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Life and Works of Mawlana Amin Ahsan Islahi (1904-1997)

Dr. Abdul Rauf*

Abstract

Mawlana Amin Ahsan Islahi is considered to be a prominent Islamic scholar in Pakistan. He belonged to Farahi school that is known after Mawlana Hamiduddin Farahi. Mawlana Islahi was also a religio-political activist, thinker and wrote extensively on various issues faced by the Muslims in his time. He wrote various books on Islamic philosophy but the most celebrated work of Islahi was his exegesis of the Holy Qurān. In this article, an attempt is made to highlight the life and works of Mawlana Islahi. He offered different perspective on various religious issues such as, Zakāt, Rajam etc. But the most prominent work of Islahi is Tadabbur-i-Qurān, an exegesis of Holy Qurān. Due to his sound scholarship, various governments of Pakistan consulted him on different religio-political issues.

The period of stagnation in the realm of Muslim intellectual pursuits/scholarship that started after the fall of Baghdad in 1258 A.D. continued in the twentieth century also. The decline in Muslim tradition of investigation and research was followed by the decline in the political power. The arrival of the British and other European nations and the failure of the uprising in 1857 ended the political ascendancy of the Muslims in Indo-Pak Subcontinent. Muslim leadership responded to the challenges in their own ways and Deoband, Aligarh and *Nadwat al-Ulema* were the manifestation of these efforts. Among the Muslim luminaries

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Mawlana Hamiddudin Farahi belong to that rare breed of the Muslim thinkers who knocked the closed doors of Muslim religious scholarship in the beginning of 20th century as did Ibn Taymiyyah in 13th and 14th centuries and Shah Waliullah in 18th century. Farahi's ideas regarding Qurānic exegesis were unique and attracted little attention of the scholars. He could not complete his works on the basis of his own discovered principles for the interpretation of Holy Scriptures. However, one of his illustrious students Amin Ahsan Islahi became successful in completing *Tadabbur-i-Qurān* in nine volumes (comprising 6064 large pages) in 1980. Islahi's works introduced Farahi's school of thought in the academic and intellectual circles in the Muslim world particularly in Indo-Pak Subcontinent.

Islahi is not known well enough among the academic circles as well as among the people of Pakistan. There is a need to introduce him and his work in order to provide an opportunity to researchers to investigate different aspects of Islahi's ideas and thought to understand Islam and its role in the collective life of a modern state.

He was also the most celebrated and once *na'ib amīr* (vice president) of the *Jamā'at-i-Islamī*, Pakistan. The study of his work will also be relevant to evaluate the efforts and trends of Muslim revivalism in the contemporary socio-economic and political conditions of Pakistan. Islahi's latter work provides an alternative to the present state oriented reformation movements of the Isalmists in Pakistan. In the following paper an attempt is made to give a biographical sketch of Islahi and introduce his works.

Early Life and Education

Mawlana Amin Ahsan Islahi was born in 1904 in small village Bamhur, district Azam Garh in the Indian State of Uttar Pardash. His father Muhammad Murtaza was of a Rajput family. The livelihood of the family was based on cultivation of their own land. Mawlana Shibli Nu'mani, another great Muslim scholar, too belonged to the Islahi's family.¹

1 Mawlana Islahi's Interview with Radio Pakistan 23 March 1982, compiled by Manzoor ul Hasan, *Ishraq*, Jan/Feb. 1998, p. 113.

Islahi got his early education in two schools: in a government school and in a *madrasah* of his own village. In January 1914 he was admitted in class III of the *Madrasatul Islah*² in Sarai Mir. He was educated there until 1922. He was influenced more by Mawlana Hamiddudin Farahi and Abdur Rahman Nigami than his other teachers. The latter supervised him in language and literature and inspired him to get religious education at a time when he was disheartened.³ He studied \times adīth from Mawlana Abdur Rahman Mubarakpuri, another reputed scholar.⁴ From 1920-1922, Mawlana Muhammad Ali Jauhar, leader of the Khilafat Movement, and Sayyid Sulayman Nadwi attended the annual meeting of the *Madrasatul Islahi*, representing the students, spoke on the occasion. His speech was very much admired by the audience, and leaders, including Muhammad Ali Jauhar. In his later life, Islahi became well known for his oratory. On the advice of his mentor, however, he did not make it a habit. Islahi was good in his studies and was considered to be among the best students of the *madrasah*. As the examiner, Mawlana Sayyed Sulayman Nadwi commented on reading Islahi's *Sab'a-i-Mu'allaqa* paper, 'I wish I could have such a person as a teacher at Nadwah'.⁵ Islahi completed his education in 1922 and added the word 'Islahi' to his name in honour of his *alma mater*.

After completion of his education, Islahi joined as sub-editor of a bi-weekly newspaper, *Madina* of Bijnor.⁶ He also worked in a weekly newspaper *Sach* of Lucknow. His name appeared in a magazine, *Ghūncha* from Bijnore as joint editor.⁷ *Ghūncha* was a

2 It was founded by Mawlana Muhammad Shafī and run by an organisation called *Anjuman-i-Islah-al-Muslimin*. The school got prominence when Mawlana Shibli Nu'mani got interest in its affairs and finalised its aims and objectives. Mawlana Hamiddudin Farahi streamlined its curriculum. It imparted religious education along with some modern education. Special attention was given to Arabic language and literature. Qurān was the centre of all branches of knowledge. Moreover Muslim *Fiqh* was taught to the students without any discrimination.

3 Mawlana Islahi's Interview with Radio Pakistan 23 March 1982, compiled by Manzoor ul Hasan, *Ishraq*, Jan/Feb. 1998, p.115.

4 He is author of a commentary in Arabic on *Tarmīzi* (a book of \times adīth) called *Tuhfat al-Ahwāzi*.

5 Javid Ahmad Ghamidi, "Rawayatun ki \times aqīqat," *Ishraq*, Jan/Feb. 1998, p.16.

6 Khalid Masud, "Mard-i- \times ur ki Ri'lat," *Ishraq*, Jan/Feb. 1998, p.104.

7 *Ghūncha*, Bijnore, 1 July 1924.

joint venture of Mawlana Abdul Majid Daryabadi and Mawlana Abdul Rahman Nigami. The same magazine was later on published under the names of *Sidq* and *Sidq-i-Jadīd*.⁸ In the same period, he translated some Arabic books into Urdu, for example a novel, *Al-Jasūs al-Hindī* into *Hindustani Jasūs* (Indian Secret Agent).⁹ The author of the novel is not known but its main character is Muhayuddin al-Jayyāī. He also translated a history book written in Arabic, *Darūs al-Tarīkh al-Islamī*, in four volumes.¹⁰

In 1925, Islahi visited Farahi in his hometown. Farahi asked him to continue his journalistic activities, or study Qurān from him. Without any hesitation Islahi decided. Islahi joined his mentor and studied Qurān from him for the next six years until his death in 1930. More specifically, he learnt Farahi's principles of research for (*nazm* principle) Qurān. In the light of those principles, Islahi conducted his research. English, philosophy and political science were other subjects, which he learnt from Farahi. In political science, his focus of attraction was J.K. Bluntshli's *The Theory of the State*. Islahi gained the ability to have access to contemporary modern thoughts. He used to weep when studying Marcus Aurelius' writings. This influence vanished when he paid attention to Farahi's views on the subject.¹¹

Islahi was assigned to teach in the *Madrasatul Islah* when he joined Farahi in 1925 for specialisation in the study of Qurān. During the same period, Sayyed Sulayman Nadwi offered him a teaching post in Madras University.¹² Islahi refused with thanks

8 Masud, "Mard-i-ur ki Riflat." p.105.

9 Mawlavi Amin Ahsan Sahib Islahi, *Hindustani Jasūs* (Indian Secret Agent) (Bijnor: Madina Press, 1938).

10 Interview with Khalid Masud, Lahore, August 1, 2002; Khurshid Ahmad, "Mawlana Amin Ahsan Islahi ki Yad main," *Tarjuman al-Qurān*, March, 1998, p. 53; Zafar ul Islam Islahi, "Kitabiyat-i-Islahi," *Uloom al-Qurān* (Special Issue on Mawlana Amin Ahsan Islahi), vol. 13-15, January 1998-December 2000, pp.582-86.

11 Khalid Masud, "Ilm-o-Irfan kay Māh-i-Kamil ka Gharūb," *Tadabbur*, No.61, January 1998, p.5.

12 It had a remuneration of Rs. 200 while Islahi was receiving only Rs. 20 as stipend in Madrsatul Islah. Sayyid Sulayman Nadvi used to cite the event before his students that such should be the devotion of a student of *Qurān*. Interview with

and continued to study Qurān.¹³ He continued his teaching in *Madrasatul Islah* until 1943.¹⁴ Islahi started translating Farahi's Arabic books into Urdu. His translation was of high quality. Mawlana Mawdudi recommended his translation as a model to anyone in translating the first rate scholarly excerpts into Urdu.¹⁵ In 1936, he started a monthly magazine *Al-Īlah*¹⁶ for the promotion of Farahi's thoughts. Social and political issues of contemporary India also attracted attention of the editor, and his views and comments appeared in it. The journal continued its publication for three years.

Islahi and *Jamā'at-i-Islamī*

In late 1930s Mawdudi and Islahi exchanged their views through correspondence.¹⁷ These contacts resulted in their meeting in Lahore through a mutual friend, Mawlana Manzoor Nu'mani. Mawdudi founded *Jamā'at-i-Islamī* in 1941. Islahi's name appeared on the list of the founding members. *Jamā'at* established its central office in Pathankot (Punjab). Mawdudi requested Islahi to shift to Pathankot and assist him in the central office. Islahi took one of the important decisions of his life and left the *madrasah* and shifted to *Jamā'at-i-Islamī* in Pathankot. In Pathankot, he started *dars-i-Qurān*, a series of lectures on the Qurān. These lectures were attended by *Jamā'at*'s workers and office bearers including Mawdudi.¹⁸ Islahi became the *na'ib amīr* (vice president of *Jamā'at*). Islahi always remained a member of the central *shūra* and several times acted as head of the party in the absence of Mawdudi. He delivered lectures on the Qurān, *ḥadīth* and other Islamīc questions. He wrote books and pamphlets, and participated in *Jamā'at*'s training camps as a resource person in different parts

Ahsan Tehami, (a participant of Islahi's *dars-i-Qurān* in Lahore) Lahore, September 18, 2002.

13 Ghamidi, "Rawayatun ki ḥaqīqat," p.11.

14 Masud, "Ilm-o-Irfan," p.6.

15 Ghamidi, "Rawayatun ki ḥaqīqat," p. 19.

16 Some of the copies of this magazine are available in the library of Islamīc Research Institute, International Islamīc University, Islamabad.

17 Ghamidi, "Rawayatun ki ḥaqīqat," p.19.

18 Hakim Mehmud Ahmad Barakati, "Chand Mehakti Yadun kay Sath," *Tarjuman ul Qurān*, October 2003, p. 226.

of the India. In fact, he played an effective and vital role secondary only to Mawdudi, in the development of thinking, and character building of *Jamā'at*'s workers.¹⁹

After the partition of the sub-continent, Islahi had to migrate to the newly established Muslim state of Pakistan.²⁰ In Pakistan, he took part in the movement for the demand of Islamīc constitution in Pakistan. He was arrested on 4 October 1948 under Punjab Safety Act and imprisoned in Multan jail.²¹ In 1951 *Jamā'at-i-Islamī* took part in the elections and nominated Islahi for a Provincial Assembly seat from Lahore. He accepted the decision of the party. *Jamā'at*'s candidates, including Islahi, were defeated in the elections. In the anti-Qadiani movement of 1953, he was again arrested. After eighteen months of imprisonment he was released in March 1954.²² Mawdudi, who was arrested for the same reason, was awarded death sentence.²³

In 1956, Islahi was nominated as a member of the Islamīc Law Commission, appointed by the President Sikandar Mirza.²⁴ It was constituted to fulfil requirements of the 1956 constitution for the recommendations to bring the existing laws in conformity with the injunctions of Islam. The commission was headed by Justice (Retd.) Muhammad Sharif. This commission ceased to function when General Ayub Khan imposed Martial law in 1958.

Islahi quit *Jamā'at-i-Islamī* in 1958 due to his differences with Mawdudi primarily on the question of relationship between *amīr*

19 Khurshid Ahmad, "Islahi ki Yad main", p.54.

20 Islahi wanted to shift to his own native town, Azam Garh and reactivate the *Dayra* (circle for the study of Farahi's work, its translation and publication) and serve the *Jamā'at* but the unpromising conditions of the partition did not permit him to fulfil his desire. Letter to Mukhtar Ahmad Islahi, 19 July 1947. *Tadabbur (Makātīb-i-Islahi Number)*, Vol.61, 1998, p.46.

21 Mian Tufayl Muhammad, *Mushahidāt: Mawlana Maudwdi, Jamā'at-i-Islamī our Pakistan* ed. 4th (Lahore: Ma'arif-i-Islamī, 2005), pp. 201-205.

22 Sayyed Vali Reza Nasr. *The Vanguard of the Islamic Revolution: The Jamā'at-i-Islamī of Pakistan* (London: I.B. Tauris Publication, 1994), p.141.

23 However, national and international pressure forced the government to revise its decision. Mawdudi's sentence was converted to life imprisonment but he was then released after two years in prison on April 29, 1955.

24 Khalid Masud, "Mard-i-Hur ki Rehlat," *Ishraq*, Vol.10, No. 1-2, Jan. & Feb, 1998, p.107.

and *shūra*. Islahi was in favour of supremacy of *shūra* while Mawdudi was in favour of more power for *amīr*.²⁵ Islahi formally parted his way in 1958 but differences between these two scholars had been observed earlier than 1958. They differed with each other on the question of *Pardah*, Muslim nationalism and Islamīc nationalism, in *modus operandi*, *qurayshiyat* as a pre-condition for the Muslim ruler, details in the domain of *ʿadīth* and the punishment of *rajam*.²⁶ Some other areas of differences were the use of the term *tahrik* (movement) for Islam and stress on the role of leaders in a movement, projection of personality of leaders, and the question whether photography is lawful in Islam.²⁷ However, these differences were not such that they could not work together. Both had one thing in common: independent thinking in the light of Qurān, unlike other traditional religious scholars in the sub-continent.

Earlier *Jamāʿat* considered it unlawful to participate in politics but after adoption of the Objectives Resolution in 1949 *Jamāʿat*'s leadership reversed its decision. Thus, *Jamāʿat* contested the 1951 and 1954 elections in Punjab. Electoral politics requires a different style, which was normally contrary to *Jamāʿat*'s moral standards. Methods adopted by *Jamāʿat*'s candidates during election caused resentment among workers of *Jamāʿat-i-Islamī*. The *shūra* appointed an inquiry committee in November 1955²⁸ to investigate the causes and suggest measures for the recovery of *Jamāʿat*'s moral image. The committee visited the whole country, met

25 Mawdudi considered the *Jamāʿat* as a movement and he thought that more powers for the leader of a movement is inevitable. Speech of Mawdudi to a selected group of members at the Machi Goth meeting cited by Dr. Israr Ahmad, *Tarikh-i-Jamāʿat-i-Islamī ka ayk Gumshuda Bāb* (Lahore: Tanzim-i-Islamī, 1990), p.317.

26 Khurshid Ahmad, "Mawlana Amin Ahsan Islahi ki Yad main", *Tarjuman al-Qurān*, April 1998, p.49.

27 Dr. Mansur ul Haq interview with Mawlana Islahi, *Tadabbur*, Vol. 60, 1998, pp. 56-57.

28 In the beginning the committee comprised eight members, Hakim Abdur Rahim Ashraf, Hakim Sheikh Sultan Ahmad, Mawlana Abdul Jabbar Ghazi, Mawlana Abdul Ghaffar Hasan, Mawlana Abdur Rahim (amir *Jamāʿat-i-Islamī* East Pakistan), Sa'id Malik, Baqar Khan, and Ajmal Khan Laghari. Later on it was reduced to only the first four members. Sayyed Muhammad Zulqarnain, "Said Malik Say Guftago: *Jamāʿat-i-Islamī ka ayk Gumshuda Bab*" *Tarikh-o-Saqafat-i-Pakistan*, Vol.7, No.3, 1996-97, p.109.

concerned party members and submitted its report to the *shūra* in November 1956. The *shūra* hailed the report and adopted a resolution conceding some mistakes but was not pessimistic about its rectification. Mawdudi took the report as a statement against his leadership. He asked the four members of the inquiry committee to resign from the *shūra* as they were thought to have indulged in a 'conspiracy' against the *amīr* and *Jamā'at*.²⁹ Islahi resented this attitude and wrote a letter to Mawdudi. Mawdudi felt disheartened and resigned from the leadership of *Jamā'at*. Chowdry Ghulam Muhammad became acting *amīr*. He met the two leaders and persuaded Mawdudi to withdraw his resignation.³⁰ It was suggested that the issue of the dispute of the review committee should be placed before a general meeting of the members of *Jamā'at*. A meeting of the central *shūra* was called in January 1957. Islahi was kept outside the meeting. The *shūra* supported Mawdudi and requested him to withdraw his resignation. Mawdudi accepted the request. Islahi tendered his resignation as some *Jamā'at* leaders charged him with allegation of personal ambitions. He also resented the handling of the affairs of the review committee. Chowdry Ghulam Muhammad successfully stopped Islahi from leaving *Jamā'at* till the outcome of the proposed open meeting of the *Jamā'at* at Machi Goth. Mawlana Zafar Ahmad Ansari also played a reconciliatory role before the Machi Goth meeting. Certain views of Islahi were incorporated in the resolution of *shūra* at Machi Goth. Islahi felt satisfaction. The situation was discussed thoroughly in the Machi Goth meeting and at the end an overwhelming majority supported the resolution of *shūra* asking for the withdrawal of Mawdudi's resignation. Mawdudi withdrew his resignation. Those who were not in favour of the entry of *Jamā'at* in politics were disappointed and consequently resigned from its membership.³¹ Islahi was of the

29 Mawdudi's letter to the *Qayyam* (Secretary General), December 23, 1956. (Reproduced by Dr. Israr Ahmad, *Tarikh-i-Jamā'at-i-Islamī ka ayk Gumshudah Bāb*, (Lahore: Tanzim-i-Islamī, 1990), pp.31-35.

30 Mian Tufayl Muhammad's letter to Khalid Masud, *Tadabbur (Special Issue)*, Vol.60, 1998, p.100.

31 Total membership of the *Jamā'at* was 1272. Among 935 members present on the occasion 30 voted against the *Jamā'at*'s entry in politics and 15 out of 935 resigned

opinion that it was not a suitable time to take part in electoral politics. He viewed that reformation of society should be given priority and when it is reformed to the required level, it is only then that participation in election may be fruitful. However, Islahi did not quit *Jamā'at*, as he was satisfied with playing an effective role in the *shūra*. After the incident of Machi Goth, a very crucial meeting of the *shūra* was held in Kot Sher Singh in December 1958. Certain provisions (e.g. the formation of a working committee) were added to the constitution of the party. Members of the working committee were appointed by the *amīr* from *shūra*. These provisions enhanced the powers of the *amīr* in comparison to *shūra*. Islahi considered it against Islamīc polity that one person be given more authority over the rest of the people. Islahi sent his resignation. Mawdudi tried to persuade Islahi to take back his resignation but failed to do so.

The Machi Goth incident of 1957³² and the resignation of Islahi in 1958 seem to have transformed a movement primarily launched for the Islamīc revival into merely a political party. It was thought that party organisation is more important than holding certain moral codes. In the words of Nasr, Machi Goth affairs 'marked the "end of ideology" and beginning of pragmatic politics and decision making in the party'.³³ The incident of the separation of Islahi considered by some leaders of the Islamīc movement as a sad episode not only for *Jamā'at-i-Islamī* but also for all non-sectarian and non-militant revivalist movements.³⁴

Post *Jamā'at* Period

After quitting *Jamā'at*, Islahi gave full time to his exegesis. He started writing *Tadabbur-i-Qurān* and its excerpts appeared in *Al Minbar* a magazine published from Layalpur (now Faisalabad). In the same year he visited Makkah for Hajj and his reminiscences appeared in the same magazine. In the year 1959, he started his

from the *Jamā'at* membership (Kalim Bahadur, *The Jamā'at-i-Islamī of Pakistan-Political Thoughts and Political Actions* (Lahore: Progressive Book, 1983), p.91.

32 Tufayl, *Mushahidāt*, p.380.

33 Nasr, *The Vanguard of the Islamīc Revolution*, pp.40, 42.

34 Sa'id Ramadan a leader of the Akhwan-ul-Muslimin expressed his grief and sorrow over the separation of Islahi from the *Jamā'at* and considered it a great tragedy. (Islahi, *Mushahidāt-i-Haram* (Lahore: Dar-ul-Tazkir, 2000), p.113.

own magazine *Mīṭāq* from Lahore. All of Islahi's works now appeared in this magazine. In the year 1961, he started teaching Arabic grammar and Arabic literature, and Qurān and ḥadīth to a selected group of educated youth. This study circle was called *halqa-i-tadabbur-i-Qurān*. These activities continued until the death of Islahi's son, Abu Salih Islahi in a plane crash near Cairo, in 1964. This tragic incident increased the responsibility of Islahi. Activities of the study circle were disbanded and *Mīṭāq*'s publication ceased.

There were efforts to organise all those people who left the *Jamā'at* after 1956. Mawlana Abdul Ghaffar Hasan and Sheikh Sultan Ahmad toured the country and met with the ex-members of the *Jamā'at*. They reached the conclusion that there was no common ground among them except their ex-affiliation to the *Jamā'at*. Thus any new organisation was useless. A meeting of like-minded members was held in Rahim Yar Khan on 6-9 September 1967. A consultative council comprising Mawlana Amin Ahsan Islahi, Mawlana Abdul Ghaffar Hasan, Mawlana Abdul Haq Jammi', Sardar Muhammad Ajmal Khan Niazi, Dr. Muhammad Nazir Muslim, Dr. Israr Ahmad and Sheikh Sultan Ahmad was formed.³⁵ However, nothing came out from these efforts.

In 1966, *Mīṭāq* was handed over to Dr. Israr Ahmad who was in search of a declaration for a journal from Lahore.³⁶ Islahi and Dr. Israr could not go along together as the latter violated the directions of Islahi in the publications of writings. They also had differences over Islahi's concept of *rajam*. Consequently, Islahi disowned whatever had been published in that period in *Mīṭāq*. Islahi cut off his relations with Dr. Israr Ahmad in the coming days.³⁷ In 1971, Islahi became severely ill. He lost his memory. He was shifted to Karachi for medical treatment in a very critical condition.³⁸

35 *Mīṭāq*, Vol.14, September-October, 1967.

36 Dr. Israr Ahmad was also among those who resigned from the *Jamā'at* in 1956.

37 *Mīṭāq* is still appearing from Lahore carrying the writings of Dr. Israr Ahmad and his associates.

38 Interview with Khalid Masud, Lahore, 1 August 2002.

In 1972, financial constraints forced Islahi to leave Lahore. He shifted to Rahmanabad, a place in district Sheikhpura, where his wife had some agricultural land. Islahi continued his research work on Qurān in conditions where there was no electricity for the first four years of his stay there.³⁹ His associates and students used to visit him once a month. Islahi would discuss with them progress of the past month and give them fresh assignments. Khalid Masud, *inter alia*, took care of Islahi's finished work while Javid Ahmad Ghamidi assisted him in finding some important references.⁴⁰ In 1979, Islahi had to shift back to Lahore due to illness of his wife. On 29th Ramadan 1400 A.H. (11 August 1980) at Lahore, the monumental *Tadabbur-i-Qurān* was completed. Writing of the exegesis was completed in 23 years while the whole project (i.e. interpretation of Qurān on Farahi's principles of hermeneutics) took about 80 years including the period of Islahi's teacher, Farahi deliberation on the Qurān under *nazm* principles. After completion of the exegesis, it was felt that the Qurānic work of Islahi should be organised through an institution. On 10 November 1980 an institution under the name of *idara-i-Tadabbur-i-Qurān-o-ʿadīth* was formed. Islahi became its president while Khalid Masud became its *nāzim*.⁴¹ After *Tadabbur-i-Qurān*, Islahi concentrated on ʿadīth, another very important source of understanding the religion of Islam. He completed the teaching of *Mawta-i-Imam Malik* to his class. The classes of *ʿaḥīl Bukhari* had to be suspended due to his failing health in 1993. A scholarly journal under the title *Tadabbur*, under the guidance of Islahi, was also started in 1981. It carries views of Islahi and his associates. The journal is still being published regularly under the editorship of Abdullah Ghulam Ahmad.⁴²

39 Islahi, *Tadabbur-i-Qurān*, Vol. 9, p.10.

40 *Ibid.*, p.13.

41 Members of the working committee include Mawlana Amin Ahsan Islahi, Javid Ahmad, Khalid Masud, Abdullah Ghulam Ahmad, Dr. Nasiruddin Khwaja, Muhammed Noman Ali, Dawud Ahmad, Sayyed Ahmad, Muhammed Arshid, Munir Ahmad, Mansur ul Hamid, Muhammed Hamid, Mehbub Subhani, Ishaq Ali, and Majid Khawar. (*Tadabbur*, No.1, 1981, pp.7-8.)

42 Khalid Masud remained its editor till he died on 1 October 2003.

Islahi and the Governments in Pakistan

Islahi's thoughts attracted attention of intellectuals to a limited extent. His influence was mostly confined within *Jamā'at-i-Islamī*, however, some outside quarters took interest in his ideas. In the early days of Pakistan, when there was a struggle for the introduction of Islamic constitution, views of "Ulama on the status of non-Muslims in a Muslim state caused certain objections and reservations among intellectuals. All such issues were addressed by Islahi in his articles which appeared in the monthly *Tarjuman-ul-Qurān* in late 1940's. Unlike other traditional "Ulama Islahi asserted that non-Muslims were not *Īarbi* (combatant) but *mu'āhidī* (contractual) and therefore should not be treated as second-rate citizens. Islahi's views satisfied the intelligentsia to some extent. Abdur Rab Nishtar, a minister of the then government, is reported to have said in the court of inquiry that he considered the views of Islahi regarding the status of non-Muslims as most satisfactory.⁴³

The 1956 constitution provided for the formation of a commission for the Islamization of laws in Pakistan. Islahi was appointed as member of the commission in 1956. The commission continued its functions till 1958, when General Ayub Khan overthrew the democratic government and imposed martial law in the country. Islahi had reservations about the objectives, structure and procedures of the commission. His experiences as member of the commission and the attitude of the government disappointed him.⁴⁴ In his view, aspirations of the people of the country were completely ignored by the government. Islahi's views have been substantiated by Justice Javid Iqbal in his recently published reminiscences.⁴⁵

43 Islahi's Letter to Mehmud Ahmad Lodhi, *Tadabbur (Makātib-i-Islahi Nambar)*, vol.61. 1998, pp.22-23.

44 Masud, "Ilm-o-Irfan", p.22.

45 Javid Iqbal (son of Allama Iqbal) recorded his own experiences as: After completing his education in the West when he returned to Pakistan he met President Sikandar Mirza on the latter's request. During their conversations Javid Iqbal expressed his desire to serve the nation as a member of the commission. Sikandar Mirza smiled and replied 'that the commission is constituted merely to fulfil constitutional requirements. It will neither work nor do we want it to work'. Justice (Retd) Javid Iqbal, *Apna Garayban Chāk (Autobiography)* (Lahore: Sang-i-Meel Publications, 2003), pp. 93-94.

In 1964-65, General Ayub Khan held presidential election. Islahi's views on the candidature of women in an Islamīc state indirectly supported Ayub Khan's position in the election. Islahi's articles were initially published in his magazine, *Mīṭhāq*. These articles were subsequently published and distributed throughout the country.⁴⁶ Ayub Khan won the election held on 2 January 1965. In 1965, Ayub Khan expressed his desire to meet Islahi. Islahi agreed on the conditions that there will be no guard on the gate to stop Islahi and secondly the meeting will not be reported in the press.⁴⁷ Ayub Khan appreciated Islahi's role, and offered him any assistance he wished of the Government. Islahi replied that whatever he wrote in *Mīṭhāq*, it was not for Ayub Khan but rather to clarify the Islamīc teachings regarding a very important issue. Islahi refused any assistance from the government.⁴⁸ He advised Ayub Khan to fulfil his responsibilities as head of the state and take care of the citizens of Pakistan. After spending some time soon Islahi left Ayub Khan.

Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto during his reign (1971-77) sent a message to Islahi that the government wanted to do something for him. He replied that he always considered those who sold themselves to the government for material gains as traitors. So how could he accept the same status (traitor) for himself?⁴⁹ In the same regime, the deputy commissioner Sheikhupura met Islahi in Rahmanabad, while he was busy writing his *Tadabbur-i-Qurān*. He expressed desire of the government to confer upon him a civil award for his meritorious services. Islahi refused the nomination. He expressed that whatever he rendered was not for any award, it was rather to perform his duty.⁵⁰

In July 1977 the government of Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto was overthrown by General Zia ul Haq after a mass agitation by the opposition alliance, Pakistan National Alliance (PNA). Along with

46 Interview with Khalid Masud, Lahore, 1 August 2002.

47 Interview with Mr. Daud Ahmad (he used to take care of Islahi's personal affairs), Lahore, 22 July 2002.

48 He was offered *inter alia* the post of Vice Chancellor of the Islamīc University, Bahawalpur. Interview with Daud Ahmad, Lahore, 22 July 2002.

49 Ghamidi, "Rawayatun ki aqīqat," p.26.

50 Masud, "Ilm-o-Irfan", p.23.

other steps for Islamization, Zia reconstituted the Council of Islamic Ideology as well. Islahi was approached to become a member of the council. He refused the offer due to failing health; secondly, he wanted to complete his exegesis; thirdly, the military government, he reasoned, should not indulge in such a long-term scheme as it had taken over the charge for a limited period.⁵¹ Zia had a personal liking for Islahi and through Pakistan Television requested him to deliver lectures on the Qurān. Islahi refused the offer, as the management of T.V. could not take the risk of telecast his programme without editing. At one time, Zia ul Haq himself visited Islahi at his residence in Lahore. He appreciated his works and offered him public office and other financial benefits, but Islahi refused all such offers.⁵²

In early 1980's, a debate started in the country about the punishment of a married *zāni* (adulterer and adulteress). Traditional "Ulama supported the established punishment of *rajam* (stoning to death). Some scholars had reservations about the punishment of such crimes. Islahi's views were against the stance of the traditional "Ulama, which had already appeared in *Tadabbur-i-Qurān*. The Shariat Court asked all the leading "Ulama and scholars to present their view before the court. Islahi also appeared in the court and rejected the established views on the plea that Qurān does not support *rajam* for a married *zāni*. According to Islahi the Quranic Punishment for *zāni* (both married and unmarried) is only lashes. Other "Ulama were in favour of *rajam* (stoning to death) for the offenders (married person) on the basis of prophetic traditions and views of the earlier jurists. Islahi was opposed by the "Ulama and in some cases even threatened him of dire consequences. Islahi stood firmly for his views without heeding threats by the religious fanatics. The court finally implemented a punishment of only 80 lashes for the offender if the crime was committed in normal circumstances.⁵³ "Ulama raised hue and cry in the newspapers, magazines and journals against the decision lamenting the government of 'deviation' from the tenants

51 *Ibid.*

52 Interview with Khalid Masud, Lahore, 1 August 2002.

53 It was primarily based on Islahi's views. See Khurshid Ahmad Nadim, *Islam ka Qanun Jurm-o-Saza*, Vol.I, Islamabad: Almi Idara-i-Fikr-i-Islami, 1997.

of *shar*'.⁵⁴ The government had to bow down before the pulpit because of political expediencies. Consequently the Court was reconstituted and the decision was finally revised in accordance with the views of traditional 'Ulama.⁵⁵

Looking back to Islahi's careful relations with the political authorities, one can say that Islahi revived the tradition of the early Muslim scholars/jurists who did not accept political positions and continued their research in a free and independent environment. The aloofness from government did not mean opposing it. In fact, Islahi upheld the tradition of *indhar* — the tradition among 'Ulama to alert the government to its mistakes. He constantly reminded the rulers to take the right steps while making policies and decisions. He also reminded them to perform their duties in serving the people. Whenever there was an occasion, he expressed his disagreement with the government. In 1948, and in 1953, he was imprisoned for his criticism of the government. During Zia ul Haq period, nearly all the religious leaders approved the execution of Bhutto. Islahi was among those few religious scholars who were not satisfied with the government decision and felt aggrieved by it. According to him, it was the most unwarranted method to eliminate a national leader. Islahi said that through this decision the government sowed the seed of permanent enmity in Pakistani politics.⁵⁶ The later trends of confrontational politics between the pro-Bhutto and anti-Bhutto elements hamper the democratic process in the country in 1980s and 90s prove Islahi's prediction.

Introduction to his Works

Islahi expressed his views both in spoken and written words. The spoken material has been transcribed by his students and associates and published in magazines and books. The written work has appeared in the shape of treatise in different journals, including those edited by him. Besides articles, he wrote several books covering a variety of subjects like Qurān, ḥadīth, jurisprudence, mysticism, philosophy, ethics, society and politics.

54 Muhammad Safdar Mir, "Aik Mard-i-Darwish Ki Batayn," *Ishraq*, Vol.10, Nos. 1-2 January & February 1998, p.101.

55 *Ibid.*

56 Ghamidi, "Rawayatun ki ḥaqīqat", p.27.

His works are introduced here in chronological order. The discussion on Islahi's work is primarily focussed on making relevance of this work to the existing situation/issue. In some cases a short evaluation or personal assessment of the work is also provided when it was felt necessary. However a detailed review of his work was avoided as it was not possible in this paper.

1. *Mubādi Tadabbur-i-Qurān* (Principles of Understanding the Qurān)⁵⁷

Qurān is not an ordinary book. It has a special role in the Muslim community. It is the centre of scholastic deliberation for the intellectuals. Efforts have been made to draw principles for understanding this book. There are different opinions as how to interpret Qurān. Some asserted that Qurān should be understood in the light of the sayings of the Prophet, his companions and the early interpreters. Ibn Tamiyya is the representative of this school. He collected all such traditions and wrote his exegesis *Jamy-i-Bayān*. The second school came into being as a result of the influence of Greek philosophy on the thinking of Arabs. These people wrote their exegesis while they were occupied with certain ideas and beliefs. Their works reflect external impact primarily that of the Greeks. Mehmud bin 'Umar Al-Zamakhshari's (467-538 A.H.) *Al-Kashshaf* and Al-Razi's (544-606 A.H.) *Tafsir-i-Kabir* are two examples from this school. In the succeeding years, a third school emerged which is dominant in the present day also. It is the group of conformists. They explain the book in the light of the explanation of the first school and do not allow any deviation under any circumstances. The fourth school emerged after the dawn of the Western era and its subsequent expansions in the Muslim world. The colonized got influenced by the Western thoughts and started judging their own cultural heritage in the light of contemporary and the dominant Western thoughts. Sir Sayyed Ahmad Khan was representative of this school. He interpreted the Qurān in the light of modern discoveries of science. Their utmost effort is to adjust views of the Qurān with the scientific theories.

57 Amin Ahsan Islahi, *Maqālāt-i-Islahi* (Collection of Islahi's Articles), Vol.I, Khalid Masud, ed. (Lahore: Faran Foundation, 1991).

Islahi's main sphere of research is the Qurān, therefore, he acquainted himself with all trends in the exegetical science. In this book, which is his first published book, he points out the shortcomings of the existing schools and then supports his teacher Farahi's principles and substantiates it with his own arguments. In fact, he advocates the natural and universal principles which one needs to understand any written document.

2. *Haqīqat-i-Shirk-o-Tawhīd* (The Essence of Polytheism and Monotheism)

Religion remains one of the most important focus of human thought and practice in the entire human history. After advancement in science and technology, it was claimed that religion had lost its vitality. But the claimants soon realised their fallacy, as some religions, due to their dynamism could not be banished from humanity. Different theories have been forwarded in the modern times to explain the religious phenomenon. These explanations are based on the theories of the origin of religion. The widely accepted view is that of evolutionists. According to this theory, since coming of the rational man, two elements originated religion: Fear and worship of those, who cause this Fear. Islahi being a religious scholar assesses this theory in this book and rejects it. He advances his own idea of origin of religion primarily influenced from his knowledge of the Qurān.

The book consists of two parts: the concept of polytheism and monotheism in historical context and in the contemporary perspective. Part one discusses the concept of polytheism and its different kinds. It elaborates all the fallacies of Quraysh, *ahl-i-kitāb* (followers of the Holy Scriptures) and *munafiqīn* (hypocrites). This part also discusses the contemporary world and then analyses the conditions of Muslims in the context of their belief system. Two questions are specifically addressed: polytheism as a natural desire and the *raison d'etre* of the polytheism.

Part of the two books discusses the concept of monotheism in the light of Quranic arguments. Islahi organised all the arguments into two categories; common and specific arguments. The first is comprised of *anfusi* (the selves) and *'afāqi* (universal). The second is confined to the specific style of Qurān, which built up its stand

on the norms and beliefs of the addressees. In the end the book discusses the impacts of monotheism in Islam.

3. *Haqīqat-i-Namāz* (Reality of Prayer)

The Muslim community is required to pray five times a day. What is the philosophy behind this worship and what should be the behaviour of the people after performing prayer? In this book, Islahi addresses the issue and clarifies what he considers the actual essence of *namāz* in the present day circumstances. He also discusses in detail the role played by this kind of worship in the rise and fall of religious communities in history.

4. *Haqīqat-i-Taḡwa* (Real Sense of God-consciousness):

Godliness is a way through which a man can reach the height of spiritual life. Most people, however, have a confused view of Godliness. They consider some special practices to attain *taḡwa*. According to some, this objective is unattainable unless one attaches himself as follower of a saint. Some asserted that if a person desires to adopt Godliness, he must renounce all worldly belongings and adopt seclusion and avoid even lawful acts. Islahi did not agree with these concepts because it is not in accordance with the teachings of the Qurān and *Sunnah*. In the book he highlights his own point of view.

The book has three parts; piety in the light of Qurān, *ḡadīth* and the proper method of education and training in piety. In the beginning, Islahi discusses the existing concept of holiness among the Muslims. Islahi then elaborates his own views in the light of literal meaning of the word *taḡwa* (piety)⁵⁸ and its usage in the holy Qurān and *ḡadīth*.

5. *Da'wat-i-Dīn aur us ka Tarīqa-i-kār* (Call to Islam and the Mode of Preaching)⁵⁹

In the modern times, certain Muslim zealot groups adopted various methods in preaching of their religion to others. On the one

58 Literally its meaning is to guard oneself from the ill effects of some thing. Islahi says that the term is used in four meaning in the Qurān. Islahi, *Haqīqat-i-Shirk*, pp.313-14.

59 Mawlana Amin Ahsan Islahi, *Da'wat-i-Dīn aur us ka Tarīqa-i-kār* (Call to Islam and the Mode of Preaching) 3rd edn. (Lahore: Markazi Anjuman-i-Khuddam-al-Qurān, 1976).

hand, they strive for the reformation of Muslim society; on the other hand, they try to enlist new entrants in their religion. Other religious missionary activities among Hindus and Christians have influenced considerable portions of the methodology, adopted for the purpose by these Muslim groups. In this book Islahi after criticising the existing methods, puts forward his own methodology for preaching Islam and for the persuasion of Muslims to bring change in society. The book is first and foremost attempt upon the topic in the Muslim history and is considered as a classic work on the subject.

The book first discusses the fallacies (both conceptual and practical) in the existing methods adopted by different Muslim groups for preaching. Islahi concluded that all such efforts are fruitless. Instead of advancing the cause of Islam, it actually damages it. He pointed out the method adopted by the prophets and particularly by the Holy Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) fully took into account the psyche of the addressees. Islahi discusses different stages and means of preaching and then narrates all the methods of prophets adopted for the training of personnel. The book classifies support and opposition to the message of Islam into three categories each. The final part of the book discusses three stages i.e. call to the truth, acquittal (fulfilling the obligation of presenting Islam in the most understandable way) and migration and lastly, the use of force. The book is important and certain Muslim revivalist groups have adopted it as a required reading for membership.⁶⁰ The book is translated from Urdu to English by Sharif Ahmad Khan (India) and published from Kuwait.⁶¹

6. *Islamī Mu'asharh mayn 'Awrat ka Muqām* (The Status of Women in Islamī Society)⁶²

After the establishment of Pakistan, the new state was facing enormous problems. The most important among these was about the role of religion in the social and political life. Some leaders,

60 Such as Jamā'at-i-Islamī, Pakistan and its student wing Islamī Jamiat-i-Talba.

61 Sharif Ahmad Khan, *Call to Allah and How the Holy Prophets Preached*, 2nd edn. (Safat (Kuwait): Islamīc Book Publishers, 1982).

62 Mawlana Amin Ahsan Islahi, *Islamī Mu'ashary mayn 'Awrat ka Muqām* (Lahore: Faran Foundation, 1998).

especially, in the government, agreed that Islam is the *raison d'être* of Pakistan, but according to Islahi they interpreted certain themes such as freedom and equality against the basis of Islam and its traditions. Some leaders and women activists, especially, the All Pakistan Women Association (APWA) were calling for the rejection of all traditional restrictions upon women and demanded elimination of any disparity between men and women in Pakistan. The arguments presented by these activists put forth some instances from Muslim history in support of their stance. On the other hand, there were people who were absolutely against any role for women in society. There was a pressing need to clarify the Islamīc concept regarding the role of women in society. Islahi felt the intensity of the issue. He could not take up the issue till his imprisonment in 1948 which provided him an opportunity to write a book on the issue. He was able to read the newspapers in jail especially, the English dailies, which are the most important source to know and understand views of modernists in Pakistan. Islahi analysed the contents of speeches, statements of leaders including government officials, who stressed for the removal of any kind of segregation of men and women. Islahi criticised political leaders for the state sponsored duality (for professing Islam to be the basis of creation of Pakistan and at the same time erasing the border set by Islam for segregating men and women in society) and warned them about its consequences. Islahi countered all arguments of modernists in this book.

The book has seven chapters. It discusses and analyses the issue in the light of statements of Pakistani leadership who saw no harm in mixing of both sexes. Islahi highlighted the theory of equality of sexes in the context of Islamīc law, which uphold the segregation of both sexes in ordinary situation. Islahi says that this is based on the ultimate objective which is to bring an ethical revolution in society. In the fifth chapter Islahi reviewed equal participation of women in politics and encountered the arguments of its supporters. After pointing out the ill effects of participation of women in political activities, Islahi discusses the rights and obligation of women in an Islamīc state in the last chapter.

7. *Islāmī Riyāsāt* (Islamic State)⁶³

In late 1920's, Islahi took lessons on some political concepts in the light of political literature from his teacher Farahi including *The Theory of the State*⁶⁴ by J.K. Bluntschli (1808-1881).⁶⁵ Islahi found that there was no book of international repute carrying in its contents the principles of an Islamic state. And if there was any reference, it merely portrayed the Islamic principles as theocracy more in line with papacy. Islahi considered it as incorrect and a blemish on Islamic teachings.

He planned to write a book on the guideline of Bluntshli and started collecting material for the book. According to his plan, it was to have twelve chapters covering all the basic principles ranging from the concept of state to international relations.⁶⁶ He could not complete the book due to his occupation with another massive project i.e. *Tadabbur-i-Qurān* in the subsequent days. However, he was able to write articles for the monthly *Tarjuman-ul-Qurān*, on the subject. Islahi could not give time to revise these articles and put them together in book form. These articles were later compiled and published as a book.

The present book comprises of five parts. Part one comprises of Islamic concept of state, basic principles of Islamic State, *Qureshiyat* as a condition for Khilafat, determinants of Islamic nationalism. Part two discusses conditions for citizenship, rights of citizenship for non-native Muslims and rights and duties of citizens. A separate section is allocated to the duties of women. Part three discusses the status of non-Muslims in an Islamic state

63 Mawlana Amin Ahsan Islahi, *Islāmī Riyāsāt* (Lahore: Markazi Anjuman-i-Khuddam-al-Qurān, 1977).

64 It appeared for the first time in 1875.

65 He was a remarkable figure in Swiss and German politics. He opposed both the left-wing radical politics and reactionary Roman Catholicism. The relationship of Religion and state was one of the focuses of writings. He developed the theory of state as an organic system similar to living organism. Secondly his ideas were foundational in the development of the laws of war at the end of 19th century and beginning of 20th century.
http://www.newworldencyclopedia.org/entry/Johann_Kaspar_Bluntschli#Publications. Internet; accessed; 15 May 2009.

66 Letter to his son, Abu Salih Islahi from Multan jail, dated December 8, 1949. (*Tadabbur- Makātīb-i-Islahi Number*), Vol.61, July 1998, p.38.

and in the state of Pakistan. This part also discusses proposed state policy regarding differences in *fiqh*. Part four is about the conditions and limitation for compliance to state. Last part of the book discusses the characteristics and responsibilities of state functionaries. The book is helpful in knowing Islahi's earlier thoughts related to state and society.

8. Masala-i-Tamlik awr Zakāt kay muta'aliq ba'Ī dwsray Masāyl⁶⁷

In mid 1950's someone circulated a questionnaire among 'Ulama. In response Mawlana Zafar Ahmad Thanwi wrote two letters, which also appeared in the monthly *Tarjuman-ul-Qurān*. Thanwi reiterated view of the traditional 'Ulama particularly the view of Hanfī School that duty of *zakāt* (a kind of Islamīc tax on Muslims) will be performed only till the recipients became *malik* (possessor) of the *zakāt*. In fact they consider it as one of the fundamentals of *zakāt*. Consequently, all the welfare works by the government or by welfare organisation from *zakāt* became unlawful. Islahi does not agree with this explanation. He wrote this booklet in which he analysed the arguments of the existing views in the light of Arabic lexicon. Views of the 'Ulama have very important implications for Islam in modern times. In fact, this discussion came up from the misinterpretation of Arabic preposition *lām*, which can be used as having twenty two different meanings. Islahi did not agree with the established view. He put forward his opinion on the basis of Arabic language and literature. Islahi criticised the view of traditional 'Ulama and concluded that the word *lam* has never been used in the meaning, which the traditional 'Ulama adopted. Islahi also pointed out some impacts of the view of the traditional 'Ulama particularly the use of *zakāt* money in the welfare works by the government or by other welfare organisations. Islahi's opinion first appeared in monthly *Tarjuman ul Qurān* August and September 1955 and then in a booklet. The booklet not only provides some new insights in reinterpreting the Islamīc economic thought, it also portray Islahi's style when he disagrees with the classical 'Ulama such as Imam Abu Hanifa and

67 Mawlana Amin Ahsan Islahi, *Masala-i-Tamlik awr Zakāt say Muta'aliq ba' doosray Masail* (n.p., n.d.).

Imam Shāfi. It seems that he is also founding new and different school of Muslim scholastic theology in this book.

9. Islāmī Riyāsat mayn Fiqhi Ikhtilafāt ka ḥal (Juristic Differences and How to Resolve them in an Islamīc State)⁶⁸

Juristic differences started in the first century A.H. But they remained within appropriate limits. Later on, these differences took a dangerous turn and assumed the shape of permanent distinctive juristic schools. These differences are of special concern for the people of Indian sub-continent. Along with juristic differences, Muslim society is further divided into different sectarian groups such as *Dewbandi*, *Barelwi*, conformist and non-conformist etc. It hampers not only the growth and development of Muslim thought but also stops a unified approach to certain social and political issues. Any effort for the Islamīc Law would be futile unless there are resolutions to these juristic differences. The most pressing and delicate issue of the resolution of these differences has been the focus of Islahi's deliberations in this book. Islahi's exclusive concentration is on the Qurān and *Sunnah* on one hand, and an objective, tolerant, liberal and pragmatic approach in Islamīc law. Islahi is sure that such an approach to these two sources of Islamīc law will curb conflicts and prevent further disintegration of society on the basis of religion, the message of which is universal and not confined to a particular group of people.

This is one of the earliest works of Islahi. The book started with Muslim period when there was no concept of such conflicts. Islahi discusses the period when these differences originated and how such differences developed and got the shape of certain established schools like, *Māliki*, *Shāfi*, *Hanafī*, *Hanbali* and then the differences of these juristic groups with the *Ahl-i-ḥadīth*. Islahi marked 4th century as the turning point in the nature of these differences. In the 5th chapter Islahi discusses the points of contention among these groups. He then discusses the resolution of all such differences in an Islamīc state, and the constitutional status of these various groups in the state. In the last chapter he discusses

68 Mawlana Amin Ahsan Islahi, *Islāmī Riyāsat mayn Fiqhi Ikhtilafāt ka ḥal* (Juristic Differences and How to Resolve it in an Islamīc State) (Lahore: Islamīc Publications, 1986).

the process of codification of Islamīc law. Islahi states that he got inspiration from Shah Waliullah's work on the subject for this book.⁶⁹

10. *Tazkiyah-i-Nafs* (Purification of the Soul)⁷⁰

In 1945 Islahi asserted in a lecture that purification of souls is a noble objective and thus could not be handed over to those mystics who are ignorant of the divine law.⁷¹ Islahi put forward his concept of purification of soul in this book. He delivered lectures on the subject in early 1950's and then in 1980s. These lectures were compiled and published in two volumes. Volume I discuss the literal meaning of word *tazkiyah*, its objectives and scope. He divides it in three categories; purification of knowledge, actions and purification of human relations and behaviour. In part I, he criticises the existing views of mystics on the subject and concluded that the parlance of mystics is contrary to Qurān and *Sunnah*. Qurān is the only source of purification of belief system. But how a person can benefit from Qurān? Islahi also highlighted the conditions and prerequisites of deliberation in the Qurān. Along with Qurān, Islahi stresses adoption of the model of the Holy Prophet (PBUH) for the purification of soul. In the same part, Islahi discusses various threats to such a move i.e., purification of knowledge and how it can be safeguarded. Part I comprises the acts of worship like *namaz*, *rowzah*, and *hajj* what are the possible threats to these acts and how it can be avoided? The second volume of the book discusses man's relations with God, inner-self and other humans. Islahi says that *shukr* (gratefulness), *'ibadat* (worship) *ita'at* (obedience), *ikhhlāl* (sincerity), *muhabat* (love), *khawf* (fear of God), *hayā* (modesty), *wafā* (loyalty) etc., should be the basis of man's relation with God. The book elaborates man's relation with inner-self. Last portion of the book discusses individual's relation with family and parents. It also covers the

69 Mawlana Amin Ahsan Islahi, *Mubādi Tadabbur-i-ṣadīth* (Lahore: Faran Foundation, 1994), p.151.

70 Part I of the book was published in 1957 i.e., *Tazkiyah-i-Nafs*, Vol.I (Faisalabad: Malak Sons Tajiran-i-Kutub, 1957) while the part II was completed in 1989 and published in 1992, *Tazkiyah-i-Nafs*, Vol.II. 4th edn. (Lahore: Faran Foundation, 1992).

71 Ghamidi, "Rawayatun ki ṣaḥīḥat," p.23.

required behaviour towards poor orphans and neighbours and, relation with society and state. The book is important as Islahi himself declared it as containing the essence of his religious thought.⁷² Its English translation has appeared, titled, *Self-Purification and Development*, by Sharif Ahmad Khan from India.⁷³

11. *Tawġihāt* (A Collection of general explanatory Essays)⁷⁴

These articles are the outcome of questions asked, clarification of certain ambiguities and respond to criticism by opponents of *Jamā'at-i-Islamī*. First section covers Qurānic studies and discusses the nomenclature of Qurānic suras; interpretation of a verse of sura *Nisa*; the story of Harūt and Marūt; explanation of a verse of sura *Furqān*, sura *Hūd* and the law of *Khatm-i-Qūlūb* (seal on heart and soul). Second section is related to \times adīth and discusses the difference between \times adīth and *Sunnah*, the means for knowing *Sunnah* and meaning of *Akhbar-i-Ahad* its place and scope in religion. Islahi also elaborates views of Mawdudi and *Jamā'at-i-Islamī* regarding the evaluation of the earlier Muslim celebrities. Third section relates to certain social, juristic and cultural issues such as zakāt, scope and limitation of differences in a pious group, prayers, *Istikhara* etc and finally discuss as the working environment of workers for Islamīc persuasion.

12. *Tanqīdāt* (A Collection of Critical Essays)⁷⁵

Islahi remained in *Jamā'at-i-Islamī* for seventeen years. The traditional 'Ulama severely opposed the views and practices of *Jamā'at* and the personality of Mawdudi. Islahi answered the criticism of these 'Ulama on different occasions which appeared in the *Tarjuman ul Qurān*.⁷⁶ This book is a collection of articles, four of them are rejoinders to 'Ulama which includes: whether Moses was a nationalist leader or a prophet? Sovereignty belongs to God or to the masses? Criticism on *Jamā'at-i-Islamī* and its reply. The

72 Islahi, *Tawġihāt -i-Nafs*, I: p.10.

73 Published by Adam Publishers & Distributors, India, 2002.

74 Mawlana Amin Ahsan Islahi, *Tawġihāt*, 4th edn. (Lahore: Islamīc Publications Ltd., 1985).

75 Amin Ahsan Islahi, *Tanqīdāt* 4th edn. (Lahore: Islamīc Publications Ltd.), 1984.

76 The official organ of the *Jamā'at-i-Islamī* Paksian.

last one is the response to Mawlana Manzoor Nu'mani, who wrote an article '*Jamā'at-i-Islamī awr Iskāy Khilaf Fatwa*' (*Jamā'at-i-Islamī* and the verdict against it). The last article of the book is a review and criticism on the draft of Shariat Bill. Begum Salma Tasaduq Hussain in the Punjab Assembly introduced this draft bill in 1954.⁷⁷

13. '*Āili Commission ki Report par Tablīrah* (Commentary on the Family Law Commission Report)⁷⁸

In 1950's, the Prime Minister of Pakistan Mohammad Ali Bogra, had taken an Arab lady as his second wife while he was married to his first wife. The women rights associations, particularly, APWA raised objections and protested against it. The government of Pakistan constituted a commission to review the existing family laws in Pakistan. The commission comprised Khalifa Abdul Hakim, Mawalana Ihteshamul Haq, Mr. Enayat ur Rehman, Begum Shah Nawaz, Begum Anwar G. Ahmad and Begum Shamsunnahar Mehmud. The commission submitted its report in June 1956, with dissenting note of the only religious scholar in the commission. The report was important because if adopted by the government, it was to affect the very fabric of Pakistani society. Secondly, it highlighted views of a particular school of thought highly impressed with Western thoughts. Islahi realised gravity of the situation and wrote several articles on the topic in different journals. Later Professor Khurshid Ahmad translated and edited Islahi's articles and published form Karachi.⁷⁹

The recommendations of the commission were evaluated in the light of Qurān, and *Sunnah* and the existing conditions of Pakistani society. The book consists of five sections. The first section discusses the nature of commission in the light of the objectives given for the creation of such a commission. The second section discusses the constitutional status of the commission. Islahi

77 Muhammad Haroon Usmani, *Mawlana Islahi Ki Nasri Khidmaat* (Lahore: Maghrabi Pakistan Urdu Academy, 2006), p.115.

78 Mawlana Amin Ahsan Islahi. '*Āili Commission ki Report par Tablīrah* (Layalpur (now Faisalabad): Malak Brothers Tajiran-i-Kutub, 1960).

79 Khurshid Ahmad, ed., *Marriage Commission Report X-Rayed* (Karachi: Chiragh-e-Rah Publications, 1959).

criticises the commission on the basis of its structure and its constitutional status. The third section highlights the concept and principles of *ijtihad* (interpretation of Islamic law) of the scholars as enumerated in the report. Islahi commented on the views of the commission regarding *ijtihad* and labelled it *bid'at* (innovation) in the history of Muslim jurisprudence. The fourth section discusses recommendations of the commission and Islahi evaluates the same in the light of Quran and *Sunnah*. Contemporary needs and requirements are also taken into consideration. The book indicates certain ill effects in case the recommendations are implemented in Pakistan. The last section forwards some alternative proposals for eliminating discrimination against women in society.

14. *Mushāhadāt-i-āram* (Reminiscence of Hajj)⁸⁰

Islahi left *Jamā'at* in January 1958 and all his social contacts with *Jamā'at*'s followers ended. He was in despair and wanted to be alone for some time. Islahi travelled to Makkah for Hajj in May 1958. He along with his wife and a friend Hakim Muhammad Ashraf left for Makkah. Islahi kept all his reminiscences: visiting the holy places, his meeting with different delegates, and his analysis of the policies of the Government of Saudi Arabia. These reminiscences first appeared in two magazines *Al-Minbar* and *Miṭāq* in 1958. These articles were then compiled by Maqbul-ur-Rahman Mufti and published in 2000. The book is not only a reportage but also provides some other information about Hajj, the changing situation in the Arabian Peninsula, its impacts on the people and society. It also records Islahi's meetings with different leaders and workers of Islamic movements, particularly, *Akhwān al-Muslimīn* and *Jamā'at-i-Islamī*, from different parts of the world. Throughout the book, Islahi speaks like an ordinary man full of religious sentiments and human feelings. A portion of the book discusses the positive points of the Saudi government along with certain suggestions for the improvement of facilities to *Hajjis* (pilgrims).

80 Mawlana Amin Ahsan Islahi, *Mushāhadāt-i-āram* (Lahore: Dar-ul-Tazkir, 2000).

15. *Maqālāt-i-Islahi (Collection of Islahi Articles)*⁸¹, Vol.I

Islahi parted his way with Mawdudi in 1958 when differences between them could not be resolved. In the subsequent days both the leaders expressed their views mostly divergent from each other in *Tarjuman al-Qurān*, Lahore and *Mīṭhāq*, Lahore in 1959 and 1960. Mawdudi stressed mainly on the institution of government for any change in a society. He felt no harm in the allotment of more power to the *amīr* of *Jamā‘at-i-Islamī* in order to put *Jamā‘at* on the right track for achievement of its objectives. Islahi did not agree with this view and criticised Mawdudi. All such articles of Islahi have been categorised into different topics and compiled by Khalid Masud.

The book is divided into four parts. The first part discusses some aspects of the life of the Holy Prophet and contribution of Abdullah bin Abbas being the youngest exigent of the holy Qurān. The second part has seven articles and one letter. It unveiled the causes of the separation of Islahi from Mawdudi and *Jamā‘at-i-Islamī*. The letter to Mawdudi which is included in this book has a historical significance as after this letter Mawdudi resigned from *Jamā‘at*'s presidentship. The issue led to the call of a general body meeting in Machi Goth in 1957. Islahi finally left the *Jamā‘at* in January 1958. This section provides enough information/insight about the conceptual and ideological differences of Islahi with Mawdudi and *Jamā‘at*. The third part is comprised of eleven articles and discusses Islahi's views regarding reformation of a Muslim society. It highlights the efforts of Islahi for the reinvigoration of Muslim society. These activities were mostly confined to teaching and research. The fourth part carries two essays: the first article is an attack on those who support the West as fashion. He opined that adoption of western ways is recommendable only if it is adopted after thorough deliberation. The second is a criticism on those who uphold the concept of family planning primarily due to the influence of West. Though the articles were meant initially for that period, they have important historical and theoretical value even today.

81 Amin Ahsan Islahi, *Maqālāt-i-Islahi*, Vol.I, Khalid Masud, ed., (Lahore: Faran Foundation, 1991).

16. *Tafhīm-i-Dīn* (Understanding Islam)⁸²:

Islahi, besides *Tadabbur-i-Qurān*, wrote extensively in his journal *Mīṭāq* on different topics ranging from ideology to the contemporary issues. He tried to remove any misunderstandings in the minds of modern educated people regarding Islam. His student Khalid Maud has compiled Islahi's respond to all such questions in this book. The book comprises five headings. The first one is organised under the title *Qurāniyāt*. Islahi discusses ten questions raised by the readers of *Mīṭāq* ranging from classification of the *āyāt-i-mutashābihāt* to the status of angels. The second part contains answers to seven questions related to the field of *ḥadīth* and *Sunnah*. He points some intricacies in this field of religious disciplines, but he rejected the view of those who do not consider *ḥadīth* and *Sunnah* as a valid source of Islamīc ideology and teaching. Part three discusses the philosophy of *dīn* and its underlying wisdom. It includes certain topics such as human nature, the relationship of belief and worship with character building, Qurānic concept of development, guidance of humanity after the discontinuation of prophethood, concept of reward and punishment, the presence of unwanted things in this world and the *itmam-i-hujjat* (acquittal). The fourth part discusses the issues related to collective life including the concept of *ijtihād* and *ijma'*, concept of *shūra*, political power and reformation of society; seeking political post in an Islamīc state and choice of a lesser evil. The fifth part discusses national issues like vulgarity in the print media, the indifference of "Ulama in contemporary world, Pakistan and the Islamīc organisations, sectarian differences and violence; Ghulam Ahmad Perwez and "Ulama's verdict against him; Sir Sayyed Ahmad Khan as reformer; Jamal Abdul Nasir and the slogan of Arab Nationalism.

17. *Islamī Qānūn kī Tadwīn* (Codification of Islamīc Law)⁸³

Since the establishment of Pakistan, the introduction of Divine law has been the most important issue in the polity of Pakistan.

82 Amin Ahsan Islahi, *Tafhim-i-Din*, Khalid Masud, ed., (Lahore: Faran Foundation, 1992).

83 Amin Ahsan Islahi, *Islamī Qānūn kī Tadwīn*, 2nd edn. (Lahore: Islamīc Publications, 1989).

The reluctance in conceding to the popular demand cannot be genuinely considered as the insincerity on the part of the ruling elite. Islahi felt that there are indeed certain genuine difficulties in the way of Islamization of laws in Pakistan. Islahi delivered several lectures in different law colleges and universities on the issue of codification of Islamic laws in Pakistan. These lectures were later compiled and were also translated in English.⁸⁴ The book comprises of six chapters along with a forward by Mr. Justice (Retd.) Muhammad Afzal Cheema, Chairman Council of Islamic Ideology, Pakistan. The first chapter discusses fundamental difference between man-made laws and Islamic laws. The second chapter related to the dynamic nature of Islamic law. The third chapter discusses sources of Islamic law. According to Islahi, these are five: Quran, *Sunnah*, *ijtihad*, *riwāj* (custom) and *ma'lahat* (expediency). In the fourth chapter Islahi discusses *ijtihad*, the most important and controversial issue. The problem of codification of Islamic laws is discussed in the fifth chapter of the book.⁸⁵ The last chapter discusses significance of *ijtihad* in the modern age. In this book, Islahi tries to dispel misunderstandings of intelligentsia about the nature of Islamic law and its sources created with advancement in legal knowledge and change in the societal structure.

18. Tadabbur-i-Qurān⁸⁶

For quite some time, there was a theory that there is no coherence in Qurān. It was asserted that Qurān is a collection of different verses having no logical connection with each other. In the late 19th and early 20th century Western scholars propounded

84 S.A. Rauf, *Islamic Law: Concept and Codification* (Lahore: Islamic Publications, Ltd., 1979).

85 Islahi considered the codification of Islamic law as a prerequisite for enforcement of Shariah in the country.

86 Amin Ahsan Islahi, *Tadabbur-i-Qurān*, Vol.1, 5th edn. (Lahore: Faran Foundation, 1993); *Tadabbur-i-Qurān*, Vol.2, 5th edn. (Lahore: Faran Foundation, 1994); *Tadabbur-i-Qurān*, Vol.3, 5th edn. (Lahore: Faran Foundation, 1995); *Tadabbur-i-Qurān*, Vol.4, 5th edn. (Lahore: Faran Foundation, 1994); *Tadabbur-i-Qurān*, Vol.5, 4th edn. (Lahore: Faran Foundation, 1992); *Tadabbur-i-Qurān*, Vol.6, 6th ed. (Lahore: Faran Foundation, 1994); *Tadabbur-i-Qurān*, Vol.7, 6th edn. (Lahore: Faran Foundation, 1994); *Tadabbur-i-Qurān*, Vol.8, 6th edn. (Lahore: Faran Foundation, 1994); *Tadabbur-i-Qurān*, Vol.9, 6th edn. (Lahore: Faran Foundation, 1994).

the theory and some of them proposed chronological order on the bases of which the Qurān should be rearranged.⁸⁷ On the other hand Qurān has the most important place in the Muslim community. They derive all religious guidance and aspirations from the Qurān.

Orientalists assert that Qurān does not even fulfil the characteristics of a book. How can it be claimed to be the best of all the books?⁸⁸ *Tadabbur-i-Qurān* is conceived to an answer to the challenge that the Qurān is not a coherent book. Islahi wrote his *magnum opus*, on the principles derived from his teacher, Farahi, who address the issue in the beginning of 20th century. Islahi started his work on this project at the beginning of his career and completed it in 1980. The work upholds that Qurān is not a haphazardly arranged book, but that there is a structural and thematic coherence in the Qurān. The arrangement of the Qurān is divine and rational. Islahi divided the whole Quran in seven groups named *Amud* (central theme). Each section is revolving around a particular theme. Each group is started with a Makki sura and ended with a Madani sura. This classification is as; Group I (sura 1-5), II (sura 6-9), III (sura 10-24), IV (sura 25-33), V (sura 34-49), VI (sura 50-66) and VII (sura 67-114); and its themes are Islamīc Law, The consequences of denying the Prophet (PBUH) for the Mushrikīn of Makkah, Glad tidings of the Prophet's domination, Arguments on the Prophethood of Muhammad (PBUH) and the requirements of faith in him, Arguments on Tawhīd and the requirements of faith in it, Arguments on Akhirah and the requirements of faith in it and Admonition (indhār) to the Quraysh about their fate in the Herein and the Hereafter if they deny the Prophet (PBUH).⁸⁹ Each sura is carrying a theme and

87 For example the very title of Richard Bell' work on the Qurān is *The Qurān, Translated, with a Critical Rearrangement of the Suras* 2 vols. (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1937-39).

88 For some objections levelled by the orientalis see, Arthur Jeffry, ed., *Islam: Muhammad and His Religion* (Indianapolis/New York: Bobbs-Merrill, 1958) and "The Quest Of The Historical Mohammad", *The Moslem World*, 1926, Volume XVI, No. 4. pp. 158-162.

89 Shazad Salim, "Tadabbur-i-Qurān (An outline of its Pattern of Nazm)", *Renaissance*, January - February 1998 Vol. 8 Issue 1-2, <http://www.monthly-renaissance.com/issue/content.aspx?id=723> visit date, May 16, 2009

connected with the adjacent sura as pair. Each is complementing the other by different ways with the exception of sura Fatiha. For understanding the meaning it is important to look at Qurān jointly. Recently Dr. Khalid Zaheer conducted a comparison of this exegesis with Mawdudi's *Tafhim al Qurān*.⁹⁰

The concept of *nazm* in Qurān adopted by Islahi in his exegesis lead him to interpret Qurān in many places different from the other 'Ulama.⁹¹ Another characteristic of *Tadabbur-i-Qurān* is specification of the addresses of the text. This is important to determine implication of the tenants of Qurān upon the Muslims.⁹² *Tadabbur-i-Qurān* is influencing Islamīc literature more than any other Qurānic exegetical work in the modern times. No future scholar undertaking interpretation and exposition of Qurān or working on Islamīc themes, can afford to ignore this monumental exegetical work of Islahi.⁹³

19. *Mubādi Tadabbur-i-×adīth* (Principles of Understanding the ×adīth)⁹⁴

Next to the Qurān, ×adīth is considered the most important source of divine guidance. After completion of his commentary on Qurān, Islahi concentrated on the discipline of ×adīth. He had framed the principles of understanding the Qurān. In the same way, he worked for ascertaining the principles to understand the ×adīth literature. Islahi delivered lectures to his associates and students on

90 Khalid Zaheer, "Tadabbur-i-Qurān" Compared (I), *Renaissance*, August 1991; "Tadabbur-i-Qurān" Compared (II), *Renaissance*, November, 1991.

91 See for detail, Hafiz Iftikhar Ahmad, *Al Shaikh Ameen Ahsan Islahi wa Mihijjah fi Tafsih Tadabbur-e-Qurān* (Shaikh Ameen Ahsan Islahi and his Methodology in his tafsir *Tadabbur-e-Qurān*) (Ph.D. Thesis, Department of Arabic, Islamia University, Bahawalpur, 1996). Another work is of Herman Roborgh, *A Critical Analysis of Amin Ahsan Islahi's Approach to Understanding the Qurān*, (Ph.D. thesis Aligarh Muslim University, India, 2006).

92 Consult for details, Javid Ahmad Ghamidi, "Islamī 'alum par Tadabbur-i-Qurān kay 'Asrāt." speech delivered at Islahi Seminar, Islamabad, 13 December 1998 (Vedio Cassette available at Danish Sara, Lahore).

93 See for details Mir, Mustansir. "Thematic and Structural Coherence in the Qurān: A Study of Islahi's Concept of Nazm" (Ph.D. diss. Near Eastern Studies, University of Michigan, 1983).

94 Amin Ahsan Islahi, *Mubādi Tadabbur-i-Qurān* (Lahore: Faran Foundation, 1994).

the subject in 1980s. These lectures have been transcribed into a book by Majid Khawar.

The book comprises ten chapters. Chapter one discusses the difference between *Sunnah* and \times adīth in detail. The second discusses relationship of Qurān, \times adīth and Sunnah. Islahi tries to place each in its due place in *dīn* (religion). From chapter three to nine, Islahi discusses methodology to understand all \times adīth literature. He forwards the following principles: Accepting the Holy Qurān as the final word of God; taking each \times adīth a part of the whole \times adīth literature; the language of \times adīth is the Arabic of the period of the Holy Prophet (PBUH); seeing the context of \times adīth, and finally it should not be contradictory to human intellect and nature. Islahi tries to dispel the impression of people who reject \times adīth due to certain grey areas in the discipline. However, Islahi is not among those who do not accept any criticism on any \times adīth. Islahi considers three works as the main books on the subject matter and in the last chapter he discusses characteristics of these books and their writers. These books are *Mawatta Imam Malik*, *Øahih Imam Bukhari* and *Øahih Imam Muslim*. The book in its nature is unique. It indicates some new avenues towards understanding the \times adīth, a very sensitive issue among Muslims in modern times.

20. Falsafay kay Bunyādi Masāyl Qurān-i- \times akim ki Roshni mayn (Basic Philosophical Issues in the light of Qurān)⁹⁵

Islahi expressed his views on certain basic issues in philosophy and religion in 1980s. In fact he delivered lectures to his students which were edited into articles by Khalid Masud and Mehbub Subhani. These views first appeared in *MīØāq* in 1980s and after compilation were published in a book form. The book discusses six basic issues: the entity and attributes of God: the place of man in the universe; concept of good and evil; freedom and fatalism; reward/punishment and Day of Judgement, and the concept of Prophethood. Islahi first presented views of western thinkers then expressed his criticism and in the end presents the

95 Amin Ahsan Islahi, *Falsafay ki Bunyadi Masayl Qurān-i- \times akim ki Roshni mayn* (Basic Philosophical Issues in the light of the *Qurān*). Mehbub Subhani and Khalid Masud, ed. (Lahore: Faran Foundation, 1991).

views of the holy Qurān. For knowledge of Western thinkers Islahi relied mainly on S.E. Frost's *The Basic Teachings of Great Philosophers* and Will Durant's *The Story of Philosophy*. English translation of some lectures have been done by Saeed Ahmad and appeared in the monthly *Renaissance*, Lahore.⁹⁶

21. *Maqālāt-i-Islahi* (Collection of Islahi Articles), Vol.II⁹⁷

This book is another compilation of Islahi's writings and speeches including one of the very important interviews of Islahi. During the editorship of monthly *Mīṭhāq*, he wrote different articles and editorials covering contemporary issues, some have relevance to present time also. Political issues of the 1960s dominate this volume. General Ayub Khan overthrew the civil government and his move was not much condemned due to incompetence and internal intrigues of politicians. Ayub was believed to bring internal and external stability to the country. During this period, the constitution of 1956 was abrogated and a new constitution was adopted in 1962, followed by presidential election in 1964. Islahi did not support the candidature of Miss Fatima Jinnah on the basis of religion, while majority of the "Ulama active in politics supported her. Islahi expressed his views on the structure of different institutions e.g. Islamīc Advisory Council, Institute of Islamīc Research and establishment of Islamīc University. He presented his views to the president and government on different issues in the shape of articles. This book also contains some of the speeches which he delivered before the post graduate students on different occasions. It shows what he was thinking about the educational system and the responsibility of the new generation. He was against the participation of students in active politics. Last part of the book contains Islahi's views expressed about different personalities. These include Allama Iqbal, Muhammad Ali Jauhar, Mawlana Muhammad Yousaf, Akhtar Ahsan Islahi, Allama Mashriqi etc. Two articles cover his feelings about death of his

96 "Good and Evil: Views of the Philosophers", *Renaissance*, February 1993; 'Good and Evil' *Renaissance*, January-February 1998.

97 Amin Ahsan Islahi, *Maqālāt-i-Islahi* (Collection of Islahi's Articles), Vol.II, Khalid Masud, ed. (Lahore: Faran Foundation, 2004).

son, Abu Salih Islahi who lost his life in a plane crash.⁹⁸ Abu Salih was a young and competent journalist and was among the few good journalists of his time. How Islahi faced this tragedy is an interesting story. Khalid Masud, an illustrious student, compiled the book and it was published after the death of the compiler in October 2003.

Islahi's works also include translation of his teacher's books from Arabic into Urdu e.g. *Alama'n fi Aqşam ul Qurān* (Oaths of the Qurān)⁹⁹, *Majmū'a-i-Tafāsīr-i-Farahi* (Farahi's commentary of selected *suras*),¹⁰⁰ and *Al Ray al-Øalūl fi Man Huwa Úabīh?* (Whom did Abraham sacrifice?).¹⁰¹ Some of Islahi's books have been translated into English. Mr. Salim Kiyani, a student of Islahi in London, completed the translation of first volume of *Tadabbur-i-Qurān*.¹⁰² Mr. Shazad Salim translated some selected portion of *Tadabbur-i-Qurān* in English appeared in the monthly *Renaissance*.¹⁰³ Mawlana Islahi permitted the Turkish translation of *Tadabbur-i-Qurān* by Abdul Hamid Brishiq, a researcher from Turkey.¹⁰⁴

Conclusion

The life of Islahi, an adroit religious scholar of Indo-Pak Subcontinent, can be divided into three phases each having its own features. In the first phase (1930-44) he worked as a teacher and

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- 98 Pakistan International Airways crashed on landing at airport on May 20, 1965 in Cairo killing 124 people.
- 99 Imam Hamiddudin Farahi, *Aqşam ul Qurān* (Oaths of the *Qurān*) Urdu Tran. Mawlana Amin Ahsan Islahi (Lahore: Markazi Anjuman-i-Khuddam-al-Qurān, 1975).
- 100 Imam Hamiddudin Farahi, *Majmū'a-i-Tafāsīr-i-Farahi* Urdu Trans. Amin Ahsan Islahi (Lahore: Faran Foundation, 1998).
- 101 Imam Hamiddudin Farahi, *Úabīh Kon hay?* Translated by Mawlana Amin Ahsan Islahi (Lahore: Markazi Anjuman-i-Khuddam-al-Qurān, 1975).
- 102 The first part i.e. introductory Volume (*Tafsīr of Bismillāhi-r Raīmāni-r Raīm and Sūrah al-Fātiā*) has appeared under the title *Pondering over the Qurān* (Lahore: Dar ut Tazkeer, n.d.). Its latest version is now available as *Tadabbur-e-Qurān — Pondering over the Qurān (Volume One: Tafsīr of Surah al-Fatihah and Surah al-Baqarah)*, (Kuala Lumpur: Islamīc Book Trust, 2007).
- 103 It is now available in book form as *Selections from the Tadabbur-i-Qurān* (Lahore: Al-Mawrid Institute of Islamīc Sciences, 2004).
- 104 Abdul Hamid Braishiq, "Mutawazan wa Mu'tadil 'Alim," *Tadabbur (Special Issue)*, Vol. 60 (1998), p.92.

organiser of *dayra* — a circle devoted to disseminate thought of Farahi through translation and publication of his manuscripts in Madrasat al Islah. The political situation of the country dominated by the freedom struggle of Indian National Congress and All India Muslim League did touch him but he did not involve himself in the practical politics. However he worked hard for the promotion of Madrasa and travelled even to Burma for this purpose. The second phase (1944-58) begins with his migration to Pathankot and working as deputy of Mawdudi in the *Jamā'at-i-Islamī*. He defended *Jamā'at*'s position when it was opposed by the traditional 'Ulama. He worked as a major resource person for the religious and moral training of the *Jamā'at* workers particularly in disseminating the Qurānic teachings. He had to spend sometime in jail due to his affiliation with the *Jamā'at*. But he could not transform himself in the political tilt of the *Jamā'at* in Pakistan. His apolitical tendency brought him back to the field of teaching and research in his third phase started (1958-97). This is the most important phase in Islahi's life. His matured ideas came out in shape of treatises and books. He continued to move forward the thought of Farahi School and completed his exegesis *Tadabbur-i-Qurān* in 1980. His ideas attracted both appreciation and opposition from the 'Ulama and intelligentsia. While dealing with the public dignitaries and government officials he maintained dignity of an 'ālim and upheld the characteristic of the early Muslim religious scholars and jurists by not accepting any lucrative post.

The present dilemma of Muslims between the Muslim militants on one hand and the uncompromising secularists on the other endanger peace and security of the Muslim land. Continuous unrest in these regions could negatively affect the peace and stability of Europe and America also. In such a situation Muslim leadership should rethink some of their facets of national life particularly their religious thinking. Many of these have been re-evaluated by Islahi, his students and associates and thus need an academic investigation by those interested in religion, Muslim politics, Islam and the west and the internal relations of Muslim groups. Last but not the least Man's relation with God needs to be established on the basis propounded by Qurān. Islahi's work,

though, worthwhile is subject to human error and thus also need a critical analysis in the ongoing religious intellectual discourse in Pakistan.