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Volume L11, Issue No. 3, August 2025

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Editorial

Let others boast of the pages that they have written; I take pride in those that I have read.¹

We are truly happy to present the Volume L11, Issue No. 3, October 2025 of the *Islam and the Modern Age*. It is absolutely imperative to reiterate our deep thankfulness to Professor Mazhar Asif, the honorable Vice Chancellor of Jamia Millia Islamia, for his unrelenting encouragement and guidance in the publication of this and the past issues of the Journal. Professor Asif is himself an exemplary scholar of a very high repute. It is indeed our good fortune to have him as the chairman of the editorial board of this journal. We thank him. We also thank the Registrar of Jamia Millia Islamia, Professor Md. Mahtab Alam Rizvi for his unconditional support. His administrative efficiency emboldens us to invest in academic endeavors. The Editor-in Chief, Professor Habibullah Khan is responsible for ensuring that the content quality of the Journal remains up to the superbly high standards he has set for it. The Assistant Editor, Dr Mohd Sayeed Anwar's hard work is stamped on each page of the printed matter that you will read in this issue. Indeed, there is an exemplar team out here that keeps the 'star' quality of this journal shining and I thank each member of it.

Religious teachings settle in the human mind in layers. Each layer is shaped by the one preceding it. The past perceptions act like successive influencers in the making of fresh ideas around religiosity and the people who follow a certain faith. Luckily the unchanging character of the Quran; the core text of Islam has frozen most of the Islamic teachings at a temperature beyond the possibility of thawing and change. However, it is the interpretations of this core that fluctuate and color the memory of men in different hues. No arguments are needed to establish that these fluctuations are as old as Islam itself. However, debates about who interpreted what, when, how and why is what is valuable for understanding the interactions of the unchanging with change.

Contextualizing the impact of these interpretations adds meaning to the whole narrative. A lot of the history of these interactivities is lost in the transference of notions from one mind to another. Passage of time itself is enough to corrode the original line of thought but whatever survives by virtue of its value and strength remains at the center of a futuristic take on ancient religions. This is what this journal is about.

The idea of modernity is one of the most imitated and marketed ideas. It is sometimes projected as an almost deified situation. People wear lacquered masks to be seen as 'well-fitted' in the social space that fascinates them the most. However, the truth is so well captured by Heraclitus when he says that we and our circumstances change so quickly that we can never be in a state of 'being' someone, but in fact we are always in a state of 'becoming' someone. The collection of articles in this issue particularly inclines towards the slant of capturing the continuous activity of becoming rather than the stagnation of being. They are based on scientific inquiry that questions, observes, formulates and tests hypothesis and arrives at structured logical deductions. The challenge here is to situate Islam in shifting time zones with the seamless smoothness of convincing connections between the past and the present. The authors have provided a strong Islamic backdrop and then created a modern scene break where the value of early learning is presented in a way that highlights their relevance in our current set up of here and now. Using a reverse chronological structure to prove a point in a modern time-line is complicated business because so many variables change in the time gap, but this is exactly what makes each of the write-ups here unique and valuable. I am grateful to the authors for their contribution.

Most humbly I am grateful to our readers because our enthusiasm for writing/editing/printing rests on their enthusiasm for reading. A big thanks to all the well-wishers of knowledge in general and this journal in particular!

PROF. FARHAT NASREEN

NOTE

1. Cf. Rodrigo Quian Quiroga, *Borges and Memory Encounters with the Human Brain*, tr. Juan Pablo Fernandez, The MIT press, Massachusetts, 2012, p. 23.

Hālāt-o Sukhanān-i Sheikh Abu Sa'id Abul Khair and Asrār-ut Tauhīd fi Maqāmāt-i Sheikh Abi Sa'id: The Earliest Specimens of Sufi Malfuzāt

INTRODUCTION

Sheikh Abu Sa'id Fazlullah bin Mohammad Abul Khair was born in Mayhna (also called Mehna or Meana, presently in modern Turkmenistan) in December, 967 CE (1st Moharram, 357 AH) and died in January, 1049 CE (440 AH). He received his early education in Mayhna and then moved on to Merv and then Sarakhs- two important centres of learning in Khurasan in those days, for further education. He studied all the branches of religious sciences and acquired proficiency in all the subjects commonly studied in those days. However, he was more inclined towards mysticism that took him to places and people to seek spiritual guidance from his preceptors. He spent much of his time in Merv and Nishapur, but finally settled in Mayhna. He turned his house into a *ribāt* (*sufi* hospice) where he himself would practice most difficult ascetic exercises. Soon he became very popular due to his openness as he was quite convivial and warm. However, he also came into conflict with the authorities and *ulama* (reputed scholars, mainly experts in religious sciences). It is interesting to know from his *malfuzāt* that in such conflicts it was Sheikh Abu Sa'id only who came out victorious, especially in polemics *vis-a- a-vis* those who were against the ways of *sufis*. He is counted amongst the earliest *sufis* who composed mystic poetry. His couplets became popular far and wide, even among the *sufis* in India.

His *malfuzāt* containing the anecdotes related to his life and relations with the contemporary *ulama*, rulers and masses were compiled as *Hālāt-o Sukhanān-i Sheikh Abu Sa'id Abul Khair* ('Mystical States and Sayings

of Sheikh Abu Sa'id Abul Khair') by his great-grandson Jamaluddin Abu Ruh¹ (d. 541 AH/ 1146-7 CE) in the twelfth century. Later, a cousin of Jamaluddin Abu Ruh namely Mohammad bin Munawwar² also compiled a more detailed account of the life of Sheikh Abu Sa'id known as *Asrār-ut Tauhīd fī Maqāmāt-i Sheikh Abi Sa'id* ('Secrets of God's Mystical Oneness in the *Maqāmāt*³ (a genre of poetry and prose) of Sheikh Abu Sa'id') sometime between 553-599 AH (1153/54- 1174-75 CE).⁴ He was first introduced to the Indian audience by one of his most contemporary Sufis- Sheikh Ali Hujwiri who met him in Khurasan and became his disciple. Perhaps these *malfūzāt* in detail reached India a little late.⁵ However, Sheikh Abu Sa'id's couplets and quatrains travelled far and wide in the Islamicate. His couplets were often recited in the *sufi* circles of the Indian Subcontinent. In this paper an attempt is being made to compare both the texts in the light of the socio-cultural environment of the period.

Malfūz (pl. *malfūzāt*) means, utterances, conversations, discourses, or, something worded, etc. *Malfūzāt* have been broadly divided into two- (a) those which were put together during the life time of the *sufi*, or a revered person itself; and (b) *malfūzāt* that are compiled after the death of the person concerned (mainly a *sufi*) by his disciples or family members. Usually, the first category of *malfūzāt* is considered more reliable and dependable than the second, as most of these were compiled when the person is alive and events are recorded immediately after the words are uttered, or events that happened. *Hālāt-o Sukhanān-i Sheikh Abu Sa'id Abul Khair* and *Asrār-ut Tauhīd* fall in the second category, compiled much after the death of Sheikh Abu Sa'id Abul Khair. Somehow, importance of these texts lies in the fact that these works were put to writing by the immediate family members of the Sheikh. They must have inherited authentic information about their great-grandfather.

ANTECEDENTS

History of mystic tradition known as *tasawwuf*, in Islam has been studied by dividing it into three phases. The first phase is identified as the period of 'quietists' (c. 661- 850 CE), when this was an individual phenomenon. Prophet (saws) Mohammad (saws) is identified as the

embodiment of those very qualities which a true *sufi* aspires to embrace in his life. The only difference between the Prophet (saws) and a *sufi* is that- while the Prophet (saws) is a recipient of the Divine Light and revelations, *sufis* are blessed through a chain of revered personalities, especially from the companions of the Prophet (saws), and his son-in-law Caliph Ali bin Talib.⁶ Many of the Companions of the Prophet (saws) also used to spend a life devoted to the cause of Allah, repenting for the past sins, humbling themselves and struggling to follow a virtuous path. Those who opted for the life of a mystic also aspired to follow the same path, i.e., of the Companions (*Sahābah*) of the Prophet (saws). The second phase in the process of growth of mystic tradition in Islam extends from the 9th to 12th century. This period is called the period of 'mystic philosophers' and the period of compilation of *Risālahs* (treatises or manuals) also. In this phase various groups called *garoh* or *mazhab*, based on the ideology of particular *sufi*(s),⁷ grouped themselves- sharing the same philosophical views. Advocates and propagators of their ideology were people who enjoyed immense respect in the society due to their ascetic practices and devotion to Allah, piety, virtues and propagation of the message of love and compassion. At the same time, they also compiled *risālahs* (mainly in Arabic) to convey their experiences, philosophy and teachings. Enormous literature was produced in this phase that had been constantly studied since then and these *risālahs* continue to be part of classics even today. One of the earliest *Risālahs* was *Risālah* of Qushairi (d. 1072/1074 CE). They also introduced certain doctrines, like those of *shukr*, *sahv*, *hāl*, *maqām*, *hulūl*, *ittehād*, *tanasukh*, *rijat*, *fana*, *baqa*, etc. however, it was Imam Ghazali who gave a new direction to the mystic ideas through his compilations. Third, and the last phase, can be traced to the period of organization of spiritual orders- *silsilahs*, where *sufis* selected their own spiritual territories and organized the life of their disciples on the basis of certain principles. *Ribāt*, *khānqāh* or *jāma'at khānah* (a hospice) became an important institution in the life of *sufis*. Here the disciples were trained and after their attaining some eminence, they were given diplomas (*khilāfat nāmahs*) and allowed to train others in the same tradition and propagate the mystic ideas of love and peace taught to them by their masters.⁸

In the second phase of the growth and expansion of mystic ideas in

the Islamicate and elsewhere, the tradition of compilation of *malʿufuzāt* also took roots. It can very well be considered a new genre of literature that came out, first in Arabic and then in Persian language. To Abu Saʿid Ibn al-Arabi⁹ (d. 952/953 CE) goes the credit to have compiled one of the earliest treatises on mystic ideas in the history of the Islamic World. After him, Abu Mohammad Jafar ibn Nusayr ibn al Qasim (d. 959/960 CE) digested a compendium *Hikāyat-ul Auliya* which was composed of anecdotes from the life of saintly figures and on mystic subtleties.¹⁰ Unfortunately the work has not survived. Somehow, one of his disciples Abu Nasr Abdullah al-Sarraj al-Tusi¹¹ (d. 988/89 CE) arranged the till date known information on mysticism (*tasawwuf*) in *Kitāb-ul Lumaʿ fil Tasawwuf* in Arabic language. Among other scholars who contributed to the field of hagiographical¹² literature on mystic philosophy and life of *sufis* are- Abu Talib al-Makki¹³ - a disciple of Abu Saʿid Ibn al- Arabi (d. 996-97 CE), and Abu Bakr Mohammad ibn Ishaq al Kalabazi¹⁴ (d. 998-99 CE). Work of Kalabazi was translated into Persian by one of his contemporaries namely Abu Ibrahim Mustamli (d. 1042-43) of Bukhara. Somehow, these works generally deal with the concepts, beliefs and relevance of ascetic exercises suggested or opted by the Sufis as their daily routine.

The first ever known intact work having biographical details is *Tabaqāt-ul Sufiya* compiled by Abdur Rahman Mohammad al-Sulami (1021-22 CE) in Arabic who was a native of Nishapur in Khurasan. Based on *Tabaqāt-ul Sufiya* of al-Sulami another work of the same name was anthologised by Abu Ismail Abdullah Harvi Ansari (1006-1089).¹⁵ However, it was al-Sulami's *Tabaqāt-ul Sufiya* that laid the foundation of a completely fresh genre of biographical or hagiographical literature where the life of *sufis* was narrated in a chronological order under different chapters called *tabaqāt* (layers). Al-Sulami was followed by Hafiz Abu Nuʿaim Ahmad ibn Abdullah (d. 1038-39 CE) who also arranged the biographical accounts of *sufis* in his *Hilyat-ul Auliya wa Tabaqāt-ul Asfiya* ('The Ornament of God's Friends and Generations of Pure Ones') in Arabic. Subsequently, Imam Abdul Karim Abul Qasim Qushairi penned his celebrated work known as *Al Risālah-al Qushairiyya fi ilm-ul Tasawwuf* in Arabic sometime in 1045-46 CE which summarises the life of earlier *sufis* and their compilations in a chronological order. Unfortunately, most of the writings of *sufis* of

early phase are now extinct, but we get to know from Qushairi that enormous literature on mystic ideas and practices was produced in this era. Qushairi also defined the various terms in vogue among the *sufis* to express their thoughts and experiences.¹⁶ Qushairi's contemporary was Sheikh Abul Hasan Ali ibn Usman al-Hujwiri (c. 1009-1072/73 CE) whose work *Kashf-ul Mahjūb* (in Persian) is ranked among the most remarkable works on the history of mysticism which also contains commentaries on mystical terminology. Imam Ghazali (d. 1111 CE) compiled various works on *sufi* philosophy with his own assessment and explanations based on his personal experiences, and justified these arguments in the light of the teachings of Quran and *Hadis*. However, a mystic who created a niche for himself in the circles of *sufis* of his time was Sheikh Abu Sa'id Abul Khair. While others before him and his contemporaries too, disseminated their ideas mainly through prose, Sheikh Abu Sa'id Abul Khair expressed his esoteric experiences and consciousness he attained in the path of seeking Truth through poetry in Persian. Incidentally, he was not only a contemporary of great *sufis* and scholars of his time, but also had the occasion to meet and converse with some of them, like- Imam Qushairi, Sheikh Ali Hujwiri and Bu Ali Sina, etc.

THE TEXTS

The *Malfuzāt* under discussion here- *Hālāt-o Sukhanān-i Sheikh Abu Sa'id Abul Khair* and *Asrār-ut Tauhīd fī Maqāmāt-i Sheikh Abi Sa'id* belong to the second phase of the development of mystic tradition in the Islamicate. It is interesting to know that the person to whom these *malfuzāt* belong is Sheikh Abu Sa'id Abul Khair who was the contemporary of many great personalities and prolific writers of his time, especially Abdul Karim Abul Qasim al-Qushairi and Sheikh Ali Hujwiri. However, the most important aspect of *Hālāt-o Sukhanān* by Jamaluddin Abu Ruh (d. 1146/47, a great- grandson of Sheikh Abu Sa'id) based on his *sukhan* (conversation, pl. *sukhanān*), is the first known biography which is dedicated to one single individual. It contains minute details about Sheikh Abu Sa'id Abul Khair from his birth till death, enclosing all the important events in the form of *hikāyāt* (tales, allegories; sing. *hikāyat*). However, like any other eminent

sufi, he is presented as a prodigy in his childhood and stories about his life which have an insistence on his having telepathic powers and ability to perform miracles (*karāmāt*). *Hālāt-o Sukhanān* consists of an Introduction beginning in a traditional manner with the praises of Allah and the Prophet (saws) (*hamd o sanā*) and suitably supported with Traditions of the Prophet (saws) (sing. *Hadīs*, pl. *Ahādīs*). It is followed by six chapters. The last portion contains the text of some of the letters exchanged between Sheikh Abu Sa'id and the renowned scientist and philosopher Ibn Sina (980-1037 CE). The concluding part has also been appended with some of Sheikh Abu Sa'id's couplets in Persian and Arabic.

Discussion on Sheikh Abu Sa'id's life is dealt with in the first chapter which says that he was from Mayhna and took his initial lessons in a traditional manner from a teacher Abu Mohammad Ayyari. Later, he was taught by Abu Sa'id Ayyari, Abul Qasim Bashr Yasin, Abu Abdullah al-Khazari, Abu Bakr Qaffal, Imam Abu Ali Zahir (all living in the town of Sarakhs), etc. These learned men of their time taught and trained him in all the known branches of religious sciences.¹⁷ Somehow, throughout the text there has been a lot of emphasis on the point that some of these teachers were the disciples of great mystics of their time and hence, they were able to inculcate in Sheikh Abu Sa'id a strong desire to take up a mystic path ultimately. For example, al-Khazari was the disciple (*murīd*) of Ibn Surayyaj, while Ibn Surayyaj was a student of one Muzni, and the last one was the student of the great jurist Imam Shafi'i. Similarly, Abu Ali Zahir was the disciple of Abu Nasr Sarraj, who was a pupil of Abu Mohammad Abdullah al-Murta'sh, and the last one was a disciple of the greatest mystic of the time Sheikh Junaid Baghdadi.¹⁸ Therefore, a deliberate attempt is made to justify that he was a true *sufi* having spiritual connections with the stalwarts of the world of mysticism and inheritor of their legacy.

Subsequently, he was blessed by saints like Luqman Majnun, Pir Abul Fazl and Sheikh Abul Abbas Qassab (of Amul). During this phase, he ventured out to many places from Mayhna like Merv, Sarakhs, Amul and Nishapur- these being the celebrated cities of Khurasan. He died in Mayhna in 1049 CE and was buried there. A very important aspect that has been emphasised in the text *Hālāt-o Sukhanān*, is that he was the follower of Shafi'i school of Islamic jurisprudence. Second

chapter briefly discusses Sheikh Abu Sa'id's interaction with his contemporaries of whom were both adversaries and friends. The third chapter specifically portrays the Sheikh as a man who could perform miracles. Anecdotes are put before in the form of *hikāyāt*. Since the claim for performing miracles has always been a subject of criticism, Jamaluddin Abu Ruh justifies these with the help of a Hadis of the Prophet (saws).¹⁹ Altogether, there are eleven *hikāyāt* that depict Sheikh Abu Sa'id as an extremely pious and virtuous man of his time. Also that, whatever he did, was in accordance with Sharia (Islamic canonical law) and his miracles were the outcome of his spiritual qualities. The fourth chapter is devoted to the discussion on steps of the Sheikh taken for the welfare of people. The last, i.e., fifth, chapter talks of the will (*wasīyat*) of the Sheikh. In addition to this, concluding part of the fifth chapter is devoted to the subject related to the encounter of Sheikh Abu Sa'id with Ibn Sina as both had the occasion to meet and had also exchanged a few letters as well. Here the author specifically insists on the point that despite Ibn Sina's being a great scholar of his time, he could not outshine the Sheikh in the realm of spirituality. Sheikh Abu Sa'id had the ability to read even what was going on in the mind of Ibn Sina. Interestingly, a letter of Ibn Sina in Arabic has also been reproduced here.²⁰ Again, fifteen *hikāyāt* have been appended herewith. These recount Sheikh Abu Sa'id's conversations with Ibn Sina, Imam Qushairi and others. These *hikāyāt* are interspersed with *abyāt* (sing. *bayt*, couplet) mostly composed by Sheikh Abu Sa'id himself. Lastly, Persian translation of letters of Sheikh Abu Sa'id to Ibn Sina with a detailed reply from the latter have been appended to the concluding chapter. Perhaps, these letters were obtained from some other sources, also suggesting that these were originally written in Arabic- a language in which all the important works were composed in those days.²¹

A more detailed account on Sheikh Abu Sa'id is *Asrār-ut Tauhīd fī Maqāmāt-i Sheikh Abi Sa'id* compiled by another great-grandson of the Sheikh namely Mohammad bin Munawwar.²² The main objective of the said work is to glorify the mystic achievements of Sheikh Abu Sa'id and elevate his stature over other *sufis*. It has been divided into three chapters (*bāb* sing./ *abwāb* pl.) and each chapter is sub-divided into sections (*fasl*). The work is more organised as compared to *Hālāt-o Sukhanān*. The first chapter is about the early life of the Sheikh, while

the second chapter is divided into three sub-sections dealing with the different phases of life of Sheikh Abu Sa'id. First *fasl* of the second chapter comprises 114 *hikāyāt*, while the second *fasl* has 127 *hikāyāt*. In the second *fasl*, a particular *hikayat* (number 94) details the happy sayings- *hikāyat o fawā'id*, of the Sheikh. Third section (*fasl*) of the second chapter encompasses the teachings of Sheikh Abu Sa'id mostly in the form of questions (asked by someone) and answers (from the mouth of the Sheikh). Here text of some of his letters to his contemporaries is also reproduced. The concluding part of *Asrār-ut Tauhīd* contains the couplets- *abyāt*, composed by Sheikh Abu Sa'id. It is the longest of all the chapters contained in the book, where mostly events of his performing miracles are detailed. The third chapter is briefly divided into three sub-sections- first containing his precepts- *wasīyat-hā*, whereas the second is devoted to the events of the last days of Sheikh Abu Sa'id. The third part is related to the miracles performed by the Sheikh and some of the incredible events that happened after him. All these events are encapsulated in 21 *hikāyāt*. While all the sections are full of anecdotes about his miraculous power, some of the miraculous events that happened after his life are also narrated.²³

A CRITICAL ESTIMATE AND EVALUATION

Hālāt-o Sukhanān and *Asrār-ut Tauhīd* are the two earliest known specimens of *malfuzāt* in the form of a complete biography of a person who is depicted as one of the most revered personalities of his time. What makes Sheikh Abu Sa'id Abul Khair stand out in the crowd? Stories narrated in both the works suggest that he had a huge following and possessed the ability to convince the people of different backgrounds through his miraculous powers. In most of the cases, people coming to him in the first instance, do not seem swayed by his stature. However, with his miracles and intuitive powers Sheikh Abu Sa'id would immediately turn them into believers. His association with the famous scholars and *sufis* of his time is highly emphasised upon to insist that he was a towering figure.²⁴ Traditional stories of conflict between the *sufis* and *ulama* (reputed scholars and jurists) are painted in a way that whoever came his way, did not return without carrying a lasting impression of Sheikh's spiritual assets. It is conveyed repeatedly

through the medium of *hikāyāt* that the Sheikh never took an anti-*ulama* stand, it was rather *ulama* who were against him. He is shown in conflict with Hanafis and Karramis of Nishapur alike who had even complained to Sultan Mahmud of Ghazni about Sheikh's involvement in anti-*sharia* activities. Sheikh Abu Sa'id was blamed for conducting *sama'* (organizing the event of singing devotional poetry along with playing on musical instruments), arranging huge and lavish banquets for the mystics, ascetics and common people out of nowhere or apparently having no means. He was also blamed by these *ulama* for some other activities which apparently are not approved in the law of *sharia*. It is also narrated that Sultan Mahmud handed over the matter to the *ulama* of both the leanings- Hanafi and Shafi'i. Fortunately, Sheikh Abu Sa'id came out clear of all the charges.

Somehow, the text indicates that in his days Hanafi and Shafi'i jurists did not go along well, and also that activities of Sheikh Abu Sa'id were in no way in confrontation with either of the two in the region of Khurasan under Mahmud Ghazni. Interestingly, Sheikh Abu Sa'id is projected as an admirer of Imam Abu Hanifa- the originator of Hanafi School of jurisprudence. He is also spiritually connected with Imam Shafi'i through a chain of three generations of *sufis*. Jamaluddin Abu Ruh in his *Hālāt-o Sukhanān* emphasises upon the superiority of the *sufis* over *ulama*, supporting the position taken by his great-grandfather *vis a vis* his contemporaries. That a person can become an *ālim* (reputed scholar) by acquiring knowledge of the prescribed texts, but a *sufi* is the one who not only has to have command over the different known branches of knowledge (*ilm-i zāhir*), but also needs to have mastery over spiritual knowledge (*ilm-i bātin*); and spiritual knowledge can be acquired only through ascetic exercises and utmost devotion to Allah. And that, both types of knowledge combined together make a man perfect- *insān-i kāmīl*.²⁵ Here comes the criticism of Mu'tazilah and others as well, who laid utmost emphasis on rationality in understanding the religious precepts.²⁶ Sheikh Abu Sa'id is also shown having equally good relations with the Seljuqi Sultans who were the rivals of the Ghaznavids. It does indicate that he was away from all kinds of political contentions. Among his critics was the renowned man of his time, Imam Qushairi. Ultimately, as per the information contained in *Hālāt-o Sukhanān* and *Asrār-ut Taubid* he was also turned, through miraculous powers of the

Sheikh, into an ardent follower- *mu'taqid*. Hereafter, claims the author of *Hālāt-o Sukhanān* that the bond between the two proved to be long lasting. There is no dearth of stories about many others who met with the same fate. Interestingly, in his list of *sufis* of various periods, Qushairi in his *Risālah* does not mention Sheikh Abu Sa'id Abul Khair at all. Sheikh Abu Sa'id is also credited to have outwitted one of the greatest scientists of his time Bu Ali Sina / Ibn Sina also, as the latter had doubts about the capability of Sheikh Abu Sa'id as a spiritual master.

What could be the possible reason for Sheikh Abu Sa'id Abul Khair's popularity, can be gauged from these two sources on his life. He was very fond of *sama'*²⁷ and everyone who first opposed it ultimately got allured to it (i.e., *sama'*) due to the charisma of Sheikh Abu Sa'id. There had been debates on the validity of *sama'* in Islam. Somehow, it became a common practice among the *sufis* in the medieval era. These gatherings always attracted large crowds including those genuinely aspiring for spiritual attainments. This would have possibly led to the popularity of Sheikh Abu Sa'id as he was able to successfully defy the opposition of traditional *ulama* and the authorities alike by holding *sama'* regularly in his *ribāt*. More important was the practice popularised by Sheikh Abu Sa'id of regularly holding large banquets- *dāwat hā*, for all where exotic varieties of dishes were prepared.²⁸ It must have become a reason for travellers, poor and destitute, to flock to his gatherings held in his *ribāt*, where they could feed themselves with delicacies. However, the issue pertaining to the source of money needed to hold such lavish banquets, frequently perturbed the opponents of Sheikh Abu Sa'id. They always charged him with one allegation or other. However, historians have a different view about the issue of resources at the disposal of the Sheikh. They believe that Nishapur, Merv, Mayhna, Amul and Sarakhs- all were great urban centres of the time and were located on a trade route regularly frequented by the merchants. This route was a branch of the famous 'Silk Route'.²⁹ It were they who would have been supporting Sheikh Abu Sa'id's establishment- *ribāt* by way of making endowments, donating money and gifts to seek his blessings in hope of prosperity in their life and growth in trade. All these came in the form of 'unasked charity', i.e., *futūh*. Another significant aspect is that the trend of composing devotional couplets and quadrants- *abyāt* and *rubā'iyāt*, also does not go back much in time. This tradition too gained popularity

in the period of Sheikh Abu Sa'id itself. As he was fond of composing (beautiful) couplets based on his mystical experiences, these must have travelled far and wide carrying along his name too. He is also considered as the founder of Persian *sufi* poetry.

It may also be said with certainty that before him all the works on mysticism are available in Arabic. Although collected at a later stage, his couplets and anecdotes, if we are allowed to trust the text of Sheikh Ali Hujwiri, are the first specimens of any work originally compiled in Persian. Since Persian was in a process of revivalism between the ninth and eleventh century, especially under the Samanids (819- 999 CE) and then the Ghaznavides (977-1186 CE); Khurasanis' inclination towards their own language was but natural. Interestingly, till his time only one well known work on *sufis* and mysticism by Abu Bakr Mohammad ibn Ishaq al Kalabazi³⁰ was translated into Persian from Arabic by one of his contemporaries Abu Ibrahim Mustamli Bukhari (d. 1042/43). It strengthens the view that Persian was emerging as a language of expression in the eastern Islamicate. It would have increased the scope of these works resulting in a wide readership.

Lastly, a question may be raised about the authenticity of information contained in these two works which were compiled almost a century after the death of Sheikh Abu Sa'id. The genuineness of the works can be established with a few relevant examples. One, the *maqāmah* genre of prose interspersed with poetry in Arabic has taken roots by the time of Sheikh Abu Sa'id. Interestingly, the first person considered as a pioneer of *maqāmah*, Badi-uz Zaman Hamdani was the contemporary of Sheikh Abu Sa'id. Badi-uz Zaman (b. 969 CE) had visited Nishapur in 992 CE where Sheikh Abu Sa'id (b. 967 CE) spent a considerable time. It is said that Badi-uz Zaman had achieved much fame in Nishapur which was then under the Samanid rulers. *Maqāmāt* were recited in public places and had great appeal among the audience. It was not a 'court centric' genre. It is said that Badi-uz Zaman had trained his sons into the same art to carry on his legacy. It is most likely that both had met in Nishapur and Sheikh Abu Sa'id must have come under his influence. Secondly, Sheikh Ali Hujwiri not only met Sheikh Abu Sa'id, but also had become his disciple. He quotes some events from the life of the Sheikh which are exactly the same that were later quoted in Hālāt-o Sukhanān and *Asrār-ut Tauhīd* – the sources which were penned much after Sheikh

Ali Hujwiri.³¹ Thirdly, both Jamaluddin Abu Ruh and Mohammad bin Munawwar extensively quote their father and grandfather as their source of information who had been an eye witness to the events that happened in the life of Sheikh Abu Sa'id - as Sheikh Abu Sa'id lived a life of long eighty two years and was having grandsons, and perhaps a few great-grandsons also at the time of his demise.³²

Hālāt-o Sukhanān-i Sheikh Abu Sa'id Abul Khair and *Asrār-ut Tauhid* can be judged as the earliest known texts in the form of *malfuzāt* compiled in the form of monographs dedicated to the memory of one single person, i.e., Sheikh Abu Sa'id Abul Khair. Prior to these two *malfuzāt* compiled by these two great-grandsons of the Sheikh Abu Sa'id, contemporaries of Sheikh Abu Sa'id Abul Khair namely Abdur Rahman Mohammad al-Sulami and Abdul Karim Abul Qasim al-Qushairi had compiled the earliest known *malfuzāt / tazkirahs* (compendia of biographical sketches of mystics, poets, scholars and revered personalities) entitled *Tabaqāt-ul Asfiya* and *al-Risālah al-Qushariyya* respectively, along with several others.³³ However, these two *malfuzāt* under discussion that are dedicated to the life of Sheikh Abu Sa'id only, are different in the sense that these are the biographies in the form of monographs meant to invoke the memory of one single person. These also contain a good amount of information on the contemporaries of Sheikh Abu Sa'id who have been famous historical figures. These two specimens of biographical / hagiographical literature also contain a lot of information on the contemporary socio-political set-up in the Islamicate in general, and in the region of Khurasan in particular.

NOTES

1. Jamaluddin Abu Ruh Lutfullah, bin Abi Sa'id, bin Abi Sa'ad, bin Abi Tahir, bin Abi Sa'id.
2. Mohammad, bin Munawwar, bin Abi Sa'ad, bin Abi Tahir, bin Abi Sa'id.
3. *Maqāmāt* or *maqāma* is an Arabic prosimetric genre of literature where anecdotes or events in prose are interspersed with couplets suitable to the prose as a gist, or moral of the story. This literary genre was introduced by Badi-uz Zaman Hamadani (969-1007 CE), a contemporary of Sheikh Abu Sa'id himself. Later, this style became popular in Persian also. Many *sufis*, like Sheikh Sa'di adopted the same style in his *Gulistān*.

4. Both the texts are published from Iran. Jamaluddin Abu Ruh, *Hālāt o Sukhanān-i Sheikh Abu Sa'id Abul Khair*, (ed.) Mohammad Raza Shafi'i, Tehran in 1947; Mohammad bin Munawwar, *Asrār-ut Tauhid fi Maqimāt-ul Sheikh Abi Sa'id*, (ed.), Zabihullah Safa, Tehran, 1953. Earlier, the two texts were edited and published by B. Zhukowski from St. Petersburg in 1899.
5. Sadiduddin Awfi, a contemporary of Iltutmish is the first person to have quoted his verses extensively. In *Fawā'id-ul Fuwād* Sheikh Nizamuddin Auliya is quoted to have been often reciting couplets composed by Sheikh Abu Sa'id Abul Khair with much reverence expressing his utmost liking for these as well. Some of these couplets are also reproduced in *Fawā'id-ul Fuwād* and many other *sufi* texts.
6. It is believed that Caliph Ali, son-in-law of Prophet Mohammad, and for being very close to him, received a part of the spiritual knowledge from the Prophet bestowed upon him by Allah. Almost all the *sufi* Orders trace their spiritual lineage from him.
7. Among them, eminent *sufis* were- Sheikh Sari Saqti, Junaid Baghdadi, Mansur Hallaj, Qushairi Nishapuri, Sheikh Ibn Masarra, Abdur Rahman al-Sulami, Abu Sa'id Abul Khair, Sheikh Ali Hujwiri, Imam Ghazali, Fariduddin Attar, etc.
8. K. A. Nizami, *Some Aspects of Religion and Politics in India during the Thirteenth Century*, Idarah-i Adabiyat, Delhi, 1961. Pp. 50-57.
9. He was a disciple of Sheikh Junaid Baghdadi (830-910 CE). He is different than the famous Ibn al Arabi of Andalusia (1165-1240 CE).
10. S. Athar Abbas Rizvi, *History of Sufism in India*, Delhi, 1978. Vol. I, p. 62.
11. He is mentioned in *Asrār-ut Tauhid* as the *pir* (master) of Sheikh Abu Sa'id. Pp. 27, 66.
12. Although the word 'hagiography' is used in various contexts, here it has been used purely in the sense of 'portrayal of saintly figures'.
13. He composed *Kitāb Qut ul Qulūb fi Mu'āmlāt-ul Mahbūb*.
14. He authored *Kitāb-ul Tarruf li Mazhab ul Tasawwuf*. The original work is available in Arabic.
15. He was the disciple of famous *sufi* Abul Hasan al- Kharqani. Kharqani was a disciple of Abul Abbas Qassab Amuli, who is extensively discussed in *Hālāt o Sukhanān* and *Asrār-ut Tauhid* as the teacher of Sheikh Abu Sa'id.
16. Such treatises having biographical accounts came to be known as *tazkirahs* in later centuries. There can be drawn a line between a biographical account- *tazkirah* and *malfuzāt*. While *tazkirahs* contain an account of various mystics put in one place, *malfuzāt* belong to one single individual and have all significant details related to his life.

17. From them he learnt Quran, *Fatāwah* (rulings), *Lughat* (grammar), *Hadīs* (traditions of Prophet), *Tafsīr* (exegesis), etc.
18. Sheikh Junaid Baghdadi was a disciple of his uncle Sheikh Sari Saqti, who was a disciple of Sheikh Ma'ruf Karkhi, Ma'ruf being the follower of Daud Ta'ai, while Daud Ta'ai was the immediate disciple of Hazrat Hasan Basri. Hasan Basri is the most important link in the pious chain of discipleship of *sufis* as he is said to have met Caliph Ali and received lessons in spirituality from him. Caliph Ali is acknowledged to have received 'part' of the spiritual knowledge from Prophet Mohammad itself.
19. *Hālāt-o Sukhanān*, Mohammad Raza Shafi'i, Tehran, 1947. P. 56.
20. *Hālāt-o Sukhanān*, pp. 93-96.
21. *Hālāt-o Sukhanān*, pp. 115-120.
22. Zabihullah Safa, Tehran, 1953.
23. *Hālāt-o Sukhanān*, pp. 345-392.
24. For an honest judgment of Sheikh Abu Sa'id, *Kashf-ul Mahjub* is the best specimen.
25. *Hālāt-o Sukhanān*, pp. 38-39.
26. *Hālāt-o Sukhanān*, p. 56.
27. *Mehfil-i sama'* is a gathering of *sufis* where devotional songs dedicated to Allah, the Prophet and revered personalities- especially the House of Prophet, are sung with the accompaniment of some particular musical instruments to arouse ecstasy. Sufis have established certain rules to conduct *sama'*, and to be observed while participating in it.
28. *Asrār-ut Tauhid*, p.77. Later on such banquets came to be known as *langar* in the Indian Subcontinent.
29. Merchants bringing goods from China via Central Asia, would make a diversion via Khurasan to reach Persia, Iraq, Syria and Egypt. The Indian subcontinent was also connected with this trade route.
30. *Kitāb-ul Tàrruf li Mazhab ul Tasawwuf*.
31. *Kashf-ul Mahjūb*, Persian text (ed.), Maulvi Mohammad Shafi, Lahore, 2013. Pp. 171-172.
32. *Asrār-ut Tauhid*, pp. 66, 97, 110, 169, 173, 183, 218, etc.
33. Abu Sa'id Ibn al-Arabi, Abu Mohammad Jafar ibn Nusayr ibn al Qasim, Abu Nasr Abdullah al-Sarraj al-Tusi, Abu Talib al-Makki, Abu Bakr Mohammad ibn Ishaq al Kalabazi and Mustamli of Bukhara's names can also be added to this list.

Dairatul Ma'arif-al-Osmania: A Revolutionary Effort to Revive Classical Arabic Sciences

Dairatul Ma'arif-al-Osmania stands as a testament to the revolutionary efforts to revive and preserve classical Arabic sciences. The goal was to assist in the development of knowledge and life in the modern age. European Orientalists recognized the importance and impact of classical Arabic knowledge and its influence on the European Renaissance. Many of these highly remarkable works remained in manuscript form in libraries around the world. Although some Orientalists participated in reviving them, their efforts were often limited.

Interestingly, neither scholars in the Arab world nor those in the Ottoman Empire prioritized the preservation and publication of these timeless Arabic manuscripts. It was, astonishingly, Indian Arabic scholars who took on this monumental task. They brought these valuable manuscripts back to life, filling a crucial void that had gone unnoticed by the wider world of knowledge and information. The works they revived were of great value and continue to be relevant for modern generations.

Regarding the early efforts made in India in collecting and editing rare Arabic manuscripts, Syed Hashim Nadwi wrote:

This movement began with early pioneers like the Calcutta Asiatic Society, established by Sir William in 1784, which published Arabic and Persian manuscripts. Individual Indian scholars also took up the cause, including Abdul Hai Farangi Mahalli, who edited manuscripts on Fiqah (Islamic Jurisprudence) and Hadith (the sayings of the Prophet Muhammad(saws)), and Ahmad Ali Saharanpuri, who edited a rare manuscript of Sahih-al- Bukhari. In this field the contributions of the renowned Indian scholar Nawab Siddique Hasan Khan were not less important.¹

These individual efforts laid the groundwork for a more ambitious, institutionalized approach. The Asif Jahi dynasty in Hyderabad is known

for its significant contributions to culture, education, and social fabric of Hyderabad. The dynasty is particularly renowned for its patronage of arts and research, with its role in the field of Arabic language and literature being especially significant.

The most important institution established was Dairatul Ma'arif-al-Osmania. In the late 19th and early 20th centuries, no other institution in the Arab world could match its contributions and achievements. It was unparalleled in its high-standard research, editing, and publishing of rare Arabic manuscripts across various fields.

Editing of rare manuscripts was a great challenge, requiring immense sincerity, profound knowledge of the subject and language, and impeccable literary skills. The scholars at Dairatul Ma'arif proved their capability by transforming these manuscripts into meticulously published books. This monumental task was only possible due to the great sincerity and enthusiasm of the Asif Jahi rulers.

The Dairatul Ma'arif-al-Osmania's remarkable achievements were not just a local success; they were a unique and significant contribution to the world of knowledge, ensuring that the wisdom of classical Arabic sciences could once again assist in the development of modern thought and life.

The idea for the institution originated with Nawab Emadul Mulk Syed Husain al-Bilgrami, a distinguished scholar of Arabic, Persian, English and French who served as the Director of the Department of Education. He proposed to establish a society to protect and publish valuable oriental works in the sciences and arts in Arabic. To help achieve this goal, the Asafia Library was established to house rare books.

The establishment of Dairatul Maarif-al-Osmania was a highly significant and commendable initiative. It was founded with the support of several key individuals:

- Mulla Abdul Qayum, an expert in Islamic knowledge, provided crucial financial assistance and practical support.
- Maulana Anwarullah Farooqui used his influence to garner government attention for the project.²
- The plan was first presented to Mir Mahboob Ali Khan, the sixth ruler of the dynasty, by Nawab Sir Waqarul Umara Bahadur, with Nawab Sir Aasmanjah Bahadur acting as a mediator. They

outlined the project's aims and objectives, which greatly impressed the ruler. Pleased with the program, he pledged his full support and issued an official order to that effect on 24th Jumada al-Akhira, 1308 AH.³

The institution was first established in 1882 as Majlis Dairatul Maarif. It was later renamed Dairatul Maarif al Nizamia in honor of the ruling dynasty. During the period of Mir Osman Ali Khan, its name was changed to Dairatul Maarif Al-Osmania.

It began its operations in 1888 in the Old City at Shahgunj before moving to Nizam Shahi Road and finally settling into a dedicated building at Osmania University. In 1960, the building was formally inaugurated by Humayun Kabir, the Central Government Education Minister.⁴

For detailed information on the institution's key figures, including its directors, editors, and other academic and administrative contributors, may be referred to the book *Maqala Tahaffuz uloom Qadima* by Syed Hashim Nadwi, a former director of the Dairatul Maarif.⁵

The primary mission of the Dairatul Maarif was to revive Islamic Arabic sciences that were dispersed in manuscripts and in danger of being destroyed. The institution focused on preserving original and monumental works from the period between the second and seventh centuries of the Hijra. This was considered a golden age of original thought and creativity, where ideas and concepts reached an unparalleled level of maturity and sublimity.⁶

The institution believed that Arabic and Islamic sciences had flourished most brilliantly in their purest form during the early periods of Islam and the Arab dynasties. This was before the decline of political, social, educational, and philosophical creativity in the Islamic world.

By focusing on this specific period, Dairatul Maarif aimed to ensure that the works published were of the highest calibre, reflecting the zenith of intellectual achievement in the Islamic world.

To accomplish this, they developed a rigorous process; Committees of expert scholars were formed to locate and select the most important manuscripts based on their authenticity and intellectual merit. The scholars did not rely on a single copy of a manuscript. They tried their best to obtain multiple copies from libraries in the Arab World, Europe,

America, and India. These copies were meticulously compared to produce the most authentic and correct version of the text before it was edited and published. For example, for the book *Al-Tarikh al-Kabir*, of Abdullah Muhammed bin Ismail-al-Bukhari that comprises of 4 volumes and each volume contains two parts (it means 8 parts). Copies were collected from multiple libraries in Hyderabad, Constantinople, Istanbul, and Egypt, and even many pages found in Makka.

In editing the manuscripts along with the Indian scholars, foreign scholars also contributed. Notable among them were Abul Wafa al Afghani, Abdullah bin Ahmed al Mudaihaj al Hazrami, Hasan Jamaal al Lail al Madani, Abdul Ghafoor al Mosul, Abdur Rahman al Maullemi al Yamani, Saalim Kranko, Aziz Suriyal Atiya al Misri and Dr. Farah Qaisar etc.

Initially, Dairatul Ma'arif focused on editing and publishing manuscripts written by foreign scholars. However, this criterion was later expanded to include works by Indian authors, even if they were written after the stipulated seventh century of the Hijra.

This broadened scope allowed Dairatul Ma'arif to publish the works of many influential Indian writers, including Shah Waliullah Dehlawi, Ali al-Muttaqi, Abdul Hai-al-Hasani, Mulla Husain Iskandar, Irtaza Ali Khan, Abdun Nabi Ahmad Nagri, Moinuddin Nadwi, Muhammad Yar Jung, Shahabuddin Daulatabadi, Syed Hashim Nadwi, Inayat Ali Hyderabad, Muhammad Sibghatullah Madrasi, Muhammad Tahir Patni etc.

According to Dairatul Ma'arif's publication catalogue, 287 books were published after extensive editing of the manuscripts. Many of these books comprised eight or more volumes. Additionally, other research works that were not originally part of the program were also included and published. As a result, the total number of publications from Dairatul Ma'arif exceeds 500.

The subjects covered include: Tafseer of the Holy Quran: 60 books, Usool al-Hadith (Methodology and principles of Hadith research): 9 books, Hadith (Sayings of the Prophet): 15 books, Al-Rejal Wa al-Asanid (Biographies of Hadith narrators): 197 books, Al-Seyar wal-manaqib wal-Tarajim (Biographies of the Prophet and great personalities): 18 books, Al-Taraajim (Biographies): 8 books, Al-Fiqh

(Islamic jurisprudence): 6 books, Al-Kalam wa al-Aqayed (Scholastic and Doctrine): 12 books, Al-Tasawwuf (Sufism): 4 books, Al-Tarikh (History): 18 books, Jameul Uloom (Introduction to Arabic sciences and works): 2 books, Al-Adab (Literature): 16 books, Al-Lughah (Linguistics): 11 books, Al-Nahw and Al-Maani (Grammar and Rhetoric): 3 books, Falsafa (Philosophy): 3 books, Ma-Bad-al-Tabiyyaat (Metaphysics): 3 books, Al-Riyadhiat wa al-Haiyat (Mathematics and Geometry): 22 books, Al-Ansaab (Genealogy): 1 book, Al-Uloom al-Mukhtalifa (Miscellaneous Sciences): 7 books, Al-Tib (Medicine): 5 books, Al-Jughrafiya (Geography): 1 book, Al-Mufarriqat (Different topics): 26 books, Agriculture: 1 book.

This collection is categorized into several core disciplines, highlighting the breadth of knowledge preserved within these works. In Usool al-Hadith nine books are present including the five works found in «خمس» of five writers. In Hadith fifteen books have been edited. Notable works include «كنز العمال» consisting of twenty-two volumes and «مشكل الآثار» contains ten volumes. In Tasawwuf – Sufism there are four books. The collection «رسائل ابن العربي» is particularly significant as its two volumes contain twenty-nine books. In the field of Philosophy and Metaphysics there are six books. However, it's worth noting that the works of ابن الفارابي، ابن سينا، ابن رشد are known to be multi-volume treatise. In Mathematics, Engineering and Astronomy there are twenty-two books and majority of these works are multi-volume sets. In Medicine and Surgery there are five books, the most notable being «كتاب» of «الحاوي الكبير» أبو بكر محمد زكريا a monumental medical encyclopedia in 24 volumes.⁷

The manuscripts edited and published by Dairatul Maarif have earned widespread recognition in both academic and research fields. These works are considered remarkable and original, representing a period in Arab history when such texts were foundational and unprecedented.

Dairatul Maarif played a crucial role in preserving these incomparable treasures, which other institutions could not. The books it published are celebrated for their pure, original, and high-standard content, making them essential sources of knowledge for scholars. This monumental effort was highly appreciated by Arab scholars, solidifying the institution's pivotal role in cultural and historical preservation.

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The Role of Religion in Statecraft: A Study of Muhammad Asad's Thought

INTRODUCTION

The relationship between the religion and politics among Muslims has long been a subject of scholarly debate and discussion, especially with regard to modernity and contemporary challenges and challenges posed by understanding of Western political thought. Muhammad Asad is one of the most influential voices among those who have been engaged in debates and proposed their views regarding the issue. Asad is a prominent Muslim thinker and scholar of twentieth century, dedicated his life to reinterpret and articulate the principles of Islam in the contemporary arena of the time. His extensive travels across the Muslim world, insight for Islamic sources and his direct engagement with both Eastern and Western intellectual traditions endowed him with a unique perspective. It enabling him to abridge and interpret Eastern and Western tradition with rare vision and to develop a distinctive interpretation of principles of the Islamic governance. In his remarkable work, *The Principles of State and Government in Islam*, Asad sought to clarify and challenge the misconceptions about Islamic state. He advocated for a rational, *shariah* based approach and emphasized both the ethical foundations and pragmatic flexibility of Islamic governance.

The current study is an insight into the Asad's debates on the role of religion and politics and his vision of Islamic governance that is both, rooted in tradition and responsive to contemporary realities and challenges.

MUHAMMAD ASAD

Every individual's past profoundly shapes his ideas, understanding and approach to life and its vision. His experiences form his identity

and influence his intellectual viewpoint. Likewise, Muhammad Asad's early life is witnessed for his versatile experiences including a great transformation from his affiliation of a Rabbinical Jew family to a renowned Muslim scholar. Leopold Weiss was born in a Jew family at Lemberg, a city in the Eastern part of Austria (German) in 1900 CE. However, he belongs to a Rabbinical cleric family background but his father was a liberal mind person and inclined towards physical sciences; he did not have much interest in Judaism,¹ Leopold obtained his intellectual stimulation from him. He studied history, art, philosophy and other disciplines from the local university of Vienna. At the age of twenty he left for Berlin and joined a news agency, a semi-American agency, 'United Telegraph' and started his career in journalism. After two years' stay in Berlin, Leopold left for Jerusalem to his uncle, Dorian. His stay in Jerusalem resulted in attraction towards Islam. During the period, he observed the Zionists' aim for colonizing Palestine and their misdoings with Arabs. In 1922, Leopold left Palestine and resumed his journalist job in Berlin where he was writing for *Frankfurter Zeitung*, the most reputed newspaper of the time.² He soon got famed in German press and media agency provided him an opportunity to work as a special European correspondent in the Middle Eastern countries such as Egypt, Transjordan, Syria, Turkey, Amman, Tripoli, Iraq, Iran, Afghanistan, Central Asia and other countries. His long journey to Middle East left great impact on him in respect to Islam, its teachings, Muslims and their culture. He learned Arabic from the Bedouins of Arabia and read Qur'an in its original language. In 1926, he resigned from *Frankfurter Zeitung* and converted to Islam in the same year in Berlin. After conversion he changed his name from Leopold Weiss to Muhammad Asad. Later he performed hajj with his family as his wife was also converted to Islam with him.³

After six years' stay in Saudi Arabia, Muhammad Asad left for India, though he decided to stay in India for a few months but these few months extended in many years.⁴ In India he met Muhammad Iqbal who persuaded Muhammad Asad to remain in India and work for making the constitution of newly established state of Pakistan.⁵ In 1947, he got permitted to settle in Pakistan and became the first legal citizen of the state. In the same year, he was appointed as director of the 'Department of Islamic Reconstruction' in Lahore and remained

till 1952.⁶ That department was a governmental institution established for functioning to direct intellectual and sociological values and norms to build a new society and state. Later Muhammad Asad was appointed as Deputy Secretary and in-charge of the Middle Eastern Division of Foreign Affairs in Karachi. During his stay in Pakistan, Asad used his utmost effort to revive the lost hope of Islam in making the constitution of Pakistan. However, his dream of an independent and liberal democratic state could not come true.⁷

POLITICAL THOUGHT

The era of self-determination for Asian and African countries, roughly from 1945 to 1960, was a period of decolonization where numerous nations gained independence from European colonial powers. That era saw the emergence of new states and number of political ideologues and thinkers flourished and strived to find a political system for the progress of these newly emerged nations. Muslim thinkers belong to that period can be divided into two categories. Those who were advocating secular state and were against any kind of Islamic state; this first category was influenced by the modern western democratic system, Mustafa Kamal Atatürk (1881-1953) of Turkey and Sa'd Zaghloul (1859-1927) of Egypt. Another category was advocating the establishment of an Islamic state based on *shariah*; this group included Rashid Rida (1865-1935), Hasan al Banna (1906-1949) of Egypt and Maulana Maududi (1903-1979) of India. They all were making their efforts to propose idea of Islamic state and needed to establish it⁸. Muhammad Asad was first to propose a model for government and discuss about its nature in Muslim country based on a blend of traditional and modern idea of state.

Muhammad Asad's political views were evolved while he was entrusted or engaged in making constitution of Pakistan. His writings such as *Islamic Constitution Making* which was published by the government of Punjab in both Urdu and English languages in 1948, *The principles of State and Government in Islam*, published from the university of California press in 1961 and *This Laws of Our* from Dar Al-Andalus in 1987 reflect his political ideas.⁹

For instance, some modern Muslim thinkers describe Islamic state as

democratic or compare its goals with those of a socialist society, while many western writers label it as totalitarian or dictatorial. Asad believes that to truly comprehend the Islamic state, it must be analyzed using its own original concepts and terminology rooted in Islamic tradition.¹⁰ In his discussion, Asad critically examined key themes such as relationship between religion and state, the structure and organization of government and economic system. Beyond these, he also explored a range of other important topics, including the various organs of the state, the nature and scope of their powers, the role and status of women and the rights and responsibilities of citizens within the Islamic framework.

In Asad's view classical model of an Islamic state is not fit for contemporary world, divided into nation states. He was not fully agreed with existing theories regarding Islamic state. In his opinion Muslim scholars of early centuries interpreted Islamic state and its nature as per demands of their contemporary age that cannot fulfill the necessities of present world. On the other hand, the present works on Islamic polity are much influenced by the governmental system of European countries. Therefore, instead of referring existing theories, Muhammad Asad referred to the basic sources of Islam, Quran and *sunnah* and developed an idea of state having human opinion to adjust in the present age and to face the challenges of modern world.¹¹ He clarifies his idea of state by proposing a system based on understanding and adherence of *shariah* in the present time. His proposed state's governance should uphold certain principal criteria of *shariah* to attain a perfect model of Islamic state. These criteria include its adherence to the principles of *shariah* regarding its function and adherence of constitution by its subject, no legal action should be taken by judiciary contrary to *shariah* text, government activities and decisions should be taken after consultation with the community's accredited representatives (*Shura*) and supreme court should ensure its fundamental responsibility to protect, uphold and interpret the constitution (*Shariah*).¹² It can be said that Asad envisioned the establishment of a state that would function as a coordinating authority, endowed or vested with the power of commands and prohibitions. It would not only govern the political and the administrative affairs but would also play a pivotal role in shaping and regulating the socio-ethical framework of the society.¹³

STATE AND ROLE OF RELIGION

Muhammad Asad firmly rejects the idea of secular state as it lacks universal moral foundation and serves the interest of particular nation, group or class that leads disintegration and instability and proves failed in constituting relative norms for making difference between right and wrong. And without common and absolute moral law no state can realize genuine happiness and unity.¹⁴

As far as state sovereignty is concerned, an Islamic state grounded in the principle of divine sovereignty, where all authority belongs to Allah. In this system, the laws of the state must strictly conform to the teachings of the Quran and *sunnah*. In Asad's view Islamic state is best suited state for achieving national progress and happiness. He further argues against popular sovereignty as absolute and views it as exercise of delegate sovereignty which is derived from Allah. However, when Islamic state comes into existence with the people consent or according to the Islamic principles, it obtains its sovereignty from Allah which manifests from His revealed law, source of all sovereignty.¹⁵

Muhammad Asad supports presidential form of government. He advocates that Islamic state functions as a welfare-oriented system under an *Amir*. He discarded the conservative scholars' view that only the reinstallation of the institution of caliphate would be fruitful to get the previous glory of the Islamic society. His argument is that caliphate was a form of government suited to the previous age and it is an ideal state to be relying. Now the time is different with its new demands and challenges far different and more advanced than the period of *Khulafa i Rashideen*. Therefore, today's state's requirements are different so the method of the governance should be in accordance.¹⁶ Asad viewed that *Amir*, head of the state must be a Muslim to be loyal to Allah, who acknowledges the divine origin of Islamic law as the implementation of this divine law (*shariah*) is primary duty of him. He is bound to function as the vicegerent of Allah on earth. Since there is no truly life that can be imagined without an Islamic state in the same way no truly Islamic state can be observed unless its head and administrative figures are the people who submitted their will before Allah.¹⁷

Asad viewed that *shariah* as state constitution is foundational for a strong ethical value system. It provides principles to identify what is right

and what is wrong? People abide to be loyal with state and the criterion of loyalty to state is to be loyal to Allah by following His law that is also the constitution of an Islamic state. This sense of loyalty brings all together by removing clashes and making a realization of unity that provides happiness in a nation.¹⁸ Muhammad Asad challenges common misperception and disagreements for *shariah* law that it is an unbending and inflexible law. While highlighting the concept and scope of *shariah* that the conventional Islamic law or real eternal *shariah* predominantly dependent upon the commandments and prohibitions of Allah clearly defined in Qur'an and *sunnah* and known as *nuṣuṣ*.¹⁹ These laws are having eternal validity and the nature of these ordinances is self-contained, unmistakable and clear cut in wordings which is not subject to any conflict in interpretation. It is applicable for all ages. However, Islamic legal system has a room for free inquiry or exercise of *ijtihad*, so, Asad urges its exercise in formation of temporal laws. Further explained that a major part of *fiqh* rulings is the result of juristic effort, where jurists, who used their reasoning in the light of Qur'an and *sunnah* to get the solution of the issues, have no clear answer or solution in the Qur'an and *sunnah*. These laws can be differed from each other or can have similarities because every jurist interprets or constitutes these laws according to his own understanding of basic sources of Islam, Qur'an and *sunnah* and the demands of the time. These laws or ordinances obtained authority with the passage of time and are considered as integral part of *shariah*.²⁰

Muhammad Asad identifies four fundamental rights that must be recognized and guaranteed by an Islamic state to its citizens. These include *freedom of expression* to citizens through words or writings. Citizens should have right to criticize the policies and conduct of state institutions and officials, as intellectuals and scholars are entrusted to critically analyze the policies of the state, violating the fundamental principles of Islamic state. However, this freedom is subjected to limit that it must not violate Islamic law, cause sedition against government or offend common civility in the state, in case, state is entitled to defend and implement the *shariah* law. The citizens have right to get assurance from the state for *protection of their life and property, their dignity, honor and privacy*. A state is not responsible only for proving the physical security but also for securing socio-economic and political freedom of

citizens and give them insurance for no detention without legal process. The state must socially be responsible for providing *free and accessible education* to all its citizens regardless of cast, gender and religion. This assurance safeguards equal opportunity for intellectual growth of every individual of the society. As the primary objective of *shariah*, the constitution of Islamic state is social welfare. Islamic state should take a serious and active responsibility for *economic welfare* of its citizens. It obliged to give economic security and ensure basic necessities like food, cloth and shelter aiming to prevent poverty. Further, it must give equal opportunities of jobs, a bearable tax imposition, establishment of *zakat* institutions and all possible and legal facilities required for the maintenance of life and happiness.²¹ Likewise, citizens are obliged to respect and cooperate the system of the government, securing their rights.²²

Muhammad Asad's especial emphasize on the status of non-Muslims is rooted in his interpretation of Qur'an and *sunnah*. He does not designate terms *Dhimmi* and *Jizya* in case of non-Muslims and advocates for them equal rights and duties as Muslim citizens within the Islamic state. The state is responsible to protect their civil rights and give them protection in respect of their life and property. In Asad's view, non-Muslims can hold the governmental positions on the basis of their merits; that reflects their full participation in societal affairs. However, he clarifies regarding the leadership of Islamic state that a non-Muslim cannot be the head of the Islamic state because the purpose of the Islamic state is to implement the law of God on the earth for that it is most important that head of the state must be loyal to the God and committed to achieve the ideal objectives of an Islamic state with full of devotion, a non-Muslim cannot fulfil this criteria.²³ Regarding the duties of non-Muslims at the time of war, Asad's view focuses on Islamic teaching that war is permissible only in self-defense, in this situation, all citizens whether Muslims or non-Muslims are expected to equally participate and defend their state and prove their loyalty to the state. In case of exemption from military service they are liable to pay tax that is *jizya*. *Jizya*, a tax historically levied on those non-Muslims who took exemption from obligatory military services. These measures replicate their civic duties while identifying their distinct status being a citizen of an Islamic state. It can be said that Asas's viewed non-Muslims as fully

integrated citizens having equal civil rights including opportunity to get access to government roles and responsibilities except for the higher authority of the state that is head of the state (*Amir*). They also play an active role even in case of war time either by participating in war or by paying *jizya* if get exemption.²⁴

GOVERNANCE OF ISLAMIC STATE

Muhammad Asad has discussed about governance of an Islamic state in his book *The Principles of State and Government in Islam*. He presented a rational, modern and Islamic framework of government rooted in the core teachings of Quran and *sunnah* which is flexible in accordance with the change of time. Asad's assessment of government in Islam is not merely a system but a moral and legal institution tasked with implementing the values and objectives of the *shariah*. He argued that state governance must be rooted in divine sovereignty, where ultimate authority belongs to God and ruler serves as trustee, responsible to implement justice, protects rights of the people and promotes the common welfare. The government in his view, is accountable both to the people and the higher ethical standards set by revelation. Asad rejects rigid historical models of governance and the notion of a theocratic regime ruled by clergy class as Islam provides guiding principles rather than a fix constitutional model for governance. He emphasizes system of *shura*, requiring ruler's consult with representatives of the community in decision making process, public accountability and rule of law. He maintains that the primary role of government is to coordinate social, economic and legal affairs in a way that upholds the morality in the society. Its executive authority must be responsible for administration and policy implementation, consultative or legislative body to deliberate on matters of public interest and judiciary to uphold justice in accordance with the *shariah*. This system ensures social welfare, maintenance of law and order and protection of dignity and rights of the citizens regardless of their faith.²⁵ Allah says

And hold firmly to the rope of Allah and do not be divided. Remember Allah's favor upon you when you were enemies, then He united your hearts, so you by His grace became brothers. And you were at the brink of a fiery pit and He saved you from it. This is how Allah makes His revelation clear to you, so that you may be rightly

*guided. Let there be a group among you who call others to goodness encourage what is good and forbid what is evil-it is they who will be successful.*²⁶

Islamic state is not something that Muslims want to achieve for power and domination but it is a way to get the will of Allah where He says to establish justice and equity, to encourage right and to forbid wrong, to become united as ummah and for the growth and development of ummah.²⁷

Muhammad Asad viewed that a state cannot be considered as Islamic state only on the basis of its Muslim population and a Muslim leader unless it follows *shariah* as its constitution and socio-political guidelines of Islamic *shariah*. He further illustrates the guiding principles for Islamic state in the light of foundational sources of Islam. He stresses upon the enforcement of *shariah* law in the state territory. He highlights the Quranic verse where Allah says

*And whoever does not judge by what Allah has revealed then it is those who are the definitely disobedient.*²⁸

So, no Islamic state can be considered truly Islamic until its constitution stipulates that *shariah* laws on public issues shall constitute the firm basis of all state legislation. Here, Muhammad Asad stresses upon the social life of the people because being a social organization state exclusively looks after the social aspect of the people. Constitution should clearly state that any interim legislation or executive order which is mandatory or allowed will not be valid unless it is in conformity with *shariah*. Asad agreed that an Islamic state should be established on the basis of election or on the basis of public consent that is also required by *shariah*.²⁹

1. Legislation

Asad emphasizes the need for continuous temporal legislation as he believes that *shariah* deliberately refrains from providing detailed regulations for all the situations rising time to time from the changing requirements of social existence. In Islamic state, this legislation would pertain to many administrative issues that the *shariah* has not addressed at all, as well as those problems for which *shariah* has only general principles but no detailed solutions.

Asad mainly deals with; how new laws should be formed and who should make these laws. According to him laws constituted through application of *ijtihad* in matters affecting the collective aspect of social life that cannot be left to individual discretion. These discretions must be based on a clear consensus (*Ijma*) of the entire community. Asad further believes, those who constitute these temporal and collective laws should be a limited group of elected persons of the community to whom community delegates its legislative power and whose decisions should be binding on everyone. With this Asad emphasizes on the necessity of *majlis e shura*. Moreover, since absolute power often corrupts its possessor and tempts him to misuse it for his own interest or that of in his supporters favor either consciously or unconsciously, Asad believes that the legislative power of the state should be entrusted to such a legislative body which is specifically elected by community for this particular purpose.

In addition, since the Quran and *sunnah* have no clear instructions about the procedure and method of elections, it is a matter that should be left to the *ijtihad* of the community which should decide it according to the needs of the time.³⁰ However, Asad's preferable method of election is rooted in the Prophetic tradition which prohibits self-canvassing, according to the fact that any person desirous of being appointed to an administrative post or of being elected to a representative of assembly should be disqualified from being elected or appointed automatically.³¹

Asad further viewed that all temporal legislation should be carried out through the representatives of the community, i.e., the legislative assembly (*Shura*). The members of the assembly are entitled to exercise *ijtihad*; the *ijtihad* should be in accordance with the spirit of Islam. He has placed the same emphasis on the principle of *maslaha* (the best interest of the nation) as Rashid Rida which reflects the Islamic state's welfare-oriented nature.³²

2. Executive power

Muhammad Asad's view of the executive authority in an Islamic state should be vested in a single leader or *Amir* who is responsible for administration. He favored a presidential system, which he considered most compatible with the Islamic concept of the caliphate, where a

single man having all required qualification to administrate the state along with the support of his ministers directly appointed by him. Unlike parliamentary systems where executive power is shared. Asad rejects a radical separation of powers; his theory of the executive includes the balance between executive and legislative powers. He supported a system where the legislative and executive functions are integrated in the leader or *Amir* with advisory council and elective representatives ensuring consultation.³³ As mentioned by Prophet Muhammad (SAW)

If God means well with the *Amir*, keep provide for him a trustworthy assistant (wazir) to remind him whenever he forgets, and to help him whenever he remembers. And if [God] does not mean it well with him, He provides for him an evil assistant, who does not remind him whenever he forgets and does not help him whenever he remembers.³⁴

However, *Amir* holds all administrative powers and functions but his decision-making conducts in consultation with a council or cabinet of ministers³⁵ reflect the Qur'ānic principle

*Their (the believers) communal business (amr) is to be (transacted in) consultation among themselves.*³⁶

Amir is answerable to the legislative assembly and consists of the representatives of the people. Ministers serve at the pleasure of the *Amir* and assist in governance but are subordinate to his authority.³⁷

3. Judiciary

Muhammad Asad saw judiciary as a crucial organ in Islamic state responsible for ensuring justice based on Quran and *Sunnah*. It is an unbiased agency for arbitration in the case of any difference or disagreement in between *shura* and *Amir*.³⁸ Muhammad Asad refers Quranic view:

*Obey God and obey the messenger and those in authority from among you, then if you disagree in anything, refer it to God and the messenger.*³⁹

The judiciary not only interprets the law but also ensures that all laws and government actions comply with Islamic principles. These courts should also have the power to reject or veto any law or administrative

decision in case of contradiction with Qur'an and *sunnah*, acting as the guardian of the constitution.⁴⁰

While acknowledging the value of separating powers, Asad warns against rigid divisions that could lead to autocracy in times of crises. Instead, he proposes a balanced integration of legislative and executive authority, checked by robust consultation and an independent judiciary. This ensures that no branch of government can act irresponsibly, while maintain the unity and efficiency necessary for just governance.

CONCLUSION

Muhammad Asad's political thought offers a profound and enduring contribution to contemporary debates on Islamic governance, law and identity. His vision transcends simplistic binaries between tradition and modernity by proposing a model of Islamic governance that is firmly rooted in Quran and *sunnah*, yet responsive to the challenges of modern constitutionalism and democratic ideals. Asad's advocacy for *ijtihad* and his dynamic, context-sensitive approach to *shari'ah* provides a framework for evocative reform, empowering Muslim societies to address new challenges without leaving their foundational values. His distinct model for an Islamic state addressing constitutional structure, rights of minorities and women and relationship with non-Muslim states remains highly relevant as Muslim majority societies continue to negative questions of pluralism, inclusivity and legal reform. Moreover, Asad's critique of Western notion of sovereignty and his emphasize on ethical transformation and community building enrich current discussions on the moral dimensions of politics, moving beyond mere statecraft or power struggle.

In nutshell, Asad's complex and creative thought challenges prevailing assumptions and offers valuable insights for those seeking an authentic yet adaptive Islamic political vision. His legacy is not just as a bridge between Islam and the West, but as a catalyst for internal renewal and critical engagement within the Islamic tradition making his idea as relevant today as it was in his own time.

NOTES

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15. Ibid., pp. 37-39.
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24. Ibid., pp. 70-75.
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27. Asad, Muhammad, (1980), op. cit., p. 30.
28. Al-Qur'an, *Surah al Maidah*: 47.
29. Asad, Muhammad, (1980), op. cit., pp. 34-36.
30. Ibid., pp. 43-45.
31. Ibid., pp. 46-47.
32. Ibid., p. 14.
33. Ibid., p. 61.
34. Abu Daud and an-Nasai, on the authority of Hazrat Aisha (RA).
35. Asad, Muhammad, (1980), op. cit., p. 44.

36. Al-Qur'an, *Surah ash Shura*: 38.
37. Asad, Muhammad, (1980), op. cit., pp. 39-42.
38. Ibid., pp. 65-66.
39. Al-Qur'an, *Surah al Nisa*: 95.
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Al Tafsir Al Mazhari and the Science of Hadith

INTRODUCTION

Al Tafsir Al Mazhari is a commentary that its esteemed author presented to readers after nearly thirteen years of extensive study, deep contemplation, and profound reflection on the Quran. This exegesis was completed during a phase of the author's life when his scholarly and spiritual abilities had reached their peak and had become well-established. Furthermore, for over half a century, he had compiled a vast intellectual and literary treasury as part of the Islamic revival in India. He had closely observed and studied the various events and revolutions occurring across the Indian subcontinent for an extended period.

Additionally, for many years, he held the position of Chief Judge (*Qadi*) in Panipat, during which he had the opportunity to engage extensively with Islamic jurisprudence (*Fiqh*), Hadith, and other Islamic sciences. Due to this esteemed position, he developed an exceptional ability for decision-making. Certain indications suggest that *Al Tafsir Al Mazhari* was his final grand scholarly work. After its completion, although he wrote smaller treatises, he was unable to produce another major book.¹

The early scholars (*mutaqaddimun*) established that a commentator (*mufasssir*) must possess expertise in at least fifteen different disciplines to engage in the science of exegesis.² Therefore, to assess the scholarly and research level of any *tafsir* or its author, it would be appropriate to evaluate all these sciences. However, in our opinion, since most of these disciplines are auxiliary (*ulum al-aliyah*) rather than primary, it is more fitting to analyze *Al Tafsir Al Mazhari* based on its engagement with the higher sciences. Among these, the discussion begins with the blessed science of Hadith. Before that, we better have a look at the brief mention of the Author here.

THE AUTHOR (D. 1225/1810)

Qāḍī Muhammad Thana'ullāh ibn 'Izz al-Dīn Panipatī was one of the eminent scholars of eighteenth–nineteenth century India, best remembered for his celebrated Qur'ānic commentary *al-Tafsīr al-Maḥhari*. He was born in Panipat, a historic town in northern India that produced a number of influential scholars and Sufi figures. He belonged to a family of learning and piety, and from an early age he was trained in the traditional Islamic sciences, particularly in tafsīr, ḥadīth, fiqh, and kalām.

Thana'ullāh Panipatī came under the intellectual influence of the reformist movement spearheaded by Shāh Waliullāh al-Dihlawī (d. 1176/1762), whose emphasis on a revival of the pristine sources of Islam—Qur'ān and Sunnah—left a lasting imprint on the religious landscape of India. As a jurist (qāḍī), Thana'ullāh combined legal training with a deep commitment to the scriptural sciences. His works reflect both his grounding in the Hanafi legal tradition and his appreciation for ḥadīth-based scholarship, which was a hallmark of Shah Waliullāh's intellectual legacy.³ The most enduring contribution of Qāḍī Thana'ullāh Panipatī is his multi-volume Qur'ānic exegesis *al-Tafsīr al-Maḥhari*, named in honor of his spiritual master Mīrzā Maḥzar Jān-i Jānān (d. 1195/1781), a renowned Naqshbandī Sufi of Delhi. This tafsīr is considered one of the most important Indo-Muslim commentaries of the Qur'ān. It is characterized by a balanced methodology: a careful engagement with transmitted reports (*riwāyāt*), a respect for the science of ḥadīth, and an awareness of linguistic, juristic, and theological dimensions of the Qur'ānic text. Unlike many exegetes of his era, Thana'ullāh sought to integrate the rigor of ḥadīth criticism into tafsīr, thereby safeguarding the Qur'ānic commentary from unreliable narrations, including weak and fabricated reports.

In addition to his tafsīr, Thana'ullāh Panipatī authored works in jurisprudence and theology, though many of these remain less well-known compared to *al-Tafsīr al-Maḥhari*. His position as a qāḍī (judge) also meant that he was directly engaged with applying Islamic law in practical contexts, a role that further enhanced the juristic insights reflected in his writings. He was also closely associated with the Sufi tradition, particularly the Naqshbandī order, which helped shape his spiritual outlook and ethical orientation.

Thana'ullāh Panipatī passed away in 1225 AH/1810 CE, leaving behind a legacy that bridged the worlds of tafsīr, ḥadīth, fiqh, and taṣawwuf. His *al-Tafsīr al-Maḥzarī* remains a significant reference for scholars of Indo-Islamic intellectual history, not only because of its exegetical content but also as a window into the synthesis of traditional learning, reformist impulses, and Sufi spirituality in the late Mughal and early colonial periods of India. Through this work, he ensured that the rich Indo-Muslim scholarly tradition continued to engage meaningfully with the Qur'ān, grounded firmly in the science of ḥadīth.

IMPORTANCE OF ḤADĪTH IN TAFSĪR LITERATURE

The science of Qur'anic exegesis ('ilm al-tafsīr) has, since the earliest period of Islam, been inseparably linked with the science of ḥadīth, for the Prophet Muḥammad himself is regarded as the first and most authoritative interpreter of the Qur'ān. The Qur'ān declares:

وَأَنْزَلْنَا إِلَيْكَ الذِّكْرَ لِتُبَيِّنَ لِلنَّاسِ مَا نُزِّلَ إِلَيْهِمْ

*And We have sent down to you the Reminder so that you may explain to mankind what has been revealed to them.*⁴

Classical exegetes such as al-Ṭabarī (d. 310/923) cite this verse as proof of the necessity of the Prophet's explanations for understanding divine revelation. He remarks in his *Jāmi' al-bayān*:

إِذْ كَانَ لَا سَبِيلَ لِأَحَدٍ إِلَى عِلْمِ تَأْوِيلِهِ إِلَّا بِبَيَانِ الرَّسُولِ

Since there is no way for anyone to know its interpretation except through the explanation of the Messenger.

Consequently, ḥadīth reports constitute the primary source of tafsīr after the Qur'ān itself, and the tradition of *tafsīr bi'l-ma'thūr* rests heavily upon authenticated Prophetic narrations. Ibn Kathīr (d. 774/1373), in the introduction to his *Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-'Azīm*, states:

فَإِنْ أَصَحَّ الطَّرْقُ فِي ذَلِكَ أَنْ يَفْسَّرَ الْقُرْآنَ بِالْقُرْآنِ، فَمَا أَجْمَلَ فِي مَكَانٍ فَقَدْ فُسِّرَ فِي مَوْضِعٍ آخَرَ، وَمَا اخْتَصَرَ فِي مَكَانٍ فَقَدْ بَيَّنَّ فِي مَوْضِعٍ آخَرَ. فَإِنْ لَمْ نَجِدِ التَّفْسِيرَ فِي الْقُرْآنِ رَجَعْنَا إِلَى السُّنَّةِ، فَإِنَّهَا شَارِحَةٌ لِلْقُرْآنِ وَمَوْضِحَةٌ لَهُ

The most authentic method is to interpret the Qur'ān by the Qur'ān; what

*is general in one place is explained elsewhere, what is brief is expanded in another place. If no tafsīr is found in the Qur'ān, then we return to the Sunnah, for it explains and clarifies the Qur'ān.*⁵

The importance of ḥadīth in tafsīr is further underscored by the practice of the Companions (ṣaḥābah) and Successors (tābi'ūn). When confronted with ambiguous verses, they sought clarification from the Prophet ﷺ or transmitted what they had heard from him. Al-Suyūṭī (d. 911/1505) writes in *al-Itqān fī 'ulūm al-Qur'ān*:

أصح أنواع التفسير ما ورد عن رسول الله ﷺ لأنه هو المبين عن الله مراده من كتابه

*The most authentic form of tafsīr is that which is transmitted from the Messenger of God ﷺ, for he is the one who clarifies God's intent in His Book.*⁶

Similarly, al-Zarkashī (d. 794/1392) affirms in *al-Burhān fī 'ulūm al-Qur'ān*:

الطريق في معرفة تفسير كتاب الله تعالى هو النقل والسمع عن النبي ﷺ ، ثم عن الصحابة، ثم عن التابعين

*The path to knowing the interpretation of the Book of God is through transmission and hearing from the Prophet ﷺ, then from the Companions, then from the Successors.*⁷

Moreover, ḥadīth provides not only exegetical clarifications but also *asbāb al-nuzūl* (occasions of revelation), legal rulings (*ahkām*), and theological explanations. For example, reports on the verse of *tayammum*⁸ detail both its context of revelation and its juristic implications. Al-Ṭaḥāwī (d. 321/933), in *Sharḥ mushkil al-āthār*, demonstrates how apparently conflicting narrations can be reconciled in order to preserve coherence in tafsīr and law.

The role of ḥadīth in tafsīr literature is both foundational and indispensable. Classical exegetes consistently placed Prophetic reports at the centre of their methodology, ensuring that Qur'anic commentary remained rooted in revelation rather than conjecture. As al-Suyūṭī summarizes:

من أراد التفسير من غير طريق الحديث فقد ضلّ الطريق

*Whoever seeks tafsīr without recourse to ḥadīth has gone astray.*⁹

This interconnection between tafsir and ḥadīth underscores why later exegetical works such as *al-Tafsir al-Mazhari* cannot be fully appreciated without reference to the broader framework of ḥadīth sciences.

AL TAFSIR AL MAZHARI AND THE SCIENCE OF HADITH NARRATION

Although *Al Tafsir Al Mazhari* is not a book specifically dedicated to the science of Hadith, nor is it solely focused on this subject, it is undeniably rich with Hadith literature. In fact, the extensive and comprehensive use of Hadith in this *tafsir* is unparalleled. The learned commentator (*mufasssir*) used this science as the foundation for structuring and establishing discussions related to Fiqh (*jurisprudence*), Usul al-Fiqh (*principles of jurisprudence*), Ijtihad (*independent reasoning*), history and biography (*tarikh wa sirah*), Islamic theology (*kalam*), and Sufism (*tasawwuf*). Each discussion begins with Hadith and concludes with it. Due to this approach, *Al Tafsir Al Mazhari* contains an extensive collection of Hadith, as well as traditions (*āthār*) from the Companions (*Sahaba*) and Successors (*Tabi'un*). This vast repository of narrations is rarely found in any other exegesis. The sheer number of Hadith compiled in *Al Tafsir Al Mazhari* reveals two important aspects:

First:

The esteemed *mufasssir* (commentator) had an intense and passionate love for the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ). This deep devotion led him to be completely immersed in the spirit of sincere obedience to the Prophet (ﷺ) in every aspect of life. *Al Tafsir Al Mazhari* itself explicitly states on multiple occasions that this unwavering obedience is an essential part of *Iman* (faith).¹⁰

Second:

While various schools of thought exist in the field of *tafsir*, the two most prominent approaches are traditionalism (*riwayah-based exegesis*) and rationalism (*aqli-based exegesis*). The esteemed commentator adopted a balanced approach between these two methodologies. For some matters,

he relied solely on narrations (*riwayat*), while in others, his discussions resulted from deep contemplation of the Quran (*tadabbur fi al-Qur'an*) and reflection on Hadith (*tafakkur fi al-ahadith*). Thus, he established a remarkable example of moderation and balance. In brief, we can classify the methodology of *Al Tafsir Al Mazhari* as following the spirit of the *Mujaddidi Movement* or the *Islamic Renaissance Movement*.

CLASSIFICATION OF HADITH BOOKS AND *AL TAFSIR AL MAZHARI*

The vast and extensive use of *Ilm al-Riwayah* (the science of Hadith narration) in *Al Tafsir Al Mazhari* can be estimated by examining the list of sources cited in the commentary. A closer look at these sources reveals that the esteemed *mufassir* utilized approximately eighty six books from the science of Hadith narration (*Ilm al-Riwayah*) and nineteen books from the science of Hadith understanding (*Ilm al-Dirayah*). Many of these books consist of multiple volumes. If we assume an average of two volumes per book, the total number of volumes studied would be two hundred ten. The ability to analyze such a vast collection of literature on a single subject and to incorporate references throughout the *tafsir* demonstrates the author's remarkable scholarly depth, religious expertise, and unique style in Qur'anic exegesis. Hadith scholars have classified the books of Hadith into four categories based on their authenticity and reliability. *Al Tafsir Al Mazhari* includes references from books belonging to all four categories.¹¹ The classification is as follows:

(A) *First Category*

The first category includes books that exclusively compile mutawatir (mass-transmitted), mashhur (widely reported), and sahih al-isnad akhb'ar a'had (authentic single-chain reports). This category consists of books such as:

- *Sahih al-Bukhari*
- *Sahih Muslim*
- *Muwatta Imam Malik*

These books are held in high regard by all schools of thought and are universally recognized as the most authentic sources of Hadith. In *Al Tafsir Al Mazhari*, extensive reliance has been placed on this category for Hadith related to various topics. A detailed discussion of this reliance follows in the subsequent sections.

(B) Second Category

The second category of Hadith is Sunan (collections). Among the Sunan are Sunan Abū Dāwūd, Sunan al-Tirmidhī, Sunan al-Nasā'ī, and Sunan Ibn Mājah. Musnad Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal also falls under this category. In these collections, alongside authentic reports, there are also such narrations that do not meet the standard of authenticity. Since these narrations are cited in accordance with legal (fiqh) rulings, they are called Sunan. For this reason, a specific title 'al-Sunan' is given to them.

Like the general jurists, Qāḍī Sahib too, after the books of Ṣiḥāḥ, made these (the Sunan) a basis for research. However, since most of their narrations are considered with caution, both the texts and the chains of transmission are usually examined with a critical eye.

(C) Third Category

In this category, the books comprising reports such as, Shādh,¹² Munkar,¹³ Muḍṭarib¹⁴ and other similar categories of ḥadīth collections have also been included. For example, Musannaf Ibn Abī Shaybah, Musnad Abu Daud Al-Tayalsi' Musannaf 'Abd al-Razzāq, Musannaf Abdul Hameed, Sunan al-Bayhaqī, Sunan Tahavi, and Sunan Tabrani, among others.¹⁵ Reference has also been made to books of this category. However, wherever possible, the narrations have been duly cross-referenced and identified.

(D) Fourth Category

In this category, books compiled by the preachers, the storytellers and narrators etc have also been included. For instance, the books of Marduwaih, Abul al-Shaikh and Ibn Hisham. In Tafsīr Mazharī, these

books have likewise been utilized for matters of virtues, some historically legal rulings and issues, instructive parables, and narratives.¹⁶

(E) Classification of Hadith from another Perspective

The books of Ḥadīth are also classified from another perspective. In this way, the first category of Ḥadīth books consists of the *Ṣiḥāḥ*, which include the *Kutub Sittah* and the *Sunan Arbaʿah*.

The second type of books of Hadith is called *Al-Jawamʿe*. These contain Ahadith related to at least eight topics such as Beliefs, rulings, etiquettes, exegesis, manners, history and biography, expeditions, the chapter of *al-Shamāʿil*, the trials (*al-Fitan*), and the virtues (*al-Manāqib*), and other similar topics. Examples are *Jami*, *Al Sahih li al Bukhari* and the *Jami al Sunan li al Tirmithi* etc.

The third type includes those books which are known as *Musnad*. In these, the narrations of Ahadith are compiled according to the names of the Companions (may Allah be pleased with them). For example, the *Musnad* of Imam Ahmad ibn Hanbal, *Musnad* of Abu Daud al Tayalsi etc.

The fourth type of books includes those in which the narrations of the Prophet ﷺ are arranged in an alphabetical order, such as *Muʿjam li al Tabrani* etc. According to this classification, the fifth type is called *Mustadrak*, which refers to books in which the author compiles such Ahadith which meet the conditions of authenticity set by earlier compilers but were not included by them. The most famous example is *al-Mustadrak ʿala al-Sahihayn* by Imam Hakim al-Naysaburi.

The sixth type is *Mustakhraj*, in which the compiler re-narrates the Ahadith of earlier books with his own chain of transmission. For instance, *Mustakhraj* Abi Bakr al-Ismaʿili, etc. The seventh type is *Juzʿ*, which refers to a small treatise focused on one specific issue. For example, a book dedicated only to the virtues of a certain deed or rulings on a specific matter.

In *Tafsīr al-Mazharī*, with respect to this classification, references from the seven categories of ḥadīth books are found in abundance. Thus, in this regard, *Tafsīr al-Mazharī* holds the distinction of benefiting from all the collections of ḥadīth.¹⁷

THE SCHOLARSHIP OF THE AUTHOR IN HADITH LITERATURE

Generally, the scholars of ḥadīth (muḥaddithūn) are classified into three ranks: the first is *Musnid*¹⁸, the second is *Muḥaddith*,¹⁹ and the highest rank is that of *Ḥāfiẓ (of ḥadīth)*.²⁰ In our view, the esteemed author of *Tafsīr al-Mazharī* attained, in his own time, the highest level in the science of ḥadīth—namely, the rank of *Ḥāfiẓ al-Ḥadīth*. This becomes entirely evident from the grand scholarly and investigative contribution related to ḥadīth contained within *Al-Tafsīr Al-Mazharī*.²¹

Ḥāfiẓ al-Ḥadīth means that scholar who, along with memorizing aḥādīth, also possesses mastery of the chains of transmission (*asānīd*) and the science of the narrators (*asmā' al-rijāl*). He must be well-versed in the Prophetic traditions, have insight into the various routes of transmission, be able to discern differences in chains of narration, and be knowledgeable of both unanimously accepted (*mujma' alayh*) and disputed (*mukhtalaf fih*) reports for the purpose of ijtihād. He should be capable of distinguishing between the various terms used in the discipline of ḥadīth criticism, such as ḥujjah (decisive proof), thiqaḥ (trustworthy), maqbūl (accepted), wasat (moderate), lā ba's bihi (no harm in his narration), ṣadūq (truthful), khushū' (humble), shaykh (simply a transmitter), da'if (weak), matrūk al-ḥadīth (abandoned in narration), and dhāhib al-ḥadīth (one whose narrations are discarded).

Similarly, he should be able to distinguish between the narrations transmitted with *'an* and those transmitted with *inna* (in the chains of ḥadīth). In short, he must be proficient in both riwāyah (transmission) and dirāyah (understanding/critical evaluation) of ḥadīth. In the beginning, it was considered essential for a *Ḥāfiẓ al-Ḥadīth* to have memorized a vast number of aḥādīth along with their chains of transmission. According to al-Ḥākim al-Nīsābūrī, a *Ḥāfiẓ al-Ḥadīth* ought to have memorized five hundred thousand aḥādīth. However, gradually this number decreased until it was set at twenty thousand. On this basis, al-Suyūṭī, citing some ḥadīth scholars, reports: "*We do not consider a person to belong to the people of ḥadīth (ahl al-ḥadīth) until he has written down twenty thousand aḥādīth.*"²²

Nevertheless, the renowned ḥadīth scholar Ibn Sayyid al-Nās deemed the fixing of a specific number unnecessary, arguing that the required quantity has varied in different eras. In any case, the one

who, in his own time, excels in the science of ḥadīth—both in riwāyah (transmission) and dirāyah (understanding/critical evaluation)—and has such proficiency in the discipline of *asmā' al-rijāl* (biographical evaluation of narrators) that he knows each transmitter and his teacher, and whose knowledge of ḥadīth outweighs what remains unknown to him, such a person is considered a Ḥāfiẓ al-ḥadīth.

Qāḍī Ṣāhib fully met the above-mentioned criteria of being a Ḥāfiẓ al-ḥadīth. He acquired the knowledge of ḥadīth in a formal manner from three of the most renowned and leading teachers of his time—Shāh Walīullāh (RA), Shaykh Muḥammad Fākhir al-Muḥaddith (RA), and Ḥaḍrat Mīrẓā Maẓhar Jān-i Jānān (RA). His chains of transmission (*asānīd 'ilmī*) were among the most distinguished and exalted of his era, since in his sanad were combined the three great scholarly lineages of both India and the sacred land of Ḥijāz—namely, the chain of Shaykh Sālīm al-Baṣrī, the chain of Shaykh Abū Ṭāhir al-Madanī, and the chain of Shaykh Muḥammad Ḥayāt al-Sindī.

All the primary texts of ḥadīth were under Qāḍī Ṣāhib's consideration, and indeed, he had mastery over all of them. On this basis, the list of sources and references of *Al-Tafsīr al-Mazharī* includes ḥadīth books from every category and rank.

Moreover, his scholarly and investigative work in the form of *Al-Tafsīr al-Mazharī* encompasses both aspects of ḥadīth—riwāyah (transmission) and dirāyah (understanding and critical evaluation). The abundance and breadth of narrations within it are such that he had mastery not only over his own school's traditions but also over those of the opposing side. His command over the various routes of transmission was so profound that he would often cite multiple chains simultaneously. His attention to both the text (*matn*) and the chain (*isnād*) was so comprehensive that not even the weakest aspect of a narration under discussion would escape his scrutiny. The vastness and depth of his expertise are reflected in the fact that whether the subject was an ordinary theme or the most complex legal issue, he consistently incorporated a rich and valuable collection of traditions and aḥādīth in his *tafsīr*.

It was on account of these diverse qualities that Shāh 'Abd al-'Azīz Muḥaddith Dihlawī (RA) would refer to him as the "*Bayhaqī of his time*." It was well known regarding Imām al-Bayhaqī that he had strengthened

and reinforced Shāfi‘ī jurisprudence through the science of ḥadīth. In brief, just as Imām al-Bayhaqī undertook the difficult task of revisiting Shāfi‘ī fiqh in the light of ḥadīth, in the same manner, Qāzī Ṣāhib carried out the challenging work of re-examining Ḥanafī fiqh in light of the traditions, enriching it with many new evidences and fresh juristic insights. Clearly, such a task could not have been accomplished without profound scholarly mastery. Thus, *Tafsīr al-Mazharī* stands as a vast and valuable repository of ḥadīth and the reports of the Companions and Successors.

QADI THANAULLAH’S METHOD OF CITATION

The depth of Qadi Thanaullah’s scholarship is evident not only in the vast number of narrations he includes but also in his precise methodology of referencing Hadith. His approach to writing Hadith, analyzing it critically, deriving rulings, and using Hadith as evidence reflects his expertise as a seasoned Muhaddith²³ and Hafiz al-Hadith.²⁴

Some key characteristics of his writing style are as follows:

(A) The Consensus-Oriented Writing Style:

There are generally two methods of writing hadith. The first method is commonly found among the muhaddithun (e.g., Imam Malik and Imam Bukhari), where they first narrate the hadith and then extract rulings and interpretations from them. The second method is followed by jurists, who first present legal rulings and issues and then provide supporting hadith and other evidences. This method is evident in the works of renowned jurists such as Marghinani (author of *Al-Hidayah*), Sarakhsi (author of *Sharh al-Siyar al-Kabir*), Abu al-Qasim in *Al-Mudawwanah*, and Imam Shafi‘ī in *Kitab al-Damm*, where hadith citations come after the legal discussions.

In *Al Tafsir Al Mazhari*, the latter approach has also been adopted. For example, under the explanation of Surah Al-Baqarah, verse 196:

“And complete the Hajj and ‘Umrah for Allah...”

This verse serves as proof for the obligation of Hajj and ‘Umrah, the necessity of their completion, and the prohibition of converting Hajj into ‘Umrah.

*Regarding the obligation of Hajj, there is a unanimous consensus that it is a firm obligation upon individuals and one of the pillars of Islam. Allah Almighty says... The Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said: "Islam is built upon five pillars..." (Agreed upon). There are numerous hadith on this subject."*²⁵

However, under the influence of the *muhaddithun*, some degree of independent scholarly innovation has been introduced in *Al Tafsir Al Mazhari*. For instance, the primary sources of Islamic jurisprudence—Qur'an and Hadith—have been given the utmost emphasis. Additionally, hadith have been cited extensively and with great frequency, making these discussions appear more like hadith and tafsir discourses rather than pure legal discussions. This demonstrates that the objective of *Qadi Sahib* in writing legal discussions in *Al Tafsir Al Mazhari* was not merely to educate people about fiqh rulings and laws (although that was an additional benefit). The primary purpose was to strengthen the call for the revival of the Sunnah and a return to the Qur'an—an objective that has remained central to the broader movement for Islamic renewal (*Nahda Thania*).

(B) Influence of Hafiz Ibn Hajar and Abu Isa Al-Tirmidhi

The style of writing and presenting hadith in hadith literature is not uniform. Imam Bukhari's methodology, which involves understanding hadith through categorized chapters, is quite different from that of Imam Muslim bin Al-Hajjaj Al-Qushayri, who does not strictly adhere to chapter divisions.²⁶ Similarly, the commentators of hadith books have adopted different writing styles. In *Al Tafsir Al Mazhari*, the influence of two particular scholars in this regard is quite evident:

1. Influence of Imam Abu Isa Al-Tirmidhi

The method of quoting hadith, referencing additional hadith, and briefly critiquing them in *Al Tafsir Al Mazhari* clearly shows an influence from the *hadith master* Imam Abu Isa Al-Tirmidhi (d. 279 AH / 888-889 CE). This is because *Sunan al-Tirmidhi* is unique in its critical observations regarding the authenticity of its chains (*isnads*) and in identifying points of divergence between different schools of

thought.²⁷ Additionally, Tirmidhi's phrase "*Wa fi al-bab...*" (On this subject...) provides comprehensive and useful additions, a feature not found in other books.

The influence of Imam Tirmidhi is easily noticeable in *Al Tafsir Al Mazhari* since it frequently employs Tirmidhi's distinct phrases and expressions, such as:

- "*Wa fi al-bab...*" (On this subject...)²⁸
- "*Hatha hadith hasan sahih*" (This is a good and authentic hadith)²⁹
- "*Hadith gharib la na'rifuhu illa min hadith...*" (This is a rare hadith that we know only through the narration of [a particular narrator])³⁰

Furthermore, the method of critical evaluation (*naqd wa ta'liq*) in *Al Tafsir Al Mazhari*, especially in its brief critiques, is remarkably similar to that of Tirmidhi. Consider the following examples:

*"We say that the chain of Abdullah bin Hakim and its text are inconsistent; therefore, it cannot be presented as an argument against the hadith narrated in the authentic collections. Moreover, this narration includes Abdullah bin Aziz, about whom Abu Hatim Al-Razi said, 'His hadith are rejected, and I do not consider them to be true.' Ali bin Husayn Al-Jayd remarked, 'He holds no credibility and fabricates hadith.'"*³¹

*"And a group of leading scholars have classified this hadith as authentic, but not based on its chain of narration (isnad), rather due to its widespread acceptance (shuhrah)."*³²

*"Ibn Sulaiman is weak, and his connected (mawsool) narration cannot be used as evidence, let alone his disconnected (mauqoof) narration."*³³

*"The chain of this narration includes Mu'alla bin Hilal. Yahya (ibn Ma'in) said that he was a forger of hadith."*³⁴

Such brief yet comprehensive critiques, when studied alongside *Sunan al-Tirmidhi*, reveal a striking similarity between their styles.

2. Influence of Hafiz Ibn Hajar

Just as *Al Tafsir Al Mazhari* follows Imam Tirmidhi's approach in brief hadith critiques, it mirrors Hafiz Ibn Hajar's method in detailed and

analytical commentary. Ibn Hajar was one of the most revered scholars for Qadi Sahib, and he frequently references him with deep admiration. He often cites him using phrases like:

- “*Qal al-Hafiz*” (*The Hafiz said*)³⁵
- “*Al-Sheikh Ibn Hajar*” (*The scholar Ibn Hajar*)³⁶
- “*Hafiz Ibn Hajar*”³⁷

This consistent deference highlights Qadi Sahib’s profound influence from Ibn Hajar. Moreover, he often aligns with Ibn Hajar’s conclusions on various hadith interpretations.³⁸

His in-depth critiques, which strongly resemble Ibn Hajar’s analytical style, follow this pattern:

*“I say that these hadiths have no connection to the Qur’an or to Tamattu’ (a type of Hajj) because none of these verses are related to Hajjatul Wada’ (the Farewell Pilgrimage). Rather, they pertain to the Treaty of Hudaibiyyah. Furthermore, the Prophet (PBUH) did not perform any Hajj between his migration and Hajjatul Wada’. Therefore, this cannot be a ‘Hady Tamattu’ (sacrificial offering of Tamattu’ Hajj); rather, it was a voluntary offering.”*³⁹

In this passage, the critique is historical, a hallmark of Ibn Hajar’s approach. Another example of Ibn Hajar’s analytical influence in *Al Tafsir Al Mazhari* is as follows:

*“I say that these two hadiths have no relation to the claimant’s argument because they only reflect the stance of Ibn Abbas (RA) and Ibn Umar (RA). This ruling applies to someone who sends a sacrificial animal (hady) to Makkah without intending to perform Hajj. Such a person must observe all the prohibitions of Ihram until the animal is sacrificed in Makkah.”*⁴⁰

This passage demonstrates an extensive knowledge base and a critique of the narrations based on the personal inclinations of the narrators—another distinctive feature of Ibn Hajar’s approach. At one point, Qadi Sahib writes:

*“These traditions, although seemingly contradictory, can be reconciled. The first hadith highlights the virtue of performing prayer aboard a ship, while the second suggests the opposite. However, they can be harmonized by considering the response to be contingent upon the condition of the questioner.”*⁴¹

This method of *tatbiq* (harmonization) and *jam’ bayn al-riwayat*

(reconciling narrations) is a clear reflection of Ibn Hajar's analytical style. From this, it becomes evident that *Al Tafsir Al Mazhari* holds a remarkably high scholarly standard in hadith studies. Instead of presenting hadith in a superficial or generalized manner, it adheres to the methodology of expert *muhaddithun*, offering in-depth and refined discussions.

FUNDAMENTAL OBJECTIVES OF QUOTING HADITH AND NARRATIONS

Regardless of the field, its application must align with context and necessity to ensure its relevance and utility. Hadith science is undoubtedly one of the most sacred and noble disciplines, but an essential question arises: how has Qadi Sahib employed it within *Al Tafsir Al Mazhari*?

Based on our analysis, his objectives appear to be as follows:

(A) A Balanced Combination of Tafsir bil-Riwayah and Tafsir bil-Dirayah

As we have discussed in detail in the introduction, *Al Tafsir Al Mazhari* is a moderate and well-balanced blend of *Tafsir bil-Riwayah* (interpretation based on narrations) and *Tafsir bil-Dirayah* (interpretation based on reasoning and understanding). The extensive and comprehensive reliance on the sayings of the *Sahabah* (Companions) and *Tabi'in* (Successors) is unparalleled among later scholars. Additionally, the use of reasoning (*dirayah*), particularly in deriving legislative wisdom and benefiting from hadith, is a distinctive feature. Consequently, narrations play a significant role in interpreting the Quran, making their inclusion highly relevant and appropriate.

(B) Use of Hadith for Contextualizing Verses and Legal Precedents

Al Tafsir Al Mazhari frequently references hadith to explain the subject matter and usage of Qur'anic verses, including their *Asbab al-Nuzul* (circumstances and reasons for revelation) and legal analogies. This highlights the multifaceted importance of hadith in this *tafsir*:

1. To study the context of revelation (*Shan-e-Nuzul*).

2. To elucidate the meanings of Qur'ānic verses.
3. To establish legal analogies, examples, and jurisprudential evidence.

Undoubtedly, this use of hadith is well-placed and necessary.

(C) Integration of Hadith in Various Islamic Sciences

Al Tafsir Al Mazhari incorporates hadith-based insights into various disciplines such as:

- Fiqh (Islamic Jurisprudence)
- Kalam (Theology)
- Akhlaq wa Maw'iz (Ethics and Admonition)
- Tarikh wa Sirah (History and Prophetic Biography)
- Tasawwuf (Islamic Mysticism)

Each of these fields is structured in a manner that reflects a purely *muhaddith* (hadith scholar) and *muhagiq* (researcher) approach. Additionally, even linguistic studies, such as lexicology (Ilm al-Lugha) and etymology (Ishtiqaq), are not devoid of references to narrations.

UNDERSTANDING OF HADITH

Imam Bukhari (may Allah have mercy on him) recorded in the chapter on understanding (Fahm) in *Kitab al-Ilm* the following statement of the Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him):

“Let the one who is present convey (this message) to the one who is absent, for it may be that the one to whom it is conveyed will understand it better than the one who heard it.”

This indicates that, according to the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him), the essential issue was comprehension (understanding), and being physically present was not a necessary condition. Throughout Islamic history, many renowned scholars have distinguished themselves in the field of hadith comprehension. Allah had bestowed upon Qadi Sahib (may Allah have mercy on him) a similarly exceptional intellect, enabling him to demonstrate a deep understanding of both the Quran and Hadith in *Al Tafsir Al Mazhari*. His mastery in understanding

Hadith is most prominently reflected in the chapters of Fiqh, where he skillfully derives accurate conclusions from hadith and applies them to contemporary situations and issues.

THE SCIENCE OF DIRAYAT AL-HADITH AND *AL TAFSIR AL MAZHARI*

The branch of knowledge related to Hadith and its subsidiary disciplines is also known as '*Usul al-Hadith*' or '*Mustalah al-Hadith*' (Principles and Terminology of Hadith). Just as the development of '*Ilm al-Riwayah*' (the science of narration) took place under the guidance of the Quran and Sunnah, the science of *Dirayat al-Hadith* (the analytical study of Hadith) was also founded on the same principles. The Quran and Hadith emphasize speaking and accepting the truth while avoiding falsehood, and it is upon these foundations that *Usul al-Hadith* and *Dirayat al-Hadith* were established. This discipline allows scholars to distinguish between authentic and weak narrations.

The esteemed commentator of the Quran (*mufasssir*) possessed a profound mastery of *Dirayat al-Hadith* and *Usul al-Hadith*, which is evident in *Al Tafsir Al Mazhari* and the extensive sources it draws upon—approximately twenty scholarly works. *Al Tafsir Al Mazhari* makes extensive use of this science and its related disciplines to explain, interpret, critique, and analyze hadith narrations. Some of the most notable aspects of *Dirayat al-Hadith* in *Al Tafsir Al Mazhari* are as follows:

RECOGNITION OF HADITH

As a Hadith scholar, Qadi Sahib in *Al Tafsir Al Mazhari* considers it his duty to identify whether a Hadith is authentic (*ṣaḥīḥ al-isnād*) or weak (*ḍa'if al-isnād*) and to determine to what extent it can be relied upon in various jurisprudential matters.

Based on the authenticity and reliability of the text (*matn*) and the chain of transmission (*isnād*), narrations are categorized into three types: *Ṣaḥīḥ* (authentic)⁴², *Ḥasan* (good)⁴³, and *Ḍa'if*⁴⁴ (weak). These three classifications are mentioned in the commentary (*Tafsir*). Additionally,

Imam Tirmidhi's specific terms, Ḥasan Ṣaḥīḥ (good and authentic)⁴⁵ and Ḥasan Gharīb⁴⁶ (good but rare), are also discussed. From the perspective of completeness or incompleteness of the chain (*isnād*), Hadiths are divided into different categories such as Marfū' (elevated),⁴⁷ Mawqūf (halted),⁴⁸ Mursal (missing a link),⁴⁹ Maqtū' (severed),⁵⁰ and Mufaṣṣal (detailed).⁵¹ References to these classifications can be found throughout the *Tafsir*. Furthermore, regarding the classification of Hadith based on "Turuq" (literally meaning paths, referring to the different chains of transmission), *Al Tafsir Al Mazhari* discusses the four main categories: Mutawātir (mass-transmitted),⁵² Mashhūr (well-known),⁵³ 'Azīz (rare but strong),⁵⁴ and Khabar al-Wāḥid (solitary report)⁵⁵. Similarly, the *Tafsir* frequently points out weaknesses in certain chains of narration and discusses other flaws in transmission. Scholars of Hadith methodology (*Uṣūl al-Ḥadīth*) have identified up to 381 types of weak Hadiths. However, according to Imam Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ, many of these classifications are merely theoretical and rarely occur in practice. These weak Hadiths can be broadly divided into two categories:

1. Those that are weak due to flaws in the text (matn).
2. Those that are weak due to deficiencies in the chain of transmission (*isnād*).

Among these, *Al Tafsir Al Mazhari* frequently discusses specific weak Hadith categories such as *Shādh* (anomalous),⁵⁶ *Muḍṭarib* (confused in text or chain),⁵⁷ *Matrūk* (abandoned),⁵⁸ *Munkar* (rejected),⁵⁹ *Mawḍū'* (fabricated),⁶⁰ *Mukhtaliṭ* (mixed-up),⁶¹ *Maqlūb* (reversed),⁶² *Mu'allal* (defective),⁶³ and *Majhūl* (unknown narrator)⁶⁴.

The extensive mention of these various classifications of Hadith in *Al Tafsir Al Mazhari* demonstrates the profound expertise of its esteemed commentator in the sciences of Hadith.

CRITICISM OF NARRATORS

The critical evaluation of Hadith chains (*isnād*) and the examination of narrators (*rāwīs*) fall under the specialized field known as 'Ilm Asmā' al-Rijāl (the Science of Narrators). This remarkable scholarly achievement of Muslims has no parallel in any other religion. The famous German

orientalist Dr. Sprenger has rightly stated that the discipline of *Asmā' al-Rijāl*—which has preserved the names and biographical details of over 500,000 individuals—is an unparalleled feat in world history.

Qāzī Muḥammad Thanā'ullāh encountered *Ilm Asmā' al-Rijāl* in an objective capacity. Although his primary field was Hadith and Tafsir, mastery of *Asmā' al-Rijāl* was essential for assessing the authenticity of narrations. Therefore, he frequently utilized this science in his *Tafsir*.

The critique of narrators is further divided into two aspects. Positive Criticism – Establishing the authenticity (*ṣiḥḥa*) and reliability (*thiqāba*) of a Hadith's text (matn) and chain (isnād). Negative Criticism – Highlighting the weakness and inconsistencies (*idṭirāb*) in a Hadith's text (matn) or chain (isnād).

To classify narrators, Hadith scholars developed about twelve standard terms to describe their scholarly and narratorial status. *Al Tafsir Al Mazhari* contains almost all of these terms, each used in its appropriate context. Some of these classifications include:

- Companions (Ṣaḥābah) – Simply calling someone a *Ṣaḥābī* was considered sufficient proof of their reliability. *Al Tafsir Al Mazhari* also defends the high religious and scholarly status of the Companions.
- Second and Third Categories (Higher Reliability)
Example: *وقال يحيى ابن معين ثقة وقال الذهبي ثقة مشهور من رجال مسلم*
56
- Fourth Category (Moderate Reliability)
The phrase “ليس به بأس” (“There is no harm in his narration”) is used.⁶⁶
- Fifth Category (Slightly Weak Narrators)
Qadi sahib at some place writes, “وايضا في ابن ابي ليلى طعن الطحاوي،
”فيه بفساد الحفظ”
- Sixth Category (Lower Weakness): It is described in the following way.
رواه الدارقطني عن ابي حاتم لا يحتج به⁶⁷, ⁶⁸“Narrated by al-Daraqutni from Abu Ḥātim: ‘He is not a reliable authority (lā yuḥtajj bihi).’ Elsewhere: “Lā yaqūmu bihi ḥujjah” (His narration does not establish proof).
- Seventh Category (Unknown Status)
The term *Majhūl* (unknown) is used.

- Eighth Category (Weak Narrators)
The term *Da'if* (weak) is used. Example: “ضعفه فلان” (So-and-so was declared weak).
- Ninth Category (Abandoned Narrators)
The terms *Matrūk* (abandoned) and *Matrūk al-Ḥadīth* (his Hadith is abandoned) are used.
- Tenth Category (Severely Weak Narrators)
The phrases “واه جدا” (extremely weak) and “واهى الحديث” (his Hadith is fragile) are used.
- Eleventh Category (Suspected of Lying)
The phrase “كان يكذب” (He used to lie) is used.
- Twelfth Category (Confirmed Fabricators)
The terms “كذاب” (liar) and “شيخ دجال” (deceptive sheikh) are used.

Additional Terms for Weakness of Hadith

- “Ashadd ḍa‘fan ضعفا أشد” (Extremely weak)
- “Laysa bi shay’in ليس به شيء” (He is nothing)
- “Laysa maḥallahu al-ṣidq ‘indī ليس محله الصدق عندي” (He is not truthful in my view)
- “Lā yasāwī falsan لا يساوى فلسا” (His narration is not worth a penny)
- “Wudhūḥ al-kadhib وضوح الكذب” (His falsehood is evident)

In the same way, Qadi Sahib, in *Al Tafsir Al Mazhari*, has established a high standard of Hadith writing by critically analyzing Ahadith and narrations in a purely Muhaddith-style manner. This level of critique is rarely seen in the field of exegesis. His critiques are thorough and complete when it comes to Hadith related to Fiqh, while they are partial on other topics. The scholarly commentator’s impartial and unbiased approach is so evident that even narrations supporting the Hanafi school of thought have not been spared from his critiques.

EXPLANATION OF SOME PRINCIPLES OF ILM AL-DIRAYAH IN HADITH

The depth and breadth with which *Al Tafsir Al Mazhari* studies the sciences of Hadith and Riwayah (narration) can further be understood by the fact that the esteemed commentator has also explained some

important principles of *Ilm al-Dirayah wa Riwayah* (the science of Hadith understanding and transmission). A few examples of these principles are as follows:

(a) Issue of a Narration Being Reported through Multiple Weak Chains

If a narration is transmitted through multiple weak chains (*non-thiqah* sources), these chains collectively strengthen each other, making the weak narration acceptable as evidence (*hujjah*). Hafiz Ibn Hajar states that this Hadith has also been narrated through another chain by *Tabarani*, and if combined with the first chain, it becomes stronger. Similarly, at one point, such narrations have been termed as *i'tidad* (reinforced), where their chain up to *Sha'bi* is authentic. In some cases, different chains, when combined, attain the status of *mu'tadid* (strengthened).

(b) Issue of Accepting or Rejecting Marfu' and Mawquf Narrations

It is generally accepted that all the *Sahabah* (Companions of the Prophet ﷺ) were just (*ʿidul*), and therefore, their *mawquf*⁶⁹ (non-Prophetic) narrations are also accepted. However, this is not an absolute rule. There are instances where great caution is required—especially when narrations of different *Sahabah* contradict one another. In such cases, this principle cannot be applied strictly. In these situations, all relevant narrations are usually mentioned, and preference is given based on other considerations. This is necessary because, at times, a *mawquf* narration may be based on the *Sahabi's* personal *ijtihad* (independent reasoning).

Qadi Sahib, in one place, writes:

"We do not accept that this narration holds the status of a Marfu' (Prophetic) Hadith. It is possible that Abdullah ibn Umar and Aisha (RA) derived their ruling on the permissibility of fasting during the days of Tashreeq from their own interpretation of a Quranic verse."⁷⁰

(c) Discrepancy between a Narrator's Words and Actions

Similarly, if a narrator's own statement or practice contradicts the narration he has transmitted, then in such a case, the narration—whether it is Marfu' (attributed directly to the Prophet ﷺ) or Mawquf

(attributed to a companion)—is no longer considered reliable. As mentioned explicitly by the esteemed commentator in the previously cited excerpt regarding Abdullah ibn Umar (RA) and Aisha (RA). In one instance, the reason given for this is that the discrepancy between a narrator's words and actions indicates that the narration in question is not to be followed (i.e., it has been abrogated); otherwise, the narrator's own actions would not be contrary to it.

(d) Abundance of Criticism Regarding a Narrator's Reliability

If a narrator has been subject to both positive and negative critiques, as Subhi Salih mentions, this situation frequently arises concerning narrators from the third century and beyond. In such cases, the Hadith scholars have set general conditions for accepting a narration, such as intelligence, maturity, being a Muslim, strong memory, and the absence of evident transgression. Qadi Sahib fully agrees with these conditions for accepting narrations and even goes a step further. His approach in such matters is that if the majority of a narrator's critics have deemed him weak (da'if), then based on the majority opinion, he does not consider that narrator's reports acceptable. However, if some experts in the field regard the narrator as truthful or if his narration is supported by another reliable narrator, then it should be accepted. This principle has been affirmed in one instance by Ibn Hajar and in another by Allama Ibn Humam al-Hanafi, as referenced in scholarly works.

(e) Addition by a Reliable Narrator

A similar issue arises concerning additions made by a reliable (thiqa) narrator. If a trustworthy narrator includes additional words in a narration that are not corroborated by other narrators, some scholars from different schools of thought do not accept such additions. However, Qadi Sahib, representing the Hanafi school of thought, considers such additions to be authentic. He states:

Narrations from these narrators have been recorded in both Sahih al-Bukhari and Sahih Muslim. Moreover, Imam al-Bukhari has transmitted Muqim's narration, and scholars such as Ibn al-Qattan, al-Hakim, and Ibn Daqiq al-'Id have attested to its authenticity. Therefore, the fact that some narrators have transmitted it as

*a Mawquf (companion's statement) does not affect its validity. This is because considering a Hadith to be Marfu' (attributed to the Prophet ﷺ) is an addition that can be accepted from reliable narrators.*⁷¹ This principle emphasizes that additions made by reliable narrators do not compromise authenticity but rather strengthen the narration's status.

(f) Status of Khabar al-Wahid (Solitary Narration)

The status of Khabar Al-Wahid (a solitary narration) is a debated issue among Hadith scholars and jurists. If a Khabar Al-Wahid is transmitted by trustworthy (thiqa) narrators, it is considered authentic; otherwise, it is deemed unreliable. However, Khabar Al-Wahid remains probabilistic (zanni al-ihtimal) in nature. Qadi Sahib explains that while analogy (qiyas) can be based on Khabar Wahid, it does not attain absolute certainty. Despite this, Khabar Al-Wahid holds a higher status than qiyas. On this basis, Qadi Sahib derives several rulings. For instance, if a person takes an oath based on Khabar Wahid, and it is later proven that the narration was incorrect, the person will not be considered sinful (hanith) for breaking the oath.

(g) Status of Aathar al-Sahabah (Companions' Reports) Compared to Marfu' Hadith

If there is a Marfu' Hadith (a narration directly attributed to the Prophet ﷺ) on one side and a report from a Companion (Aathar al-Sahabi) on the other, then the Marfu' Hadith is given preference.

Qadi Sahib states:

The reports of 'Abdul Rahman ibn 'Awf and Hasan (i.e., Aathar) are not authoritative when compared to a Marfu' Hadith.

Similarly, if there is a contradiction between the Quran and Hadith or between the Quran and a Companion's report, the former (Quran or Hadith) will always be given preference.

(h) Status of a Woman's Narration Compared to a Man's

In some cases of conflicting narrations, differences arise between the reports of men and women. Generally, if there is a contradiction, the

narration of men—especially when reported by multiple narrators—is given preference. However, if there is one narrator on each side, and the woman's narration has a stronger chain (sanad) and text (matn) compared to the man's, then the ruling is different.

For example, in a well-known case, two conflicting narrations exist:

- One reported by Busrā bint Safwan (RA) (a woman)
- The other by Tālq ibn Ali (RA) (a man)

Since Busrā's narration is more reliable and authentic, Qadi Sahib gives it preference, even against the Hanafi School's position.

(i) Resolving Contradictions between Narrations

At times, apparent contradictions arise in narrations due to factors like a narrator's misunderstanding, lack of awareness of the context, minor variations in wording, or other similar reasons. Hadith scholars have always sought to harmonize and reconcile such differences using established principles. This approach is also emphasized in *Al Tafsir Al Mazhari*. As a fundamental principle of reconciliation, Qadi Sahib writes:

*The Hanafis state that when there is a contradiction between texts (nusus), it becomes necessary to either give preference (tarjih) to one or to reconcile (jama') them.*⁷²

The methods of resolving contradictions is either by preferring the Stronger Chain (Sanad) as when a choice must be made, the narration with the stronger and more reliable chain is given preference or by preferring the More Precautionary (Ahwat) Narration such as in some cases, the narration that is more precautionary in religious matters is preferred. another way is to reconciliation (Jama') through analytical reasoning as Qadi Sahib demonstrates remarkable intellectual skills in bringing together seemingly conflicting narrations within the same school of thought, presenting a unified perspective that leaves the reader deeply impressed. Sometimes mild Interpretation (Ta'wil) is done to resolve contradictions when necessary as in certain cases, minor interpretative adjustments have been made, such as in the narrations related to the change of Qibla.

One well-known issue is whether *Qiran*⁷³ (combining Hajj and

Umrah without exiting Ihram) or *Tamattu*⁷⁴ (performing Hajj and Umrah separately in the same season) is superior. The majority (*Jumhur*) consider *Qiran* superior. Hanafis give preference to *Tamattu*. Qadi Sahib reconciles the narrations by stating: *If a pilgrim has sent a sacrificial animal (hadi) ahead, then Qiran is superior; otherwise, Tamattu is preferable*. Another disputed matter is whether one or two *Sa'is*⁷⁵ are required in *Qiran*. The majority (*Jumhur*) prefer two *Sa'is*. Hanafis argue for one *Sa'i*. Qadi Sahib reconciles the narrations by explaining:

The Prophet performed two Tawafs and two Sa'is at different times and under different circumstances. The first Tawaf and Sa'i were performed on foot, as part of Umrah. The second Sa'i was performed after Tawaf al-Ziyarah, while riding, so that pilgrims could observe the practice and learn the rituals. The core obligation was only one Tawaf and one Sa'i. This approach of harmonizing conflicting reports showcases Qadi Sahib's juristic expertise, especially in cases where differences in narrations led to varying fiqhi opinions. "The purpose of the second Sa'i and Tawaf was more for instruction than worship."⁷⁶ There are many similar instances in Al Tafsir Al Mazhari.⁷⁷

Such explanations not only help reconcile different Hadith narrations but also create a level of harmony among juristic opinions and views. This approach helps eliminate sectarian bias and makes Hadith comprehension easier. In summary, *Al Tafsir Al Mazhari* provides comprehensive discussions and valuable insights on the subjects of Hadith narration (*Ilm al-Riwayah*) and Hadith reasoning (*Ilm al-Dirayah*).⁷⁸

CONCLUSION

The foregoing discussion demonstrates that *Al-Tafsir al-Mazhari* stands as a monumental contribution to the exegetical and ḥadīth sciences, reflecting both the intellectual depth and methodological precision of Qāḍī Thana'ullāh Panipatī. His recognition as a Ḥāfiẓ al-Ḥadīth and his mastery over both *riwāyah* and *dirāyah* enabled him to construct a tafsīr that was at once textually rooted, critically engaged, and jurisprudentially balanced. Unlike many of his predecessors who either confined themselves to juristic reasoning or uncritically transmitted narrations, Panipatī combined rigorous isnād analysis with careful narrator evaluation and an astute awareness of variant reports.

His approach reveals a conscious effort to safeguard the Qur'anic exegesis from weak and unreliable traditions while simultaneously preserving the exegetical value of sound ḥadīth. By employing the tools of *ilm al-rijāl*, weighing conflicting narrations, and reconciling apparent contradictions, he aligned his tafsīr with the scholarly legacy of major muḥaddithūn, yet adapted it to the needs of his own intellectual and socio-religious milieu. Moreover, his selective citation of ḥadīth and his critical commentary on their application underscore a dual objective: to affirm the centrality of Prophetic tradition in exegesis and to cultivate a rational and methodologically coherent framework for interpreting the Qur'an.

In sum, Qāḍī Thana'ullāh Panipatī's *Al-Tafsīr al-Mazharī* embodies a rare synthesis of tradition and critique, of reverence for transmitted reports and vigilance in their application. It not only enriches the corpus of tafsīr literature but also stands as a testimony to the dynamic role of ḥadīth in shaping Islamic thought in the post-classical period. His exegetical enterprise thus offers enduring insights into how the Qur'an may be interpreted with both fidelity to tradition and methodological rigor, ensuring that the Prophetic legacy continues to illuminate the understanding of divine revelation.

NOTES

1. The most significant evidence in this regard is temporal, as *Tafsīr Mazharī* was completed in 1208 AH. During its compilation, certain incidents occurred that led the author to become disillusioned with life. Letters written during and after this period provide insights into this matter. Moreover, *Tafsīr Mazharī* itself contains references to multiple works by the author, which were evidently compiled prior to it.
2. Nawab Siddiq Hasan Khan, *Abjad al-Uloom*, Bhopal edition, pp. 304–404.
3. Abdul Hai Hasani, *Nuzhatul Khawatir* Vol. 1 p. 942 published in 1999.
4. Al-Quran Chapter 16: Verse 44.
5. Ibn Kathir, *Tafsīr* Vol.1 p 10.
6. al-Itqān, 2:179.
7. al-Burhān, 2:154.
8. Al-Quran Chapter 4 Verse 43.
9. al-Itqān, 2:181.

10. For example, see *Tafsir Mazhari*, 5:191–391 (*Tafsir of Surah Yusuf*).
11. Dr. Subhi Saleh, *Uloom al-Hadith wa Mustalahuh*, Second Edition, Damascus, 1383 AH / 1969 CE, p. 161.
12. Shādh ḥadīth = a narration by a reliable transmitter that **contradicts stronger or more numerous reports**, and therefore it is not accepted as proof.
13. Munkar ḥadīth is when a weak narrator reports something that contradicts what reliable (thiqah) narrators have reported.
14. Muḍṭarib ḥadīth is one in which the narrators report it in different, conflicting ways, with equal strength of reliability, without any way to prefer one version over the other. Because of this irresolvable contradiction, the ḥadīth is considered defective (ḍaʿīf).
15. *Uloom al Hadith* p. 117.
16. Ibn al Jauzi, *Kitab al Qisʿas wa al-Muzzukkireen*.
17. See Subhi Salih, *Uloom al Hadith* p. 122.
18. A **Musnid** refers to a **ḥadīth scholar who narrates aḥādīth with their full chain of transmission (isnād)**, going back to the Prophet.
19. A **muḥaddith** is a scholar who has studied, memorized, and transmitted aḥādīth with their chains of transmission (**isnād**), and who possesses deep knowledge of the texts (**matn**) of ḥadīth, the chains (**asānīd**), the conditions of narrators (ʿilm al-rijāl) and the classifications of ḥadīth (ṣaḥīḥ, ḥasan, ḍaʿīf, etc.)
20. A scholar who has memorized an enormous number of aḥādīth along with their chains (isnād) and critical details. He is also an expert in Ilm al-rijāl (biographical evaluation of narrators), Ilal al-ḥadīth (hidden defects), Jarḥ wa-taʿdīl (criticism and praise of narrators). Classical scholars say that a ḥāfiẓ knows at least 100,000 aḥādīth by heart, with their chains and narrators' conditions. Some even set the bar at 300,000 aḥādīth.
21. Dr Mahmoodul Hasan Arif, *Tazkira e Qadi Muhammad Thanaullah Panipati*, Idara Thaqafat e Islamiyah Lahore 1995 p. 438.
22. Ibid with reference to *Tadreeb al Rawi* p. 7.
23. Muhaddith refers to a scholar of hadith who is well-versed in chains of transmission (isnad) and the science of Asma' al-Rijal (biographical evaluation of narrators). He is knowledgeable about both high (ʿaliyy) and low (nazil) chains of narration, has memorized some hadith texts, and has formally studied collections beyond the Sihah Sittah (Six Canonical Books), such as Musnad Ahmad ibn Hanbal, Sunan al-Bayhaqi, and Muʿjam al-Tabarani (*Tadrib al-Rawi*, p. 4; Subhi Saleh: *Uloom al-Hadith*, p. 67).
24. Hafiz al-Hadith is an Islamic scholar who has memorized a very large

collection of Hadith (sayings, actions, and approvals of the Prophet Muhammad), often specified as 100,000, along with their chains of narration. The term “Hafiz” literally means “protector” or “guardian,” indicating a person who has committed a significant body of knowledge to memory, and while the title is popularly used for Quran memorizers (Hafiz al-Quran), it is also a prestigious title for accomplished hadith scholars like Al-Hafidh Ibn Hajar or Al-Dhahabi.

25. Al- Tafsir Al- Mazhari, Volume, 1 p. 612.
26. Additional chapters were added to *Sahih Muslim* at a later time; originally, the book did not contain chapter divisions.
27. See A.J. Wensinck's article on *Tirmidhi* in *Urdu Daira Ma'arif-e-Islamiya*, 6:380.
28. See, for example, *Tafsir Mazhari*, 1:712.
29. *Tafsir Mazhari*, 1:712.
30. Ibid., 1:282.
31. Ibid., 1:161.
32. Ibid., 1:180.
33. Ibid., 1:181.
34. Ibid., 1:381.
35. Ibid., 1:981.
36. Likewise, 1:182, 324.
37. Likewise, 1:081.
38. Likewise, 1:081, 181, 182, 324, etc.
39. Likewise, 1:722.
40. *Tafsir Mazhari*, 1:232.
41. Likewise, 1:752
42. **Ṣaḥīḥ Ḥadīth** is: *A narration whose chain of transmission is continuous, all of whose narrators are reliable ('adl), precise in memory (ḍābiṭ), free from irregularity (shudhūdh), and free from hidden defects ('illah)*
43. **Ḥasan Ḥadīth** is: *A narration with a continuous chain, narrated by trustworthy ('adl) transmitters, whose precision (ḍabṭ) is acceptable but not at the level of the narrators of a Ṣaḥīḥ ḥadīth, and which is free from irregularity (shudhūdh) and hidden defects ('illah).*
44. A ḥadīth is considered Ḍa'īf (weak) if it suffers from any of the following:
 - Disconnection in the chain (inqiṭā') – e.g., missing a link between narrators.
 - Narrator's lack of trustworthiness ('adālah issue) – the narrator may be known for dishonesty or immorality.
 - Weak memory (ḍabṭ issue) – the narrator has poor retention or confuses reports.

- Contradiction (shudhūdh) – the narration contradicts a stronger ḥadīth.
 - Hidden defect (‘illah qāḍīḥah) – a subtle flaw that undermines authenticity.
45. When Imām al-Tirmidhī (and some others) graded a narration as Ḥasan Ṣaḥīḥ, it generally meant: “*The ḥadīth has been narrated through more than one chain. One chain reaches the level of Ḥasan, while another reaches the level of Ṣaḥīḥ, so together the ḥadīth is stronger and more reliable.*”
 46. Ḥasan Gharīb ḥadīth is: “A narration that is authentic at the level of Ḥasan, but it is narrated only through a single chain or from a single narrator at some point in the chain (hence it is ‘Gharīb’ = rare/strange).”
 47. A Marfū‘ ḥadīth is any narration attributed directly to the Prophet — whether it is a saying, action, approval (taqrīr), or description.
 48. A Mawqūf narration is one that stops at a Companion (Ṣaḥābī) — meaning it is attributed to the Companion’s own words, actions, approval, or opinion, and not directly to the Prophet.
 49. A Mursal ḥadīth is one in which a Tābi‘ī (a Successor of the Companions) directly attributes a saying, action, or approval to the Prophet without mentioning the Companion in between.
 50. A Maqtū‘ narration is one that is attributed to a Tābi‘ī (a Successor) or anyone after them — whether a saying, action, or opinion.
 51. A Mufaṣṣal ḥadīth is one in which the narrator reports the incident or teaching of the Prophet in detail, with elaboration of events, words, or rulings
 52. A *Mutawātir ḥadīth* is a report narrated by such a large number of narrators **in every generation** (from the Prophet down to the collectors of ḥadīth), that it is **impossible for them all to have agreed upon a lie**.
 53. A **Mashhūr ḥadīth** is a report that was originally narrated by **a few Companions** (so it started as *āḥād*), but in the later generations (tābi‘ūn, atbā‘ al-tābi‘īn, etc.) it was transmitted by a **large number of narrators** until it became very well-known and widespread.
 54. An **‘Azīz ḥadīth** is a report that is narrated by **at least two narrators in every generation** of the chain (isnād).
 55. In ḥadīth terminology, **Khabar Wāḥid** is **any report that does not reach the level of Mutawātir**. In other words, it is narrated by only **one, two, or a few narrators** in some layer of the chain. It includes **Gharīb, ‘Azīz, and Mashhūr** — all of these are subcategories of *Khabar Wāḥid*.
 56. A **Shādh ḥadīth** = a narration by a reliable transmitter that **contradicts stronger or more numerous reports**, and therefore it is not accepted as proof.
 57. A Muḍṭarīb ḥadīth is one in which the narrators report it in different, conflicting ways, with equal strength of reliability, without any way to

prefer one version over the other. Because of this irresolvable contradiction, the ḥadīth is considered defective (ḍaʿīf).

58. A Matrūk ḥadīth is a narration reported by a narrator who is accused of lying or is known for extreme **weakness** in memory and reliability, such that his narration is abandoned (matrūk = “left aside”).
59. A Munkar ḥadīth is when a weak narrator reports something that contradicts what reliable (thiqah) narrators have reported.
The difference from Shādh is important:
 - **Shādh** = a reliable narrator contradicts more reliable/numerous narrators.
 - **Munkar** = a weak narrator contradicts reliable narrators.
60. A Mawḍūʿ ḥadīth is a narration falsely attributed to the Prophet, deliberately invented by a narrator, with no basis in the Prophet’s words, actions, or approvals. The word *mawḍūʿ* literally means “placed/dropped,” i.e., a made-up statement falsely placed into the body of ḥadīth.
61. A Mukhtaliṭ narrator is one who, after being reliable earlier in life, became confused or mixed-up in narrating due to reasons like:
 - Old age,
 - Blindness,
 - Memory loss,
 - Loss of books,
 - Or other circumstances that damaged his precision.
 The ḥadīth he narrates before the confusion are accepted, while those he narrates after confusion are considered weak.
62. A Maqlūb ḥadīth is one in which part of the isnād (chain) or matn (text) has been reversed, swapped, or changed, either accidentally → due to narrator’s memory slip, or deliberately → sometimes scholars did this to test students.
63. A Muʿallal ḥadīth is a narration that appears outwardly sound (ṣaḥīḥ) but, upon deep investigation, scholars discover a hidden defect (ʿillah) in the isnād (chain) or matn (text) that affects its authenticity. The word *ʿillah* means “subtle hidden flaw.”
64. A Majhūl narrator is one whose condition (ʿadālah – uprightness and ḍabt – precision) is not known. If a narrator is majhūl, then the ḥadīth he narrates is considered weak (ḍaʿīf) until his status is clarified.
65. See *Al Tafsir Al Mazhari*, Vol. 3, pp. 95-96.
66. Idem, Vol, 01 p. 106.
67. Ibid.
68. Idem p. 181.
69. A narration whose chain of transmission **stops at a Companion** (Ṣaḥābī)

and does not reach the Prophet. That is, the statement, action, or approval being reported is **attributed to a Companion only**, not to the Prophet.

70. Al-Tafsir Al-Mazhari Vol. 1 p. 4.
71. Idem 278.
72. Idem p. 319.
73. When a pilgrim makes the intention for both 'Umrah and Ḥajj together, and performs them under a single iḥrām (state of consecration), it is called Qirān.
74. When a pilgrim makes the intention only for 'Umrah first, then after completing 'Umrah he comes out of iḥrām, and later during the days of Ḥajj he wears a new iḥrām for Ḥajj, this is called Tamattu'.
75. The devotional act of walking **seven times** between the two hills — starting at Ṣafā and ending at Marwah — after performing Ṭawāf (circumambulation of the Ka'bah).
76. See Subhi Saleh: *Uloom al-Hadith*, p. 221.
77. See A.J. Wensinck's article on *Tirmidhi* in *Urdu Daira Ma'arif-e-Islamiya*, 6:380.
78. The substance of this article is heavily derived from Dr. Mahmood-ul-Hasan Arif's Urdu work *Tazkira Qadi Muhammad Sanaullah Panipati*, especially the chapter addressing Al-Tafsir al-Mazhari and the science of Hadith.

Khawaja Ghulam-us-Sayyidain (1904–1971): Life, Educational Philosophy, and Services

Khawaja Ghulam-us-Sayyidain was born in 1904 in the historic town of Panipat.¹ For nearly seven hundred years, a branch of the Ansar tribe had been settled in this town. These people are known as the Ayyubi Ansaris, i.e., descendants of the Companion of the Prophet, Hazrat Abu Ayyub Ansari. Sayyidain belonged to this noble family. The forefather of this family, Khwaja Malik Ali, who was renowned for his knowledge, piety, and spiritual excellence among his contemporaries, came to India from Herat during the reign of Sultan Ghiyasuddin Balban in the 7th Hijri/13th century CE. Khwaja Malik Ali was a descendant of Sheikh al-Islam Khwaja Abdullah Ansari, also known as Pir e Herat. Khwaja Abdullah Ansari was a well-known figure among Indian scholars. In *Tārīkh-e-Adabiyāt-e-Irān* (p.113), Dr. Rezazadeh Shafaq writes that Khwaja Abdullah Ansari's lineage traces back to Hazrat Abu Ayyub Ansari (RA).

He authored several notable books in Arabic such as *Dhamm al-Kalām* and *Manāzil al-Sā'irīn*, and in Persian like *Zād al-Ārifīn* and *Kitāb al-Asrār*. His most famous work is his collection of supplications, *Munājāt*. Khwaja Abdullah Ansari passed away in Herat in 184 AH.²

Sultan Ghiyasuddin Balban greatly respected noble families, and his son Prince Muhammad was a patron of scholars and poets. Consequently, many learned and noble families from Iran and Turkistan migrated to India. Inspired by this welcoming environment, Khwaja Malik Ali undertook the journey to India. The Sultan granted him several prosperous villages in the Panipat district for residence and appointed him to the positions of Qazi, Sadr, and Khatib for Eid sermons. Khwaja Malik Ali's lineage could be traced back to Hazrat Abu Ayyub Ansari through twenty-six generations and to Sheikh al-Islam Khwaja Abdullah Ansari through eighteen generations, as well as

to Mahmud Shah Anjum (also known as Aaq Khwaja), who ruled Fars, Kerman, and Iraq e Ajam during the Ghaznavid period. Khwaja Malik Ali passed away in 718 AH.

Sayyidain's uncle, Khwaja Ghulam al-Hasnain, was a distinguished scholar of educational philosophy and an expert in pedagogy. Khwaja Ghulam-us-Sayyidain belonged to the family of the renowned Urdu poet and reformer, Maulana Altaf Husain Hali. His father, Khwaja Ghulam al-Thaqalain, was one of the celebrated alumni of Aligarh and is still remembered with pride in the Muslim University. He was an eloquent orator and a prolific writer. As a prominent national leader and a member of the U.P. Council, he rendered valuable services to the country. Through his journal *Asr-e-Jadeed* and the reformist movement *Tehrik-e-Islāh-e-Tamaddun*, he made every effort for the betterment of society. Unfortunately, he passed away at the young age of thirty-five.³

EARLY EDUCATION OF KHWAJA GHULAM-US-SAYYIDAIN

Khwaja Ghulam-us-Sayyidain was raised for eleven years under the guidance of his father, and for nine years, he was also mentored by Altaf Husain Hali. He received his early education at Hali Muslim High School in Panipat, where he proved to be a highly intelligent and commendable student. He actively participated in every school initiative and student society, consistently demonstrating his exceptional God-gifted abilities to his peers. In 1919, at the age of fifteen, he passed the matriculation examination from Hali Muslim High School with distinction.⁴

HIGHER EDUCATION

After completing matriculation, he enrolled at Aligarh, where he passed his F.A. and B.A. exams in the first division, topping the entire university. During his stay at Aligarh, he won several awards. He participated in a debate in Banaras where he emerged victorious. He was also awarded the prestigious Cambridge Medal by Aligarh Muslim University. In addition to his oratory skills, he established a remarkable reputation through his writing, contributing significantly to university magazines.⁵

EDUCATION IN EUROPE

In 1923, after securing first position in his B.A., he was awarded a government scholarship and admitted to Leeds University in England, which was considered one of the finest institutions for education studies at the time. There, he completed the *Diploma in Education* with double distinction — an honor that had only once before been achieved in the university's history. In 1925, he earned a Master of Education degree by submitting a dissertation titled *Trends in Modern Education in the West*. During his time at Leeds University, he was often chosen to represent the university at other institutions. He served as Prime Minister of the University Union Parliament and as President of the International Society. Many of his speeches and debates were published in *The Times* over a span of two years.

PROFESSIONAL CAREER

After completing his higher education in education from Leeds University, he returned to India and, in 1925, was appointed as a Reader at the Training College of Muslim University, where he began teaching principles and methods of education. This marked the beginning of his career as an educator, and he was only 21 years old at the time. In 1930, at just 26 years of age, Sayyidain became the Principal of the Training College. Following this appointment, he came to be recognized across the country as an expert in the field of education.

(Note: In 1930, Sayyidain married Aziz Jahan Begum, the sister of Nawabzada Sajid Ali Khan of Rampur.)

His stature as an educationist was further solidified when he was appointed as a member of the National Education Committee under the chairmanship of Dr. Zakir Husain. He played a pivotal role in formulating the *Wardha Scheme* of Basic Education.⁶

(Note: The foundation of this scheme was laid during the Educational Conference in Wardha, hence the name. Mahatma Gandhi presented the concept of education through productive work. To actualize this concept in a natural and practical manner, Gandhi appointed a committee under the leadership of Zakir Husain, in which Sayyidain was included as an educational expert.)⁷

VARIOUS POSITIONS AND SERVICES

Ghulam-us-Sayyidain, after being appointed as a professor in the Education Department in 1935, rendered valuable services at AMU (Aligarh Muslim University). Under his guidance, the college made extraordinary progress and gradually became one of the best educational institutions in the country. After Aligarh, at the suggestion of Dr. Zakir Hussain, he went to Jammu and Kashmir to continue work in basic education. Sayyidain spent seven years (1938 to 1945) there making significant contributions to educational reform and development.

In the following sixteen years, Sayyidain served two years as an education advisor in Rampur State and three years in Mumbai State. After that, for eleven years (1950 to 1961), he held the posts of Joint Secretary and then Secretary in the Ministry of Education, Government of India. Upon reaching retirement age in government service, he continued as an education advisor in Kashmir, a visiting professor at the University of Wisconsin and the University of Hawaii in the United States, a member of the Education Commission of the Government of India, and director of a joint Indo-UNESCO institute established to train officials from Southeast Asian countries in educational planning and administration. During this period, he traveled to and lived in several dozen countries on behalf of his government, other governments, and international educational and scholarly organizations.

In recognition of his scholarly and educational services, the Muslim University, Aligarh, awarded him an honorary Doctor of Literature degree in 1962. Three of his travels stand out as particularly important: the first was on the invitation of the Government of Iraq, the second on the invitation of the Government of Sudan for educational organization, and the third when Columbia University in New York invited him along with seven other renowned educationists worldwide to honor him with a distinguished service award. Earlier, he had also received two major honors in his own country: one from the Sahitya Akademi Urdu for his outstanding Urdu work “**Aandhi Mein Chiragh**” (“A Lamp in the Storm”) and the other was the Padma Bhushan award, which is given for outstanding service in any field of life. In 1967, Sayyidain retired from government service but continued educational leadership work until the last days of his life.⁸

WRITING

Khawaja Ghulam-us-Sayyidain was equally proficient in both Urdu and English, and his high-quality writings exist in both languages. His first significant work on education was published in Urdu under the title “**Usool-e-Taleem**” (Principles of Education) in 1935 by the Indian Academy (Allahabad, UP). This voluminous book, with over five hundred pages, is arguably the only comprehensive book on its subject in the Urdu language.

In the preface of this book, Sir Ras Masood wrote:

“No better book on education and principles of education has ever been written in Urdu. It is a book that we proudly present alongside the authoritative works written on this subject in other languages.”

Below is a list of many of Sayyidain’s English books on education:

1. School of Future, 1937
2. Iqbal Educational Philosophy, 1938
3. Education for International Understanding, 1948
4. Problems of Educational Reconstruction, 1950
5. Education, Culture and Social Order, 1952
6. Man in the New World, 1964
7. Universities and the Life of the Mind, 1965
8. The Faith of an Educationist, 1965
9. The Humanist Traditions in Indian Educational Thought, 1966
10. Language, Life and Education, 1971

He wrote about a dozen books on education in Urdu and English combined. Apart from education, he authored well-known books on other topics such as:

1. Rooh-e-Tahzeeb (The Spirit of Civilization)
2. Shaheedan (Martyrs)
3. Wafa Ka Khoon Baha Kya (What Did the Blood of Loyalty Spill For)
4. Mard-o-Darvesh (Man and Mystic)
5. Fikr-e-Insani Ka Safar-e-Irtiqā (The Evolution of Human Thought)
6. Aandhi Mein Chiragh (A Lamp in the Storm)

“Aandhi Mein Chiragh” became very famous, and the Sahitya Akademi awarded Sayyidain a prize of five thousand rupees for this book.¹⁰

DEATH

After returning from Kashmir, Sayyidain frequently suffered from heart ailments. Dr. Wigg, his longtime physician, carefully attended to his health. On December 16, 1971, his condition worsened, and he was taken to Holy Family Hospital. On December 19, 1971, at 3:30 PM, at the age of 67, Khwaja Ghulam-us-Sayyidain passed away.¹¹

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE INDIVIDUAL AND SOCIETY

The subject of education concerns the character and formation of human life; therefore, it requires a broad perspective. Human life is like the ocean, which cannot be divided into isolated sections by lines or wooden boards so that one part has no connection with another. Just as every wave rises and flows over the water's surface, sometimes joining others to create a storm or lightly pushing a boat forward, so too the influences on a person's personality or character cannot be strictly limited. First, within a person's own being, body and mind, intellect and soul, animal instincts, etc., are all interconnected and affected simultaneously by surrounding circumstances. Second, a person does not live alone as an isolated individual but lives in cooperation with others, sharing in social business and activities. The connection with society is so deep and essential to life that imagining humans without social association is beyond our understanding. Truthfully, it is being a social worker that makes a human truly human. Without society, the full development of mental and spiritual faculties is impossible.

If we analyze our activities, we will realize that understanding their purpose and meaning requires constantly considering society. Our trade, industry, craftsmanship, transportation; in short, all activities fulfilling our life's necessities—depend on cooperative effort. Without collective work, the well-established system of society would collapse in a single day.¹²

THE NEED FOR EDUCATION TO BENEFIT FROM SOCIAL HERITAGE

There is a very important distinction between individual physical heritage and collective civilizational heritage, which those studying the philosophy of education must internalize. Physical heritage, like civilizational heritage, is inherited by every human being, but unlike civilizational heritage, it does not require any special struggle to benefit from or master it. The traits and instincts that a child inherits from their ancestors gradually manifest and mature naturally in given environmental conditions. It is true that expressing these instincts requires some stimulus, but such appropriate stimuli are present in the environment of every animal. A child has the instinct to seek nourishment; thus, without any hesitation or delay, they start nursing from their mother. The child has an innate desire to move, play, create, destroy, and to claim ownership, fulfilling these desires through objects available in their environment at appropriate times.

However, civilizational heritage is more delicate. Mere possession is not ownership in this context. This can be explained by a simple example: a book cannot truly be ours until we study it through our intellectual effort and master its contents. Simply paying money does not make it our real property. It remains an external object and is our property only in the same sense as a table or chair is our property.¹³

THE EDUCATIONAL IMPORTANCE OF CHILDHOOD

Until proper arrangements are made for the education and development of individuals' natural abilities, they will remain incapable of understanding and effectively utilizing their environment and thus cannot participate competently in the affairs of life. If we look at this issue from another angle — the study of the child's psychological life — we reach the same conclusion because the process of education depends on the mutual connection and relationship between the individual and the group. No theory of education can be deemed correct unless it balances both these aspects equally. All human institutions and systems are based on human nature and instincts; education is no different.

If the child did not have a passion for learning, experimenting, and expressing it, education would be impossible.

However, these innate powers alone are not sufficient for educating a human. For animals, their instincts combined with useful and strengthening environmental forces serve as their teacher, enabling them to live a relatively limited and simple life. Through play, slight guidance from more experienced animals, and mostly through instincts that motivate both humans and animals, they understand their environment as needed, search for food, build shelters — these few things generally constitute their life's activity. They learn all these much faster than human children.

On the contrary, human education faces two difficulties. First, at birth, a child is completely helpless and dependent, unable to protect or nourish themselves and constantly relies on the mother or others. Second, the childhood period of humans is much longer compared to all animals. To fully grasp the importance of human education, it is necessary to consider why human childhood lasts longer than that of animals. Upon reflection, it becomes clear that the extended childhood of humans is very purposeful.

For animals, a short childhood is enough to learn all the skills required for their survival, and during this time, they become familiar with the necessary things in their relatively limited and fixed environment. Humans, however, differ because their environment is neither fixed nor limited. Therefore, human children need special care and a prolonged period to understand and derive correct conclusions from the centuries of experiences of previous generations, which is precisely what education, is. Nature has granted a comparatively long childhood—the best period for education—for this purpose.¹⁴

ESTABLISHMENT OF THE CIVILIZATIONAL SYSTEM THROUGH EDUCATION

There is now a vast difference between the environments of humans and animals, but even in the earliest stages of civilization, this disparity had begun to emerge. It is possible that at the very primitive levels, human civilization was so simple and clear that children reached maturity at a young age without much external assistance, i.e., they participated in

adult life and contributed to civilizational activities. But as the system became more diverse and complex, preparing children for civilizational life became a more difficult and important responsibility, requiring a longer period. Childhood, which can be described as a period of preparation, is not a fixed duration; it extends automatically according to need so that the child can at least master the resources necessary to understand the civilizational system, and their physical and mental growth is properly guided.

The study of the history of education shows that alongside the evolution of civilization, the period of children's education has indeed lengthened. An important chapter of last century's educational struggle has been the efforts to extend the duration of compulsory education for children. In many Western countries, since the industrial and craft revolutions, there have been continuous efforts not only to maintain children in educational environments during childhood but also to keep students in educational environments during adolescence. This is because education experts feel that many principles and duties of modern civilization cannot be understood by students during childhood. A more mature experience, attained in adolescence, is required for thorough understanding, when young boys and girls recognize the rights and duties of social life through their own practical experience.¹⁵

A MISCONCEPTION ABOUT EDUCATION

Many teachers and educational theorists, by considering education from a one-sided perspective, have made significant mistakes whose consequences unfortunate children have had to endure for centuries. One of their errors is the belief that the sole purpose of education is to prepare children for future life. At first glance, this idea seems not only entirely necessary but also very correct and beneficial because it considers the mutual relationship between education and civilized life. However, any idea that is inherently useful, if we become so engrossed in it that we cannot see anything to the left or right, ahead or behind, it can lead to many errors. Education means preparing students for the duties and responsibilities they will have to face, but overemphasizing this has resulted in practical outcomes that are entirely harmful.

One consequence is that instead of focusing on the children's present

needs, abilities, and interests, the teacher makes future expectations and requirements the central goal, completely shifting the focus of education.¹⁶

INFORMAL EDUCATION

There is no need to elaborate in detail on the effect the early home life and family members have on a child's personality in the initial stages of life, as this is apparent through personal observation and experience. First, in the mother's lap and then in the love of the household, the child learns the initial movements and activities essential for living. Not only this, but the child's moral and social arrangement mostly takes place at home. Here the child first realizes how various individuals cooperate and work together towards common goals, and that the household cannot function unless each one performs their part. This awareness of mutual need and help is the foundation of all moral and civilizational training.¹⁷

EDUCATIONAL INFLUENCE OF SOCIAL LIFE

The home is the child's first and closest environment. Beyond it, a broader environment encompassing the groups and communities closely related to the child exists. Collectively, we call these the social class. Among these is the specific community in which the child is born and to which the child belongs in almost the same capacity as to their family. For a group to become a community in this sense, several factors are required. The members' economic status, customs, social style, traditions of culture and civilization are more or less similar, and there is naturally unity and social interaction among them.

When a child begins the journey of life, they are nurtured not only in the atmosphere of their home but also within a circle of social life which, though often imperceptible, very effectively molds their habits, thoughts, and character into a particular pattern. Their mannerisms, style of speech and vocabulary, moral principles, and goals become colored by their environment. Consider the earlier examples: if a child's early life is spent in an organized and hardworking community of laborers, it is likely that because of this environment, their social awareness will

be strong, they will be habituated to hard work, and skilled with their hands. However, if education is not emphasized in their family, then despite these qualities, the child may be narrow-minded and parochial. Their sympathies and interests will be limited, and they will have little interest in anything beyond a few trivial matters.

In contrast, consider a child born in a home of an educated professional who, from an early age, interacts mostly with members of that social class. This child's speech, thoughts, and lifestyle will differ from the first child's.¹⁸

EDUCATION AND THE ECONOMIC PROBLEM

Now we turn to the relationship between education and the economic problem and discuss its nature and consequences in some detail because, in the current age of industry and crafts, economic issues have gained and continue to gain great importance. Moreover, the significance of professions is not only economic but also civilizational and moral. Therefore, for a student of educational theory, studying this is essential. Besides, there are widespread misunderstandings among people regarding this issue, and due to these, complications in educational matters have arisen, making this discussion necessary to clarify ideas.

The first question here is why we include the economic system among the civilizational institutions related to the training of children and youth, and how it affects their temperament and character. The professions of adults do not directly affect children's lives, and the proposal to include vocational training in their curriculum is not acceptable. However, the system of professions in a particular community or country indirectly affects the temperament, habits, and activities of its members, including children.

A child absorbs various influences from their civilizational environment. A large and permanent part of this influence is the effect of the organization of professions and economic resources of a community on people's lives. People's intellectual and practical interests, their worldview, their character, and knowledge are largely shaped by the work they perform daily for eight to ten hours to earn a living. Another factor that has increased the educational importance of professions is their modern internal organization. The industrial revolution that

took place in Europe and other Western countries over the last two hundred years has completely transformed the nature of people's work and occupations. Earlier, almost every type of work was done by hand or with very simple tools operated by hand. Skilled craftsmen taught their apprentices different tasks.

Now, almost all work is done by machines. While this change has saved time and money, it has also deprived ordinary people of the industrial and craft elements in their occupations that contributed to the training of their personality and character. This situation has brought new difficulties and challenges to education. Since opportunities for the expression of personal abilities in minor industrial and craft occupations have almost disappeared, many good habits and crafts developed through school education are wasted in the unfavorable environment of many professions. Education demands that students develop innovation, curiosity, and creativity, but what relevance do these have for the poor factory workers? Their time is consumed by tasks that neither train the mind nor nurture the spirit.

GOVERNMENT AND EDUCATION

Now we turn our attention to an organized institution that is broader than the smaller groups we discussed earlier — namely, the system of government of a country, through which a nation or community organizes its social life and provides individuals with the means and resources to live a common and civilized life. Here, our purpose is not to discuss the general aims and objectives of government, but only to show what duties the government has in the propagation and guidance of education, and how and to what extent it can intervene in this area. In this age, when government influence and interference is increasing, it is very necessary to understand the mutual relations between government and education and to define the limits of their interference.

Why does the government interfere in individuals' lives? What right does it have to limit individual freedom? Before answering these questions, we must understand that the purpose of establishing a government is to organize and coordinate the efforts of individuals in order to help achieve common goals. If the actions of individuals remain separate and disconnected, they will be incapable of accomplishing many large

tasks such as transportation systems, provision of economic resources, etc. Therefore, the government either takes these kinds of tasks into its own hands or helps in their execution. Moreover, when cooperation or competition exists between individuals or groups, their goals often conflict, and there is a need for an institution that has authority over all, ensuring that the strong do not dominate the weak merely by force. For this reason, the government intervenes in the affairs and businesses of individuals and enacts laws, sets punishments, appoints officials and authorities who enforce laws and maintain peace.¹⁹

However, the condition is that this intervention of government is limited to those occupations and businesses which affect our collective life and are definite and well-defined. Actions that are personal, limited to our own selves, are not the government's concern directly and should not be. Our thoughts and feelings, our religion and beliefs are our own, and the government has no share in them. As long as we do not wrong others in expressing or practicing them, the government cannot interfere. If the government begins to intervene in this sphere of life as well, the rightful freedom of individuals will be lost.

This principle defines the legitimate limits of government intervention. But historical evidence shows that governments have never confined themselves to these limits; rather, they have always tried to control both the actions and thoughts of individuals as much as possible. For this purpose, they have not only used laws but have also sought to dominate education and shape people's minds according to specific molds. Many examples of this can be found in history from ancient times to today.

The declared aim of education in Sparta was to create citizens who, through their physical strength and training, would be useful to the country and strengthen its political government. For this reason, in Sparta, the government itself took charge of boys' training from childhood, and parents had only a nominal role. Similarly, in the Middle Ages, when education in Europe was not under national governments but under the Christian Church—which was not only the center of religious authority but also wielded considerable political power—the educational system was dominated by it. The Church aimed to achieve its specific objectives through education. Its most effective and successful example was the Jesuit educational system, which at one time

almost controlled the entire Europe and led many religious and political movements. Over time, this sect's religious power waned, and education largely escaped its control.

During this period, various factors accumulated that caused the scattered educational efforts of groups and individuals to prove inadequate for national objectives. This led to the establishment of an educational system that we now find in almost all civilized countries: that is, education management came under government control. But it must be remembered that this act of government was not without motive. Especially in the beginning, absolute monarchs in many countries established these systems with the intention of shaping the thoughts of their subjects according to their own opinions and goals. Napoleon clearly stated his view:

"My greatest purpose in establishing this educational system is to have a means through which I can influence people's opinions on political and moral matters."

German philosophy and ideas had a particular impact on this movement, and education was recognized as a national issue. Professor Dewey discussed this situation in his book, explaining its historical and essential causes. Germany, having been defeated by Napoleon, devised a strategy to regain its political power and repair its damaged state by using education as a tool and creating a broad and organized system of schools. Therefore, the political situation influenced not only the practical system of education but also the philosophy and purpose of education. When the entire educational system, from elementary schools to universities, aimed to prepare patriotic citizens, soldiers, officers, and administrators to ensure the military, industrial, and political security and stability of the country, naturally the principle of collective benefit gained importance in educational theory.²⁰

A LOOK AT THE EDUCATIONAL HISTORY OF INDIA

A glance at the educational history of India shows that in ancient times, the government did not subordinate the education system to its own objectives in the way indicated by the examples above. During the reigns of both Hindus and Muslims, education was mostly managed by scholars themselves, who sometimes ran schools without any particular

financial support and sometimes under the patronage of wealthy individuals. Kings and rulers often supported educational institutions and scholars through royal grants and donations. Occasionally, these scholars received regular annual stipends, but the government was neither responsible for establishing a systematic education system nor did it bear all its expenses. Scholars and experts of various sciences taught their respective subjects at their own places. Their teaching circles functioned like advanced educational institutions, where seekers of knowledge would travel from far and wide to quench their thirst for learning. These teaching centers showed some similarity to the medieval universities of Europe, where enthusiasts would travel throughout the country and benefit from the teachings of prominent scholars wherever they were.

Education was not organized for all people, but poverty was not a major barrier to education, and the doors of learning remained open to those with true passion. Religious groups indeed held authority over madrasas, since those who taught religious sciences were also highly skilled in their fields. However, since these elders had little or no deep or indirect connection with politics and government, the government did not interfere in the freedom of education. During the British rule, a new and strong relationship between education and government was established. From the beginning of the East India Company's rule till now, it is fairly clear that the government aimed to prepare students for its own purposes through educational institutions. Setting aside the period when Christian missionaries' educational efforts were dedicated to guiding the locals out of what they considered ignorance and disbelief, the educational records and correspondence from the East India Company's era show that English education was introduced mainly to prepare clerks and lower-level officials to run the company's growing business. This prevented the company from having to bring people from England for minor tasks who demanded exorbitant salaries. Another pragmatic reason was to have some local intermediaries who could act as links between the company and India in both trade and governance.

At the same time, Lord Macaulay was also concerned about lifting the countless inhabitants of this vast continent out of the darkness of ignorance, which, in the eyes of the elders, was like drowning in seas of

blood and butter! Since then, although much has changed in educational perspectives, and government statements, correspondence, and writings reveal glimpses of other and better aims, in practice education largely remains limited to teaching literacy to the middle classes and preparing them for government jobs. Moreover, both government and semi-government madrasas remain under government supervision because the government largely bears their expenses. The English proverb fits here well: "He who pays the piper calls the tune."

If educational institutions are established in the country whose objectives and policies differ completely or significantly from the generally accepted aims, it is very difficult for them to operate successfully. This is because they are deprived not only of government financial aid and the patronage of the wealthy but also their graduates, without government recognition on their certificates, face difficulties in finding livelihood. This is the challenge faced by the national educational institutions that have been established in various places in recent years. This brief commentary shows that at least in the present era, it is impossible for any government not to interfere in education at all—that is, not to try to influence its policy and objectives. But this inevitable situation makes it all the more necessary to define the limits of such interference. To some extent, every government needs such intervention for its own protection. But the greater and stronger the government's power and dominance, the greater the fear that the real objectives of education will be lost. If the government were the embodiment of the best national traditions and moral qualities, its intervention would not only be useful but necessary. But this is just an imaginary picture that does not exist anywhere. In reality, the government always represents various groups and vested interests that dominate the country at a particular time.²¹

THE INFLUENCE OF GOVERNMENT ON EDUCATION: LIMITS AND CONSEQUENCES

The ruling group or class inevitably tries to propagate its own ideas and objectives among children and youth. The result is that in the effort to dominate the minds and thoughts of the new generations, the primary and highest goals of education are overlooked. Instead of nurturing the intellectual faculties of students and preparing them for a proper

human life, the efforts and attention of teachers and learners are wasted on irrelevant matters.

One of the purposes of education is to develop in children the capacity to continue learning and growth independently — that is, education aims at the correct and complete development of the individual. But for this, the educational process must be free and autonomous. Due to government interference, however, the element of freedom is lost, education becomes subservient to external goals, and the subject of education transforms from a free, evolving being into a mere machine controlled by others' agendas.²²

This raises the question: To what extent and in what matters should the government interfere in the field of education? As far as the ultimate purpose of education is concerned, we have already indicated that the government should have no control over it. This is because educational aims depend on two matters completely beyond government influence: on one side, the national traditions, national character, and national needs; and on the other, the psychological life, nature, and developmental laws of the learner. The goals of education are determined by the interaction and mutual influence of these two.

If the government, as an organized and authoritative body, attempts to define educational aims partially or wholly, the greatest harm would be that pure educational goals would have to be sacrificed for political and external objectives. In practice, this flaw manifests itself in the fact that all the various educational institutions in the country, which have different environments, traditions, and needs, strive to achieve uniform goals set by the government, and no atmosphere of free development is created among them.

Similarly, internal matters of schools—such as teaching methods and curricula—should be free from government control. Teachers and educational communities should have the freedom to work according to their own needs so that through new experiments, educational progress and reform may continue. Whenever government involvement in the educational affairs of schools goes beyond interest, advice, encouragement, general supervision, and coordination of individual efforts, the result is always that education becomes lifeless and soulless. A modern example of this is the educational progress that England has made in recent times, largely since the government's educational

departments and officials loosened their rigid control over schools. At present, schools enjoy a kind of freedom to shape their own education and life, and the Board of Education has become merely an advisory body.²³

KNOWLEDGE AND LIFE

To fully understand the current theory of education and its most important principles, the best approach is to examine the concept of the *modern madrasa*, which emerged in recent times and has attempted to implement modern educational ideas in practice. If our goal were to trace the historical evolution of contemporary education, we would discuss that modern ideas do not mean that they have no connection with ancient ideas or that education has suddenly undergone a radical revolution wiping out all old traces and replacing them with an entirely new structure. Every change in human affairs is part of an unbreakable evolutionary chain of cause and effect, which philosophy students are tasked to understand and explain. Educational changes follow this same evolutionary pattern. Their roots lie hidden in past events and incidents, but their immediate cause is the current circumstances before us.

However, by reflecting on the educational principles and trends of the *modern madrasa*, we can gain insight into the direction of our educational evolution and the goals that our educational institutions strive to fulfill. For example, we must refer to the educational methods and efforts of other developed countries, which will acquaint us with their educational experiences and help us assess how far behind our own madrasas have fallen from the standpoint of modern educational ideas.²⁴

The original concept of a madrasa referred to an institution where students acquired useful knowledge essential for survival in life and understanding their surroundings, which also somewhat satisfied their intellectual curiosity. As the concept of the madrasa matured, students began to seek knowledge even without external motives, because it cultivated their souls, trained their minds, and added meaning to life.

In brief, the madrasa's focus was on three types of knowledge:

1. Knowledge that prepared students for earning a livelihood and meeting material needs of life,

2. Knowledge that developed their intellectual and mental faculties,
3. Knowledge that aided in moral training and character building.

In the early stages of this gradual evolution, great emphasis was placed on the practical benefits of education, as it directly met the material needs of life. With the advancement of knowledge and the professionalization of teaching, more attention shifted to theoretical and intellectual matters, to the extent that today the word *madrassa* is primarily used to mean a place of instruction, and instruction itself has come to signify bookish and oral education.

Until the recent educational revolution in the last century, in most countries including ours, the meaning of *madrassa* was understood as a place where students were taught specific subjects deemed necessary by teachers or parents, subjects in which their views evolved and were adjusted somewhat according to the changing times.²⁵

This may seem so obvious and straightforward that few would deny it. Yet, in practice, *madrassas* have for centuries ignored this reality. They adopted rote learning of words rather than personal and direct experience as their main approach and largely excluded indirect experience from their curriculum. Early informal education had limited scope but the advantage that children directly participated in the social environment or imitated it through play, thus the information they acquired became a permanent part of their personality because it was gained through personal effort and practical experience. When the era of bookish education began, knowledge became less related to everyday business and experience, and *madrassas* emphasized words and terminology more.²⁶

THE PURPOSE OF KNOWLEDGE

Syedain Sahib, while defining the purpose of knowledge, also dispels many misconceptions that are commonly prevalent among the educated classes today. Many people, including some educated scholars at universities, believe that the ultimate cause (final purpose) of acquiring knowledge is solely to produce material things and increase wealth through them. It cannot be denied that the utilitarian purpose of knowledge is important, but it should not be forgotten that knowledge

in itself is an immensely valuable entity. If education fails to instill a love for knowledge in the minds of youth, then it has failed in its fundamental purpose. One should not expect from school or university education that it will immediately show profits as if it were a financial account. That would not be education but a businessman's trade.

Its benefits cannot be shown merely in monetary terms nor should they be limited to what business-minded people understand. Knowledge that seems useless today may later prove to be invaluable and practically useful. History contains many examples where pure, scientific research and disinterested scientific discoveries have led to far-reaching practical results.²⁷

DIFFERENCE BETWEEN KNOWLEDGE AND INFORMATION

After the above explanation, Syedain Sahib distinguishes between knowledge and information:

"This way, the mind cannot be properly organized. That happens only when we learn to benefit from our meaningful experiences and struggle with new, thought-provoking, and encouraging ideas and problems. If students do not know something, they are not given sufficient opportunity to discover it themselves; instead, it is simply told to them. In this way, knowledge merely transfers from the teacher's notebook to the student's notebook, and it passes through neither of their minds.

But as I said, this is not knowledge; it is mere miscellaneous information. Of course, this information is sometimes necessary in life, but most of it can easily be obtained from reference books as needed. Why burden the memory with it? When information and its interrelations are intelligently organized, it transforms into knowledge. But knowledge itself is not sufficient until we convert it into wisdom. Wisdom, which a commentator has called the "refined essence of knowledge," enlightens the entire personality and life of an individual.

When education becomes limited merely to transmitting awareness and many practitioners are unaware that there are higher goals, what else can result except failure?"²⁸

DUTIES OF UNIVERSITY PROFESSORS

While explaining the contradictions of education, Syedain Sahib writes:

“Much of the current situation’s flaws stem from the intellectual atmosphere and conditions in which our teachers work. In many universities, there is no real possibility of meaningful dialogue among faculty members of the same department, nor among those of different departments. Each professor is given certain papers to complete, and they are expected to finish them. In my opinion, even the use of the word ‘complete’ here is not only meaningless but dangerous.

In colleges and universities, it should not be the professor’s duty to finish assigned textbooks or to make easily digestible summaries of all discussions therein for the students. Their job is not to make reading easy for students but to increase their interest and enlighten their minds so that they learn to study independently. And if a problem arises that the student cannot solve at all, then the professor should assist.

The mutual relations among professors themselves are also very important in this regard. Often, they have very little intellectual and scholarly contact with their peers. They rarely discuss matters of common interest, and some even consider such interaction inappropriate. I even know cases where university professors sit in adjacent rooms and communicate by writing rather than talking face to face. On the contrary, I have had the experience of visiting many foreign universities and even teaching at some, where professors frequently attend each other’s lectures and seminars and participate freely in discussions. This rarely happens here, and if the head of a department does so, other professors dislike it.”²⁹

THE SEMESTER SYSTEM

Syedain Sahib acknowledges many benefits of the new semester system introduced in universities. However, he also states that this system reflects the haste and impatience characteristic of twentieth-century civilization, which demands that everything be done immediately. To understand this concept in Syedain’s own words:

“Maulana Azad defined **‘tadbeer’ (deliberation)** as to **dive deeply into thought**. Our students do not get the opportunity for such deliberation. It may happen that a new meaning is discovered, or a creative connection is

formed subconsciously between unrelated events and observations — like a flash of lightning — even when the person is not consciously paying attention to it. But before that, a sincere and long process of thinking is inevitable, and for that, time and leisure are required. Unfortunately, teachers often do not provide this to students; rather, education is considered effective only if time is not wasted at all. Students are kept busy all the time taking notes, writing essays, and passing monthly, quarterly, or yearly tests, whose marks are deposited as if in a savings bank in cash. Because of all this, not only are students perhaps kept safe from mischief, but this is considered the best use of their time.

The new semester system introduced in universities, despite having certain benefits, also emphasizes exams more than education. If students work honestly, they neither get time nor develop the desire to sometimes quietly stand and watch the flow of the world, enjoy unnecessary books, ignite their minds and warm their hearts with poetry, or enrich their lives with art or music.

The twentieth-century civilization suffers from the consequences of this impatience. Everything must happen immediately. This century not only demands instant coffee but also instant music produced by machines and instant culture that can be expressed easily without paying any price. It wishes that all the good things in life could be obtained easily in packets, glasses, or capsules — that is, put a coin in a machine, and immediately something comes out.³⁰

THE IMPORTANT ROLE OF LANGUAGE IN HUMAN LIFE

According to Syedain Sahib, the issue of language is not limited to the classroom walls between teacher and student. He says:

“This is a universal problem for all human beings — men, women, children, groups, societies, and nations. We live not only in the Tower of Babel but often speak languages whose ‘currency’ has become significantly debased. (However, this should not be misunderstood to mean that new words introduced by new generations or movements necessarily corrupt the language.) When language is distorted, it becomes a tool for hypocrisy, deceit, oppression, and manipulation.

Millions of people use languages in ways that show no respect for sincerity, honesty, noble thoughts, or honorable feelings. Many respectable professions involve dealing primarily with words, such as

lawyers, writers, teachers, religious scholars, advertisers, politicians, and nearly all of them mistreat words to some extent — behaving irresponsibly and without principles.”³¹

One important point to remember about Syedain’s philosophy is that, for him, there was no distinction between life and education. If you carefully review the list of his writings, you will get a clear idea of his educational viewpoint and what he sought to achieve through education.

His English work, *Education for International Understanding*, published in 1948, is a collection of lectures he delivered outside India in 1946—in Australia and Paris. Not only the title of this book but also everything he says within it clearly reflects his educational ideas and objectives. He devoted his entire life to promoting these ideas and goals. His last book, titled *Language, Life and Education*, sheds light on the importance of words in the evolution of civilization and humanity. Thus, from beginning to end, his purpose and focus remained consistent. He wanted education to serve the welfare of both the individual and society.

Syedain’s educational philosophy has two key aspects:

1. A deep connection between education and social life.
2. The preservation and continuation of human values through education.

Syedain had a profound awareness of education. He considered it a crucial means for shaping and building human life. At one point, he writes:

*“Since education’s subject is the character of the human being and the formation of his life, a broad outlook is especially necessary to study it.”*³²

By ‘human life,’ he meant not only individual life but also collective or social life. Through education, he aimed for the development and reform of both.

From the standpoint of philosophy of education, he was a strong supporter of a democratic educational system. He did not tolerate any kind of discrimination in education. Regarding educational principles, he says:

“The effort of democratic education should be to remove, as far as possible, those illegitimate privileges and extraordinary concessions which some individuals or

groups have obtained without personal merit, and to provide equal opportunities for all."

Through education, he wanted to cultivate every individual's intellectual and moral capacities in such a way that on one hand, they would illuminate their personal lives, and on the other hand, prove useful in serving the country and nation. Individual progress had no meaning for him unless it also contributed to the advancement of social life.

Syedain regarded national life as the real foundation of education. For successful educational development, he considered it essential that its roots be deeply and broadly embedded in national life. He studied English education in particular and had grown up during British rule, but he strongly felt that for organizing the country's education, it was absolutely necessary to consider national traditions and the country's unique conditions. In the preface to his book *Principles of Education*, he states:

*"My belief is that if we blindly imitate another country, abandoning our own particular traditions, the demands of our civilization and culture, our inner life, and our philosophy, we will never reach our desired goal. The roots of education are hidden deep in national life."*⁸³

NOTES

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TAZEEM HAIDER

The Imamate and Political Milieu of Imam ‘Alī ibn Mūsā al-Riḍā: An Overview

ABSTRACT

Imam Ali ibn Musa al-Kadhim, known as Imam Ali al-Rida exemplified a life of profound success. He dedicated himself to religious guidance, the betterment of humanity, and the dissemination of knowledge and wisdom. A figure of immense influence, learning, and piety, Imam Ali al-Rida served not only as one of the infallible Imams of the Shia tradition but also as a source of knowledge for the Sunni community. His life was marked by tireless efforts and dedication to upholding the teachings of the Quran and the Sunnah of Prophet Muhammad (saws). He fulfilled his religious duties and responsibilities until his final moments. He carried the responsibility of guiding the Muslim community and interpreting Islamic teachings. Imam al-Rida was renowned for his vast knowledge and wisdom. He participated in many scholarly debates and discussions, demonstrating his mastery of Islamic theology, philosophy, and jurisprudence. His intellectual prowess was recognized even by those who opposed him. Imam al-Rida’s teachings and sayings continue to be a source of guidance for Muslims today. His shrine in Mashhad, Iran, is a major pilgrimage site, attracting millions of visitors each year.

This paper provides a brief overview of Imam Ali al-Rida’s family background, with particular attention to his mother and the political scenario of his time and also focuses on the final period of his life.

FAMILY BACKGROUND, BIRTH, AND NATIVE PLACE

Imam Ali al-Rida was born in Medina, the holy city of Prophet Muhammad (saws), to the seventh Imam, Musa al-Kadhim, and

Najma. He was a sixth-generation descendant of Ali ibn Abi Talib (RA) and Fatima (RA), the Prophet's daughter, through Imam Hussain (RA). His genealogy (*shajrah*) is as follows:

Imam Ali al Rida ibn Imam Musa al-Kadhim ibn Imam Jafar al-Sadiq ibn Imam Muhammad al Baqir Ibn Imam Ali (Zainul Abedeen) Ibn Imam Husain Ibn Imam Ali Ibn Abi Talib.

MOTHER OF IMAM ALI AL-RIDA

His mother, Najma, was renowned for her piety. She was known by various names, including Tuktam, Arda, Sakan, Samana, Ummul Baneen, Khizran, Saqr, and Shaqra. After the birth of Imam Ali al-Rida, she was called Tahira.¹

It is important to elaborate on Najma's background, as less is generally known about her compared to the Imams. She was a slave girl from North Africa. According to Hassam bin Ahmad, a companion of Imam Musa al-Kadhim, slave traders would bring slaves from various regions to the outskirts of Medina for sale. On one occasion, Imam Musa al-Kadhim went to the slave market and inquired about a specific slave girl. The slave owner confirmed her presence but refused to sell her to anyone outside the Banu Hashim clan.

Imam Musa al-Kadhim did not reveal his identity at that time. The next day, he instructed Hassam bin Ahmad to purchase the slave girl. Hassam followed his instructions. When the slave owner asked about the new owner, Hassam informed him it was Imam Musa al-Kadhim. The slave owner then revealed that a noble Christian woman had warned him to sell the girl only to the noblest man of Banu Hashim. She had predicted that the slave girl would marry an honorable member of Banu Hashim and give birth to a pious individual.

The slave girl, Najma, was given to Hamida Khatoon, the mother of Imam Musa al-Kadhim. Shortly after, Hamida Khatoon had a dream in which Prophet Muhammad (saws) instructed her to arrange the marriage of Najma to Imam Musa al-Kadhim. Hamida Khatoon followed the Prophet's command, and Imam Ali al-Rida was born. Imam Musa al-Kadhim referred to her as Tuktam, and she was also known as Tahira.²

OPINIONS REGARDING DATE OF BIRTH

There are varying accounts regarding Imam Ali al-Rida's exact date of birth. Some sources place his birth in the same year as the death of his grandfather, Imam Jafar al-Sadiq, while others suggest it occurred five years later. The majority of scholars believe he was born on the 11th of Dhu al-Qidah 148 AH.³

Historians present differing opinions regarding the year and month of his birth and death. These discrepancies, which can span up to five years, make it difficult to establish a definitive timeline. While the paper will not attempt to resolve these disagreements, it acknowledges the range of dates provided by historical sources. For example, sources indicate his birth occurred in Medina on a Thursday or Friday, the 11th of Dhu al-Qidah, Dhu al-Hijjah, or Rabi' al-Awwal, in either 148 AH or 153 AH.⁴

EARLY LIFE AND EDUCATION

While the precise date of Imam Ali al-Rida's birth remains a subject of scholarly debate, his wisdom, teachings, and mission are of paramount importance. He spent approximately 35 years under the guidance of his father, Imam Musa al-Kadhim.⁵ This period was marked by both tranquility and profound sorrow, as he shared in the hardships inflicted by the Abbasid caliphs Mehdi, Hadi, and Harun. He witnessed his father's prolonged imprisonment and the persecution of the descendants of Abu Talib by the Abbasids.⁶

During that time, Imam Ali al-Rida absorbed his father's vast knowledge, exemplary morals, and refined manners. This comprehensive education rendered him a highly esteemed scholar, eminently qualified to guide the Muslim community. He would later contribute significantly to the intellectual and religious development of the Ahl al-Bayt school of thought.

IMAMATE AND POLITICAL SCENARIO

Imam Ali al-Rida's imamate coincided with the caliphates of Harun al-Rashid, and subsequently, his sons Amin and Ma'mun. The period following the death of Imam Musa al-Kadhim was a very challenging

time for Imam Ali al-Rida. He faced significant mental and physical harassment, stemming from the political turmoil and the Abbasid Caliphate's fear of the Imam's growing influence. Here's a breakdown of the events:

- **Uprising by Muhammad bin Jafar:** One of the most significant challenges arose from within the Imam's own family. Muhammad bin Jafar, the Imam's uncle, led an uprising against the Abbasid government. The rebellion, though ultimately unsuccessful, had severe repercussions for the wider Banu Hashim and, in particular, for Imam Ali al-Rida. The Abbasid Caliph, Harun al-Rashid, reacted swiftly and behaved harshly to this uprising. He dispatched a military force under the command of Isa bin Jalood to suppress the rebellion in Medina. Isa bin Jalood's forces inflicted severe punishment upon the Banu Hashim in Medina. That was a direct consequence of Muhammad bin Jafar's uprising. The Abbasids saw the Banu Hashim as a potential threat to their rule, and they used that opportunity to assert their dominance.
- **Raid on Imam al-Rida's Home:** The oppression extended to Imam Ali al-Rida personally. His home was raided by Isa bin Jalood's forces. This was a clear act of aggression and intimidation, demonstrating the government's hostility towards the Imam. During the raid on his home, Imam Ali al-Rida's belongings were confiscated. This was not only a material loss but also a symbolic act of humiliation and disrespect. It showed the extent to which the Abbasid authorities were willing to go to suppress the Imam and his followers. The uprising by Muhammad bin Jafar provided the Abbasid Caliphate with a pretext to intensify their persecution of the Banu Hashim. Imam Ali al-Rida, as the leading figure of the Ahl al-Bayt, was particularly targeted. The raid on his home and the confiscation of his belongings were part of a broader campaign of harassment and oppression aimed at weakening his position and intimidating his followers.⁷

Despite the hardships imposed during Harun al-Rashid's reign, Imam Ali al-Rida remained steadfast in his commitment to justice and truth. He fearlessly addressed the public, delivering sermons that challenged the caliph's authority. On one occasion, Safwan ibn Yahya,

a companion, expressed concern for the Imam's safety.⁸ According to the historian Waqidi, Harun al-Rashid imprisoned Imam Ali al-Rida, releasing him only upon Harun's death in 193 AH.⁹

SUCCESSION CONFLICT AMONG ABBASIDS: AMIN AND MA'MUN

Following the death of Harun al-Rashid in 809 CE (193 AH), a succession conflict erupted between his sons, Muhammad (Amin) and Abdullah (Ma'mun). Despite Harun's division of the empire between them during his lifetime, tensions escalated after his death. The rift between the brothers deepened, foreshadowing a tragic outcome. Al-Amin's decision in Baghdad to remove al-Ma'mun's name from the Friday sermon and replace it with that of his own son, Musa, whom he declared his successor, further exacerbated the situation. He disseminated letters announcing this decision throughout the empire.

In response, al-Ma'mun mobilized to defend his claim, planning to seize Baghdad, the capital. Meanwhile, al-Amin gathered troops to counter his brother's advance. The two armies clashed, resulting in al-Amin's death in 813 CE. Al-Ma'mun subsequently became the sole ruler of the vast Abbasid Empire. He chose to establish Marv as his center of power, rather than Baghdad.

MA'MUN'S INVITATION TO IMAM ALI AL-RIDA

Imam Ali al-Rida was widely recognized as the rightful successor to the Prophet Muhammad (saws) by a significant portion of the population in the Hejaz and other important regions. Although Ma'mun became the sole caliph after al-Amin's death, his position was precarious. The three-year succession war (195-198 AH) between the Abbasid brothers had depleted the treasury, weakened the army, and left Baghdad in need of reconstruction.¹⁰ Furthermore, numerous rebellions had erupted, and Ma'mun lost control of Kufa in 199 AH.

In this context, Ma'mun sought to consolidate his power and legitimize his caliphate by inviting Imam Ali al-Rida to Marv, his capital. Ma'mun justified his invitation by claiming that during the war with al-Amin, he had vowed to Allah that if victorious, he would transfer the

caliphate to the Banu Hashim. Scholars suggest that Ma'mun's invitation was primarily a political maneuver designed to gain the support of the descendants of Abu Talib and the Shia community. According to Sheikh Mufeed, Ma'mun, a shrewd and intelligent politician, intended to use the Imam's presence in Marv and his appointment as successor to advance his own political objectives.

MA'MUN'S MOTIVATIONS FOR INVITING IMAM ALI AL-RIDA

Ma'mun's invitation to Imam Ali al-Rida was a politically motivated maneuver, designed to achieve several strategic objectives. The growing influence of the descendants of Abu Talib and the opposition from Abbasid factions following al-Amin's defeat created a precarious situation for Ma'mun.

1. **The Alavi Factor:** The descendants of Abu Talib had become increasingly powerful and influential, with rebellions erupting throughout the empire.¹¹ Ma'mun, facing a vast and unstable realm, sought to quell these uprisings by feigning a transfer of the caliphate. This strategy aimed to pacify the descendants of Abu Talib, as well as to appease the Shia and Iranian populations.
2. **The Abbasid Factor:** Ma'mun's legitimacy was challenged by many Abbasid nobles, who favored his deceased brother al-Amin. Al-Amin was of Abbasid lineage on both sides, while Ma'mun was the son of a Persian slave girl. Consequently, al-Amin's defeat alienated many Abbasid elites. Ma'mun strategically threatened to transfer power to the Banu Hashim, specifically the descendants of Abu Talib, by inviting Imam Ali al-Rida. This created apprehension among the Abbasids, as evidenced by their pleas to Ma'mun not to hand over power to the Alawis.¹² Ma'mun responded by citing Ali ibn Abi Talib's appointment of Abbasids to governorships, suggesting he was merely reciprocating their historical role.
 "During his reign, Ali Ibn Abu Talib had deputed Banu Abbas to govern most of the provinces. I want to reciprocate and give power and the Caliphate to their descendants"¹³
3. **Demonstrating Alavi Competence:** Ma'mun aimed to gain

acceptance among the broader Banu Hashim by giving the descendants of Ali ibn Abi Talib administrative responsibilities. He intended to demonstrate their competence and dispel the notion that their exclusion from power was due to incompetence. He hoped to weaken their spiritual standing by exposing them to the temptations of worldly power. Imam Ali al-Rida, however, recognized Ma'mun's ploy and refused to nominate individuals for governorships, knowing that Ma'mun sought to attribute his own actions to the Imam and thereby discredit him.

4. **Surveillance of the Alavis:** Ma'mun also intended to gather the descendants of Abu Talib in Marv, enabling him to monitor their activities and eliminate any potential threats. This objective ultimately culminated in the poisoning and martyrdom of Imam Ali al-Rida and the subsequent suppression of the Alavis, breaking all agreements.

IMAM ALI AL-RIDA IN MA'MUN'S COURT

Imam Ali al-Rida utilized his knowledge and wisdom while serving in Ma'mun's court. When questioned about his acceptance of Ma'mun's offer and the scriptural basis for his decision, the Imam cited the example of Prophet Yusuf (peace be upon him), demonstrating the relevance of this precedent. He actively participated in scholarly discussions and offered his counsel on important cases brought before Ma'mun.

According to Mohammad Raza Dungersi, Ma'mun took the following steps to publicly establish Imam Ali al-Rida as his successor:

1. He convened assemblies of nobles and dignitaries, requiring them to pledge allegiance to the Imam.
2. He ordered the minting of coins bearing both his and the Imam's names.
3. He mandated that the Imam's name be mentioned in sermons as his designated successor.

Shia scholars, including Sheikh Mufeed have their view that Ma'mun's primary objective was to secure the Imam's support rather than a genuine transfer of power. They believe Ma'mun anticipated the Imam's refusal of the crown prince position.

MA'MUN'S ANXIETY AND INFLUENCE OF IMAM ALI AL-RIDA

Ma'mun anticipated that Imam Ali al-Rida would decline the offer of crown prince, allowing him to maintain absolute control. However, when the Imam accepted, albeit reluctantly, and began expressing independent opinions on matters of governance, Ma'mun's plan was thwarted. The Imam became a vocal critic of the government, particularly when it deviated from religious principles, causing Ma'mun considerable anxiety.

Conversely, Imam Ali al-Rida utilized his position to benefit the Muslim community. During the reigns of Hadi, Mehdi, and Harun, the descendants of Abu Talib faced severe persecution and arbitrary executions. This hostility ceased during Imam Ali al-Rida's tenure. He facilitated the migration of numerous descendants of Abu Talib to Iran, India, and other safe havens. Furthermore, the ban imposed by Harun al-Rashid on pilgrimages to Imam Hussain's shrine in Karbala was lifted. Ma'mun stipulated those pilgrims required a guarantee from Imam Ali al-Rida, earning him the title "Imam al-Dhamin" (the Guarantor Imam). These actions and services rendered by the Imam displeased Ma'mun.

MARTYRDOM

In late Safar 203 AH, Ma'mun al-Rashid decided to travel to Baghdad, a city he had not visited since his victory over al-Amin. He compelled Imam Ali al-Rida to accompany him on this journey. Near the city of Tus in the province of Khurasan, at a location known as Sanabad, Ma'mun halted for rest. It was here that Imam Ali al-Rida became ill. Shia sources maintain that he was poisoned. Despite Ma'mun's summoning of a physician, the Imam passed away on the last day of Safar 203 AH. He was buried near the grave of Harun al-Rashid. This location is now widely known as Mashhad, a prominent city in Iran.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, Imam Ali al-Rida lived a life of profound purpose, a purpose that transcended the temporal and resonated with eternal

values. His unwavering commitment to truth, in all its manifestations, defined his very existence. This commitment was not a passive adherence to principle; it was an active, dynamic force that shaped his interactions, his decisions, and his legacy.

Imam Rida lived during a time marked by significant political upheaval, social complexities, and religious challenges. The Abbasid Caliphate, during his Imamate, was a period of both expansion and internal strife, with conflicts arising from succession disputes, regional rebellions, and differing interpretations of Islamic authority. Imam al-Rida navigated this turbulent landscape with remarkable steadfastness, never compromising his principles for political expediency or personal gain. He remained a true proponent of the Quran and the Sunnah of Prophet Muhammad, the foundational sources of Islamic guidance. His adherence to these sources was not merely a matter of ritual observance; it was a holistic approach that encompassed his ethical framework, his intellectual pursuits, and his social activism.

From his childhood in Medina, under the guidance and protection of his father, Imam Musa al-Kadhim, to his final moments in Tus, where he is believed to have been martyred, Imam Ali al-Rida endured hardships. He witnessed the persecution of his family and followers, the imprisonment of his father, and the political machinations of the Abbasid court. The invitation to Marv, the attempt to integrate him into the caliphate, and the subsequent anxieties of Ma'mun presented a unique set of challenges. Yet, through it all, he never deviated from his path. He used his position to advocate for the rights of the oppressed, to promote knowledge and understanding, and to guide the Muslim community. His legacy is one of wisdom, resilience, and unwavering dedication to the cause of truth and justice.

NOTES

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Healing in Harmony: Physicians, Medical Institutions, and Patronage in Mughal Gujarat

With the Arab conquest of Sind, India came into contact with the Greco-Arab or Unani system of medicine. Muslim rulers and the scholars, healers, and physicians, brought with them placed great emphasis on public health. The popularity of Unani medicine gradually expanded through the establishment of Unani hospitals (*Shifakhana*s or *Darush shifas*) under the patronage of the Sultans and Mughals.¹ Thus, alongside the already well-established Ayurvedic tradition, a new medical culture took root in India, enriching healthcare practices of medieval India.

Gujarat was incorporated into the Mughal Empire in 1572 AD under the reign of Akbar. It was one of the most prosperous regions of India owing to its maritime trade and commerce and the political stability ensured under Mughal governance. Historians have systematically studied the prosperous economy of Mughal Gujarat but other fields have not received adequate scholarly attention. However, with the annexation by the Mughals, the province of Gujarat received a significant boost in other areas also. The main focus of the paper is to reveal how Gujarat became one of the highest seats of learning in the field of healthcare and to analyse the role of physicians and hospitals. The paper also examines the administration to govern the hospitals (*dārush shifā*) and their patronage network, which was sometimes patronized by the State, sometimes by individual nobles and sometimes by rich merchants of Gujarat.

Gujarat has been a center of scholarship and culture from the ancient days. The rulers like Mahmud Begada, Muzaffar Shah II and Muzaffar Shah III of independent Gujarat were the patrons of scholarship.² Under the governorship of Abdur Rahim Khān-i Khānā during Mughal period, it received a renewed impetus. A large number of intellectuals,

literati and physicians gathered at his court.³ Niccolao Manucci informs that in the reign of Shah Jahan, Ahmadabad emerged as an important centre and attracted a number of students from distant regions.⁴ The trend continued, in fact, reached its zenith in the reign of Aurangzeb.

PHYSICIANS

Among the physicians of Mughal Gujarat, *Hakim* Ruhullah and *Hakim* Mir Muhammad Hashim have been very famous. *Hakim* Ruhullah was in the royal service of Akbar as his name listed among the physicians of Akbar by Abul Fazl in *Āin-i Akbarī*.⁵ It is clearly mentioned that his predecessors (*aba wā ajdād*) were from Bharuch in Gujarat. It has been reported that Jahangir and Nur Jahan, both were treated by him during their visit of Gujarat. Ruhullah advised Jahangir that 'as soon as you moderate your habit of taking wine (*sharāb*) and opium (*afyun*), all these troubles will disappear'.⁶ *Hakim* Hashim, tutor of Aurangzeb and the student of *Hakim* Ali Gilani, went and stayed at the Iranian centers of medical education in Mashhad and Shiraz for twelve years.⁷ After returning from there, he opened his own madrasā at Ahmadabad and was also appointed by Shah Jahan as head of the government hospital (*dārush shifā*) at Ahmadabad.⁸ Mukarrab Khan was another famous surgeon of the time and became the favourite of Jahangir on account of his talent in surgery.⁹ A large number of physicians and surgeons were under the charge of the head physician who also acted as the superintendent (*darogha*) of the hospital. To assist them, in the administration of the hospitals, there were clerks (*mutasaddis*) and *kotwal*.¹⁰

Besides the head and other Yunani physicians, Ayurvedic physicians (*tabīb-i Hindī*) and surgeons (*jarrāh*) were also appointed in Ahmadabad hospital.¹¹ The Unāni and Ayurvedic methods of treatment were practiced in the Mughal Gujarat. Thus, both Hindu as well as Muslim physicians were involved in the profession. Ovington informs that Brahmans were accomplished physicians and treated various ailments. Kafi Khan, the author of *Muntkhab-ul Lubāb*, records a dialogue with the Brahman of Surat who claimed his extensive knowledge in astrology (*Ilam-i najūm*), medicine (*tabābat*) and religion (*shāstra*).¹² Whenever any person of the English Factory became ill, the President directed

him to visit the Indian physician or the English surgeon according to his problem.¹³ John Fryer reports that in fever the Indian physicians prescribed the cooling effect to low down the temperature. However, he further explains that the Hindu physicians lacked expertise in surgery and even the Muslim physicians who followed the Arab method thought it unlawful to dissect human bodies and pharmacy was not in an advanced state.¹⁴ Sometimes *baniās* acted as a local doctor 'who pretended to do great cures by amulets, filters and prayers' and when they failed in the practice, they left their patient on salvation of their own.

HOSPITALS AND MADRASAS

The author of *Mirat-i-Ahmadi* informs about the presence of two government hospitals at Ahmadabad and Surat. *Hakim* Hashim was appointed as the head of the government hospital (*dārush shifā*) at Ahmadabad during Shah Jahan's period which was especially built for the poor patients.¹⁵ There is another evidence of the appointment of the head physician by Aurangzeb through an order in 1645 A.D in the government hospital of Surat.¹⁶ Not in the cities like Ahmadabad and Surat only but Jahangir also ordered for the establishment of hospitals at every town and city where physicians should be appointed.¹⁷ The information is attested by Ali Mohammad Khan's work that Emperor Jahangir ordered that administrators (*bukkām*) should build hospitals (*darush-shifā*) in cities and appoint physicians (*hākīm*), and travellers (*musafir*) should in the hospitals for free treatment.¹⁸

Besides hospitals, there were many madrasas attached to the hospitals. It seems that the training to the new physicians were given in the madarsas attached to *shifakhans*. The renowned physician *Hakim* Hashim, already discussed, built a *madrasā* near Ahmadabad government hospital. Saif Khan, the governor under Shahjahan, established a *madrasā* attached to the hospital at Ahmadabad.¹⁹ That was most likely that the *madrasās* attached to the hospitals were working as modern medical colleges.

One of the striking features of the healthcare system of Mughal Gujarat were that there were a large number of Veterinary hospitals.

Travellers, when came to Gujarat, noticed animal hospital or *pinjrapole*²⁰ built by *baniā* merchants at Cambay, Surat and Ahmadabad.²¹ The hospitals were for the benefit of the birds and animals that were sick, deprived of their mates, decayed by age or needed food and care. In *pinjrapoles*, there were birds like cocks, peacocks, pigeons, ducks and small birds and beasts like cow calves, goats, oxen, camels, horses, dogs, mice, cats, bugs, flies and other vermins were kept for recovery.²² Those hospitals were maintained by the common funds of the Jain and Hindu merchant's community. *Mahājans* of the *baniā* merchants taxed its members and took a nominal levy from every *baniā* in order to run those *pinjrapoles*.²³

FUNDING AND PATRONAGE

Like the Imperial system, there was funding and patronage network in Mughal Gujarat. Monetary aids were extended, both by the State as well as individual nobles, to the madarsās, teachers, physicians and to the hospitals in the form of gifts, stipends, land grants, and cash money.²⁴ Specifically, the reign of Aurangzeb was distinguished for the advancement of education through State patronages. In 1677 A.D he assigned an amount of rupees 1,580 for the repair work of the madrasā, mosque, bath (*hammām*) and hospital of Saif Khan.²⁵ Thus, health system received the State patronage in the Mughal Gujarat.

Yunani physicians, Ayurvedic physicians (*tabīb-i Hindī*) and surgeons (*jarrāh*), appointed in the government hospital of Ahmadabad, were paid daily allowance of 8 *ānās* and sometimes 10 *ānās* in addition to annual amount of rupees 2000 to spend on medicine (*dawā*) and food (*ghīzā*) of the sick (*bimarān*) and poor (*muflīs*) from the treasury (*bait-ul māl*).²⁶ A daily allowance of two rupees for medicine (*dawā*) and mixture (*ashnār*) was allotted, to the hospital of Surat, out of the revenues of the mint house (*dār-ul zarb*).²⁷ Jahangir ordered that the expenditure of the physicians, appointed in the hospitals at every town and city, should be met out of the *Khalisa* lands.²⁸ A physician like *Hakim* Ruhullah was given money and land grants and was weighed in silver coins by Jahangir.²⁹ Under the patronage of Khān-i Khānā, he received much more.³⁰ There are also instances of patronage given to the

students, madrasas and the hospital of Ahmadabad and Surat from the *langar* grants of Sultan Ahmad's mausoleum and allotted funds from the treasury and mint.³¹

CONCLUSION

Conclusively, because of the incorporation of Gujarat by the Mughals and its commercial contacts with the people of the outer world like Arabs, Persians, Turks and Abyssinians, 'heterodoxy' became a characteristic feature of Gujarat. The intellectuals, literati, and physicians were flocking in Gujarat and the place became a 'hub' of them. Obviously, it was primarily because of its geographical location favourable for prosperous trade and commerce and the other primary reason was its existing harmony provided by the rulers of Gujarat. There was a well-organized system of patronage network, sometimes by the State, sometimes by individual nobles and sometimes by the other rich merchants. *Langarkhanas* were there not for sufi *khanqahs* (shrines) only but for the students living in madrasas and hospitals also. Madrasas attached to hospitals were perhaps working as modern medical colleges. Mughal chronicles show the prevalence of both the Unāni and Ayurvedic medicines for the healings in Mughal Gujarat. Thus, the emphasis on public health and the provision of medical aid during that period reflects a rich history of medical evolution which prioritized the well-being of the people by offering free and effective treatment to the poor and the needy.

NOTES

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17. Jahangir, p. 4.
18. Ali Mohammad Khan, *Mirat-i Ahmadi* Vol. I, p. 196.
19. Lahori, I (ii), pp. 345-46; Ali Mohammad Khan, *Mirat-i Ahmadi* Vol. I, p. 186.
20. **Pinjrapoles**- are generally supported and funded by Jain religion. It dates back from the time of Ashoka, as mentioned by the Arrians. They respected animals on account of their belief in the 'transmigration of soul' not only from man to man but man to animal also on the basis of their merits and demerits in life. They were much charitable to beasts than men. (See, for further information, Pietro Della Valle, *The Travels of Pietro Della Valle in India*, (London, 1991-92), Vol. I, p. 68 and notes; Jean de

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