



Literary Achievement of Maulana Syed Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi

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Précis For Research Paper

In this research article, an attempt has been made to highlight the contribution of one of the great luminaries of the twentieth century in Islamic history and historiography who stood for social reform, literary awakening and for revolution through the medium of Islamic history. The historical analysis of *Maulana* Nadwi makes one to believe strongly that the time has come when the present leadership should be changed to restore humanity from darkness to light and from ignorance to knowledge and wisdom.

To sum up the paper it can be said that one of the characteristics of Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi was his profound belief in Islam. He took pride in his writings and speeches in Islamic cultural heritage,

He tried to find solution to all problems the mankind faced primarily in the Quran and Hadith. He was, among all other identities, a great preacher of Islam and an international messenger of brotherhood, humanity, peace and a socio-religious reformer of the Muslim world

who eagerly wanted Muslim society to develop and compete with the rest of the world in every field.

He had very pleasing personality didn't have animosity and ill will against any one. He believed in the purity of Islam, worked and lived for Islam, never ran after wealth, never preferred an isolated life, unmindful what is happening around the world. He was observer of the developments taking place across the world, fought for humanity and strived hard for the revival of glorious Islamic history. He pin pointed the shortcomings of his fellow believers and criticized in no uncertain terms all those who miserably failed to develop Muslim society

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On this occasion my research paper centers around “Literary Achievement of Maulana Syed Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi” as my favorite writer and renowned scholar of Arab Culture / Islamic Studies.

Syed Abdul Hasan Ali Nadwi (1913-99), an eminent Islamic scholar, thinker, educationist, and reformer of the twentieth century, stood tall across the entire Islamic and Arab world with his sheer faith in Islam, works, reforms, courage, and love for mankind. A gifted speaker and a prolific writer, he wrote more than 50 books and hundreds of papers on history, literature, and theology in both Arabic and Urdu. Syed Nadwi's literary efficiency was par excellence, having envious profundity in Arabic and Urdu. His Ma Dha Khasarul 'Alam ba Inhetatul Muslimeen is considered as one of the best books of the twentieth-century Arabic literature. This biography by his close associate and nephew is a vivid account of Syed Nadwi's multifaceted personality and

his influence among Muslims across the globe, Arab and non-Arabs alike. He was well known for his wisdom, intelligence, foresight, and rapport with numerous intellectuals, religious and political heads in the Muslim world and elsewhere. As an exemplary personalty, he stood firm against the [1975-76](#) birth-control policy of the Indian government and played a pivotal role in getting the Muslim Personal Law passed in 1985. This volume portrays Syed Nadwi s vision, mission, organizational ability, determination to face challenges, devotion in introducing the essence of Islam to the new generation Muslims. It should entice all new generation students of Islamic history and literature across nations to reform themselves and be a catalyst in Islamic ethics, manners, and vision of a modern Islamic world

Sayyid Abul Hasan `Ali Nadwi was born in the Takiya Kalaan Rae-Bareilly in North India in 1914 and passed away on Friday 23rd December, 1999 at the age of 86. In the principality of (Utrapradesh) in India on 23rd October 1914, he was named Ali and his full name is Ali bin Abdul Hay bin Fahruddeen Al-Hasani. His lineage joins to Imam Al-Hasan bin Sabt bin Ali bin Abi Talib.² Scion of a well-educated and pious family, which has produced scholars, *Ulama*, Atkiya, spiritual preceptors, mujahedeen, professors, civil service officers, he was an eminent scholar, thinker, writer, an enlightened *Alim*, an eloquent preacher, a wise genius reformer and most outstanding personality of the world of Islam in the last half century. His father was Abdul Hayy Hasani, author of famous books like *Nuzhatul Khawatir* (a biographical dictionary of Indian *Ulama*) and *Al-Thaqafah al-Islamiyah fil-Hind* (Islamic Culture in India). He was a descendant of Sayyid Ahmad Shaheed who had led a *Jihad* movement against the British occupation, established an Islamic state in the North Western Frontier (now in Pakistan) and fell martyr on the battlefield of Balakot in 1831. Moreover, he was one of the few non-Arabs today who had fully mastered spoken and written Arabic. Although he is an Arab by lineage, yet his family had lost its roots with the Arabic world and he grew up as an Indian Muslim. He was popularly known in India as Ali Miyan. His genealogical epithet was Hasan, as he came from the prominent Sayyid family of the Ashraf - the local Muslim notables, who claimed origins from outside the Indian subcontinent, and among them the Sayyids were recognized to be especially privileged for their roots of kinship with

prophet Muhammad (SAW). However, he was popularly known worldwide by the name of Nadwi, which was not his family name; it was synonymous to higher rank of Islamic intellectuals belonged to a particular institution: the scholars educated at the prestigious Nadwat-ul-ulama in (Lucknow), India, took the name `Nadwi' and the name `Nadwi' in this research refers to Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi.

Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi's genealogy could be traced from Nadwi himself¹ and goes backwards starting from `Ali Ibn Abi Talib. It is as follows: Ash-Shaikh Abul Hasan Ali Al-Hasani Al-Nadwi bin Allama Abdul Hayy al-Hasani. His lineage joins to Al-Hasan bin Al-Hussain bin Jahfar bin Al-Qasim bin Al-Hasan Al-Jawwad bin Mohammed bin Abdullah Al-Ashar bin Muhammed Zinnafs Azzakiyya bin Abdullah Mahl bin Al-Hasan Al-Musanna bin Al-Imam Al-Hasan bin Al-Imam Ali bin Abi Talib (RA). According to Historians Amir Qutb-ud-deen is counted as the first migrant (1185- 1278) from Arab Island to India. He is the paternal grandfather of Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi.

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Nadwi grew up and was guided in a peaceful and God fearing environment in the guardianship of his family. His father *Maulana* Hakim Syed Abdul Hayy Nadwi al-Hasani was an accomplished Islamic scholar in his own right and had written many books, one of which, *Nuzhat al-Khawatir*- monumental biographical dictionary of the Indian `ulama in Arabic language is very famous and consists of eight volumes. He served as Rector of *Nadwat-ul-ulama* until he breathed his last on Friday 1923 when Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi was only nine years of age. Having lost his father, young Ali grew up under the shadow of his pious mother and the guardianship of his beloved brother, Dr. Hakim

Abdul Ali Nadwi (who qualified from both *Dar al-Ulum* Deoband and *Nadwat-ul-ulama*).

In order to be trained as an *Alim* (religious scholar), he was sent to *Nadwat-ululama* for higher studies. *Nadwat al-ulama* also known as *Nadwa*, the choice of the name got inspiration from a hall in Makkah, where nobles used to assemble to debate and discuss. It was one of the renowned Islamic universities in the world, which has produced several famous scholars. It was founded in 1894 at Kanpur and eventually shifted to Lucknow (India) in 1898. It was established with the objective of countering the challenges of western education; striking out equilibrium between classical Islam and modernity and producing a new breed of Islamic scholars of higher level, molded in classical Islamic disciplines and new ideas to regain the intellectual initiative lost in the wake of colonial occupation. At *Nadwa*, young Nadwi was exposed to new trends prevalent in Islamic thoughts in other Muslim countries.

He was also benefitted from the two leading Arab teachers at *Dar al ulum*. One of those teachers is Khalil Muhammad of Yemen and Taqiuddin al-Hilali of Morocco who taught him modern verbal and written Arabic. He studied Hadith under Sheikh Husain Ahmed Madani at *Dar al-ulum*, Deoband and *Tafsir* under Maulana Ahmad Ali of Lahore where he came in touch with Iqbal whose poetry left an abiding impression on him. The major turning point in Nadwi's life came in 1934, when he was appointed to teach Arabic and Qur' ānic commentary at *Nadwat al-ulama*, after the completion of his studies. The *Nadwa* committed itself to spread the teachings of Nadwi since he played a pivotal role in turning the institution into well acknowledged research center world widely, just as he was to remain central to the life of the institution, turning it into a widely recognized centre for Islamic research. As Hasan writes, one of his principle concerns as head of the institution was to promote suitable changes in the educational system in accordance with the demand of the modern age.

Works of Maulana Abul Hasan Ali Hasani Nadwi

Maulana Nadwi had a unique style of writing history, which bear distinct historical roots and reflect an in-depth study of the subject of Islamic history. May it be the penning of a biography or a thesis

recounting the rise and expansion of Muslim power; or lamentations on civilizational maladjustment following the diminishing fortunes of Muslims in India; or the obligations to pay literary tribute to the spiritual orders, *Maulana* Nadwi derives an inherent satisfaction in heaping himself with the debris of history.

Nuqoosh-i Iqbal (Glory of Iqbal) *Nuqoosh-i Iqbal (Glory of Iqbal)* 13 is among the most famous work of *Maulana* Nadwi, well accepted across the Muslim world, particularly in India and Arab world. The strength of his work lies in inspiring the Muslims by reminding them of their glorious past. To *Maulana* Nadwi, Iqbal - the greatest Muslim poetphilosopher of the Indian subcontinent- was a phenomenal personality who endowed with profound spiritual power, a keen sense of attachment to the *Ummah* of Islam, as well as a comprehensive knowledge of western philosophical and economic systems.

His poetry awakened the Muslims of India who make up a significant ration of the Muslim world, both in numbers as well as in terms of civilizational and scholarly contribution to Islam. The author traces the greatness of Iqbal and his message through his texts, and enumerates six such factors and apparent forms of his life and poetry. First, it is Iqbal's faith in Islam, which grew stronger as he matured and studied the Eastern western philosophies.

*Karvaan-i-Zindagi*¹² is a voluminous autobiography of *Maulana* Nadwi in eight volumes which is a profound contribution to the history as well as to Urdu literature. Originally, the book was written in Urdu. In this work, *Maulana* Nadwi tried to cover all the information related to himself as well as the remarkable events of his life. *Maulana* Nadwi's motivation for writing his autobiography is not merely to recount memorable milestones in his life but to provide an all-encompassing spectrum of his activities that delineates his intellectual growth and development. The historical incidents in his life are contextualized to provide the reader an opportunity to examine his role in the said events, in which *Maulana* Nadwi was an active participant. Furthermore, his autobiography makes copious reference to his prolific writings to highlight his contribution to contemporary Islamic thought. The *Karvaan-i-Zindagi* also attempts to explore *Maulana* Nadwi's vision and thought regarding Islam and humanity as well as what was his attitude

for the renaissance of Islam in the modern age. *Maulana* Nadwi stated in his autobiography that, he believed in steadfastness, progress, to make use of everything old which is beneficial, welcomed everything new which is sound, adopted from tradition what is sincere and rejected what is dubious. *Karvaan-i-Zindagi* represents his synopsis of his other important works, which analyzed for a more complete appreciation of his contribution to contemporary Islamic thought.

Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi was one of the few Indians who extensively toured the world. He frequented to the Middle- East and exchanged views with a large number of scholars and propagated his ideas and philosophy. He first visited various important centers of Islamic learning of undivided India and met the noted socio-religious reformers. His foreign tour began in 1947 to perform Hajj in Mecca, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. In 1951 he performed Hajj for the second time, met prominent Arabic and Islamic Saudian scholars, delivered lectures and soon became a known name in the kingdom. After the Hajj he traveled to Egypt where his first and most popular Arabic book *Islam and the world* had just been published by a reputed publishing house of Cairo and he had already become a known name in the religious and literary circles. During this visit, which lasted for six months, he extensively engaged himself in debates and discussions and met and exchanged views International Journal of Advanced Science and Technology with many Arabic and Islamic luminaries of the time. He visited Egypt's major centers of Arabic and Islamic learning including the world famous Al- Azhar University, Cairo and delivered speeches on Religion and literature.

From Egypt he went to Sudan and the Syria where he visited all major cities of historical importance. He visited Arabic and Islamic centers, met the major literary, Islamic and political figures of the time in Syria and he visited Jerusalem and finally returned to India. He again visited Syria as visiting fellow at Damascus university in 1956 where he delivered a series of valuable lectures which were later published in

book form under the title Rijal al- Fikr wa al- Dawah fi al-Islam. He visited Lebanon, Turkey and Iraq in 1954, Myanmar in 1960, Pakistan in 1964, Kuwait in 1962, Europe, specially Paris, London, Cambridge and oxford universities, Madrid, Cordova etc in 1963 and met the great scholars such as then president of the oxford university professor Becton, orientalist Dr. Arberi, Mr. Bashan and Muhammad Asad, Dr. Hamidullah and Dr, Zaki Ali. in 1973 he visited Afghanistan , Iran, Iraq, Lebanon, Jordan and Syria in his capacity as the head of the world Islamic league's delegation. He visited U.A.E. and Morocco in 1974, USA and Canada in 1977, Pakistan in 1978, State of Qatar in 1979, srilanka in 1982, London in 1983, Jordan, Yemen, K.S.A. and Bangladesh in 1984, Malasia in 1987 and Tashkent, Samarqand and Bukhara in 1993. He frequently visited some countries like K.S.A., Turkey and Pakistan. In all these visits he participated very actively in debates and discussions and exchanged views with great scholars of diverse thoughts and philosophies and never remained as a passive spectator. He founded Message for Humanity, a movement for closer interaction mainly between the Hindus and Muslims in 1951 and Islamic Research Academy in Lucknow in 1959. He participated in the establishment of the Board of Religious Education of Uttar Pradesh in 1960, All India Advisory Council in 1964 and All India Muslim Personal Law Board in 1972. He supervised the establishment of journals such as Nida e- Millat in 1962, Tamir e-Hayat in 1963 in Urdu, Al- Ba'ath al- Islami in 1955 and Al-Rayed in 1959 in Arabic which have still been published from Nadwah.

He received a number of awards for his contribution to Arabic and socio- religious reformative works. He was awarded King Faisal International Award in 1980, honorary doctorate degree in literature by Kashmir University in 1981, selected by Dubai International council for Quran for the Award of the Islamic personality for the year 1998 and an international literary seminar was organized in Istanbul, Turkey in 1996 to discuss about his life and contribution to the promotion of literature

and culture all over the world. The Saudi government once gifted him the key of the holy Ka'abah in appreciation to his scholarship.

He was modes in life, moderate and balanced in thoughts, had very pleasing personality didn't have animosity and ill will against any one. He believed in the purity of Islam, worked and lived for Islam, never ran after wealth, never preferred an isolated life, unmindful what is happening around the world. He was observer of the developments taking place across the world, fought for humanity and strived hard for the revival of glorious Islamic history. He pin pointed the shortcomings of his fellow believers and criticized in no uncertain terms all those who miserably failed to develop Muslim society. He called upon the Muslims around the globe to be True to their religion, sincere to the service of Islam, moderate in their thoughts and actions and never be lured to the glittering but materialistic culture of the west. For the propagation of true Islamic teachings and Arabic literature he traveled to the east and the west, visited capitals and cities, centers of development and progress, met leaders and scholars, kings and rulers and established contact with them for the development of Muslims and to find solutions to the problems they are faced with. He called upon one and all to establish a just, human and tolerant society across the globe.

firmly believed in Islamic teachings and ethos and tried to find solution to all problems the mankind faced primarily in the Quran and Hadith. He was, among all other identities, a great preacher of Islam and an international messenger of brotherhood, humanity, peace and a socio-religious reformer of the Muslim world who eagerly wanted Muslim society to develop and compete with the rest of the world in every field.

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- 5 Muhammed al-Majzooob, *Ulama wal Mufakkiruna Araftuhum (Ulama of our Age)* (Jeddah:
- 6 Aalam al-Ma'rifah Li al-nashriwal thawzi,1983),135.
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