Dr. Mahmood Ahmad Ghazi (1950-2010): Life & Contributions

By Dr. Muhammad Junaid Nadvi

“Verily in the creation of the heavens and the earth, and the alternation of night and day there are indeed signs for men of understanding; Men who remember Allah, standing, sitting, and lying down on their sides, and contemplate the creation of the heavens and the earth.”
(al-Qur’an 3:190-191)

Introduction
Islam has been a subject of great significance for Muslim scholarship and common man as a normative source of guidance. It has been a subject of endless series of writings and studies done by historians, traditionalists, jurists and scholars interested in the disciplines of social sciences. In the 1st century, Qur’an and Sunnah became a vital source of developing the Islamic civilization. The first three centuries of Islam is a period of compilation and classification of the available information about the life, conduct, personality and statements of the Prophet of Islam. In the later period, the scholars focused on the interpretation of the collected data and the transformation of Islamic sciences as a systematic discipline.

The arrival of Western colonial powers to the Muslim World in the late 19th century opened a new era of studying Islamic sciences. Because of the intense intellectual encounter between the Muslim orient and colonial occident, new aspects of studying Islamic sciences were discovered and a new genre of literature emerged in response to the large quantity of work produced by the Western writers on Islamic sciences.
Importance of Social Sciences
One of the most important objectives of Islam is to enable its followers to live an enlightened life. The Qur’ān and Sunnah does not conceal its preference for those who possess knowledge and those whose faith is tempered by reason. Muslims correctly value those who have knowledge and ‘Ulama have for centuries determined how Muslims understand Islam and the world. But over time Muslims have mistakenly begun comparing knowledge with a narrowly defined perception of religious knowledge, and scholars too with narrowly defined conceptions of scholarship. Thus, as the frontiers of knowledge expanded and human understanding of things and the scope of social sciences expanded, the Muslim vision of what knowledge is and who is knowledgeable shrank.

The Muslim minds should realize that the diminishing Muslim vision of knowledge and the knowledgeable is specifically responsible for the decline of creativity, dynamism, vitality and power of the Islamic civilization. Today, the Muslim world lingers behind other civilizations in its production and consumption of knowledge. At present, most Muslims think of knowledge as limited to the familiarity of medieval Muslim understanding of law and jurisprudence. Scholars are only those who “memorize” Qur’ān and Traditions, and are familiar with thousand year old pedagogically and epistemologically developed tools. It is therefore not surprising that under the intellectual leadership of this class of scholars the Ummah has gone from one low to another lower low.

The area of knowledge that has been deeply neglected by Muslims is social sciences.

Except for the ‘Islamization of Knowledge’ project and the American Journal of Islamic Social Sciences, both initiatives launched by American Muslims in the early 1980s, there has been very little attempt by Muslims to indigenize social sciences. Social sciences, unlike Islamic sciences, which are essentially normative paradigms, have an empirical focus. Social sciences are more interested in understanding and describing the world as it is rather than on assuming on how it ought to be. Without being prejudicial about what is more important, we must realize that while medieval Islamic sciences do provide a view of how the world ought to be from a thousand years ago, they do not equip our jurist-scholars with the training and tools necessary to understand the world as it is. ‘Ulama’s discourses on how the world ought to be become meaningless and
therefore ineffective because they are not grounded in contemporary realities. Simply, if you don’t understand who we are, where we have to go, we will be lost. Therefore, understanding of contemporary social sciences is important to make the traditional Islamic sciences more effective and useful.8

With this brief preamble and significance of social sciences, in the following section we will introduce a globally renowned Islamic scholar of the late 20th and 21st centuries, Dr. Mahmood Ahmad Ghazi, who foresaw the truly neglected areas of Islamic social sciences and made his utmost contribution.

Memoir of Dr. Mahmood Ahmad Ghazi
Dr. Ghazi was an Islamic scholar of the late 20th and 21st centuries, acknowledged for his intellectual and academic contributions to Islamic Social Sciences, with special reference to the concept of cosmopolitan Islamic jurisprudence.9

Mahmood Ahmad Ghazi was born on September 18, 1950 at Raey Brayli, Uttar Pradesh10, India and died on September 26, 2010 in Islamabad11. His ancestral native land was Thana Bhawun, U.P., India, the hometown of the celebrated Islamic scholar ‘Mawlâna Ashraf Ali Thânwi’12. Ghazi was the disciple of Mawlâna ‘Abd al-Qadir Raypuri, connecting to the Khilafa-chain of Mawlâna Ashraf Ali Thanwi.13

The genealogical roots of Dr. Ghazi’s father ‘Muhammad Ahmad Faruqi’ meet the family tree of ‘Umar ibn al-Khattâb, Radi-Allahu ‘Unhu. Dr. Ghazi’s father was a Hafiz of al-Qur’ân; graduate of Islamic Sciences from the school of ‘Mazâhir al-‘Ulum, Saharanpur, a city of India. He was an employee of the Pakistani High Commission, Delhi14. The mother of Dr. Ghazi ‘Ammata al-Rab’ belongs to the famous Siddiqi family of Kandhla city U.P., India.15

The family of Dr. Ghazi’s mother comes from the pedigree of Abu Bakr al-Siddîq, Radi-Allahu ‘Unhu16. Mahmood Ahmad Ghazi got married to Hamidah al-Ansari, the daughter of a well known Islamic scholar and writer Sadruddîn ‘Amir al-Ansari on April 15, 1980, from her Ghazi has five daughters.17

Educational Journey of Mahmood Ahmad Ghazi
Ghazi started memorizing al-Qur’ân from the madrasa of Mawlâna Siddîq Ahmad, during stay with his grandmother (Nani), and completed the Hifz after
migration to Karachi, Pakistan in 1954 from the madrasah of Qâri Waqa-Allah Panipati, at the age of eight years. Started Dars al-Nizami from Jamiah al-Binnoriyyah, Karachi and completed the syllabus from Madrasa Ta'lim al-Qur’ân, Rawalpindi in 1966. Got the degrees of B.A. honours (Arabic) in 1966; B.A. honours (Persian) in 1968; M.A. (Arabic) in 1976; and PhD in 1998 from the University of Punjab, Lahore.

**Mentors of Mahmood Ahmad Ghazi**

1. Mawlâna Muhammad Ahmad Faruqi, father and mentor.
2. Hafiz Abdul Aziz, from: Kandhla, Uttar Pradesh, India.
3. Mawlâna Abdul Jaleel Bastawi, from Kandhla, Uttar Pradesh, India.
4. Mawlâna Zainuddin Bastawi, from Kandhla, Uttar Pradesh, India.
5. Qâri Waqa Allah, from Karachi.
6. Qâri Nazir Ahmad, from Karachi.
14. Muhaddith Zafar Ahmad Usmani, from Tando Allahyar, Sindh.

Dr. Ghazi was an extensively published scholar of English, Urdu and Arabic languages. He has produced more than thirty books in the areas of Islamic law, Muslim political thought, Islamic resurgence, Islamic economics and Islamic education. In the following section his major published, unpublished, and unfinished work in English, Arabic and Urdu languages are being cited.
Published English-Work of Dr. Mahmood Ahmad Ghazi


2. *Qadianism*: The book deals with some of the interpretations of Mirza Ghulam Ahmad. It discusses the finality of prophethood, the prophethood of Ghulam Ahmad, and its consequences in Muslim society. It also mentions the status of the Ahmadiyya Community and its political plans. Publisher: u.n. Lahore, 1992.


5. *The Shorter book on Muslim International Law*: This work is the translation and editing of the Arabic book *al-Siyar al-Saghir* written by Muhammad Al-Hasan Al-Shaybani, the student of Imam Abu Hanifah, one of the six primary collections of the Zahir al-riwaya in the Hanafi School. A systematization and codification of the international law of Islam in the second century of Hijrah. Publisher: Islamic Research Institute, International Islamic University, Islamabad, 1998.

historical evidence of the movement in the northern part of the African continent, comprising Morocco, Mauritania, Algeria, Tunisia, Libya, and Northern Egypt. Publisher: Islamic Research Institute, International Islamic University, Islamabad, 2001. Book is based on his PhD dissertation.

7. *Islamic Renaissance in South Asia (1707-1867)—The Role of Shah Wali Allah and His Successors*: The book is a study of the evolution of Islamic thought in the Subcontinent in general and Shah Wali Allah's contribution to it in particular for he represents the zenith of Islamic intellectual contribution and scholarly excellence in South Asia. The author, with his insight into the dynamics of Indian Muslim history, traces significant moments of the rise and fall in the cultural career of the Indian Muslim community until the crisis-ridden era of Shah Wali Allah. He brings out the impact of the great thinker on the development of Islamic thought and highlights that Muslim community was witnessing a major sociopolitical turmoil in its eventful history. Publisher: Islamic Research Institute, International Islamic University, Islamabad, 2002.

8. *State and Legislation in Islam*: Drawing on theories of legal pluralism, this book tests whether and to what extent claims of the modern nation-state laws to exclusive dominance over other spheres are acceptable, and reassesses the operation of laws in an Islamic society. In eradicating existing misconceptions, the book provides a thorough commentary of the contributions made by Islamic States in the development of state laws. Publisher: Shariah Academy, International Islamic University, Islamabad, 2006.

**Unfinished English Work of Dr. Mahmood Ahmad Ghazi**

1. A Textbook on the Philosophy of Islamic Law, based on Maqasid al-Shari’ah.
3. English Translation of Imam Ghazali’s Kitab Qawa'id al-'Aqa'id, with notes and Introduction.
Published Arabic Work of Dr. Mahmood Ahmad Ghazi


4. *Al-‘ulama: Akbar al-Tahdiyat al-Hadariyyah lil Ummah al-Islamiyyah fi al-Hadir wa al-Mustaqbal* [Globalization: present and future biggest cultural challenge to the Islamic nation]: Globalization refers to the increasingly global relationships of culture, people, and economic activity. It is generally used to refer to economic globalization or the global distribution of the production of goods and services, through reduction of barriers to international trade such as tariffs, export fees, and import quotas and the reduction of restrictions on the movement of capital and on investment. Globalization may contribute to economic growth in developed and developing countries through increased specialization and the principle of comparative advantage. The term can also refer to the transnational circulation of ideas, languages, and popular culture. Dr. Ghazi has discussed the contemporary situation and the upcoming challenges of globalization to be faced by the Muslim ummah. Publisher: Dar al-Basair, Cairo, 2008.


**Unpublished Arabic Work of Dr. Mahmood Ahmad Ghazi**

5. A fresh Arabic translation of Muhammad Iqbal’s *Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam*.

**Published Urdu Work of Dr. Mahmood Ahmad Ghazi**

1. *Adab al-Qadi*: A comprehensive Urdu work on procedural Islamic law; published by Islamic Research Institute, International Islamic University, 1983.


11. *Fariza-e-Da’wat-o-Tabligh*: This booklet highlights the importance of promulgating Islam. Publisher: Da’wah Academy, International Islamic University, Islamabad, 2004.


Apart from the abovementioned works in English, Arabic and Urdu languages, Professor Mahmood Ahmad Ghazi wrote more than one hundred articles related to Islamic Law, Muslim resurgence, Islamic education, Sirah, Islamic history and Islamic economics.26

During his lifespan, Dr. Mahmood Ahmad Ghazi held numerous academic and administrative positions, fellowships of several national and international scholastic bodies, and attended around 100 national and international conferences. The following section gives an impression of his contributions.

**Academic, Administrative Positions, Fellowships**27

- Judge of Federal Shari‘at Court of Pakistan, March 2010- till demise September 2010.
- Chairman Shari‘ah Board, State Bank of Pakistan, till demise 26, September 2010.
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- Chairman Shari’ah Advisory Cell, International Islamic University, Islamabad, till 2010.
- Chairman Shari’ah Supervisory Committee, Takaful Pakistan, Karachi, 2005-till death.
- Professor/Associate Dean, Faculty of Islamic Studies, Qatar Foundation, Doha, 2008.
- Professor of Shari’ah, Faculty of Shari’ah and Law, IIU, Islamabad, 1987-2008.
- Vice President (Academics), International Islamic University, Islamabad, 1994-2004.
- Member of ‘Constitution Commission’ appointed by President of Pakistan, 1983-1985.
- Member, Board of Trustees, Ibn Rushd Islamic University, Cordova, Spain, 1992-1996.
- Member, Syndicate, Arid Agricultural University, Rawalpindi, Pakistan, 2006-2008.
- Member, Academic Council, International Islamic University, Islamabad.
- Member, Al-Tajammu’ al-‘Alami li ‘Ulama al-Muslimin, Makkah, Saudi Arabia.
- Member, Al-Ittihad al-‘Alami li ‘Ulama al-Muslimin, Cairo, Egypt.
- Member, World Forum for the Proximity of Islamic Schools of Thought, Tehran, Iran.
- Member, Arab Academy, Damascus, Syria.
- Judge (Adhoc), Shari’ah Appellate Bench, Supreme Court of Pakistan, 1998-1999.
• Director General, Shari’ah Academy, International Islamic University, 1991-2000.
• Director General, Da’wah Academy, International Islamic University, 1988-1994.
• Khatib, Faisal Mosque/Director, Islamic Centre, Faysal Mosque, 1987-1994.
• Jurisconsultant, Shariat Appellate Bench, Supreme Court of Pakistan, 1981-1998.
• Associate Professor, Islamic Research Institute, Islamabad (1981-87).
• Research Fellow/Assistant Professor, Islamic Research Institute, Islamabad (1979-81).
• Fellow/Lecturer, Islamic Research Institute (1973-79).

**Academic & Administrative Journeys of Dr. Mahmood Ahmad Ghazi**  
Professor Ghazi had thorough knowledge of Arabic, English, Persian, Urdu and French languages. During his lifespan, he held numerous academic and administrative positions, fellowships of several national and international scholastic bodies, and attended around 100 national and international conferences, and visited the following countries mentioned in alphabetical order: Africa, Algeria, Australia, Bangladesh, Brunei, Canada, China, Denmark, Egypt, Fiji, France, Holland, Hong Kong, Hungary, India, Iran, Italy, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kirghizistan, Kuwait, Libya, Malaysia, Morocco, Qatar, Russia, Saudi Arabia, Singapore, South Africa, Spain, Syria, Tajikistan, Thialand, Turkey, UAE, UK, USA, Uzbekistan, West Indies.

Everyone upon the earth will perish, and there will remain the Face of your Lord, Owner of Majesty and Honor. (al-Qur’an 55:26-27)
Notes & References

4. ‘Ulamāʾ (علماء) refers to the educated class of Muslim legal scholars engaged in the several fields of Islamic social sciences. They are well versed in shari’ah law (fiqh/jurisprudence), some of them also go on to specialize in other fields, such as hadith or tafsîr.
5. Khan, M. A. Muqtedar, “The role of social scientists in Muslim societies” (USA: Islamic Horizon, May 2004); also see, <www.ijtihad.org/IslamicSocialSciences.htm> [30-02-2012]
6. Ummah (أمّة) is an Arabic word means "community" or "nation." Commonly used for the whole Muslim world.
7. Khan, M. A. Muqtedar, “The role of social scientists in Muslim societies” (USA: Islamic Horizon, May 2004); also see,<www.ijtihad.org/IslamicSocialSciences.htm> [30-02-2012]
8. Ibid., <www.ijtihad.org/IslamicSocialSciences.htm> [30-02-2012]
10. A state located in the northern part of India, formerly called “United Provinces”.
12. Ibid., p.12.
15. A state located in the northern part of India, formerly called “United Provinces”.
18. A curriculum used in a large portion of Islamic religious schools in South Asia.


26 See, Ismatullh, Dr., “Dr. Mahmood Ahmad Ghazi: Hayatuhu wa Athāruhu al-‘Ilmiyyah” (Islamabad: Ma’arif-e-Islami, Allama Iqbal Open University, Vol. 10, No. 1, 2011); also see online publications of Islamic Research Institute, International Islamic University, Islamabad; publications of Shari‘ah Academy, International Islamic University, Islamabad.

27 See, Federal Shari’at Court, [http://federalshariatcourt.gov.pk/AJ2.html] [Retrieved: 01-01-2011]; also see, Da’wah, International Islamic University, Islamabad, vol. 17, no. 4-5 (September-October 2010), pp. 165-173; also see, [http://www.iiu.edu.pk/index.php] [27-09-2010].