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***Reforms in Hinduism  
A Critique in the Shariah Perspective***

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**Abstract**



Hinduism has been a vital subject for studies and research of Muslims throughout the Islamic History. From Ibn Hazm (994-1063AD), and Al-Biruni (973- 1048AD) till modern period Muslim scholars have

been defining the commonalities between the two great religions and cultures of the world, and have been trying to find out some scope to mutual understanding and participation in the development. Maulana Sayyid Hamid Ali (1923-1993AD), the ex-general secretary of Jamaat-e Islami of India, a prolific writer, a distinguished orator and a moderate intellectual tried his best to understand Hinduism, its basic sources- Vedas, Upanishads, Manusmirtis, Puranas, Gita and Ramayana- its evolutionary stages and the reformative ideas in his writings. He has compared the monotheistic ideas of Vedas, as interpreted by Swami Vivekananda (1863-1902AD), Swami Dayananda Sarasvati (1824-1883) and other Hindu reformist Intellectuals, with the theory of Wahadat al-Wajud as advocated by Muhiuddin Ibn al-Arabi (d.1240AD) of Muslim Spain. The great scholar has also differentiated the said Sufi theory from the Quranic belief of tauhid. This chapter will examine the academic stand taken by the great Muslim intellectual in respect of Hinduism and try to understand his views objectively.

**Keywords**

*Hinduism, Reforms, Shariah Perspective*



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## 1. *Life and Education*

The authoritative and the influential personality of the Islamic movement- that left unparalleled impact on the Muslim youth- the brightening chapter of the modern history of propagation of religion, the authentic theologian, the writer of his own style, the eloquent and brain – storming orator, the combination of theory and practice in his personality, the translator and editor of Sayyid Qutb's *Fi Zilāl al-Quran* in Urdu, the original legacy of Jamaat-e Islami of India, the dignified hero of Islam, the sufi-saint and the spiritual mentor of Students Islamic Movement of India<sup>1</sup> (now banned officially) Maulana Sayyid Hamid Ali was born on May 01, 1923 in an educated family of Mirān- Shah Katra, a town in the district Shahjahan Pur, Uttar Pradesh. His father Sayyid Nawazish Ali, the then head master in a government school at Bareilly had already launched his reformative efforts against the innovative customs and traditions prevailing in the society in the name of religion.

After having passed the primary and middle classes in the modern stream he and his guardians preferred the theological stream of education and he got admission in Madrasa Misbah al-Uloom, situated at Madari Darwaza Bareilly, a branch of Darul Uloom Deoband seminary. He completed the early classes in the Arabic and Persian subjects and entered to Madrasa Ishā'at al-Uloom another seminary situated in the same city. In this institution of higher theological learning Maulana Muhammad Yasin, the pupil of Shaykhul Hind Maulana Mahmud Hasan (1851-1920) and the contemporary of Maulana Ashraf Ali Thanawi (1063-1943), as well as the famous scholar of the Quranic exegesis and of Arabic literature Maulana Jalil Ahsan Nadvi (1924-1981)<sup>2</sup> had continued their teaching and research. He always expressed his pride over the learning from Maulana Muhammad Yasin, and declared himself an spiritual pupil of Maulana Mahmud Hasan through the link of his actual teacher. Later on Sayyid Hamid Ali completed different courses of *Munshi*

and *Kamil* (in Persian language and literature) and *Maulvi, Alim, Fazil Diniyat* and *Fazil Adab* (in Arabic) from Arabic and Persian Examinations Board Allahabad.<sup>3</sup>

Sayyid Hamid Ali joined Madrasa Ishā`at al-Uloom Bareilly now in the position of teacher. Faiz Aam Islamia College Shahjahanpur was also benefitted from his scholarship as a teacher.<sup>4</sup> He stayed therein four years since July 1944. In 1948 he shifted to Rampur and launched a Monthly Urdu journal *Zindagi* in order to strengthen the movement of establishing Islam in the country. The first issue of *Zindagi* was published in October 1948 alongwith the name of Hamid Ali Shahjahanpuri as editor written on the title cover.

### **1.1 Association with the Islamic Movement**

As early as in 1940s Sayyid Hamid Ali was aware of, and ideologically convinced with, the writings of Sayyid Abul Ala Maududi (1903-1979), the distinguished scholar and revivalist thinker of India. Before the foundation of Jamaat-e Islami in 1941, he supported the reformative and revolutionary mission Maududi had started in his writings published in the Monthly *Tarjuman al-Quran* to be circulated then from Hyderabad. In 1942, however, he officially joined the Jamaat-e Islami as a hard-core member and was consequently appointed by Sayyid Maududi the *amir* of Bareilly city, and then *qayyim* of Shahjahanpur circle that extended geographically up to western U.P. at that time. His father drove him and his family out of the home because of his son's deeply concern with the Jamaat-e Islami. After the partition of the country Jamaat-e Islami was reorganized and its functioning re-structured in 1948. Sayyid Hamid Ali continued his mission and position as the *qayyim* (the secretary). He was enlisted now because of his qualifications and dedication to the movement as one of the selective leaders and was chosen as member of *Majlis Shura* (Advisory Council) and he retained this prestigious position upto 1982. The centre of the Jamaat was shifted to Rampur and the learned scholar was appointed as All-India in- charge of education and training affairs of the

Jamaat.

Sayyid Hamid Ali served the mission of Jamaat-e Islami from 1961 to 1971 independently without receiving any emolument officially. In the meantime he founded his personal academy Idara Shahadat-e Haq and devoted himself to studies, researches and publications. Between 1973 to 1981 he was again appointed by the Jama'at as All-India secretary. During this period he supervised some other sections of the Jamaat also like the media and publication section, the section of propagation of the religion among non-Muslims. He was put behind the jail several times by the government of India because of his missionary activities.<sup>5</sup>

Dr. Sayyid Abdul Bari (known popularly by his pen name Shabnam Subhani) has narrated an interesting story of Maulana Sayyid Hamid Ali he had witnessed himself in 1953. He says that he was a student of high school in the traditional Muslim town of Tanda, Faizabad Uttar Pradesh. His family belonged to the Deoband school of thought and everyone had loved and respected Maulana Husain Ahmad Madani as the spiritual guide and custodian. The Jamaat-e Islami was considered at that time as (*fitna-e azeem*) the great disorder to both the country and community by Indian National Congress and the classical theologians as well. The young generation of Muslim community reading the books of Maududi and of other scholars was counted as, suspicious in the eye of intelligence services, and misled in the eye of holy theologians. In the given situation a public program was celebrated in Tanda, the hometown of Dr. S.A.Bari.

Dr. S.A.Bari was ever-active like an alert soldier in the said public program, sometime while installing the tent and arranging the seats, and sometime welcoming the guests and leading the outsiders to the proper places. Maulana Sayyid Hamid Ali, the editor of *Zindagi* Urdu was expected to grace the occasion from the Jamaat-e Islami headquarters at Rampur. The young blood was waiting for him with love and affection.

He came and captured the mind and heart of everyone by his intelligence, farsightedness, large- heartedness, humorous nature and entertaining attitude. His penetrating speech captivated the entire community of the town, and the environment became receptive to the mission and message of the Jamaat-e Islami, Dr. S.A.Bari narrates.

One of famous debaters of the town Tanda, Dr. Subhani continues his story, who had gained popularity in the public debates organized in the past against the Sunni- Barelwi theologians or against the Aryasamaji preachers, stood up spontaneously alongwith his supporters while the speech of Sayyid Hamid Ali was going on. He publicly challenged the learned speaker and repeated loudly some of the accusations commonly charged by everyone against Maulana Maududi. The Muslim youth was surprised to see how Sayyid Hamid Ali faced the situation with tolerance and attentive mind. It was quite unbelievable that he convinced the respectable debater to visit him the next day to discuss mutually the issues with seriousness. He visited Sayyid Hamid Ali the second day and after an hour of deliberations over the issues of difference he returned calm and peaceful. During this public program Muslim students and younger participants interacted with him freely without any fear or reservation, and experienced in him a moving model of faithful (*mard-e mumin*) as portrayed by Muhammad Iqbal, the Islamic poet.<sup>6</sup>

### **1.2 His Literary Taste**

Dr. S.A.Bari highlighted another feature of Sayyid Hamid Ali- his keen interest in promoting of a constructive – reformative literature in Urdu language and checking of intellectual frustration and literary misleading under the slogan of *adab barāi adab*. It was his counseling and guidance that motivated the men of letters to found the *Idara Adab-e Islami Hind* in..... Sayyid Hamid Ali eagerly accepted the membership of its highest body and encouraged the office-bearers when its organ *Monthly Dānish* was produced for the first time in.....<sup>7</sup>

Dr. S.A.Bari himself being a literary figure of eminence, appreciates the literary standard Sayyid Hamid Ali maintained in his writings. Hamid Ali had a mature literary taste and used to compose the poetry and sometimes the *ghazal* also. He had full power of expression and could not tolerate a negligible mistake in the proper use of words and metaphors. The fluency, blooming taste of humor, the softness and elegance his writings inherited made him distinguished from his contemporaries. He had insight into the classical literature of Urdu language. He had studied deeply the classical heritage of Urdu poetry. He thought that a considerable part of Urdu poetic legacy reflected the Muslim culture, traditions and values that run like blood in its veins. He was critic of the process of learning and teaching prevailed in the seminaries that the difference between ripe and matured was not maintained therein. The classical teachers and experts had included in their compositions some unpleasant and unwanted material only for the sake of sweetness in language; these may not be unavoidably taken as substance of the classical poetry. Sayyid Hamid Ali desired that a selection from the classical poetry should be published, and this desire was repeatedly expressed by him, Dr. S.A.Bari says.<sup>8</sup>

In one of the condolence meetings held at New Delhi after the sad demise of Sayyid Hamid Ali on March 03, 1993. Dr. Sayyid Abdul Bari again described his role in the founding and smooth functioning of *Idara Adab-e Islami Hind*. Hamid Ali made the literary figures realized that the religion may be served through the literary activities also.

### **1.3 Academic Contributions**

Climax of life Maulana Sayyid Hamid Ali lived was the seventh and eighth decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. He now emerged as a distinguished theologian, an expert of Islamic Studies and a famous orator and authentic writer. During this period he expressed his ideas on the different burning issues like

Muslim Personal Law and Its  
Validity, Communal Riots,  
Polygamy and Islam  
Nationalism and Its  
Limitations  
Secularism and Its Varying  
Interpretations Progressive  
Movement and Enlightenment.

Idara Shahadat-e Haq, the publishing company working individually under the guidance of Sayyid Hamid Ali, produced a number of research works compiled by him. Following may be mentioned here:

1. *Ahādith Rasul*, 1980.
2. *Islam Ka Tasawwur-e Tauhid*, 1978.
3. *Tauhid Ke Atharāt Insani Zindagi Par*, 1981.
4. *Khuda Ka Inkar Kiyun*, 1981.
5. *Mulhidīn Ke Shubhāt*, 1981.
6. *Shirk Azimtarin Gumrahi*, 1978.
7. *Jannat- Quran, Hadith Aur Aql KI Roshni Mein*,

Some of his books were published from Markazi Maktāba Islami Delhi like

1. *Islam Yek Nizam-e Rahmat*, 1981.
2. *Iqāmat-e Din-Islam Ka Taqaza*, 1981.
3. *Tahrik-e Islami Aur Biradran-e Watan*, 1979.
4. *Islam Aap se Kiya Chahta hai*,
5. *Qaumon Ka Urooj-o Zawal*,
6. *Qurani Istilāhāt Aur Ulama-e Salaf-o Khalaf*, 1988.
7. *Tauhid Aur Shirk* (A collection of his monographs on Islam and other religions specially Budhism, Jainism and Hinduism, already published individually) produced by Islamic Publications, PI Lahore, in February

1987.

8. *Taysir al-Quran*,

After having studied the books written by Maulana Sayyid Hamid Ali, Dr. Sayyid Abdul Bari found him to be placed in the golden chain of the enlightened Islamic thinkers of India that begins with Shah Wali Allah of Delhi.<sup>9</sup> Maulana Sayyid Hamid Ali critically examined the nationalism and the western secularism the highly debatable themes in independent India as if the repeating of these slogans was the sign of progressive and enlightened intellectual. He analyzed the fallacies of these ideologies and the political exploiting objectives working behind them. Through his noble efforts Hamid Ali tried his best to keep Muslims far away from this magic and convince them ideologically to emerge as a missionary community that calls the human being to universal brotherhood and fraternity, the equity and justice, peace and prosperity the Quran upholds.

In the post- independent India, Maulana Sayyid Hamid Ali realised the dignity and survival of Muslims and the upliftment and success of Islam in the region depended mainly on how Muslim community was attentive to its mission prescribed in the Quran as *Khair Ummah*<sup>10</sup> and try its utmost to heighten the dignity of common man as defined in term of *takrim*.<sup>11</sup> He thought that Indian community specially the deprived and subjugated section, trapped by the hereditary caste system and untouchability and disgraced since a long time must be addressed by the Quranic message of love and equality. He was so anxious to witness Islam by both preaching and practicing in his life as if the “mercury was put in fire”.<sup>12</sup> He travelled the different towns in Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh states and managed a long stay in his trips in order to explore the opportunities for *dawah* mission. In this journey he mostly addressed the youth. One of his titles *Tahrik-e Islami Aur Biradarān-e Watan* (Islamic Movements and the Brothers of Country) reflects the very idea of introducing of Islam to the non-Muslim co-citizens. Calling

non-Muslims the brother himself reveals the message the learned scholar and reformer aimed to convey.

#### **1.4 Research Aptitude**

Dr. Sayyid Abdul Bari has rightly remarked that the research ability of Sayyid Hamid Ali is reflected in all his writings but the book *Quranic Istilāhāt Aur Ulama-e Salaf-o Khalaf* (The Quranic Terms and the Scholars of Islam from the Predecessors and the Successors) should be referred to specially in this context. The book under discussion is a product of 45 years continuous thinking, research and studies as he has pointed out in the preface (*muqaddimah*) of the book.<sup>13</sup> The learned scholar had thoroughly read the series of articles written by Sayyid Abul Ala Maududi in the Monthly *Tarjumanul Quran* Hyderabad 56-57 years back on the topic of “Four Basic Terms of the Quran” and had found no innovation in the thought since the religious thought he had received earlier from the theological scholars of Deoband and Nadwah was no more different from. The thought of Maududi was in accordance with.

The *Tarjumanul Quran* started another series of articles on the theme of *Musalman Aur Maujuda Siyasi Kashmakash* (Muslims and the Recent Political Conflict). In the first two parts of the book, Maulana Maududi had elaborately criticized the atheistic politics of Indian National Congress and detailed its bloody affects on Islam and Muslims- and in the span of forty years Muslims have experienced themselves with this poisonous politics, Sayyid Hamid Ali comments. The third part of the book, Sayyid Hamid Ali elaborates, had argumentatively condemned the Muslim nationalism as was advocated by Muslim League and the Khaksār Movement. Maududi had suggested a third option entirely different from that of Indian National Congress and also from that of Muslim League.<sup>14</sup>

After having founded the Jamaat-e Islami in August 1941, Maududi was severely opposed by the political leaders and the theologians closely associated with the Indian National Congress, the Jamiatul Ulama Hind and the Muslim League. As

a teen-ager Sayyid Hamid Ali was keenly studying the ideas of these parties and the scholars associated with them. In the meantime a book of Maulana Sayyid Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi ( ) titled *Seerat*

*Sayyid Ahmad Shaheed* was published. The learned scholar was highly impressed by the book and the main hero of Islam the book had covered. He found Sayyid Maududi to be equated with the personality of Sayyid Ahmad Shaheed. Then he joined the Jamaat-e Islami eagerly. Maulana Sayyid Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi also joined the Jamaat but at the same time he retained his link with the Tablighi Jamaat also. When Maududi advised Nadwi to exclusively devote himself to either of the two movements he devoted himself to *Tablighi Jamaat*.<sup>15</sup>

Sayyid Hamid Ali painfully stated that Indra Gandhi the then Prime Minister imposed emergency in the country on June 25, 1975. The political parties that had joined the revolutionary campaign under Jai Prakash Narain the socialist leader were now banned officially. To maintain a balance politically the Jamaat-e Islami along with the Rashtria Swayam Sewak Sangh was also declared as illegal and anti-social one. During the emergency period a number of books full of accusations and allegations charged against Maulana Maududi and the Jamaat-e Islami were published and circulated widely. Among such books *Fitnah-e Maududiyat* was the most abusing one.<sup>16</sup> The second book of the same nature was written by Maulana Sayyid Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi with the title of '*Asr-e Hāzir mein Din Ki Tafhim wa Tashrih* (Understanding and Interpretation of Religion in the Contemporary Age). This book against Maududi was compiled with the sense of sincerity (*nush wa Khayrkhuwahi*), as the author claimed, but Sayyid Hamid Ali found no element of sincerity therein,<sup>17</sup> nor the methodology of research was applied in the book.

According to the research methodology it was the duty of Maulana Nadwi to point out the mistakes committed by Sayyid Maududi in his book *Quran Ki Chār Buniyādi Istilāhen* (Four Basic Terms of the Quran) while deliberating over the lingual meaning of the terms, and that how the translation and

interpretation of the Quranic verses cited by Maududi was wrong and deviated from the unanimously defined concepts and perceptions in Islamic history. Unfortunately the book was devoid of such research technique. In the long period of over 45 years Sayyid Hamid Ali spent in the pondering over the Quran, studying the classical tafsir works and the collections of hadith, learning and teaching the celebrated works of the theologians of Islam, and interpreting and writing on a varieties of Islamic subjects like tafsir, hadith, fiqh, comparative religion, he never felt that Maulana Maududi had distorted the religion after having changed the meaning of Quranic terms, nor any other theologian had uttered this.

After sometime there emerged a suspicion about the firm stand Sayyid Hamid Ali had taken in support of Maulana Maududi. This suspicion increased over the passage of time and finally he started studying afresh the Arabic dictionaries, the authentic tafsir works and the classical works of Muslim scholars through the ages. He exhausted the books available in his personal library, in the library of Maulana Muhammad Farooq Khan and the official library of the headquarters of the Jamaat. He also consulted the library of Islamia College Shanthapuram, Kerala and of Aligarh Muslim University.<sup>18</sup> And finally he completed the book under discussion on February 05, 1988/ Jumada al-Akhirah 16, 1408 AH. This is a model of research in the contemporary world.<sup>19</sup>

Sayyid Hamid Ali died on March 03, 1993. He was seriously ill since two years. When he fell down unconscious on the day after a paralysis attack on his body he was immediately admitted to the nearby Holy Family Hospital in New Delhi. The doctors advised to shift him immediately to All India Institute of Medical Sciences in the same city. However on the way his soul departed away forever at 3:00 pm. On the next day, March 04, 1993 the funeral functions were performed. In order to mourn him a condolence meeting was called on March 07, 1993 at SIM headquarters and Maulana Aijaz Ahmad Aslam, Sayyid Rashid Ali Hamidi (his younger son), Dr. Sayyid Abdul

Bari, Dr. Manzoor Alam, Dr. Sayyid Qasim Rasul Ilyas, Anjum Naim, Maulana Abdur Rashid Usmani, Ashraf Jafari, and Obaidur Rahman Tayyib expressed their ideas over the loving personality and the great achievements of Sayyid Hamid Ali.<sup>20</sup>

### 1.5 *Translation of the Quran*

Sayyid Hamid Ali contributed a number of works in order to ease understanding of the Quran for common people. His book *Qurani Istilāhāt* reveals an insight into the Quranic terms like *Ilāh, Rabb, Ibadat, Din, Shirk, Mushrik, Shuraka, Andād, Taghūt* etc. as interpreted historically from the period of holy companions (*Sahaba*) till the present-day by the exegetes of the Quran, theologians and lexicographers.

Another book in process – but could not be completed – was titled as *Anbiya Ki Dawat Quran Majeed Ki Roshni Mein* (Mission of the Prophets in the light of the Quran). This aimed to point out the first and prime addressees of the prophets, the essential elements of their mission, the reaction on behalf of the addressees and the response of the prophets towards them.

In order to facilitate learning of the Quranic Arabic, his book *Taysir al-Quran* part one was produced, the second part was in press and the third one in the process. Another work *Taysir al-Quran Qāidah* was compiled by him for those who were unable to recite the Quran properly.

Sayyid Hamid Ali had planned an academic exercise for the sake of non-Muslims so that they may have a better understanding of the Quranic teachings. He thought that the translation of the entire Quran was inconvenient for non-Muslims to recite and understand. He wanted some short chapters or some larger groups of verses of the Quran should be translated and briefly explained keeping in view their needs and psychology. This noble project was begun with but could not be proceeded a head because of some exigencies in life of the author.<sup>21</sup>

Because of rendering of *Fi Zilal al-Quran* into Urdu language to be made by Sayyid Hamid Ali, it was quite

unimaginable to him to perform the most difficult and equally the most sensitive job of translation of the Quran itself. Having surrendered to the will of Allah, he was however convinced to initiate this noble job which was considered by him a good fortune also. During the learning of theological courses in the seminaries of the country he, apart from the scholars of Deoband, Nadwah as well as the Ahl Hadith schools of thought, had benefited specially from the most authoritative scholar of the Quran in modern times Maulana Hamiduddin Farahi, and the most influential Islamic preacher and thinker of the age Sayyid Abul Ala Maududi. In case of Arabic language and literature he sought the help from Maulana Jalil Ahsan Nadwi. In spite of all this the learned scholar found himself helpless and quite disqualified to translate the Quran into Urdu.<sup>22</sup>

While initiating the Urdu rendering of the Quran Sayyid Hamid Ali, however took refuge to the mercy of Allah and used to pray him continuously with extreme humility and humbleness. He frequently repeated the words of the Quran uttered historically by Moses the Prophet:

Lord! Open my breast for me; and ease my task for me, and loosen the knot from my tongue so that they may understand my speech.<sup>23</sup>

He continued to seek forgiveness from Allah and restore his cordial relations with Him. He repeatedly pronounced the Prophetic pray known in the hadith as *sayyid al- istighfār* that reads

Shaddad bin Aus says that

The Prophet is reported to have said: “The supplication for seeking forgiveness is to say”:

O Allah! You are my Lord. There is no true God except You. You have created me, and I am Your slave, and I hold to Your Covenant as far as I can. I seek refuge in You from the evil of what I have done. I acknowledge the favors that You have

bestowed upon me, and I confess my sins. Pardon me, for none but you has the power to pardon.”<sup>24</sup>

Sayyid Hamid Ali while being engaged in the rendering of the Quran in Urdu language was in constant touch with the Urdu renderings made already by the following scholars of the Quran:

1. Shah Abdul Qadir of Delhi
2. Deputy Nazir Ahmad of Delhi (1831-1912)
3. Shaykhul Hind Mahmud Hasan (1851- 1920)
4. Ashraf Ali Thanawi (1863- 1943)
5. Fath Muhammad of Jalandhar (1752-1813)
6. Sayyid Abdul Ala Maududi (1903-1979)
7. Amin Ahsan Islahi (1904-1997)

He pondered over these translations individually and compared them with each other also. He revised his own translation time and again. He maintained the following points specially:

- a) Translation in Urdu should be nearer to the words and sentences of the Quran and be brief and compact.
- b) The translation should be convenient, fluent and metaphoric one.
- c) The Quranic force of expression should be reflecting at least to some extent.
- d) The words added by the translator to elaborate further are placed in the bracket.
- e) The specific terms in Arabic as *imān*, *taqwa*, *fujūr*, *‘amal sālīh* etc. are written generally without any rendering.
- f) Any translation fundamentally opposed to other translations, or one that has no ground in the tafsir works, is avoided.<sup>25</sup>

There are some other features of this translation also as pointed out by the learned translator himself:

- g) The translator has added some foot-notes, if needed, from the seven Urdu renderings, referred above, on the different holy verses and the Quranic words; he has not cited the translation in consonance with his own rendering however.
- h) The citation of these varying renderings of the Quran will reveal their quality as per the requirement of the language; quite possibly any reader would have preferred any other translation than the author.
- i) In the foot-notes the Quranic words are explained occasionally.<sup>26</sup>

It was quite unfortunate that Sayyid Hamid Ali could not complete this noble project. He translated the Quranic chapters from *Surah Al- Fatiha* to *Surah Al- Maidah* continuously and before that the last 30<sup>th</sup> part of the Quran (from *Surah Al- Naba* to *Surah Al- Nās*) individually. This noble project was later completed by Maseehuzzaman Falahi Nadwi. This translation of the Quran in Urdu was published along with the Urdu translation of Sayyid Qutb's *Fi Zilāl al-Quran*. The Urdu translation of 30<sup>th</sup> part of the Quran was first produced and then other volumes were published.<sup>27</sup>

### **1.6 Rendering of *Fi Zilal al-Quran***

Another significant contribution of Sayyid Hamid Ali in the field of Quranic sciences is the remarkable rendering of Sayyid Qutb's tafsir in Urdu, *Fi Zilal al-Quran*. This forms a unique exegesis of the Quran not only in Urdu but in Arabic also, the learned translator claims.<sup>28</sup> The tafsir in Arabic compiled by Sayyid Qutb (1906-1966) was published into eight volumes. It was translated into other languages of the world also. The great author had started publishing of the tafsir serially in the *Al-Muslimūn* magazine but only after few months he was put in jail by the Egyptian government in 1954. When some facilities to reading and writing were provided to him he started afresh the tafsir work. After having released from jail in the summer of

the same year he was appointed as editor of *Al- Ikhwan al-Muslimun* but again he was imprisoned on July 13, 1955. However he now completed the historic tafsir *Fi Zilal al-Quran*.<sup>29</sup>

The tafsir *Fi Zilal al-Quran* constitutes the following main features:

1. The powerful literary style of the tafsir has distinguished it from other works of exegesis of the Quran. The learned author when elaborates an issue of theology, jurisprudence, politics or society he is always sweet and polite and penetrates the mind and heart of readers.
2. He has tried to expose the order and coherence every chapter of the Quran implies.
3. He holds a balanced approach while dealing with the science and technology. He neither seems to be apologetic nor reactionary.
4. He always avoids the Judaica (the Israeli narrations).
5. The tafsir forms a revolutionary one and leads the readers to all the stages of change in the society.
6. It denounces the theories and philosophies of the west argumentatively and calls them the neo- *jahiliyyah*.
7. The scholar avails the modern knowledge while explaining the verses of the Quran.
8. He overlooks generally the far- fetched deliberations over the juristic and grammatical issues.<sup>30</sup>

Sayyid Hamid Ali, the learned translator of *Fi Zilal al-Quran*, has adopted the following method throughout the work:

1. He upheld a fluent and metaphoric style of translation instead of a liberal and independent rendering that prevails generally, and turns sometimes into a summary of the text. In the process of summing- up sometimes not only few sentences but the paragraphs also are deleted; some points

are missed and the meaning is altered.<sup>31</sup>

2. He tried his best to reflect in Urdu the power of expression the author maintained in the Arabic text. It was too difficult for the translator. He consulted his friends including the men of pen. They verified the powerful and authoritative expression of language he had used.
3. The author cited the Quranic verses without proper reference. It has been corrected by the translator. Every time he has cited the Arabic text along with the Urdu translation in order to convey meaning of the Quran word by word.
4. The author had left the exact referencing of the hadith he had cited. The translator has provided with the proper references, elaborated the variation, if any, in the words or otherwise, and has pointed the authenticity or inauthenticity of the hadith under discussion. He consulted the classical sirah- writers in case of events of the Prophet of Islam.
5. For further elaboration, if needed, more Quranic verses and traditions of the Prophet were cited. In case of difference from the author, the translator has added some notes.
6. The opinion of other exegetes, if deemed describable, was also noted down by the translator in brief. In that case he consulted mainly the Quranic scholars like Ashraf Ali Thanawi, Shabbir Ahmad Usmani (), Sayyid Abul Ala Maududi, Amin Ahsan Islahi and Hameeduddin Farahi.
7. The learned translator has tried to understand independently some of the complicated places in the Quranic text also. He had managed the notes in abundance but deleted them keeping in view the increasing size of the tafsir.<sup>32</sup> Sayyid Hamid Ali tried his best to make the Urdu rendering of *Fi Zilal al-Quran* more conclusive through the notes he added.<sup>33</sup>

While elaborating the approach and methodology Sayyid Hamid Ali adopted during the rendering of *Fi Zilal al-Quran* in Urdu language, he concluded at the Urdu couplets Shibli Numani had cited in the introduction to his magnum opus *Siratun Nabi* that read

*Ajam ki madh ki, Abbasiyon ki  
dastān likhkhi Mujhe chande  
muqim-e āstān-e ghayr hona thā!*

(I admired the non-Arabs; I wrote the stories of the Abbasids. I had to knock the door of others in order to take refuge.) *Maḡar ab likh raha hūn sirat-e payghambar-e khatam*

*Khuda ka shukr hai, youn khatima bil khayr honā thā.*

(But now I am compiling the biography of the last Prophet. Thanks to Allah, my life would be concluding with the good.)

Shibli deserved that great job and was fully qualified, the translator introspects, but he could never think that he would be fortunate enough to serve the Quran despite of short knowledge he possessed; it was only the favor and grace of Allah that enabled him to do this noble job. He cites with humility the following verse of the Quran:

That is Allah's bounty which He bestows upon whom He pleases. Allah is the Lord of abounding bounty.<sup>34</sup>

Sayyid Hamid Ali refutes argumentatively the claim of being no enmity between the polytheism (*shirk*) and the intellectual and scientific developments. He also negates the countries like China, India, Iraq, Greece, and Rome- the then cradles of culture and civilization and centres of knowledge and learning- of being essentially polytheistic in the faith. The learned scholar nullifies the idea that these civilizations from the very beginning were the dens of polytheism. To him, the

faith in one God was the base of these civilizations and constituted the main factor for their progress and prosperity. The ignorance and superstitious dogmas gradually penetrated the society and that culminated into the dominance of polytheism. Sayyid Hamid Ali cites here the cases of Iraq, Egypt and Iran.

## **2. Zoroasterianism**

Zoroaster, old Iranian Zarathushtra, or Zarathustra (628-551B.C.). Iranian religious reformer and founder of Zoroasterianism, or Parsiism, as it is known in India, is most distinctively characterized by tendency of the temple fire. To Sayyid Hamid Ali, this was the later development, originally Zoroasterianism centred on *Ahura Mazda*, who is the highest God and alone is worthy of worship. He is, according to the *Gāthās*, the creator of heaven and earth; of the material and spiritual world. He is the source of the alteration of light and darkness, the sovereign Lawgiver, and the very centre of nature, as well as the originator of the moral order and judge of the entire world.

The conspicuous monotheism of Zoroaster's teaching is apparently disturbed by a pronounced dualism. The Wise Lord has an opponent, *Ahriman*, who embodies the principle of evil, and whose followers, having freely chosen him, also are evil. This ethical dualism is rooted in the Zoroastrian cosmology. Monism, however, prevails over the cosmogonic and ethical dualism because *Ahura Mazda* is father of both spirits, who ever divided into the two opposed principles only through their choice and decision.<sup>35</sup>

Sayyid Hamid Ali claims that it was Mazdak<sup>36</sup> in the 5<sup>th</sup> century Iran who introduced an optimistic interpretation of the Manichaean dualism and made property and women common. He converted to his faith the Sāsānid King Kavadh.I (488-496 and 499-531), who introduced social reforms being inspired by his tenets. These appear to have involved some liberalizing of marriage laws and of measures concerning property. These

actions aroused the hostility of the nobles and the orthodox zoroastrian clergy and led to the eventual suppression of Mazdakism.

If the claim of Iran to be the cradle of the faith in the unity of God is correct- and this is undoubtedly correct- it applies to India equally. All the evidences certify that the Aryans came to India from Iran. The corrupted Mujusism and deviated Vedic religion have so many similarities between them. It is also substantiated that the Aryans were badly affected by the polytheistic practices and traditions of the Dravidas, the oldest nation of India. It is also certain that the idol-worship in Hinduism is an additional to it contributed mainly by Buddhism and Jainism, and it is also known that the idol-worship in both the religions were introduced only after sometime. Undoubtedly the real image of India has been clouded by the mysteries and fictions of layers and layers. Some remnants of the faith in the unity of God are however discovered even today.<sup>37</sup>

With these clarifications, Sayyid Hamid Ali starts his readings of Hindusim in his book *Hindumat Aur Tauhid*, already included in the collection of monographs pronounced with the title of *Tauhid Aur Shirk*.

### 3. **Hinduism**

While studying Hinduism, Sayyid Hamid Ali deals in detail its basic sources- Vedas, Upanishads, Manusmiritis, Puranas, Gita and Ramayana- and divided into two groups:

1. Hindus who don't believe in Vedas as the source for religion as Sikhism, Buddhism and Jainism, and
2. Hindus who believe in Vedas.<sup>38</sup>

While deliberating the roots of polytheism in the Hindus sources, Sayyid Hamid Ali cites Dr. Tara Chand's *Influence of Islam on Indian Culture* thoroughly. He also quotes C.Chinan Raja, Head of the Department of Sanskrit Madras University and his article "The Vedic Culture" included in the *The Cultural*

*Heritage of India*, as well as Swami Dayananda Sarasvati<sup>39</sup>, and Swami Vivekananda<sup>40</sup>.

Swami Vivekananda in his book *Hinduism of Vedas* admitted unambiguously that:

1. The dogma of the unity of God existed in Vedas in the earliest phase, but was neglected Later on because it was found not useful and satisfying to the Aryans.
2. Vedas inherited gods and goddesses. Every god or goddess had a physical entity and limited power while in other places they are described as Omnipresent, Most Powerful, Most Knowledgeable and Transcendental, and was to be obeyed by other gods.
3. This was justified by ideology of *Wahdat al-Wajud*<sup>41</sup>. There existed One Being called by people with different names. This theory of *Wahadat al-Wajud* replaced the faith of the Unity of God.<sup>42</sup>

Swami Vivekananda, Swami Shraddhananda<sup>43</sup> and some other Hindu reformers tried to trace the roots of *Tauhid* in Vedas. They quoted especially *Rig Veda* to substantiate their arguments. But the *mantras* cited by these great Hindu reformers, argues Sayyid Hamid Ali, reflected the ideology of *Wahdat al- Wajud* more than the *tauhid*. This philosophy was developed more elaborately and sophisticatedly in the Upanishads. The learned scholar has named it “the philosophy of Vedanta”. Sawami Vivekananda has discussed in detail the “dualism”, “qualified monoism” and “the non-dualist monoism”<sup>44</sup>

To Sayyid Hamid Ali, all the Hindu reformers in the later history were influenced with these three schools of thought especially with the last two- qualified monoism and non-dualist monoism. Sayyid Hamid Ali viewed both ideologies the two interpretations of the theory of *Wahdat al- Wajud*, which has nothing to do with the Quranic concept of *tauhid*. Apart from

Hindu philosophers and reformers, a number of Muslim Sufis also wrongly equate *Wahdat al-Wajud* to the Quranic *tauhid*. The religious and intellectual history of India reveals that the philosophy of *Wahdat al-Wajud* substantiated the baseless polytheism and established its roots to the extent that the puritan concept of *tuahid* could not flourish entirely.<sup>45</sup>

#### 4. **Reformative Movements**

While citing Dr. Tarachand, Maulana Sayyid Hamid Ali describes reformative movements emerged in the Hindu society in Southern India after 8<sup>th</sup> century AD. as Shankaracharya<sup>46</sup>, Ramanuja<sup>47</sup>, Nimbāditya, Basava<sup>48</sup>, Vallabhacharya<sup>49</sup> and Madhavā<sup>50</sup> interpreted their philosophical thoughts and systems.

According to Tara Chand:

“The History of the Hindu religion sketched in previous chapter shows continuity in development from the earliest times to the beginning of the eighth century. This development took place principally in Northern India where all the great movements originated from where they spread to the south. All through this period the north was the elder in culture, for there all the scriptures were written, and most of the heterodox faiths, Buddhism and Jainism, philosophical schools and sects arose. But after the eighth century came a change; the north lost its leadership and the initiative passed to the south. From the eighth century to the fifteenth the south is the home of religious reform; it is there that Vaisnava and Saivite saint starts the schools of Bhakti<sup>51</sup> and Sankara, Ramanuja, Nimbāditya, Basava, Vallabhācharya and Mādhva expand their philosophical systems. From

the south the impulse was transmitted to the north through Ramananda, a pupil of Ramānuja.”<sup>52</sup>

Dr. Tara Chand, highlighting the factors responsible for the shift of Hindu reform movements from the north to the south of India, specifies the main cause, as pointed out by Sayyid Hamid Ali. Dr. Tara Chand says:

“The appearance of new ideas and the emphasizing of certain old ones in Southern India from the ninth to the fourteenth century is rather peculiar. Such things did not happen in the north, for all the early medieval reformers belonged to the South. If one of the reasons was not the influence of Islam steadily and increasingly exerted during this very period and in this very region till it was suddenly eliminated by the advent of the Europeans, it would be difficult to account for the phenomenon, still more so considering that the reforming shears were applied to the very parts anathematized by Islam, and that the new acquisitions were the very features which most prominently marked that religion”.<sup>53</sup>

#### **4.1 Cultural and Ideological Interaction**

Maulana Sayyid Hamid Ali admits the far-reaching impact of Hindu – Muslim cultural interactions in India. Muslims and Hindus both influenced each other in the customs, traditions, habits as well as in their approaches to the religion. He cites Dr. Tara Chand again:

“In the give and take of culture between Muslims and Indians it is difficult to assess accurately the share of each. It is true that the Muslims received many ideas from India and perhaps India received through Islam a reflection of its own contribution. It is true that Christian and neo-Platonist thought deeply colored Islam and therefore some writers have found in Hinduism traces of those systems. But

the fact remains that a number of elements were absorbed onto Hinduism through its direct contact with Islam and these elements were presented to India impressed with the Islamic mould”<sup>54</sup>

Sayyid Hamid Ali pointed out the new ideas and perceptions introduced to Hinduism by the South Indian reformers and intellectuals, which were found missing in the thought of North Indians. He substantiates his arguments while referring again to Dr.Tara Chand:

“The appearance of new ideas and the emphasizing of certain old once in Southern India from the ninth to the fourteenth century is rather peculiar. Such things did not happen in the South. If one of the reasons was not the influence of Islam steadily and increasingly exerted during this very period and this very region till it was suddenly eliminated by the advent of the Europeans, it would be difficult to account for the phenomenon, still more so considering that the reforming shears were applied to the very parts anathematized by Islam, and that the new acquisitions were the very features which most prominently marked that religion.”<sup>55</sup>

“Certain other characteristics of South Indian thought from the ninth century onwards, however, strongly point to Islamic influence. These are the increasing emphasis on monotheism, emotional worship, self-surrender (*prapatti*) and adoration of the teacher (*Guru-bhakti*) and in addition to them laxity in the rigors of the caste system, and indifference towards mere ritual.”<sup>56</sup>

“In medieval times monotheism became the prevailing religion of India. The One God may be called by different names, Siva, Visnu or any other,

and there may be different theories about His existence, creation and relation with man. But He is One above all. Then He is a personal God. Again the conception of personality may differ. He may be king and master, father or mother, friend and teacher, spouse and lover. In every case the human relation with Him is emotional, usually tender. The emotion in the earlier times is clam, and restrained, in later times exuberant, passionate, and violent.”<sup>57</sup>

#### **4.2 Role of Shankracharya**

After the domination of Buddhism over India, Shankracharya, amongst those who revived Hinduism and united the different Hindu sects and cults, had a distinct position. Shankra has a deep impact on the today’s Hinduism, argues Sayyid Hamid Ali. Again he quotes Dr. Tara Chand to the effect:

“Sankara was born when this modification had been accomplished and Hinduism was already triumphing over its rivals, Budhhism and Jainism. He was thus a child of the times, but he was also the precursor of a new age. Monotheistic worship had been vindicated, by the labors of his predecessors, but it had to be established on the firm foundations of philosophy, so that not merely the will but also the intellectual might became convinced and its permanence be assured.”

“The establishment of this monotheistic tendency received a powerful impetus from the appearance of so uncompromisingly monotheistic religion as Islam. Sankara was born at a time when Muslims were beginning their activities in India, and if tradition is correct, when they had gained a notable success in the extension of their by converting the king of the land. He was born and brought up at a place near

which many ships from Arabia and the Persian Gulf touched.”<sup>58</sup>

Shankaracharya was a follower of the ideology of *Wahdat al-Wajud* more than being an Unitarian. The great Sufis who caused the spread of Islam in the country, were mostly the follower of *Wahdat al- Wajud*, Sayyid Hamid Ali clarifies.<sup>59</sup>

### 4.3 The *Lingāyats*

Sayyid Hamid Ali refers to the *Lingāyats* and the *Siddhārs*, the two Hindu sects of South India who accepted the Islamic influences ideologically.<sup>60</sup> He cites again frequently Dr. Tara Chand:

“Before leaving the South two more sects require consideration, in which the influence of Islam appears more clearly than in those considered so far. They are the *Lingāyats* and *Jangamas and the Siddhārs*.”<sup>61</sup>

“The *Lingāyats* consider themselves as ancient *Saiva* sect. without disputing the fact of their ancient lineage from one of the many branches of *Saivism* and admitting to the probability that the *Ārādryas* made an early attempt to organize a reformed *Vaisnava* faith, it may be taken for granted that the uncompromising *Lingāyatism* arose in the twelfth century. Who were the leaders of this movement? Basava and Channabasava, his nephew, are universally recognized by the *Lingāyats*.<sup>62</sup>

“The system of Basava in its original form was one of the absolute and wholesale opposition to the prevailing religious thought. It was revolutionary all along the line in doctrine, ritual and social custom, so much so, that in spite of all the attempts of the *Lingāyats* to tone down its daring originality they have not succeeded in completely obliterating its individuality or in assimilating it to orthodox

Hinduism. The *Lingāyats* are worshipers of One God (*Para Siva*), the infinite, independent, invisible Being, the highest residence, the supreme joy, the most excellent substance, exalted above all change and avoid of all

materiality. He is the creator of souls and of nature which are conceived of as the self-diremption of the Supreme Being.”<sup>63</sup>

“These are no scarifies, no fasts or feasts, no pilgrimages. “There is no river (purifactory ceremony) for a *Lingāyats*.” There is no caste, “even if a Pariah joins the sects, he is considered in no way inferior to a Brahman”. There are no distinctions based on differences of birth or sex.” All men are holy in proportion as they are temples of the Great Spirit.”

“Marriage is voluntary, the consent of the bride before marriage is necessary and child marriage is considered wrong. Divorce is allowed. Widows are treated with respect, and they are permitted to marry again. The dead are not cremated but buried, the dying man is given a bath, no *srādha* or death ritual is prescribed. The theory of transmigration of souls are metempsychosis is not believed in. All *Lingādharis* or wearers of the divine symbol eat together, intermarry and live in unity.

“*Lingāyats* are devout, puritanical and warlike in their character. They are found chiefly in the Kanarese and Telugu countries, constituting thirty-five percent of the total population in the Belgaum, Bijapur and Dharwar districts and ten percent in the Mysore and Kolhapur State.”<sup>64</sup>

Whence did the *Lingāyats* develop their peculiar doctrines of social institutions? Dr.Tara Chand raises the

question. He denounces the theory explained by Brown in that context. Brown came to the conclusion that the Christians living in the neighboring country of Malayala might have influenced them.<sup>65</sup> According to Dr. Tara Chand, there is no evidence for the existence of a Christian community on the Konkan coast. On the other hand, the whole of Western India from Cambay to Quilon was studded with Muslim colonies. He also cites Nairn<sup>66</sup> who, after investigating the Muslim remains on the Konkan coast, arrived at the conclusion “that the Musalmans of this part, who differ so strongly from others of their religion in physical appearance, in dress, and in some of their customs, must be descended from sea-faring Arabs who settled on this coast, and not from the Musalman conquerors of India”. Dr. Tara Chand then concludes:

“It is difficult to resist the influence that *Lingāyatism* was a result of the influence which these Muslims exerted in these parts of India. No other hypothesis appears sufficient to explain the revolutionary character of its doctrines and customs. The abandonment of such deep-rooted Hindu idea as that of metempsychosis and of such customs as cremation and prefatory death ceremonial, the abolition of inequalities of caste and sex and the reform of marriage, the conceptions of the community of brave warriors led by their sanctified preceptor, and of God (*Allama*) whose very name is probably of Muslim origin, point unmistakably to the source of inspiration, that is Islam.”<sup>67</sup>

Dr. Tara Chand then cites exhaustively the *Vachanas* attributed to Basava and says that these extracts illustrate the following doctrines in consonance with Islam, Sayyid Hamid Ali cites in his book a long quotation from the *Vachanas*:

“There is no God”

Thou art the only Lord and Thou art the eternal; this is Thy title. I proclaim it so that the whole world may know. There is no world beyond the Almighty God, the Almighty God *Pusupati* is the only God in the universe. In all the heavenly world, the mortal world and the neither world, there is only One God, O *Kudalasangama Deva*.

I did not see those so-called gods alive, when the four *yugas* and the eighteen cycles of those *yugas* were being destroyed; nor did I see them, when all was burning; nor do I see them now. Neither that day nor this day, do I see those gods, except *Kudalasangama Deva*.

How can I say that the god that, filled with lac, melts down, or the god that, being touched with fire, twists itself, is equal to Him? How can I say that the god that is sold, when the time comes, is equal to Him? How can I say that the god is buried, when there is fear, is equal to Him? *Kudalasangama Deva* is the only One God whose state is natural, who is in union with truth, eternal, pure and chaste. Oh think: is only One God to devote that believes. Oh, do not seek the company of other gods. To speak the other gods is adultery.”<sup>68</sup>

Dr. Tara Chand has followed some other extracts from the *Vachanas*. Very beautiful citations depicting the influence of Islamic teachings he has given under the following heads:

God is  
universal.  
Do not  
sacrifice.

Do not believe in caste.

Work without desiring anything  
in return. The state of Sarna.

A state of final absorption.<sup>69</sup>

#### 4.4 *The Siddhārs*

Sayyid Hamid Ali, borrowing from Dr. Tara Chand mentions the *Siddhars* of South India also, who were a school of philosophical rhymists, who were *yogis* as well as medical men and alchemists. Dr. Tara Chand has provided the details of the *Siddhārs*. They did not like the Brahmans. They ridiculed them in their writings and poured unlimited contempt on their social institutions, religious observances and sacred books. They were monotheistical quietists who retained the name of *Siva* as that of God, but rejected everything in the Siva System which was inconsistent with pure theism.<sup>70</sup>

The *Siddhārs* believed in One God, in one true preceptor (*satguru*), in one way for all men, and rejected the theory of many births and the authority of the Hindu sacred scriptures. The following poetic lines of the *Vachanas* were specially taken from by Sayyid Hamid Ali:

God is one and the Veda is one;

The disinterested, true Guru is one, and his initiatory  
rite is one, When this is obtained his heaven is one;

There is but one birth of men  
upon earth; And only one way for  
all men to walk in.

But as far as those who hold four *Vedas* and six *Sāstras*,

And different customs for  
different peoples, And believe in  
plurality of gods,

Down they will go to the fire of hell."<sup>71</sup>

## **5. Reformers of North India**

Sayid Hamid Ali, while citing Dr.Tara Chand, describes the Hindu reformers of North India who were influenced with the teachings of Islam, and who rejected deliberately certain elements of ancient creeds of Hinduism and emphasized others and thus attempted to bring about an approximation between the Hindu and Muslim faiths. This was specially introduced by the religious leaders in Maharashtra, Gujarat, U.P. and Bengal.<sup>72</sup> Sayyid Hamid Ali has mentioned specially Kabir and Guru Nanak and Dayananda Saraswati.<sup>73</sup>

Kabir tried to reconcile the Hinduism and Islam. Influence of Islam, of great Sufis and the Sufi Literature on Kabir is certain. The reconciling movement launched by him had recognition not only in his time but even in the ages to come. This is acknowledged even today also, Sayyid Hamid Ali admits. He holds some citations from the book of Dr. Tara Chand.

Kabir is not a systematic philosopher but a poet and mystic and his language is not categorical. He mostly uses the allegorical words and therefore his thoughts are highly complicated. However certain ideas of Kabir are clear. Says Tara Chand:

His central theme is God, whom he indifferently calls by many names – *Rama, Hari, Govinda, Brahma, Samrath, Sāin, Satpurusa, Bechūn* (the indescribable), *Allah, Khuda*, but his favorite name is *Sāhib*. His conception of God is extremely subtle; according to him God is transcendent and immanent, impersonal and personal, infinite and finite, without qualities and qualified, the non-being and the being, the unconscious and the conscious, neither manifest nor hidden, neither one nor two, both within and without and yet above and beyond all pairs of opposites.<sup>74</sup>

Sayyid Hamid Ali appreciated Kabir's denunciation of incarnation (*avatāar*), an ideology treated by Hindus as an essential part of their creed. Kabir asked the Hindus to give up what every reformer since the days of Buddha had insisted upon. The ceremonial, sacrifice, lust for magical powers, lip worship, repetition of formulae, pilgrimages, fasts, worship of idols, gods and goddesses, Brahmin supremacy, caste differences, prejudices concerning touchability and food all were criticized now. Kabir openly condemned the doctrine of incarnations: "The Creator did not marry Sita nor did he make a stone bridge across the waters", and "they say the Lord of the world finding inequalities of the weak and the strong came as Rama". But Kabir says, before such a one (Rama) who took birth and died, I cannot bend my head". Again, "the ten incarnations that people talk about don't concern me, they are merely the reapers of the fruits of their actions, but the Creator is some one else".<sup>75</sup>

This brief study of Maulana Sayyid Hamid Ali's writings on Hinduism clearly defines his sympathetic and honest attitude to understand the common features of Hinduism and Islam and that how the two great communities should understand each other's religion and culture. This mutual understanding may create a better atmosphere for participation in the developmental activities of the country.

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#### Notes & References

- 1 These titles and epithets were attributed to the learned scholar under discussion by the *Monthly Islamic Movement* Urdu New Delhi in its article entitled *Maulana Sayyid Hamid Ali- Kiran Se Aftab Tak*, Vol. 12, No. 3, Shawwal & Dhu Qadah 1412 AH/ April 1993 A.D. pp.23-26, compiled probably by Abdur Rab Athari Falahi. This shows clearly the love, affection and respect the great theologian had in the mind and heart of the young generation.
- 2 Maulana Jalil Ahsan Nadwi was an expert of classical Arabic language specially of Pre-Islamic language. I have an honor to complete the *takhassus fi al-Quran* course and submit the thesis entitled *Quran Karim Ka Asloob* at

Jamiatul Falah Bilariaganj Azamgarh in 1979-80 under his supervision. He compiled a number of collections of hadith in Urdu along with his explanatory notes in order to reform and revival as *Zād-e Rāh*, *Rāh-e 'Amal*, *Tosha-e Akhirat*, *Safina-e Nijāt*, all published from Markazi Maktaba Islami New Delhi. A scholar of Farahi ( Nazm- based interpretation) school of tafsir, he criticised Maulana Amin Ahsan Islahi's pioneering work in Urdu tafsir academically in his book *Tadabbur-e Quran Par Yek Nazar*. His lectures on the Quran are also compiled by Dr. Muhammad Raziul Islam Nadwi with the title of *Duroos-e Quran*.

- 3 See for details of these examinations and the prescribed courses therein, Dr. Ghulam Yahya Anjum, *Nisāb Taleem barai Darajat-e 'Āliyah Arabi wa Farsi Board Uttar Pradesh*, Jamia Hamdard New Delhi, 1422 AH/2001.
- 4 In a lecture Sayyid Hamid Ali delivered at the Islamic summer camp, conducted at Pokhra Nepal on 13-20 June 1977, he shared with the audience his experiences and ideal and pragmatism steps he had taken in his life. He was against joining the government services at that time not because of the Jamaat-e Islami's straight forward stand in that context but from the very student life he had this thinking in his mind. His father also was in opposition too. When he joined the Jamaat-e Islami later on he informed Maulana Maududi that he had joined the Islamic College Faiz 'Aam Shahjahanpur as Arabic teacher but he was convinced to resign and join him and his headquarters at Pathan Kot Punjab though his father would not allow him to leave. Maulana Maududi categorically stopped him to resign the government service without prior permission of his parents. He then decided to continue his service in the Islamia College and resigned it only after the sad demise of his father. In the environment of this ideological confrontation between the Jamaat intellectuals he started his career as a reformer and academician. *Kahabarnama Tahrir-e Islami Number*, editor: Ahmadullah Siddiqi and Tajammul Husain (editor-in-chief), New Delhi II edition, July 2001, *Nizām-e Bātil mein Tahrir-e Islami Ke Karkunon Ki Shirkat* (Joining the wrong system by the workers of Islamic Movement), p.79.
- 5 *Monthly Islamic Movement, op.cit.*, p.24.
- 6 Dr. Sayyid Abdul Bari, *Aisa Kahan se Laūn Ki Tujhsa Kahen jise!* (From where I produce the personality that may be equated to you!) *Monthly Islamic Movement, op.cit.*p.27. The faithful man of Iqbal (*mard-e mumīn*) as depicted in his poetry, is soft and flexible to the circle of friends like silk, and forms the hard and unalterable in the battle field of right and wrong like an iron. He is always in clash with the universe and is made of clay but independent of this temporal world. The birds like pigeon and sparrow do not suit his right since he constitutes the hunting one of angels like Jibreel and Israfil. An allegorical style of expression Iqbal always used to reflect the Quranic characteristics of a Muslim: *Kulliyāt-e Iqbal* (Urdu), Markazi Maktaba Islami Publishers New Delhi, May 2001, pp.426-427. In a condolence meeting held at the headquarters of

Students Islamic Movement of India at New Delhi on March 1993, Dr. Sayyid Abdul Bari expressed that in 1953 during his school life he visited Allama Muhammad Iqbal in the personality of Sayyid Hamid Ali. See Monthly *Islami Movement*, New Delhi, op.cit., 29. (He preferred the other world on this world!)

7 Dr. Sayyid Abdul Bari, *op.cit.*, p.28.

8 *Ibid.*, p.28. In the weekly *Al-Insāf* Allahabad dated 29 August 1948, a poem of Sayyid Hamid Ali bearing the title *Dawat-e 'Amal* was published. This poem reflects the composer's Islamic enthusiasm and his missionary zeal. He says  
This world around you, this sky, and this land all stand against you. Are you conscious of or not? In another couplet of the same poem he says:

You are convinced with the success and progress of the wrong and still you claim of being the truth- worshipper! How one can believe it?

The poem concludes to the following line:

Serving to other exclusively and obeying him than Allah forms the wrong. Meaning of the *din* and meaning of the '*ibādat* imply the very concept.

9 Monthly *Islamic Movement*, New Delhi, op. cit., p.28.

10 *The Quran*, 3:110, that reads: You are now the best nation brought forth for mankind. You enjoin what is right and forbid what is wrong and believe in Allah.

11 *The Quran*, 17:70 that reads:

Indeed, We honored the progeny of Adam, and bore them across land and sea and provided them with good things for their sustenance, and exalted them above many of Our creatures.

12 Dr. Sayyid Abdul Bari, Monthly *Islamic Movement*, op.cit., p.28.

13 Ali Sayyid Hamid, *Qurani Istilāhāt Aur Ulama-e Salaf o Khalaf*, Markazi Maktaba Islami Delhi, 1988, p.16.

14 The third option suggested by Maududi- as discussed by Sayyid Hamid Ali- emphasized mainly the following points:

- a) Islam forms a universal religion and way of life, and is not confined to Muslims.
- b) Muslims (*Muslim Ummah*) constitute a principles- based and global community which is created for the betterment of mankind; they do not form any racial or national identity.

- c) Both the atheistic politics and nationalism-based Muslim politics are wrong as well as injurious to Muslims who are not created to fight the battle of interests; they are created to lighten the word of God in the world.
- d) The mission of all the prophets was to establish the sovereignty of God on the earth and Muslims are deputed for the same mission.
- e) The western civilization is on the path of decay, and the effort for Islam has a bright future provided a qualified group marches a head for this noble cause.

*Qurani Istilāhāt Aur Ulama-e Salaf o Khalaf*, op.cit., p.8.

15 *Ibid.*, p.9.

16 The *Fitnah-e Maududiyat* was not compiled by the writer afresh, as clarified in the book on behalf of the publisher. This was originally a letter addressed by Maulana Muhammad Zakariyya, the Shaykh al-Hadith at the Mazāhir al-Uloom Saharanpur to Maulana Muhammad Zakariyya Quddusi, the Shaykh al-tafsir at the same institution in 1951. Maulana Quddusi was pushed out of the institution because of his link to Maududi. The Shaykh al-Hadith was not convinced to publicize this personal letter. How was he ready then to publish the book when Jamaat-e Islami was put behind the jail, it was exposed by the Shaykh al-Hadith when he was asked by Māhir al-Qadri (). The person behind this move was Maulana Sayyid Asad Madani() who had pressurized the government to ban the Jamaat-e Islami. This book *Fitna-e Maududiyat* was a masterpiece of baseless accusations, unsound arguments and ill-understandings. The situation selected for defaming of the Jamaat had exposed the character of those involved in producing of the book. Maulana Said Ahmad Akbarabadi, former chairman Department of Sunni Theology Aligarh Muslim University, a member of Majlis Shura Darul Uloom Deoband and editor of Monthly *Burhan* Delhi had severely criticized and declared the publication of the book in the given situation an act of meanness far away from the human ethics and morality. *Ibid.*, p.14.

17 *Ibid.*, p.15. Sayyid Hamid Ali questioned the author's claim of sincerity. In the given specific situation did the sincerity to the Jamaat Islami demand the very action like this? Another question emerged in the mind that the learned author had cordial and intimate relations with the leaders of the Jamaat and used to visit them in the long sittings of Muslim Majlis Mushawarat and of the Muslim Personal Law Board officially and he used to visit the headquarters of the Jamaat himself but never expressed his "sincerity" of like this nature. It was quite possible for the leaders of the Jamaat to repent from this "ill-thinking" after the mutual deliberations, as was equally possible for the learned author himself to check his misunderstandings, Sayyid Hamid Ali raises questions.

- 18 *Ibid.*, p. 16-17.
- 19 The author has provided a selective list of the sources (68 in number) and the list of the scholars' sayings and citations he has made (62 in number). *Ibid.*, pp. 345-348.
- 20 *Monthly Islamic Movement, op. cit.*, pp. 29-31.
- 21 Ali, Sayyid Hamid, *Quran Majeed Ke Tarjume Ke Bāre mein* ( Around over Translations of the Noble Quran) Introduction to Sayyid Qutb Shaheed's *Fi Zilāl al-Quran Urdu Translation*, Hindustan Publications, Delhi, 2007, Vol 01, p.48.
- 22 *Ibid.*, p. 49.
- 23 *The Quran*, 20:25-28.
- 24 Bukhari, *Al- Jami al- Sahih, Kitab al- Istighfār*, Book 20, Hadith No 1875. Rest of the words of the hadith reads as  
 "One who supplicates in these terms during the day with firm belief in it and dies on the same day (before the evening), he will be one of the dwellers of paradise; and if anyone supplicates in these terms during thenight with firm belief in it and dies before the morning , he will be one of dwellers of paradise."
- 25 Ali Sayyid Hamid, Introduction to Sayyid Qutb Shaheed's *Fi Zilal al-Quran Urdu Translation*, op.cit., p.50.
- 26 *Ibid.*, pp. 50-51.
- 27 *Ibid.*, p.32.
- 28 *Ibid.*, p. 30.
- 29 Falahi Obaidullah Fahad and Umari Salahuddin, *Sayyid Qutb Shaheed- Hayat oKhidmāt* (Urdu), Manshurat, Lahore, July 1999, pp., 121-123.
- 30 *Ibid.*, pp. 125-128. Sayyid Hamid Ali himself has counted the eight significant characteristics of the tafsir namely: i) an intellectual and knowledgeable tafsir, ii) scientific tafsir in consonance with the modern knowledge, iii) quite useful to understand the Quran, iv) convincing to the modern mind but traditional in the nature as does not cross the limits marked by the predeceasing scholars of Islam, v) an ideal tafsir of reformative and revivalist nature, vi) a revolutionary tafsir; as the Quran forms a book of revolution and this tafsir a revolutionary exegesis of it, vii) a spiritually deserving and most befitting tafsir, and viii) a tafsir based on the literary taste purely in the modern literary paradigm that has masterly exposed the eloquence, the beauty of oration, technique of the Quranic narrative, and the supernatural character of the Quran. *Sayyid Qutb Shaheed's Fi Zilal al-Quran Urdu Translation*, op. cit., pp. 40-42.
- 31 *Ibid.*, pp. 44-45. The learned translator found the English rendering of *Fi Zilal al-Quran* a better one but seems in a number of places a summary of the text that has missed some paragraphs and even some points of the author, and occasionally has misrepresented also. Possibly the English translator had used

some other edition of the Arabic text different from the one under use of the Urdu translator.

32 The exegetical notes, as pointed by the translator himself were useful and valuable, but were deleted. Sayyid Hamid Ali had expressed his desire to produce them in future, if approved and given a chance by Allah (*Ibid.*, p.46). It is the duty of his successors to save these notes from destruction and publish them after having edited and arranged.

33 *Ibid.*, pp. 44-46.

34 *The Quran*, 57: 21.

35 See for details on Zoroaster, *The New Encyclopedia Britannica* Vol.12 (Micropaedia), 15th edition, pp. 934-935.

36 Mazdakism, dualistic religion that rose to prominence in the late 5th century in Iran obscure origins. According to some scholars, Mazdakism was a reform movement seeking an optimistic interpretation of the Manichaean dualism. Its founder appears to have been one Zaradust-e Khuragan; a connection has been sought between him and a Persian, Bundos, who preached a divergent Manichaeism in Rome under Diocletian at the end of the 3rd century. Other scholars see it an internal development within Iranian religion. After the 5th century the religion came generally called after Mazdak (fl. Late 5th century AD. Persia). Its major Persian proponent. No Mazakite books survive. Knowledge of the movement comes from brief mentions in Syrian, Persian, Arabic and Greek sources. According to Mazdakism, there exist two original principles, Good (or Light) and Evil (or Darkness). Light acts by free will and design; Darkness, blindly and by chance. By accident the two became mixed, producing the world. See for detail, *The New Encyclopedia Britannica*, (Micropaedia) Vol.v. pp.861.

37 Ali, Sayyid Hamid, *Tauhid Aur Shirk*, Islamic Publications, Lahore, February 1987, pp.461-463.

38 *Ibid.*, pp.256-283.

39 Dayananda Sarasvati, original name Mula Sanlara (b.1824, Tankara, Gujarat, India-d. October 30, 1883, Ajmer, Rajputana) Hindu ascetic and social reformer who was the founder (1875) of the Arya Samaj, a Hindu reform movement advocating a return to the temporal and spiritual authority of the Vedas, the earliest scriptures of India.

40 Vivekananda, original name Narendranath Datta, Datta also spelled Dutt (b. January 12, 1863, Calcutta- d.July 04, 1902, Calcutta), Hindu spiritual leader and reformer who attempted to combine Indian spirituality with western material progress, maintaining that the two supplemented and complemented one another. His absolute was man's own higher self; to labor for the benefit of mankind was the noblest Endeavour. He joined the Brahmo

Samaj (Society for Brahman), dedicated to eliminating child marriage and illiteracy and determined to spread education among women and lower castes. He later became the most notable disciple of Ramakrishna, who demonstrated the essential unity of all religions. He was an activating force behind the Vedānta (interpretation of the Upanishads) movement in the United States and England. In 1893 he appeared in Chicago as a spokesman for Hinduism in the World's Parliament of Religions. On his return to India with a small group of western disciples in 1897, Vivekananda founded the Ramakrishna Mission at the monastery of Belur Math on the Ganges River near Calcutta. *The New Encyclopedia Britannica (Micropaedia)*, vol.12, pp.408-409.

- 41 *Wahdat al- Wajud*, the “transcendent unity of being”, the doctrine held by many Sufis who follow Ibn al\_Arabi and his ideas according to which only God possesses Being, Who alone is. See, Nasr, Seyyed Hossein, (editor), *Islamic Spirituality Foundations*, Routledge & Kegan Paul, London, 1987, p.426.
- 42 Ali, Sayyid Hamid, *op.cit.*, p.297.
- 43 Swami Shradhanand (1856-1926), the violent Hindu reformer advocated the nation of a *Hindu Rashtra*- India as Hindu nation, the land of Hindus alone-first in the 1920s. This was well illustrated in the argument about the need for Hindu *sangathan* (organization) put forward by this *Arya Samaji* leader and militant nationalist, in a pamphlet, *Hindu Sangathan: Saviour of the Dying Race* published in 1924. He advocated as a first step towards the organization of the Hindus, the building of one *Hindu Rashtra Mandir* in every city and important town of India. Each *mandir* was to have a compound capable of holding an audience of 25000, and a large hall for recitations from the holy texts and epics. Unlike most Hindu temples, associated with a particular Hindu tradition or sect and dominated by their own individual deities, this ‘Catholic Hindu Mandir’ was to be devoted to the worship of the three mother-spirits’  
– *Gau-mata* (or Mother cow), *Saraswati – mata* (Mother *Saraswati*, the goddess of learning) and *Bhumi-mata* (Mother earth). Shradhanand theorized in the context of increasing strife between Hindus and Muslims in urban centers throughout the northern India, and growing demands for *shuddhi* and *sangathan* on the Hindu side, with matching calls for *tabligh* and *tanzim* on the Muslim side, as Gyanendra Pandey analysis. See his edited book, *Hindu and Others (The Question of Hindus in India Today)*, Viking by Penguin Books India(P)Ltd. 1993, pp. 242-243.
- 44 *Ibid.*, p.311. The *thanaviyat* is translated as dualism, the *mahdud wahdat al-wajud* as the qualified monoism, and *wahdat al-wajud ya Rathanaviyat* as the non- dualist monoism.
- 45 *Ibid.*, pp.311-312.

- 46 Shankara, also spelled Sankara, also called Shankaracarya (b.700?, kaladi village?, India- d.750?, Kedarnath) philosopher and theologian, most renowned exponent of the Advaita Vedanta school of philosophy, from whose doctrines the main currents of modern Indian Thought are derived. He wrote commentaries on the *Brahmasutra* and the principal Upanishads, affirming his belief in one eternal unchanging reality (Brahman) and illusion of plurality and differentiation. *The New Encyclopedia Britannica (Micropaedia)* vol.10, pp.418-419)
- 47 Ramanuja, also called Ramanujacarya, or Ilaya Perumal (b.1017, Sriperumbudur, India-d.1137, Srirangam) South Indian Brahman theologian and philosopher, the single most influential thinker of devotional Hinduism. After a long pilgrimage, Ramanuja settled in Srirangam where he organized temple worship and founded centers to disseminate his doctrine of devotion to god Vishnu and his consort Sri. He provided an intellectual basis for the practice of bhakti (devotional worship) in three major commentaries: the *Vadārtha-samgraha* (on the Veda), the *Sri-bhasya* (on the *Brahmasutras*), and the *Bhagavadgita-bhasya* (on the *Bhagavadgita*). *The New Encyclopedia Britannica (Micropaedia)*, vol.9, p.918)
- 48 Basava (mid-12th century) south Indian religious reformer, teacher, theologian and administrator of the royal treasury of the Cālukya king Bijjala I (reigned 1156-67). Basava is the subject of the *Basava-Purana*, one of the sacred texts of the Hindu Lingayat sect. According to south Indian oral tradition, he was the actual founder of the Lingayats, but study of Calukya inscriptions indicates that rather than found a new sect he infect revived an existing one. His life and doctrines were recorded in the *Basava – Purana*, written by Bhima Kavi (14th century) in the Kannada Language and based on an earlier Telgu Version of *Palkuriki Somnātha*. See *The New Encyclopaedia Britannica (Micropaedia)*, vol.1, p.931.
- 49 Vallabhācarya, school of Hinduism prominent among the merchant class of North and West India; its members are worshippers of Lord Krishna (Krsna) and followers of the *pustimarga* (way of prosperity or well-being), founded by the 16th century Leader Vallabha. The sect is renowned for the degree of devotion paid its *gurus* (spiritual Leaders) who are considered earthly embodiments of the divine. Vallaba was succeeded as leader of the sect by his son Vitthala (also known as Gosāinji), and he in turn by his seven sons, each of whom established his own separated temple. *The New Encyclopedia Britannica (Micropaedia)*, vol.12, p.247.
- 50 Madhavacarya, also called vidyaranya (b.1296?-d.? 1386, Sringeri, Kashmir, India), Hindu stateman and philosopher. He lived at the court of Vijayanagar, a southern Indian Kingdom. He became an ascetic in 1377 and was thereafter known as Vidyārānya. He was part author *Jivan-muktiviveka* and *Panadāsi*, work of Vedanta philosophy; *Dhatuvrtti*, a treatise on Sanskrit

- grammer; *Nyayamālāvistara*, a work on the Mimāmsa system of Vedic philosophy; and *Parāsarasmrtivyaḥya*, an elaborate comment on the *Parāsarasmṛiti*. *The New Encyclopedia Britannica (Micropaedia)*, vol.7, p.654.
51. *Śāstra* and *Smṛiti* are not to be taken as two separate terms, but as two aspects of the monistic ideal of Advaita Vedānta Philosophy. *The New Encyclopedia Britannica (Micropaedia)*, vol.2, p.184.
- 52 Dr. Tara Chand, *Influence of Islam on Indian Culture*, Allahabad, 1976, p. 67.
- 53 *Ibid.*, p.93.
- 54 *Ibid.*, p.90.
- 55 *Ibid.*, p. 93
- 56 *Ibid.*, p.91.
- 57 *Ibid.*, p.91.
- 58 *Ibid.*, p.89-90.
- 59 Ali, Sayyid Hamid, *op.cit.*, pp. 314-315. 60 Ali, Sayyid Hamid, *op.cit.*, pp. 315-317. 61 Tara Chand, Dr., *op.cit.*, pp. 93-94.
- 62 *Ibid.*, p.94.
- 63 *Ibid.*, pp. 94-95. Dr. Tara Chand has prescribed the eight practices of the *Lingāyats* or the *Jangamas*, which are called terminologically as the *ashtavarānam* (the eight environments). These are 1) *guru* (preceptor), 2) *Lingam* (phallus), *jangama* (follower), 4) *vibhuti* (ashes), 5) *rudrākṣa* (rosary), 6) *pādoka* (water in which the perceptor's feet are washed), 7) *prasāda* (sacramental food), and 8) *pañchaksara* (five-syllable formula). *Ibid.*, p.95.
- 64 *Ibid.*, p.96.
- 65 *Madras Journal of Literature and Science*, January 1840, p.145.
- 66 The Muslim Remains on Southern Konkon. *Indian Antiquary*, vol.11, pp. 278, 317; vol. III, p.181.
- 67 Tara Chand, Dr. , *op.cit.*, p.11.68 *Ibid.*, p.98.
- 69 *Ibid.*, pp. 98-100.
- 70 *Ibid.*, p.101.
- 71 *Ibid.*, p.102.
- 72 *Ibid.*, p.111.
- 73 Ali Sayyid Hamid, *Tauhid Aur Shirk*, *op.cit.*, pp. 217-319.74 *Ibid.*, pp, 123-124.
- 75 *Ibid.*, p.131.