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Original Article

Approach of Mawlānā Syed Abul A ‘ala Mawdudi Towards Western Education

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Abstract: Mawlānā Syed Abul A ‘ala Mawdudi was one of the great thinkers of the Muslim world. He lived and worked for the religious cause of Islam during 20th century. He studied all the religious sciences of Islam in depth, and presented a comprehensive interpretation of Islam encompassing all the facets of the society. Moreover, he was abundantly cognizant about the socio-political atmosphere of the Muslim world on one hand, and on the other hand, he had full knowledge about the challenges confronting by the Muslims from Western civilization, especially the influence of Western educational methodology and system. So, accordingly he deliberated over the issues and initiated the religious activities, and produced an extensive scale of literature on Islam, and apprised the Muslims from imminent challenges. He took apposite steps to immune the religious legacy of the Muslims, and to pull out them from situation of daze. Therefore, this study will focus on his approach towards Western civilization and education by applying analytical and critical methods.

Keywords: Civilization; Education; Islam; Materialism; Reason; Revelation; West.

Introduction: Islam is a universal religion that works for all eras; therefore, its resurrection and reformation are essential phenomenon that investigates how Islamic teachings might be tailored to the demands of the day. Additionally, it seeks to rid Islam of any foreign components. This goal was nearly the foundation of Islam's preceding reformist and revivalist efforts. Within the subcontinent, emergence of British colonial authorities at external level, and intellectual stagnation, penetration of un-Islamic components, superstitious beliefs, at internal level of the Muslim society badly impacted the Muslims and abated essence of civilizational aspect. Thus, several measures were undertaken to fend off these problems and preserve the Islamic cultural component from time to time. A few were involved on a personal basis, while others started movements in this regard. They made an effort to investigate Islam's dynamic nature and situational function in the society. Even while these programmes and movements were beneficial to Muslim community, but there was lack of inclusiveness in these reformist initiatives. Therefore, it is necessary to take a holistic approach to the reform and resuscitation of Islamic teachings. Mawlānā Sayed Abul A ‘ala Mawdudi was among them who endeavoured to uplift the Muslims both at political as well as intellectual level comprehensively. After Imam Ghazzali, Ibn

Taimiyyah, and Shah Wali-Allah, Mawlānā Mawdudi is being considered as an Islamic scholar who attempted to present Islam as a complete system of the life. To put his ideas in to practical shape, Mawlānā Mawdudi produced a vast number of works which encompasses all the aspects of the Muslim society and its principles according to the Islamic teachings. His Qura'nic exegesis *Tafhīm-ul-Qur'ān* is considered to be a great exegesis on Qur'an which mostly appeals to the young minds of the Muslim community.

Since its establishment as a socio-religious phenomenon, Islam has produced a number of very intelligent, highly skilled, and knowledgeable individuals who have made momentous contributions to the revival of Islamic teachings. Some concentrated more on the religion's spiritual side and tried to understand it in terms of the monastic system, and thereby neglected Islam's global character. That is undesirable to Islam because it caused them to develop a sense of renunciation and escape from the material world. Some highlighted the socio-religious and political aspects of Islam more thoroughly, and made an effort to showcase it to the world through political mechanism. Mawlānā Syed Abul A 'ala Mawdudi was among them who explored the socio-political character of Islamic teachings along with its religious nature.

Literature Review: Taking into consideration the nature of the present manuscript, I have selected few and most relevant sources for the literature review. Most of these sources are penned by Mawlānā Mawdudi himself. Though we have an abundance of the works written by Mawlana Mawdudi, and which have been rendered into multiple languages, however, I have focused on those works which talks relevant with the title of present research paper. In his *Muslmām aur Mojuda Seyāsi Kashmaksh* (part I), Mawlānā have highlighted the basic drawbacks of the Western civilization, and says the primarily this civilization keeps individuals away from religious teachings. Similarly, his another notable work i.e., *Tafhemāt* (part iii) says that, Western civilization keeps no guiding principles for the collective life of the individuals. His *Tafhemāt* (part i) and *Khutbāt*, another two outstanding works discusses about the utility of education. Then in his *Tanqihāt*, Mawlānā have stressed on the need of the establishment of the educational institutions among the Muslims based on Qur'an and *Sunnah*. Mawlānā have highlighted the need and importance of research in the Islamic religious sciences in his *Ilm-i-Tehqiqāt Kun aur Kaisay*. Na 'im Siddiqui in his *Al-Mawdudi*, credits Mawlānā Mawdudi for his attempts to present a comprehensive concept of educational system for the Muslims. Mawdudi in his *Islam kā Nezām-i-Hayāt* have presented a comprehensive picture of the life based on the Islamic principles.

Mawlānā Syed Abul A 'ala Mawdudi (1903-1979) was born in Aurangabad, Deccan India. He offered Islam as a complete way of life. He reinterpreted the Islamic teachings in order to made Islam permeate in all the spheres of life, and attempted to highlight the socio-political role of Islam in the society. He was one of the great scholars of Muslim world who studied Islam as whole. His pondering upon socio-religious issues, his deep study of Islam, and his disassociation from sectarian issues made him an intellectual of Islam. He produced a good number of works which are based on research. He did not accept things blindly, rather he resisted against the intellectual stagnation among the Muslims.¹

Mawlānā was a religious thinker among the Muslims of 20th century. He framed his religious ideas vis-à-vis the socio-religious and political atmosphere of the Muslims. He was in favour of revival of religious thought of Islam. Since he was aware about the challenges confronting by the Muslims, so, he made an assessment of all the challenges and presented a comprehensive solution to these challenges accordingly. He focussed on the immediate needs of the Muslim community.² Mawlānā Mawdudi was a keen observer of

the socio-religious atmosphere both at external as well as internal level. The meagre and poor knowledge of Muslims about Islam at internal level, and the influence of materialism and Western civilization at external level were some macro issues confronting by the Muslims during that period which were averse to the religious atmosphere of the Muslims. Perhaps Mawlānā was the only Muslim thinker during his times who positively attempted to pull out the Muslims from these challenges. Primarily, in this regard, he practically as well as literary endeavoured to present a satisfactory image of Islamic way of life.³

Mawlānā Mawdudi comprehended the universe through the approach of Islamic world view. He adopted a Qur'anic method to understand the universe, human beings and their relationship with one another. He says that there is a unity among all the elements of the universe irrespective of its diverse nature, and all the elements of the universe are connected with each other, and there is a close relationship among these elements. Hence, it explicitly shows that *Tawhīd* (oneness of Allah) was chief factor to shape his religious, social, political, and economic ideas.⁴

He further utters that; the whole system of universe is subordinate to a power which runs it systematically in an organised way. He says that, it is the nature which directs the universe, and any sort of violation of these natural laws at any level creates mischief.⁵ In fact, all the creations from living to non-living are under this law. Human beings from their individual level to collective level are also under the same law. This law is made by a super power who is the creator of the whole universe. Therefore, Mawlānā says that Islam is a cosmopolitan ideology.⁶

He says that, since Islam is a natural way of life, so it provides logical foundation to all the aspects of human life. It supplies guiding principles for all-round development of human personality.⁷ This was a religious comprehension of Mawlānā Mawdudi. He widened the boarders of the character of Islamic teachings from personal level to collective level of the Muslims. He did not confine Islam up to some rituals. He says that Islam is a way of life for all the creations of the universe. Moreover, he says that the way of Islam is an intimate part of the human nature. To him, Islam has a vital role in the socio-political system of the Muslims.⁸

Mawlānā Mawdudi endeavoured to explore the universal aspect of Islam and its contribution towards humanity. He says that, Islam is a perfect way of life. It supplies guiding principles for religious, social, political, economic, and moral aspects of human life. Moreover, being a moderate way of life, Islam has maintained a balance among all the facets of human life. On one side, it talks about inner purification of the individuals; concurrently it has a keen eye on the social aspect of the individuals. It insists humans to be God-fearing, however, it never allows any sort of renunciation from the world, and never consents anyone to be oblivious from social responsibilities. Islam has laid down teachings which are eternal and unchangeable, yet it keeps scope to accommodate the dynamic nature of the society. But, according to Mawlānā, the revolutionary aspect of Islam is that it has provided answers to the fundamental questions of human life which differentiates Islam from other systems of the world. The aim of creation of human beings in this world, relation of these human beings with the other creations and elements of universe, and the responsibilities of human beings, are some basic and imperative questions which Islam have answered.⁹ This inclusive understanding of Mawlānā Mawdudi influenced the Muslims almost throughout the world. Especially, his works made a high influence upon the young Muslim generation.¹⁰

According to Dr. Yousf al-Qarḍāvi, Mawlānā Mawdudi was a great thinker of the Muslim world during his times. He produced an immense quantity of Islamic literature which not only aware the Muslims about their religious legacy, rather this literature cleared all the misconceptions and allegations put by Western non-Muslim scholars on Islam. Through his literature, Mawlānā presented a complete Islamic social, political, economic, and educational system for the Muslims. The revolutionary aspect of his literature is that, he adopted an approach of research while understanding Islamic religious thought.¹¹

During the life time of Mawlānā Mawdudi, the Muslims in Subcontinent were facing various socio-religious problems both at external as well at internal level. Externally, there was Western hegemony at political level which was no less threat to the religious aspect of the Muslims. Similarly, at internal level, Muslims were intellectually stagnant. In religious matters, *Taqīd* (blind imitation) was common among the Muslims which hindered their intellectual capabilities. These were some main causes which were responsible for the downfall of the Muslims. He emphasised on the need of *Ijtihād*¹² (fresh explanation), and presented Islam as comprehensive system to suit contemporary times.¹³

Primarily, Mawlānā Mawdudi gave preponderance to the teachings of the Qur'an and *Sunnah* for the deliverance from the decay and decline of the Muslim society. Similarly, another objective of Mawlānā was to convince the Muslims about the richness of Islamic fundamental teachings and canons to satisfy the contemporary needs. In this regard, he provided a simple translation of holy *Qur'an* for the understanding of the common people. However, his primarily focused on the establishment of a political system based on Islamic principles.¹⁴ Mawlānā Mawdudi deals systematically with Islamic political aspect. He produced multiple works which represents the Islamic political character. The political study of Islam by Mawlānā was emerged in such a socio-religious atmosphere of Islam, where Muslim civilization was prone to deterioration. After the decline of Mughal rule in India Western influence was snowballing constantly. Both intellectually as well as politically, Muslims were showing a docile position in the subcontinent. His political study of Islam primarily aimed to preserve the Islamic civilization and religious traditions. His political ideas present Islam as a comprehensive way of life with its role in all the domains of the Muslim society.¹⁵

He was adamantly in favour of imposing Islamic ideals on the Muslim society as a whole. He asserts that Allah has created the universe, and that several Qur'anic verses provide us with proof of Islam's significance and effectiveness on a collective level of the individuals. Hence, he made an effort to construct an ideal society based on the Islamic teachings. In this regard, he did face criticism for applying a political interpretation to Islamic principles.¹⁶ However, he did not comprehend Islam via a political prism at all; instead, he looked into its political aspects and made an effort to use Islamic political power to elevate Muslims. Following that, Mawlānā Mawdudi's Islamic political concepts evolved into a formal movement advocating for the resuscitation and rebirth of Islam in the Subcontinent.¹⁷

He said that, Islamic teachings demand the modification of the society as a whole. Islamic teachings focus on the welfare of the humanity in a total, and Islam gives a class-less concept of society. He says that, *Qur'an*, primarily seeks contribution of the Muslims at collective level, and asks Muslims to be an icon for other communities. This understanding of Islam infused a revolutionary idea in the temperament of Mawlānā Mawdudi for the establishment of an Islamic socio-political system.¹⁸

The main aspect of Mawlānā's religious thought was that, he assessed the psychological aspect of the Muslim society. Hence, he attempted to present an adequate image of Islam without deviating from the past, and ignoring the present. He tried to solve the issues confronting by the Muslims through Islamic perspective. He created an awareness among the people about negative effects of Western civilization on Muslim civilization. He primarily made an assessment of the Western civilization. Violation of human rights, human values, dignity and honour of the women, and poor morality were some negative aspects of Western civilization which he highlighted in his works. Especially secularism, nationalism, and democracy are three aspects of Western civilization which he highly denied by considering these repugnant to Islam.¹⁹

Mawlānā Mawdudi explains the religious notion of Islam by saying that it talks about the relationship between an individual and the cosmos, as well as the relationship between God and the individuals. Islam discusses the entirety of human culture. According to him, the idea of religion before the advent of the Prophet (*Ḥaḍrat Muhammad Rasūlullah Khātām un Nabīyyīn Ṣallallahu 'alaihi wa 'alā Ālihi wa Aṣḥābihi wa Ṣallam*) was that it was only a matter of personal faith and had no bearing on society as a whole. As a result, religion and human concerns about everyday life were kept apart. He claims that it was a flawed interpretation of the faith. Conversely, Islam offers a thorough understanding of religion. Islam tackles every aspect of human existence. It creates a culture founded on the religious principles of Islam. It is significant in all facets of human existence. It convinces people to worship God only while also making sure they are aware of societal concerns at all times. It offers guiding principles for meeting all of humanity's requirements, and hence, Islam has a crucial role in society at all levels, from the individual to the communal. Furthermore, he asserts that every component of the cosmos is united in accordance with Islam. He refers to it as a revolutionary religious idea. Mawlānā was not thought to distinguish between politics and religion in this way.²⁰

Research Methodology: The current assignment by applying the analytical and critical methods of research aims to know the ideas of 20th century Islamic scholar as well as intellectual Mawlānā Mawdudi about western civilization and education.

Discussions and Results:

Discussions:

Mawlānā Mawdudi on Western Civilization: Although there is scope of debate about the absolute and appropriate meaning of the civilization, yet the term civilization entails the meaning of a complete social system which includes political, social, economic and judicial aspects of any society. Whenever any society is advanced and rich in the said domains, it must be called a civilized society. The inhabitants of any civilized society are intellectually strong, scientifically developed, and educationally forward. Huntington defines the term civilization, and says that, civilization is the cultural character of the humans which differs them from other species. Like their way of life, religious values human values, linguistic aspect, etc.²¹ Mawlānā Mawdudi says that every civilization consists of some main aspects which include concept of life, main objective of the life, basic beliefs of the individuals, guidance of the humans, and the social system. If these aspects are fully realised by any civilization, then it is human-centred civilization.²² Taking into consideration, he differentiates between Western and Islamic concept of civilization. The basic demerit of

Western civilization, according to him is that, it is based on atheism and materialism, and it has produced a system parallel to Islam.²³ Moreover, to him, Western civilization gradually proceeded towards materialism. He further asserts that; the methodology of comprehending things of the Western thinkers and philosophers is based on materialism. Some thinkers either denied the existence of God or limited the existence of God. In nutshell, their ideology was that, there is no supernatural power behind the functioning of the universe.²⁴

He says that, the culmination of the Western philosophy about humanity is that, it gave humans a status of the animals in spite of the fact that nature has endowed humans with immense intellectual faculties which differs them from other creatures. In fact, Mawlānā says that Western civilization retains no scope for any revealed information as well as guidance. Islam focuses on unity, purification of the self, and a sense of responsibility in the world and a sense of accountability in the life to come. However, Western civilization lacks these concepts. Moreover, he says that the same atmosphere is prevalent continuously, and which has become a challenge for Muslims. Nevertheless, he believes that there is a hope to pull out the Muslims from this intellectual chaos and disorder through an Islamic renaissance among the Muslim world. He says that we need such scholar, thinkers, and men of sensitive minds who can produce a new philosophy based on Qur'an and *Sunnah*.²⁵

Mawlānā Mawdudi says that, the Western civilization is based on wrong foundations which are responsible for poor guidance of the individuals. All the aspects of Western civilization including education, lacks human development on proper basis. Because it does not believe or it does not possess a complete concept of the human life. It does not meet the religious needs of the individuals. It is more inclined towards material aspect, and henceforth, it creates an imbalance in human life. On the contrary, Islamic civilization concedes all the needs of the individuals, and has provided guiding principles for all the domains of human life.²⁶

But simultaneously Mawlānā Mawdudi presented a solution to these intellectual crises. Primarily he says that, the need of the time is to present the revealed system of life in front of the Western communities. Because the revealed teachings supply proper guidance for the comprehensive development of an individual both esoterically as well exoterically. It talks about human values and rights. It creates a sense of equality and justice in the society.²⁷

Mawlānā further enunciates that, the mundane concerns of an individual are dominant in the Western civilization; hence, the spiritual aspect is neglected.²⁸ He says that, Western civilization does not supply principles for the eternal life of the individuals; rather it aims to provide facilities on temporary basis. There is no room for all-round growth of an individual in this civilization.²⁹

Mawlānā Mawdudi, while talking about the function of the Prophets, says that, their main duty was to establish Allah's rule on earth so that the world's affairs might be managed without interruption. According to him, every civilization aspires to establish rules and laws that allow for the methodical management of its system. Therefore, Mawlānā was referring to the authority that allows the state's operations to be carried out in accordance with divine law. In this sense, he claims that every prophet has tried to instigate a political revolution in order to establish divine rules, and to free people from the enslavement of

others. He continues by saying that Prophet (*Ḥaḍrat Muhammad Rasūlullah Khātām un Nabīyyīn Ṣallallahu ‘alaihi wa ‘alā Ālihi wa Aṣḥābihi wa Ṣallam*) was the pinnacle of this political movement.³⁰

According to Mawlānā, there were primarily three chief goals of the Prophetic mission: the first was to convert people to the Islamic way of thinking; the second was to create a community of followers of the law so as to establish an Islamic governmental authority. The third was expanding the borders of the Islamic state and governing society in accordance with Islamic law. According to him, the Islamic caliphate system that the Prophet (*Ḥaḍrat Muhammad Rasūlullah Khātām un Nabīyyīn Ṣallallahu ‘alaihi wa ‘alā Ālihi wa Aṣḥābihi wa Ṣallam*) created was upheld by the first two caliphs of Islam and the first few years of the third caliph. It could not, however, continue to be the same as it had been in the past. Consequently, due to emergence of certain internal conflicts among Muslims, the roots of Islamic civilization became weak. Additionally, due to the interaction of the Muslims with other people because of growth of Islamic territory, un-Islamic components managed to infiltrate in the Islamic civilization.³¹

Sources of Western Education: Western scholars trust more on human reason. John Lock (1632-1704) says that, revelation cannot satisfy human beings, as it can do human reason. Similarly, he says that revelation provide no additional and new knowledge to the individuals. He says that the knowledge gained through human reason is more reliable, sound, and authentic than the knowledge supplied by revelation. Because human reason seeks a practical explanation of the things. So, he says that, need is to make difference between methods of revelation and reason.³² Moreover, Lock gives a secondary position to the revelation while understanding things.³³

Lock further says that human mind is the only source of ideas and things. He calls human mind as basic source of human knowledge.³⁴ Not only revelation, rather the natural power of human understanding also was not trusted by Western philosophers. Francis Bacon (1561-1626) says that mind has two types of abilities to comprehend the things; one is acquired and another one is inborn. However, the innate or inborn power of human mind is not sufficient for the said purpose, and hence cannot be perfect source of knowledge.³⁵ This is the main problem of the West that they do not acknowledge the revelation as a source of knowledge. In nut shell, the Western scholars unnecessarily blamed religion of not giving place to human reason in deciding issues. Because multiple verses of the Qur’an witness that Islam encourages human beings to use their intellect in order to comprehend the universe. The biased and narrow-minded approach of Western non-Muslim scholars towards Islam did not consent them to understand the reality. It is undeniable that humans possess abilities to know the things; nevertheless, these abilities are not enough. However, revelation provides solutions, and guides humans where they are inaccessible. Hence, the necessity and utility of the revelation as a source of knowledge cannot be undermined.³⁶

Mawlānā Mawdudi on Indian Muslims: The primary thing which according to Mawlānā Mawdudi, is responsible for the downfall of the Muslims is that, they stopped their progress in intellectual field. He, while talking about the contemporary Muslims, says that they are subdued by other nations in terms or morally, intellectually, politically and materially. Almost every aspect of the Muslim society is influenced by other civilizations. More particularly, the intellectual aspect of the Muslims is highly influenced by un-Islamic elements. Yet, he primarily says that Muslims themselves are responsible for this. Because

they closed the door of *ijtihad* and research which led to their intellectual stagnation. Islam has already designed the principles about determining of the things. But Muslims did not take help from these principles, and consequently they became slaves of other nations intellectually.³⁷

While talking about the shortcomings prevalent in the Muslim educational institutions, Mawlānā Mawdudi says that, primarily there is need to inculcate a real spirit of Islam among the Muslim students. Then there is need to reform the overall educational system of the Muslims. However, Mawlānā focuses on modern sciences simultaneously. For that very purpose, he says that the concerned governments are committed at best to provide the modern sciences of different fields. He maintained the efficacy of modern education in the society as well. But to produce an ideal Muslim, it is pertinent to have a separate Islamic educational system. By an Islamic educational institution, Mawlānā aims to establish such a system which is based on revealed teachings.³⁸

For that very purpose, Mawlānā highly felt need of *ijtihad*. He talks about the welfare of Muslims through intellectual activities, in this regard he discusses about Sir Sayed Ahmad who established the Muslim university of Aligarh for the said purpose. However, he could not understand the needs of his own time and hence, endeavored to save the educational, political and economic dimensions of the Muslim society. Mawlānā says that the religious aspect was neglected in this institution. Because the curriculum was based on Western temperament which was totally against the essence of the Islamic teachings. Similarly, another shortcoming of Muslim educational institutions, according to Mawlānā, the principles which are being taught in these institutions about the socio-political system are un-Islamic.³⁹

The most remarkable contribution of Mawlānā Mawdudi was that, he applied a critical approach towards both Western as well as Islamic educational system. About Islamic educational system, he says that we should reform the whole curriculum, and we should not accept things unquestionably so that we can give authentic and proper Islamic teachings. Therefore, he asked for the reformation the Muslim educational aspect in the lines of modern needs.⁴⁰

While discussing the need of a complete Islamic educational system, Mawlānā have primarily debated on the main problems that modern educational institutions have. Then he has discussed about the main principles of the reformation of these institutions and the practical implementation of these principles. While talking about the problems he says that there is an integration of curriculum in these institutions which is against Islamic spirit because, here in these institutions Western curriculum is more dominant. Consequently, there is an imbalance between these two aspects, and outcome of these institutions is West oriented. He says that such a type of curriculum aims to undermine the Islamic values. On the other hand, he says that, the Islamic curriculum which is being taught in these institutions is not sufficient to meet the contemporary needs, and it cannot appeal the modern minds. So, it also needs modification by taking into consideration the contemporary demands of the human society.⁴¹

Coming to next aspect of Mawlānā's educational thought, he says that primarily there is need liberate Islamic teachings from the influence of all un-Islamic, innovative, and superstitious elements. Need is to penetrate the values of Islamic civilization in every aspect of the Muslim society. Similarly, the persons who are assigned to teach the students should be ideal Muslims. They should be firm in their religious commitment. Additionally, Mawlānā speaks that there is need to get direct access to the Islamic sources.⁴²

Mawlānā was worried about the imminent challenges coming from the Western influence. He said that these challenges could directly affect the socio-religious and civilizational aspect of the Indian Muslims. However, he hoped that the sensitive minded Muslims can immune their religious aspect along with their civilizational and social one. Hence, he appealed the sensitive section of the Muslims and seeks their support for the religious cause of Islam. He invited them to ponder on the issues in order to provide an everlasting solution to the problems of the Muslims.⁴³

While talking about the influence of other civilizations on the Islamic civilization, Mawlānā says that, this influence diluted the Islamic civilizational dimension. He says that, subsequently, British penetration boosted further this influence. The two main realms of the society are politics and education, but he says that, both of these were based on un-Islamic ideas. Consequently, the Muslims could not flourish themselves. He says both political as well as religious leadership of the Indian Muslims were unaware about their respective assignments. Although some 'Ulma and Sufis shouldered the responsibility, and to some extent they succeeded in their mission to save the religious aspect of the Indian Muslims, however it was inadequate. The main reason according to Mawlānā was the unsatisfactory Islamic educational aspect. Because men of authority and money could not give attention towards the educational system. The negligence towards the educational aspect directly hit the political aspect of the Muslims besides their moral declination.⁴⁴

The revolt of 1857 gave further impetus to the moral decline of the Muslims. Hence, Muslims after fall of their political power focused more on their personal needs and, therefore, the universal demands of the humanity were neglected. People became selfish, and corruption, and dishonesty like un-Islamic elements emerged among the Muslims. It affected the economic interests of the Muslims as well. He says that the initially British attempted to dominate the Muslims in terms of power and economy in order to dominate the whole society. Then gradually they dominated the whole Muslim society.⁴⁵

Mawlānā Mawdudi on Western Education: Mawlānā Syed Abul A 'ala Mawdudi opined that, after dominating the Muslims politically as well as economically, Britishers turned towards educational aspect of the Indian Muslims. They established the educational system of their own choice where Islamic teachings were not available. It resulted in the inclination of the Muslims towards western education. It further affected the morality of the Muslims, and they became unaware about their civilizational aspect. Moreover, a sense of integrity among the Muslims was almost vanished. They became the victim of disintegration, and they could not establish their social system because of absence of a competent leadership.⁴⁶

Mawlānā Mawdudi says that, during 11th century of *Hijri* calendar, degradation of the Indian Muslim society was at its peak. But because of Muslim political power, it could not become so effective. However, subsequently, when the Muslim political power began to lose its roots, due to the demise of King Jahangir, Muslims experienced a complete degradation in terms of religion, education, morality, etc. Moreover, due to the failure of revolt of 1857, the condition of Muslims worsened more, and their civilizational aspect was in jeopardy. It was the first time that, when the Western education, according to Mawlānā became a dominant factor among Indian Muslims. He was of the opinion that Western education nourishes human beings at their animal level and fulfils carnal desires, and hence negates the moral and religious aspect.⁴⁷

Mawlānā Mawdudi articulates that, primarily, Western education keeps away Muslims from Islamic religious education.⁴⁸ Here it seems that, he was of the opinion that Western

education is a parallel system to Islamic educational system. It results in selfishness, and consequently, humans become unaware about their religious values, civilization, and nationality. However, there is need to clear that, Western education is no anti-Islamic at all. Because it also talks about human values, human rights, and morality. It also favours the maintenance and establishment of human values. But there is need to maintain a balance while imparting religious as well as secular knowledge.⁴⁹

One of the major faults of the Western education, says Mawlānā Mawdudi, is that, it more highlights the material aspect, and it confines the real aim of the individuals up to their physical needs. It allures the individuals by showing material advance. It keeps away the individuals from religious teachings.⁵⁰ On the contrary, Islam is a complete and a unique way of life and it is a revolutionary concept of life which encompasses all the walks of the life. However, Western education does not possess the concept of a complete successful life which Islam has given.⁵¹

Moreover, Mawlānā says that Western education dominates the thinking power of the Muslims and consequently it diverts them from real aim of the life, and changes the index which determines the values of the things. Though the Western education makes an individual able to lead the state affairs, still it possesses inadequate guidance for a broad nourishment of the human life.⁵²

He says that, Islam seeks unity among the human beings irrespective of heterogeneous nature of the universe which constitutes the main feature of Islam. Similarly, it lays down guiding principles for a healthy and an organised social system, economic system, and political system. Moreover, it highly addresses the morality, human values, and human rights. He says that as soon as political system of Islam became inactive, Western education left a deep impact on these different dimensions of the Muslim society.⁵³

Another negative aspect of western education, says Mawlānā, is that, this system of education does not provide principles for the collective life of the individuals. Moreover, the medium of instruction of Western education keeps no scope for other languages. He says that it badly affected Muslim community at a large, and consequently the Islamic knowledge became unfamiliar for the Muslims. Because the basic epistemology of the Islamic knowledge is in Arabic language.⁵⁴

He says that the aim of Western education is to make an individual able to run the government according to their own interests. There is no scope in this educational system to prepare a person to lead the society properly. He calls this education as God-less and moral-less system of education.⁵⁵ Mawlānā utters that, the Western education which is purely based on human reason, makes individuals to negate the sense of accountability, which consequently undermines the main aim of individuals. He says that, the Western education negates all those things which are beyond human reason because of its limited abilities, which is an invalid concept according to the Islamic teachings.⁵⁶

He says that the Western perspective of understanding the humanity, its origin, development, and civilization is purely based on materialism. According to Western philosophers, the present world is the result of class struggle among the people with regard to the material needs. Because the main objective of individuals is to serve their material and physical needs. This perspective of West gave no importance to Islam.⁵⁷ Mawlānā says that the system of Western education does not care about the human dignity, human

values, and the morality. It does not provide moral guidance to the individuals. The Western literature does not possess any moral information, and lacks disciplined life.⁵⁸

Mawlānā's concept of Islamic Educational System: Islam gives a high place to education. Education is bed rock of every society. Because it shapes and moulds the society. It constructs the system of society richly. It modifies individuals at their personal level, and society at its collective level. It is directly associated with the morality of the individuals. History witnesses those various Muslim rulers at different times made efforts to enhance the educational dimension of the Muslims. Although the educational trend among the Muslims was strong since the inception of Islam, however, after the decline of Muslim socio-political structure, education system also suffered drawbacks. But keeping in view the weak educational scenario, during 19th century, Muslim scholarship felt need of an educational system which can protect the religious legacy of Muslims as well as to aware them about modern Western sciences.

In this regard, Sir Syed played a magnificent role in Subcontinent. He initiated Aligarh movement which purely aimed to educate the Muslims and pull out them from illiteracy, ignorance, superstitious beliefs, conservatism, and a sort of pessimism and inferiority. He became partially successful in this regard. However, Mawlānā Mawdudi was the first during his time who approached with a comprehensive Islamic educational system for the Muslims. He framed aims, objectives, curriculum, and methodology of Islamic educational system according to Islamic teachings.⁵⁹

Post 1857 socio-religious atmosphere of the Muslims was unsatisfactory due to the decline of Muslim political authority. Yet, the only way to get rid from these crises and to save their religious and cultural legacy was educational field because education is chief factor of the development of any society. Taking into consideration the efficacy of the education, various attempts were made to enhance the Muslims through providing education. Various institutions were established for the said purpose. However, Mawlānā Mawdudi drew attention of the Muslims further towards educational importance. In this regard he himself produced a number of valuable compilations which infuses a new spirit of research and knowledge among the young Muslim generations. He highlighted the value of the education in his works, and appeals the Muslim community to aware their consciousness through education.

While highlighting the importance of education in Islam, Mawlānā Mawdudi says that, Islam is the only religion which is based on knowledge. It appeals to the intellect of the individuals. Islam frequently asks the individuals to ponder on the universe in order to explore the signs of Allah on the universe. Moreover, it aims to build a relation of individuals with Allah. It does not believe in superstitious elements, and aims to remove the ignorance from the society. Therefore, the epistemological concept of Mawlānā Mawdudi was that, the primary source of knowledge is revelation.⁶⁰

Mawlānā says that, need is to arrange such institutions which can fulfil the purpose of Muslims. He speaks that Muslims should aware about Islamic sciences along with the modern sciences. He says that we should establish such institutions which can quench the intellectual thirst of the Muslims, and mitigate the intellectual crises of the Muslims. Moreover, he says that, through such educational system, need is to prepare the Muslim generations to present Islamic teachings in a scientific manner based on Qur'an and *Sunnah* in this dynamic and heterogeneous nature of the world, and prepare them to counter the challenges and questions posed by the orientalist. Similarly, he believed that, such an

educational system which can assist the Muslims youth to get proper and full acquaintance about Islamic legacy, civilization, heritage, etc, is much important. He says that there is dire need to frame a curriculum which can serve this purpose.⁶¹ According to him, it is inevitable that Muslim scholarship should design a new intellectual strategy to meet the needs of the community and to overcome the modern issues and challenges because the ways and means which already possessed by the Muslims are not in position to recover the lost legacy of the Muslims. Modern times have been given rise to new issues which needs modern methods to solve these issues in all aspects. There is an imperative need to use the modern technology. He says the time has come to avoid to take the things unquestionably and irrationally. Door of *Ijtihād* must remain open. The conservative ways of thinking must alter with broad, optimistic, and positive thoughts.⁶² He says that to make Islamic teachings compatible for all the times along with fulfilling the demands of changing circumstances, *Ijtihād* is must. In the same way he defines *Ijtihād*, and says that *Ijtihād* means to discover the universal and eternal aspect of Islam vis-à-vis the dynamic character of the world.⁶³

Mawlānā Mawdudi says that there is something wrong in Western education which is anti-Islam. Because the basic aim of this education is to explain the universe without any supernatural power. The essence of this education is not compatible with Islamic teachings. So, he says that towards Western education, our Muslim youth should possess a critical approach. He says that we should not take each and every element of the Western education blindly. After that we can establish an Islamic institute. Nevertheless, Mawlānā did not limit this critical approach of understanding things, rather he was of the opinion that, same approach should be towards Islamic sciences as well so that we can differentiate authentic from unauthentic elements, and can remove the innovations, illogical, and superstitious elements from the pure Islamic teachings, and can make these Islamic teachings active and permeate in the world.⁶⁴

He says that primarily intellectual stagnation became root cause of downfall of the Muslims in all aspects. After 4th century when *Taqīd*(adherence) became religious phenomenon among the Muslims, and the trend of research which was initiated with the arrival of Islam, and was on peak during Abbasid kingdom⁶⁵ became inactive, the Muslims lost their legacy.⁶⁶ He says that, in order to overcome these intellectual crises, it is necessary to place the sources of Islamic teachings at their appropriate and respective positions. Our primary source of knowledge is Qur'an. Then comes the sayings of Prophet (*Ḥaḍrat Muhammad Rasūlullah Khātam un Nabiyyīn Ṣallallahu 'alaihi wa 'alā Ālihi wa Aṣḥābihi wa Ṣallam*). The jurists, theologians, historians, and *Muḥadithīn* should be treated as secondary sources of Islam.⁶⁷

Mawlānā says that, though a Muslim university was established at Aligarh as a big institution among the Muslims for intellectual purpose, however, its main objective was to supply education as per the needs of contemporary social, political, economic, and educational needs. Consequently, it could not possess such an educational system which can fulfil the socio-religious demands of the Muslims. Moreover, Mawlānā says that, the present structure of education at Muslim University of Aligarh is not sufficient for Muslims. Fundamentally, he says that this university presents a picture of both Islamic and Western culture which are irreconcilable with each other. Because both have a different vision and aims. Moreover, in this institution, Western education is playing a dominant role. Consequently, the product of this university possesses a West oriented mind. However, Mawlānā could not understand the educational policy of this University. Basically, Sir Sayed Ahmad Khan was of the opinion to aware Muslim students about

Western education especially with science and technology. Because of that, he included Western education in the curriculum of Muslim university.⁶⁸

Basically, this society was an intellectual movement initiated by Sir Sayed which gradually developed. Sir Sayed was of the opinion that the Muslims of Subcontinent must go through the modern education. For that very purpose he attempted to aware Muslims about Western sciences. In fact, it was a response of Sir Sayed against the conservative Muslims who were ignorant about Western education. Moreover, there was a social reason also behind this policy of Sir Sayed. He wanted to create friendly atmosphere among the different elements of society. In this regard, in 1963, Scientific Society of Ghazipur was established for the same purpose.⁶⁹

Sir Sayed was talking about the welfare of the Muslims. He said that Western education is the only and unique mechanism to fight against the issues confronting by the Muslims in Subcontinent, and he looked to Western civilization for development of the Muslims.⁷⁰ Undeniably, he was a pro-Muslim thinker who was curious to uplift the Muslims, and to pull out them from intellectual crises. However, he unnecessarily opted the field of religion (Islam) which was not his domain, and did not heed the orthodox Muslims, and consequently he was not supported by a majority of the Muslims. Had he restricted his activities up to the education, he would not have been criticised and would not have support from orthodox Muslims.⁷¹

On the other hand, Mawlānā Mawdudi says that, the need is to give Islamic education to our youth separately, he did not believe in common curriculum. He says that, the primary function of any academic institution is to represent the culture of any community. Therefore, the function of the institutions should be accordingly. He says that institutions should be able to produce the Muslim experts of all the fields who can understand the Islamic teachings according to the needs of dynamic societies. We should eliminate the influence of Western civilization, and should save our own civilization. The persons responsible for imparting Islamic education in the institutions should be comprehensive personalities of Islamic teachings who can play a role of icon for forthcoming generations, and should be able to represent the Islamic civilizational and cultural values in front of the world. Arabic language needs a proper scope in the institutions in order to get direct access to the original teachings of Islam. This was the general structure of Islamic academic institutions according to Mawlānā Mawdudi. Besides, he says that all the religious sciences of Islam must teach properly. He says that fundamental knowledge of all the religious sciences should be provided. Other dimensions of Islamic education like philosophy, history, principles of Islamic jurisprudence, finance, and politics, should be teach along with the same aspects of Western education. Mawlānā says that Western education in itself is not wrong; rather the way of Western thought is not based on reality. Similarly, he says that a spirit of research on Islamic religious sciences should be infused in the Muslim youth, and separate institutions should be established for the research.⁷²

About *Nadwat-ul-'Ulma*, Mawlānā possessed the same views. He says that there was no more scope for any change which was in favour of Islamic system except omission and addition of books at curriculum level. In such conditions, Mawlānā says, Muslims were going to achieve no more enough success, though the Muslim students could aware about Western sciences.⁷³

Mawlānā was highly in favour of research in the Islamic religious sciences. He says that, the lack of research leads a community to domination and hegemony of another community

in terms of political, social, and intellectual aspects.⁷⁴ He was talking about reform of all the social sciences based on Islamic perspective, and to introduce these sciences in Islamic educational institutions. Therefore, his thought possesses an element of the Islamization of the knowledge in the Muslim world.⁷⁵

Need of Knowledge for the Muslims: The authenticity of Islam lies in its revealed process. The teachings and injunctions encompassing all the aspects of human life have been revealed by Allah. Hence there is no scope for superstitious beliefs. Islam seeks the explanation of things based on knowledge and arguments. Islam asks the individuals to use their intellectual faculties in order to comprehend the phenomenon of the universe. It insists humans to ponder on the universe and to exploit it for benefit of individuals.

Mawlānā Mawdudi was believed that the welfare of Muslims lies in education. He believed that until and unless Muslims cannot made progress in the field of education, and cannot boost their intellectual, nothing positive can be expected. While talking about the necessary of education for the Muslims, Mawlānā Mawdudi says that, a Muslim cannot be a Muslim without knowledge. He says that it is imperative upon the Muslims to have knowledge about the universal phenomenon of the Islam. He says that, a Muslim should be aware about the objectives of the Islamic teachings. He says that through knowledge one can discover the reality. Hence, knowledge is must in order to inculcate the Islamic values among the individuals. Moreover, knowledge develops human personality, and it makes them able to run the society.⁷⁶

He claims that Islam places more emphasis on practical actions than it does on mere discourse of knowledge. For this reason, understanding the core of the Islamic message is important in order to meet the requirements of Islamic teachings. According to Mawlānā, hereditary traits, affiliation with Muslim families, or any other Islamic identity is not something the real identity of faith; instead, all Muslims should make an effort to understand the true goals and objectives of Islam. He asserts that Muslims possess knowledge about God that sets them apart from other societies.⁷⁷

Conclusion: Mawlānā Mawdudi was a great Muslims scholar who contributed immensely towards Islam. He was a unique personality in his systematic study of all the dimensions of Islam. He primarily attempted to cognizant Muslims about the basics of Islam. However, simultaneously he widened his Islamic religious activities according to the needs of the Muslims. He was fully aware about the challenges confronting by Islam both politically as well as intellectually. In this regard, he studied all the aspects of Western civilization. At intellectual level, he refuted the Western blame on Islam that, in Islam, there is poor contribution of reason while comprehending things, and said that, Islam admits reason also as a source of knowledge. Nevertheless, Mawlānā saw the Western civilization through a critical, yet positive approach. He assessed the Western civilization deeply, and said that there is poor scope for human development in this civilization. Mawlānā says that, in this civilization, there are crises with regard to human values, human rights, and status of women. It does not possess any idea of a systematic and organised social system. Similarly, he says that Western education gives scanty attention towards religious necessity of the individuals; consequently, there is lack of unity, moral values, spiritual development, and absence of concept of accountability and responsibility. However, it should be clear that the Western civilization possess a concept of life according to its own consciousness and understanding. Mawlānā, though pointed towards the fall of Muslim political mechanism and influence of Western education as the main reasons for the downfall of the Muslims, however, he acknowledged the inactiveness of the Muslims in the field of education as a

chief factor behind their decay. Therefore, he largely raised the issues of need of education among the Muslims for their resurgence. He said that for the collective interests of the Muslims, establishment of the Islamic political and educational system is must. Although he initiated his Islamic religious activities from intellectual level through a rich Islamic literature, however, subsequently, he became politically active in the remaining years of his life, and founded *Jam 'āt-i-Islāmi* for achieving his target. He focused more on political activities, rather than intellectual activities, consequently his movement could not achieve the desired target.

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- ¹⁰ Seyyed Vali Reza Nasr, *Mawdudi and the Making of Islamic Revivalism*, op. cit., pp. 3-4
- ¹¹ Dr. Yousf al-Qarḍāvi, *Imām Mawdudi: ek Muṣṭaḥ, ek Muḥakir, ek Mujadid* (Urdu trns. By Abul 'Ala Syed Subḥānī), Hidayat Publishers and distributors New Delhi, 2015, pp. 29-30
- ¹² By emphasizing on the necessity of *ijtihād*, Mawlānā Mawdudi never intended to neglect the religious services of predecessor or interpret Islamic teachings out of the Qur'ānic context, rather he aimed to meet the modern needs of the Muslims.
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- ¹⁶ Mawlānā Wahiduddin Khan frequently raised this issue in his works. He wrote that the religious interpretation of Mawlānā Mawdudi is actually political interpretation, see his *Dīn ki Seyāsi T 'abir*, Maktab Al-Risala Books New Delhi, 1990, p. 13
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- ²¹ Samuel P. Huntington, *The Clash of the Civilizations and The Remaking of World Order*, India, 2016, p. 43, see the same reference for the historical background of the world civilizations.
- ²² Mawlānā Mawdudi, *Islāmi Tehzib aur Is kay Usūl-o-Mabādi*, Islamic Publications Pvt. Ltd., 2018, pp. 6-8
- ²³ Ibid, pp. 10-11
- ²⁴ Ibid, pp. 12-16 (see also *Tafhemāt* of the same author part ii, Chp. 19)
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- ³⁹ Ibid, pp. 10-13
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- ⁴² Ibid, pp. 22-24
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- ⁵⁰ Ibid, p. 19
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