

INSTITUTE OF OBJECTIVE STUDIES, NEW DELHI

Two-day National Conference

On

“The Life and Contributions of Maulana Manazir Ahsan Gilani”

On December 1-2, 2018 at Patna

Concept Note

The late 19th and early 20th centuries were disturbing times for the Muslim Ummah. The great Mughal Empire of India had been dismantled, the Iranians and the Arabs were a pale shadow of their glorious past and the Ottoman Empire, the last seat of Muslim power, was fast heading towards dismemberment.

Many capable Muslims, intellectuals and leaders, felt and analysed the disastrous impact of European colonialism on Muslims across the world. However, the solutions they offered were different, depending on the individual bent of mind and the observer's situation. Some, without fully realising the might of the European powers, especially the British Empire, took on them militarily and failed. There were people and movements who sought to bring about unity among the Shi'ites and Sunnis in order to jointly face the European challenge, but to no avail. Men like Sir Syed Ahmad Khan, however, proved to be more far-sighted and chalked out programmes to revive the Ummah through education. Muhammad Abduh of Egypt, also realised the importance of education and took upon themselves to reform. In Egypt Muhammad Abduh led a reform to enable Muslims to join the challenges posed by modern Europe. Among the Indian rulers having big states under British suzerainty was the Nizam of Hyderabad. He decided to carry forward the educational mission of Sir Syed Ahmad Khan. In late 1910s, when Sir Syed's institution, Muhammadan Anglo-Oriental College was trying to become a full-fledged university, the Nizam set up the Osmania University at Hyderabad. It was a silent, but bold realisation on the part of Indian Muslims that educational empowerment was the only panacea of all the ailments plaguing the Muslim community in India.

The intellectuals and leaders of late 19th and early 20th centuries were fully aware of the need to either bridge the gap or bring about reconciliation between traditional and modern systems and syllabi of education. Allama Shibli was the first among the ulama to have realised the importance of such a reconciliation. He was picked up by Sir Syed to teach theology in Aligarh. This employment, among other things, provided Shibli with an opportunity to closely observe the European system and method of education. However, after all he remained too conservative for Europeans

and Westernised Muslims in Aligarh, and too modern for the ulama of Nadwatul Ulema in Lucknow, which Shibli had joined after leaving Aligarh.

Not only Shibli, Maulana Manazir Ahsan Gilani had also undergone similar experiences. He received traditional Islamic education like Shibli and then joined Osmania University to teach Islamic Studies. He, like Shibli, got an opportunity to observe the European system of education and benefited from it. But Maulana Gilani was not an intellectual activist, which Shibli was, and therefore never tried to do what Shibli had earlier attempted to accomplish. Gilani was a genuine scholar and focused on research activities. He taught and groomed many scholars at Osmania, including the celebrated Dr. Mohammad Hamidullah. But his true scholarship found expression in the books, over a dozen in number, which he produced after vigorous research. He influenced his contemporaries and continues to inspire the present generation of Islamic scholars across the Indo-Pak subcontinent, which in itself is a great tribute to the excellent services he rendered to the discipline of Islamic Studies.

Maulana Manazir Ahsan Gilani, an eminent Islamic scholar of British India was born on 1st October 1892 (9th Rabi-al-Awwal, A.H. 1310) in a small village, Gilan, in Nalanda district almost 100 kms. from Patna. He is often referred to as “*Muhaqqiq-e-Islam*” (researcher of Islam), “*Sultan-ul-Qalam*” (king of the pen) and “*Mutakallim-e-Millat*” (spokesman of the community).

After receiving his primary education (the holy Qur’an, Persian and Arabic grammar) in his village, he was admitted to Madrasa Khalilya, Tonk, Rajasthan wherein he studied books on *mantiq* (logic), *fiqh* (Islamic jurisprudence), literature, astronomy and mathematics during 1906-1913.

Later on, he moved to Darul Uloom, Deoband, the seat of Islamic learning in Asia for his academic pursuit. During his stay in the seminary he learnt from some of the best ulema of the time. Thus, he was benefitted from Sheikhu Hind Maulana Mahmud Hasan Deobandi, Maulana Anwar Shah Kashmiri, Allama Shabbir Ahmad Usmani and Maulana Hussein Ahmad Madani etc.

After graduating from Darul Uloom Deoband in 1332 A.H., he stayed there for six years, and worked as an assistant editor of *Al-Qasim* and *Al Rasheed* journals of the Darul Uloom. During this period, his literary works such as *Savanih-e-Abuzar Ghifari* and *Kainaat-e-Roohani*, made him famous in academic and literary circles of the Indian subcontinent. After reading his book *Savanih-e-Abuzar Ghifari*, Maulana Ashraf Ali Thanvi said, “the writer of this book will prove to be a great researcher of Islam.”

In 1916, he was appointed as a teacher in his alma mater. However, for some unavoidable circumstances he had to leave it and joined Department of Theology,

Osmania University, Hyderabad in 1920, from where he retired in 1949 as head of his department and returned to his village Gilan, where he devoted most of his time to writing. After a long illness, he died on June 5, 1956 (25th Shawwal, A.H. 1375).

He ventured out in the study of diverse subjects when India was devoid of basic infrastructure and lived under oppressive colonial regime. He left his remarkable works in countless disciplines.

Maulana Gilani was a master of the Urdu language and a talented and prolific writer. He enlightened the hearts and minds of thousands with his unique style of writing and speech.

His famous works are: *Hazaar Saal Pahle*; *Hazrat Abuzar Ghifari*; *Abaqaat*; *Ad Deen al Qayyim*; *Annabi al-Khatim*; *Darbar-e-Nubuwwat ki Hazri*; *Imam Abu-Hanifa ki Siyasi Zindagi*; *Musalmanon ki Firqa Bandiyon ka Afsana*; *Dajjali Fitnon ka Numaya Khad-o-Khal*; *Tadveen-e-Hadith*; *Tadveen-e-Qur'an*; *Tadveen-e-Fiqh*; *Savanih-e-Qasmi (3 volumes)*; *Maqalat-e-Ihsani*; *Islami Maashyat*; *Hindustan mein Musلمانon ka Nizam-e-Taleem wa Tarbiyyat (2 Volumes)*; *Tadhkira Shah Waliullah*; *Ihata-e-Darul Uloom mein Beete Hue Din*, etc.

His last book was the biography of the founder of Darul Uloom Deoband, Maulana Muhammad Qasim Nanotwi (r.a.), *Savanih-e-Qasmi*.

All works mentioned above are in Urdu. However, his work on *Suratul Kahf* is translated in Arabic entitled *Al Fitnah Al Dajjaliyyah: Malamihuha al Barizah wa Isharaatuha Fi Suratil Kahf* by Maulana Mohammad Arif Jameel al-Qasmi.

Keeping in view the contributions made by Maulana Manazir Ahsan Gilani, the Institute of Objective Studies, New Delhi, proposes to organise a two-day national conference on **“The Life and Contribution of Maulana Manazir Ahsan Gilani”** on December 1-2, 2018, at Patna.

Papers can be written on any of the following topics:

1. Formative elements of Maulana Gilani's personality
2. Maulana Gilani as biographer of the Prophet (PBUH)
3. Maulana Gilani as biographer
4. Maulana Gilani as commentator of the holy Qur'an
5. Views of Maulana Gilani on Education
6. Maulana Gilani's works on Islamic sciences
7. Maulana Gilani and Darul Uloom, Deoband
8. Maulana Gilani's views on Islamic Finance
9. Maulana Gilani with his contemporaries
10. Maulana Gilani's work *Dajjali Fitna* at a glance

11. Panegyric poems of Maulana Gilani: An objective assessment
12. Maulana Gilani as litterateur
13. Maulana Gilani and the concept of Islamic hostel and its importance
14. Views of Maulana Gilani on mysticism
15. Maulana Gilani and Hyderabad
16. Maulana Gilani and the study of religions
17. Maulana Gilani: Harbinger of Muslim Ummah
18. Maulana Gilani and his collection of letters

Business sessions of the conference

1. Maulana Manazir Ahsan Gilani: his early life and education
2. Maulana Gilani's contribution to Uloomul Qur'an and Seerah
3. Maulana Manazir Ahsan Gilani at Darul Uloom Deoband and Jamia Osmania Hyderabad
4. Maulana Manazir Ahsan Gilani as a biographer
5. Maulana Gilani's views on modern issues of Muslim Ummah
6. Maulana Gilani's works on Islamic sciences
7. Maulana Gilani and his contemporaries

Important Dates:

Last date for submission of abstracts (in pdf & doc. /Inpage file)	Oct. 10, 2018
Notification of acceptance/rejection of abstracts	Oct. 20, 2018
Last date for submission of full paper (in pdf & doc. /Inpage file)	Nov. 15, 2018

Submit abstracts at:
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