CHAPTER 5

ALI MIYAN’S THOUGHT AND CONTRIBUTION TO TASAWWUF AND TASAWWUF LITERATURE
Maulana Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi was also one of the most important Islamic Scholar of Tasawwuf and Tasawwuf literature in the twentieth century. He has his own views, regarding Tasawwuf. He defends it with his strong logical approach, considering Tasawwuf as a prime part of religion required for the development of high moral values in its followers. He also termed it as Fiqh-e-Batin (inner jurisprudence). In this Chapter, we will deal with his introduction and adherence to Tasawwuf, his progress in later life and his moderate logical approach to it. As a reputed scholar, his thoughts regarding Tasawwuf, give a new look to the discipline. The expression of his thoughts and strong advocation of his opinion balanced by logical reasoning presents ‘Tasawwuf’ as an interesting goal and crucial factor to producing men of morality in Islamic history.

Ali Miyan’s early introduction to Tasawwuf

Ali Miyan belonged to an orthodox Muslim family and among his ancestors; Sayyid Ahmad Shaheed was an eminent Sufi of his time. There were a number of other members of his
family, who were also popularly famed as great Sufis of their times, like Ameer Qutubuddin, Qazi Sayyid Ahmad Naseer Abadi, Shaykh Fakhruddin Khayali etc. To name a few his maternal grandfather Shah Zia-un-Nabi was also a great Sufi and was an ideal personality to whom many family members looked unto. But despite these family traditions, Ali Miyan remained a scholar of Islamic sciences until the age of 23 and had no formal exposure to Tasawwuf.

In his own words his first encounter to Tasawwuf follows, “I had never delved in the Sufi literature nor was familiar with the terminologies of Tasawwuf. However, my brother was fully aware of my taste and likings, for it was he who been the chief guide during my educational attainments. Our family had been intimately connected, at least for the last three hundred years, intellectually and spiritually, with the school of thought that belongs to Mujaddid Alf Thani and Shah Waliullah. The private library of my father had a three volumes collection of Mujaddid’s letters, printed at Ahmadi Press of Delhi. I started reading the book in compliance to my brother’s wishes, but was so discouraged that I had to put it off, more than once”. The letters written by Mujaddid to his mentor Khwaja Baqi Billah describing his spiritual experiences and ecstatic moods were especially disconcerting, but his brother kept on prodding him to go
through the letters along with the *Izalatul Khifa* of Shah Waliullah, *Sirat-e-Mustaqeem* of Sayyid Ahmad Shaheed and Shah Ismail Shaheed’s ‘*Mansab-e-Imamat*’. When he started reading it, more he read the book, more fascinating it found. It attracted his interest as the best literary creations. To quote Ali Miyan, “I had read so far, I was at that time passing through a critical stage of my life in which certain mental distractions and intellectual stresses and strains had put me in turmoil. The book then became a spiritual guide to me. The Journey I had begun in obedience to my brother gave me an enthralling delight. I started reading, the Mujaddid’s letters, after a short time with the intention of classifying the ideas expressed in it under different headings. I started preparing an index of the subjects dealt with in it, for example listing the passages dealing with the oneness of Allah and repudiation of Polytheistic ideas, Prophet hood, teachings of the Prophet(pbuh) and aberrations from it, innovations in Islam, unity of Being and Unity of Manifestation, reaches of intellect and institution so on”.

**A brief history of Tasawwuf**

Ali Miyan briefly explained the history of *Tasawwuf* in these words, “Imam Ibn Taymiyyah writes in the eleventh volume of his ‘*Fatawa*’, which consists of topics on ‘*Tasawwuf*’. Taymiyyah wrote, “The word Sufi was not known in the third century
Hijrah. It was only afterwards that it introduced. This word used by many Shuyukh (plural of Shaykh) and Aimmah (plural of imam) such as Imam Ahmad ibn Hambal, Abu Sulaymaan Darani, Sufyan Thauri, and Hasan Basri. Ulama hold different opinions regarding the root of this word. After quoting various opinions he says, “It is derived from wearing ‘Suf’ (woolen garment). Some Ulama mention that, it is extracted from the word ‘Safa’ (cleaning of impurity)”.

To Ali Miyan, Sufi is one who absorbed in the thoughts of Allah, and to whom gold and stone have become equal (he is not tempted by wealth). These men, then rose from Sufi to the rank of Siddiq (truthful). Verily, after the Ambiyaa the best of creation are the Siddiqueen (plural of siddiq). The first Sufi jamat arose in Basra, and the founders of the first Khanqah were the Murids of Abdul Wahid bin Zayd, who was a disciple of Hasan Basri. Piety, devotion and the fear of Allah were renowned in Basra during this period. Therefore, the phrase, ‘Jurisprudence of Kufa and devotion of Basra’ became popular.

**Juristic value of Tasawwuf**

According to Ali Miyan ‘Tasawwuf’ is not against Islamic spirit rather it is desirable practice. He proved, a few Ulama have disallowed this on the basis that it was an overstatement and, others have said, that ‘Tasawwuf’ not practiced by the Sahabah. The majority of Ulama (Scholars) however are of the opinion
that there is no objection if such things happened while in an
overpowered state (of ecstasy), yet, it is more virtuous in
remaining normal at all times. Hazrat Imam Ahmad was once
questioned about the fainting and going into spiritual raptures.
He replied, “Yahya bin Saeed Qattani, once fainted while reading
the Qur’an. If there was anybody who could discourage this act
then it was only Yahya bin Saeed himself, because I have not seen
anyone more intelligent than him.”

Further Ali Miyan asserts, it is narrated about Imam Shafii,
that these states prevailed over him too. Consequently, stories of
this nature related to many pious persons, whose integrity is
undisputed. The examples related to the Sahabah, mentioned in
the Qur’an, such as the washing of the heart and flowing of tears
etc, is far more superior, it is only those who have strayed far off
religion, and who have hard and rusted hearts can deny these
states and conditions. This class of person is imperfect. On the
other hand, some persons believe that, these conditions are the
perfect and supreme. Both these classes overcome by extremes.
There are realities and well-known conditions, pertaining to
‘Tasawwuf’ which ordinary men cannot realize.

Ali Miyan emphasized, there are four categories of Men.
The first lowest state is that of a self-oppressor who has a hard
heart, which not softened by listening to the Qur’an or by remembering Allah. About whom Allah has said,

"Then, after that, your hearts were hardened and became as stones or even worse in hardness. Indeed, there are stones out of which rivers gush forth, and indeed, there are of them (stones) which split asunder so that water flows from them, and indeed, there are of them (stones) which fall down for fear of Allah. And Allah is not unaware of what you do."

(Qur’an 2:74)

These people consists major part of Human beings. They have very little spiritual sense. Many of them have no concern of religion. The second state is that of pious believers who cannot endure inspirations because of a weakness in their hearts. They either faint or die. In worldly matters too, some people become insane or even die of excessive happiness or uncontrolled grief. If this stage befalls anyone, then without Transgression on his part, he is neither sinful nor suspected. Similarly, if one listens to the Qur’an without transgressing any law and an inspiration enters his heart due to which he becomes unconscious, Such a state is known as Fana or Sukr. In such a case it is not to be despised but
excused. The deciding factor of these states is that if the impacts are lawful and the beholder is truthful and unable to control himself, then this condition is praiseworthy. He is excuse from whatever happens to him unwillingly, such as fainting etc. These people are much better than those who cannot reach this rank because of weak faith, hardened hearts etc. The third state refers to those who do not lose their consciousness in spite of achieving the high degree of faith and these are superior and more exalted than those of the second stage are. *Sahabah* never lost their senses during the period of ecstasy. The highest degree of faith bestowed on Prophets (pbut). This was the state of Prophet Muhammad (pbut) also. An example can be cited of the Prophet Muhammad (pbut) experienced ‘Meraj’\(^{12}\) and many such things shown to him, yet his condition was unchanged the next morning. This state of the Prophet (pbut) was more superior to that of Moses (pbut) who fainted, while observing Divine manifestation at Mount Toor. Certainly, Moses’s (pbut) state was cannot be questioned but Prophet Muhammad (pbut) had an even higher and sublime experience.\(^{13}\)

**Ali Miyan’s formal involvement in Sufistic activities**

In the year 1931, Maulana Ali Miyan made his second visit to Lahore, to attend the classes of “*Hujjatullahil Baligah*” under Maulana Ahmad Ali Lahori. During his stay, Ali Miyan observed
the pious and devout life of Maulana Lahori and felt the urge to be a disciple of Maulana Lahori. On an occasion Ali Miyan, expressed his desire to him, but Maulana Lahori replied that his mentor, “Hazrat Khalifa Ghulam Muhammad Dinpurwi” is still alive, and hence it would be better to consult him regarding this issue. However, I can write a letter to him favoring you, which you will give to him. Therefore, Ali Miyan set for Dinpur. There he met Hazrat Khalifa, and gave him the letter. Therefore, Hazrat Khalifa took ‘Bait’ from him and recommended him, the “Zikr-e-Qalb” (silent remembrance of Allah). After a few days, Hazrat Khalifa passed away. Then, Ali Miyan came under the mentorship of, Maulana Lahori. The two showed a lot of correspondence and their association grew stronger with time.\textsuperscript{14}

The following year Ali Miyan went to Lahore for the third time, on the recommendation of Maulana Lahori. The stay was for spiritual working out. Therefore, he stayed in a small room, which was in Badshahi Mosque of Lahore.\textsuperscript{15} This was his longest stay at Lahore. Later, he undertook many Journeys to Lahore to attend his mentor.\textsuperscript{16} In 1946, Maulana Ahmad Ali Lahori went for Haj (Pilgrimage). During the stay at Minah, he made a special Dua and Istikhara for Ali Miyan in Masjid-e-Khaif. There he received some spiritual directives. On his return to Lahore, he called Ali Miyan to Lahore. There he secretly declared Ali Miyan
as his Khalifa (Successor) in the Qadriyya Order of thought. After some years of this, Maulana Ahmad Ali Lahori died, and in the mean time the partition of India took place, therefore the journey to Lahore became difficult for Indians.

At this time, Ali Miyan introduced to a pious man, Maulana Muhammad Ilyas Kandhlawi who founded a new reformist movement known as ‘Tableeghi Jamaat’ in Delhi, and its outskirts in Mewat. Maulana Ali Miyan inspired very much by him, on observing the activities and efforts of his members.

He expresses about the Jamat, “in that trip the most amazing thing that I have observed and which give me thorough excitement was the efforts and activities of Maulana Muhammad Ilyas and his members in the region of Mewat. It seems that, the scene, which I observed was, of 1st century Hijrah instead of the 20th century. The stories and social environment which we read about, the reformation, revolution and the urge of Jihad in the early New-Muslims of the era of Prophethood, are visible herein the Mosques and streets of Gurgoan, Nuh and Shahpur etc. It is a fact that, this chishti saint (Maulana Ilyas), revivalist and scholar of the Nizamuddin Locality sitting beside the grave of Nizamuddin Aulia is propagating Islam like Khwaja Moinuddin chishti and, defending religion like, Mujadid Alf Thani and Sayyid Ahmad Shaheed”.

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In 1940, Ali Miyan went to Markaz Nizamuddin with two of his friends, Maulana Muhammad Manzoor Nomani and Haji Abdul Wahid. Due to the illness of his wife Maulana Manzoor Nomani returned to Lucknow, therefore these two went into the Markaz and was informed that Maulana Ilyas was not present. Therefore, they remained there and waited for his arrival. When Maulana Ilyas arrived, he was excited to meet Ali Miyan, and this first meeting with Maulana Ilyas was a remarkable event in Ali Miyan’s life.

When Ali Miyan returned to Lucknow, he established the first centre for Tableegh there, and actively took part in its activities. Afterwards, many times he went to Nizamuddin and undertook a number of Journeys with Maulana Ilyas. Devotion in Tableeghi activities, made Maulana Muhammad Ilyas’s confidence of Ali Miyan. Ali Miyan became very closer to Maulana Ilyas among all the members of Tableeghi Jamat. Due to his complete devotion to Tableegh, Ali Miyan intended to resign from teaching. For this, he consulted Maulana Ilyas who replied, “Our elders don’t advice anyone to give up his means of earning till its alternate will be available”.19 But soon after, he permitted Ali Miyan to give up his job.

Ali Miyan undertook many trips to different parts of the country and abroad for the sake of Tableegh. At a number of
places, Ali Miyan was the first person to introduce Tableeghi Movement and founded new centers of Tableegh particularly, at the Frontier province of Pakistan, Hyderabad, Sindh and many Gulf Countries. On 13th July 1944, Maulana Muhammad Ilyas departed for his heavenly abode. This was among one of the tragedies, which affected Ali Miyan’s life and his soul. This was the end of the second phase of the mystic career of Ali Miyan.  

After the death of Maulana Muhammad Ilyas, Ali Miyan went under the mentorship of Maulana Abdul Qadir Raipuri. Soon Ali Miyan became more attached to his mentor than his other colleagues. Ali Miyan performed Haj with Maulana Abdul Qadir Raipuri in 1950, and this association lasted until 1962 when Maulana Abdul Qadir Raipuri died.

Ali Miyan met Maulana Raipuri for the first time in 1940. His affectionate nature, deep political approach, worldly awareness, spiritual insight, foresightedness, great heartedness, deep thought, fact full approach and above all his complete devotion to religious and mystic activities, were the qualities, which Ali Miyan found as a source of inspiration. The Maulana’s observations affected Ali Miyan’s thought and a strong urge rose in him to be his Murid (disciple). However, Maulana Ahmad Ali Lahori was the first mentor of Ali Miyan but due to the partition of India, it had become difficult for him to visit his mentor.
frequently, and to consult him in all issues. Secondly, Maulana Lahori and Raipuri were close friends and Maulana Lahori had a great respect for Maulana Raipuri. In the mean time, also unfortunately, Maulana Ilyas died in 1944. Maulana Ali Miyan was actively involved in Tableeghi activities during the lifetime of Maulana Ilyas and there was no need for Ali Miyan to turn to any other person in the lifetime of Maulana Ilyas. But, after his death Ali Miyan felt the need to choose a new spiritual guide who had equal experience and status of Maulana Lahori and Maulana Muhammad Ilyas. According to the observations and experiences of Ali Miyan, Maulana Abdul Qadir Raipuri was appropriate for this purpose in all parameters. Raipuri was among the few great mystics of contemporary India. Even Maulana Muhammad Ilyas in his last days recommended his members to consult Maulana Raipuri in spiritual matters.22 One of the closest friends of Ali Miyan, Shaykhul Hadith Maulana Muhammad Zakariya advised him many times to join Maulana Raipuri. When the two met, both were satisfied with the association with each other, Ali Miyan was excited to find his new guide and an appropriate person while Maulana Raipuri was excited to have an able and brilliant disciple. Their respect for each other can be traced in their letters, which they sent to each other, in which they have used very respectable titles for each other. This relationship
became stronger eventually. Maulana Raipuri visited Lucknow seven times and \textit{Daira Shah Alamullah} more than four times.

On a visit to \textit{Daira Shah Alamullah}, when Maulana Raipuri was coming outside the mosque with Ali Miyan, he secretly appointed Ali Miyan as his Khalifa (successor) through all four Sufi orders as well as in the order of Sayyid Ahmad Shaheed which is known as ‘Tariqa-e-Muhammadia’.\textsuperscript{23}

After the death of Shaykh Abdul Qadir Raipuri, Ali Miyan chose to be under the guidance of Shaykhul Hadith Maulana Muhammad Zakariyya.\textsuperscript{24} He was the last spiritual guide of Ali Miyan, and he died in 1982.\textsuperscript{25}

\textbf{Ali Miyan’s works on Tasawwuf}

1. \textit{Tareekh-e-Dawat-o-Azeemat (Saviours of Islamic Spirit)}

\textit{Tareekh-e-Dawat-o-Azeemat}, is a collection of lectures delivered by Maulana Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi, at Lucknow, under the title “\textit{Tareekh-e-Dawat-o-Azeemat}”.\textsuperscript{26} As it is obvious from the title, this work consists of the biographies of few towering personalities of Islamic history who were regarded as “Revivalists of Islam in their ages”. During the long span of thirteen hundred years of its existence, Islam underwent different phases. Sometimes it emerged as a strongest political and intellectual
power and sometimes it became too weak to think of its recovery. According to Ali Miyan reformers, leaders and scholars produced by Islam during its sovereignty were of no more higher caliber than those born in its age of decadence.

In “Tareekh-e-Dawat-o-Azeemat” Maulana Ali Miyan demonstrates “there have been great revivalist personalities throughout Islamic history. Whenever, the religion of Allah attacked either, from within or from outside, Allah sends men of the hour equipped with the right kind of scholarship and spiritual strength to correct the wrongs of the age and show the way. Therefore, he has in this book he presented the continuous history of the revival of Islam through the biographies of these great revivalists. Because, in history we find only the events with Kings and Emperors or biographical accounts of certain eminent luminaries, but no account has been found, of the revivalist personalities and movements of Muslims and speculative achievements of all those great servants who have left an indelible mark on Islamic world. These champions have bravely fought against the forces of corruption and bidah (innovations), defended the original Islamic precepts and teachings, and rejuvenated the true spirit of Islam along with making valuable contributions to the intellectual and academic treasures. The book present an account of these continuous efforts, made
during the past thirteen hundred years, for reawakening the Muslims. It highlights the name of those eminent servants, who rose to the defense of Islam in order to arrest the onslaught of the evil forces and who gave rise to various movements for the purpose of upholding Islamic morals and values and finally their efforts made it possible for Islam to survive to this day. Most of them were identified as Mujaddids (revivalists). Also, some important personalities mentioned in this book which cannot be called as Mujaddids but who have worked for the renovation and regeneration of the Islamic faith and practice and the subsequent generations of Muslims have ever remain indebted to them.

The first volume is comprised of the biographies of the revivalist personalities of the first eight centuries after Hijrah. The second volume contains the achievements of Ibn-e-Taymiyyah and the biographies of those remarkable revivalists of India who have been the fountainhead of call to religion and renovation of Islamic thought. The third volume contains a detailed study of Mughal India. The social and religious conditions of India from Babar to Jahangir, as well as the great efforts of Shaykh Ahmad Sarhindi, to defend and preserve the true Islamic spirit, from the illegitimate attacks of King Akbar.
2. Tazkiya wa Ahsan ya Tasawwuf o Suluk (Tazkiya and Ahsan or Tasawwuf and Suluk)

It is most important work of Ali Miyan, which reflects in detail the thought of Ali Miyan regarding *Tasawwuf*. As its title displays *Tazkiya, Ahsan, Tasawwuf and Suluk*, which means Purification of soul, Devotion, Sufi Thought and Spiritual stages respectively. The first two terms (Tazkiya and Ahsan) were used in *Qur’an* and *Hadith* respectively. While the later two (Taswwuf and Suluk) were used in by Sufis and coined in later days. Ali Miyan tried to explain that, the concept of *Tasawwuf* found in *Qur’an* and *Sunnah*. In *Qur’an*, the word *Tzakiya* used for the purpose of *Tasawwuf* and in *Hadith Ahsan* used for the same. Thus *Tasawwuf* is not anti Islamic or a Bidat (innovation) though the word *Tasawwuf* is not used in both.

Ali Miyan pointed out that, there are two very difficult and unavoidable stages encountered in all doctrines, be they ethics, education and training, reformation, sciences etc. The first is the stage where the means turn to objectives, and the other, where technical terms obscure the realities. Both the means and the technical terms are essential, without which the propagation and expansion, teaching and explanation of these high objective is practically impossible. However, be they, the
means or the technical terms, in achieving the aims and realities, their function is that to express the aim properly. Therefore, they adopted temporarily for the fulfillment of a necessity. Nevertheless, sometimes these technical terms, over emphasized and deemed as just objective or goal. When an expert deems its necessity, he gives instruction to do without means, or completely drop the means and technical terms. However, in the case of Tasawwuf some immature Sufis over emphasized these means, which in result generate the misconceptions in the minds of common people. Therefore, instead of conveying to goal, they become an obstacle. A historical fact, which has to be acknowledged, is that, such a misfortune befalls lofty ideals, where means become the objective and technical terms obscure realities with a thick veil. Not only were they obscured but also, the bitter experiments and grave errors of the flag bearers of these technical terms gave rise to such grievous misunderstandings that a great number of true and upright people have learnt to dread and dislike its real aim and realities. It has now become a very difficult task to make them recognize and value these realities, so that they make efforts to attain these goals. If whenever a discourse to denote the importance of acquiring these aims is delivered, or an effort to satisfy them is made, they are confronted with an enormous mountain of ‘means’ which immature and unauthorized reformers exaggerate
and force them to perform. These reformers themselves become so confused that the actual aim totally forgotten and disregarded. Similarly, when the call for these undisputed realities made, it obscured by technical terms. Generally, technical terms had to explain realities and to draw people towards understanding them. This was done due to particular reasons, according to the demands of the social structures and the special situations, which prevailed in different times. Those who experienced these realities, and whose lives were a true reflection of these facts, were unacquainted with these technical terms. They used different words, expressions and ways to explain these realities. If a study is made of the history of any science, whatever etymology, syntax, rules, dialect, Balaghat (rhetoric), spiritual reformation, it found that the earlier ones were in full control of the means, whereas the latter ones, controlled by the means. The authorized experts were propagators and inviters while the novices were captives of their mentors, and the technical terms. This became an agonizing factor in the path of the exalted aims of religion, ethics, skills and sciences. Students throughout the ages, confronted by this difficult test. As far as the aims and objectives are concerned, they are self-evident undisputed. *Tasawwuf* has been adversely affected by the following two factors: one that, the means were exaggerated and the second that the technical terms were over emphasized and insisted on.
Ali Miyan argued, if a person is questioned, are loyalty and ethics important or not? Is it necessary to develop a firm belief or not? Is it commendable to be adorned with virtues and be free from vice, such as jealousy, Kibr (to be extremely proud), to show off, bear malice and hatred, love for wealth and honor or not? Is it desirable to liberate the Nafs from these evil tendencies? Humility and humbleness in prayers, the state of modesty weeping in Dua, and above all, the love for Allah and His Messenger (pbuh), achievement of a feeling of satisfaction and sweetness or at least to be eager and punctual to attain it, clean dealings, truth and trust, having regard for the rights of humankind, control over ones selfishness especially in times of anger, are all these desirable or not?, Then, every sensible person, particularly the Muslim who is not blindfolded by prejudice, will definitely give this answer: These are not only virtuous but also necessary according to the Shariah, and these are the motivations by Qur’an and Hadith. The method of acquiring these qualities is what the later generations named as “Tasawwuf”, they react with a grimace because they are dismayed by this term. Others would disapprove because of their bitter experiences with false Sufi saints. They would recall unpleasant incidents and observations that they encountered with them. This is not the case with Tasawwuf only. It is the problem with all other skills and reformations, where there will be found,
amongst their propagators, administrators and missionaries, those who are genuine and those who are false, the authorized and the unauthorized, the mature and the immature, and even the faithful and the faithless. In spite of this opposing type, no wise person will deny the necessity of *Tasawwuf* nor will criticize it. In worldly professions too, whether it is business, agriculture, industry, or artisanship, both the experts and the novice are present. One, the guide and other the deceiver. Yet, the affairs of the world and religion are running. One must adopt it for his own benefit and not to give up these treasures due to, inexperienced claimants, nor cast aside the actual reality because of disagreement with any technical term.

3. **Seerat Sayyid Ahmad Shaheed** (Biography of Sayyid Ahmad Shaheed)

Seerat Sayyid Ahmad Shaheed was the first book written by Maulana Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi at the age of 23. Ali Miyan himself belonged to Sayyid Ahmad Shaheed’s family. The book is a biographical sketch of Sayyid Ahmad Shaheed and Sayyid Shah Ismail Shaheed, and their movement of *Islah* (reformation) and *Jihad*.

Sayyid Ahmad Shaheed was a ‘*Wali*’ (saintly person) who started his career as a Sufi. Masses of Muslims joined him as
Murids (spiritual disciples), but later due to some political and social reasons, he turned into a Sufi Mujahid and started the movement of "Islah and Jihad", which had some affinities to the Muwahhidun (Unitarian) movement of Arabia. Though he did not succeed in forming an Islamic State among the tribes of the North-West Frontier of the Indian subcontinent, by owing to the disloyalty of some Muslim Chieftains of North Frontier. At last, he was martyred (shaheed) at the battlefield of Balakot in 1831. However, the movement continued for several decades after his death, and the impact of the movement lasted for much longer. Thus, the history of the movement of Sayyid Ahmad Shaheed is a remarkable event in Indian History.

It was the first work on the subject. The Tales and stories were scattered in several other books or in the memory of elder members of the family. Therefore, Maulana Ali Miyan collects the matter from all authentic sources and compiled the book, which extremely appreciated by academic and religious sections. The book also illustrates the moral and religious temper and daily life of the army of Sayyid Ahmad Shaheed. They have spiritual and moral values, and exactly deserve to be remembered in the history. They in a way, reflect the Islamic life of the time of Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) and his Companions.
The book stimulates the sentiment of Iman in the heart of the reader and provokes him to follow the true spirit of the religion.

4. **Sawaneh Maulana Abdul Qadir Raipuri**  
   *(Biography of Maulana Abdul Qadir Raipuri)*

As we have stated earlier that after the death of Maulana Muhammad Ilyas, Ali Miyan increased his adherence with Maulana Abdul Qadir Raipuri and consider him as his mentor. After the death of Maulana Raipuri, Ali Miyan wrote a detailed biography of his mentor under the title *Sawaneh Maulana Abdul Qadir Raipuri*. In this book, Ali Miyan discussed in detail the spiritual life of his mentor and extensively recorded his daily schedule and Sufistic practices. Along with this, Ali Miyan gave useful information about *Tasawwuf*. Therefore, it is well accepted and most referred book of Ali Miyan in Sufistic circles.

**Critical remarks**

From the above discussion, it appears that Ali Miyan had a deep insight in theory and practice of *Tasawwuf*. He was not merely a scholar but a leading personality in the area. However, he was the disciple of Maulana Ahmad Ali Lahori yet he was, impressed by Sayyid Ahmad Shaheed’s Sufi thought. He considered him as his role model in *Tasawwuf*. Ali Miyan was
also influenced by Shaykh Ahmad Sirhindi and Shah Waliullah Muhaddith Dehlawi. His own approach regarding *Tasawwuf* was balanced and clear. He considered *Tasawwuf* as an essential factor in developing the true spirit of religion in a man. According to him, *Tasawwuf* plays a vital role in the development of great Muslim personalities throughout Islamic history. Knowledge only cannot make men of high morals and pious character, purification of the mind and the heart is equally necessary for one’s personality development, which can easily attained through *Tasawwuf*.

Ali Miyan highlighted that, Islam is a religion of moderation. It is not a dry and prosaic religion as some may be inclined to imagine. Its beauty, grandeur, appeal and sublimity are unsurpassable. It rests on eternal truths whose charms are captivating and exhilarating. It prescribes certain minimum acts of worship and it calls upon man to perform them in loving devotion and to respond to them from the depth of his heart. It is a celestial call, which sinks into the heart of a man and permeates his whole being. There are numerous verses of the *Qur’an* and scores of *Ahadith* calling upon man to love Allah with fervor, and to remember Him constantly with devotion and humility. It is no doubt that man has been created as Allah’s bondman, but a favorite bondman, the most esteemed creation of Universe, in
whose service every object and force of nature has been directed. However, man can fall to the lowest of the low or rise to the highest of the high.

Authenticating *Tasawwuf* logically he advocated against those, who consider *Tasawwuf* as a later day innovation and, at the best, it falls in the category of permissible, which have to be avoided, as it breeds stagnation, defeatism and an escape from realities of life. To Ali Miyan, *Tasawwuf* is as old as Islam. All the Prophets (pbut) practiced it. It is the essence of Faith and the soul of Islam. Its basic ingredients are consciousness and a living realization of the omnipotence of Allah (*Tauheed*) in all its implications, adoption and love of Allah, purification of the heart and righteousness. It constitutes the very base of religion. It calls upon man to inculcate in himself the qualities of piety, sincerity, patience, steadfastness, and gratitude to Allah. Alongside, it should not be judged, by the conduct of fraudulent pretenders or worldly men calling themselves, Sufis, so, there are false Ulama who are to be avoided according to Hadith.

*Tasawwuf* is such a vast, profound and sublime subject that one cannot explain it within few words. Its depth and dimensions can be experienced but cannot be appropriately express. It includes purification of the Nafs (selfness), inculcation of the noblest qualities, adopting attributes of Allah, attainment of love
for Allah, His Marifat (Gnosis). When man reaches this state, the reality of eternal values dawns upon him, and a new horizon of the “Beyond” opened up before him. Then man begins to live in accordance with Allah’s values and receives reciprocally love, which is thrilling, captivating, ecstatic and all absorbing.

Disapproving the critics of Sufis he contends that “to deny the services of the great Sufi Saints in expansion and establishment of Islam is to deny a well accepted and well established truth and thereby an important aspect of the history of Islam”.

Ali Miyan asserts, *Tasawwuf* is not a *Qur’anic* word nor can it be found in *Hadith* literature but other words, can be found which are equivalent to it, like “Tazkiya” in the *Qur’an*, and “Ahsan” in *Hadith*. These are some groups of people which opposed *Tasawwuf*. One group comprises those who accept its constituents separately, but deny it if it is referred to as a whole. The majority of the people applaud the aforementioned aim and qualities separately, but if it be said to them that, some people have for some reasons given all these qualities a common name “*Tasawwuf*”, then their colours change instantly and they say, ‘We don’t believe in *Tasawwuf*, it has caused great harms’. The other group is of those to whom it is acceptable if it proposed under a different name. For example if it is said, “The *Qur’an* has termed it ‘Tazkiyah’ (cleaning). The *Hadith* names it ‘Ahsan’, and later
jurists termed it as *Fiqh-e-Batin*[^33]. They would then reply that there is no reason for contradiction and all these are declarations of Allah and His Prophet (pbuh).

Verily, neither alterations can make to all the books written, nor the tongues of men can be withheld. Otherwise, if we were given the option, we should have referred to it by the words ‘Tazkiyah’ and ‘Ahsan’ and not used the word ‘Tasawwuf’. Now this is the popular name. Likewise, the history of the arts and sciences is full of such common technical terms. Authorities on sciences have all along laid stress on the aims and kept the means within their limits. They not only refuted, that which was foreign to the soul, essence, and real goal of science, but they have also refuted that, which proved harmful and irrelevant.

Ali Miyan, acknowledge, there is no such period in the history of Islam in which the experts, tutors and propagators of this subject did not differentiate between its body and soul, reality and form, aims and customs. Such as, Shaykh Abdul Qadir Jilani, Shaykh Shahabuddin Suhrwardi, Mujaddid Alfe Thani, Hazrat Shah Waliullah Dehlawi, Hazrat Sayyid Ahmad Shaheed, Shah Ismail Shaheed, Hazrat Maulana Rashid Ahmad Gangohi and Hakimul Ummat Hazrat Maulana Ashraf Ali Thanvi, all have emphatically made a clear distinction between the kernel and shell, the correct object and the incorrect interpretation. They have vehemently...
rejected all those customs and innovations which were introduced into and regarded as part of *Tasawwuf* and *Tariqat* by Non-Muslims and immature Sufis, due to unaware of the reality.\(^3^4\)
Chapter: 5

Notes and References:


4. Ibid., pp. 122-23.


11. Fana or Sukr:- It is a spiritual stage in which a Sufi lost his consciousness.

12. It is a famous incident of Prophet Muhammad’s (pbuh) life in which, The Holy Prophet (pbuh) visited heavens physically with the Angel Jibraeel.


15. For three months he stayed in Bad Shahi Mosque, isolated from worldly affairs and devout his time to spiritual training and mystic activities like Prayer, Recitation of
Qur’an, Zikr (Remembrance of Allah), Muraqba (Meditation) etc.


21. Maulana Abdul Qadir Raipuri was one of the leading Sufis of Northern India living at that time in the town Raipur, of District Saharanpur U.P.


24. Maulana Muhammad Zakariyya was a well-known scholar and teacher of Hadith in the Madrasah Mazahir-al-Uloom of Saharanpur U.P, he was also an eminent Sufi of the time.


26. Tareekh-e-Dawat-o-Azeemat, is a collection of lectures delivered by Maulana Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi, at Lucknow at a convention organized by “Jamat-e-Dawat-o-Tableegh” in Muharram 1372 A.H. Later on, these lectures published collectively with further additions under the title “Tareekh-e-Dawat-o-Azeemat”. It also rendered in English under the title “Saviors of Islamic Spirit”.

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27. Therefore, the movement labeled as ‘Wahhabi’ by the British in India.


30. World of eternal truths like, Angles and other intangible creations of God.


33. Inner/Spiritual Jurisprudence, Ibid., p. 84.

34. Ibid., pp. 46-47.