, Dr. Abdul Ali always guided and trained him to be the servant of Islam and preacher of its philosophy. When Dr. Abdul Ali arranged for him the Islamic education. The voices were raised in the family against this step. Some elders of the family suggested to provide him English education because his family was inclined to the modern education at that time but he rejected the idea. It was his wisdom and farsightedness that he facilitated him more to learn Arabic than Persian, which was official language at that time.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Karwan-e-Zindagi. p.46

After the death of his father, he grew up under the supervision of his mother who was very humble, noble and a pious lady. She gave him guidance and training which were very much useful for his future life. She always wanted him to become a great preacher of Islam. She used to ask him, Ali how many persons have embraced Islam due to your efforts. It is my wish that people come in groups and embraced Islam on your hands. She always blessed him and prayed for the success of his mission. She always preferred Islamic Studies for her son Abul Hasan Ali to modern subjects. When he took admission in the University of Lucknow, he became inclined to learn English with other modern subjects. But when his mother heard this news she became anxious. She wrote a number of letters asking him not to pursue any other education there except Islamic Studies.

In such a letter she wrote addressing him "Ali if I had hundred sons, I would have told them to have religious and Islamic education. All graces and honours are hidden in this education, nobody having modern education can achieve that and this is quite evident in your family."<sup>1</sup>

Maulana was inclined to the mysticism from his childhood. The atmosphere of his house was full of its echoes and activities; his mother was famous for her prayers and her meditations in the wee hours. After the death of her husband Maulana Abdul Hai, she spent most of her time in prayers and religious activities. Maulana was too much impressed by her dedication and devotion to the prayers and inherited this quality from his mother.

Maulana has defended "Sufism" in his deferent articles and books and justified describing it as god gifted system for the

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<sup>1</sup> Swaneh Muffakkir-e-Islam, P. 117

purification of soul. Beside this he criticised those who have changed its real face, he himself writes in this regard:

”تزکیہ نفس و تہذیب اخلاق کا وسیع و محکم نظام جس نے بعد کی صدیوں میں ایک مستقل علم و فن کی شکل اختیار کر لی۔ نفس و شیطان کے مکائد کی نشاندہی۔ نفسانی و اخلاقی برائیوں کا علاج، تعلق مع اللہ اور نسبت باطنی کے ذرائع و طرق کی تشریح و تربیت جس کی اصل حقیقت تزکیہ و احسان کے ماثور و شرعی الفاظ میں پہلے سے موجود تھی اور جس کا عرفی و اصطلاحی نام بعد کی صدیوں میں تصوف پڑ گیا۔“<sup>1</sup>

Maulana has favored these activities but in their real faces and for spritual purposes only, not for the show off and for any materialistic objective. He and his family had great respect to these saints and spritual people. Some of his ancestors were also great devotees of these activities for purification of soul. In this regard he was too much impressed by his teacher Shaikh Ali Ahmad Al-Lahori, who used to spend most of his time in prayers, meditations and reading of Quran. When Maulana revisited Lahore in 1934, his teacher had suggested him to stay in a small room of Shahi Masjid where some times, Maulana had to spend most of his night alone despite the best facilities were offered by his relatives in Lahore. His teacher also ahs ordered him to spend more times in prayers, meditations and recitation of Holly Quran. Maulana has accepted himself that if I had not met Maulana Lahori, my life would have been different. I had no other thoughts and ideas in my mind rather than writing books on different aspects of literature, history and Islam.<sup>2</sup>

Maulana himself had performed some practices of mysticism, according to Maulana Nazrul Hafeez Nadvi who is a teacher of Arabic literature at Nadva and has accompanied Maulana Abul Hasan Ali in his deferent journeys, that a as youth Maulana used to sleep beside a pond, so that he could not sleep much. He also had performed some

<sup>1</sup> Tameer-e-Hayat Junly-August-1 P. 30

<sup>2</sup> Puran-e-Chiragh, Abdul Hasan Ali V. B, p. 134



mystical practices with other famous personalities of that era such as Maulana Abdul Qadir Rae Puri. These practices helped to create a revolutionary soul in him and built this personality to carry on his Islamic mission successfully.

### **His Major Works:**

After completing his formal education, his first destination was Nadva where he became a teacher of Arabic literature and Quran in 1934. This was his first assignment and he carried out it very well. He stayed in Nadva and made plans for its development and progress alongwith his assignment as teacher. His second objective was to change the atmosphere of Nadva. According to him, "At that time Arabic and history were prevailing over the curriculum of this Madrasa. There were different reasons behind it. The big reason was the personality of Allama Shibli. He had been considered the founder and the architect of Nadva. Every one at Nadva had cherished desire to become like Allama Shibli. This trend had affected the progress of Nadva negatively. With the passage of time the founder of Nadva was forgotten and its bad impact was obvious in the atmosphere of Madrasa. Maulana Sayyid Sulaiman Nadvi was concerned over this matter. Students of Nadva had command over Arabic and Urdu languages and that was the mark of prominence for Nadvatul Ulema at that time. There was no atmosphere of preaching and propagating the message of Islam. Students had no enthusiasm about that. It was a matter of great concern for a person who was a preacher of Islam by birth, and who was educated and trained for this only purpose. Maulana Abul Hasan started conveying his thoughts to students and a new atmosphere started emerging in Nadva. After some years, his efforts brought some fruits, and by his relentless struggles and efforts he infused the passion of serving Islam and preaching its messages and instructions in students."<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Muffakkir-e-Islam, P. 145

In 1935, there was a discussion all over India that Dr. Bheem Rao Ambedkar is seriously considering to change his religion and belief by embracing the other one. Maulana's elder Dr. Abdul Ali was very keen to invite non Muslims to Islam. He handed over the task of inviting Dr. Ambedkar to Islam, to his younger brother Sayyid Abul Hasan Ali, Who was just 21 years old at that time. Maulana reached Mumbai and met him. He specially listened to him and very humbly exchanged views with him. Maulana very frankly told him to embrace Islam alongwith his people and this is the only way of success in this world and the world after that. But Dr. Ambedkar embraced Buddhism later on.<sup>1</sup>

In 1938, Maulana prepared the syllabus of theology for Aligarh Muslim University. The then Head of the Theology Department, Maulana Sulaiman Ashraf had specially requested him to do so. Maulana stayed there for two months fir the preparation.

At a time when there was chaos and disorder like situation all over India and Muslim league was demanding a separate Muslim state, due to his opposition to this demand Maulana Hussain Ahmad Madni came under direct attacks from supporter of Muslim League. The Khaksar Tehrik added the fuel in the fire. Ulemas in general came under harsh criticism. Maulana Madni's was a very much respected personality for Maulana Abul Hasan Ali, so he stood to him by an authentic and historical criticism against Muslim league and Khaksar Tehrik.<sup>2</sup>

He was impressed by the writings of Maulana Sayyid Abul Aala Maududi, the the founder of Jamate Islami. In 1941 Abul Hasan met him, Maulana Maududi arrived in Nadva, then Maulan Abul Hasan Ali

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<sup>1</sup> Muffakkir-e-Islam, P. 148

<sup>2</sup> Swanch Muffakkir-e-Islam, P. 162.

actively participated in the activities of Jamat but due to some personal reasons, he quit the Jamate-Islami.

As we know that from his childhood he was inclined to the preaching and familiarizing Islam in Indian subcontinent. After quitting Jamate Islami Maulana chose Tablighi Jamat for this purpose. Maulana had a great respect for Maulana Mohammad Ilyas. Maulana Ilyas also considered him the dearest one. Maulana Abul Hasan Ali started participating in all activities of Tablighi-Jamat. He was very committed and dedicated in this mission. After some months his dedication proved fruitful. Jamat spread its wings in Lucknow and adjoining areas. Students of Nadva and their teachers also participated with great enthusiasm. Maulana visited different places and addressed large gatherings from its platform. In 1943, he rejoined Darul Uloom Nadvatul Ulema formally on insistence of Allama Sayyid Sulaiman Nadvi.

Maulana always felt himself associated with Arabs, their cause and Arabian Peninsula. He always felt their pains and tried to find out ways to cure it. He made every possible effort for the betterment of Arabs. In his first visit to Hijaz, Maulana farsighted the dangers which were hovering over the heads of Arabs. In this regard, he wrote a letter to the then Crown Prince of Saudi Arabia Prince Saud briefing him about the potential danger, which were waiting to infiltrate the nations. He also suggested him measures to face them. This letter has been published with the title name of "Bain-al-Jibaya-wal-Hidaya".<sup>1</sup>

After the partition of 1947, Indian Muslims were feeling insecure. This feeling of insecurity was pushing them away from the main stream, education and especially from religious education. It is true that Ali Mian Nadvi was not fully agreed with the system of education in Aligarh Muslim University. But he always considered it

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<sup>1</sup> Swanch Muffakkir-e-Islam, P.

as a precious property of Muslims. He made every effort to protect it from those who wanted to change its real face and character.

Apart from this he established "Dini-Talimi-Council" to teach Muslims fundamentals of their religion. Because Muslims were feeling themselves alienated and as citizens with no right. That's why Maulana established that council to teach them their own identity. <sup>1</sup>

In 1962, Jamia Islamia University was established in Medina Munawwara, King Saud himself wrote a letter to him and instructed the Saudi Ambassador to India to pursue Maulana to teach in the University, but Maulana sought excuse due to some reasons. After some days he was selected as a member of the advisory council of the University Maulana accepted it. In the same year "Rabita-tul-Alam-al-Islami" was formed and Maulana was selected as founder member of Rabita and actively participated in its activities. <sup>2</sup>

Despite his great interests in the affairs of the Muslim world and specially the Arab countries, Maulana was equally committed to the welfare of Indian Muslims. In a country with the majority of non-Muslims, Maulana always thought that until Muslims will not get stability and would not be self confident, their identity in this country would be a major problem for them. Maulana had diverted his efforts in this direction since 1947. But after 1963-64 when some parts of India witnessed awesome riots and massacres, he was very sad on these killings of innocent people. Then he intensified his efforts to form a council to promote harmony and peace in the country. In the beginning he tried to pursue some Hindu leaders who also had concern over these incidents to lead the council but there was no positive answers from them. Maulana himself visited those affected areas and then some of his colleagues decided to call "Kul Hind Muslim Mushawarati Ijlas" (an All India Muslim Consultative

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<sup>1</sup> Swanch Muffakkir-e-Islam, P. 284

<sup>2</sup> Swanch Muffakkir-e-Islam, P. 289

meeting.) The first meeting was held on 8-9 August 1964 in Lucknow. In its first meeting on 8th August "Muslim Majlis-e-Mushawarat" (Muslim Consultative Council) was formed to look into Muslims affairs in the country. Dr. Sayyid Mahmood was the first president of the council. The council had much importance at that time and played leading role for the welfare of Indian Muslims. <sup>1</sup>

The movement also organised different meetings at different places and times in Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Punjab and Haryana. This was a great movement and received very good response from other communities. It also played key role in the normalisation of relations between the two communities.

Apart from these efforts and services, there are many great works done by him for the betterment of Indian Muslims in particular and for the Islamic world in general.

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<sup>1</sup> Swanch Muffakkir-e-Islam, P. 297

## **A Brief Introduction of his Academic Works**

Sayyid Abul Hasan Ali Nadvi was a multi-dimensional figure. He was a reformist, a great preacher of Islam and a scholar of Islamic sciences. Beside all this he was a good writer. He has written more than 100 books on different issues and topics from history, religion and reforms to the culture and politics.

Here I am giving a brief introduction of some of his well know books.

### **(I) Rijalul Fikr wal Dawah:**

This book is a general and historical survey of the efforts made for reforms and modernisation in the Islamic world. It also presents a detailed introduction of some well known Muslim reformists of India and their contribution to the Muslim society. This book also contains some personalities, famous in the field of "Dawat", (call for Islam). We also find that this book deals with works of these famous personalities and their impacts on Muslim society. The objective of this book is that there was no time in the history when Muslim society had not accepted reforms and witnessed progressive thoughts

This book covers almost all major incidents of Islamic history form the 1st to 13<sup>th</sup> hijri. The book comprises on 5 volumes. In the preface of the first volume the writer has put a great note on the "need of reforms and renovation and its continuation in Islam." The writer has covered all major reform works from the first upto the seventh century of Hijri. He has stated all the reforming efforts starting from Umer bin Abdul Aziz to Maulana Jalaluddin Roomi. In this chapter, the writer has concentrated on the impacts of these reformative works on the society. <sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Syed Abul Hasan Ali Nadvi, Hayat aur Karname, By M.A. Haque , Hyderabad.

The American lady scholar Maryam Jamailah had expressed her views on this book saying, "I am very much impressed by this book . it has enhanced my knowledge on Islamic history , and in my view this is the greatest book on this issue."<sup>1</sup>

The ex-president of India late Zakir Hussain was also impressed by this book, despite his engagement in the Rashtrapati Bhavan, he studied this book and wrote a letter to Sayyid Abul Hasan Ali Nadvi stating

”محبت محترم! مجھے آپ کی اس کتاب نے بہت رلایا، کن کا ذکر ہے، اور کس کے قلم  
...<sup>2</sup>“

Dear Sir, your this book has made my eyes shed a lot of tears. Who has stated! and which kind of personalities have been described!

## **(II) Ma dha Khasira Al-Aalm Bi Inhitatil Muslimien:**

This is the most celebrated work of Sayyid Abul Hasan Ali Nadvi. This book has been translated into different languages. Due to his inclination towards Islamic history and his desire to present a well researched document on the causes and reasons behind decline of the Muslim rule in the world. Maulana thought to write this book in the period when he was even a student. There are different books on this topic and Muslim scholars have deliberately discussed these issues in their books. But Maulana made a different approach on this topic. His personal approach on the topic was to awaken and pull out Muslims from their inferiority complex against the scientific and materialistic development in the west. He has started this book by stating situations and conditions before the period of the Prophet Mohammad (p.b.u.h.) he has mentioned the social, political and ethical conditions of Arabs and impact of Islam on these things. Then the writer discusses about the Islamic government led by the Prophet a government with values and justice. After that he describes the

<sup>1</sup> Syed Abul Hasan Ali Nadvi, by Abdul Majia Al-Gheuri , Dar Ibn Kasir, Dames Ques Page369

<sup>2</sup> Rabita Special Issuc, P. 92

weakness and decay in the system of Islamic government, the inability of rulers, and the inner differences in Islamic empire which caused the infighting within the empire and led to the disintegration of the Muslim empire.

In a separate chapter he has surveyed the materialistic development in the West. In this respect, he has stated that these progresses are leading the western societies to the darkness and the family system is breaking down there which is very dangerous to the humanity, and only Islam can bring stability in this system.

At last, writer has concluded that it is the need of hour to transfer power from those making materialistic approach in every matter to those who analyze all things Within the broad frame work of Islam, and this is possible only when Muslims be committed to Islam.<sup>1</sup>

### **(III) Al-Siraa bain al fikra Al Islamia wal fikra Al Garbiyah:**

This book of Sayyid Abul Hasan Ali Nadvi deals with the problems and difficulties faced by the Muslim world and cultural differences between Muslim nations and the Western countries. He has discussed these issues and analyzed the problems with different angles. He has highlighted in this book that the biggest problem before the Muslim nations is that what is the stand they are going to take in this changing scenario, what kind of steps they need to take to make their countrymen live in peace with the West and their modern world and achieve requirements of modern period, and to which extent they are able to face this problem.

The writer states that the answer to these questions will decide the status of these people on the world map, the future of Islam there, and the sustaining power of Islamic spirit in these Muslim countries.

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<sup>1</sup> Syed Abul Hasan Ali Nadvi, Abdul Masjid Al-Gauhari p. 371



In this background the writer has mentioned many personalities, revolutions and Islamic organizations in the Islamic world and their role in reformative activities. He has also stated stands of governments on these issues and its pros and cons in dealing with these problems. He has specially mentioned in this book that if the newly educated generation is able to deal with these problems, will it give peaceful, just, secure and stable system under the shade of Quran replacing the system which only promotes materialism.<sup>1</sup>

This book of Sayyid Abul Hasan Ali Nadvi invites scholars of Islamic countries to ponder on these issues.

#### **(IV) Al-Sirah-Al-Nabaviyya:**

Sayyid Abul Hasan Ali Nadvi was feeling a need to write a biography of Prophet Mohammad (p. b. u .h) on modern scientific methods. He was of the view that all new and old sources would be consulted, and the book would be based on original sources of Sirah literature such as Quran and the traditions. He wanted to avoid those biographies, which are like encyclopedia on that topic. The main features of this books are given below:-

- I. The writer has presented a deep study on the general condition of the world in 6<sup>th</sup> A.D. He also has described the disorder, corruption, the economic social and political turmoil and disability, the oppression of governments and the destruction and clashes, which were prevailing over the world.
- II. He has discussed the atmosphere in which the Prophet was born, the country where that Dawat-work was first started and why the Arabian Peninsula and Arab people were chosen to take this responsibility against others.

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<sup>1</sup> Abul Hasan Nadvi, Abul Majid Al-Ghauri, p. 375

- III. He has mentioned the general economic, social political and ethical situation of Mecca at the time of birth of the Prophet. He has also covered situation of Yesrib the old name of the city of "Madina" comprehensively, its political situation, military power and its economic and social conditions.
- IV. The situation of those contemporary powers and neighboring governments, which were the first to be addressed by the Prophet. The writer has also described the civilization and military power of this government.

This book is based on two major things. The first is the scientific approach and the second is the religious and informative approach; the two have never collided with each other.<sup>1</sup>

**(V) AL ISLAM: ATHROHU FIL HIDHARAH WA FAZLUHU ALAL IN SANYAH:**

This book is one of the most important books of Sayyid Abul Hasan Ali Nadvi. The writer has extracted materials from Arabic and other foreign sources whether it is new or old. This book presents scientific and neutral analysis of the blessing of Islam on humanity. This book presents a deep study and scientific comparison between Islam and other religions. It concentrates on ten major points, which are the foundation of Islam:

- I. The belief of oneness.
- II. Uniform civilization based on firm Islamic belief.
- III. Principles of unity and equality of human being.
- IV. Raising the women's status and giving them their due rights.

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<sup>1</sup> Mutal -e-Tasnifat Syed Abdul Hasan

- V. Announcements of the glory of human being and their high status.
- VI. A combination of religion and the world, unification of different groups and fighting factions.
- VII. To fight against hopelessness and pessimism and to create sense of hope, confidence and dignity in human being.
- VIII. Use of science and wisdom to get benefits from them, even in religious issues, and to urge people to analyse nature, and reality of human being.
- IX. To find out a sacred link between religion and science.
- X. Existence of groups, which can check the irregularities and can see the ethics and etiquettes of individuals and nations<sup>1</sup>.

This book has got wide acceptance in India and abroad.

**(VI) Al Qadyani wa-Al- Qadyaniyat:**

A seminar was held in Lahore in January 1958 on the topic of Qadyaniyat. The great scholars of the East attended the seminar. The scholars from Arab countries such as Syria, Egypt, Iraq, had no clear knowledge about this particular group. So they demanded a book on this topic so that they could be able to have a clear vision and stand on this group. At last they demanded Sayyid Abul Hasan Ali Nadvi to pick his pen on this burning topic. Earlier Maulana had written many valuable articles on this issue. This book of Maulana Abul Hasan Ali Nadvi was published in 1958 A.D. It presents clear picture of Qadyaniyat, its activities and their misleading propoganda to spread the idea of this new sect. This book deals with this idea in a scientific way and provides a neutral analysis in a modern style. Some followers

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<sup>1</sup> Mutala-e-Tasnifat Syed Abul Hasan Ali Nadvi, Prof. Mohsin Usmani, P. 76

of Qadyaniat have themselves accepted the importance of this book. The book depends on historical facts rather than controversies, and has evidences and strong proof rather than slandering, making fun and hurting sentiments. It is unique in its approach and style. It also discusses the founder of this sect Mir Qadyani with different analysis, scientific approach. It also has highlighted situations, contradictions and ground realities working behind Qadyaniyat.

This book has declared that Qadyaniyat is an attack on the Prophet Mohammad. It also questions the authenticity of Almighty's declaration that no Prophet will come again. Mohammad B.P.U.H. is the last Prophet and now it is the responsibility of his followers to carry out his mission for the betterment of human being.<sup>1</sup>

**(VII) Al-Muslimoon-Fil-Hind:**

In early fifties when Maulana was on a visit to Middle East and interacted with people there, there were some repeated questions before him such as:

- I. What is the number of Muslims in India?
- II. Are there religious buildings?
- III. Do you have ulemas and scholars?
- IV. Are there mosques?
- V. Is there any person who reads Quran very well?
- VI. Are there people in India who can understand Arabic language?

These questions were evident that Arabs have no clear knowledge about the Muslims of India. Then Maulana felt the need to write a book on this particular topic. He collected information from

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<sup>1</sup> Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi, *Al-Ghawari*, P. 391-392

different sources and presented a very good and a very informative book on Indian Muslim.

The book gives us information about India and its Muslim population since old time till the contemporary period. It also discusses some aspects of religious, social and cultural life of India. It has also information about the developments and progress, which came to India with the advent of Muslims here. This book also points out the reforms and renovations brought by Muslims in India. It gives details about Islamic art and sciences promoted by Muslim rulers and Muslims scholars and writer. Besides, it provides information about religious and educational centers in India. Apart from that, the book discusses the nature, ethics and qualities of Indian Muslims with their past and present and also highlights major issues and problems faced by the present-day Muslims in the country.<sup>1</sup>

#### **(VIII) Rawa-e-Iqbal:**

Maulana Abul Hasan Ali Nadvi was very much associated with Allama Iqbal and was a great fan of his poetry. He was very much impressed by his poetry, which deals with the glory of Islam and Muslims and laments on their present situations. Allama Iqbal has urged Muslims in his poetry to re-establish their commitment with Islam to regain their glorious past. He has described these things again and again in his poetry in different tones and styles. Maulana had also similar thoughts about these things and that was the reason that he was very much inspired by Iqbal and his poetry. Maulana has tried through this book to introduce Iqbal and his thoughts among Arabs and to highlight his way of thinking and his approach to Islam in the Arab world.

This book is the explanation of Iqbal's philosophy, as the son of Dr. Iqbal, Mr. Javed Iqbal says that the writer of this book has

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<sup>1</sup> Syed Abul-Hasan Ali Nadvi, Abdul Majid-Al-Ghauri, P.403

presented aspects of thoughts and philosophy and that is in a style, which suits the feeling and sprit of Dr. Iqbal. Maulana himself is of view that my love and affection for Dr. Iqbal is due to the similarity in our thoughts.<sup>1</sup>

**(IX) Fi Masiratil Hayat:**

This is an autobiography of Maulana Abul Hasan Ali. He has described in this books about the origin of family and his family lineage, which has migrated from Medina to India and settled down here. This family had come to India only to preach Islam and propagate its philosophy. He has also stated the atmosphere in which he was born, and its contribution to the development of his personality. He has started this book from the family background, memories of childhood and major incidents and events in his life. He has also namely mentioned the names of his teachers and personalities who impressed him and those whose meetings and their companies benefited him. In this regard he has also mentioned ulemas, devotated Saints, preachers, scholars and thinkers whom he met with and gained from. In addition to these important things related to his personal life, he has mentioned about those centers, organizations and councils which were either established by him or he had participated in the foundation ceremonies of those organizations or was present at different occasions of these organizations or council. All these organizations have been introduced in this book highlighting their importance and special services.

In view of all these qualities of the book and its coverage, the great Egyptian scholar of Arabic and Islamic studies allama Ali Tantavi has mentioned in the preface of the book, as follows:

“It is not a story of his life only, but it is a book of history and a book of literature. The writer has described events in the book as its is

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<sup>1</sup> Syed Abul Hasan Ali Nadvi Al- Gharui. P. 404

happening before our eyes. This is a book of information about scholars, their meetings, and it is also a social register which shows qualities, rituals, habits and conditions of people of India".<sup>1</sup>

This book is originally in Urdu and has been translated by Dr. Jafar Masood Hasani Nadvi into Arabic and has been published from Darul Qalam Demascus.

**(X) Rehlat-wa-Mudhakirat:**

This book is based on the memories of a tourist of Middle East. The tourist is no other than Maulana Abul Hasan Ali. He had paid a visit to the capitals of Middle East countries in 1951. The visit was made to study the social, scientific and religious situations of this part of the world. The other objective of this trip was to be introduced with their leaders and thinkers and to discuss with them religious and scientific affairs, Islamic issues, systems of reforms and educational project. One of the main purposes of this visit was to introduce India in these countries. For Maulana Abul Hasan Ali, a purpose of the visit was also to inform them about the experiences of reform works and related activities witnessed by medieval India in this regard. During his visit, Maulana was keen to record all talks and remarks of every day.

After going through this book, the reader will find that he himself is talking with those Arabs quoted in the book. The writer has made a very commendable effort to present all kinds of events, talks and statements in their real shapes and contents. The writer has quoted talks of Arab scholars and experts in their own dialects and style of talking. The book has reflected very clearly the personalities of those quoted in the book and presents the culture and atmosphere of that time. There were neither psychological conflicts ideological clashes nor social disorder nor the society was in any disarray about

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<sup>1</sup> Syed Abul Hasan Ali Nadvi Al-Gharui. P.393

any future turmoil and disturbances. That is why these memories on papers are like collection of pictures telling the real story of the society. The reader can enjoy the real atmosphere of those incidents and feel that he is living in the same period.<sup>1</sup> The book is well organized and has enviable expressions and styles, because it is by a person, who feel himself a part of that society.

Apart from these valuable books, Sayyid Abul Hasan Ali Nadvi has written many more books on different topics and issues. He has also presented some precious papers in different seminars and meetings. In all these books his major focus is the propagation of Islam, its glory and a general appeal to Muslim to get back their glorious past by following the real spirit of Islam.

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<sup>1</sup> Syed Abul Hasan Ali Nadvi Al- Gharui. P.405



## **Chapter 3**

### **An Analytical Study of His History Writing**

- 1. His inclination to Islamic history and culture**
- 2. His contribution to the Islamic history writing**
- 3. His place among the Indian writers of Islamic history**

**CHAPTER III**  
**AN ANALYTICAL STUDY OF HIS**  
**HISTORY WRITING**

**HIS INCLINATION TO ISLAMIC HISTORY AND CULTURE**

Maulana Sayyid Abul Hasan Ali Nadvi was born in a family, which had a glorious history. He was brought up under the guardianship of some eminent personalities who were very much interested in history. It is a well known fact that a boy inherits the features and qualities of his family, which come generation by generation. That was the same matter with Maulana Sayyid Abul Hasan Ali Nadvi, who was keen and interested to collect materials of Islamic history and present it before people in a way, which can create in their heart an emotional touch to their religion and culture. The family background of Maulana had played a key role to create a taste of history in him. Though he could not enjoy the guardianship of his father more than 7-8 years, but this period of time was enough to have an impact on his personality. He got the taste of history from his father alongwith the commitments for doing some thing better for Muslim Ummah.

As we know that his father was a great historian of his age and his book "Al-Aalam" has status of encyclopedia on eminent personalities of Indian subcontinent. This book is considered a great contribution to Islamic history and biography writings and covers biographies of almost all important scholars whether men or women. In addition to this book he has written some more important books having some history related topics. But his most famous book is "Nuzhatul Khwatir" as Maulana Sayyid Abul Hasan Ali Nadvi himself points out:

“My father’s main concentration was on writing books and articles. Apart from his engagements in Nadva and his clinic, he would have managed some time for “Nuzhatul Khwatir”.<sup>1</sup>

The family factor is very strong in this regard and it will not be wrong, if we say that he was the real heir of that tradition. This family of Syeds, which had migrated from Arab Peninsula to the Indian soil for preaching Islam, had very rigid and strict system to preserve its origin and history of the family, which meets a branch of the Prophet Mohammad’s grandsons Hazrat Hasan’s family. Maulana Sayyid Abul Hasan Ali Nadvi has himself criticised this strict family system saying “this family went in preserving of its origin to an extent which is not allowed in Islam.”<sup>2</sup> Maulana inherited this family quality but in different shapes and kinds. He utilised it in a completely different style of history writing because he was living in a period when it was necessary to fortify and defend Islam and its foundations and instructions. Maulana applied this quality very well to build a fence against attacks on Islam. Maulana also adopted this spatiality of family to accept big challenges of the time. He was living in an era, which was an era of chaos and uncertainty. Islamic empires including India were dismembered. Muslims were thrown out of power. They were facing problems in all spheres of life. They were frustrated. They had no idea and plan. Their future was bleak and there were no rays of hope. Their religion was under attacks and their values were being targeted from every corner. At this juncture, Maulana used his skill of history writing, which was transferred to him as family distinction to boost their morale. In this period of complex vision, he stood side by side with Ulemas of Deoband who were making sacrifices in this fast changing period, which was adding every day a problem to their already existing problems.

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<sup>1</sup> Karwan-c-Zindagi, Abul Hasan Ali, P.66

<sup>2</sup> Karwan-c-Zindagi, Abul Hasan Ali, P. 21

The other factor which played a prominent role in promoting his interest in history, was the guardianship and training of his elder brother Dr. Abdul Ali, as it is mentioned earlier that this family was famous for its services to Islam and Indian Muslims, and mothers traditionally used to tell stories of ancestors to their children to prepare them for sacrifices, so Dr. Abul Ali was much impressed by values of his family and specially by the personality of Sayed Ahmad Shaheed who never took care of his life when it came to make sacrifices for the defense of Islam. History has proved that he got martyrdom while fighting with army of Raja Ranjeet Singh. When Sayyid Abul Hasan Ali came under his guardianship, he basically trained him to carry out this great legacy. He infused in him interest in Islamic history and culture, specially the history of his own family. The first of its kind effort to create in him an ambition and desire for the Islamic history and especially for the history of personalities was his suggestion to Sayyid Abul Hasan Ali Nadvi to translate an article on Sayed Ahmad Shaheed into Arabic. The translation was published in the famous magazines of Sayed Rasheed Raza "Al-Manar" Sayed Rasheed Raza published it later on in shape of a book and that was very encouraging for him. Maulana himself writes; "my elder brother had intention that I should have deep relations with Sayed Ahmad Shaheed because he was the pioneer and leader of our family."<sup>1</sup> The translation of this book encouraged him and he started having interest in the Islamic history. He not only read about the prominent personalities of his family but he also went through biographies of heroes of Islam and history of glorious past of Muslim Umma. By this way he extracted an idea to unite Muslims and urged them get back their past leadership and glory by following Islam, its rules and instructions. This idea became the base of his writing and his mission of life later on. There are some other major factors, which played key roles in his interest in Islamic History and culture.

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<sup>1</sup> Swana-e-Muffakkir-e-Islam, Bilal Hasani, P. 122

Now I will examine some things, which show his interest in Islamic history, values and culture.

As we know that Maulana was evolved in an atmosphere, where Islamic values and cultures were parts of life. Every thing was cloured with spiritually. He was brought up in a family, which always made efforts for an Islamic government and Islamic rule that's why when Khilafat was dissolved and a movement was started in India in support if it, this family actively participated in this movement. These Islamic values and culture have suitable place in his writing and we also find that he always deals with these spiritual and Islamic issues and matters even when he writes on any other issue.

He has written many books related to history and biographies of some eminent personalities of Islam and particularly those who have their own rule in serving Islam and Muslims in India. For the same, he has written "Rijalul Fikr-e-wal-Dawa". In this book he has covered all major personalities, who have active participation in reform works and gave Islamic governments of their times a positive direction. From Hazrat Umer bin Aabdul Aziz to Sayed Ahmad Shaheed and Shah Waliullah, who were great reformists of their periods, he has covered almost every historical aspects of their particular time. His choice of these personalities and way of discussion clearly shows how he was focused on the Islamic history and how he was concentrated on his family mission to glorify Islam and to urge Muslims to show their commitments to for getting back their glory by following the guidance of Islam.

He also introduced Indian Muslims and their culture to Arabs when he felt that there was a vacuum between Arabs and Indian Muslims. This idea struck the mind of Maulana Sayyid Abul Hasan Ali Nadvi when he was on a visit to Arab countries. There were questions about Muslims in India, their numbers, conditions, their places of worship and their association with Islam. He felt a pressing need of a

book on this topic and then he introduced Indian Muslims to Arabs by a book called "Al-Muslimoon Fil-Hind". This book is very comprehensive introduction of Indian Muslims, their culture, their rituals their institutions and their way of life.<sup>1</sup>

According to Maulana Nazrul Hafiz Nadvi who is a teacher of Arabic language and literature at Nadva and was close to Sayyid Abul Hasan Ali Nadvi that he "Abul Hasan Ali" had been repeatedly saying in his speeches that he is a student of history. It is true if some one says that his association with history from prompted him to write such nice books related to history. He has also defended Islam from Qadyaniat by his book "Al-Qadyani-wal-Qadyaniat". He composed this book on demand of Arab scholars, who wanted to know about the reality and history of that group called Qadyaniat. They found only Abul Hasan Ali to write on this issue because of his interest and deep knowledge of Islamic history. Their choice was perfect. He neither criticised them without proof nor made fun of them but exposed their reality with historical evidences.<sup>2</sup> He has written many more books on history, which would be discussed in the 2nd part of this chapter.

This is a brief introduction of his focus and inclination to history now I want to give some examples of his interest in Islamic culture.

From the beginning to the end of his life, he was adhered to the Islamic culture. His mother had played a very strong role in his training as the grand ambassador of the Islamic culture. When he was pursuing his education at Luck now under the supervision of his brother Dr. Abdul Ali, during his period he had interest in western education. When his mother was informed, she was shocked and advised him to avoid all other things than Islamic education, Islamic values and culture. The instructions of his mother became his ideal

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<sup>1</sup> Thaqaful Hind, v. 52, Issue 4, 2001, P. 121

<sup>2</sup> Sayyid Abdul Majid Al-Ghauri/ Abul Hasan Ali Nadvi, P. 391

and he was proud of that. He always felt pain whenever and wherever the Islamic culture under threats. It was his great enthusiasm, which prepared and encouraged him to write a letter to the Crown Prince of Saudi Arabia Prince Saud. He had written this letter at a time when the petrol dollar was influencing minds of Arabs and their culture. In this letter, he had given some suggestions to the Prince to save Islamic culture and values from foreign influences. He had also mentioned that a control at early stage is the only way to strengthen the principles upon which the Saudi government was established.<sup>1</sup>

In 1950-51, he performed another Haj and observed a changed Saudi society. As he writes "I had come here in 1947 and have come now after a 3 years gap, but I am feeling that the society is changed. From the markets to minds, western culture and economy of western countries have gripped every thing. No body knows that how many minds and thoughts have changed under beautiful Arab dresses".<sup>2</sup>

Maulana was very much attached with Islamic culture and was of view that there should not be any compromise on this issue. He visited, Syria, Egypt and Sudan for this purpose, and held meetings on these sensitive issues and specially addressed youths and educated generations, who were the prime target of western influences. There was very positive response from all sections of Arab society. The young generation was impressed by his thoughts, ideas and his positive approach to save Islam and Islamic culture from western influences.<sup>3</sup>

He was also equally concerned over threats and plans against Islamic identity of Indian Muslims. The threat was looming large from a long period of time but it surfaced with strength after 1947. There were some rights in which Muslims were specially targeted.

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<sup>1</sup> Bilal Hasani Nadvi, Swaneh-Mufakkir-e-Islam, P. 231

<sup>2</sup> Karwan-e-Zindagi, P. 356

<sup>3</sup> Mufakkir-e-Islam, PP. 250

Thousands of Muslims lost their lives. Maulana visited these affected areas and made some council to look into the matters of these uprooted Muslims.

The dangerous threat to the identity of Muslim in India was posed in 1980 after the fall of Janta Government, when Hindutava forces raised their voices against minorities specially Muslims. There were some relaxations in the functioning of pro-Hindutava organisations. Vishva Hindu Parishad held a secret meeting in April 1984, where they received some suggestions for genocide against Muslims so there could not be any Muslim group or organisation, which could make its presence felt in the country. They also claimed Gyan Vapi Masjid at Banaras, Idgah of Mathura and Babari Masjid at Ayodhya. Mualna Abul Hasan Ali felt this danger and wrote a detailed letter to Mrs. Indira Gandhi. In the letter Maulana did not raised complaints on behalf of Muslims but he highlighted dangers faced by the country and its harmony, and urged her to save India form these threats.<sup>1</sup>

One of his major contributions to save the identity of Indian Muslims and their culture is his country wide movement against the Supreme Court interference in Muslim Personal Law and Shriah through Shah Bano case, in which the chief Justice had misinterpreted some verses of Quran, and now there was a question mark on Muslim's identity. At that time, Maulana Abul Hasan Ali was the Head of the Personal Law Board. He started a movement for the same, Muslims were mobilised and the government was compelled to present a bill in the Parliament to amend the law.

He was committed and focused on preserving the Islamic identity of Muslims in India and in other countries, to achieve this objective he wrote biographies and autobiography where he presented

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<sup>1</sup> Abul Hasan Ali, Karwan-e- Zindagi, p. 91



Muslim luminaries as role model for the new generation he also composed some books which shows dignity and glory of Islam and invite Muslim youth to take back their glorious past and to present Islam as a system of governance and a system of peace and justice.

## **HIS CONTRIBUTION TO THE ARAB-ISLAMIC HISTORY WRITING**

Sayyid Abul Hasan Ali Nadvi is one of the most prominent Islamic history writers of the Indian subcontinent. There are many historians who have chosen Islamic history as their main subject and have concentrated on its different aspects. But Maulana Sayyid Abul Hasan Ali Nadvi has adopted a different way from them in his approach to the Islamic history. As it is passed, Maulana was very much concerned over the fading values and Islamic culture. He also had started making efforts from his childhood to inform Arabs in particular and Indian Muslims in general that they are real leaders and heroes of the world. He made innovative approach to Islamic history to strengthen his mission for making Muslims beware of their spiritual, ethical and humanitarian duties to the world. The innovative approach in the sense that historians in the subcontinent before him, were not concentrating on some particular points in their writings because of some principles of historiography. But he has focused on some major points according to his mission of the preaching of Islam (Dawat -wa- Tabligh).

Sayyid Abul Hasan Ali has discussed different issues of different periods, some times he has discussed some issues of pre-Islamic Arab world and in other books he has taken issues related to Islamic era and also has chosen deal with some issues of reform works and reformists in the Indian subcontinent. But I have to take some of his books, which are related to the Arab Islamic history writing. These books are the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> volumes of "Tariqhe Dawat-o-Azimat", "Madha Khasera -Al-Alam bi- Inhitatil Muslimeen". I have also taken his book on biography of the Prophet Mohammad. I have specially chosen this book to compare it with other biographies of Prophet Mohammad s.a.w. which are composed earlier.

First of all, I take 1<sup>st</sup> volume of “**Tariekh Dawat-o- Azimat**”. In this volume he has covered different personalities, who have carried out reform works in their periods. The first among them is the personality of Umer bin Abdel Aziz with reference to his reform works in the first century. He has started the book discussing the social and political situation of Umayyad period. He is of view that behaviour of the Umayyad government and general conditions were inviting a revolution against it because the system of government was changed. There were discriminative feeling of Arab and non-Arab origin. The pre-Islamic biasdness reoccupied their minds. The Baitul Mal was being misused, it had become like personal property and estate. It was observed at that time that pre-Islamic era has come back and wants to revenge of its absence of 40 years from Arab society. He has described these bad elements of the Umayyad government and their impact on the society. Besides these negative aspects, he has also mentioned the causes and reasons behind changes in society. He has also given reasons, which played key role in the changing of the system of governance in that period.

Besides this aspect of the society, there were some noble and good personalities, who were considered ideals in piousness, Islamic values. They had their impacts on Muslims but political situation had influenced every thing. The politics was deep and wide in ranks, pious personalities had limited approach. Now politics had gripped every aspect of life and royal family had become the sole controller of all government affairs. Situation worsened and values began disappearing from the society. There was no hope of revolution because Umayyad government was strengthening itself day by day. The only hope at that time was a miracle which could change fortune of Muslims and Islamic world. Umer bin Abdel Aziz filled this vacuum, and established a high valued government, very much similar to the government of 1<sup>st</sup> four Caliphs. Responsibility of Khilafat (Islamic governance) changed his life and he became very simple and gentle

man. While mentioning revolutionary reforms of Umer bin Abdul Azis, Maulana Abul Hasan Ali Nadvi has described the policy of tax collection, which was the main source of the government. Umer bin Abdul Aziz changed it and proffered to concentrate on the Islamic rule rather than tax collection.<sup>1</sup>

Due to his commitment to the Islamic rule, he wrote to his governors to spread instructions of Islam in their regions and to ensure that people are following it. He had also mentioned in his letters some specific Islamic laws regarding basic issues of an Islamic society.

His other prominent works highlighted by Sayyid Abul Hasan Ali Nadvi are:

- I. His efforts to spread and generalise Islamic values in citizens.
- II. His other prominent work, which has great importance in the Islamic history, is that he was very much focused on collection of traditions of the Prophet and making it safe and secure.

The impacts of his reforms were positive. It was feared that due to his change in tax policy, the state may face financial problems. But reforms yielded good results and the whole state and everybody felt prosperity and betterment.

Maulana Abul Hasan Ali Nadvi has mentioned about the prosperity but has not stated the reasons and process of changes, which gave good responses. The reason may be that, his purpose of history writing is not to search roots and causes behind any event, as usually done by other historian. But his purpose of history writing is to highlight things, which could help urge Muslims to reform their own lives. That is the main reason why he has chosen only those

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<sup>1</sup> Tarikh Dawat o Azimat, V I, P. 38

personalities for the first volume of the book who have been reformists in their ages.

Actually the first volume of the book comprises history of reform works in Arab Islamic society in different periods. After discussing the reform works and efforts of Umer bin Abdel Aziz in this regard, Maulana Abul Hasan Ali Nadvi has opted Allama Hasan Basri, who was the great reformist of his time. He has briefly introduced the situation of Islamic society, the system of governance and a general condition of law and order. He says that the system of governance and law and order was collapsed after the death of Umer bin Abdel Aziz. Arabs once again had returned to their old traditions and social system. Then arises the personality of Hasan Basari, who made sacrifices for preaching Islamic values and ethics among Muslims and making Islamic guidance a role model for Islamic society. The Islamic society of 2nd century was highly influenced by foreign impacts. As a reformist Hasan Basari studied the society, set his goal to bring changes in lives of Muslims and Islamic society, he also collected information about all sections of the society, and then he started his reform works. The first and foremost challenge before him was to nail out black sheep from Islamic society and they were "Munafiqin" (Muslim by appearance) of their time. His major target was to highlight them and their activities. He had an opinion that these elements are posing threat to Muslim society and they should be declared out of bound. His message was widely accepted and he got popularity among masses because he had raised a much needed issue and tried to quell it.<sup>1</sup>

After Umer bin Abdel Aziz and Hasan Basari and their reform works Maulana Abul Hasan Nadvi has taken issue of Abbasid dynasty. There is no detail of their rulers, their system of governance and society, the writer has only mentioned that the borders of the

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<sup>1</sup> Tarikh-Dawat-o-Azimat vi p. 66

government were expanded at large. The rulers had free hand over "Baitul Mal" and were lavishly expending on their comfort. The writer also finds no difference between Umayyads and Abbasids in their system of governance and their ignorance to Islamic values. He has specially mentioned Baghdad as a centre of art, culture and civilization. Ulemas and scholars were thronging there from across the empire. It was also home of some great preachers of Islam, who were committed to their mission and nothing could divert their attentions from their mission. But Maulana has not mentioned how Abbasid dynasty was established and what were the factors, which led to the decline of Umayyad dynasty. He has simply mention that Abbasid came after Umayyads.

In line of these developments and progress in the whole Muslim empire especially in the capital Baghdad, he has mentioned the activities of collecting and composing traditions of Prophet and commentaries of Islamic jurisprudence. He has also given names of some personalities, who were pioneer of his field.

He has specially mentioned Imam Ahmad bin Humbal and his resistance to the misinterpretations of some aspects of Islam.<sup>1</sup> Maulana Abul Hasan Ali Nadvi has severely criticised "Mutazala" sect of Islam. He has described them as modern scholars of their time and influenced by philosophy of Greece and Roman Empire. Their philosophy flourished in Mamoon's period who was highly influenced by their thoughts. They (Mutazala) were highly educated and intellectual persons, nobody had courage to compete them on any issue related to Islam and they were interpreting Islam in different ways in the light of modern philosophies. Those who were committed to the real philosophy of Islam and sources of its guidance were facing problems with the increasing authority of Mutazala. The Islamic society was divided between two sections. One was matching its tone

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<sup>1</sup> Tarikh-Dawat-o-Azimat v. 1 p. 100

with Mutazala who were spreading their thoughts under the government umbrella, and the other sections was totally against the use of modern philosophy to interpret Islam and they were concentrating on Quran and traditions of the Prophet.

After describing these things, Maulana Abul Hasan Ali has written that under these circumstances, there was a pressing need of a reformist, who could fend off controversies and save Islam from direct threats. In these conditions, the personality of Abul Hasan Ashari emerges and plays a great role by adopting a middle path between the two sections and so he saved Islam from the danger of inner controversies and differences. He not only made reform works but also composed many valuable books in this regard.<sup>1</sup>

Islamic empire was expanded to the forecast and west, many kingdoms and governments were included in the Islamic empire, enemy armies were defected, but feelings and thoughts of their citizens were not conquered. Those who were still having soft corners for their erstwhile culture and religion created new ideas and ways to interpret verses of Quran and distorted the meaning. This time there was also chaos and uncertainty.

At this stage Imam Ghazali emerges and makes efforts to reform the Islamic society. Maulana Abul Hasan Ali has described social and political situations of his time and his services to Islam and Islamic society. He has also mentioned two great personalities of that period. One is the name of Abdul Qadir Jilani and the other one is Allama Ibne-Jauzi. Maulana has mentioned in detail about the social and political conditions of their period, the development of their personalities and their services to Islam and Muslim society.

After describing lives and works of great Muslim reformists and their reform works, Maulana Abul Hasan Ali Nadvi has taken the

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<sup>1</sup> Tarikh-Dawat-o-Azimat vi p p. 113

political history of that period. He has written conditions and situations in the periods of Nooruddin Zangi and Salahuddin Ayubi. Earlier he had covered dangers faced by Islam from within and now he is discussing about foreign dangers and specially threats posed by Christian governments of the West. In 490 A.H. Christian forces marched towards Syria and captured some parts of its territory. He says that in 1099 A.H. Christian militia took over control of "Baitul Maqdis". Then Noorudding Zangi came and created a passion and courage in citizens to fight back against Christians. At last, he defeated them and took back the captured territory.

After Zangi, Maulana has given a detailed commentary on the contribution of Sultan Salahuddin Ayubi to boost the dignity and glory of Islam. He has mentioned about his life and development of his personality as a true Muslim and real follower of Islam. He has specially described his victory in the decisive war to take back the control of "Baitul Maqdis".<sup>1</sup>

Maulana Abul Hasan Ali Nadvi has separately stated the attack of the Tatarian forces on Islamic empire. He has stated that the reason behind the attack was a wrong decision of the Muslim kings namely Allauddin Mohammad Khawarizam Shah, who had ordered the killing of Tatarian traders then the same behaviour was repeated with envoys of their government, who had come to talk on this issue. This act provoked Changez Khan to attack on Islamic empire.

Maulana has analysed the attack in the light of divine laws of power changes due to the deteriorated religious and social situations. Then he has given details about their movement towards Islamic government, their acts of brutality and then how Islam impressed them and they embraced it and made sacrifices for its dignity<sup>2</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> Tarikh-Dawat-o-Azimat p. 267

<sup>2</sup> Tarikh-Dawat-o-Azimat p.303



Maulana has simply written only one reason for this attack and has not analysed the political, economic and social conditions of the Islamic empire, which easily fell to Tatarians.

At the end of the book, Maulana has presented the general condition of society and its mentality in the seventh century. In this context he has described to Maulana Roomi and his service's to reform Islamic society at a time when it was gripped again by a wave of philosophy and discussions on baseless issues.<sup>1</sup>

### **2<sup>ND</sup> VOLUME OF TARIKH-E- DAWAT-O-AZIAMAT:**

The 2nd volume of Tariekh-e-Dawat-o-Azimat is based on life and works of Allma Ibne Taymya and an introduction to the political and social situation of his era. The writer has introduced, before every thing, the atmosphere in which this multidimensional and dynamic personality was evolved. Then he comes to the political power and slave dynasty of Egypt, which was ruling there for 13 years before his birth. One king of this dynasty named Ghulam Saiffudin Qatar is the first person who defeated Tatarian army.

Maulana Nadvi has mentioned that even if Islam was the base of constitution and was official religion of the country, but the king and his associates had full fledged power to do whatever they want. The country was ruled by Turkish ruler who always had sense of superiority against other citizens. He used to speak his Turkish language in general at all official places. The ruling section of Turkish origin was keen to build mosques and appreciate Ulemas for their research and reform works. There was no specific quota for Turkish men but naturally they were holding higher posts in the government. In 697 A.H. the ruler Hisamuddin tried to distribute land among poor farmers but there were strong opposition form higher classes.

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<sup>1</sup> Tarikh-Dawat-o-Azimat p. 355

During the same period non-Arabs were leaving their impacts on the culture, rituals and civilization that resulted in a mixed civilization. Nobody could have differentiated between Arab and non-Arab civilization. There was a need to make some reform works to make Islamic values felt in all aspects and parts of Islamic society.

Despite these differences and tussle between different values, cultures and life standards, the scientific and educational researches were going on, Ulema and scholars were doing their best to make researches on different topics. There were schools and learning centres of traditions of Prophet. But according to Maulana Nadvi, though the books were being composed but there was lack of research. In the some time, every school of thought was confined to its limit. Every one was extolling his own thoughts and views. There were different groups of scholars, who were advocating their own thoughts even mysticism was on its peak.

The situation was deteriorating and there was need of a personality who could deal with all these things.

After describing all those political, religious and social situations, Maulana Nadvi has stated about the life and works of Allama Ibn-e-Taymiya, highlighting his prominent role in the war between the government in Damascus and Tartaris in 703 A.H. in which Muslim forces defeated Tatarian army. Allama Ibne Tamiya had also contributed to reform Muslim society which was reeling under inner differences and baseless discussions on beliefs.<sup>1</sup>

Maulana Nadvi has divided different aspects of his life, his works and his writing and has discussed all these issues under specific topics. Maulana Nadvi has also concentrated on the reform works of Allama Ibne Tamiya. As we find that major parts of the volume is covered by detailed commentaries on his works in social

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<sup>1</sup> Tarikh Dawat-o- Azimat p., v-2, p.65

and religious life of the society. He "Nadvi" has also presented him as a hero of Islam to urge Muslim youths to be committed on guidance and instructions of Islam, as Ibn-e-Tamiya has done without fearing the curse and brutality from the ruling sections.

Some major aspects which have been highlighted in the book are:

- I. His God fearing personality
- II. His reform works in society and religion according to the situation and problems.
- III. His qualified pupils who carried out his legacy, such as Hafiz Ibn-e-Qaiyim, Ibn-e-Abdul Hadi and Hafiz Ibn-e-Rajab, their lives and works.

#### **(II) MADHA KHASIRA AL-ALAM Bi- INHITATIL MUSLIMIEN:**

This is the most important book by Sayyid Abul Hasan Ali Nadvi and has global fame. This book has a great deal of Islamic history alongwith an introduction to the condition of pre-Islamic era. The writer has covered almost all aspects required in the history writing whether it is social, political or economic. Beside all these characteristics, the book and its content clearly reflect the personality of the writer, his way of thinking and analysing any historical event.

He has divided this book into five chapters and all chapters have subheadings on different issues. The first chapter deals with the political and financial system in pre-Islamic period, the second one states how Islam emerged in Arab Peninsula and had its impacts on the society, and the third describes the Islamic society which had just evolved, the Islamic government, the system of governance and Islamic civilization. The fourth chapter discusses about Europe's dominance and the modern European civilization. The fifth and last, tells about

values and virtues of Islam. After this brief introduction of the book, I am giving details about the historical events mentioned in the book.

In the first chapter, the writer has presented a general survey of the role of religion in the pre Islamic era. He has mentioned that the Christianity had lost its importance in the society. The rituals and other unrealistic things had replaced the spirituality in different countries it had different faces. The Roman Empire was badly hit by modern philosophy. All concentrations were on economy and nothing else. He has also stated an over all social condition of Egypt, Iran, India and China and has highlighted some important features of these countries. Egypt at that time was facing severe economic crisis despite its green fields. He has described the bad conditions of women in Iran and different aspects of India's social, political, religious and economic conditions of that period. He has specially mentioned the class system of the society, worship of idols, sex as a part of religion, status of women as a slave and the emergence of Buddhism and its decline in India. He has also analysed social and religious conditions of Iran and the importance of fire worship and deteriorating family system there. He was also covered social and political situation of Arabs and women's status there in the pre-Islamic era. At the end of this chapter, the writer has given a brief introduction to the political and financial systems in the pre-Islamic era. According to him there were rigid political systems in almost every parts of the world. The Monarchy was the only system of governance and every Monarch had belief to exploit its people and get tax from them for his lavish expenditure. The society in general was divided between the richest and the poorest. There was no other class the humanity was being crushed under the wheel of illegal, illogical and anti human system. This was the prevailing situation of the world. The whole world was expecting a different kind of system. A system based on security, justice and peace<sup>1</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> Abul Hasan Ali Nadvi, Madha Khasira Al Alam, .... P. 1-10

In the second chapter, the writer has emphasised that how the world was waiting for the new system of life and how Islam fulfilled their hopes and desires. He has given detail how the Prophet Mohammad s.a.w. struggled against malpractices of his period to replace it with a just, peaceful and natural system of life. There was a revolution, now the severely divided society was unified. There was unity and equality between them. They were renovated. They rose with new spirit and prevailed over the world.

Then writer has taken the issues of the Islamic leadership. He has mentioned virtues and qualities of the Islamic era, claiming that this period is a golden era in the history of human being. He has also described the period of the first four Caliphs as a exemplary period of a highly civilized society. There were all kind of Islamic civil laws and all these were applied in every part of life. The peace and security had become a strong reflection of the system.

Then he comes up to the decline in the Islamic values and differences in the political system. He has stated that Islamic leadership depends upon two words "Jihad" and "Ijtihad", in their broad meanings, but these two things were fading away in the Islamic society. He has given some reasons of the decline as mentioned below:

- I. Monarchy system of the government.
- II. Changes in the Islamic system of life.
- III. Separation of religion from politics.
- IV. Political controversies within the government.
- V. Misrepresentation of Islam. Emergence of the forces which weakened the Islamic empire.

He has specially mentioned the role of Ottoman Empire and contribution of its rulers to spread Islam and defend its dignity for a long period of time. They were expert in all government related affairs, from the war strategy to the administration. But there were ethical decline and a time came when the last fort of Islam was conquered by European forces.<sup>1</sup>

After stating the reasons and causes behind decline of the Islamic empire, the writer has taken Europe, which had its control over major parts of the world. The whole fourth chapter of the book deals with different aspects of Europe, its culture, society and political system. The writer has a view that the present European society is not a reflection of 20<sup>th</sup> century's Christian culture as many people believe, but it is the extension of the erstwhile Greek and Roman culture, which was empty of spirituality, human values and full of luxurious life. The writer has also presented different aspects of the two old civilisations and has tried to match their features with the new European culture.

After going through this chapter which is based on an overall view of the writer about 20<sup>th</sup> century Europe, it seems that he has examined Europe and its developments from the materialistic point of view and having a faith that no development is commendable without spirituality and religious activities. The writer has proved with different references and verses of Quran that all materialistic developments in Europe have no deep roots and humanity can never be satisfied with these achievements. He has mentioned that whole Europe is gripped by materialism, and even the Christianity is marred by it and all its activities are based on these new thoughts.

The writer has specially mentioned the movement of nationalism in Europe, saying that it could be possible only when the spirit of

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<sup>1</sup> Madha Khasir Al Aalam.... P. 167-191

Christianity faded up from the European society, according to him this nationalism is the same as it was developed in the earstwhile Roman empire when they had excluded themselves from rest of the world rating themselves above all cultures and civilizations. The same situation exists in Europe. Europeans feel themselves superior than others.

In reference to this issue, the writer has expressed his concern over the increasing sense of Arab Nationalism in West Asian Countries and he makes European responsible for it saying that they have injected this idea in some Arab revolutionary youths to revenge from the Turkish Empire and to undermine the Islamic unity.<sup>1</sup>

Then he comes to the innovations and developments of European in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. He says, no doubt that Europe has made some very innovative things. But all these achievements went in wrong direction when they separated religion from their modern achievements and civilization. Their spirituality went behind their achievement. Materialism prevailed over everythings family system broke down. He has also mentioned their success in making Atom Bomb and nuclear weapons, which are being used as weapons to threat small countries.

At last, he has concluded that whole Europe with all its achievements is going back to the pre-Islamic era and there is a need of a new system and new leadership, which can ensure both spirituality and materialism.

In the fifth chapter, the writer has concluded that the whole world is going back to the pre Islamic like situations. The European philosophy has influenced the world. All qualities and powers are being used to control more and more resources to consolidate the

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<sup>1</sup> Madha Khasir Al Aalam.... P.230

economy. No body in Europe pays serious attention to familiars the instructions of cherist.

He has criticised Russia on its policy of no religion and only materialism. He has also expressed concern over the stands and behaviors of Asian nations saying that all these countries are indiscriminately following path of western materialism. They should had chosen another way after their independence. But they could never overcome this crisis. He has also exclaimed that these western thoughts and philosophies have succeeded to influence Arab's mind.

Then, he has advocated that the leadership of the world should be transferred from the unrealistic hands to the realistic and deserving people, and Muslims are the real contenders for this leadership. They only can complete Europeans in providing a just and secure system against theirs dangerous and suitable system for the humanity. It is only possible for Muslims when they will abide by the utterances of the Prophet Mohammad and his guidance for success in this mortal and the world after that, and have complete faith in Allah and commitment to obey all his rules and regulations described in Quran and traditions of the Prophet. This leadership would be responsible to prepare its followers spiritually and infuse in them enthusiasm for their religion. Then it should also have industries including the industry of war materials. The Islamic leadership should also prepare a group to lead in fields of research and technology. All these things will help lead a world full of peace, security and justice.<sup>1</sup>

At the end of the book, the writer has highlighted the importance of Arabs, their natural resources, their faith power and the importance of their land as center of Islam and Muslims around the world. Then he has concluded that only they deserve for the world leadership through some reforms in their system such as, living a very

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<sup>1</sup> Madha Khasir..... P. 301



simple life, bringing awareness in the society, liberating their trades and business from foreign hands. All these things will ensure their leadership as it was in the past.<sup>1</sup>

This book is over all a book of history. Some times, the writer has avoided rules of historiography. When it comes to Islam, Muslims and Islamic leadership, he has glorified all of them and concluded that they are superior. Though this is against principles of history writing, but he was not writing a special history book, his only aim was to boost moral of Muslims through history because he was living in a period when Muslims all over the world were demoralized and there was no ray of hope before them and Europe was emerging as a role model for the world. In this background, he is successful in his effort.

### **(III) AL-SIRAH-AL-NABAVIYAH:**

This book of Maulana Abul Hasan Ali Nadvi is a biography of the Prophet Mohammad as reflected by its name. I have chosen this book because it has also a great deal of history along with the biography. The other purpose to choose this book was, that most of the Islamic history writers in India have necessarily written about the Prophet such as Maulana Shibli and Sayyid Sulaiman Nadvi and an overall view on this book will help to compare it with others. He has concentrated on the following major points.

- I. He has concentrated on old Sirat sources. He has specially concentrated on these major books of prophets biography such as sirat Ibn-e-Hisham, Zadul Maad of Inbn-e- Qayyim Al- Jauzi and Al sirat-Al-Nabaviyah of Ibn-e-Kasir.
- II. He has tried to have a match between the contents of sirat books and that which is mentioned is Quran and traditions, the main sources of sirat.

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<sup>1</sup> Madha Khasir..... P. 288-323

III. Concentration on religious aspects, leaving others views, scientific approach and explanations.

IV. He has gained from all modern and old books written on this topic, and also from foreign sources.<sup>1</sup>

The writer has started this book from a general survey of religious conditions in some major parts of the world in 6<sup>th</sup> century B.C. He has described, pre Islamic conditions of Arabs The religious activities of Indians, who had divided their society into different sections. Egypt was reeling under oppressive and rigid religious activities. Syria a part of Bazentine empire was following capitalism of Romans. The poor people were suffering. Iran was also facing likewise situations. There were corruptions every where in the world. The situation was demanding a new system.<sup>2</sup>

In the second chapter, the writer has described a geographical, political and social survey of the Arab Peninsula. In this chapter he has specially taken Quraish tribe their activities and their social status among Arabs. He has also mentioned the history of Mecca, its importance in Arab. Import and export activities by traders of Mecca. He has also written about, industries, civilization and literature in Mecca. Their expertise in war plans, and their social and religious status.

Then he starts the biography of the Prophet from his birth to the period when he was opted by Allah for introducing a new system of life, and that was Islam, his secret activities for Islam, his agreement with some personalities from Madina. His preparation for migration to Madina.

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<sup>1</sup> Thaqaiful Hind, Z.H.Nadvi ICCR, v, 52, issues 4 p.372

<sup>2</sup> Al-Sirah-Al -Nabaviyah, Abul Hasan Ali, p.30

Then he specially writes about Madina, which was new home of the Prophet. Then writer has described, the natural, political, social and economic conditions of Madina, activities of Jews and their enmity towards the Prophet, and specially the change of Qibla from Biatul Maqdis to Kaaba.

Then he comes to a topic, which is very important in the history of Islam and Islamic civilization, and this is the war of Badar, that was very crucial. It was decisive for the future of Islam. The writer has given detail on preparedness of war, the atmosphere and the result.<sup>1</sup> In line with the war at Badr, the writer has described all major and small wars between the followers of Islam and others. He has also given a space to the agreement between the Prophet and leaders of Quresh, which is usually, know as Suleh Hudaibiyah.

From battlefield to social life, Prophet Mohammad s.a.w. was committed to his mission of preaching Islam and spreading a system of peace and justice. In this regard, he wrote letters to different kings including the king Hiraqal of Bazentine Empire, Kisra Pervez of Persian empire and king Najashi of Ethiopia. He also wrote letters to Arab leaders. All of them responded positively except Pervez of Persia who tore the letter and said that the writer is like my servant.<sup>2</sup>

After these events, the writer has discussed the war of Khaiber and Mauta and has also described in detail the biggest event in the history of Islam and that is the victory and complete control over Mecca. The writer has discussed reasons and causes which urged the Prophet to lead Islamic forces to Mecca. This was the biggest event because Muslims had taken control over the center. He also has written in detail, the behaviour of the Prophet and his treatment with

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<sup>1</sup> Abul Hasan Ali Nadvi, Al-Sirah-Al-Nabaviyah, P.168

<sup>2</sup> Abul Hasan Ali Nadvi, Al-Sirat Al-Nabaviyah, P. 253 , Darul Shuruq, Jeddah, 1992

his opponents. Every one was surprised on his decision how he pardoned all those who were his dangerous enemy?<sup>1</sup>

After conquering Mecca and retaining the center of Islam, now the Prophet's mission was almost complete. The writer has specially mentioned the last Haj profound by the prophet and his last address before his followers in which he gave valuable guidance and instructions.

At the end of the book, the general situations at that time, and especially his qualities and virtues in all aspect of life and which are enough for guidance<sup>2</sup>.

This book has been written in a very simple style an impressive way of expression has been applied for special occasions. The writer has only concentrated on events, which took place in Prophet's life and never paid attention to counter forgeries and wrong propaganda of western writers against the Prophet and Islam. He has also not applied principles of history in this book as used by Shibli Nomani and Sayyid Sulaiman Nadvi.

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<sup>1</sup> Al-Sirat Al – Nabaviyah, P.272

<sup>2</sup> Al-Sirat Al –Nabaviyah, P. 326.

## HIS PLACE AMONG THE INDIAN WRITERS OF ISLAMIC HISTORY

The Indian subcontinent has been a center of sciences, arts, and fine arts. It also has been a fertile land for scholars, researcher, writers and historians. Some historians have concentrated on the Islamic history and they have made some commendable works in this field.

Maulana Sayyid Abul Hasan Ali Nadvi is one of the most prominent historians of the subcontinent. He had been usually saying during his speeches that he is a student of history. In this profession he has created innovative ways in history writing. He also has been committed to his objective while writing on any history related topic. He was a specialist of Arab-Islamic history and was very much aware of social, political, economic and cultural structure of Arab and Islamic world. It was his prowess in the Islamic history which made him prominent among his contemporaries in the Indian subcontinent and abroad, it was proved in the conference on "Qadyani and Qadiyaniat" at Lahore, when Arab scholars requested to write about this new sect of Islam and to highlight its historical reality. Nobody in the Indian subcontinent could show courage to do this great job and to carry out this very difficult mission. Maulana Abul Hasan Ali Nadvi not only accepted the request but proved with historical evidences and analysis that Qadiyaniat has no ground in its claim and its leaders and preachers are making blunders when they talk about authenticity and reality in their claims for Qadiyaniat.<sup>1</sup>

But when it comes to mark his place among the Indian writers of Islamic history writing. It is necessary to compare his work, his style, principles and objectives in Islamic history writing with other writers of Islamic history. When we discuss this issue we easily find

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<sup>1</sup> Abul Hasan Ali Al Hasani Al Nadvi/Abdul Majid Al Ghauri, P. 301

that Islamic history writing in India was started with the establishment of Muslims Government here, Urdu replaced Persian in the 2<sup>nd</sup> half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century in all subjects including history.<sup>1</sup> But Islamic history writing with some principles was started by Sir Sayed Ahmad Khan and promoted and developed by Maulana Shibli and Sayyid Sulaiman Nadvi there are also many other writers of Islamic history in India but to clarify his position, I will compare his works, style and his methods of history writing only with Maulana Shibli and Sayyid Sulaiman Nadvi who are considered pioneers of his field.

First of all I take style and methods of Maulana Shibli though Maulana Shibli was a great scholar having command on different subjects but when he arrived in Aligarh College and studied books on modern subjects, including history written by Europeans scholars, he observed that that there were many faults in their interpretations of Islam and life of the Prophet. At this juncture, history became his special subject, and he committed to give them befitting response to their allegations in the same way and styles.<sup>2</sup>

One of his different objectives of history writing was to provide history materials in Urdu to new generation which has no knowledge of Persian and Arabic. One of these was also to encourage Indian Muslim by their past-glory, who were having inferiority complex against other citizens after collapse of great Muslim empire and abolition of Khilafat.

Maulana had a plan to write a history of Islam and Islamic governments and rulers with a very transparent way, so their should not be any kind of opportunities to attack Islam and Islamic civilization.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Darul Musannefin Ki Tarikhi Khidmat, Ilyas Azami, P. 8

<sup>2</sup> Darul Musannefin Ki Tarikhi Khidmat....., p. 51

<sup>3</sup> Darul Musannefin Ki Tarikhi Khidmat, p. 59

When we compare the style and methods of Maulana Sayyid Abul Hasan Ali Nadvi with style, methods and objectives of Maulana Shibli, we find that there were no defined method and objectives of Maulana Nadvi for Islamic history writing.

As far as Maulana Shibli's objective to urge Muslim youth to be real followers of Islam, by presenting glory of their past, is concerned, Maulana had same objective with minor differences, Maulana Nadvi was aiming to urge Muslims of the world and specially Arabs to lead the world.

In comparison with Shibli, Sayyid Abul Hasan Nadvi was of view that history should be composed in a style which yields spiritual benefits to readers<sup>1</sup> while Maulana Shibli says that historian should be neutral while writing on any aspect of history. He should only write the fact about an event.<sup>2</sup>

Maulana Shibli and Sayyid Abul Hasan Ali Nadvi have been the writers of biography of the Prophet. Maulana Shibli had an objective in his writing of biography and that was to give answers for allegations made by Europeans in their own styles. So, he made some principles and tried to apply it in the biography. But Maulana Nadvi has made no such principles and methods, he has simply composed events happened during the life of the Prophet. There is only one thing similar in their writings of biography of the Prophet, and that is the main sources of knowledge about the Prophets biography, Maulana Shibli has described in his 13<sup>th</sup> principles of history writing that in the prophet biography. Quran and traditions would be the main sources.<sup>3</sup> In the same way Maulana Nadvi has made Quran, six major books of

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<sup>1</sup> Tarikh Dawat-o- Azimat p.15

<sup>2</sup> Darul Musannefin Ki Tarickhi Khidmat, p. 88

<sup>3</sup> Darul Musannefin Ki Tarickhi Khidmat, p. 90

traditions and primary books on this topic his main sources of materials.<sup>1</sup>

Maulana Shibli was keen to defend Islam and Muslim rulers of India from baseless propaganda of western writers. he has also written many books including "Aurangzeb Alamgir Per Aek Nazar", and has vehemently defended Aurangzeb on his policies of against interest of Hindus. His only aim was to defend the harmony of the country, which was under attack through history.<sup>2</sup> On the other hand, Maulana Nadvi was only interested in writing about those personalities who had carried out reform works, such as Shah Waliullah, Sayed Ahmad Shaheed and others though he had practically made some efforts to bridge that gap between the two communities Hindus and Muslims.

In this 10<sup>th</sup> principle of history writing Maulana Shibli has said that historian should not give a conclusion, he should only write events in its real shape.<sup>3</sup>

On the other hand Maulana Nadvi has given a specific conclusion on every issue as we see in his book "Madha Khasira Al-Alam".

With these comparisons, it clarifies that Maulana Shibli has taken history as a subject and as a matter of research while Maulana Nadvi has taken history as a source to forcefully present his mission of "Dawat-o-Tabligh", (the preaching of Islam) and to urge Muslims to be committed on instructions of Islam and guidance of the Prophet. He is very successful in his objectives.

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<sup>1</sup> Darul Musannefin Ki Tariikhi Khidmat, p. 120

<sup>2</sup> Thaqaatul Hind, V-52, Issues 4-2001, p.372

<sup>3</sup> Darul Musannefin Ki Tariikhi Khidmat, p. 88



One of the most prominent writers of Islamic history in India is, Maulana Sayyid Sulaiman Nadvi. He had had multidimensional personality. He is the person who has completed the series of the book "Sirat-un-Nabi" by Maulana Shibli Nomani. He has also some valuable works on medieval India history. His book on Indo-Arab relations is valuable and is like a document on this topic.

When it comes to a comparison between him and Sayyid Abul Hasan Ali Nadvi, it becomes a very hard work; Sayyid Sulaiman Nadvi was a published Maulana Shibli who had great deal with history. He was also associated with history at a time when Muslims and their rulers were under severe attacks by western writers and some Indian historians including Muslims. It was a time when the gulf between Hindus and Muslims was widening. Now it was responsibility of every serious historian to counter the false propaganda against Muslims to create a rift between Hindus and Muslims, Sayyid Sulaiman Nadvi himself writes, "Today it is the biggest obligation for Muslims to write a very perfect and balanced history of India". He had also said while presiding over a meeting of Historical Congress "History has its own role in interests of nations, so objective of Indian history writing in future should be the improving of unity between the different parts of India, not to dismember it."<sup>1</sup>

Maulana Sayyid Abul Hasan Ali Nadvi had come from a background, where his ancestors had been great reformist such as Sayed Ahmad Shaheed. he was trained in an atmosphere where the first aim was to preach Islam and familiarizes its instructions as system of life and mother of all success as his mother had instructed him when he was studying in the University of Lucknow.

So, these two personalities had two different approaches towards history. Sayyid Sulaiman Nadvi was making a recognized and

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<sup>1</sup> Darul Musannefin Ki Tarickhi Khidmat, p. 186

popular approach and was writing very balanced and impartial history. While Maulana Abul-Hasan Ali Nadvi had a targeted approach and that was to bring reforms and glorifying the past to urge Muslims to retain it.

There is only one similarity between them and that is in the writing of Prophet biography. Both have chosen Quran and traditions as their main sources.

## CONCLUSION

Islamic history writing in India has started from the establishment of the Muslims rule in India. There were many individuals who have written important books on history, which have informations about kings, their governments, stories of bravery in the battlefield and other things. There were no principles and rules to be applied while writing on any issue related to the Islamic history.

Inspite of a long tradition of Islamic history writing, I have started my first Chapter from the second half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century which is called the starting period of Islamic history writing in Urdu. I have mentioned some books on this period. such as "Qissa Ahwal-e-Ruhela" of Rustam Ali Bijnauri and "Tareikh-e-Deccan" by Monam Khan. There were some other individuals who had composed some books of history. The 19<sup>th</sup> century is considered the golden period of history writing in Urdu.

In this period, Fort William College Calcutta, has played a remarkable role in Islamic history writing, their was a special centre for translation in the college which provided some important history books. I have described the contribution of this college in detail in my dissertation. When Fort William College was loosing its glory and its activities were shrinking to a considerable extent, their was Dilli College which got fame in the same period and provided some valuable history books through translation. Some teachers of this college like Master Ramchandra and Maulvi Karimuddin have written some important history books. Till this period, history books were being composed without observing any method and principle. These books were field with praises and stories about kingdom and battlefield. Then comes the period of Sir Syed Ahmad Khan who is the first writer of Islamic history in India. He set some methods and principles, based on the principles of modern historiography for Islamic history writing

in India. He has applied all these methods in his writings. He has tried to write a balanced, impartial and just history.

Then I have taken Maulana Shibli who is considered the pioneer of the Islamic history writing in India. His methods and principles for Islamic history writing are considered the greatest contribution by him to the Arab-Islamic history writing. I have given a brief introduction of some of his books and explained his methodology and principles.

In the same chapter, I have also described the significant role of Sayyid Sulaiman Nadvi in the Arab-Islamic history writing. I have elaborately mentioned his contribution, style and approach to the Islamic history writing. I have also explained his methods and principles comparing them with those of Maulana Shibli. In the last I have pointed out that some times he has differed with the methods of his teacher Maulana Shibli, and his intention was to write a very just, balanced and impartial history of India.

The second chapter comprises on the life and works of Sayyid Abul Hasan Ali Nadvi. First of all, I have presented his family background starting from his grand father to the other important members of his family. In this part I have given details about sacrifices offered by his family for Muslim cause as well for defence of Islam.

The second chapter of the chapter deals with the development of his personality. Here I have discussed the factors, which contributed greatly in moulding and shaping him as a multidimensional personality. In this regard, I have specially noted, the role of the healthy atmosphere of his house, his mother's special attentions and above all guidance and training of his elder brother Dr. Abdul Ali who was a beautiful combination of Modern and Religious Educations. I have also highlighted the role of his teachers and some other prominent-Ulema's in his career building. In this part I have also

mentioned some social and reformative works carried out by him in India and abroad.

In the third and last sub-chapter of this chapter, I have presented a brief introduction of his academic works. I have given main features of his famous books on different topics issues. The main concentration here is to give a summary of his important books, such as, *Rijalul-Fikre-Waddawa*, *Ma dha Khasria al-Alam bi Inhitati muslimain*, *Rawaae-Iqbal*, *Al-Qidiyani wal Qadiyaniyat* and- *Al-Musliemoun fil-Hind* and some other books.

The third and the last chapter of my dissertation has been titled as "His Contribution to the Arab-Islamic History Writing". In the first part, I have discussed his (Abul Hasan Ali Nadvi) inclination towards Islamic history. Some of the main reasons behind this inclination are:

- I. His family background, his families tradition to preserve its origin and keep their ancestors great works alive in their mind.
- II. The special training of his brother who in the very beginning of his career as writer, handed over him an article on "Sayyid Ahmad Shaheed to translate it into Arabic. This translation was appreciated and later was published in the "Al-Manar" magazines of Sayyid Rasheed Raza. Maulana has told that this article has inspired me alot.
- III. He has inherited Islamic history writing from his father who was a great Muslim historian of his age.

In the second part of the chapter, I have discussed his contribution to the Islamic history writing. As my topic is "Arab-Islamic history writing in India", I have selected only those books of Maulana Abul Hasan Ali Nadvi, which specially deal with this

particular aspect of history. I have chosen 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> volumes of "Tariekh-Dawat-o-Azimat", because only these two volumes are related to my topic. As well as I have taken "Ma dha Khasira al Alam.." and "Al-Sirah-Al-Nabaviyah". First of all I have pointed out historical importance of these books then I have analysed some parts of these books. I have also highlighted some places in his books where he is more committed to his mission of dawat-o-tableigh and reforms in the Muslim community rather than the principles of history and its methods. I have specially taken Al-Sirah-Al-Nabaviyah in my discussion to compare it with other biographies written by Maulana Shibli and Sayyid Sulaiman Nadvi.

The last part of the chapter comprises on a discussion about his place among the writers of Arab-Islamic history in India. I have mentioned some principles and methods of Allama Shibli and Sayyid Sulaiman Nadvi and then compared them with the history writing of Maulana Abul Hasan Ali Nadvi. I have concluded that at many places in his books, especially in "Ma dha Khasira al-Alam" Maulana Nadvi has avoided and neglected some principles of historiography writing and concentrated only on his sole mission and that is to urge Muslims to get back their lost glory, and he is very much successful in his mission.

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بحث جامعي

لنيل شهادة ما قبل الدكتوراه

تقديم

اشفاق ظفر

تحت إشراف

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