

The ‘Firangi Mahal’: Family of the Learned and their Contribution to the Development of Islamic Educational Curriculum

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Abstract

The Firangi Mahal Family have consistently produced Islamic scholars, authors, mystics, politicians, and philanthropists for hundreds of years, making them the only family in the world to have done so. They stressed *maqulat* (rational science) rather than *manqulat* (transmitted science), and through this educational system, administrators, business people, poets, and writers were all adequately prepared for their relevant positions. Their most excellent intellectual outcome was the systemization of a new curriculum which, with improvements, has overtaken religious teaching in South Asia to the 21st century. This article will explain the Firangi Mahal family's contribution to knowledge advancement and their educational curriculum system. Data were obtained and examined from secondary sources, direct observation, and earlier research such as articles and journal publications. The results of this study show how committed this family is to serving humanity and how accepting they are of people. Furthermore, this study will assist in creating a comprehensive understanding of the evolution of Islamic curricula in the 18th and 19th centuries and the impact of the Dars-e-Nizami curriculum developed by Mullah Nizam Uddin Firangi Mahal in South Asia.

Key words: Firangi Mahal, Islamic Education, Curriculum, Development.

Introduction

The “Firangi” is the Persian word for “Franks” or “Europeans”. The Farang in concern was a wealthy French merchant who was granted a license to work for the business of horses in Lucknow during Mughal Emperor Akbar (1542-1605). ‘Mahal’ means palace.¹ The learned men, Ulama of Firangi Mahal, consolidated the rationalist Islamic academic tradition from Persia to India. They stood for a stable and malleable interpretation of Islam.² Their topmost priority was teaching. They

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¹ Now, this Mahal remained government property until the time of Mughal Emperor Aurangzeb who presented it as a gift to the learned Mullah Nizamuddin Sahalvi. This surname is itself from Sihali, a town in the Bara Banki District of UP, India. The family shifted from Sahali to the Firangi Mahal around 1695.

² Francis Robinson, *The Ulama of Firangi Mahal and Islamic Culture in South Asia*, (Orient Longman Private Ltd., New Delhi India 2001), p. 69.

turned the Firangi Mahal into a hub of learning that drew intellectuals from all over India and as far away as Arabia, Central Asia, and China. It must have been one of India's most prominent centres of study in the early 18th century.³ Firangi Mahal established popularity and distinction as an institute, leading to a reputation outside the region. It considers itself the world's first "University" of oriental studies.⁴ Lucknow had blossomed into a very sophisticated hub of trade and commerce by the reign of Emperor Akbar. A French trader moved to the city then and was allowed to do so by the Mughal government. He was an expert in the horse trade and lived at Firangi Mahal, where some French traders visited and lived during the reign of Aurangzeb (1658-1707). They later moved away because their residency permission could not be extended. Mullah Nizam Uddin established a prominent Madrasah here while under the supervision of Aurangzeb. One of the most well-known Firangi Mahal thinkers is Maulana Abdul Bari (1878-1926), a prolific author of 111 books, and was active both in religious groups like *Jamiat al-ulama-e-Hind* and the Khilafat movement. Altaf Hussain Hali, a poet of the Aligarh Movement, Mohammad Moinuddin Ansari, the Chief Judge of the Supreme Court of the State of Rampur, and M.A. Ansari, the President of the All-India Muslim League, are three other well-known figures connected to the Firangi Mahal.⁵

This location, known as the "Cambridge of India" (*Hamaarey Hindostan ka Cambridge yehi hai*),⁶ offered knowledge for which not only India but also Bukhara, Khwarazam, Herat, and Kabul bowed their heads. The Islamic world gained satisfaction in learning here and at their universities using Mullah Nizamuddin's course curriculum.⁷ He produced the Dars-e-Nizami curriculum that was incomparable and unrivalled for years to come. It included mathematics, hadith, fiqh (Islamic law), logic, philosophy, and a variety of other fields of study.⁸ The existing

³ Francis Robinson, *Problems in the History of the Firangi Mahal: Family of Learned and Holy Men*, (Oxford University Papers on India, Vol. 1, pt. 2, Delhi, 1987)

⁴ Nadeem Hasnain, *Firangi Mahal Made Lucknow an Intellectual Capital*, Volume: 10, No: 12; December-2016. Retrieved From: <https://www.tomosindia.com/firangi-mahal-made-lucknow-an-intellectual-capital/#.Y-0PenZBy3B>

⁵ Sir Cam, "Lucknow's Firangi Mahal", *Daily Times*, (Cambridge 2012), Retrieved from https://web.archive.org/web/20121022013259/http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/print.asp?page=2003%5C01%5C08%5Cstory_8-1-2003_pg3_6

⁶ Quoted in "*Arabia: The Islamic World Review*", Issue, 17-24, (Islamic Press Agency, Indiana University 1983), p. 73. Retrieved from: <https://books.google.com.bd/books?id=NoMAQAAMAJ&q=Hamaarey+Hindostaan+ka+Cambridge+yehi+hai&dq=Hamaarey+Hindostaan+ ka+Cambridge+yehi+hai&hl=en&sa=X&ved=2ahUKEwi2s7zI6539AhWs5HMBHTGZAPwQ6AF6BAgHEAI>

⁷ Abdul Haleem Sharar, "*Lucknow: The Last Phase of an Oriental Culture*" (translated and edited by ES Harcourt and Fakhir Hussain, 1989).

⁸ Nadeem Hasnain, *Op. cit.*

store of family history's social knowledge is studied with various goals. Still, most academic researchers in this field want to know how families shape the historical events and activities that are taking place in their larger socio-economic, cultural, and political environments.⁹ This approach is known as “collective biography”. It aims to recreate how ordinary people experienced more significant structural changes in society.¹⁰ This study examines the Firangi Mahal family's contributions to the growth and development of Islamic knowledge and curriculum.

Historical Roots of the Family of Firangi Mahal

Throughout the past 300 years, the Ulama of the Firangi Mahal have actively performed as instructors, Hanafite academics, and mystics. The family claims genealogy through the well-known Persian Hanbalite scholar and Sufi poet Abdullah Ansari Heravi, from Abu Ayyub Ansari (d. 672), the host of the Prophet Muhammad (SAWS) at Madinah.¹¹ Robinson asserts that “it too was connected to a learned family, the offspring of ‘the learned man and mystic, Khwaja' Abdullah Ansari of Herat,” Persia, who in turn subsequently tracked down his ancestry back to the family in Medina which had offered to host the Prophet Muhammad (SAWS) after his migration (hijra) from Makkah in 622 C.E.¹² Ala Uddin Heravi, an Abdullah descendant in the 19th generation, travelled to India during the Timurid attack of Persia and Afghanistan. He resided with relatives in Barnwa, which is now part of the Meerut district of Uttar Pradesh, India, where he also passed away.¹³ One of the latter, Qutub Uddin Sahalvi, was among the most illustrious thinkers of the 17th century and the author of numerous volumes; he was killed in a conflict in April 1692, and his library was destroyed. The Mughal emperor Aurangzeb (1658-1707) gave his sons Mohammad Asad, and Mohammad Said a building in Lucknow as compensation, and they gathered the family there.¹⁴ Another son Nizam Uddin Sahalvi (1678-1748), had a reputation for being professors, scholars, and saints.¹⁵

⁹ Sylvia Vatak, “The Cultural Construction of Shared Identity: A South Indian family history”, *The International Journal of Social and Cultural Practice*, No. 28, (Person, Myth and Society in South Asian Islam July 1990), pp. 114-131.

¹⁰ C. Tilly, "Family History, Social History, and Social Change", *Journal of Family History*, Vol. 12, 1987, p.332.

¹¹ “FARANGĪ MAḤALL”, *Encyclopædia Iranica*, Encyclopædia Iranica Foundation, Inc., (New York 1999), Retrieved from <https://iranicaonline.org/articles/Firangi-Mahal>

¹² F. Robinson, *The 'Ulama of Firangi Mahal and their Adab*. In: B. D. Metcalf (Ed.), “Moral conduct and authority: The place of Adab in South Asian Islam”, (Berkeley: University of California Press 1984), p. 153.

¹³ Wali ul Haque Ansari, *Ansari's of Firangi Mahal*, (Lakhnaw 2012), pp. 3-6. Retrieved from <https://issuu.com/abdulkidwai/docs/ansarisoffirangimahal>

¹⁴ *Ibid*, p. 38.

¹⁵ *Ibid*, p. 43.

Once home to a European trader, the structure was known as *Firangi ka Mahal* (House of the European), and the family later adopted the name Firangi Mahal.¹⁶

The Establishment of Firangi Mahal

In the period of Emperor Aurangzeb (1658-1707), the Firangi Mahal was constructed. During his reign, a French trader named Neal bought the house. Nevertheless, the government took every asset, including the Firangi Mahal, under the royal proclamation, which indicated that at that time, the government had access to foreigners' private possessions and things.¹⁷ A family of men known for their religious fervour, which had long received backing from the Mughal court, relocated to Lucknow around the start of the 18th century. Mullah Qutb Uddin, the community's founder, took part in the accumulation of the *Fatwa-i-Alamgiri* with his sons. Two of Qutb Uddin's sons, who had accompanied him on his campaign to the Deccan, were generously compensated when their father was killed in a land dispute with a family of rival shaikhs. The emperor punished his opponents. His prize included land in the Bahraich area of Oudh, awarded as a jagir, and a revenue-free tenure in the Lucknow neighbourhood where a French explorer constructed the Firangi mahal.¹⁸ Later on, the family would come to be known as Firangi Mahal. Mullah Asad and Mullah Said, the sons of Qutb Uddin Shaheed, established the comprehensive Madrasah at the Firangi Mahal. In addition to Islamic studies, the centre also offered math, science, astrology, philosophy, and sociology courses.¹⁹ In the eighteenth century, the Firangi Mahal was regarded as a significant Islamic institution. The legacy of this institution conserved traditional Islamic culture through its carefully crafted curriculum while serving students' intellectual interests. Students used to go to Lucknow from such distant lands as Saudi Arabia, South East Asia, Africa, the Middle East, and China to further their education at this prestigious institution.²⁰

In 1693, Darul Uloom Firangi Mahal was founded. The curriculum of the academic institution was introduced by Mullah Nizam Uddin Sahalvi, who was the third son of Qutb Uddin Shaheed and regarded as the forerunner of structured Islamic curricula in this territory. Consequently, the curriculum of academics was designated after him

¹⁶ F. Robinson, *Op. cit.* pp. 52-83; *Encyclopædia Iranica, Op. cit.*

¹⁷ 'Firangi Mahal's Role in India's Freedom Struggle against the British', (October 20, 2015). Retrieved from <http://lucknowpulse.com/firangi-mahal-in-lucknow-and-indias-freedom-struggle/>

¹⁸ F. Robinson, *Op. cit.* pp. 52-83.

¹⁹ *Firangi Mahal's Role in India's Freedom Struggle against the British, Op. cit.*

²⁰ *Ibid.*

and is known as Dars-e-Nizami.²¹ Almost all Muslim religious institutions in the Indian Subcontinent and other Muslim-majority regions adopted this curriculum. Firangi Mahal was renowned for providing the qadis (judges), muftis (those qualified to offer legal opinions), and other legal personnel with the instruction that Muslim courts occasionally needed. As a result, this family was able to fill the gap in Islamic knowledge left by the relocation of Delhi's religious centres.²² Shah Wali Ullah (1703-1762), with the ulama played a significant role like the ulama of the Firangi Mahal. He took over from his father, Mawlana Abdur Rahim (1644-1718), who spent his entire life learning about and preaching Islam as the head of Delhi's Madrasah al-Rahimiyyah.²³ Certain changes were made to the religious curriculum by Mawlana Abdur Rahim, and further modifications to the Dars-e-Nizami Curriculum were made possible by Shah Wali Ullah and the Firangi Mahal ulama.²⁴

Expansion of Knowledge by the Firangi Mahal Family

Qutb Uddin, the father of Mullah Nizam Uddin Sahalvi, participated in Emperor Aurangzeb Alamgir's endeavour, which attempted to create a compendium of the *fatwa*. Scholars still consult the summary, known as *Fatwa-e-Alamgiri*, today.²⁵ When Mullah Nizam Uddin was 14 or 15 years old in 1696, his father was assassinated in a political coup. After that, with his brother Maulana Muhammad Said Sahalvi, he travelled to Mughal court where Emperor Aurangzeb gave them the famed Firangi Mahal in Lucknow. Then, the brothers built the framework for the Dars-e-Nizami curriculum which is currently expected as madrasahs curriculum in the Indian subcontinent. During this time, this curriculum also began to gain popularity.²⁶

The Firangi Mahal 'ulama's most significant intellectual achievement was the systematization of this new curriculum, which has since characterized religious instruction in South Asia with specific revisions.²⁷ Under Mullah Nizam Uddin's guidance, the Firangi Mahal added several books on the *maqulat* disciplines-Arabic

²¹ Ziyad-din A. Desai, *Centres of Islamic Learning in India*. (Simla, Government Press 1978), p. 27.

²² *Ibid.*

²³ Barbara Daly Metcalf, *Islamic Revival in British India: Deoband. 1860-1900*. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1982), p. 36.

²⁴ *Ibid.* p. 36.

²⁵ Burton Stein, *A History of India*, (John Wiley & Sons 2010), pp. 177-178.

²⁶ Sabrina al-Faarsiyyah, *The Nizami Curriculum a Historical Glimpse & Critical Proposals*, (Birmingham, UK 2020), pp.8-9. Retrieved from: [file:///C:/Users/Dell/Desktop/ Asiatic%20Journal/ dars%20e% 20nijami%20info/dar-2%20The-Nizami-Curriculum.pdf](file:///C:/Users/Dell/Desktop/Asiatic%20Journal/dars%20e%20nijami%20info/dar-2%20The-Nizami-Curriculum.pdf)

²⁷ Barbara Daly Metcalf, *op. cit.* pp. 16-45.

grammar, logic, philosophy, mathematics, rhetoric, fiqh, and theology-to the existing corpus of texts generally taught. Just a little research was done on the Quran and hadith, the former through two commentaries and the latter by abridgment.²⁸ During political unrest, the Firangi Mahal earned respect for their efforts to preserve and advance the intellectual tradition. The extent to which the new curriculum, Dars-e-Nizami, was embraced shows how extensively the ulama shared this viewpoint. Students from around the world came to Firangi Mahal and took this curriculum home with them. Nizam Uddin (1678-1748), possessed a thorough understanding of all fields of knowledge grouped under the titles of *maqulat* (rational) and *manqulat* (traditional).²⁹ Like his father, he was knowledgeable in both Arabic and Persian. He wrote much, primarily scholia and commentary on classic religious and philosophical writings. His primary accomplishments, however, were to establish the Firangi Mahal as a significant centre of spiritual learning and to create a curriculum which balanced the two areas of knowledge and is now used in the majority of Madrasahs in the subcontinent.³⁰

The logician Mohammad Hasan, nephew of Nizam Uddin, and his son Abdul Ali (1729-1810) were more interested in rational topics. They responded to a taunt directed at rationalists by the Delhi scholar Abdul Aziz. On jurisprudence, *Risala al-arkan al-arbaa* was written by Abdul Aziz. He was so impressed by the erudition it conveyed that he called the author *Bahrul Uloom* (Sea of Knowledges), the nickname by which he became well-known to humankind. In Arabic and Persian, he wrote on all aspects of *maqulat* and *manqulat*; his writings reached more than 100, with some spanning multiple volumes.³¹ He was a master of classical Arabic and Persian script. According to the scholar's assessment, his publications are "according to the custom of his time, commentaries, glosses, and super-glosses on most of the regular textbooks." He was also referred to as the "chief of the 'ulama" or "*mail-ul-Ulama*," and his contributions were valued highly.³² He practised mysticism through Ibn Arabi's (1165-1240) philosophy of *wahdat-al-wujud* (lit., unity of being). From this viewpoint, he produced a noteworthy commentary on the Persian poet Jalal Uddin Rumi's (1207-1273) great work *Mathnawi-e-Manawi*. He died in Madras after having taught in numerous cities.³³

²⁸ Muhammad Mujeeb, *The Indian Muslims* (London 1967), pp. 406-408.

²⁹ *Encyclopædia Iranica*, *Op. cit.*

³⁰ *Ibid.*

³¹ *Ibid.*

³² F. Robinson, *Op. cit.*, pp. 52-83.

³³ Wali ul Haque Ansari, *Op. cit.*, pp. 38-42.

Most of Firangi Mahal Mohammad Hasan's publications are scholia and comments on philosophical texts by Muheb Ullah Behari's *Sollam-al-Uloom*, Mahmud Jawnpuri's *Sams al-Bazigah* and those of Mullah Sadra Shirazi.³⁴ Ahmad Anwarul Haq (1742-1821), a member of the same and the next generations of Firangi Mahal, had a stronger urge for mysticism. Another Firangi Mahal's most prolific writer was Mohammad Mobin (1744-1810), a grandson of Ahmad Abdul Haq. His body of work consisted primarily of commentaries and scholia on classic literature and was second only to that of Bahrul Uloom.³⁵ Nurul Haq (d. 1822), a Bahrul Uloom's student and Anwarul Haq's son, excelled in all areas of knowledge and was a renowned educator, much like his brother Mohammad Wali.³⁶ The writer Wali Ullah (1769-1853) and Abdul Halim (1824-1868), the scholar-saints Abdul Wali (1775-1863), Borhanul Haq (1799-1878), and Abdur Razzaq (1821-1889), as well as the brothers Neamat Ullah (d.1873) and Rahmat Ullah (d.1873), were among the notable Firangi Mahal scholars of the 19th century. The latter established the prominent educational institution, the Casma-ye-Rahmat Madrasah, at Ghazipur, Uttar Pradesh. Mohammad Abdul Hai, the son of Abdul Halim (1848-1886), was the most notable member of the Firangi Mahal family at this time.³⁷ Despite having only lived for thirty-nine years, he left behind more than 100 books and is still revered for his intelligence.³⁸ *Al-Taliq al-Mumajjad*, an introduction to Imam Muhammad's *Muatta*-a text on hadith in the light of Abu Hanifa's jurisprudence and Zafar al-Amani, his commentary on Sayyid Shirif Jurjani's text on the basics of hadith, all by Mawlana Abdul Hai, established him as these publications, along with his collection of the fatwa, have helped to make Lucknow recognized as the "city of Abdul Hai" among Muslims both inside and outside of India.³⁹

One of the most prominent literary figures of the Firangi Mahal and the entire Islamic World was Allama Abdul Hai Firangi Mahal (d. 1886). After Allama Bahrul Uloom, he was the person with the highest intelligence. Before he could exceed the foremost Islamic scholars of all time, he passed away at 39. He wrote 120 volumes in only a short span of time.⁴⁰ By the time of Asaf-ud-Daula, the Firangi Mahal's educators had

³⁴ *Ibid.*

³⁵ *Encyclopædia Iranica, op. cit.*

³⁶ Wali ul Haque Ansari, *op. cit.* 37-38.

³⁷ *Ibid.* pp. 38-42.

³⁸ Carl Brockelmann, "History of the Arabic Written Tradition", Vol. 2, *Handbook of Oriental Studies*. Section 1 The Near and Middle East, Volume: 117/2, 2017, pp. 857-858.

³⁹ Francis Robinson, *The Ulama of Firangi Mahal and Islamic Culture in South Asia*, (Orient Longman Private Ltd., New Delhi, India, 2001), p. 69.

⁴⁰ "A Brief History About Firangi Mahal", *Islamic Centre of India*, (Darul Uloom Firangi Mahal, Lucknow), Retrieved from: <https://www.Firangimahal.in/about.html>

already attained a high standing in several Muslim lands. Its pupils had dispersed widely throughout the whole subcontinent. Despite belonging to the Shia faith, Nawabs of Awadh had a high regard for Firangi Mahal and nominated many of its Ulama to the prestigious positions of Qazi and Mufti. Many Shia youngsters were also turning to the Ulama of Firangi Mahal for instruction since they had a broad perspective and were free from strict sectarian views.⁴¹

The Firangi Mahal has continued to follow its traditions in the twenty-first century. In addition to being a renowned scholar and prolific author, Abdul Baki (b.1869) spent most of his time in Madinah. His disciple Qiam Uddin Abdul Bari (1878-1926) was also one of the most influential figures in the campaign against British authority in the subcontinent. Abdul Majid and Abdul Hamid, two of his contemporaries, were learned academics and instructors. Famous Urdu poets from the Firangi Mahal family include Abdul Ahad Samsad, Barakat Ullah Reza, Mohammad Hussain Motin, Amanul Haq Anwar, and Enam Ullah Enam. Maulana Abdul Bari was considered to be a passionate campaigner by many historians and academics.⁴² He felt an urgent requirement for a formal learning system in addition to promoting Islamic education, Quranic lessons, and hadith. He aimed to enhance the method of teaching and studying religious disciplines. Mawlana Abdul Bari's personal goals at Firangi Mahal included revising the curriculum, teaching methods, and developing a consistent organizational framework.⁴³ Because he came from a family famous for India's lengthiest continuous familial heritage of Islamic scholarship, Bari was also a brilliant teacher and spiritual leader. The nawabs of Rampur, Jahangirabad, and Hyderabad, as well as learned figures like Mohammad Ali Jauhar, Shukat Ali Jauhar, well-known poet Akbar Allahabadi, and others, were much impressed by him and grew close to him. After making the third Hajj (pilgrimage) to Makkah and visits to Cairo and Baghdad in 1912, Mawlana Firangi Mahal created the *Anjuman-i-Khuddam-i-Kaaba*. His inventiveness and intellect can be evaluated by the fact that he wrote around 110 volumes on a variety of topics, including Tafseer, Hadith, Fiqh, Usool-e-Fiqh, Faraiz, Tasawwuf, Adab, Kalaam, Mantiq, Hikmat, Ilm-e-Nahu, and Ilm-e-Sarf, despite his engagement in social movements and political issues. So much happened during his brief 44-year life, which ended on January 17, 1926, at that age.⁴⁴

⁴¹ Nadeem Hasnain, *Op. cit.*

⁴² *Encyclopaedia Iranica*, *Op. cit.*

⁴³ *Firangi Mahal's Role in India's Freedom Struggle against the British*, *Op. cit.*

⁴⁴ "A Brief History About Firangi Mahal", *Islamic Centre of India*, (Darul Uloom Firangi Mahal, Lucknow), Retrieved from <https://www.Firangimahal.in/about.html>

The Firangi Mahal family focused on Sunni princely states as Mughal dominance collapsed in the 18th century, including Rohilkhand, Rampur, Arcot, and Hyderabad, the most prominent and influential Muslim state under British administration. Hence, in quest of princely support, teachers and pupils travelled far and wide throughout South Asia.⁴⁵ The Firangi Mahal also sought to exclude themselves from political engagement by the 19th century, when Lucknow had mainly converted to Shi'ism under the Nawabs' authority and had then come under British rule.⁴⁶

The Firangi Mahal 'ulama did not actively pursue a more autonomous position for themselves by speaking to a more diverse audience, even though there was a declining demand for their expertise and a decreasing amount of princely patronage available. Instead, they kept concentrating on obscure and technical types of research, just like the ulama of the Mughal era. They did not share certain other ulama's enthusiasm for widespread reformation. They maintained a strong focus on *maqalat* and instructed Shi'i and Sunni learners, partnering with the Oudh court, which made this clear. Hence, the Firangi Mahal served as a scaled-back representation of the thriving form of religious authority.⁴⁷

According to Robinson, during its heyday, in Firangi Mahal, the madrasa "had several hundred students and over two hundred residents, paid no charges and did its best to compensate for the living costs of poorer children."⁴⁸ Firangi Mahal also didn't make an effort to raise money for the madrasah. They acquiesced to whatever the community offered them "of its own free will."⁴⁹ However, some educators took delight in "forgoing their wages to support the madrasah overcome financial difficulties."⁵⁰ The Firangi Mahal 'ulama demonstrated that learning was their highest holy mission, which could not be gauged in monetary terms in these ways and others. They were fervent Sufis despite the Dars-e-Nizami curricula emphasizing the rationalist sciences and excluding the study of Sufism. Mullah Nizam Uddin was a student of Sayyid Shah Abdur Razzaq, a Qadiri Sufi saint from Bansa, a tiny town close to Lucknow, who passed away in 1724.⁵¹ Since that time, Firangi Mahal have

⁴⁵ F. Robinson, *Op. cit.* p. 173.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 173-175.

⁴⁷ G. N. Jalbani, *Teachings of Shah Waliyullah of Delhi*, 2nd ed., (Lahore 1973); S.A.A. Rizvi, "The Breakdown of Traditional Society", in *The Cambridge History of Islam* (Cambridge 1970), 11, pp. 67-96.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 164.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 164.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 162.

⁵¹ F. Robinson, 2001, *Op. cit.*, pp. 58-66.

maintained a tight bond with the saint and his progeny, regularly participating in his 'urs' (death anniversary) traditions. They were also connected to the renowned Muin Uddin Chishti (1142-1236) of Ajmer and other Sufi Mashaikh through a network of pupils known as the Silsila. Hence, their commitment to learning and Sufi mysticism went hand in hand. These elements of the teaching style of Firangi Mahal bring us to a key aspect of Firangi Mahal madrasah, which is also true of other madrasahs in South Asia as well as elsewhere, namely, that personal instruction and permission to teach others (through ijaza) transferred more than mere knowledge of a text or subject. It was considered crucial for the development of ethics. The Firangi Mahal had its own code of ethics (*adab*), which was characterized by, among other things, achieving a balance between the mystic path and rationalism, relying on Allah instead of asking for favours from political patrons, seeking the British company of the learned but not that of government officials, and promoting the advantages of the Muslim community and their religious aspects.⁵² These principles would also be represented in the innovators of Darul Uloom Deoband, and other renowned Muslim universities in the 19th century.

Khilafat Movement, Independence, and Firangi Mahal Family

The Muslim population of British India initiated the pan-Islamic Khilafat Movement, and Lucknow and Firangi Mahal played a crucial role in it.⁵³ After World War I, it was established in opposition to the British authority in India and the defence of the Ottoman Empire.⁵⁴ Islamic nations and their Muslim populations expanded during the period, and the Western and European powers occupied them forcibly.⁵⁵ During the same period, the British administration in India adopted an anti-Muslim stance and executed several Muslims.⁵⁶ Due to this unfavourable strategy, some Ulama declared a *fatwa* (religious decree) announcing a holy war (*jihad*) against British oppression.

The political impact of Firangi Mahal Mawlana Abdul Bari, particularly in 1919 and 1920, was notable. Also, he started the publication "*Akhuwat*" to cover Islamic topics. His ability to persuade Mahatma Gandhi (1869-1948) to engage in the

⁵² F. Robinson, 1984, *Op. cit.*, pp. 170-77; Moosa, *what is a madrasa?* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2015).

⁵³ M. Naeem Qureshi, "Pan-Islam in British Indian Politics: A Study of the Khilafat Movement, 1918-1924", *Volume 66 of Social, economic, and political studies of the Middle East and Asia*, (BRILL 1999), pp. 301-307.

⁵⁴ Burton Stein, *A History of India*, (John Wiley & Sons 2010). p. 300.

⁵⁵ J. Hutchinson and A. D. Smith, *Nationalism: Critical Concepts in Political Science*. Nationalism: Critical Concepts in Political Science. (Routledge 2000), p. 926. Retrieved from https://books.google.com.bd/books?id=NN0m_c8p6fgC&pg=PA926&redir_esc=y#v=onepage&q&f=false

⁵⁶ *Firangi Mahal's Role in India's Freedom Struggle against the British*, *Op. cit.*

Khilafat Movement during his stay at Firangi Mahal in March 1919 is evidence of his increasing influence. He hosted an All-India Conference in Lucknow in September 1919, and as a result, the All India Central Khilafat Committee was established.⁵⁷

Mawlana Abdul Bari emphasized the immediate necessity for Hindu-Muslim unity in the battle against the British in 1920. He declared that Mahatma Gandhi (1869-1948) should guide the Hindu-Muslim community in uniting to depose the British. According to Mawlana Abdul Bari, Swaraj and Khilafat should be linked to foster Muslim-Hindu unity in opposition to the British.⁵⁸ Hence, Firangi Mahal and Lucknow provided the Indian independence movement with a constructive aim. Mawlana Abdul Bari solicited monetary contributions from Muslims nationwide for the independence movement and even extended numerous invitations to Mahatma Gandhi to travel to Lucknow and the Firangi Mahal.⁵⁹ Mahatma Gandhi's trips to Firangi Mahal and Lucknow were crucial in reducing hostility between the two populations because there were often Hindu-Muslim conflicts. When Mahatma Gandhi toured the Firangi Mahal, people used to refrain from cooking meat as a symbol of respect and veneration. Jawaharlal Nehru (1889-1964), Sarojini Naidu (1879-1949), and Abul Kalam Azad (1888-1958) all attended this historic institute to discuss the various facets of the independence movement.⁶⁰

Mawlana drafted the constitution with the assistance of renowned attorney Chaudhari Khaliq-uz-Zaman. At the Khilafat Conference in Delhi in November, he made the first move toward launching non-cooperation against the British as a policy and started reaching an open agreement with Mahatma Gandhi. In addition, Mawlana Abdul Bari founded the *Jamiat-ul-Ulama-e-Hind* and chaired its first meeting in Amritsar.⁶¹ Persian and Arabic as a language, and the educational institutions founded on them, dwindled through time in India. Firangi Mahal is no exception and currently occupies a place in Lucknow's rich intellectual background. Firangi Mahal is part of *Tornos'* History Walk, and the current occupant is occasionally delighted to exhibit the archive of old letters and photographs here.⁶²

⁵⁷ Sir Cam, *Op. cit.*

⁵⁸ Francis Robinson, *Separatism Among Indian Muslims*, (Delhi 1975), p. 339.

⁵⁹ Ishtiaq Ahmed, "The Legacy of Gandhi: A 21st Century Perspective", *The Gandhian Legacy of Hindu-Muslim Relations*, The Institute of South Asian Studies, (Singapore 2007). Retrieved from: https://www.isas.nus.edu.sg/wp-content/uploads/media/isas_papers/ISAS%20Insights%2025%20-%20Email%20-%20The%20Legacy%20of%20Gandhi.pdf

⁶⁰ *Firangi Mahal's Role in India's Freedom Struggle against the British*, *Op. cit.*

⁶¹ Ishtiaq Ahmed, *Op. cit.*

⁶² Nadeem Hasnain, *Op. cit.*

Firangi Mahal Family and Their Contribution to the Development of Islamic Curriculum

The Firangi Mahal family contributed significantly to the creation of the Islamic curriculum. The syllabus and Nizamia Madrasah in Baghdad are regarded as the forerunners of the official educational system in the Muslim world. Seljuq wazir, Nizam al-Mulk (1018-1092) founded a series of Madrasahs in Muslim-majority territories in the 11th century as a particular institution of Muslim education, among which the Madrasah in Baghdad gained a considerable reputation.⁶³ The Madrasah was the preeminent institution for learning and instruction in the Muslim world.⁶⁴ These institutions provided a variety of subjects. The main focus of the curriculum was the Quran and hadith, followed by the Quranic sciences of tafsir (exegesis) and tajweed (variant reading of the Quran) and the science of hadith (traditions of the Prophet (SAWS)), which included the study of the biographies of the hadith transmitters, and then two usuls (principles): usul ud-din, principles of religion (theology), and usul al Fiqh.⁶⁵ But, as Madrasahs took on the role of educating judges and magistrates to administer imperial offices, the study of the *madhhab*, the law of school to which one belongs (fiqh), started to garner more attention. Many rational sciences, including grammar, poetry, philosophy, medicine, mathematics, and astronomy, were also emphasized at medieval madrasahs. The imparting of education was free for everyone.⁶⁶

Muslims in other parts of the world were greatly impacted by the Muslim educational system and the numerous "rational" and "transmitted" sciences that were formulated during the Middle Ages. With the establishment of the Muslim sultanate (1206-1526) in India and progress from the beginning of the thirteenth century, the Islamic academic legacy and the Madrasah system were firmly established in this region. With the founding of numerous significant Madrasahs, many of which were supported by Muslim rulers and aristocracy, India quickly became a key centre of Islamic education.⁶⁷

⁶³ Nizam al-Mulk, Darke, Hubert (ed.), *The Book of Government or Rules for Kings*, New York: Persian Heritage Foundation 2002), pp. ix-x.

⁶⁴ George Makdisi, *The Rise of Colleges: Institutions of Learning in Islam and the West*, (Edinburgh University Press, Edinburgh 1981), p. 27.

⁶⁵ *Ibid*, p. 84.

⁶⁶ Muhammad Farooq, Political Change and Madrasa Curriculum: A Historical Analysis of Dars-i-Nizami, *Journal of Research* (Faculty of Languages & Islamic Studies), 2007, Vol. 12, pp. 59-81. Retrieved from: <file:///C:/Users/Dell/Desktop/Asiatic%20Journal/dars%20e%20nijami%20info/dar-25.pdf>

⁶⁷ *Ibid*, pp. 59-81.

The diffusion of knowledge and royal sponsorship throughout the reigns of the Mughal Emperors (1526-1857) are two significant events in the history of medieval education. One of the most notable times in Islamic history, the Great Mughal era (1526-1858) in India, was known for its wisdom and talent.⁶⁸ The first time that secular courses were incorporated into the Islamic curriculum was under Akbar's (1542-1605) administration, an influential innovation indeed.⁶⁹ Citizenship, Economics, Astronomy, Science, Mathematics, and Medicine were covered in the curriculum.⁷⁰

To encourage the study of rational sciences, Emperor Aurangzeb (1658-1707) founded Firangi Mahal in Lucknow. It quickly became India's most extensive educational facility in the 18th century. Mullah Qutb Uddin Sahalvi made the initiation of the Firangi Mahal. His third son Mullah Nizam Uddin provided the well-known Madrasah education curriculum known as Dars-e-Nizami. It offered both conventional and cutting-edge courses. The curriculum had the extraordinary potential to help pupils develop their ability to think critically, which is the modern idea of a successful educational goal.⁷¹ The curriculum was carefully formulated to help pupils become critical thinkers and well-read individuals.⁷² Due to its distinctive characteristics, Dars-e-Nizami eventually became the norm for Madrassah education in the Subcontinent.⁷³

Mullah Nizam Uddin served the remainder of his life at Firangi Mahal, where he taught, wrote, preached, and helped to lead the locals after completing their study. It was here that he developed his curriculum. Because of the wide reputation of his course, his students started to gather from all across India. The blessings of Firangi

⁶⁸ M. Hamiuddin Khan, *History of Muslim Education (712 to 1750)*, Vol. 1, All Pakistan Educational Conference, (Karachi 1967), pp. 135-136.

⁶⁹ Abdul Momen and Mobarak Hossain, Features of Medieval Muslim Education System under the Mughals: An Analysis. *Jagannath University Journal of Arts*, Vol. 12, No. 1, January-June 2022, pp. 241-257. Retrieved from <https://jnu.ac.bd/journal/portal/archives/arts/12/1.jsp>

⁷⁰ Abdul Hai Madni, Naseem Akhter and Muhammad Asif Nadeem, "Curriculum of Islamic Institutes in Sub-Continent (a Critical Analysis)." *The Scholar-Islamic Academic Research Journal*, Vol. 6, No. 1, May 31, 2020, pp. 135-62. Retrieved from <file:///C:/Users/Dell/Desktop/Asiatic%20Journal/dars%20e%20nijami%20info/dar-6.pdf>

⁷¹ A. Momen, M. Ebrahimi and A.M. Hassan, *Importance and Implications of Theory of Bloom's Taxonomy in Different Fields of Education*. In: M.A. Al-Sharafi, M. Al-Emran, M.N. Al-Kabi, K. Shaalan (eds.), Proceedings of the 2nd International Conference on Emerging Technologies and Intelligent Systems, ICETIS 2022. Lecture Notes in Networks and Systems, Vol. 573, pp. 515-525. (Springer Cham, 2023). Retrieved from https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-20429-6_47

⁷² F. Robinson, *Op. cit.*

⁷³ Ali Riaz, "Madrassah Education in Pre-colonial and Colonial South Asia", *Journal of Asian and African Studies*, 2010, pp. 69-86.

Mahal spread throughout most of South Asia owing to his endeavours and those of his numerous students. Hence, by creating the Dars-e-Nizami curriculum, Firangi Mahal Lucknow laid the groundwork for contemporary madrasah curricula. Its emphasis on both religious and modern topics made it the most well-received and coveted curriculum in the Subcontinent at the time.⁷⁴ He turned Firangi Mahal into a centre of learning, and as an obvious outcome, hundreds of teachers, academics, researchers, and preachers emerged. The top academics and educators in Bangladesh, Pakistan and India today view it as a privilege to be in the line of Mullah Nizam Uddin's pupils and ancestors.⁷⁵

This "Nizami curriculum" was the first "organized curriculum" in the Indian Subcontinent and was focused on the Urdu and Farsi languages.⁷⁶ The Indian subcontinent produced thousands of religious scholars and intellectuals who were experts in numerous sciences because of this educational system. Most Muslims of the subcontinent were educated according to the same learning system from its birth until the Mughal Empire's closing years (1858). Its curriculum strongly emphasized the "rational sciences" and ensured significant advancements in these fields and transmitted sciences in India since the 17th century.⁷⁷

In religious education and Muslim academia in South Asia, the expression "Dars-e-Nizami" is frequently utilized. The term refers to a course of study practiced for centuries in the subcontinent to teach Muslim scholars. This curriculum, a highly demanded Arabic and advanced Islamic studies program as it is, has produced thousands of intellectuals over 350 years.⁷⁸

The core curriculum and syllabus have withstood the test of time. They are still imparted in the thousands of seminaries throughout South Asia, albeit having

⁷⁴ S. Ramzan and A. Rabab, *Madrassa Education in the Sub-Continent - Myths and Realities*, (Al-Idah 2013), Vol. 27, No. 2, 2013, pp. 33-49.

⁷⁵ Haamid Siraaj Attari Madani, *Faizan E Madina*, Wasim Abbas Attari (eds.), (Karachi, Pakistan, Dec. 2022), pp. 13-14. Retrieved from <file:///C:/Users/Dell/Desktop/Asiatic%20Journal/dars%20e%20nijami%20info/dar-3.pdf>

⁷⁶ M. Qasmi, *Hanafi Fiqh in India During Delhi Sultanate (1206-1526)*, In: 2nd National Seminar of Research Scholars Jamia Hamdard (Hamdard University), (New Delhi, Date: 5-6 November 2013), pp. 1-13. Retrieved from http://ijtihadnet.com/wp-content/uploads/Hanafi_Fiqh_in_India_During_Delhi_Sultan.pdf

⁷⁷ Mohammed Umar, *Classical Foundations of Islamic Educational Thought*, Markfield Institution of Higher Education, (United Kingdom 2020), pp. 1-26. Retrieved from: <file:///C:/Users/Dell/Downloads/ClassicalFoundationsofIslamicEducationalThought2.pdf>

⁷⁸ Haamid Siraaj Attari Madani, *Faizan E Madina*, Wasim Abbas Attari (edit.), (Karachi Pakistan, Dec. 2022), pp. 13-14. Retrieved from <file:///C:/Users/Dell/Desktop/Asiatic%20Journal/dars%20e%20nijami%20info/dar-3.pdf>

undergone a few minor revisions. Several outstanding academics who became luminaries of knowledge in various fields over these 350 years were initially nurtured through this program. Dars-e-Nizami is a unique academic course where students learn from multiple books in many sciences that serve as an introduction and lay the groundwork for those sciences. Many of the books were authored by the students of the originator of Dars-e-Nizami, either after him or under his direct touch. This curriculum's unique feature is that graduates as a rule have access to a wide range of works in the leading academic branches of Islam, including Arabic, rhetoric, jurisprudence, logic, and legal theory.⁷⁹

There are books by Mullah Nizam Uddin that cover eleven different sciences. Here learning Arabic is obligatory because the Quran and Sunnah are the cornerstones of Islam. These disciplines were also studied because Persian was the official language, and "*anaq*" jurisprudence was the dominant legal system at the period. The curriculum also included mathematics, logic, dialectics, and philosophy. It was a thorough strategy that catered to the time's societal and religious concerns. Forty-three books covered eleven diverse topics. The rational sciences were covered by Twenty works, including Five books on mathematics and Euclidean geometry, Three books on philosophy, four on dialectics, and eight on logic. The field of linguistics was covered in Fourteen books: Seven on morphology, five on syntax, and two on rhetoric. Nine volumes were solely devoted to religious topics: Two dealt with law, four with legal theory, two with tafsir, and one with hadith. The specific books used for teaching these subjects have changed over time, across regions, and between institutions. Some institutions offered books on a particular science, while others provided books on a different science.⁸⁰

This curriculum was implemented by the majority of Sunni Madrasahs of the Subcontinent and is now considered as a turning point in the history of Muslim education in India.⁸¹ A few changes were made, especially following the second half of the 19th century. The Dars-e-Nizami was so designed as to train administrators and meet the demands of India's "increasingly sophisticated and complex bureaucratic structure." Although it kept the century-old practice of oral communication and text memorising, the Dars itself did not require active memorisation. The curriculum fostered the habit of self-thinking despite being biased

⁷⁹ *Ibid*, pp. 13-14.

⁸⁰ *Ibid*, pp. 13-14.

⁸¹ Zubair Zafar Khan, "How far Dars-e-Nizami is Attuned to the Modern Era: Some Observation", *Islam and Muslim Societies-a Social Science Journal*, Vol. 4, No. 1, 2012. Aligarh, India. Retrieved from <https://archive.org/details/islam-and-muslim-societies-darse-nizami/page/n3/mode/2up>

in favour of *maqalat*.⁸² More books were written on the sciences, which further improved the capacity for thought, than about any other field of knowledge, including Tafsir (interpretations of the Quran), Hadith (tradition of Prophet Muhammad (SAWS)), and Fiqh (Islamic jurisprudence). This was a structured learning process instead of a list of books assigned to the students.⁸³

Its focus on broadening the mind and cultivating the habit of reading, research, and analytical abilities rather than actual memorisation to gain mastery of two rather challenging books on a field was the core component of this curriculum. But, before starting that process with them, their mental capacity was examined. With the same intent, American educational psychologist Benjamin Bloom (1913-1999) created Bloom's Taxonomy theory in the middle of the 20th century to characterise the cognitive domain for educational goals.⁸⁴ After finishing the study, students could also understand other books on that subject. This curriculum was heavily congested with grammar and syntax books to improve linguistic proficiency in Arabic, the language of the textbooks and a medium for the transmission of the heritage of the Islamic tradition, in addition to religious sciences, in the Madrasahs. These topics covered logic, philosophy, grammar, and syntax and were regarded as "*Ulum-e-aliya*," or practical sciences.⁸⁵

There was a time when the curriculum of traditional education model proved successful under the reign of the later Mughals. Since there was little distinction between religious and secular education at the time, the traditional curriculum created not only theologians and divines but also academics, business people, and administrators to run the government's machinery of the day. It undoubtedly benefited Muslim society's educational goals. But it was no longer as beneficial as it once was after the establishment of British authority, and it needed to be adjusted to satisfy the evolving society's changing needs.⁸⁶ Nonetheless, these establishments steadfastly adhered to their outdated practices and refused to acknowledge the demands of the new organisation.

The designer of this revised curriculum made the book selections based on the following principles: 1. From Simple to Hard: An effort was made to select books that were harder rather than easier, so that they have more guidelines and rules and 2. From Shorter to Longer: To convey many things in a chapter in a few words, it was

⁸² Shibli Nomani, *Maqalat e shibli*, (Azamgarh 1932, 3:94), quoted by Zubair Zafar Khan, *Ibid*.

⁸³ *Ibid*.

⁸⁴ Momen *et al.*, *Op. cit.*, pp. 515-525.

⁸⁵ Ziaul Hasan Faruqi, Some aspects of Muslim education and culture, (Islam and the modern age, Vol. 10, No. 2, May 1979, pp. 50-52.

⁸⁶ Zubair Zafar Khan, *Op. cit*.

tried to select comprehensive books but shorter rather than lengthier.⁸⁷ In Dars-e-Nizami, the most challenging books in each subject were typically picked up. The reasoning behind this belief was that reading these texts would require more effort, which would foster intellect and, in turn, deepen in sight and develop power. Shorter books can also meet the exact needs as the longer, and more challenging ones do. As a result, the curriculum was updated to incorporate the most concise texts. Intense reading exercises strengthen the mind, and the more rigorous the activity, the more significant the improvement in comprehension. Hence, Dars-e-Nizami was designed with the following two objectives in mind: After reading such challenging texts, the students were to be able to read at a higher level when they graduate, and no book was to prove challenging for them to read and comprehend. Also, the student could develop this quality further after graduating, enabling him to work hard and achieve a level of completion.⁸⁸ Students must study harder and put more cognitive effort into understanding such a curriculum. The deeper the comprehension and the sharper the thought, the more challenging the practice. The conceptual underpinning of the program was chosen for this purpose.

Even though the ulama of Firangi Mahal adhered to the Hanafi school of legal thinking, this curriculum chose even such works as did not belong to it. Also, books selected by this system were not written by Sunni intellectuals. *Tasawwuf*⁸⁹ Tasawwuf was a crucial component of the Islamic curriculum in Islamic institutions before Dars-e-Nizami. But this curriculum eliminated it.⁹⁰

The fundamental feature of this curriculum was that it was created to broaden students' mental horizons and cultivate reading and research habits and analytical skills rather than rote learning. The students were required to learn one or two rather challenging books on a field to build masterly talent; this was done after the student's mental capacity had been evaluated. Once they finished studying, they could understand other books in the area. Nizam did not care to incorporate the works of his contemporaries because the curriculum's strategy was planned to introduce the students to the old tradition in a systematic manner. Nizam Uddin made various adjustments that offered the curriculum an extensive and formalised format in

⁸⁷ Abdul Hai Madani *et. al.*, *Op. cit.* pp. 135–162.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.* pp. 135-162.

⁸⁹ Tasawwuf, which literally translates to "becoming a Sufi," is an Arabic phrase for the process of fulfilling moral and spiritual objectives. Sufism is the common translation of tasawwuf. This knowledge enables one to understand the states of the human soul, whether they are admirable or condemnable, as well as how to detoxify it from the latter and elevate it by gaining the aforementioned. It also enables one to travel to Allah (swt) Most High by escaping to Him along the spiritual path known as tarqah.

⁹⁰ Abdul Hai Madni, *Op. cit.*, pp. 135-162.

addition to a conventional one. So, his curriculum was a systematic learning process rather than a list of texts the pupils were instructed to read.⁹¹ Along with religious sciences, logic and philosophy were promoted in madrasahs, and the curriculum was deeply integrated with grammar and syntax texts that were necessary for the development of language skills in classical Arabic, the language of textbooks, as well as for the transmission of the tradition and heritage of Islam. Nonetheless, all of these subjects- logic, philosophy, grammar, and syntax- alone did not constitute the completion of Dars-e-Nizami.⁹² The curriculum placed more emphasis on the meaning of classical works and study during the learning process than on the actual substance of books. The main driver of the curricular modifications over the past three centuries has been the belief that books should be used as a tool for teaching rather than an end in and of themselves.⁹³

Table 1: Latest Version of Dars-e-Nizami Curriculum⁹⁴

| No. | Name of Subjects | |
|-----|--|---------------------------------|
| 1. | Tafsir (exegesis) | Tafsir al-Jalalain |
| | | Anwar al-Tanzil |
| | | Al-Kashshafan Haqaiq al-Tanzil |
| 2. | Usul al-tafsir (Methods of exegesis) | Fauz al-kabir fi usul al-Tafsir |
| 3. | Hadith (Prophetic traditions) | Al-Bukhari |
| | | Muslim |
| | | Al-Muwatta |
| | | Al-Tirmidhi |
| | | Abu Daud |
| | | Al-Nasai |
| | | Ibn Majah |
| 4. | Usul al-Hadith (Methods of Prophetic traditions) | Sharh Nukhbat al-Fikr |
| 5. | Fiqh (Islamic law) | Sharh Wiqaya |
| | | Al-Hidaya |
| | | Khulasa Kaidani |

⁹¹ Muhammad Farooq, *Op. cit.* pp. 59-81.

⁹² Muhammad Raza Ansari Firangi Mahal, *Bani-e-Dars-i-Nizami*, (Nakhas Pres Lukhnow 1973, p. 259), quoted in: Muhammad Farooq, *Ibid.* pp. 59-81.

⁹³ *Ibid.*

⁹⁴ Zubair Zafar Khan, How far Dars-e-Nizami is Attuned to the Modern Era: Some Observation, *Islam and Muslim Societies- a Social Science Journal*, Vol. 4, No. 1, 2012. Aligarh, India. Available: <https://archive.org/details/islam-and-muslim-societies-darse-nizami/page/n3/mode/2up>

| | | |
|-----|-------------------------------------|---|
| | | Kitab Muniyat al-Musalli wa Ghuniyat |
| | | Al-Mubtadi |
| | | Nural-idah |
| | | Mukhtasar al-Quduri |
| | | Kanz al-Daqaig |
| | | Al-Fara'id al-Sirajiyah |
| 6. | Usul al-fiqh (Basis of Islamic law) | Nural-anwar |
| | | Al-Tawdih fi hall jawamid al-Tanqih |
| | | Al-Talwih ila kashf haqaiq al-Tanqih |
| | | Musallam Musallam al-Thubut |
| | | Husami al-Muntakhab fi Usui al-Madhahib |
| | | Usul al-Shashi |
| 7. | Sarf (Grammarr) | Mizan al-Sarf and Munshaib |
| | | Sarf-e Mir and Panganj |
| | | Dastur al-Mubtadi and Ilm al-Sigha |
| | | Fusul-e Akbari and Zarawi or Uthmaniya |
| | | Al-Tasrif al-Zanjani or al-Tasrif al-izzi |
| | | Sarf Bahai and Marah al-Arwah |
| 8. | Nahw (Syntax) | Nahw-e Mir and Kitab al-Awamil al-Miat or Miat amil |
| | | Sharh Miat amil and Hidayat al-Nahw |
| | | Al-Kafiya fil Nahw and Al-Fawaid al-diyaiya or Sharh Jami |
| | | Tashil al-Kafiya and Hashiya Sharh Jami |
| 9. | Adab (Literature) | Nafahat al-yaman and Saba Muallaqat |
| | | Diwan al-Mutanabbi and Maqamat al-Hariri |
| | | Al-Hamasa and Mufid al-Talibin |
| | | Nafahat al-Arab |
| 10. | Mantiq (Logic) | Al-Risala al Sughra fil Mantiq and Al-Risala al Kubra fil Mantiq |
| | | Kitab al-Lsaghuji and Mirqat |
| | | Mizan al-Mantiq and Tahdhib fi ilm al-mantiq |
| | | Sharh al-Risala al-Shamsiya or Qutbi and Mir Qutbi |
| | | Sharh Sullam al-Ulum or Mullah Hasan and Sharh Sullam Hamid Ullah |
| | | Sharh Sullam Qadi Mubarak or al-Munhiya and Al-Hashiya al-Zahidiya al-Qutbiya or Risala Mir Zahid |
| 11. | Philosophy | Sharh Hidayat al-Hikmat or Maybudhi and Sadra |
| | | Shams al Bazigha and Al-Hidaya al Saidiya |
| 12. | Theology | Sharh Aqaid al-Nasafi and Al-Hashiya ala Sharh al-Aqaid or Khayali |
| | | Mir Zahid and Sharh Mawaqif or Sharh al-Izzi |
| 13. | Mathematical sciences | Tahrir usul al-handasa li Uqlidis and Khulasat al-Hisab |
| 14. | Astronomy | Tasrih fi Tashrih al-Aflak and Sharh Chaghmini |
| 15. | Metrics | Arud al-Miftah |
| 16. | Rhetoric | Mukhtasar al-Maani and Mutawwal |
| | | Talkhis al-Miftah |
| 17. | Debate | Al-Adab al-Rashidiya fi ilm al-Munazara |

There was not a single book authored by an Indian scholar that was delivered in the madrasahs before Dars-e-Nizami. Mullah Nizam Uddin incorporated the works of Indian authors for the first time in the history of the madrasah. Often, ulamas do not acknowledge their peers as superior scholars to themselves. The inclusion of books by contemporaries is a testament to Nizam's generosity and a sign of acknowledgement and appreciation for contemporaries.⁹⁵ This was so designed as a typical student could finish it by the time, he was 18 or 19. Nizam once more made an effort to make the tone of the curriculum impartial to prevent the students from developing sectarian prejudices. In addition to emphasizing logic and philosophy, he kept works on fiqh that were logically written and provided fiqhi (related to law) discussions based on inferential reasoning.

The Dars-e-Nizami was a revolutionary teaching approach at the time that sought to improve pupils' mental faculties through a curriculum built around thought-provoking literature on various subjects and requiring rigorous mental exercises. According to Mawlana Shibli, Dars-e-Nizami unquestionably resulted in a qualitative shift. This system is characterized by following three guiding principles:

- i. 'Conciseness' which means that only one or two brief books on each discipline were contained in the curriculum.
- ii. Many books were learnt incompletely as per the principle of conciseness, which means that only those portions of the books were preserved that were deemed essential for learning the discipline.
- iii. For each science, only the book that was thought to be the most challenging on the subject was included.⁹⁶

This was done to develop the pupils' mental ability and allow them to comprehend any book on the subject they come across in the future. Nearly all Arabic texts were more accessible for this curriculum-based graduates to understand. Religious education was not entirely disregarded either. Mullah Nizam Uddin did not build the curriculum on the religious and secular division, maintaining the holistic approach to education. Initially, this was more oriented toward rational sciences, but it could not be described as secular. Later, revisions in the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries rendered it more religious, but the fundamental structure for learning articulation remained the same. Several madrasahs have made numerous alterations to the Dars-e-Nizami curriculum during the previous three centuries. This system is not static and

⁹⁵ Maulana Abdul Qayyum Haqqani, "Nisab Madaris Arabia ki Tashkil-e-Jadid ka Mas'lah," *Mujla Ilm-o-Aghi*, Government National College, Karachi, 1984-86. p. 490) Quoted by quoted in Muhammad Farooq, *Ibid.*, pp. 32-33.

⁹⁶ Shibli Maumani, *Maqaat-e-Shibli*, quoted in Muhammad Farooq, *Ibid.*, pp. 59-81.

restricted, as is commonly believed. Due to its malleability and adaptability to change, this curriculum was modified to suit the demands of other Indian Muslim *maslaks* while maintaining the same teaching methodology.⁹⁷

To create a refined model of education, the curriculum adopted in the madrasahs of the subcontinent passed through numerous stages and reform procedures.⁹⁸ The crucial factor was that Darul Uloom Deoband, the first Qawmi Madrasah in the Indian Subcontinent, provided additional books in many subjects while adhering to the Dars-e-Nizami curriculum. This madrasah completed its goals and generated a large number of scholars.⁹⁹ Other madrasah education systems now extant in Bangladesh, Pakistan, India, and other parts of the world still adhere to the Dars-e-Nizami curriculum.¹⁰⁰ Mathematics, traditional medicine, logic, philosophy, rhetoric, dialectic reasoning, Persian and Arabic grammar, and literature are suitably combined to make up the madrasah curriculum. At the initial levels of these madrasahs, the Quran was studied, and at the advanced levels, the entire curriculum taken from the Dars-e-Nizami syllabus was learned.¹⁰¹ The current generation of the Firangi Mahal family has switched to modern careers and is engaged in journalism, academia, surgery, and engineering. The family's women are involved in contemporary education.¹⁰²

Conclusion

Firangi Mahal has thus made a noteworthy contribution to Islamic scholarship, mysticism, and politics. The Firangi Mahal family contributed massively by creating educational institutions, producing priceless intellectual texts, and acting as speakers, instructors, and philanthropists. The systematisation of a creative curriculum, which has since dominated religious instruction in South Asia with certain variations, was

⁹⁷ Muhammad Farooq, *Op. cit.*, pp. 59-81.

⁹⁸ S. Ramzan and A. Rabab, *Op. cit.*, pp. 33-49.

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 33-49.

¹⁰⁰ Abu Bakr Rafique, *Towards an Integrated Islamic Curriculum for Bangladesh in line with the Recommendations of OIC Conference'77*, (IIUC STUDIES 2012) Vol. 9, December, 2012, pp. 17-38. Retrieved from <file:///C:/Users/Dell/Desktop/Asiatic%20Journal/dars%20e%20nijami%20info/dar-23.pdf>; Mohammad Saiful Islam, *Modernization of Madrasah Education in Bangladesh: a New Approach for Future Development*, Regional Seminar on Islamic Higher Educational Institutions 2012 (SeIPTI 2012), pp. 850-858; Retrieved from <file:///C:/Users/Dell/Desktop/Asiatic%20Journal/dars%20e%20nijami%20info/dar-29.pdf>; Reifeld Helmut and Peter Hartung Jan, *Islamic Education, Diversity and National Identity*, (New Delhi, Sage Publications, 2006), 45-6; Narendra Nath, *Promotion of Learning in India during Muhammadan Rule* (by Muhammadans), (New Delhi: Kanishka Publishers and Distributors, 2005), p.188.

¹⁰¹ A. J. Coulson, "Education and Indoctrination in the Muslim World: Is There a Problem?" What Can We Do About It? *Policy Analysis Paper*, Vol. 511, pp. 1-36.

¹⁰² *Encyclopædia Iranica*, *Op. cit.*

the Firangi Mahal 'ulama's most outstanding intellectual achievement.¹⁰³ Moreover, the Firangi Mahal family promoted fusing academic and mystical study.¹⁰⁴ They progressively advanced in multiple mystic orders and prioritised mystic perception, similar to other religious persons in this period. Madrasah curriculum was rejuvenated with an emphasis on rational sciences as Mughals Indianized themselves, and the empire, particularly under Emperor Akbar, had become secular. Early in the 18th century, the Dars-e-Nizami curriculum included instructional techniques, and a simple list of literature which students in madrasahs should read. When Dars-e-Nizami was first released, it was in line with the times and fully satiated the needs of the time. Yet, there was no separation between secular and spiritual schooling at that time. Under this educational system, administrators, business people, poets, and authors were all well-prepared for their respective areas.

Their Mahal was one of the most significant centers of learning and the birthplace of some of the greatest Muslim intellectuals. The Firangi Mahal is still a magnificent example of Islamic principles and a popular tourist destination today. Throughout the 17th to 20th centuries, the Firangi Mahal's members significantly impacted the evolution of Muslim religious thought in this region. The world was transforming at that time, and the Indian people were subjected to the burgeoning colonial powers of Europe. The European colonial powers were extending their sphere of influence through their maritime prowess, trade, and exploration. Later, due to the Industrial Revolution, they expanded their economic and military supremacy. The enormous Mughal Empire (1526-1858) collapsed and broke apart during this time, and India eventually came under British influence and, later, under direct political authority. Particularly in India, Muslims experienced the anguish of witnessing their influence and power dwindle, as well as the hardships of a new period that profoundly impacted their culture and way of life. The Muslims of India received assistance from the Ulama of Firangi Mahal in understanding the nature of this issue, maintaining their culture and way of life, and coping with the profound changes occurring in their surroundings. New political and governmental structures introduced by the British were incomprehensible to Muslims. The Madrasah and ulama acquired responsibilities for maintaining and defending Muslim identity in the light of the altered political circumstances. Consequently, Dars-e-Nizami had a strong bias toward *manqulat*, or religious sciences. The Firangi Mahal's *maqulat* (Rational Science) and *manqulat* (Transmitted Science)-based curriculum is still regarded as the forerunner of the Madrasah educational system in Bangladesh, Pakistan, and India.

¹⁰³ Muhammad Mujeeb, *The Indian Muslims*, (London 1967), pp. 406-408.

¹⁰⁴ Syed Altar Ali Barelvi, *Life of Hafiz Rahmat Khan* (Karachi 1966), p. 268.