

Writing the History of Medieval India: A Historiographical Analysis of the Works of Professor Muhammad Aslam

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Abstract

Professor Muhammad Aslam (d. 1998) was a distinguished historian of Pakistan who excelled in the history of medieval India, and extensively wrote on its political, religio-spiritual, social, cultural and intellectual aspects. He was a prolific writer, a renowned critic and historian, a devoted teacher, and an extensive traveller. He wrote on varied themes dealing with medieval Indian history based on court chronicles, malfuz (sufi discourses) and maktub (epistles) literature, and hagiographical or tadhkirah (sufi biographies) literature. He also contributed to epigraphy, musicology, as well as to the study of Pakistan movement, history of Pakistan, Islamic history and history of medieval Central Asia. Among his contemporaries, he earned fame as an institution in himself. The present article analyses the varied aspects of Professor Aslam's life, personality and also assesses his academic contribution as a historian.

Keywords: Professor Muhammad Aslam, historian, medieval India, sufi literature, epigraphy, musicology

Professor Muhammad Aslam (d. 1998) was a prominent historian, prolific writer, renowned critic, devoted teacher, and an extensive traveller of Pakistan who excelled in the history of medieval India. He extensively wrote on varied themes, ranging from political and religio-spiritual, to social, cultural and intellectual aspects, dealing with medieval Indian history. Apart

from court chronicles, his historical works were based on *malfuz* (sufi discourses) and *maktub* (epistles) literature, and hagiographical or *tadhkirah* (sufi biographies) literature. He also contributed to epigraphy, musicology, as well as to the study of Pakistan movement, history of Pakistan, Islamic history and history of medieval Central Asia. Among his contemporaries, he earned fame as an institution in himself. The present article is an attempt to highlight varied aspects of Professor Aslam's life, personality and also assess his academic contribution as a historian.

1. Biographical Sketch of Professor Muhammad Aslam

Professor Muhammad Aslam was born to an Arain Chaudhary family on November 28, 1932 at the town of Phillaur in Tehsil Phillaur, District Jalandhar, East Punjab in United India. His great-grandfather served the Indian railways at Phillaur. At that time, the small town of Phillaur served as a regional police training headquarters, where the police personnel from thirty-six districts were trained. In addition to ownership of a piece of agricultural land, the family also ran a cloth shop in the main bazar area of the city of Phillaur. After the death of Prof. Aslam's great-grandfather in 1901 at a young age owing to plague, his son Chaudhary Umar Din (d. 1977) was appointed in Indian railways at the age of sixteen. He was eventually promoted to the European ranks. After his retirement, he settled in Jaranwala, a town near Faisalabad, a few years before the partition of India. Chaudhary Umar Din had five sons, the eldest of whom was Chaudhary Tufail Muhammad (b.1904-d.1979), who was the father of Prof. Aslam. Chaudhary Tufail Muhammad also served the Indian Railways, and later Pakistan Railways. Prof. Aslam spent his childhood at Phillaur, Hansi and Loian. He had only one sister named Nasim Tufail (born 1940), who was seven years younger than him.

In his childhood, Prof. Aslam along with his grandfather and father practically participated in the Pakistan Movement led by Quaid-i-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah under the banner of All India Muslim League (AIML). He attended the thirty-first annual meeting of AIML in 1943 at Karachi. His paternal uncles

named Muhammad Shafi and Muhammad Iqbal were staunch supporters of AIML. Together they organized the AIML at their home town Phillaur.¹ Prof. Aslam also participated in the Civil Disobedience Movement against the Unionist-backed Chief Minister of the Punjab, Malik Khizr Hayat Tiwana (b. 1900-d. 1975; in office 30 December 1942-2 March 1947).²

Owing to his father's transfers, he spent his childhood in different areas such as Phillaur, Hansi and Loiyan, and later in areas which became part of Pakistan such as Lahore, Kundian, Kotri and Rohri with his family. However, his family had already been settled in Lahore before the partition. In Lahore, his father admitted him to Kinnaird School, but shortly afterwards, he changed his school. After passing matriculation from Iqbal High School, he got admission in Islamia College, Lahore, where he was honoured to have the mentorship of great teachers including Mian Shamsuddin and Professor Hamid Ahmad Khan. After passing intermediate examination from Islamia College, he got admitted in Dyal Singh College (established by Sardar Dyal Singh Majaithia in 1910) where he was taught by Allama Tajwar Najibabadi,³ Professor Khadim Mohiyyuddin, Professor Ashiq Muhammad and Professor Rafiq Ahmad, the distinguished teachers of the time. At the same College, Prof. Aslam also benefitted from Prof. Muhammad Shujaiddin who had a great influence and impact on his personality. Prof. Shuja was very fond of him, and often took him to the narrow alleys of the walled city of Lahore, and apprised him of the historical significance of many places and buildings. These visits also kindled a love for the walled city of Lahore in the heart of Prof. Aslam, who later worked and published on the historical places of Lahore.⁴ After passing B.A., he got admitted in the Department of History, University of the Punjab, Lahore from where he did his Masters in History in 1955. After that, he went to Muslim University, Aligarh to pursue higher studies in history but soon came back as he could not adjust himself in the new environment. After coming back from Aligarh, he got admission in Karachi University where he started conducting research on the Mughal Emperor, Shahjahan (r. 1628-58).

However, without completing his studies, he left for England for higher studies. He got admission in Durham University, from where he did BA Honours in Islamic and Arabic Studies in 1960 under the mentorship of renowned scholars including Prof. John A. Haywood (Reader in Arabic), Prof. Frank Ronald Charles Bagley (Professor of Persian and Arabic; d. 1997), and Prof. Richard Hill. In 1962, he completed his Masters in history from Manchester University, where he wrote a Master's essay on Shaykh Ahmad Faruqi Sirhindi (1564-1624). There he had the opportunity of learning Persian from Prof. John Andrew Boyle (d. 1978),⁵ a renowned expert of Persian and Mongolian languages. At Cambridge University, he studied under the mentorship of world-renowned scholars such as Prof. Arthur John Arberry (better known as A. J. Arberry; d. 1969),⁶ Prof. Hubert S. G. Darke (d. 1998),⁷ and Prof. Peter William Avery (d. 2008). He spent four years there, and conducted research on the political thought of a Muslim luminary, Fazl Ullah ibn Ruzbihan Isfahani (d. 1209) as elucidated in his work, *Suluk al-Muluk*, and in 1967 he was awarded the degree of M.Litt. He came back to Pakistan after spending nine years in various prominent universities in England.

Prof. Aslam joined the Department of History, University of the Punjab, Lahore as a lecturer on *ad hoc* basis in September 1967 during the tenure of the Vice Chancellor, Allama Alauddin Siddiqui (d. 1977), to whom he dedicated his first book titled *Din-i Ilahi aur us ka pasmanzar* [The Divine Faith and its Context]. At that time, the Head of the History Department was Prof. Abdul Hamid. Soon his position was regularized in the University. It was the same year (1967) that he started writing research articles at the encouragement of Shaikh Muhammad Ikram (better known as S. M. Ikram; b.1908-d.1973), who was the then director of Idara-i-Thaqafat-i-Islamia [Institute of Islamic Culture], Lahore, and a celebrated civil servant and historian. These articles were published in monthlies *al-Ma'arif* (Lahore) and *Burhan* (Delhi). After three years, in 1970, he was promoted as Reader.

Prof. Aslam served the Department of History, University of the Punjab for almost thirty-five years, and also served as Professor

and Head of the Department. Even after his retirement from the University at the age of 60 in 1992, he continued to serve the department as a visiting faculty member. In addition to it, he also served as a visiting faculty member at the Department of Kashmir Studies (Old Campus), University of the Punjab, Institute of Chemical Engineering and Technology, University of the Punjab, APWA Youth College, Lahore, and Pakistan Engineering Academy, Lahore. His students had great reverence and devotion for him, and he was known among them as an encyclopedia of knowledge.

He got married to Ms. Rehana Said (henceforth, Mrs. Rehana Aslam; born 1942) in 1967, the daughter of Prof. Said Ahmad Akbarabadi (b. 1908-d. 1985),⁸ a renowned academic and religious scholar of Deoband school known for his open-minded religious outlook. Prof. Aslam used to remark that his father-in-law was the most open-minded and liberal religious scholar in entire South Asia after Mawlana Ubaid-Allah Sindhi (d. 1944). Prof. Akbarabadi served as the Dean of Theology (Sunni) at Muslim University, Aligarh (1963-66), and also taught at McGill University, Canada and University of Durban, South Africa. Prof. Aslam died on October 6, 1998 as a result of cardiac arrest, and was buried in Miyani Sahib Graveyard in Lahore beside the graves of his parents. He was survived by a widow, two sons and two daughters. Presently, Mrs. Rehana Aslam lives in the United States of America with her children. Their eldest son, Fuad Zufer (b. 1967) got engineering degree from the University of Engineering and Technology (UET), Lahore and EMBA from Washington University in St. Louis, USA, and presently he is leading a technical team in Nokia, Kansas City, USA. Their two daughters are Zamila Farzana (b. 1970), who also got an engineering degree from UET, and lives near Chicago, USA, and Dr. Tanvir Anjum (b. 1973), one of the co-authors of this chapter, is presently serving as a Tenured Professor at the Department of History, Quaid-i-Azam University, Islamabad, while their youngest son, Farooq Nafey (b. 1975) is an IT expert working as enterprise cloud architect with Oracle Inc. USA.

Prof. Aslam was a staunch follower of Sunni Islam. He got inclined towards spirituality and sufi tradition in his childhood.

He writes in the preface of his book, *Malfuzati Adab ki Tarikhi Ahammiyat* [The Historical Importance of *Malfuz* Literature] that basic lessons of sufi tradition were taught to him in his childhood by Mian Ghulam Muhammad of Ramgarh (presently situated in the Indian state of Jharkhand), who later settled at Hafizabad.⁹ It was the impact of his company that nurtured love for the sufis and inclination towards sufi tradition in his heart. Though he had many practicing sufis among his friends including Saiyyid Nafees Shah al-Hussaini (a renowned calligrapher, and a Chishti-Sabiri sufi; b.1933-d.2008),¹⁰ Hakim Muhammad Musa Amritsari (a Chishti-Nizami sufi; d. 1999), he got himself initiated in the Chishti-Sabiri *Silsilah* during the last years of his life at the hand of Mawlana Shah Abrar al-Haqq Chishti of Radauli (a city in District Faizabad, Uttar Pradesh), who was a *khalifa* of a celebrated Chishti-Sabiri sufi, Mawlana Ashraf Ali Thanvi (b.1863-d.1943).

Prof. Aslam also benefitted from the company of Mawlana Ubaid-Allah Anwar (d.1989), son of Mawlana Ahmad Ali Lahori (b.1887-d.1962), a notable religious scholar associated with Deoband school, and the founder of Khuddam al-Din Movement at Sheranwala Gate, Lahore. He also used to deliver lectures at the mosque and *madrassah* at Sheranwala Gate, run by Mawlana Ubaid-Allah Anwar's son, Mawlana Muhammad Ajmal Qadri (one of Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam's leaders). Prof. Aslam had a great devotion for Hakim Muhammad Musa Chishti-Nizami Amritsari (d. 1999), to whom he dedicated his travelogue titled *Safarnama-i' Hind* [Travelogue of India] as well. In addition, he greatly revered Makhdum Sajjad Hussain Qureshi (b. 1923-d. 1988), the former Governor of Punjab (Dec 1985-Dec 1988), who was a spiritual descendant of the illustrious Suhrawardi sufi, Shaykh Baha al-Din Zakariyya of Multan (d. 1267). He dedicated his book titled *Muhammad bin Qasim aur us kay Janashin* [Muhammad ibn Qasim and His Descendants] to Makhdum Sahib. He had great reverence for prominent scholars like Shah Muhammad Jafar Phulwarvi (b.1902-d.1982), and Mawlana Hamid Mian (b.1926-d.1988; the founder of Deobandi *madrassah* Jamia Madania) and his two sons, Muhammad Mian and Ahmad Mian, associated with Jamia Madania, Lahore.

Among his other friends included Hakim Muhammad Said of Hamdard (renowned scholar, *hakim*/practitioner of Eastern medicine, philanthropist, and the Governor of Sindh, 1993-96; b.1920-d.1998), Prof. Syed Salman Nadvi (b.1954-; renowned religious scholar based in South Africa University, and the son of renowned scholar, Syed Sulaiman Nadvi, b.1884-d.1953), Prof. Saeed-ud-Din Dar (former Director, National Institute of Pakistan Studies, Quaid-i-Azam University, Islamabad, 1984-89), M. Aslam (one of the most prolific Urdu novelists), Ghulam Nabi Muslim (religious scholar and writer, who served Central Model School for decades), Ashraf Saboochi Dehlavi (Urdu writer and translator; b.1905-d.1990), Muhammad Abdullah Qureshi, Mufti Atiq al-Rahman Usmani (editor, *Burhan*, who lived in Delhi), Malik Ram (celebrated Indian scholar of Persian and Arabic languages; b.1906-d.1993), Prof. Khaliq Ahmad Nizami (diplomat and historian at Muslim University, Aligarh; b.1925-d.1997), Prof. Mukhtar Ud Din Ahmad Arzo (Professor of Arabic at Muslim University, Aligarh; b. 1924-d.2010), Mushfiq Khwaja (prominent writer and columnist; b.1935-d.2005), Prof. Syed Razi Wasti (historian and Professor Emeritus, Government College, Lahore; b. 1929-d.1999), Mufti Zia ul-Haq of Delhi, Dr. Waheed Qureshi (notable scholar, writer, educationist and linguist; b.1925-d.2009), Dr. Ibadat Barelwi (noted literary critic of Urdu language and educationist) and Shan-ul-Haq Haqqee (Urdu poet, writer and linguist; b.1917-d.2005).

Prof. Aslam was also a social worker and a philanthropist. He was a member of Board of Governors of *Anjuman-i Sulaimaniyya*, an orphanage established in Samanabad near his residence. He used to donate a huge amount of charity for orphans and needy including his own students, as well as annually raise funds for constructing mosques and running some of the seminaries such as *Dar al-'Ulum* in Faqirwali (District Bahawalnagar), and *Dar al-'Ulum Aminiyya* in Jaranwala (District Faisalabad).

2. Contribution of Prof. Aslam as a Historian

Prof. Aslam richly contributed to the discipline of history by his prolific writings on varied aspects of history. His penchant for

research was widely recognized in academic and religious circles in India and Pakistan. His academic works included books, and articles which appeared in leading research journals, magazines and newspapers of India and Pakistan from 1957 till his death in 1998. He mostly wrote in Urdu language. One of the greatest strengths of Prof. Aslam as a historian was his thorough and in-depth knowledge of Arabic and Persian languages, which enabled him to directly undertake the study of manuscripts of medieval historiographical works as well as sufi and other genres of literature without relying on their translations. He was of the habit that he never left even a single day without reading books and writing, and even the busy days of eid celebration were no exception. He used to start writing research articles on different topics simultaneously; however, he managed them according to his mood. His residence (950/N) in Samanabad, Lahore also served as the Lahore/Pakistan chapter of *Nadwat al-Musannifin*, a Delhi-based publishing house devoted to publishing and disseminating research on Islamic Studies.¹¹ Most of his works were included in the MA History curriculum of the University of the Punjab as well as other universities in the country. What follows is a brief discussion on books authored by him.

Books Authored by Prof. Aslam

The first book authored by Prof. Aslam is *Din-illahi aur us ka pasmanzar* [Divine Faith and its Context] published by *Nadwat al-Musannifin*, Delhi in 1969. Part of it was first published as an article in monthly *al-Ma'arif*, Lahore in January 1968. However, on the insistence of Hakim Muhammad Musa Amritsari, he developed it into a full-fledged book. The author candidly admits in the preface that while writing this book, he was neither interested in the religious perspective of Din-i Ilahi, nor in the religiosity or personal life of Emperor Akbar (r. 1556-1605). He was more interested in investigating the movement led by Shaykh Ahmad Sirhindi, better known as Mujaddid Alif Thani (d. 1626), which necessitated an examination of Din-i Ilahi.¹² He relied on contemporary sources like *Maktubat-i Imam Rabbani* (the epistles of Shaykh Ahmad Sirhindi, compiled in 3 Vols.), *Muntakhib al-Tawarikh* by 'Abd al-Qadir Badayuni, and *Muballigh al-Rijal* by Khwaja Ubaid-Allah ibn Khwaja Baqi Bi-

Allah of Delhi, in addition to other relevant primary sources in Persian language. The work throws ample light on Akbar's religious orientation in early phase of life, the worldly *ulama* and sufis, influence of the Hindus and Christians on Akbar, the role of Shaykh Mubarak and his sons, Faizi and Abul Fazl, as well as the impact of Bhakti and Nuqtawi Movements on Akbar's liberalism.

Tarikhi Maqalat [Articles on Historical Research] was the second work by the author published from *Nadwat al-Musannifin*, Lahore in 1970. He dedicated it to Professor Shaikh Abdur Rashid, who served the Department of History, Muslim University, Aligarh and later University of the Punjab, Lahore. It was compiled at the behest of Muhammad Abdullah Qureshi and Hakim Muhammad Musa Amritsari. The work is a collection of thirteen articles previously published in varied research journals of India and Pakistan on the following diverse themes and topics: Was any daughter of Sultan Ghiyath al-Din Balban (r. 1266-86) married to the Chishti sufi, Baba Farid of Pakpattan (d. 1271), a rare treatise by Fazl-Allah ibn Ruzbihan Isfahani, *Muballigh al-Rijal* by Khwaja Ubaid-Allah, the library of Pir Muhammad Shah, Mughal Emperors' patronage of music, contributions of the Muslims in the field of geography and medicine, Khwaja Muhammad Hashim Kishmi (the author of *Zubdat ul-Maqamat*), *Futuh-at-i Firuzshahi*, Indo-Muslim poetry on coinage, the role of *ulama* and sufis in the ascension of Emperor Aurangzeb Alamgir, Muslim architecture, and the arrival of Data Ganj Bakhsh in Lahore. In 1991, the book was reprinted from Book Talk, Lahore, with few additional articles.

The third book authored by Prof. Aslam was titled *Muslim Conduct of State: Based Upon the Suluk-ul-muluk of Fadl-Ullah Bin Ruzbihan Isfahani*, published from the University of Islamabad Press (now known as Quaid-i-Azam University, Islamabad) in 1974. Based on the M.Litt. dissertation he wrote at the Cambridge University, it is an annotated and translated work based upon Fazl-Allah ibn Ruzbihan Isfahani's (d. 1209) Persian treatise, *Suluk al-Muluk*. It is primarily a manual of state

conduct, administration, state institutions, as well as duties and rights of Muslim rulers. It is the first ever English translation of *Suluk al-Muluk* that covers statesmanship of Muslim rulers from ninth to sixteen centuries.

The next work authored was titled *Sarmaya-i' Umar* [The Asset of Life] published from *Nadwat al-Musannifin*, Lahore in 1976. Like his earlier work, it was also a collection of research articles published in various research journals of Pakistan and India. The author dedicated it to his grandfather, Chaudhary Umar Din and thus, named it after him.¹³ The work includes research articles on diverse themes such as Shah Fath-Ullah Shirazi (a scientist of Mughal era), Indian classical music during the reigns of Sultan Firuz Tughluq and Emperor Akbar, patronage of Hindu culture and literature by the Sultans of Delhi, *tadhkirah* or biography of Shaykh Hassu Teli by Surat Singh, historical significance of Punjabi romantic folktale, *Hir* composed by Waris Shah, the relationship of Emperor Jahangir with Shaykh Ahmad Sirhindi, religious orientation of Emperor Shahjahan and the Mughal Prince, Dara Shikoh, development of literature under the Arab rule in Sindh, the *mal'fuzat* of Chishti sufi, Khwaja Bandanawaz Gesudiraz, the role of *ulama* in the ascension of Emperor Jehangir, and Emperor Humayun's interest in astrology.

In addition, Prof. Aslam edited and translated in Urdu the Persian text of *Risala-i' Sahibiyya*, written by the Mughal Princess, Jehanara (b.1614-d.1681), who was the eldest daughter of Emperor Shahjahan. The work provides valuable information about Jehanara and her brother, Dara Shikoh's religious views, as it deals with the life and teachings of Mulla Shah Badakhshi (d. 1661; the *khalifa* of Miyan Mir Qadiri of Lahore; b.1550-d.1635), who was their mentor or spiritual guide. It was published as a special issue of the *Journal of the Research Society of Pakistan* (Vol. XVI, No. 4) in 1979. Prof. Aslam also edited the Persian text of an autobiography by a Persian noble, Tahmas Beg Khan (b.1738-d.1803) titled *Tahmas Namah*, which was published from University of the Punjab, Lahore in 1986. Its author, Tahmas Beg Khan, was the father of the renowned Urdu poet and prose writer, Sa'adat Yar Khan 'Rangin.'

Prof. Aslam compiled *Maulana Ubaid-Allah Sindhi kay Siyasi Maktubat* [Political Epistles of Maulana Ubaid-Allah Sindhi], published by *Nadwat al-Musannifin*, Lahore, and is undated. It is a collection of rare political letters of Ubaid-Allah Sindhi (d. 1944), who himself rarely wrote any book or treatise. It was his disciples and devotees who learned and preserved his teachings and thoughts. These letters were addressed to Dr. Muhammad Iqbal Shedai (d. 1974), a political activist and anti-imperialist Muslim leader of the time, and discuss the contemporary political conditions in India. For getting access to these letters, Prof. Aslam consulted the private collection of the real brother of Shedai, named Dr. Muhammad Jamal Bhutta, the founder of Nishtar Medical College, Multan.¹⁴

In 1990, he compiled a dictionary of the dates of death of famous personalities of Pakistan titled *Wafiyat-i Mashahir-i Pakistan*, published by *Muqtdra Quami Zuban* [National Language Authority], Islamabad. It contains valuable information about the personalities who expired during the forty years after the creation of Pakistan, i.e. from August 14, 1947 to August 14, 1987. Its preface was written by Dr. Jameel Jalibi (b.1929-d.2019), who was a celebrated linguist, literary critic, writer, and scholar of Urdu literature, and also served as the Vice-Chancellor, University of Karachi, and the Director, *Muqtdra Quami Zuban*, Islamabad. Another booklet of this genre was *Wafiyat-i A'ayan-i Pakistan*, published by him in 1992.

In 1991, the Research Society of Pakistan, University of the Punjab, Lahore published his work titled *Kuftagan-i Karachi*, which deals with epigraphy, and provides valuable information about the biographical sketches and the epitaphs of illustrious scholars, writers and other renowned people buried in various graveyards of Karachi. It is dedicated to his friend, Hakim Muhammad Saeed Dehlavi, Chairman Hamdard National Foundation. Two years later, in 1993 he published *Kuftagan-i Khak-i Lahore*, which deals with the epigraphical records of the epitaphs and biographical sketches of the renowned personalities buried in different graveyards of Lahore. These works provide valuable insights into the personal life and religious beliefs of the notables mentioned in the book.

Prof. Aslam authored *Salatin-i-Delhi wa Shahan-i-Mughliyya ka Zauq-i Mausiqi* [The Sultans of Delhi and Mughal Emperors' Inclination for Indian Music] published from the Department of History, University of the Punjab in 1992. He dedicated it to his wife's cousin, Prof. Mujtaba Ahmad 'Alvi (who was a musicologist and taught history at the Muslim University, Aligarh) and Shaikh Masud Ahmad (In-charge, Music Cell, Radio Pakistan, Lahore). It is a collection of his articles on the origin and subsequent development of music in early Muslim Civilization and in medieval South Asia, the contribution of Chishti sufis such as Amir Khusrau (d. 1325) to it, and sufi music during the times of Chishti sufi, Saiyyid Bandanawaz Gesudiraz. He evaluates the fondness and patronage of Muslim rulers to music such as Sultan Firuz Tughlaq (r. 1352-88), Sultan Sikandar Lodhi (r. 1489-1517), as well as the development of music during the Mughal era from the reign of Emperor Babar (r. 1526-30) to Emperor Aurangzeb (r. 1658-1707). In this work, the author argues that in medieval times, it was not prohibited to learn music because it was considered a branch of knowledge and practiced as a form of art. It was only later that a negative perception was attached to it when it was adopted by concubines and sex-workers as a profession.¹⁵ This work has recently been reprinted by Idara-i-Thaqafat-i-Islamia [Institute of Islamic Culture], Lahore in 2020.

In 1993, at the request, rather insistence, of a Lahore-based publisher, Prof. Aslam authored *Tehrik-i-Pakistan* [The Movement for Pakistan], published by Riaz Brothers, Lahore in 1993, though it is undated. It is a collection of his lectures on the freedom movement he delivered at various universities and colleges all across the country. It comprises thirty-three chapters. In addition, he added a timeline of events taking place between 1564 and 1991. It is a detailed and chronological study of developments that shaped the movement for the creation of Pakistan. The book is meant for high school and college students.

Prof. Aslam authored *Malfuzati Adab ki Tarikhi Ahammiyat* [The Historical Significance of *Malfuz* Literature] published from the Research Society of Pakistan, University of the Punjab, Lahore in 1995. It includes twenty-nine chapters, each dealing

with one particular sufi *malfuz* belonging to the sufis of varied *silsilahs*. A *malfuz* is a table-talk or conversation of the sufis held in their *khanqahs* or sufi dwellings, and often recorded by their disciples. Some of them include *Fawaid al-Fuad*, *Durr-i Nizami*, *Surur al-Sadur*, *Ahsan al-Aqwal*, *Khwan-i Pur Ni 'mat*, *Khazana-i ' Jawahir-i Jalaliyya*, *Tuhfatul-Majalis*, *Mahbub al-Qulub*, *Majalis-i Kalimi*, and *Durr al-Ma'arif*, etc. These chapters had earlier been appeared as research articles in different research journals of India and Pakistan. Before discussing the *malfuzat* one by one, the author introduced the subject, and investigated the origin of the *malfuz* genre. The work offers an in-depth content analysis of these *malfuzat*, in addition to assessing their authenticity, and introducing their compilers. It highlights the significance and impact of this literature on historiographical tradition.

Being an extensive traveller, Prof. Aslam recorded his experiences and observations in his travelogue titled *Safarnama-i ' Hind*, published by Riaz Brothers, Lahore in 1995. Its preface was written by the renowned Urdu writer and critic, Anwar Sadeed (d. 2016). It covers the story of his extensive journeys to twelve states and thirty-six cities and countless small towns of India between 1950 and 1982. These places include metropolitan cities like Delhi and Calcutta, religious centres like Deoband, Bareilly, Qadiyan and Benares, spiritual centres like Ajmer and Sirhind, as well as the coastal region of Gujrat and its capital, Ahmadabad, in addition to Deccan, Kashmir, and historical cities and towns including Chitor, Kandhala, Saharanpur, Amroha, Moradabad, Rampur, Badayun, Shahjahanpur, Azimabad (Patna), Lucknow, Radauli, Azamgarh, Ambeitha, Gangoh, Nanauta, Patiala, Shimla, Agra, FathpurSikri, Gwalior, Allahabad, Kanpur, Panipat, Amritsar, Batala, Jaunpur, Aligarh, Nainital, Almora, Phillaur, Ranikhet and Meerut. The work highlights the historical, religious, spiritual, literary and cultural significance of these places. This work was reprinted by *Bazm-i Takhliq-i Adab*, Karachi in November 2018.

Another book titled *Muhammad bin Qasim aur us kay Janashin* [Muhammad ibn Qasim and His Successors] was published by Riaz Brothers, Lahore in 1996. It offers a systematic and detailed

study of the military expeditions of the Arabs and the subsequent Arab rule in Sindh and Gujrat, with a particular reference to Muhammad ibn Qasim (d. 715). This work studies the arrival of the Muslims to India, their influence on socio-economic, cultural, intellectual and political aspects of Indian society, and subsequent historical developments. Most of the historians close the chapter of the history of Sindh at the point of Muhammad ibn Qasim's arrest and journey back to Iraq. Abruptly, they start from the history of Sabuktigin (r. 977-97) and Mahmud (r. 998-1030), the rulers of Ghazna. However, the history of intervening three hundred years between them is silenced. This work fills an important gap of history spanning from the conquest of Muhammad ibn Qasim in the beginning of the eighth century till the Ghaznavid conquests in the tenth century.

Edited Works and Textbooks

Prof. Aslam reviewed and edited some books including *Abdullah ibn Masud aur un ki Fiqh* [Abdullah ibn Masud and His Jurisprudence] published in 1971 from Lahore, and based on a PhD dissertation produced at Muslim University, Aligarh; *Syed Ali Hamadani*, published from Lahore in 1972, and based on PhD dissertation produced at University of the Punjab; Vol. 2 of *Fehrist-i Makhtutat-i Sherani* [Bibliography of the Manuscripts in Sherani Collection] published by the Research Society of Pakistan, Lahore, and *Catalogue Kutub-i Sirat* [Catalogue of Books on the Biography of Prophet Muhammad PBUH], compiled by Muhammad Ahmad, and published by Writers' Guild, Lahore.

In addition, he also authored textbooks of history such as *Tarikh-i Islami Hind (Mughliyya daur)*, co-authored with Prof. Syed Ali Abbas, on the history of Mughal India, *Tarikh-i Dunya-i' Islam* (Lahore, 1974) on the Muslim world during the twentieth century, and *Tarikh-i-Pakistan* (Lahore, 1977) on the history of Pakistan. He also contributed chapters to matriculation and intermediate level textbooks of history, Pakistan Studies and Punjabi. These books were published by the Punjab Textbook Board, Lahore. He also authored social studies textbooks for the students of seventh and eighth grades.

Articles in Research Journals, Magazines and Newspapers

Prof. Aslam rendered a good number of research articles and essays on varied aspects of the history of medieval South Asia, medieval Central Asia, as well as the history of Islam. These articles and essays, which numbered more than two hundred, appeared in renowned research journals, magazines and newspapers of India and Pakistan including *Burhan* (Delhi), *al-Furqan* (Lucknow), *Khoj Darpun* (Amritsar), *al-Ma'arif* (Lahore), *al-Habib* (Lahore), *Sahifa* (Lahore), *Mithaq* (Lahore), *Khoj* (Lahore), *Haram* (Lahore), *al-Balagh* (Karachi), *al-'Ilm* (Karachi), *Bai'yanat* (Karachi), *Barg-i Gul* (Karachi), *al-Wali* (Hyderabad, Sindh), *al-Zubayr* (Bahawalpur), *al-Haqq* (Akora Khattak), *Pakistan* (Peshawar), *Tahqiq* (Oriental College Magazine, Lahore), *Central Asia* (Journal of Area Study Centre, University of Peshawar), *Journal of Research Society of Pakistan* (Lahore), *Iqbal Review* (Lahore), and *Pakistan Journal of Historical and Cultural Research* (Islamabad). Many of these research articles were later published by him in books containing collection of articles.

3. Critical Analysis of Scholarship and Historical Perspective

What follows is a critical analysis of his sources, framework of analysis or perspective, and his contribution to history-writing, with particular reference to under-studied fields of history like epigraphy, sufi literature, especially *malfuzat*, and musicology.

3.1 Sources

Being well versed in Persian and Arabic languages, in addition to Urdu, Punjabi and English, Prof. Aslam heavily relied on Persian and Arabic published works as well as unpublished manuscripts for his historical research. For instance, the first chapter of his book, *Muhammad bin Qasim aur us kay Janashin*, deals with a historiographical review of the Arabic and Persian sources including Maqdisi, Yaqubi, Masudi, Tabari, Ibn Athir, Yaqut al-Hamavi, Ibn Hauqal and Istakhri,¹⁶ which he consulted for undertaking research. While abroad, he consulted the rich libraries of Manchester, Oxford and Cambridge Universities, as well as the British Library in London, UK. Moreover, he

consulted numerous libraries and private book collections of many scholars in the length and breadth of Pakistan and India for undertaking research. Quite often, he used to consult Dyal Singh Trust Library, Lahore, Punjab Public Library, Lahore, Azar Collection of the Central Library of the University of the Punjab, Lahore, and the library of the *Khanqah* of Taunsa Sharif (District Dera Ghazi Khan). In addition, he frequently visited India, for consulting various libraries which housed some of the rare manuscripts of *malfuzat*, *tadhkirah*, *maktubat* and other genres of sufi literature as well as other related books. Among them Khuda Bakhsh Oriental Public library, Bankipur (Patna), Abul Kalam Azad Library, Muslim University, Aligarh, Sir Salar Jang Museum, Hyderabad (Deccan), Raza Library, Rampur, and the library of *Nadwat al-Ulama*, Lucknow, among others, are noteworthy. Moreover, he frequently consulted the private collections of Hakim Musa Amritsari (which has now been donated to the Central Library of the University of the Punjab, Lahore), Dr. Waris Ali Tirmizi (Nazimabad, Karachi), and Dr. Muhammad Jamal Bhutta.¹⁷ In addition to scholarly and academic works, he enormously contributed to popular magazines and Urdu newspapers as well for wider dissemination of his views. He mostly wrote in Urdu, and that was why his works enjoyed wider readership in Pakistan and India.

Prof. Aslam presents a different perspective on the medieval Indian history largely relying on the previously ignored 'non-statist' sources such as the sufi literature. The dominant historiographical tradition in South Asian history privileges the historiographical works of medieval India, primarily including the court chronicles which offer a 'statist' discourse. The conventional historiography tends to rely more on the statist historiographical works by historians directly or indirectly associated with the courts. These works shed light on the political, administrative and military history, and fail to take into account the multiple aspects of social, cultural and religious history of medieval India.¹⁸ Contrarily, the sufi literature is considered an alternative source of history, which can rectify the mistaken assertions, faulty assumptions, and impressions created by the statist sources.¹⁹ In this regard, Prof. K. A. Nizami of Aligarh, along with Prof. Hasan Askari of Patna (d. 1990)²⁰ and

Ziauddin A. Desai (d. 2002)²¹ initiated the trend of consulting non-statist sources of medieval Indian history, which was furthered by Prof. Aslam. He undertook a thorough research on varied aspects of *malfiz* literature. His work, *Malfizati Adab ki Tarikhi Ahammiyat* offers a systematic study of twenty-nine *malfizat* produced in medieval and early modern India. Their study opens up new vistas of knowledge and fresh avenues for research on varied aspects of the social life of medieval and early modern India. In this regard, his travelogue, *Safarnama-i' Hind* is unconventional as it points out the location of various important and rare Persian manuscripts of Indian history, housed in various libraries of India.

3.2 Framework of Analysis or Perspective

The major framework employed by Prof. Aslam in his writings was that of Muslim nationalism. It seems pertinent to briefly discuss its emergence and characteristics. Nationalism as a discourse is closely linked to history and history-writing. In Europe, the concept of a 'national history' developed when the Romanticist historians tried to write the history of their own nations.²² Systematic nationalist historiographical tradition, however, emerged in Germany during the nineteenth century. Nationalism as a political ideology became popular in South Asia during the twentieth century but in contrast to Europe (where the bases of nationalism were territorial along with the commonality of ethnicity, culture and language), in South Asia religion became the chief denominator for nationalism. So in addition to Indian nationalism (the idea that all Indians constitute one nation), there emerged religiously defined variants of nationalism such as Hindu, Muslim and Sikh nationalisms. It also led to communalization of history-writing in South Asia, giving birth to Hindu and Muslim communal histories. It was also a response to the dogmatic assertions of imperialist historiography largely produced in Orientalist framework during the colonial era. Elliot and Dowson's 8 volumes, *A History of India as Told by its Own Historians*, for instance, is said to have aroused "communal passions,"²³ as not only Hindus and Muslims were imagined as two distinct and separate

communities or nations, the two were also historically pitted against each other.

The nationalist narrative in Pakistan, as reflected from the writings, particularly the textbooks, of the historian under study, presents religion as the most important agent of change in South Asian society and history. It projects two-nation theory on the basis of Hindu-Muslim differences, and provides a historical basis for it. Islam and Hinduism are presented as two poles apart religious traditions, assuming a neat demarcation between the Hindu and Muslim communities in political, religious, social and cultural terms. It is argued that in pre-partition India, the Hindus and the Muslims lived as two completely separate and identifiable nations or communities despite living as neighbours for centuries. These diverse communities in the Indian subcontinent could not fuse into a single nation, and all efforts to provide a bridge between them had failed. The partition of India and the subsequent creation of Pakistan, presented as a natural outcome of the historical processes, is interpreted in framework of Hindu-Muslim separatism. According to Hardy, the narrative, as reflected from many Muslim nationalist historiographical works, strictly follows a diachronic trend with an underlying assumption that the historical events taking place through the centuries inevitably lead to an assumed end, culminating in the creation of Pakistan. The interpretation is linear and teleological in nature.²⁴

Through his writings, Prof. Aslam tried to provide empirical evidence for the ideology of Pakistan, based on Two Nation theory. The Muslims and Hindus were imagined as two bounded religious communities, having essentialized cores. There are frequent references to the Hindu mind/psyche/mentality, their machinations and intrigues, or Hindus as inferior beings in his works.²⁵ Through this “othering” of the Hindus and Hinduism in South Asia, the author, in fact, tried to define his own identity as a Muslim. With the help of selective historical data, as evidenced from his *Tehrik-i Pakistan*, Prof. Aslam highlighted instances of Hindu-Muslim conflict, ignoring almost all avenues of their cooperation and collaboration. Contrarily, in his travelogue he acknowledges the social harmony between the Hindus and the

Muslims.²⁶ Ironically, he was a student of Sufism in medieval India, which offers countless examples of such cooperation and collaboration. He glorified the views of those South Asian scholars such as Shaykh Ahmad Sirhindi, who had expressed hostile views towards the Hindus, almost ignoring the views of those Muslim scholars and sufis whose approach was characterized by conciliation and friendliness.²⁷

The national narrative offered by Prof. Aslam imagines the communal identities in South Asia as rigid and fixed, with roots in ancient or medieval past, though communalism, as we know it in contemporary South Asia, is a modern phenomenon that emerged during the colonial times when nationalism took roots in the region.²⁸ While doing so, he tried to seek continuities with the medieval times. The Two-Nation Theory and the ideology of Pakistan were projected backwards into medieval South Asia. Though, in pre-colonial times, the religious identities were not sharply defined. For the *ashraf* or the migrants, the ethnic identities such as Turkic or Persian identities were far more important than their religious identity.²⁹ The same is true for the 'Hindu' identity, which was initially a geographical identity, but was imagined and invented as a part of the colonial discourse.³⁰ Nonetheless, the nationalist narrative tries to prove that Indian Muslims were one single undifferentiated and monolithic nation. In short, there is strong communalist approach in the writings of Prof. Aslam. One must not forget that the term 'communal' has a specific meaning in Indian context, as Thapar reminds that communalism in the Indian sense is

“a consciousness which draws on a supposed religious identity and uses this as the basis for an ideology. It then demands political allegiance to a religious community and supports a programme of political action designed to further the interests of that religious community. Such an ideology is of recent origin but uses history to justify the notion that the community (as defined in recent history) and therefore the communal identity have existed since the early past.”³¹

Prof. Aslam partly acknowledged the historical role of the sufis in South Asia, but the portrayal of the sufis is somewhat selective. Only those sufi masters find a favourable mention in his works which fit in the Muslim nationalist framework. His works do not represent Sufism in its totality, as many sufi voices of religious pluralism, inclusivity, and inter-faith harmony have been silenced in his narrative.³² For instance, Bhakti Movement originating in the sixth century AD does not find a favourable mention in his nationalist narrative, and misinterpreted as an attempt to merge Islam and Hinduism. The core message, teachings and impacts of Bhakti Movement in creating peace and inter-faith harmony in South Asia are not acknowledged.

Like other nationalist historians, Prof. Aslam linked the spread of Islam to the sufi activities, assuming the sufis as 'missionaries' or proselytizers of Islam, who converted the non-Muslims or the Hindus to Islam in large numbers. It must be remembered that the mistaken sufi-missionary equation first appeared in Thomas Arnold's *The Preaching of Islam*, published in 1913,³³ from where the Muslim nationalist historians uncritically borrowed it. Thus, the narrative gives the credit of conversion largely to the sufis, understood as 'missionaries' of Islam, comparable to the Catholic missions, which are purpose-specific groups with the mission or goal of conversion to Christianity. However, historically speaking, it would be erroneous to assume that all sufis were consciously and intentionally involved in the process of conversion. Many sufis, particularly many of the Chishtis, Qadiris and Shattaris, did not consider conversion to Islam as a pre-requisite for an individual's spiritual development. Moreover, conversion to Islam in South Asia, as shown by Eaton, was not always a conscious act; it was a glacial process, in which multiple agents played their role, and that mass conversion, which is attributed to the sufi masters, often lacked conviction.³⁴

The historical writings of Prof. Aslam present the sufis as reformers of Islam with puritanical goals, trying to purify Islam of all Hindu accretions, which is said to have eventually fostered separate Muslim identity and consciousness. It is argued that fearing complete assimilation of the Muslims in Hindu majority,

the Muslim leaders including the sufi masters strove to preserve their separate identity, and thus saved them from merging in Hinduism. The foremost among them is the Naqshbandi sufi, Shaykh Ahmad Sirhindi, invariably referred to as 'Mujaddid Alf Thani' (The Reviver of the Second Millennium). He is believed to have played a very crucial role in preserving the separate Muslim identity.³⁵ His anti-Hindu stance is appreciated and magnified, whereas his sympathetic views regarding Hindus and Hinduism, which he developed later in his life,³⁶ are conveniently skipped. Prof. Aslam highlights the role of other reformers and champions of separate Muslim identity including Shah 'Abd al-Aziz (the son of Shah Wali-Allah), Syed Ahmad Barelvi, who initiated Jihad Movement along with Shah Ismail Shaheed, and others such as Dadu Mian, Syed Nisar Ali (Titu Mir) and Haji Shariat-Allah, who initiated Faraizi movement in Bengal.

An important characteristic of nationalist historiography is valorization of historical personalities, which goes hand in hand with the heroization and villainization of historical actors. The writings of Prof. Aslam tend to heroize the Mughal Emperor, Aurengzeb Alamgir as a reformer and champion of Islam, who was influenced by the views of Sirhindi and his successors, and thus lauds his efforts in this regard, while villainizing Prince Dara Shikoh, the political opponent of Aurengzeb.³⁷ Dara Shikoh, who was an accomplished Qadiri sufi theosophist and author, is presented as a heretic, and strongly condemned for his so-called heterodox views. He is almost portrayed as a villain—an infidel or unbeliever, who preached heretical views through his writings, most notably *Majma' al-Bahrayn* [The Confluence of Two Oceans]. Dara's views are interpreted as a challenge to the separate Muslim identity. As a matter of fact, the said work was merely an attempt to harmonize the Hindu-Muslim relationship by highlighting the similarities between the esoteric traditions of Islam (Sufism) and Hinduism (Vedantism). In a similar vein, the efforts of Shah Wali-Allah, who invited Ahmad Shah Abdali to crush Maratha power in the Third Battle of Panipat (1761), are appreciated, while Syed Ahmad Barelvi and Shah Ismail Shaheed who fought against the Sikhs, are presented as the holy warrior sufis.

Prof. Aslam vehemently contested the perspective of Hindu nationalist historians including Hem Chandra Raychaudhari (d. 1957),³⁸ R. C. Majumdar (d. 1980),³⁹ Kalikinkar Datta (d. 1982),⁴⁰ and Ishwari Prasad (d. 1986).⁴¹ These historians highlighted the role of the Hindus in medieval Indian history, while minimizing the contribution of the Muslims.⁴² The assertions of these Hindu nationalist historians were later challenged and countered by Muslim historians including Hafiz Mahmood Sherani (d. 1946),⁴³ Dr. Agha Mahdi Husain,⁴⁴ Dr. I. H. Qureshi (d. 1981),⁴⁵ and Prof. Khalique Ahmad Nizami (d. 1997).⁴⁶ Prof. Aslam admits in one of his works that he followed the footsteps of Prof. Nizami of Aligarh as far as the academic tradition was concerned.⁴⁷

Contribution as a Historian: Concluding Remarks

Among his contemporaries, Prof. Aslam was a prominent historian, researcher and academic who wrote on a vast range of aspects of Muslim South Asia. In addition to political history, he particularly paid attention to social and religious history (such as the role of sufis in the state and society), cultural history (such as Indo-Muslim music, sufi music or *qawwali*, Indo-Muslim architecture), intellectual history (such as Shaykh Ahmad Sirhindi and Dara Shikoh), and history of science (such as the contribution of Muslim scientists in the field of medicine and geography, Humayun's interest in astrology, inventions of the Mughal era), etc.

Prof. Aslam's contribution to some of the under-studied fields of the discipline of history, such as epigraphy, which is an important auxiliary discipline (or sub-discipline) of history, cannot be denied. *Wafiyat-nigari* (the art of recording the dates of death of renowned personalities) is an old literary and scholarly tradition in Arabic and Persian literature, from where it came to South Asia. In Arabic, the most famous work of this genre is compiled by Ibn Khallikan (d. 1282), while 'Abd al-Husayn Husayni is the compiler of a similar work in Persian. In South Asia, Sir Syed Ahmad Khan's *Athar al-Sanadid* (published in 1847) and Maulvi Nur Ahmad Chishti's *Tahqiqat-*

i Chishti (published in 1864) partly focus on *wafiyat*. Prof. Aslam's work, *Wafiyat-i Mashahir-i Pakistan* is a pioneering work of this genre in Urdu language, in which he also provides evidence of historical facts through mentioning his sources. His two works, *Kuftagan-i Karachi* and *Kuftagan-i Khak-i Lahore* are also pioneering works on the epitaphs of famous people buried in the graveyards of Karachi and Lahore respectively. Later, many scholars followed his suit and composed works dealing with the graveyards of various cities. It is a daunting task to visit old graveyards and search for the graves of famous people, keeping in view the vast but poorly managed graveyards in Pakistan.

Musicology is another under-studied field of historical research in Pakistan. Prof. Aslam's study of Indian music shows his profound understanding of the technicalities of Indian classical music, including the *rags* (melodies) and musical instruments. Despite the fact that musicology is a highly technical subject, the said work can be read and understood by a lay reader. In addition, he also wrote on the history of science during the Mughal era, with particular reference to Shah Fath-Allah Shirazi, as well as the water harnessing technology in medieval Central Asia.

Unlike other travelogues, his *Safarnama-i' Hind* is unconventional, as he chose to focus on the centers of learning, libraries, men of letters, spiritually enlightened people and centers of spiritual activities like sufi shrines. He explored many less known places, such as grave of the famous Chishti sufi poet and the author of *Padmavat*, Malik Muhammad Jaisi (b.1477-d.1542) in small town of Ramnagar in District Nainital in present day Uttarakhand State.

Prof. Aslam tried to rectify many common errors found in historical works. For instance, he translated the English term 'Indian Sub-continent' not as *Barr-e Saghir Pak wa Hind* in Urdu; rather he translated it as *Barr-e Azim Pak wa Hind*. He considered the former one as grammatically flawed.⁴⁸ Similarly, he challenged the assertion that Muhammad ibn Qasim was the son-in-law of the Umayyad governor, Hajjaj ibn Yousuf (d. 714).

Citing the work *Jamhrat al-Ansab* by a renowned medieval genealogist, Ibn Hazm (d. 1064), he argues that Hajjaj ibn Yousuf did not have any daughter at all.⁴⁹ In a likewise manner, he argued that any daughter of Sultan Balban was not married to the Chishti sufi, Baba Farid, as mistakenly believed by many hagiographers.⁵⁰ With the help of empirical evidences, he challenged and corrected many assumptions and well established facts. He drew new conclusions, and revisited many historical questions. Moreover, by using ‘non-statist’ sufi accounts, he tried to replace the ‘history of kings’ with ‘history of the age’. He challenged the elitist historiography with the help of non-statist sources, and highlighted aspects of social, religious, intellectual and cultural history which were previously ignored.

References

¹ Muhammad Aslam, *Safarnama-i'-Hind* (Lahore: Riaz Brothers, 1995), 484.

² Muhammad Aslam, *Tehrik-i-Pakistan* (Lahore: Riaz Brothers, 1993), see preface, 11.

³ Allama Tajwar (b. 1893/94-d. 1951) of Najibabad (a town in District Bijnaur in Uttar Pradesh, India) was a celebrated Urdu poet, lexicographer, historian, teacher and a religious scholar. His titles include *Shams al-'Ulama* and *Baligh al-Mulk*. Before partition, he taught Urdu and Persian at Dyal Singh College Lahore, but after the independence in 1947, he was appointed as the librarian of the College library. He was also the pioneer of Blank Verse Movement. He also served as the editors of important Urdu Magazines namely *Adabi Duniya*, *Shahkar*, *Akhbar Prem* and *Hamara Punjab*. He also helped establish Urdu Markaz, an institution that worked for the progress of Urdu language and literature. He died in Lahore in 1951. For details see, Sohail Abbas Baloch, "Shams al-Ulama Baligh al-Mulk Allama Tajwar Najibabadi," *Tahqiq* (Jamshoro), Vol. 16 (2008), 511-25.

⁴ Muhammad Aslam, "Begumpura Lahore kay Athar-i Qadima," *Naqoosh* (Lahore Number), (June 1990), 78-92.

⁵ Professor John Andrew Boyle (1916-1978). In 1950, he was appointed Senior Lecturer in Persian at Manchester University, where he became Reader in 1959, and eventually Professor of Persian Studies in 1966. He died in Manchester on November 19, 1978. He composed a short Persian dictionary and a grammar of modern Persian language published from Wiesbaden in 1966. His most remarkable academic contribution is his work on the Mongol period of Persian history, which is annotated translation of the renowned *Tarikh-i Jahangusha* written by Ata Malik Juvayni with the English title *The History of the World Conqueror*, in two volumes. It was published from Manchester in 1958. The work was, in fact, an extension of his doctoral dissertation. He edited a number of works. His other famous work is English translation of *Elahi-nama* of Farid al-Din 'Attar, published from Manchester in 1977 shortly before his death the next year in 1978. See details in Peter Jackson, "Boyle, John Andrew," in *Encyclopaedia Iranica*, Vol. IV, Fasc. 4 (1989), 420-21.

⁶ Professor A. J. Arberry held the Chair of Persian at the School of Oriental and African Studies SOAS, University of London from 1944 to 1947. In 1947, he became the Sir Thomas Adams's Professor of Arabic at Cambridge University and a Fellow of Pembroke College,

Cambridge, which was also his alma mater, and served there until his death in 1969. The idea of *The Cambridge History of Iran* which offered a survey of the history, cultural achievements and historical geography of Iran in seven volumes published between 1968 and 1989, was conceived in 1959 by Prof. Arberry, who also served its Chairman during 1961-69.

⁷ In 1970s, Prof. Darke served as the editorial secretary of *The Cambridge History of Iran*.

⁸ For details, see Muhammad Shakeel Siddiqui and Humera Naz, "Sawanih Mawlana Said Ahmad Akbarabadi," *Ma'arif Mujalla-i' Tahqiq* (July-Dec 2011), 56-73; see also Humera Naz, "Mawlana Said Ahmad Akbarabadi: *Hayat wa Afkar*," Unpublished PhD diss., Department of Islamic History, University of Karachi, 2012.

⁹ Muhammad Aslam, *Malfuzati Adab ki Tarikhi Ahammiyat* (Lahore: Idarah Tehqiqat-i-Pakistan, Punjab University, 1995), see preface, 6.

¹⁰ For a biography on Saiyyid Nafees Shah, see <http://hmchaudhry.blogspot.com/2008/02/al-sayyid-al-sharif-anwar-al-husyan.html>

¹¹ It was founded in Delhi in early 1940s by Mufti Atiq al-Rahman, and its co-founders included Mawlana Hifz al-Rahman Seoharvi (d. 1962).

¹² For a detailed discussion, see preface in Muhammad Aslam, *Din-i Ilahi aur us ka pasmanzar* (Delhi: Nadwat al-Musannifin, 1969, and Lahore 1970), 10.

¹³ Muhammad Aslam, *Sarmaya-i' Umar* (Lahore: Nadwat al-Musannifin, 1972), see preface, 8.

¹⁴ Muhammad Aslam, *Maulana Ubaid-Allah Sindhi kay Siyasi Maktubat* (Lahore: Nadwat al-Musannifin, n.d), 1.

¹⁵ Muhammad Aslam, *Salatin-i Dehli wa Shahan-i Mughaliyya ka Zauq-i Muasiqi* (Lahore: University of the Punjab, 1992), see preface, vii.

¹⁶ Muhammad Aslam, *Muhammad bin Qasim aur us kay Janashin* (Lahore: Riaz Brothers, 1996), 12-17.

¹⁷ Dr. Bhutta was the founder of Nishtar Medical College, Multan, and the real brother of Dr. M. Iqbal Shedai.

¹⁸ K. A. Nizami, *On Sources and Source Material (Being Volume One of Historical Studies—Indian and Islamic)* (Delhi: Idarah-i Adabiyat-i Delli, 1995), 3-5.

¹⁹ For details, see Tanvir Anjum, *Chishti Sufis in the Sultanate of Delhi 1190-1400* (Karachi: Oxford University Press, 2011), 20-26.

²⁰ Prof. Hasan Askari taught history at the Patna College, and also served at many administrative positions.

²¹ Ziauddin A. Desai was an Indian epigraphist, associated with the Archaeological Survey of India.

²² Monika Baár, *Historians and Nationalism: East-Central Europe in the Nineteenth Century* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 46-74.

²³ Harbans Mukhia, "Communalism and the Writing of Medieval Indian History: A Reappraisal," *Social Scientist*, Vol. 11, No. 8 (1983), 60.

²⁴ Peter Hardy, "Modern Muslim Historical Writing on Medieval Muslim India," in *Historians of India, Pakistan and Ceylon*, ed. C. H. Philips (London: Oxford University Press, 1967), 309.

²⁵ See, for instance, Aslam, *Tehrik-i Pakistan*, 15-23.

²⁶ Aslam, *Safarnama-i' Hind*, 499.

²⁷ See, for instance, Yohanan Friedmann, "Islamic Thought in Relation to the Indian Context," *Purusartha*, Vol. 9 (1986), 79-91.

²⁸ Gyanendra Pandey, *The Construction of Communalism in Colonial North India* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1990).

²⁹ Cynthia Talbot, "Inscribing the Other, Inscribing the Self: Hindu-Muslim Identities in Pre-colonial India," in *India's Islamic Traditions, 711-1750*, ed. Richard M. Eaton (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2003), 83-117.

³⁰ Romila Thapar, "Imagined Religious Communities? Ancient History and the Modern Search for a Hindu Identity," *Modern Asian Studies*, Vol. 23, No. 2, (1989), 209-31.

³¹ Thapar, "Imagined Religious Communities?," 209.

³² For a detailed analysis, see Tanvir Anjum, "Silencing of Chishti Sufism in the Nationalist Narrative in Pakistan," *Journal of Asian Civilizations*, Taxila Institute of Asian Civilizations (TIAC), Quaid-i-Azam University, Islamabad. Vol. 39, No. 2 (December 2016), 147-65.

³³ Thomas Arnold, *The Preaching of Islam* (London: Constable, 1913), 154-93.

³⁴ Richard M. Eaton, "Approaches to the study of conversion to Islam in India," in *Approaches to Islam in Religious Studies*, ed. Richard C. Martin (Tucson: The University of Arizona Press, 1985), 106-23.

³⁵ Muhammad Aslam, "Mujadid Alif Sani and the Quest for Identity," in *The Quest for Identity*, ed. Waheed-uz-Zaman (Islamabad: University of Islamabad Press, 1974), 75-80.

³⁶ Muhammad Mujeeb, *The Indian Muslims* (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1967), 244; and Yohanan Friedmann, *Shaykh Ahmad Sirhindi: An Outline of his Thought and a Study of his Image in the Eyes of Posterity* (Montreal: McGill University, Institute of Islamic Studies, 1971), 74-75.

³⁷ Aslam, *Tehrik-i Pakistan*, 17.

³⁸ Hem Chandra Raychaudhari was an expert on ancient Indian history, and taught at the University of Calcutta.

³⁹ Ramesh Chandra Majumdar (better known as R. C. Majumdar) was a renowned historian of Indian history, who taught at the University of Dacca, where he also served as the Vice Chancellor.

⁴⁰ Kalikinkar Datta taught Indian history at the Patna University, where he later also served as the Vice Chancellor. He also served at many administrative positions.

⁴¹ Dr. Ishwari Prasad was a renowned Indian historian, who taught history at the Allahabad University, and authored a number of books on Indian history.

⁴² Aslam, *Sarmaya-i' Umar*, see preface, 7.

⁴³ Hafiz Mahmood Sherani taught Urdu at the Oriental College, Lahore.

⁴⁴ Agha Mahdi Husain taught history and politics at Agra College. He did his PhD from the University of London, UK in 1935 on Sultan Muhammad Tughlaq's reign.

⁴⁵ Dr. I. H. Qureshi was the professor of history at the University of the Punjab, and later University of the Karachi, where he also served as the Vice Chancellor. He also founded the National Language Authority.

⁴⁶ Prof. Khaliq Ahmad Nizami was a renowned Indian historian and diplomat, who taught history at the Muslim University, Aligarh and also remained the ambassador of India in Syria.

⁴⁷ Aslam, *Sarmaya-i' Umar*, preface, 7.

⁴⁸ Aslam, *Tehrik-i Pakistan*, see preface, 12.

⁴⁹ Aslam, *Muhammad ibn Qasim aur us kay Janashin*, 32-34.

⁵⁰ Muhammad Aslam, *Tarikhi Maqalat* (Lahore: *Nadwat al-Musannifin*, 1970), 9-31.