CHAPTER 2

MAULANA ABUL HASAN ALI NADWI’S EARLY LIFE
AND EDUCATION
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Family background

The family of Maulana Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi traces its origin to Hazrat Hasan bin Ali [maternal grandson of Prophet Muhammad (pbuh)]. The eldest son of Hasan was Hasan Musanna. He was born in 651 C.E, and was given the title “Musanna” meaning second, due to the reason that he closely matched his father in physique and morality. Hasan Musanna was married to Fatima Sugrah; daughter of Hazrat Husain bin Ali. Hasan Musanna had three sons. The eldest one was Abdullah al Muhiz. He had given the title ‘Shaykhul Itrah’. He led a mutiny against the regime of the Abbasid Khalifa, Abu Jafar al Mansoor that resulted in the arrest of Abdullah al Muhiz. Subsequently he imprisoned until his death. Abdullah al Muhiz had six sons of which Muhammad Zul Nafs al Zakiyyah was the most outstanding. He too waged a rebellion against Abu Jafar al Mansoor in Hijaz, which followed by the confrontation of both armies near Madinah. Muhammad Zul Nafs al Zakiyyah killed in the battle. Abdullah al Ashtar a son of Muhammad Zul Nafs al Zakiyyah, migrated to Kabul (Afghanistan) as a reason he was
entitled as Al-Kabuli, he was killed in a battle there in 768 C.E. Muhammad Zul Nafs al Zakiyyah had many sons but two of them attained fame. They were Muhammad Thani al Asghar and Hasan. 4 Muhammad Thani al Asghar migrated and settled down in Kufa and deputed as Naqeeb (in charge) of Kufa. Hasan al Jawwad, son of Muhammad Thani al Asghar was also a prominent man, succeeded his father as Naqeeb. The descendents of Hasan al Jawwad settled in different regions of west Asia. In the seventh generation, among his descendents who migrated to the region of Ahfad, a child was born who later achieved fame, as Shaykh Rashiduddin Ahmad al Madani. 5 Shaykh Rashiduddin became a great Sufi saint of his time and had several disciples. His son Sayyid Qutubuddin Muhammad al Madani was a man of letters and power and lived in Madinah. One night Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) directed him in his dream, to proceed to India and serve the cause of Islam there. Therefore, he migrated to Ghazni, which was then, an important centre of Islam. There he collected an army of 18000 soldiers and attacked Kannauj, Manakpur and Katra, near Allahbad. Sayyid Qutubuddin Muhammad al Madani was given the title ‘Shaykhul Islam’, which was then a very prestigious title. 6

With his family members and disciples, Qutubuddin Muhammad-al-Madani settled down in Katra. There he had
preached Islam and carried on his Islamic reformist activities among the locals and established an Islamic Society. The descendents of Qutubuddin Muhammad-al-Madani settled in different parts in India. About a century later one of his descendents, Sayyid Qutubuddin Muhammad Thani migrated to Jais, near Raibareilly from Katra. His son Sayyid Alauddin and grandson, Qazi Mahmud settled down in a nearby town, Naseerabad. Qazi Sayyid Mahmud had two sons: Qazi Sayyid Muhammad and Qazi Sayyid Ahmad. The son of Qazi Sayyid Ahmad, Sayyid Muhammad Muazzam was a religious person and a saint. Sayyid Muhammad Muazzam had two sons, Sayyid Muhammad Fuzail and Sayyid Muhammad Ishaq; both were great Islamic Scholars. Maulana Sayyid Muhammad Fuzail had two sons, Shah Muhammad Dawood and Shah Alamullah. Shah Alamullah was born on 12 September 721 C.E at Nasirabad. At the age of 17, he migrated to a nearby-uninhabited spot on the bank of River Sai.

Maulana Muhammad Zahir and Shah Zia-al-Nabi, they all were renowned legendary scholars and Sufis. However, the most distinct and famous among the descendents of Shah Alamullah was Shaykh-ul-Islam Sayyid Ahmad Shaheed. He was a prominent Sufi and a great socio-religious reformer of India. He was also a freedom fighter, who fought against the British regime in India. His contribution to India's freedom is an incredible chapter in Indian History.

Short biographies of the elders of Maulana Ali Miyan discussed below.

**Paternal Grand Father**

Maulana Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi's paternal grandfather was Hakim Sayyid Fakhruddin Khayali, who was the son of Maulana Sayyid Abdul Ali. Maulana Sayyid Abdul Ali Naseerabadi was the son of Sayyid Ali Muhammad. Sayyid Ali Muhammad was among the descendents of Sayyid Muhammad Ishaq Naseerabadi. Sayyid Muhammad Ishaq was the uncle of Shah Alamullah.

Hakim Sayyid Fakhruddin Khayali was born in *Daira Shah Alamullah* in the year 1840. He had lost his father at an early age and was brought up under the patronage of his maternal grandfather Maulana Muhammad Zahir and completed his education under Maulana Muhammad Naim Farangi Mahali.
After completing his education, he traveled to many places such as Rajputana, Hyderabad, Bhopal and Tonk (Rajasthan) for earning a living as well as preaching Islam. Finally, he returned to his homeland and remained there till his death on 05 October 1908.\textsuperscript{14}

**Maternal Grandfather**

Maulana Sayyid Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi’s maternal grandfather; ‘Shah Zia-al-Nabi’, was born in *Daira Shah Alamullah*, in the year 1826.\textsuperscript{15} He persuaded early education in Raibareilly, then he went to Delhi for a spiritual training.\textsuperscript{16} After two years, he came back home, where he undertook Bait (oath) to Khwaja Ahmad Nasirabadi, after whose death he joined Khwaja Faizullah, under whom he completed his spiritual training.

In 1876, Shah Zia-al-Nabi performed Haj. He was a devout follower of Islam and his inclination towards prayers, recitation and meditation attracted people. His sincerity and devotion was commendable. He breathed his last in 1908.\textsuperscript{17}

**Father**

Maulana Sayyid Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi’s father, Maulana Abdul Hai Hasani was born in *Daira Shah Alamullah* on 18\textsuperscript{th} of Ramadan 1869.\textsuperscript{18} He was brought up under the patronage of his
maternal grandmother, who was a disciple of Sayyid Ahmad Shaheed.\textsuperscript{19}

He completed his schooling in Hanswa. There he learned Persian from Muhammad Taliq and Arabic from Shah Zia al Nabi. During this time, he became the disciple of a prominent Sufi, Maulana Fazlurrahman Moradabadi, after whose demise he completed the remaining course under Shah Zia-al-Nabi. He also corresponded with Haji Imdadullah Muhajir Makki, who declared him as his Khalifa (Successor).\textsuperscript{20}

In 1895, he joined Darul Uloom Nadwatul Ulama as a teacher. Later, in 1915 he promoted as Principal. Always a busy academician, he taught \textit{Tafsir}, \textit{Hadith} Literature and Tibb. He married twice. His first wife, Sayyida Zainab, was the daughter of Maulana Sayyid Aziz Hansawi.\textsuperscript{21} She passed away when her only son, Sayyid Abdul Ali was of eight. Then Maulana Abdul Hai Hasani married to “Sayyida Khairunnisa” the daughter of Shah Zia-al-Nabi. He had two daughters and two sons, Dr Abdul Ali and Maulana Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi.\textsuperscript{22}

Maulana Abdul Hai Hasani died on 2\textsuperscript{nd} Feb, 1923 because of immediate severe illness.
The name of Ali Miyan's mother was 'Sayyida Khairunnisa'. She was also a poetess who wrote under the pen name "Behtar" (better). Sayyida Khairunnisa was born in the year 1878. She was of a devout and religious temperament from childhood itself. Her father was a renowned Sufi, therefore under his guidance; she developed these traits still further. However, at that time there was not the tradition of girls memorizing the Qur'an, she was the first one to do so. Soon many other girls were inspired by this and followed her.

In the month of Ramadan separate Taravih for women, were organized where Sayyida Khairunnisa use to recite the whole Qur'an orally, as Imam. These Taravih of women commenced through the permission of the Ulama of Farangi Mahal. In the mean time, the former wife of Maulana Abdul Hai died, so his father proposed to Shah Zia-al-Nabi for the marriage of his son, Maulana Hakeem Sayyid Abdul Hai Hasani to his daughter, which he accepted. Since, Maulana Abdul Hai was not financially strong therefore, the mother of the girl was in a bit dilemma, but the daughter saw many cheerful dreams. One of which she usually quoted, "One Night I saw that I was granted a
verse from Almighty Allah and till I awake, continued to recite it repeatedly. The verse was:

فَلَا تَعْلَمَ نَفْسُ مَنْ أَخْتَقَ لَهُمْ مِنْ فُرُوجٍ أَعْيَنَ جَزَاءَ يَمَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ

(Qur'an 32:17)

"Now no person knows what delights of the eyes are kept hidden (in reserves), for them (righteous persons) as a reward for their good deeds". (Qur'an 32:17).

When I woke up, I was in fear, as I could not say it to anybody. In addition, I did not know the meaning of that verse. When I saw the meaning, I became extremely excited and the fear disappeared. I became proud of this blessing of Allah. I informed everyone. My father wept with joy". 27

Shortly, she was married to Maulana Abdul Hai, and had three children; two daughters and the third a son; "Maulana Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi". After the death of her husband, Sayyida Khairunnisa lived rest of the life as a widow. Her only desire was to make her son Ali Miyan a great man. For this, she prayed all the time.

At a place, she herself quotes, "The Prayer was like my food. Without prayer, I did not find fulfillment. All the time I was busy in prayer. I conversed also with prayers on my lips. On Friday I prayed all day, particularly between the time of Asar and
"Maghrib I prayed with profound concentration". After the death of her husband she dedicated herself to religion. In the night, she got up to perform Tahajjud prayers. She wept and sobbed so much out of devotion that even her prayer clothe become soggy. She passed her Iddat period in Raibareilly. During Iddat and afterwards, she has only two jobs to pass time, one was to listen religious books and the other was worship and prayer. She died in Raibareilly, on 13th of August 1968 and laid to the rest in the family graveyard.

**Elder brother, Dr Abdul Ali**

Dr Abdul Ali was born in Hanswa on 1st December 1893. His early education completed in Hanswa. When he was only of eight, his mother died. In 1904 his father married for the second time, after which Abdul Ali came to Raibareilly where continued his further education.

After some years, he went to Lucknow where he took admission in ninth class in a nearby school, from where in 1917 he finished Intermediate. In 1920, he took admission to M.B.B.S in King George Medical College. In 1923, his father passed away because of which he had some financial troubles. However, he completed his degree in 1925, a year later; he established a clinic near the old clinic of his father and rented a small house.
At the time of his father’s death, Ali Miyan was only nine. Therefore, the contribution of Dr Abdul Ali in Ali Miyan’s education and guidance was greatest after his mother. After the death of his father, in 1923, Dr Abdul Ali elected as a member of executive committee of Nadwa. In 1928, he appointed as Vice Principal and in 1931, he became Principal. From 1931 to 1961 he held the office. He died on May 7, 1961, owing to a heart attack.

**Family conditions at the time of Ali Miyan’s birth**

At the time of Ali Miyan’s birth, the economic condition of the family was a bit fragile. At the time when Maulana Hakim Abdul Hai married for the second time, he was teaching without wages. There was no other source of earning. His grandfather was the only earning member and because of such financial crisis sometimes, the whole family went without food for an entire day.

Even the house was unfurnished and some of its parts damaged. Despite this, the whole family was religious and firm in belief. Most of the males were Ulama (Islamic scholars) and Huffaz (those who memorize Qur’an). The deeds of Late Shah Zia-al-Nabi (maternal grandfather of Ali Miyan) usually discussed in the family because he was a devout, pious and admired person.
He was a Sufi also and therefore nearly all of men and women around were his disciples.\textsuperscript{36}

\textbf{Ali Miyan’s Childhood}

Maulana Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi was born on sixth Moharram 1332 A.H or 15\textsuperscript{th} December 1913, in \textit{Daira Shah Alamullah} the village Takiya of district Raibareilly. At 7\textsuperscript{th} day, the Aqiq ritual held and his name chosen as of the fourth Khalifa “\textnormal{Abul Hasan Ali}”.\textsuperscript{37} Later on, he became popular as “\textnormal{Ali Miyan}”. In 1915 when Ali Miyan was of only two years old a big flood has drowned the region, consequently his house damaged. Therefore, his family shifted to his uncle’s (Hafiz Sayyid Ubaidullah) home until the house reconstructed. In the mean time a relation brother of Ali Miyan, Maulana Muhammad Ahmad returned from England after finishing Masters in Philosophy. A big ceremony held in his reception.\textsuperscript{38}

In the family, everyone was conscious about, to avoid religiously prohibited things (Haram) particularly in food. Ali Miyan’s father was always being cautious to manage Halal (permissible) food for his family. Whole family cooperate him, even the servants were cautious to keep away the children of the family from Haram (religiously prohibited).\textsuperscript{39}
In the family of Ali Miyan, many attempts were made for sake of business but most of them were fruitless, even those members who were returned from England after completing education were not much benefited by their degrees.

Once, few members collectively established a bricks plant. To quote Ali Miyan, “I purchased an air-gun and a watch by its earning. Nevertheless, shortly after, it closed due to lack of experience. These attempts were mostly resulted unproductive due to lack of proficiency and know-how of business”.

Mostly Ali Miyan’s childhood passed in Lucknow due to the reason that his father employed there. In the mean time Khilafat Movement was launched against British rule and the whole country influenced by it. In Lucknow also, many of its conventions held and most of the people join it.

Ali Miyan tells his remembrance of it, in these words, “in the city it deemed that the British rule is replaced by the headship of Ali brothers and Gandhiji. The arrival of Prince of Wales also remembered. On going outside I felt, hush in the city. Crowded markets and busy roads were vacant. European garments were burning in Aminuddaulah Park (Jhandewala Park). People, who wore European dress, were walking secretly. At that moment, I saw Maulana Muhammad Ali Johar and Gandhiji. My brother
Sayyid Habibur Rahman left his school and readmitted in a national school. People themselves were crushing their rewards and medals, which were honored by the British, or English was written on them, most of the people give up European dress and culture”.  

**Beginning of his Education**

At the age of four, the ceremony of Tasmiyah Khwani was held which was conducted by his uncle Maulana Sayyid Azizur Rahman. Since his father was employed in Lucknow thus his education begins there. At first he joined a Maktab, which was running in a room of nearby mosque, Nawazi, Imam Hafiz Muhammad Saeed was the teacher. There he learned basic lessons of Urdu and Arabic and according to the custom of the family; he completed Qur’an at the age of seven. Further, he learns Urdu with Maulana Azizur Rahman who was working in the office of Nadwa. After learning Urdu at a sufficient level the study of Persian started, Maulana Mahmood Ali appointed to teach. At the same time he read his father’s woks like “Taleem-al-Islam” and “Noor-ul-Iman” as well as learned lexicography.  

Since, very childhood Ali Miyan was fond of reading books and this interest increased by the time. More than interest, it turned as addiction. Reading was only means of playing and
entertainment for him. Even when he received pocket money, the only use of that money was to buy books. When father discards a book or any trash paper found, then he collected it, in his small library. Unfortunately, at the age of nine Ali Miyan’s father was died.

**After his father’s death**

Merely, he was a kid when his father died in 1915. Therefore, he brought up under the patronage of his mother and stepbrother Dr Abdul Ali.

Dr Abdul Ali appoints his friend Shaykh Khalil Arab to teach him Arabic. Shaykh Arab was of Yemenite origin, so Arabic was his mother tongue therefore he has a good taste of Arabic language and literature, as well as he was an experienced teacher. Under his studentship, Ali Miyan developed a full command in Arabic, shortly. Even he can express his ideas more clearly in Arabic instead of Urdu, therefore he writes most of his works in Arabic, originally. His most famous book, “Maza-Khasir-al-Alam bil inhitatil Muslimen” written first in Arabic. It was due to his teacher Shaykh Arab that he equipped sound knowledge of Arabic that he delivered many learned speeches in Arabic in Gulf countries and wrote several textbooks of Arabic Language. Few of his works were included in the syllabus of Arabic Literature in
Arab countries. He was an outstanding Arabic scholar of Indian sub-continent. Shaykh Khalil Arab provided its entire base. However, he also learns Arabic from his uncles, Maulana Sayyid Azizur Rahman and Maulana Sayyid Talha.  

On 5\(^{th}\), 6\(^{th}\) and 7\(^{th}\) of November 1926, the yearly convention of Nadwa was held. Ali Miyan went there with his elder brother. Ali Miyan helps as a translator to the chief guest Shaykh Saduddin Burradah who was an Arab. As a result he became very popular for speaking boldly in Arabic at that very young age. In that congregation he met Dr Zakir Hussain, Maulana Abu Abdulla Muhammad Surati, Hakeem Ajmal Khan, Maulana Muhammad Ali Johar, Maulana Zafar Ali Khan, Maulana Shah Sulaiman Phulwarvi, Qazi Sulaiman Mansoorpuri etc. On returning home, Dr Abdul Ali admitted him to Lucknow University in August 1927. There he got admission to B.A. in Arabic literature. Unluckily he failed at first attempt but next year he passed with distinction and awarded gold medal too, from the University.

When his aunt informed about his success, she invites him to Lahore. Therefore, in June 1929 he went to Lahore. With his uncle Maulana Muhammad Talha, he met various celebrities, there. Among them Allama Iqbal, Hafeez Jalandhari and Maulana Ahmad Ali Lahori, were notables.
Iqbal he shows his Arabic translation of Iqbal’s poem “The Moon”. His talent amazed Allama Iqbal in that young age. In this journey, he met with Maulana Ahmad Ali Lahori but for a little while. So, next year again he took to Lahore to meet him for longer time. There he attended the classes of Hujjatullahil Baligah. After that, Maulana advises him to meet his Murshid (mentor) “Hazrat Khalifa Ghulam Muhammed Dinpurvi”. Therefore, he set for Dinpur with a reference letter of Maulana Ahmad Ali Lahori. On reaching Dinpur, he met Hazrat Khalifa and gave him the reference letter. Hazrat Khalifa was 90 years old at that time. He made Ali Miyan as his disciple and recommends him the silent recitation. After staying there for 3, 4 days Ali Miyan returned back to Lucknow but unfortunately Hazrat Khalifa was died after a few days. He continues to correspond with Maulana Ahmad Ali and their relation become stronger by the time. Ali Miyan did not accept any other person as Murshid until Maulana Muhammad Ali Lahori died in 1950.

At Nadwa

Just after returning from Lahore in 1929 he admitted to Nadwa officially. There he studies Fiqh (Islamic Jurisprudence) from Maulana Shibly Jairajpuri as well as Hadith from Maulana Haidar Hasan Khan.
In September 1930 a well-known Arab scholar, Shaykh Taqiuddin Hilali joins Nadwa as a teacher of Arabic Literature. Ali Miyan attended his classes of Deewan-e-Nabigha and Shareh-Shuzur-al-Zahab. Along with this, he also studied his unfinished Tafsir. When Shaykh Taqiuddin set for travel to Varanasi, Azamgarh, Mau and Mubarakpur, Ali Miyan accompanied him. In this journey, he met many eminent personalities of those places. 

**His career as a writer**

At the age of 13, his elder brother assigns him to translate an Arabic text, which had published from Umuul-Qura. He successfully finished it, later it was published in the newspaper “The Zamindar”.

In the mean time, a continuous essay published on the life of Sayyid Ahmad Shaheed in the Journal “Tauheed”. The essay “Hindustan ka Mujahid-e-Azam ya Mujaddid-e-Azam” was written by Maulana Muhiuddin Qusuri with a striking approach. Dr Abdul Ali asks Ali Miyan to translate it into Arabic. Ali Miyan did it, and show to his teacher, Shaykh Taqiuddin Hilali for correction. After slight corrections, he suggests Ali Miyan to send it to Shaykh Rasheed Raza of Egypt to publish it in the journal “Al-Manar”. Therefore, he sent it to Shaykh Rasheed Raza. Shaykh
Rasheed Raza not only published it but also advised him if he permits, he will publish it in a separate volume. Ali Miyan agreed with it, soon it was published in a separate volume from Egypt.\(^{56}\)

It was his first work, which published from Egypt instead from India. It was the beginning of his career as an author, later he has written around 50 books on various Islamic disciplines.\(^{57}\)

However, his most famous work is “Maza-khasir-al-Alam bil inhitatil Muslimeen” which was written in Arabic. Later it was translated into Urdu, English, Persian, French and Turkish etc. As well as 26 additions were launched in different countries in different languages. Even many universities of Gulf countries include it in their syllabus of Theology and Islamic Studies.\(^{58}\) When it translated into English for the first time. Shortly it became popular among Intellectual elite of the West.

Dr Buckingham (Chairman of Middle East Section of London University) compliments in these words, “this document is among those few great efforts which were attempted to revive Islamic faith in the 20\(^{th}\) century”.\(^{59}\)

A famous orientalist Professor Sargent said, “if there was a provision of banning books in England, then I will recommend banning on import of this book. Because, the author vehemently criticized the western civilization”.\(^{60}\)
Famous Egyptian activist and writer Sayyid Qutub Shaheed attributed to it “Some excellent books which were passed to me in new and old literature on this topic. This book is a marvelous among them. It is a thriving sample of Historiography.\(^6\)

**Stay at Deoband and Lahore**

His elder brother Dr Abdul Ali was a Mureed (novice) of Maulana Husain Ahmad Madani.\(^6\) Therefore Maulana Husain Ahmad Madani often comes to Lucknow and stays at Ali Miyan’s home. During a visit to Lucknow, Maulana Husain Ahmad recommended Ali Miyan, to come for a while in Deoband. To obey him, he visited Deoband; there he was a guest of Maulana Husain Ahmad Madani. Here he attends classes in Darul-uloom-Deoband and received special Islamic education individually from Maulana Husain Ahmad. He gave separate time to explain the meaning of difficult verses of the Qur’an.

After a stay of four months in Deoband, he returned on the onset Shaban. After a few days, he made third trip to Lahore. At this time, he properly admitted to Madrasah Qasim-al-Uloom and studied there for a whole session. In March 1933, the exams held in which Ali Miyan got success with distinctive score that was 98 percent. After convocation he returned to Lucknow.\(^6\)
In April 1934, Ali Miyan went to Lahore for the fourth time. This journey was begun on recommendation of Maulana Ahmad Ali Lahori, that he stayed there and to pass some days in his service with full concentration, which could be helpful in spiritual development. For about 3 months, he resided in the Jama Masjid of Lahore, discretely busy in Salat, recitation, prayer, meditation and other religious activities with complete concentration. At the end of June 1934, he returned to Lucknow.

His appointment as a teacher in Nadwa

Shaykh Taqiuddin Hilali and Maulana Haidar Hasan Khan were senior teachers at Nadwa but they migrated to Iraq. Meanwhile, the strength of students was increasing gradually at Nadwa and some old teachers had recently died. So, a lack of teachers felt in the Institute. Therefore, on 15th of July 1934 a meeting of managerial council of Nadwa held, in which the issue of appointment of new teachers was raised. So, along with other members, Ali Miyan's name also presented for new appointment. Due to the agreement of all members, Ali Miyan selected as a teacher.

On 1st August 1934, Ali Miyan joined as a teacher of *Tafsir* and Arabic Literature at Nadwa. In the same year, he married
to Sayyida Tayyibunnisa, the daughter of his maternal-uncle. Maulana Haidar Hasan Khan presided over the ceremony of Nikah and Dr Abdul Ali arranged the feast of Walima.

**Ali Miyan’s life account in brief**

- Maulana Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi was born on 6th Moharam ul Haram 1333 A. H. (1914 AD) in Daira Shah Alamullah in the village Takiya Kalan District Raibareilly of Uttar Pradesh.

- His mother, with the teaching of the Qur’an, started Ali Miyan’s education and then, the formal education of Arabic and Urdu started.

- When he was nine years old, his father Hakim Sayyid Abdul Hai died in 1923. The responsibility of his education then came to his mother and his elder brother Maulana Dr. Sayyid Abdul Ali Hasani.

- In 1924, he began his formal Arabic education under the guidance of Allama Khalil Arab, completed his Arabic studies under him.

- In 1926 Ali Miyan got admission to Nadwatul Ulama. He attended the Dars of Hadith by Allama Muhaddith Haider Hasan Khan and studied Bukhari, Sanan-Abudaud and Sanan-Tirmzee word by word from him.
• In 1926, Annual Convention of Nadwatul Ulama held at Kanpur. Maulana attended and impressed all by speaking Arabic fluently at the age of 13.

• In 1927, Ali Miyan took admission in Lucknow University. He obtained the degree of Graduation from the University.

• In 1927-30, Ali Miyan learnt English language.

• In 1931 Ali Miyan wrote his first article on Sayyid Ahmad Shaheed at the age of 17, which was published in the journal Al-Manar edited by Sayyid Rashid Raza of Egypt.

• In 1932, Ali Miyan studied the complete Tafsir of Qur’an at Lahore by Maulana Ahmad Ali Lahori. In the same year, he stayed few months at Darul Uloom Deoband where he took lessons from Shaykhul Islam Mualana Husain Ahmad Madani in Sunan Trimzi and Sahih Bukhari. He also took advantage of his stay and learnt Tafsir. He also took lesson in Fiqh from Shaykh Aizaz Ali and in Tajweed as per the reference of Hafs from Qari Ashgahr Ali. In the same year, Ali Miyan was included in the editorial board of the Arabic Journal "Al-Zia" of Nadwatul Ulama.

• In 1934, Ali Miyan joined Nadwatul Ulama as a teacher of Tafsir, Hadith, Arabic literature, History and Logic.
• In 1935, he traveled to Bombay to invite Dr. Ambedkar (the schedule caste leader) to adopt Islam.

• In 1938, Ali Miyan's first book the life history of Seerat Sayyid Ahmad Shaheed was published which became popular amongst the religious circles.

• In 1939, his first journey to Lahore. He met Ulama and elites. He met Dr. Sir Muhammad Iqbal. He had already translated a poem of Dr. Iqbal in Arabic prose. In the same year he traveled to famous Islamic Centers in India, like Markaz Nizamuddin to met Maulana Muhammad Ilyas Kandhlavi of Delhi and Maulana Abdul Qadir Raipuri in Raipur.

• In 1940, Ali Miyan was included in the editorial board of and the Urdu journal Al-Nadwa.

• Ali Miyan invited by Jamia Millia in 1942 to deliver a lecture, which later published with the title of "Deen-o-Mazhab".

• In 1943, Ali Miyan established an Association by the name of Anjuman Taleemat-e-Deen. Moreover, he delivered lectures on Tafsir and Sunnah, which became very popular particularly among the modern educated Muslims.
• In 1945, Ali Miyan selected as a member on the administrative council of Nadwatul Ulama.

• In 1947, Ali Miyan performed his first Haj. He stayed for a few months at Hijaz. It was his first foreign trip also.


• In 1951, he appointed as the Deputy Director of Education at Nadwatul Ulama, by Allama Sayyid Sulaiman Nadwi. In the same year, Ali Miyan founded his famous movement Payam-e-Insaniyat (Message of humanity). In 1951, he also traveled to Egypt where his famous book ‘Maza Khasir-al-Aalam-bil-inhitatil-Muslimeen’ had already become popular. Here he introduced as the author of this book. In the same journey, he traveled to Palestine and visited Al-Aqsa mosque, Madinatul Khaleel and Baitullaham. In return, he met King of Jordan Shah Abdullah.

• In 1954, after the death of Allama Sayyid Sulaiman Nadwi, he appointed as Nazim (Principal) of Nadwatul Ulama.

• In 1955, Ali Miyan appointed as the editor of the journal ‘Al-Baas’ (Arabic).

• In 1956, Ali Miyan appointed as visiting member of Arabic Academy Damascus.
• In 1959, Ali Miyan founded ‘Academy of Islamic Research and Publications’ in Nadwa. In the same year, he appointed as the editor of the journal ‘Al-Raid’ (Arabic) as well as took the responsibility of editorial of a Journal from Damascus.

• In 1961 after the death of his brother Dr. Abdul Ali, he was appointed as, General Secretary of Nadwatul Ulama.

• In 1962, he was appointed by Aligarh Muslim University to recast the BA course of Islamic Studies. In the same year, the first inaugural session and foundation of World Muslim League in Makkah held. In which His Royal Highness the King of Saudi Arabia Saud Bin Abdul Aziz and head of Libyan Idris Samosi was present. Ali Miyan performed the duties of secretary at that session Ali Miyan was also among the foundation member of the League of Islamic Universities.

• In 1963, he delivered many lectures in Jamia Islamia Madinah Munawara, which were published by the name of "Al Nabuwatu wal-anbiya-o-fee zuuil-Qur'an". In the same year, he was appointed as the editor of Nida-e-Millet and Tameer-e-Hayat. In the same year, Ali Miyan traveled to Europe and visited Geneva, London, Paris, Cambridge, Oxford and important elites of Spain. He met many Arab and Western scholars and delivered many lectures.
• In 1963 inauguration and foundation of Madinah University Madinah, he was made the member of the advisory council and remained as member until the administration was changed.

• In 1965 Ali Miyan visited Turkey for the first time. He also visited Kuwait and other Gulf countries. He traveled to Afghanistan, Iran and Lebanon with the delegation of World Muslim League.

• In 1968, Ali Miyan was invited by the Education Minister of Saudi Arabia to participate in the critical study of the curriculum and system of the department of Shariah. He delivered many lectures in Riyadh University and the department of teaching.

• In 1976, Ali Miyan travelled to far West Algiers.

• In 1977, he visited America for the first time.

• In 1980, he was appointed as the Member of Arabic Academy of Jordan and the Chairman of Islamic Centre Oxford. In the same year, he received King Faisal Award.

• In 1981, Kashmir University awarded him Honorary Degree of Ph.D.

• In 1984, Rabita Adab-e-Islami appointed him as Chairman.
• In 1985, a trip to Belgium.

• In 1987, a trip to Malaysia.

• In 1990, Ali Miyan traveled to Burma and second trip to America.

• In the same year, Ali Miyan traveled to Samarkand and Tashkent.

• In 1999, he was awarded as ‘The personality of the year’ award by UAE for which a special plane was sent for him to take him to Dubai and bring him back.

• In the same year, Sultan Brunei Award presented to him by Oxford Islamic Center on his work of ‘Tareekh-e-Dawat-o-Azeemat’.

• On 31st December 1999, he died in Takya, District Raibareilly and buried in his family graveyard.

His Thought

Maulana Sayyid Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi was an eminent Islamic Scholar of the twentieth century. However, he belonged to the Madrasah Nadwatul Ulama of Lucknow yet he emerged as a towering personality, a great modern Islamic thinker, socio-religious reformer and a preacher of the true spirit and essence of Islam. An orator par excellence, an author with a distinctive
style, a man devoted to the cause of Islam and a guide to the masses. Ali Miyan was the embodiment of both traditional values and modern concepts. His concept of Islam was somewhat different from the traditional Scholars. Always moderate in outlook he favored neither the fanatic nor the radical ideologies. He appreciated the positive concepts of the Modern Era which are not contradictory to Islam. He believed in Islam as being a blessing for humankind and a positive and creative factor of human history.

Maulana always raised strong objection against the media image created by the Non-Muslims against Muslims and Islam. He was far from being conservative in his approach. Maulana understood the spirit of the age. He appreciated the role played by democracy and nationalism too. He did not consider Modern Civilization as being anti-Islamic. Therefore, he was always keen on seeking possibilities of combining both, modern civilization and Islam on uncontroversial common grounds, instead of forsaking or favoring either of the two. Here, two passages from his speech, delivered in a visit to USA, has been quoted. These could be helpful in analyzing his attitude towards the west.

To Ali Miyan, America is fortunate because nature has been most generous to it. The Lord has bestowed His gifts lavishly upon this country. Its people are resourceful and
enterprising. They are full of enthusiasm for living. They have been granted such a tenacity of purpose and resoluteness that they have made their country a paradise on earth. They have unraveled the mysteries of nature and harnessed its forces to their use. In the words of Iqbal, ‘they have enchained the rays of the sun’ and ‘sought the orbits of the stars’. They have turned dust into gold. Now, in this land wealth pours down from the skies, and rivers of milk and honey flow. This is the result of the strong spirit, robust imagination and unflagging eagerness of the American people. The United States not only abounds in mineral resources, but has, also, the hands to exploit them. In this respect, it is exceedingly fortunate and the whole world is, as if it were, keenly desirous to prove it. Everyone is a beggar at its door, eager to solicit its favours. By their ingenuity, sense of discipline and capacity for management, the people here have organized their life so well that the world at large is benefiting from it. In the material and economic fields, they are supreme. You can justly be envious of America and admire it as much as you like. I do not believe in partisanship whether religious, social or political. One must give praise where praise is due.⁶⁷

After the presentation of this speech, he addressed the Americans the spiritual massage of Islam to the west. According to Ali Miyan these tremendous achievements of the west,
particularly of America, is incomplete or even harmful, if the spiritual values are absent and humankind becomes materialistic. He said, “Along with all scientific development, this country is most unfortunate. I say it with a full sense of responsibility. Many of you may be shocked at it, but it is fact. It has been a tragedy not only for America but also to the entire humankind, that it concentrated entirely on material progress and made the physical world the sole sphere of its activity. It would have been a different story if the West received correct guidance and blessing of true faith. The Americans had, also, paid attention to morality with equal earnestness and enthusiasm and it is also necessary that they should pay attention, for the portents of God in Anfus (within themselves) and not only in Afaq (the horizons). If the intellectual faculties of the Americans not directed altogether, towards finding a clue to the mysteries of nature and themselves then their potential will waste. They would have to realize that the World of heart is more extensive than the world of matter, so much, so that if the whole of the Universe be dropped into the heart of a man it would get lost like a pebble in an ocean. The people of America would then, be able to appreciate correctly the place of man in the grand design of creation. Of the time and energy they have recklessly spent on material sciences, and, as we all know, with what results, we have it in the Qur’an
That man can have nothing, but what he strives for. His striving will soon come in sight. Then he will be completely rewarded. (Qur’an 53: 39-41)

Each do we supply, both these and those, from the bounty of the Lord. And the bounty of the Lord can never be closed to anyone. (Qur’an 17: 20)

Whichever field man chooses for himself, God will grant him success in it. There is no limit to it, no thus far and no further. The consequences of the enterprise and industry of the West are before us. The world has shrunk and man has subjugated it for his own ends and interests”.

He also, boldly invited the west towards Islam along with respecting their faiths. He presented the Islamic Dawah to the west in this very beautiful manner. To Ali Miyan, Islam is the final form of religion and it did not reject the previous faiths and prophets (pbut) and the revealed books. It emphasized and instructed the entire humankind to believe previous faiths alongside the Islam and make faith on the true spirit of religion.
Islam, which awakened the latent human capabilities, gave encouragement to intellect, and made man self-reliant and self-respecting.

According to the Qur’an:

1. “Surely we created man of the best stature. (Qur’an 95:04)

   لقد خلقنا الإنسان في أحسن تقويم

2. Verily we have honored the children of Adam. We carry them on the land and the sea, and have made provision of good things for them, and have preferred them over many of those whom we created with a marked preferment. (Qur’an 17:70)

   ولقد كرمنا بني آدم وحملناهم في البر والبحر ورزقناهم من الطيبات وفضلناهم على كثير ممن خلقنا تفضيلا

   Lo! I am about to place a viceroy in the earth. (Qur’an 2:30)

   وأنا قل ربّك للملائكة إني جائع في الأرض خليفة

   Islam places the crown of Vice-regency of Allah on man’s head than which there can be no greater honor. The whole structure of Islam based upon the doctrine of Divine Unity and when it declares that man is Khaleefatullah (the Vice-regent of God) on earth, it elevates him so much that one cannot think of a higher and nobler concept of humanity.
Ali Miyan was a great patriot and his Indian citizenship was by his own choice. He realized that the destiny of Muslims of India intertwined with that of the Indian people as a whole. According to him, Indian Muslims should lead an Islamic life while at the same time participating in managing the affairs of the country and contribute to its progress and development. These were his efforts to reduce the distance between Muslims and Hindus, to demolish the wall of distrust between them and to create bonds of understanding and cooperation in rebuilding on the terms of common values of the society, which engulfed by dark forces of hatred and violence.

Ali Miyan adopted the methodology based on Islamic teachings and lessons from history. He projected the true character and message of Prophet Muhammad (pbuh). The message comprised justice, welfare, cooperation, forgiveness, and respect for faiths and rights of other communities. He believes that only a true Muslim could act as a real leader of entire humankind.

This logic made a salubrious effect, clearing from the minds of Non-Muslims, the cobwebs of serious misconceptions and negative notions about Islam. He initiated a movement by the name “Payam-e-Insaniyat” (message of humanity), for
spreading the message of goodwill, equality, unity, respect for humankind and gathering on common grounds.\textsuperscript{70}

Ali Miyan undertook extensive tours to acquaint himself of ground realities and coordinated with other organizations, inviting wise and learned persons of other communities on one platform for emphasizing the necessity of avoiding violence through better understanding of the whole nation. In case of any inevitable flare up and riot, he would go to the root cause, establish links with people who could prove effective for remedial measures and forestall future recurrences.

He had a similar attitude towards various seats of learning, educational institutions, and other organizations, be it a religious, political, traditional or modern. He appreciated the positive efforts of all and maintained a healthy rapport with them, offering advice and guidance, if required.

He would often recite a Persian couplet, which would translate, as "\textit{ comforts of both the worlds are the interpretation of pleasure for friends and cordiality with opponents}".\textsuperscript{71} His avoidance of controversy or rebuttal construed by a tantamount to infirmity of opinion, an impression conveyed, might be by his extreme tolerance, as his oblivion to any opposition. On the contrary, he had full knowledge of what transpired behind his back and had a
definite well-considered opinion, ignoring trivialities, and addressing topics of real consequence. In case of negative and subversive thinking and activities, he was synchronizing criticism with tolerance. In more cases, the opposition could not win over his standpoint, the sole aim all the time being the cause of religion and its followers.

His writings, transcended boundaries of continents and languages, and are being treasures of knowledge and wisdom. These are lasting testimonies to above-mentioned qualities. He marked affinity for Arab nationalism. While appreciating the achievements of Turks, he did not desist from expressing himself against the anti-religious posture of their current regime. He adopted the principle of addressing a group or individual according to his receptivity and status, he interacted also with the elites of his own country and Muslim countries particularly the Arab countries. In all discussions, he maintained an attitude of selflessness and focused on the cause of humanity, exhorting all rulers and vassals to address themselves to the task of upholding the supremacy of the words of Allah and to the welfare of their people. Maulana accepted no favours for himself or for his kith and kin, and when an award did inevitably come by, he was forthwith donated it to the welfare of the people. Like Faisal award and the amount received from Dubai all went to
educational and welfare activities. Not that he was never in need but remained firm in his principle of not being overburdened by obligations from the powerful and the affluent. This enabled him to speak out uninhibitedly without compunction, from a position of authority.

He was a great literalist also. His literary came from Poet of the East Muhammad Iqbal (d.1938), whom he met in 1929, when he was merely a kid of 15. He had surprised Iqbal by presenting an Arabic translation of his poem, Chand (Moon), Iqbal advised him to concentrate for further improvement in the language. When Ali Miyan gone to see him again, he found Iqbal to be in total harmony with his thought, Iqbal has also attracted him because he was a rebel and powerful critic of the modern materialistic civilization, he was intensely concerned with recovering the lost glory of Islam, he was the greatest enemy of the ideology of narrow nationalism.
Critical remarks

The early life of Maulana Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi was surrounded by poverty. However, he belongs to an educated family but their financial condition was not too good. Ali Miyan's father died when he was nine years therefore his family depends on his stepbrother Dr. Abdul Ali for livelihood. However, due to Ali Miyan's extraordinary command in Arabic language and literature and good academic career he was introduced soon in the elite class of Arab world. At first, Ali Miyan travelled to "Haramain", Makkah and Madinah to perform pilgrimage (Haj). Later on he had an opportunity to visit these places at least annually as the member of the executive board of "Rabita" in Makkah, and a member of Madinah University. On these occasions he was often invited by different Institutions to deliver lectures on the Islam and Muslims. He spoke to Arabs frankly and often pointed out any Un-Islamic tenets in their culture that came to his notice. Ali Miyan was also an enthusiastic preacher of Islam, and a sincere socio-religious reformer. His books reflected these characteristics, but he did not regard only writing as sufficient. He carried on propagating Islamic virtues and values throughout the world. He joined hands with Sayyid Abul Ala Moududi and then became associated with Maulana Muhammad Ilyas and joined his Tableegi Movement. After the death of
Maulana Muhammad Ilyas, he associated himself with Maulana Abdul Qadir Raipur, a renowned spiritual personality. Thus, he achieved an interaction and balance between intellectual and spiritual qualities.

In order to preach the real and genuine faith of Islam among the Muslims of India, he founded the movement of "Payam-e-Insaniyat" (message of humanity). Through this new platform, he played a vital role in generating confidence and purposefulness among the Muslims of India. He travelled all over to spread his message in joint conventions and congregations of Muslims and other communities. In his lectures, which were usually extempore, he focused on ethical values. He especially drew attention of leading religious leaders, political personalities and the media of the country towards the maintaining of peace and harmony. He condemned the exploitation of their power for wicked political targets and endeavored to minimize tension and conflicts occurring due to misunderstanding.

He was a true reformer of Islam. There was no difference between his words and actions. He pointed out every weak zone of the faith and advised related people, of its appropriate solution. He appreciated interaction with non-Muslim brothers for clearing their minds about Islam and false blames of the enemies of Islam, unlike other Islamic scholars who were in
favour of isolating themselves with the non-Muslims and have conservative attitude. For the very purpose he met with top leaders of India and abroad and invite them to Islam, among them the notable was Dr. Ambedkar. He also visited abroad and conveyed the message through the lectures delivered at the congregations held in different universities of USA, like Harvard, Columbia and Detroit Universities etc.

He believes that present Muslims are guilty for hiding the true message of Islam from their non-Muslim brothers and they would be answerable in front of Allah. The only solution of the present chaos is, to truly follow the Islam as well as convey it to those who are devoid of it.
CHAPTER : 2

Notes and References:


2. Ibid., p. 20.


8. Ibid., p. 50.


12. Ibid., p. 144.


17. Ibid., p. 21.


19. Ibid., p. 18.


   http://wapedia.mobi/en/Syed_Abul_Hasan_Ali_Hasani_Nadwi


22. Ibid., pp. 33-34.


25. 20 rakat naafil (optional) Salat performed collectively after Isha in the month of Ramazan.

26. Nadwi Abul Hasan Ali quotes, “Once I hide and continued to hear her recitation of the Qur’an for a long time. I felt a drizzling of light from the sky. I can’t forget the delight of the moment”.

http://wapedia.mobi/en/Syed_Abul_Hasan_Ali_Hasani_Nadwi


30. It is a period of 4 months and 10 days, which is mandatory for a widow to remain unmarried after his husband’s death.


35. Maulana Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi’s mother herself quotes:

   “Whenever I saw somebody from my home coming I placed water filled utensil on stove to show him something is being cooked. However, there was no food in, but water only”. Nadwi Abul Hasan Ali, *Zikr-e-Khair*, op.cit., pp. 13-14. See also, [http://www.sunniforum.com/forum/showthread.php?t=10601](http://www.sunniforum.com/forum/showthread.php?t=10601)


39. Ibid., p. 68.


42. Ibid., p. 130.

43. Ibid., p. 134.


45. Ibid., p. 100-01.


47. Ibid., p. 134.

49. Ibid., p. 143.

50. Ibid., p. 148.


52. Ibid., pp. 93-94.


55. Ibid., p. 121.

56. Ibid., pp. 122-23.


58. Ibid., pp. 115-16

60. Ibid., pp. 205-06.


62. Ibid., p. 121.


65. Ibid., p. 140-41.

66. Ibid., p. 147.


74. Ibid., p. 24.