ABSTRACT

This thesis examines the contribution made by a convert to the theological issues in Muslim-Christian debates in nineteenth-century India. The man in focus here is, arguably, the most important Muslim convert to Christianity from the fledgling stage of Christianity in the Punjab, India - Mawlwī Reverend Doctor 'Imād-ud-dīn Lahiz. This study is a result of an immersion into thirty of his books, a good number of which remain inaccessible to most, both because they are not in print anymore and also because they are largely in the Urdu language. It combines this immersion with engagements with a large number of contemporary sources both Muslim and missionary in order to focus on the agenda of the famous Agra Debate of 1854, and examine 'Imād-ud-dīn's contribution to it. In doing so, it builds upon and complements earlier works on the Agra *munāẕara* and on 'Imād-ud-dīn.

This thesis addresses a gap in studies on the Muslim-Christian debates following the Great Debate and the place of 'Imād-ud-dīn in its aftermath. 'Imād-ud-dīn, it is argued, stepped into the gap Pfander left and this was, as Powell points out, in need of a fresh and full consideration. The agenda of the Agra Debate consisted of the issues of *naskh* (abrogation), *taḥrīf* (alteration of the Bible), *tathlīth* (Trinity), Muhammad, and the Qur'ān. Only the first two of the five topics were debated. In the four Parts of this thesis, Imād-ud-dīn is located in his historical-theological background in Agra and an argument made to demonstrate the specific elements of his insights into the topics, both those that were covered and those that were not covered in the Great Debate. In this sense the argument is made that Imād-ud-dīn helped complete an unfinished agenda besides making a significant contribution to the nineteenth-century context of Christian-Muslim debates.

This work is both historically and theologically significant because: i. This is the first research into the primary sources undertaken by a Punjabi Christian from South Asia. ii. It seeks to contribute to broadening one's awareness of the theologies of Muslim converts to Christianity in general, and South Asian converts in particular. iii. It attempts to illuminate a period of Indian history, which though not always helpful, encouraged open and honest interfaith debates on issues of sacred texts, faith and belief. iv. It contributes to the existing secondary literature and challenges the long held belief about the outcome of the Great Debate; in so doing, it shows that it was the unfinished agenda from this debate that Imād-ud-dīn sought to complete and thus provide a fresh impetus to Christian-Muslim *munāẕarat* in the nineteenth-century and beyond.

The Unfinished Agenda: The Great Munāẓara of 1854 and 'Imād-ud-dīn's Contribution to the Muslim-Christian Debates in Nineteenth-Century India.

By

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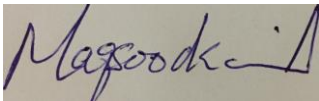
Doctor of Philosophy

In Middlesex University

Sepember 2019

Oxford Centre for Mission Studies

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DECLARATIONS

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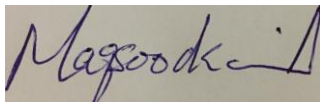
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STATEMENT 1

This thesis is the result of my own investigations, except where otherwise stated. Where correction services have been used, the extent and nature of the correction is clearly marked in a footnote.
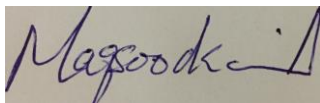
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STATEMENT 2

I hereby give consent for my thesis, if approved, to be available for photocopying by the British Library and for Inter-Library Loan, for open access to the Electronic Theses Online Service (Ethos) linked to the British Library, and for the title and summary to be made available to outside organizations.

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this thesis to my parents who dedicated me to serve the Lord at my birth and both passed away from earth into the heavenly glories during my studies at OCMS.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Abbreviations

I have not used many abbreviations and most of them are explained within the text. The few most frequently occurring are given below.

1. CMI   Church Missionary Intelligencer
2. CMS   Church Missionary Society
3. PCI   Presbyterian Church in Ireland
4. Proceedings   Proceedings of the Church Missionary Society for Africa and Far East
5. OT   Old Testament
6. NT   New Testament
7. NIV   New International Version of the Bible

Transliteration

The primary sources for this research have largely been in the Urdu language. Apart from some of 'Imād-ud-dīn's and his interlocutors' works which have already been translated into English, the author translated all the text quoted or paraphrased from the Urdu sources. With the exception of the letters و and ث the Library of Congress' transliteration system is followed here. However, instead of using 'v' for 'و' the letter 'w' is used. و is a common letter in Arabic, Persian and Urdu languages. Since Urdu adopts and assimilates words from both Arabic and Persian, instead of using different letters for expressing و, 'w' is used for all these three languages. For the same reason 'th' is used to express 'ث' than 's'. The transliteration of the Qur'ānic text is mostly taken from "the Qur'ānic Arabic Corpus", an annotated linguistic resource which shows the Arabic grammar, syntax and morphology for each word in the Holy Qur'ān. http://corpus.quran.com/wordbyword.jsp

Certain names of persons and places have been spelled and transliterated differently by different authors. For example, the main object of this study, 'Imād-ud-dīn, has been spelled as Imaduddin, Imad al-Din, and Imad uddin. To give a closer pronunciation in this thesis his name is spelled as 'Imād-ud-dīn but, in quotations, is kept the way other people spelled his name. The second most important person in this study is Mawlwī Raḥmatullāh. Mawlwī, a general term for a learned person in Islam, has also been spelled as Moulvie, maulvi, maulwi, and mawlwi. However, this form of the word 'Mawlwī' is used throughout this thesis but the original spellings in the quotations are kept as it is. In this thesis 'Raḥmatullāh' is spelled in this way while other people have preferred rendering it as 'Rahmat Allah' and Rahmatullah. The original authors' spellings have been kept when quoting their text in this thesis. The English rendering of the Arabic name of God is another case. It is generally transliterated as 'Allah' but is written here as'Allāh'. In quotation the original use is kept. Therefore, in this thesis the name of God appears as 'Allah' and 'Allāh', and an effort is made to be consistent in transliterating different words.

Urdu (in Arabic script)
Letters of the Alphabet

Initial	Medial	Final	Alone	Romanization
ا	ا	ا	ا	omit (see Note 1)
ب	ب	ب	ب	b
پ	پ	پ	پ	p
ت	ت	ت	ت	t
ٹ	ٹ	ٹ	ٹ	ṭ
ث	ث	ث	ث	s
ج	ج	ج	ج	j
چ	چ	چ	چ	c
ح	ح	ح	ح	ḥ
خ	خ	خ	خ	k h
د	د	د	د	d
ڈ	ڈ	ڈ	ڈ	ḍ
ذ	ذ	ذ	ذ	z
ر	ر	ر	ر	r
ڑ	ڑ	ڑ	ڑ	ṛ
ز	ز	ز	ز	z
ژ	ژ	ژ	ژ	zh
س	س	س	س	s
ش	ش	ش	ش	sh

ص	ص	ص	ص	ṣ
ض	ض	ض	ض	ẓ
ط	ط	ط	ط	t
ظ	ظ	ظ	ظ	z
ع	ع	ع	ع	ʻ (ayn)
غ	غ	غ	غ	g h
ف	ف	ف	ف	f
ق	ق	ق	ق	q
ك	ك	ك	ك	k
گ	گ	گ	گ	g
ل	ل	ل	ل	l
م	م	م	م	m
ن	ن	ن	ن	n
ن	ں	ﻨ	ﻦ	n (see Note 2)
و	و	و	و	v
ه	ه	ه	ه	h
ة	ة	-	-	t
ي	(ﮯ ، ي) ى	(ﮯ ، ي) ى	ي	y (see Note 3)

Digraphs Representing Urdu Aspirates (see Note 4) Value

bh	به
ph	په
th	ته
ṭh	ٹه
jh	جه
ch	چه
dh	ده
ḍh	ڈه
ṛh	ڑه
kh	که
gh	گه

Urdu Vowels and Diphthongs (see Note 5) Value

a	○○◌َ
u	○○◌ُ
i	○○◌ِ
ā	ا○○◌َ
á	○○◌َ ىٰ ، ى
ū	و○○◌ُ
ī	ى○○◌ِ
o	و○
e	○ى ، ﮯ○
au	و○○◌٘ َ
ai	ﮯ○

Notes

1. For the use of ا (alif) to support ء (hamzah) and (maddah), see rules 1 and 2, respectively. For the romanization of ء by (alif), see rule 12. For other orthographic uses of ا see rules 3-4.

2. For the distinction between ن and ں, see rule 6.

3. For the distinction between ى and ﮯ , see rule 11(c) and (e).

4. For the form of the letter ه in these digraphs, see rule 9.

5. Vowel points are used sparingly, and for romanization must be supplied from a dictionary.

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Part I: - Setting the stage

Chapter One: Introduction

Introduction

In the nineteenth century, for the first time in the history of Christian missions to Muslims, a considerable number of Indian Muslims from *ashrāf*[1] (noble) background, especially *mawlwīs* (religious scholars), converted to Christianity. Their conversion brought them to a head-on collision with the *'ulamā'* (Muslim scholars). Friends became bitter rivals who championed the cause of their faith communities. The converts to Christianity were often challenged by the *'ulamā'* to face-to-face and written *munāẓarat* (debates) to justify their conversion to Christianity. This resulted in a period of widespread Christian-Muslim debates and the production of *munāẓarātī adab* (debate literature). The men who played a critical role in this regard were Karl Gottlieb Pfander (1803-1865), Raḥmatullāh Kairānawī (1817-1891), and 'Imād-ud-dīn Lāhiz (1830-1900). Arguably, from the Christian side, 'Imād-ud-dīn, a former *mawlwī* and Sufi scholar, played an important role in the nineteenth-century *munāẓarat*. 'Imād-ud-dīn was baptized on April 29, 1866 at Amritsar. Following his baptism, through numerous face-to-face and written *munāẓarat,* he attempted to make a contribution to Christian theology in the context of the Islam of nineteenth-century South Asia. His importance in this context seems evident in the recognition he received far beyond the borders of Asia. He was the first Indian to receive a Lambeth DD in 1884, and was invited to address the Chicago Congress of World Religions in 1893. This study examines 'Imād-ud-dīn's contribution to the key issues of Christian-Muslim theology that emerged from what has been described as the Great Debate or the Agra *munāẓara* of 1854.

The aim here is to contribute to our understanding of the Christian-Muslim debates on the key issues selected for debate at Agra 1854 and the body of literature created around this *munāẓara.* It is hoped to shed new light upon our understanding of the core issues between Christians and Muslims, which have been debated for centuries. It seeks to achieve this by focusing on the writings of a former Muslim *'ālim* (scholar), *imām* (leader), and Sufi, *mawlwī* 'Imād-ud-dīn Lāhiz on the following issues: *naskh*

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[1] *Ashrāf* is a plural form of the Arabic word *sharīf,* which means eminent or exalted. In India this appellation designates Muslims of higher class and social standing, particularly those who attributed their higher status to their "Foreign" ancestry.

(abrogation), *taḥrīf* (corruption), *tathlīth* (trinity), the Qur'ān, and the prophethood of Muhammad.

1. The Munāzara

Scholars have used a wide variety of terms to describe interreligious discussions. For various reasons, the author prefers to use the term *munāẓara*. The Urdu term *munāẓara* comes from the Arabic root (n.z.r), to see the with eyes. According to Hans Wehr, *munāẓara* means, "emulation, rivalry, competition, quarrel, judgment, altercation, debate, dispute, discussion, controversy, supervision, control and inspection" (Wehr 1976:977). The word *munāẓara* has generally been translated as 'debate[2]' which does not fully express its meaning.

Munāẓara as a genre appears to have been embedded in the Middle Eastern and Islamic culture. It was also practiced in pre-Islamic Sumerian, Akkadian, and Persian cultures (Meisami and Starkey 1999:186). Scholars suggest that *munāẓara* "has obvious links with the early tribal verbal contest, *mufākhara* (pride, boast, glory) or *munāẓara*[3], in prose or poetry" (Meisami and Starkey 1999:186). The very purpose of the *munāẓara* was to establish the 'superiority' of one's religion/beliefs or views over one's interlocutors. *Munāẓara* appears to be the most common term for both scholarly and literary debates in various types of Arabic literature. It is through *munāẓara* that representative speakers "proclaim their own 'superiority' and their opponents' 'inferiority', sometimes by means of logical argument but more often by rhetorical persuasion or simple invective" (Meisami and Starkey 1999:186). With Arab conquests and the growth of Islam, this ancient Middle Eastern idea was exported to South Asia. In India, *munāẓara* was also initially attached to the Mughal courts but after the fall of Delhi (1857), it moved out into the bazaars and villages of North India (Powell 1993:286).

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[2] Oxford Learner's Dictionary defines debate as (1) "a formal discussion of an issue at a public meeting or in a parliament. In a debate two or more speakers express opposing views and then there is often a vote on the issue. (2) An argument or a discussion expressing different opinions.'

[3] The '*mufākhara* or *munāfara*' refer to pre-Islamic tribal contest for honour and glory. The *mufākhara* was a match of honour held every year after pilgrimage. It is said that whenever tribes met they opened a match of honour. There was an official spokesperson for each group, a *shā'ir* – poet or orator who played an important role. It is said that in pre-Islamic times *mufākhara* frequently ended in murder and tribal war. The *munāfara* had a similar role, a contest in which two parties disputed their claims to honour before a judge or arbiter. A stake was set or a theme for discussion was fixed. His party and witness under oath supported each contestant. Sometime the *munāfara* were held in rhyme. Clubs were formed for the express purpose first for staging a *mufākhara* (match of honour), then a *munāfara* (mutual vilification) which often ended in the sword (Huizinga 2003:86).

Christian-Muslim *munāẓara* is related to the broader field of studies called interreligious or interfaith relations. In Urdu, many other terms are used to describe interreligious discourse, such as: *tabādala-i-khayyālat* (interchange or exchange of ideas), *mukālama/hiwar* (dialogue), *mujādala* (polemic), *dafaʻ-i-dīn* (apologetics), and *mubāḥatha* (discussion). *Tabādala-i-khayyālat* and *mukālama* are primarily interested in developing understanding between otherwise opposing worldviews. *Mujādala* means a quarrel or fight and aims at destroying the opponents and winning the victory. *Munāẓara* on the other hand, had a missionary component, and was therefore, aimed at converting the opponent, especially the loser and his community, to the community the winner represented. It was one of the rules of formal *munāẓara,* and was agreed upon by Pfander and Raḥmatullāh[4] (Yaacob 2013:2). Nineteenth-century Indian *munāẓars* (debaters) occasionally used *mubāḥatha* as a synonym for *munāẓara* (Ṣābrī 1979). In Bengal *munāẓarat*, "were known as *bāḥās*" (Uddin 2000:63).

In the foreword of *Izhār al-Ḥaqq*, originally written in Arabic, Raḥmatullāh informs his readers that he requested Pfander that, *"*there should be a *munāẓara* between you and me in an open public meeting" (Raḥmatullāh AH 1388:222). *Munāẓara* was close to the heart of Raḥmatullāh. In the aftermath of the failed uprising in 1857, Raḥmatullāh escaped to Mecca where he established Madrasa Saulatiyya. One of the subjects he personally taught was *ʻilm al-munāẓara* (Alavi 2011:1371). Alavi relates that Raḥmatullāh's books summed up his *munāẓara* with Christians and his purpose was to demonstrate the superiority of Islam over Christianity (2011:1376). She specifically states about Kairānawī's *Izhār al-ḥaqq* that, "it is a compilation of the debate between him and the Christian missionaries, in it, he pleads for the superiority of Islam over Christianity and Judaism" (Alavi 2015:97). Sufia M. Uddin defines *munāẓara* as an oral theological dispute, which was traditionally held in the presence of an audience and arbitrated by a Wazīr or Caliph in a question and answer format. "The *munāẓara* was later adapted to a literary format" (Uddin 2000:63).

The purpose of those debates, from both sides, was predominantly to demonstrate the 'superiority' of their beliefs over their opponents. Although Pfander used the word *mubāḥatha,* for Raḥmatullāh the Great Debate in Agra was a *munāẓara*. Pfander's book *Mīzān al-Ḥaqq*, and almost all of Raḥmatullāh's books written to refute Christianity fall

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[4] Powell asserts that there is no evidence of such an agreement in the correspondence of the participants. But the "later commentators have asserted that it was agreed prior to the debate that the 'loser' would convert to the victor's religion, [and] pay an agreed sum in acknowledgement of defeat" (1993:245).

into this genre. The nineteenth-century Christian-Muslim debates in India, face-to-face or written, were essentially *munāẓarat,* as they were meant to prove the superiority of one's own religion over the others'. The nature of those *munāẓarat* was predominantly polemical (Powell 1993:1-2).

The literature created as an account of those face-to-face *munāẓarat,* written *munāẓarat* or that which was generally meant for the refutation (*radd*) of each other's religions falls into the category of *munāẓararāti adab.* Since *munāẓarāti adab* is the focus of this research, it is appropriate to use the term *munāzara* in this thesis. The English word 'debate' will be used interchangeably for the sake of ease and to avoid monotony.

1.1 The Great Munāẓara

After the initial encounters of Christians with Muhammad, Christian-Muslim *munāẓarat* took place in the courts of Abbasid caliphs (Beaumont 2005). Monk George (1200 A.D) is reported to have held a *munāẓara* with three Muslims in the Court of Salaḥuddīn in the presence of the prince Al-Khāna in Syria 1165 (Johnson 2007). Paul of Antioch (mid 12th to early 13th century), a Melkite bishop of Sidon, also engaged with Muslims (Thomas 2001:203). South Asia has its own history of Christian-Muslim *munāẓarat.* Here, the Christian-Muslim *munāẓarat* began with the arrival of the Jesuit Fathers in the courts of Mughal emperors in the sixteenth century (Ṣabrī 2008:6; Powell 1993:9). But the new phase of *munāẓarat* that began in the nineteenth century continued well into the twentieth century (Powell 2017:n.p). The main catalyst for the practice of debates was the *munāẓara* in 1854 that took place in Agra.

The *munāẓara* of Agra in 1854 is one of the most well known debates in the history of Christian-Muslim relations. The Great *Munāẓara* took place on April 10-11, 1854 in the city of Agra (Powell 1993:271) between the missionary Karl Gottlieb Pfander (1803-1865) assisted by Thomas Valpy French (1825-1891), and Muslim *'ālim* (scholar) Raḥmatullāh Kairānawī (1818-91) assisted by Wazīr Khān. There was a pre-agreed time, place, and agenda for the debate. Two serving judges, a Muslim Muftī Riyāz-ud-dīn and a Christian Mosley Smith, were to preside over the debate. The agreement included the conversion of the loser to the religion of the victor (Yaacob 2013:2).

The *munāẓara* was held on April 10-11, 1854 between Raḥmatullāh Kairānawī (a challenger representing Muslims) and the respondent, Karl Gottlieb Pfander (a CMS

missionary representing Christians). There were pre-agreed conditions as well as a five-point agenda for the debate: *naskh*, *taḥrīf*, *tathlīth*, the Qur'ān, and the *nubūwat* of Muhammad. But the debate could not progress beyond the second point and the *munāẓara* was abruptly terminated. Although this remained an incomplete and unfinished debate, it has come to be known as 'the Great Debate' (Powell 1993:255). Both sides are reported to have claimed victory (Gairdner 1909:188); Muslims immediately and the Christians retrospectively (Powell 1993:288).

It was neither the first nor the last in the history of Christian-Muslim *munāẓarat*. Then, what was so 'great' about the 1854 *munāẓara?* Was it the very nature of *munāẓara,* the persona of the *munāẓars* (debaters), agenda of the *munāẓara,* or a religio-political context that made Agra *munāẓara* 'the great *munāẓara'?* Had it been a *mukālama* (dialogue in the modern sense) rather than a *munāẓara* between Raḥmatullāh and Pfander, would it have had the same impact?

This *munāẓara* in Agra has come to be known as 'the great *munāẓara'*, for perhaps several reasons. Firstly, scholars like Powell who have studied this *munāẓara* called it 'the Great Debate' (1993:226). Goolam Vahed also observed "the greatest *munāẓara* took place in Agra in 1854 between Mawlana Kairanawi and the Reverend Carl Pfander… considered the greatest missionary of his time" (Vahed 2017:35). Christine Schirrmacher remarks, "The 1854 Agra debate is a historical milestone" (1997:2). According to Narayani Gupta, in the 1850s there was no other debate on the scale of the high drama of the Pfander-Kairanawi debate (1981:79). Amin Yaacob, after referring to the debates in Abbasid courts and numerous others that followed said, "Nevertheless, the greatest of them all occurred in the nineteenth century between …Pfander …and al-Kairanawi" (Yaacob 2013:1-2). Secondly, the *munāẓara* was great for Raḥmatullāh because he supposedly defeated the greatest missionary to Muslims – Pfander. Raḥmatullāh never forgot this event and made its unfinished agenda, 'the agenda' of his future writings, which culminated in his book *Izhār al-Ḥaqq*. Raḥmatullāh had originally titled '*Izḥār al-Ḥaqq'* as the 'Great Debate' (Yaacob 2013:3). Thirdly, the Agra debate arguably impacted most debates following it and still informs many of the local and international debates, apologetic literature, and Christian-Muslim relations. The scholarly interest it still generates after 164 years does set it apart from other debates in India. For these above-mentioned reasons, and for others, which will become clear during the course of this study, it seems right to add the adjective 'great' to the title of this thesis.

1.2. Qur'ānic Roots

All five points of the agenda of the great *munāẓara* were arguably also rooted in the formative years of Islam. In Medina Muhammad is said to have held a *munāẓara* with the Christians from Najrān (present Yemen) in 630 CE (McAuliffe 1991:34, 35).

Surah 2:106 appeared to be at the centre of the debate on *naskh.* The verse was revealed to answer the objections raised by Medinan Jews against the character of Allāh, Muhammad, and the revelations to Muhammad. The reason for the Jewish objections appears to be the contradictory nature of Islamic revelations which not only seemed to be contradicting the previously revealed books but also Muhammad's own statements[5] (Rafiabadi 2005:299). Baiḍāwī too argued, as noted by Rafiabadi, that this verse was revealed in response to the accusations of Jews and pagans that Muhammad was changing his commandments (Rafiabadi 2005:309). Within the Qur'ān it is quite clear that the doctrine of *naskh* originated from the polemic between the Jews and Muhammad.

Gordon Nickel has identified 25 Qur'ānic verses (e.g., 2: 42,44, 75, 77,140, 146, 159, 174; 3:71, 78; 4:37, 6; 5:13, 14, 15, 41; and 6:91), related to the doctrine of *taḥrīf* (Nickel 2006:207). These verses appear to have originated in the context of the early controversies between Muhammad, Jews and Christians. Muhammad's claim of being the promised prophet, prophesied in the Bible, was rejected by the Jews of Medina. Thereafter, the strained relations continued to deteriorate and Muhammad accused the Jews of twisting and altering their scriptures (Buhl 1934:618; Maimonides, cited in Roth 1987:7). The charge of *taḥrīf* was a reaction against the rejection of Muhammad's claims (Accad 2001:8, 223).

The debates on the Sonship, divinity of Christ, and the Trinity have been going on for long. Christians were often condemned as *kāfirs* (disbelievers) and *mushriks* (those who associate non-gods with Allāh) for believing that Christ is the Son of God or God (Surah 5:17, 72-73). The Qur'ān invokes Allāh to fight them (*qatalahumu*)[6] for calling Jesus the Son of God (Surah 9:30). Surah 4:171 tells Christians '*la taqulu thalathatun*, i.e. do not say three, Allah is one. In Surah 5:73 Christians are criticised for saying 'Allah is third of the three'. In 5:116, it is suggested that Allāh will question Jesus whether he said to people 'to accept me and my mother as Allāh; apart from Allāh'?

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[5] See Maudūdī's comment in his expository note on Surah 2:106.
[6] This word is translated as "curse" (Youssef 'Ali & Muhsin Khān), "destroy" (Ṣaḥīḥ International), "and fight" (Pickthall & Dr Ghali).

The Qur'ān also reveals debates on the authenticity of the prophethood of Muhammad and the origin of the Qur'ānic revelations. Muhammad claimed not only to be a prophet but also 'the seal of the prophets,' (*khātam[7] an-nabiyīn)* (Surah 33:40). The Qur'ān shows that the Meccans, Jews and Christians, rejected his claims. They called him a *kāhin* (soothsayer) (69:42), and *shā'ir* (poet) (69:41). They demanded from him the signs of a true prophet. The Qur'ān constantly rebuts such dismissive attitudes of Muhammad's opponents and asserts that he is the 'Messenger of Allāh'. The fourth point of the agenda was not new either.

Pagan Arabs and Jews also rejected Muhammad's revelations as the 'tales and legends of the ancients and forgeries' (Surahs 6:25; 8:31; 25:5; 83:13). Repeated assertions in the Qur'ān that 'it is the word of Allāh' (2:23-24; 4:82; 6:19; 6:92; 15:9; 25:4-6, 32; 27:6; 45:2; 56:80; 69:43; 75:16-19; 97:1 etc.), is a proof of a lively debate between Muhammad and those who dismissed his claims saying his was a 'word of Satan' (81:25)[8], 'a poet' (69:41)[9], and 'a soothsayer' (69:42),

Suffice it to say here that the core issues of Christian-Muslim *munāẓara* even in 19th century India can be traced right back to the Qur'ān.

2. The Unfinished Agenda

As noted, above, the Great Debate had a five-point agenda, but only two out of the five points; the issues of *naskh* and *taḥrīf* of the Bible were debated (Powell 1993:255). The debate on *taḥrīf* stalled the progress, and the Trinity, the Qur'ān, and the Prophethood of Muhammad remained un-debated. Therefore, 'the agenda' of the Great Debate remained unfinished. Raḥmatullāh blamed Pfander for the untimely termination of the debate and claimed victory. He wrote, "Regarding the issues of abrogation and corruption we came on top and won. When pastor (Padre or Father) [Pfander] saw this heartrending defeat, he ran away from the other three issues" (2010:223)[10]. As the debaters were at loggerheads on the issue of *taḥrīf*, Powell notes that:

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[7] The Arabic word *khatm* is derived from the root *khatama* and means, to seal, to provide with a seal of signet, to stamp, impress with a stamp, to seal off, to close, complete, finish etc. (Hans Wehr).

[8] See the opinions of two Jalāls, Ibn 'Abbas, Ibn Kathīr and Maudūdī the on Qur'ān's denial that it was a word of Satan.

[9] Maudūdī argued that the Qur'ān was not a word of a poet because Muhammad was a noble and gentle person, he had no selfish motives, his followers were suddenly transformed, and no one could say that the language of the Qur'ān was the language of poetry.

[10] The Urdu text reads: *"naskh aur taḥrīf ke masalon meiṉ hum ko kāmyābī aur ghalaba ḥāṣil huwa. Jo padre mazkūr ne yeh dil-kharāsh shikast daikhī to bāqī tīn masā'il meiṉ munāẓara se rah-i-farār ikhtiyār kī"*

Pfander finally refused to consider a further day's debating unless Raḥmatullāh would fulfil his request to show him a copy of the *Injil* in which these doctrines did not appear. Rahmat Allah… repeated the impossible condition that evidence should not be drawn from those books, which he had already proved to be 'corrupted' (1993:255).

An American Presbyterian missionary, E. Williams who was present at the debate[11] appears to justify Pfander's move in the light of Raḥmatullāh's unrelenting stand that the Bible ought not to be quoted as a source of authority. He remarked, "It was thought useless to keep the discussion longer". He also gave away his bias in these words: "The Mohammedans claim a triumph, which they would doubtless have done, whatever might have been the course of the debate" (1854:309). Irrespective of who could be responsible for the unexpected termination of the debate, the fact of the matter is that the debate did not reach its natural or logical conclusion. As the agenda of the debate remained unfinished, it prepared the way for 'Imād-ud-dīn to express his views on these issues. This is why 'the unfinished agenda', is an integral part of the title of this research.

3. 'Imād-ud-dīn in Secondary Literature

The great *munāẓara* and its principal debaters have been the focus of studies done by Avril Powell and Christine Schirrmacher. These writers mention in passing the two young *mawlwīs* who were present at the debate and who later converted to Christianity: Mawlwī Ṣafdar Ali (1830-1899) and Mawlwī 'Imād-ud-dīn Lahiz (1830-1900). Both are said to have played an important role in the cause of mission to Muslims. The focus of this research is on 'Imād-ud-dīn. 'Imād-ud-dīn, claimed Stock, was the most important nineteenth-century Indian Muslim convert to Christianity (Stock 1899. vol. 2:561). Powell notes too that "he played an extremely active role in the life of the Christian community in north India reflected in his participation in controversy with Muslim scholars, and in his invitation to the Parliament of Religions in Chicago in 1893" (Powell 1997:36). 'Imād-ud-dīn's conversion and his development as a *munāẓar* is the subject of the second chapter. Here it is briefly noted that in his pre-and-post conversion periods, 'Imād-ud-dīn was closely connected to the Christian-Muslim

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[11] Williams' letter sent to the Board of Missions was written on May 2, 1854. His letter provides some interesting details: population of the North-western provinces at that time was 30,000,000, and that of the city of Agra 20,000, and that the telegraphic communication between Calcutta and Agra had been completed. In his view India was becoming more enlightened and the public debate with Muslims, like the great *munāẓara*, was not possible even a few years earlier (Williams 1854:309).

controversy initiated by Pfander. The western scholars first noticed his presence with great interest at the great *munāẓara*. A number of them even ascribed his subsequent conversion to that event (Montgomery 1904:74; Fernando, Gispert-Sauch 2005:173, Stock 1899:70-71, Neill 1985:344,). Such claims will be reviewed in the next chapter.

‘Imād-ud-dīn had a strong relationship with Raḥmatullāh and Wazīr Khān. His presence at the Agra *munāẓara* has been confirmed by ‘Imād-ud-dīn himself. Having noted the presence of the British and Muslim dignitaries at the *munāẓara*, Powell notes, "Significant too, was the presence of Maulawi ‘Imad ud-Din, who knew Wazīr Khān well" (1993:243). Some accounts suggest that he was not merely present at the debate but was one of the assistant mawlwīs (Montgomery 1904:74). It appears that Wazīr Khān had a considerable influence on Imād-ud-dīn. Powell in her reconstruction of the great *munāẓara* has shown that it was Wazīr Khān's debating skills, more than that of Raḥmatullāh, which had carried the day for Muslims (1993:248-249). It was Wazīr and Mawlwī Muhammad Mazhar who put ‘Imād-ud-dīn in the Royal Jama' Masjid to preach against Pfander. And it was Wazīr who convinced him to 'tread the road of *taṣawwuf*' (Sufism) (‘Imād-ud-dīn 1978:4).

While ‘Imād-ud-dīn ascribed a direct influence of Wazīr Khān on the couple of turning points in his life, Raḥmatullāh's influence on him is not as obvious. He had a close association with Raḥmatullāh and the wider "circle of *‘ulamā'*[12] in Agra and Delhi" (Powell 2003:239). ‘Imād-ud-dīn's intimate fellowship with Raḥmatullāh and Wazīr Khān also emerges from some remarks found in his *hadāyat al-muslimīn* written to refute their *‘ijāz-i-‘īsawī*. He revealed that when Raḥmatullāh and Wazīr Khān were writing *‘ijāz-i-‘īsawī*[13] in 1853, he was also living in Agra and "used to spend 2-3 hours with them every evening" (‘Imād-ud-dīn 1899:3). This is a rare insider's information about the pre-*munāẓara* activities of the Muslim debaters and ‘Imād-ud-dīn's own relationship with them.

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[12] Powell does not identify, apart from Raḥmatullāh and Wazīr Khān, who else were a part of the ‘circle of ‘ulamā'. ‘Imād-ud-dīn identified them as Mawlwī Muhammad Mazher, Mawlwī Abu al-Hassan, Hafiz Abdullāh and Mawlwī Karīm-ud-dīn. He stated that they knew how Raḥmatullāh and Wazīr Khān compiled *I'jāz-i-‘īsawī*. (‘Imād-ud-dīn 1899:4). Mawlwī Karīm-ud-dīn was ‘Imād-ud-dīn's elder brother who was head of the Urdu department at Agra Government College. It indicates that some professors of the Government College were deeply interested in Christian-Muslim controversy. He was most probably involved in religious discussions with his British colleagues. At one point he brought two of them; Dr. Henderson and Mr. Fallon, to the Royal Mosque to hear ‘Imād-ud-dīn's critique of Christianity in his sermon (‘Imād-ud-dīn 1978:6).

[13] *‘Ijāz-i-‘īsawī*, was the first most important book co-authored by Mawlwī Raḥmatullāh and Dr. Wazīr Khān on the subject of the corruption of the biblical text. Authors used numerous European sources to prove their case. This book was supposed to have proved once and for all that the Bible has been corrupted and thus is utterly unreliable (CMI1900: 915). This book continues to be the most important book in Urdu on the subject of corruption and has been republished recently.

During this period of close fellowship, 'Imād-ud-dīn would have been surely influenced by these two established scholars and debaters. After his death it was noted in *Church Missionary Intelligencer* (CMI) that he studied Islam under the best masters of Agra and Delhi. Ireland Jones identifies one of those 'best masters of Islam' as being Raḥmatullāh. According to Jones, 'Imād-ud-dīn was a "devoted disciple of famous Mawlvi Rahmat Ullah" (CMI 1900:789-90). There appears a degree of exaggeration in Jones assertion. Though he had a close association with Raḥmatullāh, 'Imād-ud-dīn did not acknowledge that he was a 'devoted disciple' of Raḥmatullāh.'Imād-ud-dīn, however, from the tender age of 15 was in Agra and acquired most of his Islamic learning at the time when Christian-Muslim controversy was growing. He is known to have been a part of the team of *'ulamā'* who challenged Pfander to the *munāẓara*. He was indeed present at the *munāẓara*, perhaps as an assistant *mawlwī*. 'Imād-ud-dīn emerges subsequently as the one firmly rooted in the Christian-Muslim milieu of intense *munāẓara* memorialized in the great *munāẓara* of Agra 1854.

'Imād-ud-dīn's relationship and role in the Christian-Muslim *munāẓara* became more prominent when his conversion to Christianity in 1866 brought him to the forefront of the *munāẓara* confrontations with Muslims. For 34 years after his conversion he played an extremely active role in the fledgling Punjabi church. Powell aptly called him "the pillar of the nascent Punjabi Christianity" (Powell 2003:223) who, because of his "many publications and *munāẓara* confrontations, became both famous and notorious and ended his career in 1900 as one of the most well-known pastors in Punjab and north India" (Powell 1993:288; 1997:42). Powell also observes that 'Imād-ud-dīn's conversion and subsequent leadership in *munāẓara* provides an important "causal and thematic link between the pre- and -post 1857 era of religious encounters, as well as important 'inside' sources to understand the 'other side' of the earlier confrontation" (1993:288). In the concluding chapter of her seminal work on the Agra *munāẓara*, she stated that after the 1857 uprising (or 'the first war of independence'), in *munāẓara* confrontations, 'Imād-ud-dīn took on Pfander's role in debating and tract-writing in refutation of Islam, which was 'outstanding', and 'deserved fuller consideration' than can be given here' (1993:288).

'Imād-ud-dīn's close links with Raḥmatullāh and Wazīr Khān, his presence at the great *munāẓara*, then conversion to Christianity and refutation of Islamic claims, especially, of Raḥmatullāh and Wazīr Khān's make him an ideal candidate for the present research. Research into his work could arguably offer a new understanding of the issues at the heart of Christian-Muslim *munāẓara* in nineteenth-century India.

'Imād-ud-dīn wrote about 53 long and short books and half of these were directed at the refutation of Islam. After 'Imād-ud-dīn's death, Powell notes an opinion of someone who considered that, "his outstanding legacy to the nascent Punjabi church would prove to be his writings, 'constructive as well as destructive', for which he received in 1884 the first Lambeth doctorate in divinity to be awarded to an Indian convert". Another colleague commented, "He left a mass of material which will be more and more valuable as time goes on" (Powell 2013:253). Ernest Hahn translated 'Imād-ud-dīn's biography into English. In its preface he wrote 'Imād-ud-dīn "developed and formulated his Christian theology within an Islamic context. Especially in the Asian sub-continent the Church would do well to pay more attention to the writings of 'Imād-ud-dīn" (1978:1). Sadly, Hahn's advice was not followed. 'Imād-ud-dīn's legacy thus remained largely unexplored. Apart from Powell, 'Imād-ud-dīn has not been given the scholarly attention he deserves. 'Imād-ud-dīn's name is inevitably linked with the Agra *munāẕara*. It is, therefore, important to study his own writings in connection with the great *munāẕara* and assess his contribution to the Christian-Muslim *munāẕara* in nineteenth-century India and beyond.

4. Locating the Research and Research Questions

Christian-Muslim *munāẕara* in its Indian setting has, for long, attracted Western scholars. The Jesuit Missions to Mughals and their *munāẕarat* with the Court *'ulamā'* of Akbar (1542-1605) and Jahāngīr (1569-1627) have been well studied (Muir 1897; Barkatullāh 2010; Ṣabrī 2008:6; Addison 1966; Troll 1978). Raḥmatullāh's person, life, contribution to, and impact upon the Christian-Muslim debates has been studied extensively by both Muslim and Western scholars (Powell 1993; Schirrmacher 1994, 1997; Ṣabrī (2008). A renewed interest in this *munāẕara* and its impact on the modern Christian-Muslim apologetics was sparked by many publications of a British scholar, Avril Powell. After publishing her seminal work, *Muslims and Missionaries in Pre-Mutiny India* (based on her SOAS doctoral thesis) in 1993, she published numerous articles on Christian-Muslim debates and debaters in nineteenth-century India. She may have inspired Christine Schirrmacher (Troll 1994:87), a German scholar, to write her Bonn doctoral thesis[14] (later published as a book) on the Agra *munāẕara* and its impact

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[14] The full title of Schirrmacher's thesis is: *Mit den Waffen des Gegners: Christlich-muslimische Kontroversen im 19. und 20. Jahrhundert; dargestellt am Beispiel der Auseinandersetzung um Karl Pfander (Islamkundliche Untersuchungen)*

on modern Muslim apologetics. She published two more articles *Muslim Apologetics and The Agra Debates of 1854: A Nineteenth-Century Turning Point* (1994), and *The influence of German Biblical criticism on Muslim apologetic in the Nineteenth century* (1997). Troll reviewed Schirrmacher's book in which he notes:

> She sets out to depict three examples from the history of the Islamic-Christian controversy during the nineteenth and twentieth century which continue to play a special role in the controversy: Pfander – Raḥmat Allah; the gospel of Barnabas; the crucifixion of Jesus. The Specific object of her work, Schirrmacher stresses, is not an overall interpretation of Christian-Muslim apologetics in the line of the history of ideas but rather the theological controversy as such, i.e., "beyond the discussion of the single controversial issues, she wants to invoke the 'typical' methods of controversy as well as the climate of discussion in the area of Christianity and Islam during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries." (Troll 1994:87).

Both of her articles noted above appear to have been drawn from her thesis. She starts from the Agra debate in 1854 and traces the development of Muslim apologetics in the light of German Biblical criticism and the discovery of the Gospel of Barnabas, in her opinion first used by Raḥmatullāh. She notes a watershed change in Muslim attitudes and apologetics toward Christianity since then. She makes a passing remark about Ṣafdar Ali and 'Imād-ud-dīn in connection with the Agra debate and their subsequent conversions. She acknowledges that 'perhaps the most famous Muslim convert to Christianity in India had been 'Imâd ud-Dîn …wrote several apologetical works against Islam such as the famous book 'Guidance for Muslims' (*hidâyat al-muslimîn*) or 'Inquiry into the Faith' (*tahqîq al-imân*)" (1999:2). Based on the sources available to me, this appears to be all she has to say about the indigenous Christian apologists who played an extremely important role in post-Agra *munāẓarat*.

While Schirrmacher overlooked the Indian Christians, another German did a commendable job in bringing to light their contribution to the Muslim-Christian debate in the nineteenth century. Dieter Becht in his 1993 doctoral thesis at the University of Tubingen studied the contributions of five Indian Christian apologists[15]: Ram Chandra, 'Abdullāh Ātham, Ṣafdar Ali, 'Imād-ud-dīn, and Thākar Dās. Following the publication of Wherry's, *The Muslim Controversy* (1905), the purpose of which was to present the outline of the arguments and contents of the books written for Muslims, Becht's work

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[15] The original title of the thesis is: *Offenbarungsschrift Und Offenbarungsträger. Der Beitrag Indischer Christen des 19. Jahfhundertsin der Auseinandersetzung mit demm Islam*. Becht translated his thesis into English and recently published it under the title: *The Book and the Prophet: The contribution of Indians to the Muslim-Christian Debate of the Nineteenth-Century* (2018). I will be referring to this book.

adds considerably to the study of these five Indian apologists. Becht's study is also more closely related to the present research as he studies 'Imād-ud-dīn's contribution in relation to Pfander and Raḥmatullāh's controversy. Becht presents 'Imād-ud-dīn's biographical information and reviews his main apologetic writings. In the section on 'Imād-ud-dīn's theology, he devotes a fair bit of space to the *Results of Controversy with Mohammedans* (1875), and quotes extensively from it. He notes 'Imād-ud-dīn's high hopes for the conversion of India. This section is actually limited to his analysis of the five points of 'Imād-ud-dīn's plan of evangelism presented in his address "*Preaching to Mohammedans*" at the Allahabad Missionary Conference (1872-73), and his booklet the "Result of Controversy". One struggles to find any clue to 'Imād-ud-dīn's theology here. It is in the section on ''Imād-ud-dīn's works' that he reviews *Taḥqīq al-Īmān* and *Hadāyat al-Muslimīn*, early works written to refute Raḥmatullāh and Wazīr Khān. In this section he presents 'Imād-ud-dīn's thoughts on inspiration, prophethood, abrogation and corruption of the Biblical text. Becht's whole discussion of 'Imād-ud-dīn is entitled: "Jesus or Muhammad". According to Becht, ''Imād-ud-dīn's approach is based on the comparison between Jesus and Muhammad.' He appreciates 'Imād-ud-dīn's comprehensive refutation of the charge of abrogation and corruption of the Bible, as compared to Pfander and Ṣafdar Ali. Becht finds 'Imād-ud-dīn's idea that authenticity of inspiration depended on the agent's character, problematic. And that in his refutation of the theory of abrogation, Imād-ud-dīn failed to clearly present his ideas on the relation between the Law and the Gospel, and the role of the Law in the life of a saved person; something, he believes, Pfander and Ṣafdar were also guilty of.

Becht's work is an important addition to and improvement on Wherry. However, it does not focus on 'Imād-ud-dīn's theology as it emerged in the *munāẓara* milieu in India. He pays attention mostly to Imād-ud-dīn's refutation of *naskh* and *taḥrīf*, and his arguments against the prophethood of Muhammad and authenticity of the Qur'ān are just hinted at. 'Imād-ud-dīn's thinking on the all-important doctrine of the Trinity and divinity of Christ is pretty much ignored. It is possible that this deficiency is due partly to the fact that Becht studied 'Imād-ud-dīn among five other apologists and could not devote more space. But some of Becht's criticism of 'Imād-ud-dīn, like, as compared to Pfander, 'Imād-ud-dīn was 'not a man of profound reflection' (2018:232), appears unjustified. He also says that 'Imād-ud-dīn's answer to the theory of *naskh* is similar to Pfander, which in the light of chapter four of this research appears questionable.

Powell stands tall among most other western scholars who studied Christian-Muslim relations in India. After her extensive study of the Agra *munāẓara*, she moved

on to consider other native Christian *munāẓars*. For example, in her *Process of Conversion to Christianity in Nineteenth-Century North-Western India*[16], she studied the conversion of some of the elites from Hinduism and Islam. The examples she presented from Islam, Abd al-Masih and 'Imād-ud-dīn, both had their strong connections with Agra. As it is obvious from the title and the objective of her study, it was to "examine some examples of conversion from Islam and Hinduism to Christianity"; and her focus was limited to 'Imād-ud-dīn's conversion. Powell appears to be the single most important scholar to whom all later writers have paid due deference. Her insightful remarks about 'Imād-ud-dīn are spread over many different essays. Her most important work on 'Imād-ud-dīn was published in Robert Frykenberg's edited work (2013), *Pillar of a New Faith*. In this 32 page article Powell presents 'Imād-ud-dīn's background, the process of his conversion and ordination, his leading role in bazaar preaching, and debate with Muslims.

Having noted his multi-faceted role in the church she observes, 'Imād-ud-dīn, "provides a particularly insightful perspective on 'Indian Christianity" as it developed in its interface with 'Indian Islam" (2013:231). As he presented Christianity to his fellow countrymen, two things have been especially noted: he adopted, in tract writing, a missionary style and simple Urdu in contrast to the heavily Persianized Urdu favoured by the Muslim debaters. Powell indicates that it could have been his deliberate move, to reach the masses rather than to exclusively address the *'ulamā'*. Powell then presents some of the most significant characteristics of 'Imād-ud-dīn's contribution through reflecting on three important questions: (i) the extent to which he adopted or modified the apologetic of the European or American mentors in his own critique of Islam and understanding of Christianity; (ii) the relationship of his own long Sufi quest for truth to his subsequent understanding of Christianity; and (iii) his response to what he called the 'New Islam' represented by Sir Sayyid Ahmad Khān (1817-1898).

As far as Western influence on 'Imād-ud-dīn's writings on Christianity is concerned, Powell rightly observes that he enjoyed very close relations with some of the most outstanding missionaries of his time, which included CMS missionary, Robert Clark (1825-1900), whom he called his 'spiritual father', and Valpy French (1825-1891) who called 'Imād-ud-dīn his brother. On the other hand, he was also very close to American missionaries, John Newton (1810-1891) and Charles Forman (1821-1894) at Lahore, a prolific publisher of Urdu tracts on doctrinal themes (Powell 2013:237).

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[16] This article is a part of Geoffrey Oddie's (1997) ed. *Religious Conversion Movements in South Asia: Continuity and Change, 1800-1900*. Curzon Press.

Powell believes that 'Imād-ud-dīn was heavily influenced by Clark, Pfander and French. According to Powell, he initially adopted Pfander's methodology and emphasis in bazaar preaching and tract writing. She writes, "'Imād-ud-dīn chose to draw on the *Mīzan al-Ḥaqq* very extensively when commencing his own Christian mission in the mid-1860s" (2013:239). About French's influence she says, "French's personal influence seems to have run very deep and was probably an important factor in 'Imād-ud-dīn's decision to abandon controversial methods in the early 1870s". She goes as far as to declare 'Imād-ud-dīn to be French's *murīd* (disciple) (2013:238-39). 'Imād-ud-dīn's long and close association with some saintly and scholarly missionaries would have surely influenced him. Powell's view that 'Imād-ud-dīn was heavily influenced by western role models seems a bit far-fetched. 'Imād-ud-dīn neither changed his Muslim name nor his dress and his wife continued to wear the *burqa*. French repeatedly and publicly called 'Imād-ud-dīn, 'my brother' (Birsk 1895:114-15), not 'my *murīd'*. The direction of influence appears to be mutual. Robert Clark and his son, Henry Martin Clark, were amongst 'Imād-ud-dīn's biggest admirers. It could be beneficial, in order to offset the imbalance, to study 'Imād-ud-dīn's influence on the missionaries. His influence on the scholars of Islam like, E.M. Wherry (1843-1927) and H.U. Weitbrecht (1851-1937), has been noted already by Troll:

> *Tanqid al-Khayalat* (1882-84), an early polemical work by the Muslim convert, Rev. Imad-ud-din criticised the theological ideas expressed by Sayyid Ahmad Khān in *Tahzib al-akhlaq*. This made a great impact on subsequent missionary thinking about sir Sayyid, and especially on E.M. Wherry and H.U. Weitbrecht (Troll 1978:19).

Powell's bias in privileging the missionaries over the natives is obvious in that she overlooks Eastern influences on 'Imād-ud-dīn, not even acknowledging the role of Gurū Dās[17], a local Presbyterian pastor in Lahore, whose debt was acknowledged by 'Imād-ud-dīn in his autobiography. Powell placed Pfander amongst 'Imād-ud-dīn's mentors. There is, however, no evidence that they were even on friendly terms. Their presence in Agra was marked by mutual rejection and open animosity. There is also hardly any

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[17] Charles Forman informs us that Gurū Dās' full name was Gurū Dās Moitra. He was the head teacher in the mission school and one of the 9 Christian teachers. Forman noted the evangelistic activities of these teachers: "Every evening the gospel is preached in the high ways and bazars to all who will stop to listen to it. In this work, I am happy to say, some of the teachers voluntarily take part". He particularly noted about Dās: "On Sundays one of them holds a service in the school for the benefit of the pupils; and another, the licentiate, Mr. Guru Das Moitra, takes one of the two services for the native church" (1854:251). This report shows that Gurū Dās was a man of considerable influence and was somewhat trained theologically as well. 'Imād-ud-dīn used to attend his church services and acknowledged to have received a great benefit from his fellowship and worship services (1976:23).

direct evidence that 'Imād-ud-dīn drew extensively from *Mizān al-Ḥaqq*. In his writings one can hardly find any direct quotations from Pfander's books.

Powell briefly discusses 'Imād-ud-dīn's presentation of Christianity to his countrymen where his emphasis lies on the teachings of the Bible, on the authority of which certain doctrinal essentials must be accepted before the spiritual truths of Christianity could be opened up to anyone. She notes that Christ's Sonship and divinity was one such doctrine, but it has been the main obstacle to Muslim comprehension of Christianity. She rightly points to his masterful exposition of the traditional text used for the proof of Christ's divinity. For example, she notes 'Imād-ud-dīn's skilful use of the problematic first verse of Psalm 110, for the use of which, according to her, the Agra *'ulamā'* had scoffed at Pfander. But 'Imād-ud-dīn presented this verse in, *'man anā'* (Who am I?), as the proof of Christ's divine but also human natures. She says that he explained other aspects of Christian understanding of salvation that converts from Islam always found particularly difficult: notably, in the *Khūn se Mu'āfī*, the necessity for atonement through the sacrifice of the incarnate Christ (2013:242).

When Powell talks about 'Imād-ud-dīn's approach to the most difficult doctrine, the Trinity, which she points out is perceived in Islam as *shirk*, she asserts he did not attempt to prove it from the Bible as some of his predecessors, including Pfander, had done (2013:142-3). It appears, in Powell's view 'Imād-ud-dīn did not find a biblical basis for the doctrine of the Trinity. She writes, "Apart from the seemingly intractable problem of explaining the Trinity, 'Imād-ud-dīn found the text of the Bible to constitute the sufficient and essential basis for the acceptance of all other Christian doctrines" (2013:243). She says like Pfander, he understood the Trinity to be a divine mystery, which should be accepted. And if it was considered irrational, it was no more irrational than Muslim adherence to the 'necessity' of *tawḥīd* (divine unity) (2013:243). Powell's claim here appears not to be based on a thorough reading of 'Imād-ud-dīn's writings. He provided a large number of biblical texts in support of the doctrine of the Trinity, even some previously unnoticed texts, as well as proofs from the Islamic sources. My point here will become clearer in the discussion on the doctrine of the Trinity.

The next two sections of Powell's article deal with Islamic mysticism and rationality. Powell observes that 'Imād-ud-dīn was quite unsympathetic to Sufism and completely rejected it. She detects some unconscious influence of mysticism on 'Imād-ud-dīn. 'Imād-ud-dīn certainly rejected Sufism as a way of knowing God and salvation, but in this thesis it is argued that in the context of debate and evangelism, 'Imād-ud-dīn quite consciously, as well as creatively, utilized Sufi categories for explaining Christian

doctrines to Muslims. ʿImād-ud-dīn certainly launched a devastating critique of Sayyid Ahmad Khān's rationalistic approach and the inadequacy and insufficiency of human reason in relation to God and ultimate questions. However, he gave due place to human rationality and did not shy away from using rational arguments in the service of his master.

Rajaiah D. Paul (1961) paid due deference to ʿImād-ud-dīn and included him among the 'chosen vessels'. The title of the chapter reads, "*Imad-ud-din: Doctor of Divinity and Christian Apologist*.' Paul begins this essay on ʿImād-ud-dīn in the context of the Agra debate and his conversion as the realisation of Pfander's hope that 'much good will come out of this stir'. About half of the article is based on extensive quoting from ʿImād-ud-dīn's autobiography. He then briefly notes his ordination and pays attention to his paper presented at the Allahabad Missionary conference in 1873. Paul's article argues that ʿImād-ud-dīn's thinking at this stage was to show how the gospel should be presented to Muslims. Apart from preaching and writing books for them, Paul notes the six point plan ʿImād-ud-dīn presented at the conference (1961:262-63)[18]. Paul then presents him as the leading clergyman of the diocese. The final section talks about his literary work. Besides showing his awareness of the Lambeth DD and his peaceful passing away, Paul remarks as follows: "Perhaps the greatest contribution which ʿImād-ud-dīn made to the life of the Indian Church are the books which he wrote" (1961:268).

The most recent western work that responds to the issues debated at the great *munāẓara* is a commendable book by Gordon Nickel: *The Gentle Answer* (2015). *The Gentle Answer*, however, is limited to the discussion of *taḥrīf*. Nickel's critique of the Qur'ān is also mainly aimed at showing to Muslims that the Bible was more reliable in its integrity and transmission than the Qur'ān, and he addresses the issue of 'the abrogation,' rather indirectly. The main argument is that Muslim scholars invented the theories of abrogation to overcome contradictions within the Qur'ān. The issues of the Trinity and divinity of Christ and the prophethood of Muhammad receive no treatment in *The Gentle Answer*. Moreover, Nickel's focus is on refuting Raḥmatullāh's accusations of *taḥrīf* of the Bible in the *Izhār al-Ḥaqq*. He pays no attention to the Indian scholars' refutation of Raḥmatullāh. He does not even mention ʿImād-ud-dīn.

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[18] It included, (i) removing difficulties which hinder Muslims from becoming Christians, like, the sonship and divinity of Christ, and the Holy Trinity (ii) explaining foreign idioms of the Bible through commentaries in Urdu; (iii) removing unworthy conduct of Christians, and leading exemplary lives; (iv) by showing that Christian religion does not interfere with the customs of country – it has only to do with the heart; (v) only well trained Christians be sent to street preaching; and (vi) cultivate friendship with Muslims and love them

From this brief survey of the existing literature, it becomes clear that apart from Nickel, all have noted 'Imād-ud-dīn's initial connection with the Agra *munāẓara*. They have also noted some of his important writings, but paid no attention to his theology as it emerged from his interaction with Muslims. Powell observed, "Although there has been some study of the relationship between Christian convert theology and Hindu theology and philosophy, very little attention has been paid to Muslim Christian theology, at least as it emerged in the Indian rather than the Middle Eastern environment". She goes on to say, "This study of a particularly prolific convert's writings is a contribution to that end" (2013:224). Powell's works must be appreciated, but as noted above, huge gaps remain.

In nineteenth-century India, Christian-Muslim theology, to a large extent, beginning with Pfander's books, emerged in the milieu of Christian-Muslim *munāẓara*. After the apparently unhelpful outcome of the Agra *munāẓara*, Pfander was removed first from Agra and then from India. In Powell's view, "Pfander's removal from India left hardly anyone, 'willing or able' to debate among the European missionaries" (Powell 1993:287). Vivienne Stacey observed that, "debate was Pfander's rather than French's forte. French preferred a more conversational and private type of evangelism" (Stacey 1989:24). W. Muir (1819-1905) who was present at the debate published *The Corân: its composition and teaching, and the testimony it bears to the Holy Scriptures,* in Agra in 1855 (Muir 1878:3). He wrote *The Life of Mahomet: From Original Sources* (1877) 23 years after the debate. Both books are concerned with the following two points of the Agra debate's agenda: *taḥrīf* and Muhammad. He probably wrote the first book to recover the ground lost by Pfander. The book, however, does not directly mention Raḥmatullāh or the Agra debate. It also revolves around a single main argument: the Qur'ān testifies to the authenticity, integrity and inspiration of the Bible. Apart from presenting an extensive survey of the Qur'ān on this particular theme, Muir does not appear to have added any new argument: Pfander had already made this argument, which was vigorously refuted by Raḥmatullāh. He does not refute or challenge Raḥmatullāh's arguments culled from European biblical criticism.

The foregoing leads one to conclude that on the Christian side, the agenda of the Agra Debate remained incomplete or unfinished. The question is did any of the missionaries or local Christians try to fulfil the unfinished agenda of the Agra Debate? John Webster noted, "Most significant Christian scholarship in Punjab was carried out with reference to Islam. The key figure was the Rev. Imad-ud-din" (2007:101). Indeed, the gap created by Pfander's departure was filled by the unlikely convert to Christianity

– 'Imād-ud-dīn. In assessing his work it appears that 'Imād-ud-dīn not only took Pfander's role upon himself but also attempted to finish the unfinished agenda of the *munāẓara* and possibly even furthered it from where Pfander and French had left it. It was in this process that 'Imād-ud-dīn's theology on the key issues between Islam and Christianity emerged.

5. Primary Sources

One of the challenges a researcher faces is the availability of sufficient primary sources. 'Imād-ud-dīn was a prolific writer. It is reported that he published 53 books, but after the partition of India in 1947, some of his books have disappeared. The new reality in the divided India did not allow debate and discussion on religious issues in the same way as was possible in the pre-partition time. This factor hugely contributed to the decline in Christian apologetics vis-à-vis Islam in this region. By the late twentieth century, this kind of Christian voice had been almost completely smothered. The Gujranwala Theological Seminary, the oldest theological institution (est. 1877) in the northwestern India held none of 'Imād-ud-dīn's 53 publications. Discovering and recovering the primary sources was a daunting task. The author travelled across the South Asia, the United Kingdom, and the USA and succeeded in collecting more than 30 books. Apart from 'Imād-ud-dīn's autobiography, the letter written to the Chicago Parliament of World Religions, The Results of Controversy with Mohammedons, and one or two other papers which were translated into English, all his books are in Urdu. It was a researcher's pleasure to read most of the primary sources in his national language. The researcher also collected a number of other extremely important primary sources in Urdu and English, especially the writings of 'Imād-ud-dīn's Muslim interlocutors. Missionary magazines and periodicals, especially *The Missionary Intelligencer* and *Proceedings of the Church Missionary Society,* proved extremely valuable. At the end, it can be said the researcher did not suffer from any lack of primary sources. It is not possible to list all of the resources here. The primary writings of 'Imād-ud-dīn, which have direct bearing on this research, can be found in the bibliography.

6. Methodology

This research is historical in that it concerns a particular period, the second half of the nineteenth century. Its content, however, is theological, i.e., the text developed in the

interreligious milieu of Christian-Muslim *munāẕarat*. 'Imād-ud-dīn's text and the text he tried to refute were created in a particular socio-political and religiously pluralist, as well as hostile, context of this period. This period was marked by the British rule in India, as well as missionary, reformist, and revivalist movements (Powell 1993:3, 286). Christian missionaries, Arya Samaj (a Hindu reform movement) activists, and Muslims competed for converts in the open market (Singh 2018:198, 208, 219, 220). The spirit of *munāẕara* prevailed in interreligious dialogues and encounters (Powell 1993:267, 285-86).

Munāẕarat, in this researcher's view, was one such particular exercise, which allowed its practitioners to attempt to achieve multiple objectives in one go. *Munāẕarat* were intended to demonstrate one's 'superiority' by exposing the weaknesses of one's opponents, and thus proving their 'inferiority'. *Munāẕarat* and 'victory' claimed by the participants may be seen as 'controlling' and 'guiding' inner principles of *munāẕarātī literature*. The intention of a *munāẕara,* (and there was no secret to it) was to win a victory over one's opponents, even if it involved sometimes prophesying the death of one's opponents, called 'competitive prophecy', and plotting their murder, such as, Lekhram's death, prophesied by Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, Lekhram was later assassinated (Singh 2018: 203). Their writings and arguments were guided and controlled by this urge to win. *Munāẕara* was looked upon as a match, a contest in the arena, a wrestling, or even an open war, in which representatives of two religious communities were involved. Popular *munāẕars* were given victor's titles, like *'fāteḥ qādiyyān'* ('Abd al-Ḥaqq, d. 1936) and *'shayr-i-punjab'* (Sanaullāh Amritsarī, d. 1948) (Paul 1930:2). Even the titles of their books gave away their *munāẕarātī* spirit. For example, Sayyid Hādī's book written to refute *Mīzān al-Ḥaqq* was titled *Saulat uz-Zaigham* (fear of the lion) (Muir 1897). S. M. Paul's book written to refute Sanaullāh Amritsarī has the title *Shayr Afghan* (Killer of the Lion) (Paul 1930). These intellectual fights were seen, or, projected to be seen, as the fights for the dearly held and revealed truths, but in the heat of argument and single-minded zeal for winning, at times participants compromised the truth itself.

This study, therefore, falls within historical theology as it seeks to learn and uncover the theology done in the context of theological debates in the nineteenth century, especially by 'Imād-ud-dīn. In one sense, all theology is historical in that, as observed by McGrath, "It is virtually impossible to do theology as if it had never been done before. There is an element of always looking over one's shoulder to see how things were done in the past, and what answers were then given" (McGrath 2001:3).

McGrath puts more emphasis on the history of doctrine in his approach to historical theology. Dreyer and Pillay observe that in McGrath's books, there is a strong sense of history, a clear understanding of the context within which certain doctrines have developed. To him, the interface between church history and systematic theology is quite pronounced (Dreyer and Pillay 2017:124).

Dreyer and Pillay also note that historical theology, since the time of Adolf Van Harnack (1851-1930), has been regarded as a history of doctrine. They suggest that historical theology should be used in a more generic sense, as an umbrella term, which would include sub-disciplines such as history of doctrines and church history (Dreyer and Pillay 2017:119). According to McGrath (as noted by Dreyer and Pillay) the relevance of historical theology is not only determined by its ability to preserve our factual knowledge of the past but by the contribution that historical theology makes to all theological discourse (Dreyer and Pillay 2017:119). Gerhard Ebeling (1912-2001) thought of historical theology as the history of biblical interpretation (Dreyer and Pillay 2017:122).

In his approach to historical theology, Geoffrey Bromiley's (1915-2009) primary emphasis is not on the "origin and historical development of doctrine but rather on the individual theologians, their contribution to the church and their role in the history of the church". According to this approach, "a historical theologian is primarily a theologian, not an historian" (Dreyer and Pillay 2017:123; see also Bromiley 2000). This author's approach is more in line with that of Bromiley: the author is not a historian but a theologian and my focus is more on an individual theologian and his service to the South Asian church. This author's approach is also similar to what Prahlow understood of historical theology as that "interdisciplinary project which concerns itself with both the intellectual methods of studying the past and faith seeking understanding" (Prahlow 2015). The emphasis here will be on the intellectual arguments made in the past, which can help 'faith that seeks understanding'.

The aim will be to read these *munāẓarātī* writings with the help of a *munāẓarātī lens*, which includes reading the text from the perspectives of apologetic. One hopes it will help uncover new insights on the significance of ʿImād-ud-dīn and his writings for his time and beyond. Karl Pfander, Raḥmatullāh, and ʿImād-ud-dīn emerged on the scene primarily as *munāẓars.* Their writings are heavily coloured with the spirit of *munāẓara.* ʿImād-ud-dīn was first and foremost a *munāẓar*. His major writings about Islam were created in the spirit of *munāẓara* with Muslims. It is therefore important to read Christian-Muslim *munāẓarātī literature* and ʿImād-ud-dīn's contribution to debates

from this point of view. As an attempt is made here to show 'Imād-ud-dīn's contribution to the theological issues of Christian-Muslim debates, especially those on the agenda of the Agra *munāẓara*, an attempt will be made first to locate the issue in its historical context before highlighting Raḥmatullāh's and Pfander's arguments. It will set the stage for showing how and to what extent 'Imād-ud-dīn contributed to the understanding and advancement of particular issues of the Great *munāẓara*. As the focus of the study is 'Imād-ud-dīn's contribution to the unfinished agenda of the Agra debate, its scope will be limited to the discussion of the five themes of the Great *Munāẓara* of Agra 1854,

The relevance of this research for Christian theology of Islam and Muslim-Christian relations lies in the potential it has in broadening awareness of Christians in general and particularly of South Asian Christians of the theologies of the converts. While Christian-Muslim theology in the Middle East, which developed mainly in the context of Christological debates with Muslims, has proved to be fruitful; the study of Christian-Muslim theology from the Indian Subcontinent may also prove to be significant as this region contains a large population of Muslims and a growing number of Christians.

'Imād-ud-dīn was arguably a leading nineteenth-century Christian theologian and apologist. He appears masterful in his use of previously unnoticed Islamic sources, especially passages from the Qur'ān that bear witness to the key Christian themes which surface again and again in Christian Muslim interactions such as the Trinity and Christ's divinity. This, one hopes may prove to be significant for enabling Christians to review their attitudes to Islam and Muslims. Mark Beaumont has done a commendable job for bringing to light Christology done by 9th and 20th century Christian theologians in dialogue with Islam (2005/2011); the nineteenth century South Asia was as rich in theological debates but, has largely been neglected. The present research hopes also to fill this gap.

An objective approach to any subject may be desirable, however, absolute objectivity is not possible. A certain bias is inevitable. An attempt will be made to maintain a spirit of objectivity as much as possible. Most research and researchers start with some sort of a provisional position; one's personal bias could play a role in informing this position. It is acknowledged here that this researcher's background and location contributes to his perspective. The researcher is a Christian born and raised in a predominantly Muslim country. His community is diverse and yet, as is evident from multiple reports of independent observers, Christians have, as a minority religious faith, suffered and continue to suffer at the hands of some Muslims motivated to attack

Christians. Many Christians have lost precious lives and property. His perspectives have been shaped by the experience of subtle or open hostility against minorities. It is likely that despite every effort personal bias may manifest itself here and there. If it does happen, it is accidental and not intentional. The researcher's aim as a Christian leader and theological educator is to genuinely understand the Debate in Agra and ʿImād-ud-dīn's inputs to it. An attempt is made to do this with all honesty and integrity within its rightful horizon or context in the nineteenth century before attempting to relate this to a context and time beyond this period. This is to bring to light how a convert who became a leader of the church in his own right sought to help his adoptive community to tackle the thorny theological issues that beset Christianity's relations with Islam and impact Muslim behaviour towards Christians. His work falls within a genre of literature that reflects its time and is certainly not possible or desirable to uncritically apply today but, it has historical value and much current relevance as a new facet in our understanding of debates as a method of interfaith engagement. The theological insights too are likely to further not just our understanding of the history of such engagements but also to be significant in relation to modern converts and their theology.

7. The structure of the thesis

This research project is divided into four parts:

Part I is the background section; it consist of Chapters One and Two and is meant to provide a background for the main chapters. Chapter One: *Introduction*, introduces the thesis. It lays down the significance and justification of this study, clarifies the topic, locates the research in a particular field of study, introduces the main research question, methodology, limitations of the study, contribution to knowledge, the scholar's possible bias and structure of the thesis. Chapter Two: ʿMawlwī ʿImād-ud-dīn Lāhiz: The man and importance of his conversion for the Christian-Muslim *munāẓara* in the aftermath of the Agra *munāẓara*, introduces the principal object of this research. It presents ʿImād-ud-dīn's biographical information from a particular angle: his development and importance as a *munāẓar*.

Part II focuses on ʿImād-ud-dīn's contribution to the issues discussed at the great *munāẓara*. This part consists of Chapters Three and Four. Chapter Three presents the discussion of the first point of the great *munāẓara*: *naskh* or the abrogation of the Bible. This chapter first presents and expounds the Islamic doctrine of *naskh*, its meaning, scope, and importance as understood by Muslims. It is followed by Pfander and

Raḥmatullāh's argument for and against *naskh*. After assessing their arguments, it presents 'Imād-ud-dīn's arguments and the contribution he made to Christian-Muslim debates on *naskh*.

Chapter Four then focuses on the Islamic charge of *taḥrīf* of the Bible. The chapter begins by setting the issue of *taḥrīf* in Christian-Muslim debates. It is followed by Pfander's refutation of the Islamic accusation of *taḥrīf* in his *Mīzān al-Ḥaqq*. Raḥmatullāh's argument for *taḥrīf* in the Bible is then presented. It is followed by Pfander's response to Raḥmatullāh at the debate and an assessment of the debate before offering 'Imād-ud-dīn's arguments in refutation of the Islamic claims of *taḥrīf* in the Bible. An assessment of 'Imād-ud-dīn's argument is then made.

Part III focuses on 'Imād-ud-dīn's contribution to the 'unfinished agenda' of the *munāẓara*. This part consists of the three points of the Agra debate, which could not be discussed at the *munāẓara*: the Trinity, Muhammad and the Qur'ān. These points are discussed in Chapters Five, Six and Seven. Chapter Five is about the Trinity and the Divinity of Christ. This chapter presents 'Imād-ud-dīn's argument in refutation of Islamic arguments against the doctrine of the Trinity and divinity of Christ. It focuses on his positive use of Islamic sources, including the Qur'ān, Hadith, and Islamic traditions, especially the Sufi traditions, to argue for the veracity of the doctrines of the Trinity and divinity of Christ. Particular attention is paid to his masterful and novel use of the previously unnoticed Qur'ānic and Biblical passages for the proof of the Trinity and divinity of Christ. It is also emphasized that Christ's personal revelation to 'Imād-ud-dīn played a central role in his own conviction of the Trinity. The comparison with Pfander shows how 'Imād-ud-dīn advanced the debate with Muslims on the Trinity and divinity of Christ. Chapter Six is on the biblical prophets and the prophethood of Muhammad. This chapter describes 'Imād-ud-dīn's central argument against Muhammad's being a true prophet in line with the biblical prophets. The chapter explores 'Imād-ud-dīn's arguments and evidence he uses to support his claim that Muhammad, in his origin, sources of inspiration, and original teachings was different from the biblical chain of prophets. Chapter Seven focuses on 'Imād-ud-dīn's assessment of the claims of divine authorship of the Qur'ān. First, it outlines the assertions of the Qur'ān, Hadith, and Muslim scholars, as well as the challenges to such claims by non-Muslims; it then describes 'Imād-ud-dīn's arguments against the Islamic claims of divine authorship of the Qur'ān.

Part IV contains the concluding Chapter Eight. It presents summaries of the main argument and conclusions; offers a broader discussion on the contribution to knowledge, and identifies specific areas for further research.

Chapter Two: Mawlwī 'Imād-ud-dīn Lahiz: The Man and the Importance of his Conversion for Christian-Muslim 'Munāẓara' in the aftermath of Agra 1854

Introduction

Who was mawlwī 'Imād-ud-dīn? Where did he come from? Why did he convert and who converted him? Even more significantly why was his conversion considered important, and what did his conversion mean for the Christian-Muslim *munāẓara?* The purpose of this chapter is not to critically reconstruct his biography or study his conversion as such, but to detect at the key points of 'Imād-ud-dīn's conversion process, elements which possibly contributed towards his development as a *munāẓar* of note for the Christian-Muslim *munāẓara.* The argument here is that it was the process of his conversion which almost unconsciously had prepared him as a *munāẓar,* and that in the context of nineteenth-century Christian-Muslim *munāẓara* 'Imād-ud-dīn's unexpected conversion played a crucial role in reviving and advancing the Agra debate.

1. Who Was Mawlwī 'Imād-ud-dīn?

Muslim scholars actively refuted the writings of 'Imād-ud-dīn and attempted to undermine him as a person. They called him *tailī*[1] *kā launda* (an oil-presser's lad) (Ṣābrī 1979:162). Mirza Ghulam Ahmed called him "unenlightened", "short sighted" and "ignorant" (Ahmed 2004:447, 2006:38). Mirza's follower Mawlana Muhammad Ali depicted him as *"agent"* of the European masters (2008:82). Mawlwi Mansur Ali called him called him 'lost'. Some acknowledged that 'Imād-ud-dīn was a "great moulvi" yet condemned his work as only an effort "to win the favour of [his] European masters" (Muhammad Ali 2008:82). Mujtahid of Lucknow likened his conversion to the sound of

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[1] In Indian society the working classes of the society were looked down on. Their respective professions became their social identity called *z̄āt*. *Tailīs* were those who had oil-presses and dealt in oil. *Mochīs* (cobblers), *dhobīs* (washermen), *julāhay* (weavers), etc., were also such classes of society.

the *Tanbūr* (drum or tambourine). On the other hand, missionaries highly praised him. As he was considered the greatest Muslim convert in India, different Mission agencies tried to take the credit for leading him to Christ.

'Imād-ud-dīn was born into a highly educated family with *ashrāf* credentials in 1830 (exact date of birth is not known) in the historic city of Panipat famous for her great Sufis and Islamic learning, this would have a direct bearing on his career. His name 'Imād-ud-dīn (a pillar of religion) suggests that he was expected to become a *mawlwī* and a defender of Islam. His family's dream was realized when he became a renowned *mawlwī* who preached from the Royal Mosque and stood with Raḥmatullāh and Wazīr Khān at the Agra *munāẓara* to defend Islam against the missionary attacks. Twelve years later however, he converted to Christianity and ceased to be a pillar of Islam. His baptism in 1866 brought a total transformation in his life and a reversal of role that no one had foreseen (Smith 1893:222). He became a pillar and defender of Christianity. His autobiographies are important sources of his conversion story, which merits a separate study. Here, those aspects of his conversion story are highlighted, which directly contributed to his development as a *munāẓar*.

1.1 A Muslim in Pursuit of God

What do we know about 'Imād-ud-dīn before his conversion? There is currently no detailed biographical study available on 'Imād-ud-dīn. Most of the information about his pre-Christian life came from his own pen and is preserved in several short autobiographical accounts: *Waqi'āt-i-'Imādia*[2] (Events Concerning 'Imād-ud-dīn 1866), "*Khat-i-Shakāgo*" (Letter sent to Chicago 1893), and *Intisāb al-'Imād*[3] (Genealogy of 'Imād-ud-dīn). *Waqi'āt-i-'Imādia* has been translated into numerous languages including Arabic and Chinese.

Can 'Imād-ud-dīn's accounts be entirely trusted? Scholars in the field of conversion studies are divided on this issue. Nevertheless, the author relies on experts such as S. Bruce and R. Wallis (1983), Popkin (2005), and Singh (2016) who consider converts' narratives as valid and reliable records of past events and experience. C.

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[2] He added an appendix to his first autobiography *Waqi'āt-i-'Imādia* (1866) in 1873. The third edition of *Waqi'āt-i-'Imādia* was published in 1957 posthumously and another appendix was added (perhaps by the editor), with some additional information.

[3] *Intisāb al-'Imād* is listed everywhere in the list of 'Imād-ud-dīn's publications. Unfortunately, I have not been able to find it. The claim of Western missionaries' that 'Imād-ud-dīn belonged to the Royal House of Persia is most probably based on *Intisāb al-'Imād*.

Ullman's (1989) inquiry is based largely on the converts' own reports. Rambo considers testimonies of the converts as a rich source for understanding the nature of conversion (1993:137).

'Imād-ud-dīn's biographical accounts reveal that he was a seeker after God from his early youth. At the tender age of 15 he left his parents and went to Agra to pursue further education. According to him the sole purpose of his studies was to find God. To this end, he searched the books of orthodox Sunni and Sufi masters, learned from renowned mawlwīs, *faqīrs*, and saints dead and alive. He sat and meditated at the graves of holy men. When all his efforts seemed fruitless, he did not give up his search for the truth. Rather, he decided to give up on the world. In his effort to find the truth and union with God he was determined to plumb the deepest depths of Sufism by methodically implementing the practices enjoined by the Qādiriya Order. He writes:

> I chose to speak little, eat little, remained aloof from people, afflicted my body and stayed awake during the nights. I began to recite the Qur'an all night. I continuously repeated *qaṣīda* about Ghawth (Shaykh Abdul Qādir Jilāni). I recited *Chahal Qāf*[4] and *ḥizb ul-baḥr*. I meditated and practiced abstinence. I performed *dhikr* loudly and silently. I sat in seclusion with closed eyes and mentally began to write the word "*Allah*" on my heart. While at the graves of the saints I meditated hoping to receive illumination from their graves. I attended the Sufi assemblies, confidently gazing upon the faces of the Sufis, anticipating a flow of light from their direction. Through their intercession I constantly besought union with God. In addition to the five regular prayers, I performed the night, early morning and mid-morning prayers. I went on repeating the confession of faith and invoking blessings upon Muhammad. In short, whatever troubles are in the power of man to bear, I have born them and suffer them in their fullest intensity ('Imād-ud-dīn 1978:4).

'Imād-ud-dīn's description of his suffering for the sake of finding truth is aptly summarised by Rajaiah D. Paul:

> Imad-ud-din was, for years before his conversion, an ardent seeker after truth; and his ardour was immeasurable and unquenchable. He was prepared to do anything, go to any length, suffer any privation, and undergo any self-mortification if only he could find truth (Paul 1961:251).

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[4] *Chehal Kāf* is another extreme Sufi practice which is associated with Shaikh 'Abd al-Qadir Gilānī. It is a *waẕīfa* (a special prayer), the practitioner was supposed to fast for forty days and repeat this *waẕīfa* constantly for *chehal* (forty) days in seclusion. It is also called the practice of *chilla*. This practice was performed to encounter and control spiritual powers. Reportedly many practitioners lost their minds others died while performing this rite.

This determination to find God and have union with him at any cost convinced him to take the final and the most dangerous route through performing the rites of *ḥizb ul-baḥr* so that according to the beliefs of the Sufis, he recalled, he might meet God ('Imād-ud-dīn 1978:5). He became a *faqīr*[5], walked 2000 kos[6] (4000 km), and arrived in Qarolī and sat by the stream called *Cholidār*. Twelve days of extreme exercises of *ḥizb ul-baḥr* included fasting, writing the name 'Allāh' 125000 times on paper, cutting it individually, rolling it in the dough and feeding the fish and at the same time trying to write the name of 'Allāh' on one's heart. It was promised that at the completion of *ḥizb ul-baḥr* he would meet God. However, at the completion of this rite, 'Imād-ud-dīn described his condition in these words, "When I finished this labour, no strength remained in my body. I was pale. I could not remain standing against the wind" ('Imād-ud-dīn 1978:5). He put it succinctly, "whatever trouble is in the power of man to suffer I suffered to the fullest intensity – only to find the Truth" (1978:6). But truth had once again evaded him. Instead of finding God, the truth he discovered, according to him, was that there was "no true religion in this world" ('Imād-ud-dīn 1978:6). Extremely disappointed with the outcome of his spiritual exercises, he returned to Panipat.

Six years later (1862-63), a new phase of his search for truth began in Lahore, where he was teaching in a teachers' training school. It was the news of his college friend Ṣafdar Ali's conversion to Christianity that forced him to embark on the comparative study of Islam and Christianity. He returned to re-read Raḥmatullāh and Āl-i-Ḥasan's polemical books against Christianity. His purpose was to win Ṣafdar Ali back. He wrote:

> With this objective I procured the Old and New Testaments and also got copies of the *Istifsār*, and the *Ijāz-i-'īsawī*, and the *Izālat-ul-awhām*, and other controversial books; and I asked Mr Mackintosh, kindly to teach me and make me understand the New Testament, and I will investigate honestly (1957:12).

'Imād-ud-dīn's investigation of Christianity brought him into a collision course with his own deeply held Islamic beliefs. He began to discover what he was not expecting. A different reality began to be revealed to him. For the first time he was directly reading the New Testament, at times aided by his head teacher, Mackintosh. In the pages of the

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[5] *Faqīr* is derived from the Arabic word *faqr* (poverty). A *faqīr* is a Sufi ascetic who takes the vows of poverty and renounces all worldly possessions. He is considered to be self-sufficient and his only possession is God.
[6] According to Ernest Hahn, "one kos is about two kilometres" (1978:10).

Gospel, it seems, he was encountering the Christ whom he had been vehemently opposing. Christ's words began to shatter his faith. ʻImād-ud-dīn wrote:

> When I have read as far as the seventh chapter of St. Matthew, doubts fixed themselves upon my mind concerning the religion of Muhammad. I became so much agitated that I spent whole days and often whole nights, in reading and considering the books; and began to speak about them with pastors and Mohammedans (ʻImād-ud-dīn 1957:12).

After two years of intense investigation through books and discussions with Muslims and Christian scholars he decided to abandon Islam for Christianity (ʻImād-ud-dīn 1893:4). Had he found 'Him" for whom he was searching from his youth? Perhaps, not quite. Yet one can observe a shift in his spiritual compass – he was no more running to find and have union with the unseen and unknowable God. For him now the 'fundamental' thing was to be in pursuit of the knowledge of Christ. He wrote, "I am constantly concerned with the knowledge of Him. I have learnt that He is surely high and exalted. Who can fully comprehend His reality? He is far beyond whatever we may discover of Him" (1978:10-11).

ʻImād-ud-dīn's description of Christ as the one who was 'high and exalted' whose 'reality' could not be 'fully comprehended,' and who was 'far beyond whatever we may discover of him' was tantamount to ascribing to him the characteristics of God. In Christ, it appears, ʻImād-ud-dīn had found the God he had long been searching for. He publicly declared his faith in Christ on April 29, 1866 and was baptized by Rev. Robert Clark at Amritsar (ʻImād-ud-dīn 1957:13, Clark 1904:41).

The discussion above suggests that ʻImād-ud-dīn was a relentless seeker after God but the one he found was the Christ. This unity between God and Christ was to become the cornerstone of his faith and apologetics. It was important that he had found Him, but it was equally important where he found Him. He met God in the pages of the New Testament. His missionary colleagues testified to that end. Reporting about his death in October 1900 a missionary who had worked very closely with him sent this message to CMS, London:

> It is with much concern that we hear of the death of Rev. Imad-ud-din, the most distinguished of our converts from Islam. His story is widely known, and we need only on this occasion remind ourselves that he was converted through reading the New Testament, baptized in 1866 and ordained in 1868 (CMI 1900: 789-90).

Charles Elliott confirmed that both Ṣafdar Ali and ʻImād-ud-dīn, "were brought to the light by the study of the New Testament" (1901:18).

This reveals that Smith (1892:145), Neill (1985:459-60) and *The Church Missionary Atlas* (1896:118) were mistaken in their assertions that 'Imād-ud-dīn was Pfander's convert from the Agra Debate. Even Siddiqui in his latest article makes this mistake when he says that, "The Agra debate produced a significant convert to Christianity: Imaduddin Lahiz" (2019:92). One sees instead a confirmation of Powell's initial finding that 'Imād-ud-dīn and Ṣafdar Ali were not Pfander's converts (1993:288-9). However, taking into consideration all the evidence available, this research also advances Powell's findings. 'Imād-ud-dīn's conversion was a very long and complex process, which shows that his conversion by Pfander was a missionary myth created, perhaps, to justify the confrontational method of evangelism (Gairdner 1909:330; Smith 1892:415; Montgomery 1904:74). Neither 'Imād-ud-dīn, nor Ṣafdar ascribed their conversion to Pfander. The final instrument in Ṣafdar Ali's conversion was Nehemiah Goreh (Smith 1900:246). There appears to be no immediate impact of the Agra debate or Pfander on any Muslim, let alone 'Imād-ud-dīn and Ṣafdar Ali. The length of time between the Agra Debate and 'Imād-ud-dīn's conversion (12 years) suggests too that Pfander had little to do with his conversion. French, who was Pfander's partner in the Agra debate, never claimed that 'Imād-ud-dīn was his convert. We know that the Agra debate had a negative effect on French and he never debated again (Webster 2007:102, Stacey 1982:5, Church Missionary Society 1877:577-88).

On the other hand, firstly, 'Imād-ud-dīn's own prolonged search for truth and failure to find it within Islam had prepared him to accept the truth outside of Islam. Secondly, according to Vines, Principal at St. John's Missionary College, Agra, it was the preaching of an anonymous catechist that first influenced 'Imād-ud-dīn (CMI 1876:566). Thirdly, Mackintosh, under whom 'Imād-ud-dīn served, helped him understand the Gospel at the beginning of his search in Lahore (1864-66). Fourthly, Presbyterian missionaries in Lahore, Charles Forman and John Newton solved many of his problems regarding the Christian faith (Stock 1899:563). Fifthly, Clark took the initiative and wrote to him from Amritsar to come to Christ ('Imād-ud-dīn 1957:13). Sixthly, the final catalyst was the shocking news of the conversion of Ṣafdar Ali, which triggered him to re-read the apologetical books written by Muslims and Christians and also for the first time to study the Bible directly. Finally, he was a convert of the 'Word of God,' Christ, whom he believed he personally encountered in the New Testament (CMI 1900).

It should also be remembered that the Agra *munāẓara*, as it is generally understood, was won by Muslims; they achieved this, it was claimed by proving with

help from European biblical criticism, that the Bible had been totally corrupted and was utterly unreliable. It would appear that in the face of Ṣafdar Ali and 'Imād-ud-dīn's conversion through the New Testament, Raḥmatullāh and Wazīr Khān's argument for *taḥrīf* and their European authorities stood condemned. Both of them had heard their argument at the *munāẓara*, and reconsidered their arguments in their books as well. 'Imād-ud-dīn's conversion came through reading the NT which in turn appeared to convince him of its unadulterated inspiration in such a way that he would never again doubt its divine origin and textual integrity. Trust in the integrity and authenticity of the Bible would become the first step toward 'Imād-ud-dīn's transformation and formation as a Christian *munāẓar*.

1.2 A Seeker of Truth

It appears quite extraordinary that from his early youth 'Imād-ud-dīn was struggling to grapple with the questions that had eternal implications. He had a deep sense that he was unworthy to stand in the presence of God on the day of reckoning. Unlike the ordinary youth of his time, his eyes were fixed on the end – the hereafter. He knew he needed assurance that when he stood before the judgement seat of God, he would not be condemned and his end would be good. How could he find such an assurance? The search for such an assurance plunged him into a deep spiritual crisis.

   It is not clear what the cause of his deep spiritual anxiety was. He did not reveal what he had done that was particularly wrong. He was raised in a very religious family. His father was extremely religious and his great grandfather stood at the top of the Sufi spiritual hierarchy. He himself zealously performed the duties enjoined by Islam. He appears to have surpassed his age-mates. Ṣafder wrote:

> It is a fact that the Rev. Maulvie Imad-ud-din and I have been friends in religion ever since we were students together in Agra, now more than forty-five years ago. While we were yet Mohammedans we were never in accord in matters concerning that faith. He was not only staunch but an ardent and intolerant Sunni, while I, though Sunni, was a *Tafzeelea* [7] in heart. After a while, Maulvie Imad-ud-din became a *Ghair Muqallid,* [8] while I was a firm

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[7] *Tafzīlia*: one who, though a Sunni, and thus an upholder and follower of the three first Caliphs, Abu Bakar, 'Umer, and 'Uthmān, yet thinks it would have been better had Ali occupied the first place.
[8] *Ghair Muqallid*: One who rejects the teachings of the four Imāms and orders his conduct by Qur'ān and Hadith.

Muqallid Hanfi.[9] He then became a bigoted Wahhabi, and I, abjuring alike Wahhabis and heretics, walked in the plain, middle path of orthodoxy. Finally Imad-ud-din became a Sufi and the disciple of the light of Sufism; while I for long declined even to turn my mind to the teaching of this sect, though in the end, I too accepted their faith. Nevertheless we differed, for while he was in the state of *Sukr*,[10] I was in that of *Sahaf*.[11] (Church Missionary Society 1898:598-99).

With a zeal like this and trust in Allāh being *al-raḥmān al-raḥīm*, should not a Muslim like 'Imād-ud-dīn be confident of his place in paradise? And if there were something still lacking, as he was told, then Muhammad would have interceded for him. He had also studied Jalāl-ud-dīn As-Suyūtī's (849-911/1445–1505) book on intercession, which too did not provide any solace to him. He doubted the notion of Muhammad's intercession for Muslims, because, in his opinion, "the Qur'ān does not give any assurance in this regard" (1957:7-8). In reality, the Qur'ān itself was a major source of his problem. 'Imād-ud-dīn's spiritual crisis and terror of judgment was based on the Qur'ān 19:71[12]. He wrote: "The following verse of the Qur'ān was all the time piercing my heart like a thorn: Every mortal necessarily must once go to hell; it is obligatory on God to send all men necessarily once to hell: and afterwards He may pardon whom He will" (1957:7)[13].

To find the solution he began to explore Islamic traditions one after the other. He noted:

My only object in learning was, in some way or the other, to find my Lord. Whenever I had leisure from the study, I began to wait on f*aqīrs*, pious and learned men to discover the advantages of religion. I frequented the mosques and *Khānaqāhs*[14] (Sufi communities) and homes of the *mawlwīs*, and carried on my studies in Mohammedan law, commentaries of the Qur'ān, and the Hadith, manners, logic and philosophy ('Imād-ud-dīn 1957:3).

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[9]*Muqallid Hanfi*: Follower of the teaching of Imām Abu Hanīfa.
[10]*Sukr*: one who is beside himself, because of the contemplation of God, lost in meditation, who regards the Mohammedan Sharia and observances as merely leading strings or guidance for ignorants.
[11]Church Missionary Society (1898), *Church Missionary Intelligencer*. P598-99.
[12] Surah 19:71 reads, "*Wa-in minkum illā wāriduhā kāna ʿalā rabbika ḥatman maqḍiyyan.*" (And there is none of you except he will come to it. This is upon your Lord an inevitability decreed) (Ṣaḥīḥ International). The Qur'ān translators have tried their best to avoid the devastating impact of 19:71 on the readers. Translations read: "There is not one of you but shall approach it" (Pickthall). "There is not one of you but will pass over it (Hell)" (Muhsan Khān, Yusuf Ali). "And decidedly not one of you (there is), except that he will go (herded) down to it" (Ghali). (Ṣaḥīḥ International) (https://quran.com/19/71-81. Accessed: 10/10/2016 12:00. The following verse however, leaves no doubt that the intention of the 19:71 is that everyone will enter into hell.
[13] This is not the exact translation of 19:71; 'Imād-ud-dīn paraphrased it.
[14] *Khānaqāh* is a building designated for Sufi gathering, especially for spiritual retreats and character formation.

'Imād-ud-dīn was simultaneously involved in a wide range of intellectual and devotional activities in order to overcome his spiritual predicament. Ṣafder Ali noted 'Imād-ud-dīn moved from a '*muqallid Hanfi*' to '*ghair muqallid*,' and then from Wahhabism to Sufism (CMI 1898:598-99). He moved from Panipat to Agra and Delhi and from there to Qarolī, and back to Panipat. He thoroughly searched different Islamic traditions; but at the end was utterly disappointed. After his return from Qaroli where he had performed extreme Sufi exercises, in Panipat he met with Mawlwī 'Abdul Salām: 'a thoughtful Sufi scholar' with whom he used to discuss religious matters privately. He confided in him:

> I do not find satisfaction either in Islam or *taṣawwuf*. Now I leave practicing these paths
> and will seek God in other religions of the world. If you can stop me with [convincing]
> arguments, please do so. He bowed his head and remained silent. I said goodbye to him and
> left. After seven years it was revealed to me that Christianity alone is the religion of God,
> and the End or future life is safe in Christianity alone. At that time I was in Lahore
> (1989:138).

This intense search spread over two decades came to an end, as noted before, in 1866 when he accepted the Christian faith. This however was not the end of his long and arduous search. His search and research in Islam were to bear fruit for the rest of his life, when as a Christian *munāẕar* he would lock horns with the great scholars and *munāẕars* of Islam. It appears that by the time he made a public confession of faith in Christ, he had unconsciously become a Christian debater. Rev. McKenzie believed, "that God had raised him up for a work which he was faithfully doing" (CMI 1901:502). Considering his abilities, Robert Clark pleaded with his bishop to waive the requirements of ordination in 'Imād-ud-dīn's case. He wrote, "He is a learned man, who has great powers both of writing and speaking, which were cultivated with considerable labours … long before he had any idea of becoming a Christian" (Clark 1867).

He began to make his mark quite soon after his conversion. His first major book, *taḥqīq al-īmān* (investigation of the faith), written right after his conversion, was addressed exclusively to Muslim *mawlwīs* with these words "I have been in search of truth for the last 20 years". Here is the first clear and bold claim, which reveals, that he was assuming the position of a *munāẕar* – an effort to establish his authority and superiority over his interlocutors. The unfinished agenda of the Agra *munāẕara* was about to be resumed. A Christian, but a Christian who happened to be a former *mawlwī*, was once again taking the initiative.

1.3 Proclaimer of Truth

'Imād-ud-dīn was in Lahore when through his 'intense research' for a year[15] through study and dialogue with Muslim and Christian scholars and religious leaders, he concluded that "Muslims have been misled and are in error; and that salvation is assuredly to be found only in the Christian religion" ('Imād-ud-dīn 1957:12). Finding the truth, however, was one thing, proclaiming it was another. The truth was discovered in the relative safety of the nightly studies and private discussions, but its proclamation could expose him to all sorts of losses, including the loss of life. There have been many who did discover this truth and even accepted it but were not brave enough to proclaim it. 'Imād-ud-dīn took pains to describe the attitude of his Muslim friends when he shared his findings with them:

> I explained my conclusion to Muslim scholars who were my friends and followers. Some were angry. Some met me in privacy and listened to all my arguments. I asked them either to present better arguments or to accept Christianity with me. They plainly replied: 'we know that the religion of Islam is not true. But what are we to do? We fear the abuse of the ignorants. In our hearts we really know that the Messiah is the true One and that Muhammad cannot be the intercessor for sinners. Still we do not want to lose the respect and honour of men. Like us, do not reveal your faith. Call yourself a Muslim in Public and in your heart believe in the Messiah' (1978:7).

One of those friends was a Sufi scholar, Mawlwī Meer Hassan of Balata with whom 'Imād-ud-dīn secretly met in the Masjid Wazīr Khān in Lahore. 'Imād-ud-dīn asked him, if he could satisfy him with sound arguments and stop him from becoming a Christian. He too advised him to believe in Christ secretly (1889:138). We can draw a couple of important insights from 'Imād-ud-dīn's final discussions before his conversion with his Muslim friends: (i) 'Imād-ud-dīn was not the only scholar who reached the conclusions he had. During those private meetings other Muslim scholars confided in him that they too had doubts about their religion and they really believed in their heart that Christ was the true One. (ii) It indicates the extent of the impact that the evangelistic activities of the pioneer American Presbyterian missionaries were having in Lahore, which though looking negligible in terms of head count of converts, were yet significant. (iii) We see antecedents of a sort of 'insiders' movement' in 1866 in

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[15] There is a variation in the time period that 'Imād-ud-dīn took to reach his conclusion. In *Waqi'āt-i-'Imādia* he mentioned one year (1957:12), while in *Khat-i-Shakāgo* the time period is two years (1893:4). In *Khat*, there is more emphasis put on the investigation of Christianity as compared to the investigation of both religions.

Lahore[16]. (iv) The Gospel bears more fruit among the educated Muslims, as later confirmed by 'Imād-ud-dīn, than the ignorant Muslims; this was a view quite different from that of Raḥmatullāh-Wazīr Khān's who believed that Pfander's preaching could mislead ignorant Muslims. According to 'Imād-ud-dīn, Muslim scholars were neither able to refute his arguments nor did they accept his invitation to convert with him; the main reasons being the fear of other Muslims, worldly honour, tradition and law ('Imād-ud-dīn 1978:7; 1957:13: Singh 2016:216).

'Imād-ud-dīn on the other hand refused to live a life of hypocrisy and timidity. He was willing to proclaim the truth he had found irrespective of the cost he might have to pay ('Imād-ud-dīn 1957:13, 1889:138). He went to Amritsar and received baptism on April 29, 1866 (1957:13). Muslims reacted as it was expected. 'Imād-ud-dīn wrote, "All my friends, acquaintances, disciples, relatives and others have become enemies. At all times and in various ways everyone wants to afflict me" (1978:7). His wife was very unhappy and for some time he suffered the loss of separation from his wife and children. For a Christian *munāẓar* such courage was required. When he proclaimed his new convictions about Christianity and Islam his life was at serious risk. As a Muslim he had learnt to put his life at risk for the sake of finding truth. Now he was willing to proclaim the truth he had found, even at the cost of his life. More serious threats would be coming from those who considered him an apostate, *kāfir*, and an enemy. Stock later noted:

> In 1891 the ruler of Chitral sent a message to Dr. Imad-ud-din, saying that he had read some of his books, that he was a kāfir and worthy to die and that he would like to kill him with his own hands. The Christian Maulvie replied, please tell your master that I am thankful that he has read some of my books, and I pray that he may be led to the truth, but that if he were to kill me, from the spilt blood twenty other Imad-ud-dins would rise (Stock 1899:465).

Concerns about his security were shown during his 1876 lectures in Agra, which were largely attended by Muslims (CMI 1876). Police guards were ensuring his security while he was translating the Qur'ān. And while 'Imād-ud-dīn was going back from

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[16] Robert Clark also noted in 1868: "Although only a few as yet has openly embraced Christianity, the number of those who have practically discarded it [Islam] is large. During the past year several Mohammedans of influence and position have plainly expressed their entire disbelief in Mohammed, and their adherence to Christianity, although *the fear of man has prevented* them from being baptized (1866-68:92).

Peshawar after the consecration of the All Saints Church[17]; two Pathans who pursued him on the train with the intention to kill were arrested, ('Imād-ud-dīn 1957:21). H. Clark stated: "Maulvie 'Imād-ud-dīn's life has been several times threatened, but this stout old warrior merely says, 'Let them kill me as soon as they will. I have done my work, and no one can undo it'" (CMI 1894:814). It was this quality to proclaim the truth fearlessly, both face to face and in books, that was directly relevant for the Christian-Muslim *munāẓara,* and he demonstrated it throughout his long life.

   Another aspect of his conversion, which also played an important role in Christian-Muslim *munāẓara,* was his *ashrāf* background to which we now turn.

1.4 An *ashrāf* Sunni and Sufi *'ālim*

Although Pfander used to preach in the bazaars of Agra, the Muslims he really wanted to convince and convert were of the *ashrāf* class (Powell 1993:163-65). The *ashrāf* were a "socially highly esteemed stratum of the Indian Muslims" (Powell 1995:40). The *ashrāf* were also often well educated. Missionary success in this regard was sparse. Therefore, when an *ashrāf* Muslim came to Christ his noble credentials were projected with much fanfare. The conversions of Shaikh Ṣālih (1811 A.D), later known as 'Abd al-Masih, and 'Imād-ud-dīn were two such examples. The CMS missionaries praised 'Imād-ud-dīn's pedigree so much that Jeffrey Oddie suspected missionary motives and opined, "Much is made of his autobiographical accounts of the strength of his ashrāf credentials" (1997:36). 'Imād-ud-dīn's antagonists also questioned his genealogical claims. It could be argued, however, that both assertions and denials of 'Imād-ud-dīn's *ashrāf* status were part of the *munāẓara* motifs and ought to be understood from that perspective.

1.4.1 Claim to *ashrāf* status

'Imād-ud-dīn's conversion hit both Muslims and missionaries like a wave of disbelief, astonishment and awe. Given the reputation he had as a staunch, ardent, bigoted Sunni of Wahhabi persuasion, and then a saintly Sufi with high profile royal and religious

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[17] This is the same church, which was attacked by the suicide bombers on September 22, 2013. It was one of the deadliest attacks Christian community has suffered so far. Some one hundred people were killed and more than two hundred were injured. 'Imād-ud-dīn was a preacher during the consecration/dedication of the All Saints Church.

lineage, his conversion was a shocking event with potentially serious implications for the Indian Muslims and Islam. In missionary literature ʿImād-ud-dīn is remembered as, "one of the ablest of Indian clergy" (Montgomery 1904:74); "the most important convert" (Stock 1899:561); "a man of very different calibre" (Jones 1932:240); "outstanding convert" (CMI 1870:45); "the most eminent missionary to Mohammedans" (CMI 1877:437). To George Smith, "His conversion most interesting of all and his long life of great usefulness in the Master's cause" (1900:246). In another book he remarked that there was, "None greater than Imad-ud-din in India or Asia" (Smith 1891:342). "One of the brightest ornaments of India," (The British and Foreign Evangelical Review 1871:269), and "none more remarkable convert from Islam than Imad-ud-din" (CMI 1900:789). These are some of the representative remarks which show the value and importance of ʿImād-ud-dīn. One of the reasons behind such appreciation appears to be his *ashrāf* background.

As the news of his conversion began to spread many a Muslim could not believe it. ʿImād-ud-dīn noted in his earliest autobiography that people in Peshawar thought ʿImād-ud-dīn was a 'fictitious name'. His disciples in Qarolī, where six years earlier he had performed extreme Sufi rites, simply refused to believe that he could become a Christian. There were others who propagated that the reason for his conversion was 'worldly gains' (ʿImād-ud-dīn 1978:2). The reason for Muslim disbelief also appears to be ʿImād-ud-dīn's *ashrāf* background. Smith quite aptly observed that "ʿImād-ud-dīn's conversion was beyond the guess of experts" (Smith 1893:222). Therefore, one of his main reasons for writing his autobiography was to let the Muslims know that he really had become a Christian. The question is did his *ashrāf* background have any importance for Christian-Muslim *munāẓara*?

His conversion indeed had repercussions for Islam and Muslims. His books written in refutation of Islam created great panic and generated much anger among Muslims. Mawlwīs from Amritsar, Lahore, Agra, Delhi and Lucknow tried to refute his books and hold *munāẓarat* with him. ʿImād-ud-dīn was plunged into face to face and written *munāẓara* with Muslims and all his early writings and claims to *ashrāf* status appear to have been necessitated by such a background of *munāẓars*.

ʿImād-ud-dīn's Muslim friends and foes were all proud of their foreign origins, noble births, affiliation with royalties, higher learning and spirituality. For example; his friend Ṣafdar Ali as well as his arch rivals – Abu al-Manṣūr, Āl-i-Ḥasan, Maulana Sayyid Muhammad Mujtahid of Lucknow, and Sir Sayyid Ahmad Khān were all called

'sayyids'; a class of Muslims who were proud of their Arab descent and genealogical link with Muhammad. Many Urdu literary works trace Raḥmatullāh's family tree back to the third caliph 'Uthmān and call him Raḥmatullāh al-'Uthmānī[18]. Wazīr Khān was of Afghan origin (Powell 1993:235). Mirza Ghulam Ahmad was proud of his Mughal descent[19]. All these persons were highly learned and of considerable religious status. It is with these *ashrāf* Muslim *munāẓars* that 'Imād-ud-dīn's noble credentials had to match. 'Imād-ud-dīn was returning to the Agra Debate and was preparing to challenge Raḥmatullāh; in this background a simple comparison between them might throw some light on this issue. Both made similar claims.

1.4.2. Comparing 'Imād-ud-dīn with Raḥmatullāh

Raḥmatullāh	'Imād-ud-dīn
Royal origins ('Uthman, the 3rd Caliph)	Mushzad (Iranian King)
Foreign origins (Arabia)	(Persia)
His family served the Mughals and received estates from Emperor Akbar	His family served the Mughals and received estates from Emperor Shah Jahan
Estates were confiscated by the British government after the uprising	Estates were confiscated by the British government before the uprising
Had links with the great Muslim city of Panipat. Family moved from Panipat to Kairana after receiving estate from the Emperor Akbar.	Had links with the great Muslim city of Panipat. Family moved to Panipat after losing their estate at Hansi to British government.
Family turned to education, produced outstanding mawlwīs, and were deeply religious	Family turned to education, produced outstanding mawlwīs, and were deeply religious
Had strong Sufi connection.	Had strong Sufi connection but 'Imād-ud-dīn's claims were much stronger, deeper and higher. He claimed to be a direct

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[18] Christine Schirrmacher has repeatedly claimed that Raḥmatullāh was a 'Shi'ite *ālim*', a claim that is not shared by other scholars and is forcefully rejected in Urdu literature (Taqī 'Uthmānī 2010:180; 'Ārafī 2010:46).

[19] Powell states that, "the prefix 'Mirza' (gentleman) reflects claims to association with the imperial dynasty of Muslim Mughal rulers … the community he founded has been known by its detractors as 'Mirzai,' suggesting associations with the *ashraf*, socially highly esteemed, stratum of the Indian Muslims" (1995:40).

	descendent of the Quṭb Shaikh Jamāl-ud-dīn of Hansi and the one who himself plumbed the deepest depths of Sufism.
Learned *'ālim* who came to be recognized as a great mawlwī.	Learned *'ālim* who came to be recognized as a great mawlwī.
Extremely zealous for Islam and strong opponent of Christianity. Opposed Pfander. Raḥmatullāh, however, went much further in his enmity and led an armed struggle in 1857 against the British for which he had to flee from India. But he left behind a mass of anti-Christianity polemical/ *munāẓarātī* literature that continues to militate against the cause of Christ worldwide.	Extremely zealous for Islam and strong opponent of Christianity. Opposed Pfander initially. After his conversion 'Imād-ud-dīn left the same legacy, in reverse order. But it has remained buried until now.

This simple comparison is drawn from the biographical information available in both primary and secondary literature about them. It shows that 'Imād-ud-dīn's *ashrāf* credential fully matched with Raḥmatullāh's and the other challengers. This was to be used as a stamp of authority in arguments at crucial points in the on-going Christian-Muslim *munāẓara*. For example, it is reported that whenever 'Imād-ud-dīn was attacked for abandoning the faith of his fathers, he would proudly refer to one of the sons of Sassanian king Nausherwan of Persia – 'Mushzad,' who was a Christian, and would reply: " Nay, verily, we have but returned from wandering to the faith of our father, for at the head of our family there stands a Christian and by God's grace a good Christian too" (Church Missionary Society 1900:913-14). 'Imād-ud-dīn's genealogical link with the Sassanian Christian royalty would have been an important argument at two levels: (i) he was not merely a commoner seeking upward social mobility through conversion to Christianity; (ii) for him, his forefather's Islam was in fact a wandering, epitomised perhaps, in his own wandering in the jungles of India. And like the 'Prodigal Son' (Luke 15) he had returned to his father's house. At another place he described his conversion as "a transformation from error to truth and darkness to light" ('Imād-ud-dīn 1893). In Islamic idiom, 'Imād-ud-dīn's 'conversion' was understood to be a 'reversion' – returning to the original faith.

Who were the intended readers of 'Imād-ud-dīn's biographical accounts? 'Imād-ud-dīn's primary audience were neither missionaries nor native Christians but Muslims of different persuasions, especially the *'ulamā'* who accused him of converting for material gains[20] (1957:1). This accusation, however, was not new. Muslims generally had a very demeaning attitude towards Christian converts. Sharma points out that, "They (Muslims) taunted the Indian Christians as becoming converts for bread. They described the Christian workers as 'the padris' parrot'" (1988:178). In the very first line of the *Waqi'āt-i-'Imādia*; a biographical account written right after his conversion, he emphatically said, "I became Christian solely to gain salvation", thus rejecting the notion of ulterior motives behind his conversion (1957:1). He then presented his *ashrāf* credentials as an argument against his adversaries' accusations and in support of his decision to convert. He showed that not only did he belong to an eminent saintly and scholarly family; his own achievements as a Muslim were outstanding. He was educated at the Agra Government College. He was amongst the circle of eminent mawlwīs and *'ulamā'* of Agra and Delhi who appointed him at the Royal Mosque to preach against the missionaries of the status of Pfander and French. He had endured the extreme hardships of Sufism, which not only attracted the officials of the Prince of Qarolī but also the ordinary people in Peshawar to becoming his disciples. They considered him one of the *awlīya* (friends) of Allāh and gave him large sums of money ('Imād-ud-dīn 1957). It is in this context that his claim to the *ashrāf* status might make sense and become more meaningful.

2. Importance of 'Imād-ud-dīn for Christian-Muslim *Munāẓara*

One of the most devastating and noticeable impacts that the Agra *munāẓara* exerted on the evangelistic campaign of the missionaries was that they began to avoid Christian-Muslim *munāẓara* (Webster 2007:102; Stacey 1982:5, CMI 1877:577-88; Studdert-Kennedy 1991:83). CMS administration thought it prudent to remove Pfander altogether from India (Powell 1993:287). Powell makes this insightful observation:

> After Pfander's departure there was no single 'controversialist' among the European missionaries either willing or able to dominate the scene as he had done. Samuel Knowles, Thomas Scott, Charles Forman and George Lefroy were all well known in the hinterlands

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[20] The purpose of the biographical sketch in *Khat-i-Shakāgo*, which was written in 1893, was different as it was meant to show the effects of the Gospel among Muslims of India. Its primary audiences were the people who were to attend the Chicago parliament of World's Religions. In the *Khat*, he himself appears to be the primary object of the transforming power of the Gospel.

of their own mission stations whether Bareilly, Lahore, Ludhiana or Delhi, but there was no Pfander among them (1993:287).

 Pfander's removal from India created a huge gap and with him gone, an important and dynamic chapter of Christian-Muslim debates had also ended. 'Imād-ud-dīn not only stood in this gap but also revived the Christian-Muslim *munāẕara*. This brought him to a collision course with his former co-religionists including close relatives, friends, and religious scholars ('Imād-ud-dīn's 1957:14). The opposition against him was not limited to social boycott and verbal abuse but several attempts on his life were made. Raḥmatullāh and Wazīr Khān who debated with Pfander and French[21] at Agra in 1854, had already published *ijāz-i-'īsawī,* an encyclopaedic criticism on the *taḥrīf* in the Bible in 1853. After the debate this book became very popular and was considered to be "the weapon" against Christianity in the hands of Muslim *munāẕars*. At the time of his conversion, the controversy started by Pfander had spread all over India and reached its high water mark. 'Imād-ud-dīn, according to Powell, was thrown into this controversy (Powell 2003:223). Not only had he to give reasons for leaving Islam, but also justify his embracing of Christianity. It is at this point that he was transformed into a defender of the faith he had condemned from his youth.

It is clear from his early autobiographical and apologetic writings that 'Imād-ud-dīn was trying to turn the tide of the Agra *munāẕara*. He was trying to take the initiative back that was lost by Pfander and French at the Agra debate. Since no Christian challenged *i'jāz-i-'īsawī* for thirteen years, it was considered unanswerable. Therefore, immediately after his conversion 'Imād-ud-dīn, set out to refute *i'jāz-i-'īsawī*. Robert Clark wrote:

> He is now employed in writing a critical and more elaborate work, a reply to the "Ijaz Isawi", which though published in 1853, has hitherto remained unanswered, and appears to be one of the chief weapons used by Mohammedans of this part of India against Christianity (Proceedings 1866-68:91).

It is absolutely clear from *taḥqīq al-īmān* and *hadāyat al-muslimīn* that he was challenging Muslim scholars to give their reply to his books and to engage with him. In the introduction of *taḥqīq al-īmān,* he challenged the educated Muslims that if it was possible they should remove his objections against Islam so that the reality of Islam

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[21] T.V. French was an Oxonian, CMS missionary of saintly character and great learning. He became first Bishop of the diocese of Lahore.

may be proved and the Muslims may benefit from it; otherwise they too should accept Christianity ('Imād-ud-dīn 1878:2). Similarly, after writing *hadāyat al-muslimīn* he hoped to engage with Raḥmatullāh and Wazīr Khān or at least his disciples. He wrote,

> The compilers of *i'jāz-i-'īsawī* are still alive; I hope that they will write a reply or their assistants who are in India will say something. Otherwise, fearing God, come out of this ancient ignorance [Islam] that came from Arabia, which is against all the former prophets. And our forefathers; either due to the fear of their lives or deception were entrapped in it. God calls everyone and now his message has come to you. Disobedience to him and following the prejudice will bring great harm in his Court. So brothers, be prudent ('Imād-ud-dīn 1899:198).

According to 'Imād-ud-dīn, just as he expected, his books were taken to Arabia where Raḥmatullāh and Wazīr Khān were living in exile, but they never tried to refute his books. After waiting for nine years two Indian scholars, Abu al-Manṣūr and Sayyid Muhammad wrote replies to *hadāyat al-muslimīn*, to which 'Imād-ud-dīn also wrote a rejoinder in the 1899 edition (1899: 198-99). Thus, his hope to reinitiate the Agra *munāẓara* to an extent was realized. He also started a written debate with the *mujtahid* of Lucknow, Sayyid Muhammad, one of the first persons who took the initiative to refute Pfander's *mīzān al-ḥaqq* (Powell 1993:172-76). Soon after his conversion, 'Imād-ud-dīn also held three debates with highly respected *mawlwīs* in Lahore.[22] The missionaries were quick to notice his importance for Christian-Muslim *munāẓara*. Robert Clark wrote:

> The Moulvie Imaduddeen, was challenged some months ago to a religious discussion with several Mohammedan Moulvies. After three sittings, an excuse was made by them for discontinuing it; thus giving an example that truth in a native's mouth can appear so strong that error can think it prudent to avoid it. The objections brought forward in the attack against Christianity were culled from many an infidel and Roman Catholic work, and were replied to. But Mohammedans do not now generally wait to defend Mohammedanism; and when it came to their turn to reply to the objection against their own religion the field was deserted. We can thank God that it was a native of India, and one in service of no Christian Society, that stood up for the defence of the Gospel against many subtle and unscrupulous adversaries. At the last sitting they rested the issue of the whole discussion on one single point, whether the names of certain Apostles were to be found in an Arabic commentary of Beizawi, as Moulvie Imaduddeen has asserted. He was enabled to produce the passage in their presence (Robert Clark 1866-1868:109).

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[22] Clark did not give the names of those well respected *mawlwīs* but one of them was certainly a notorious blind man Hafiz Waliullah Lahori. Lahori in an earlier debate with Pfander punched him in the face and injured him. He also wrote a large book to refute 'Imād-ud-dīn.

From the evidence presented above one can see that a new phase of Christian-Muslim *munāẕara* had begun exactly where it had ended in 1854 in Agra – on *taḥrīf* in the Bible. Muslim *munāẕars* brought forward objections against the Bible 'from the infidels (European critics) and Roman Catholics,' that was what allegedly happened in Agra (Powell 1993:233). However, there was a marked change from the Agra *munāẕara* as well. Now all *munāẕars*: Muslims and Christians were Punjabi *mawlwīs*. In Clark's idiom, truth was 'in a native's mouth,' which appeared 'so strong'. Another notable point of 'Imād-ud-dīn's earliest *munāẕara* was that he appeared to be succeeding in turning the tables. Whereas in Agra Pfander refused to continue the discussion, which Raḥmatullāh and other Muslims interpreted as Pfander's flight to avoid humiliating defeat, in Lahore Muslims are said to have 'deserted the field'. Whether the things happened as reported by Clark could not be satisfactorily verified. One can always expect a degree of exaggeration in such accounts. Nevertheless, it is certain that the new phase of Christian-Muslim debate had begun. It was happening due to the new factor in the Christian-Muslim *munāẕara* – 'Imād-ud-dīn.

Conclusion

This chapter emphasised two points, which had a direct bearing on the Christian-Muslim *munāẕara* in nineteenth-century India. The first point was mainly concerned with the conversion of 'Imād-ud-dīn, the foundation stone of his call to be a Christian *munāẕar*. The chapter was not concerned with his conversion per se, but rather to uncover how the process of conversion might have silently prepared him to become a *munāẕar*. It was shown that his search for God and for the resolution of spiritual crises enabled him to delve deep into Islam's traditions and discover its deficiencies while he was still a devout Muslim. Finally the courage he demonstrated to renounce Islam and proclaim the truth he had found made him ready to assume the role of a Christian *munāẕar*. His coming from an *ashrāf* Muslim class added considerable weight to his persona as a *munāẕar* because in the field of *munāẕara* matching ones credentials and establishing ones superiority over ones opponents was an integral part of the game.

The second main point focussed on the importance of 'Imād-ud-dīn for the Christian-Muslim *munāẕara* in the aftermath of the Agra *munāẕara*. The evidence showed that 'Imād-ud-dīn filled the gap created by Pfander's transfer from India. 'Imād-ud-dīn revived the debate exactly where it was terminated at Agra. Although it was, in a

sense, the beginning of an old debate, a crucial difference was that now the debaters were all Punjabi *mawlwīs*, one of whom was a prominent Christian convert. The gap caused by Pfander's removal from India in the mission camp was filled by the appearance on the scene of ʿImād-ud-dīn. Soon he began to challenge the Muslim *ʿulamā'*, in what seemed like a deliberate attempt at returning to the Agra *munāẓara*.

Part II: 'Imād-ud-dīn's Contribution to the Points discussed at the great *Munāẓara*

Part II consists of the first two agenda items, which were discussed at the *munāẓara*. In this thesis, they are discussed in Chapters Three and Four below.

Chapter Three: *Naskh* of the Bible

Introduction

Part two of this research begins with ʻImād-ud-dīn's response to the first two points which were discussed during the debate. *Naskh* (abrogation) was first of the two agenda items discussed at the *munāẓara*. The main question to be addressed in this chapter is: what was ʻImād-ud-dīn's specific contribution to the issue of *naskh*? In order to answer this question, a preliminary question is: why was *naskh* put on top of the agenda of the Great *munāẓara*? What were Raḥmatullāh-Wazīr and Pfander-French's arguments for and against *naskh* in and of the Bible? This will set the background for presenting ʻImād-ud-dīn's arguments in refutation of the Islamic doctrine of *naskh* and Raḥmatullāh's position on it. ʻImād-ud-dīn's arguments will then be discussed to assess to what extent he was successful in advancing the debate on the first point of the Great Debate. The argument here is that ʻImād-ud-dīn's contribution not only reignited and advanced the Christian-Muslim debate but also enabled the emergence of a new and creative Christian-Muslim theology in the nineteenth-century India.

1. Islamic doctrine of *naskh*: importance, meaning, and scope

This section will explore why *naskh* was put on the agenda of the great *munāẓara*? To find an answer to this question the importance, meaning, and scope of the doctrine of *naskh* within Islam need to be understood.

1.1 Importance

Muslim scholars have considered the doctrine of the *nāsikh-o-mansūkh* (abrogating and abrogated) as one of the most important doctrines of Islamic theology. Louay Fatoohi records Yaḥya bin Aktham (242/857) having said that "None of all sciences is more of a duty [to learn] on the scholars, students and all Muslims than the science of *nāsikh* and

mansūkh"[41] (2013:2). The notion of *naskh* touches the life of every sincere Muslim. In Fatoohi's words, "Abrogation has played a major role in Islamic law, and thus its influence on the life of the average Muslim cannot be exaggerated" (2013:1). *Naskh* is considered crucial for the understanding of the Qur'ān and *fiqh*. As-Suyūtī[42] (1445-1505) wrote, "The learned elders have said that no one is allowed to interpret the Book of God except after he is thoroughly familiar with the verses that abrogate or have been abrogated" (As-Suyūtī n.d: 1). 'Alī, the fourth Caliph, reportedly, asked a Muslim Judge, "Are you familiar with the verses that abrogate or have been abrogated? The judge replied, "No!" 'Alī then replied, you ruin yourself and others" (As-Suyūtī n.d: 1). The importance of the doctrine of *naskh* for Islamic theology cannot be overemphasized. But another crucial question is what does *naskh* really mean and how have Muslim scholars understood it?

1.2 Meanings

One of the problems involved in the study of *naskh* is that scholars differ over the very meaning of the term. As-Suyūtī noted four ways in which the word *naskh* may be used: 1) 'To obliterate,' as in the verse, "…but God obliterates that which the devil casts and then establishes his verses" (Surah 22:52); 2); 'to replace,' as in the verse, "when we replace one verse with another…(16:101); 3); 'to change hands,' as occurs in matters of succession, where the inheritance changes hands from one person to another and; 4); 'to transcribe,' thus it is said, "I have transcribed the book", that is, "I have transcribed its words and its text to another location" (As-Suyūtī n.d:1). According to As-Suyūtī, in a given context *naskh* may mean, to obliterate, to replace, to change, and to transcribe. While this variety in the meaning allowed scholars to prefer one meaning to the others, it also gave rise to the divergent opinions. 'Abbās and Jaffar point out:

> A major factor in this difference in opinions is the exact definition and scope of the term *naskh* itself. In early narrations, the mention of *naskh* did not automatically mean abrogation, as we understand it today. This fact has led to a vastly exaggerated count for the instances of abrogation in the Qur'ān. (Jaffar 2009:149).

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[41] The term *nāsikh* means abrogating and *mansūkh* means abrogated.
[42] Imām Jalāl-ud-dīn As-Suyutī, born in 1445 in Cairo Egypt is considered to be one of the most important Muslim scholars who ever lived. His book *Al-Itiqān fī 'Ulūm Al-Qur'ān* (English translation: *The Perfect Guide to the Sciences of the Qur'ān* is said to be the most authoritative book on the sciences of the Qur'ān.

Rafiabadi quotes Ibn Manzoor's definition:

> It means actually copying from the original source word for word, and it also means removing of something and bringing a different thing on its place, and when it is said a verse has abrogated another verse. It indicates that the commandment it contains has been removed. (Rafiabadi 2005:298).

Rāghib Isfahānī says, "The real meaning of *al-naskh* is to remove one thing and bring another thing in its place…sometimes, …just abolition as the Qur'ānic verse has it (22:52)" (Rafiabadi 2005:299).

The meanings of *naskh* given above are important for this thesis. However, by the time of the Agra *munāẓara,* Muslim *scholars* had superimposed more technical meanings on *naskh* to the extent that the original Qur'ānic term *naskh* had lost its meaning. Burton notes, "The technical vocabulary of Islamic sciences is independent of the original meanings of words in the Arabic language. The term *naskh* is held to be an Islamic word, a Shar'iyya term" (Burton 1990: 102).

Muslim debaters, faced with the objections from the opponents and inherent theological problems presented by the doctrine of *naskh* have tried to lean on the Arabic usage of *nāsakh al-kitāb* (*naql* or copy of the book), and technical or Sharī'a usage of *naskh*; but a usage which may not be found in the Qur'ān. Burton argues, "That there is in Arabic the usage: *nāsikẖ*, *'l-kitāb*, but this sense of the root *naskẖ* cannot be said to occur in the Ḳur'ān and the scholars have criticised Naḥḥās for supporting that it did" (Burton 1990: 90). The disagreement of Muslim scholars is based on their understanding of the *mā nansakh* phrase in Surah 2:106. To quote Burton again, "Some say it means: Whatever *ayā* we withdraw…others that it means; whatever *ayā* we replace…yet for others it means: Whatever *ayā* we record, but replace its ruling" (Burton 1990: 90).

It is important to note that though, at the time of *munāẓara,* the technical meanings of the term *naskh* had become dominant, divergent opinions among the Muslim scholars existed from the very beginning, which played an important role in Christian-Muslim *munāẓara* in India. In the context of *munāẓara* Raḥmatullāh and his followers constantly used the term *naskh* in its technical sense, but their challenger 'Imād-ud-dīn opted for the original Qur'ānic sense which helped the issue to be appreciated more fully. It is important to explain this term further as it played a crucial role at the Agra *munāẓara.*

1.3 Scope

Originally, the scope of *naskh* was limited to intra-Qur'ānic debate between Muhammad and his critics who accused him of bringing contradictory revelations. Muslim theologians and jurists, however, developed this doctrine as a hermeneutical tool, which was to be employed in the service of almost every Islamic science. The most dominant aspect of the doctrine of *naskh* has been legalistic. Fatoohi states: " Over the centuries, scholars have understood the term "*naskh*" to mainly mean the abrogation or annulment of a divine ruling by a later divine ruling" (Fatoohi 2013:13). It was the development of *fiqh*,[43] jurisprudence, in the 8th and 9th centuries that helped develop the doctrine of *naskh*. Fatoohi says:

> But the development of the study of *naskh* was advanced by the emergence of yet another science: "*uṣūl al-fiqh*" or the "roots/sources of Islamic jurisprudence". This science is concerned with the sources of Islamic laws and the general principles for drawing legal rulings from those. *Naskh* became one of those principles (Fatoohi 2013:17).

In Burton's estimation, Imām Mālik,[44] (AD 711-795) a Medinah based scholar, was the first who extended the scope of abrogation and applied it to the service of developing Islamic laws (Burton 1990: viii).

Theories of *al-nāsikh wa-al-mansūkh* were developed by different scholars at different places in response to what Burton calls a "stimulus". According to him, these stimuli included the efforts to resolve contradictions within the Qur'ān, within the Sunna, and between the Qur'ān and the Sunna, and thus saving Muhammad's honour and Muslims from embarrassment. Burton also claims:

> There is clear evidence that Ḳur'ān and Sunna contradict each other. So the Muslims came to acknowledge that Ḳur'ān abrogates Sunna and Sunna abrogates Ḳur'ān, readily acknowledged by the oldest exegetes, the twin principles of *naskẖ* of Ḳur'ān by *Sunna* and *naskẖ* of Sunna by Ḳur'ān met determined opposition. At stake was Muhammad's honour in both cases (Burton 1990:5).

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[43] This discipline focused on the understanding of "Sharī 'a" or "Islamic law" in its revealed sense. The four schools of Islamic jurisprudence that became accepted by Sunni Muslims were established by Abu Hanīfa al-Nu'mān (150/767), Mālik bin Ans (179/796), Muhammad al-Shafi'ī (204/819) and Ahmad b. Hanbal (241/855) (Fatoohi 2013:17).

[44] Mālik's *Muwatta* is considered to be the first book containing legal opinions of a Muslim scholar. Mālik applied what he reported that his teacher Zuhrī told him: that Muslims had adopted as standard the latest of all the prophet's reported actions. This sets an extremely important principle of *naskh*: the later revelation or Sunna of the prophet annuls or supersedes the earlier ones. Burton says, "Mālik himself actually states that of the two relevant Ḳur'ān rulings, one had replaced the other" (Burton 1990: viii).

Muslim exegetes applied the principle of abrogation to overcome the contradictions. Burton notes: "Some of the oldest exegetes included indiscriminately under *naskh* all and every verse where they noted a degree of contradiction; however slight" (Burton 1990:2). According to Walīullāh. "Some scholars have taken the number of abrogated verses to 500" (Walīullāh 1997:30). Even then, the scope of the application of *naskh* appeared to be limited to the Islamic practice and law.

However, it is more important here to note that towards the tenth century, some Muslim exegetes began to extend the scope of *naskh* to earlier revealed books and religions. Abu Muslim al-Isfahānī (322/933) a Mu'talizite and Jabri were such scholars who claimed that Surah 2:106 talked about the abrogation of earlier laws (Fatoohi 2013:51). Rafiabadi says: "The Sphere of abrogation has been regarded by some scholars to be the earlier revelations not the Qur'ān primarily and a tradition recorded in the Muslim[45] also supports this claim that there had been no earlier book which has not been abrogated by Islam" (Rafiabadi 2005:317).

This trend seems to have been growing though some scholars denied it. Ḥamid Naseem asserts that the Qur'ān being universal in nature and claiming to provide answers to all the problems of humanity had to abrogate all the previous Shar'īahs, which were temporary, racial, and geographical (Naseem 1994:138-40). Jaffar claimed, "the exact meaning of "*aya*" in verse 2:106 refers to the verses of the Qur'ān, some consider it to also refer to previous prophets and scriptures" (Jaffar 2009:149).

Thus the scope of *naskh* has been extended from intra-Islamic (the Qur'ān and hadith) to inter-religious spheres. This brief discussion has a direct relevance, as at the heart of the debate on *naskh* was the question whether the Qur'ān abrogates the Bible. But why was this issue put on the top of the agenda at all?

2. *Naskh* at the great *munāẓara*

The theme of abrogation was not new in Christian-Muslim debates. ʿAli Ibn Rabban at-Tabarī appeared to be the first apologist who "asserted that the Qur'ānic commandments have abrogated Biblical commandments" (Becht 2018:24). Raḥmatullāh was simply following Ṭabarī. Powell observes that, "*naskh* had never been one of the leading

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[45] Muslim, here, refers to *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*; one of the 6 authentic books of Hadith collections. The collection is named after its compiler: Imām Muslim ibn al-Hajjāj. It is the second most authentic book, after *Ṣaḥīḥ Bukhārī*.

themes of medieval *munāẓara* between Muslims and Christians" (1993:246). Then, why did naskh become a leading point of debate at the Agra *munāẓara*? Why was *naskh* put on the agenda and given precedence over the more important and traditional points of discussion? Powell gives much attention to the setting of the agenda, as she believes that it afforded a strategic and tactical advantage to Muslims. Yet for some reason she overlooked the strategic importance of *naskh* as the opening point of the debate. A few observations may throw some light on this: (i) In his *Mīzān al-Ḥaqq* (Balance of the Truth), Pfander has put *naskh* first as he argued for the integrity, authenticity and currency of the Bible. The title of the 1866 version of the *Mīzān al-Ḥaqq* reads, "The Old and New Testament never at any time Abrogated" (Pfander 1866:4). There are several versions and a couple of translations into English of the *Mīzān al-Ḥaqq*. The 1986 edition of the *Mīzān al-Ḥaqq* was thoroughly revised and enlarged by St. Clair Tisdall in 1910. Tisdall made additions in the text to strengthen it. The second chapter of this edition is entitled as, "The Old Testament and the New Testament have never been abrogated in (1) their facts, (2) their doctrines, and (3) their moral principles" (1986). This title suggests a modification in Pfander's original claim, and leaves a possibility of abrogation apart from the three points above (1986:55). (ii) In Pfander's argument, the denial of *naskh* appears to be an overall part of his defence of the integrity of the Bible. So Raḥmatullāh may have wanted to attack the opening argument of Pfander. (iii) Raḥmatullāh was confident through reading Pfander's book and his few months' earlier discussion with French that missionaries were least knowledgeable about this Islamic doctrine and it would be easy to humiliate Pfander in *public* on this point. (iv) The acceptability of the Qur'ān depended, in part, on proving some sort of abrogation of the Bible. The position of this new item in the *munāẓara* proved to be crucial for discrediting Pfander as a scholar of Islam and thus turning the environment of the *munāẓara* in favour of the Muslims. This appears to be the aim of Raḥmatullāh for challenging Pfander on his position on *naskh* and putting it on the top of the agenda. The position of the *naskh* on the agenda was important but its outcome depended on how Raḥmatullāh and Wazīr Khān would argue their case.

3. Arguments for and against *naskh* in the Bible

Raḥmatullāh claimed that Pfander had completely misunderstood the Muslim doctrine of abrogation (Ṣābrī 2008:290). It is therefore necessary before considering Raḥmatullāh's refutation of Pfander, to understand Pfander's position on *naskh*.

3.1 Pfander's position on *naskh*

In his *Mīzān al-Ḥaqq* Pfander informed his readers that:

> Muslim doctors claim that as by the descent of the Psalms the Torah, and by the giving of the Gospel the Psalms, were abrogated; so by the appearance of the Koran the Gospel also was rendered null, thus henceforward the obedience to the precepts contained in those books became unnecessary" (1866:4).

Pfander understood the danger in the Muslim claim and noted, "If this assertion is taken as true, the authority and value of the Old and New Testament are gone" (1866:4). With this threat to the word of God, and a potential hindrance in the way of possible seekers to read the Bible in mind, Pfander attacked those who held such a view. He argued that this assertion is based on:

(i)   The 'ignorance' of the contents of the Holy Scriptures, which exhibit perfect accord, harmony and conformity between the precepts of both testaments. For him there was a unity between the OT and NT. He wrote, "The whole stands as a wonderful monument of the knowledge and love of God of which Torah is the foundation and writings of the Prophets and Apostles the superstructure".

(ii)   The emphasis on external worship in the OT was for an appointed time, at the expiration of which inward and spiritual laws were enacted. The Gospel has not annulled the precepts of the Old Testament, but only substituted what was spiritual for that which was external, and completed what had begun in earlier books.

(iii)   Precepts fallen into disuse were binding only upon the Jews.

(iv)   The Gospel has not annulled or abrogated any one of the passages of the Torah, which relate to the knowledge of God, sanctification and holy living (1866:4-7).

Pfander also perceived some theological problems related to the doctrine of *naskh* and argued that if this assertion is accepted it will necessarily lead to the conclusion that God was not omniscient. It will reduce God to the level of earthly kings. And that God intentionally sent revelations, which would not properly make his will known (1866:8). Pfander also appealed to both the Qur'ān and the Bible against the abrogation of the Bible. According to him the Qur'ān testifies that the Bible is the word of God; and both

OT and NT teach that the word of God is permanent and cannot be abrogated. Christ clearly declared he did not come to abolish the Law but to fulfil the Law (Matthew 5:17-18). It appears that Pfander argued his case well, but did he? How did Raḥmatullāh respond to his arguments?

3.2 Raḥmatullāh's refutation of Pfander's position

Raḥmatullāh began to refute Pfander by reading *Mīzān al-Ḥaqq* published in 1850:

> The Qur'ān and its *mufassirīn* claim that just as the Torah was abrogated by the coming of Psalms, and Psalms by the *Injīl*, in the same way, the *Injīl* too is abrogated by the revelation of the Qur'ān. This claim of Muslims' that the Psalms abrogated Torah and the *Injīl* abrogates both is out of place and false (Raḥmatullāh 2009: 20, 59)[46].

Raḥmatullāh accused Pfander of misrepresenting the Islamic view and challenged him to prove his claim. Raḥmatullāh claimed that, "there is no such mention either in the Qur'ān or commentaries" (Ṣabrī 2008:290). In *Izālatul awhām* vol.1, a written refutation of Pfander's *Mīzān al-Ḥaqq*, he said, "it was Pfander's *ṣarīḥ buhtān* (absolutely false accusation) against the Qur'ān and its commentators" (n.d: 256). Raḥmatullāh wrote:

> I say this is absolutely wrong; neither at any place in the Qur'ān, nor in any trustworthy *tafsīr* Muslims have made this claim. And according to the assumed meaning of *naskh* (*naskh iṣṭalahī*), neither Psalms is the *nāsikh* of Torah, nor Torah is considered abrogated by *Injīl* (p 59).

To prove his point Raḥmatullāh quoted a part of Surah 2:87 "and we gave Moses a book and followed him up with messengers". He also quoted from *Tafsīr Azīzī*[47]:

> After Moses, one after the other, Allah sent four thousand people apart from Moses: Joshua, Elijah, Elisha, Samuel, David, Solomon, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Jonah, Ezra, Ezekiel, Zechariah and John [the Baptist]. The purpose of sending them was to enforce the Law of Moses, in which Israelites, due to their laziness and pride have made changes (Ṣābrī 2008:291).

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[46] This quote is taken from Raḥmatullāh's *Izālat-ul-awhām* where he narrates about his *munāẓara* with Pfander. This book was first published in AH 1229/AD 1848 by Sayyid al-Maṭāb': Shah Jahān Ābād. It was first written in Fārsī. 'Ārafī received PhD for translating it into Urdu. It is available in Pdf form. Raḥmatullāh dealt with the issue of *naskh* as he responded to the objections raised by Christian apologists against the doctrine of *naskh*.

[47] *Tafsīr 'Azīzī* is a Persian commentary on the Qur'ān written by Shah 'Abdul 'Azīz Muhadith Dehlavī (1746-1824). 'Abdul 'Azīz was the eldest son of Shah Walīullāh and is considered one of the greatest scholars of Hadith and *Tafsīr* in South Asia.

Further, he quoted Surah Nisa 4:161: "And to David we gave *Zabūr*". He explained this with reference to *Tafsīr Husainī*[48]: "We gave David *Zabūr*; only God's praise is in it. It is devoid of commands and prohibitions. The Law of Torah is also the Law of David". Raḥmatullāh claimed, "The same is written in other books of Muslims" (Ṣābrī 2008:291). Thus Raḥmatullāh tried to prove that neither the Qur'ān nor its expositors have said what Pfander accused them of saying. On the other hand, Raḥmatullāh constantly accused Christians for not understanding the Islamic doctrine of *naskh* as agreed (*muṣṭalaḥ*) by Muslims (Raḥmatullāh n.d: 14).

Pfander was challenged to prove his assertion but, instead of refuting Raḥmatullāh and providing evidence for his claim, he directly asked Raḥmatullāh: "do you consider the *Injīl* abrogated or not?" Raḥmatullāh answered: "without any doubt, the way the meaning of the Gospel is being told, I consider it abrogated".[49] Raḥmatullāh pressed on: "but your claim is wrong" (Ṣābrī 2008:291). Pfander's defence was ironic: "This is what I have heard from the Muslims with whom I used to discuss". Raḥmatullāh retorted: "It is against the justice to impute a thing heard from Muslims to the Qur'ān and its commentators" (Ṣābrī 2008:291). In response to this, Pfander made a public confession: "Surely I have made a mistake" (Raḥmatullāh n.d: 59; Ṣābrī 2008:291). According to Powell, Pfander also sent a written apology to Raḥmatullāh for misunderstanding the issue of *naskh* (Powell 1993:246). At this point it appears that Raḥmatullāh had won not only the argument but also the first point of the debate. But was Pfander really wrong and Raḥmatullāh totally right, as he claimed? Both 'Imād-ud-dīn and Ṣafdar Ali did not think so. Their views will be presented later in this chapter.

Raḥmatullāh was not content just to prove that Pfander had made a false assertion. He was in the *munāẓara* situation – establishing his superiority and demonstrating the inferiority of his opponent was part of the game. He wanted to expose that Pfander did not understand the Islamic doctrine of *naskh* and then refute his main claim that neither OT nor NT had ever been abrogated. He challenged Pfander, "Have you read the meanings of *naskh* in the books of Muslims as they are *rā'ij* (current or in use) in the *iṣṭilaḥ* of Muslims?" Reportedly, Pfander did not respond. It

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[48] *Tafsīr Husainī* is another very important Persian commentary on the Qur'ān, which became popular by the name of Mullah Ḥusain. It is also known as *Tafsīr-i-Qādrī* after the name of its Urdu translator, Fakhruddīn Qādrī. Urdu translation was published in 1883.

[49] The Urdu text reads: "*Bila shuba jis 'aml ke sath Injīl ke m'anī batā'ye jā rahe hein is ko mansūkh samajhta hūn*". It is not clear from this text what the word (*jis 'aml ke sath*) means and what was the "meanings of the Gospel" told by either Pfander or French, and for what particular reasons Raḥmatullāh considered the *Injīl* abrogated.

shows that Pfander had not read *Izālatul Awhām* which contained Raḥmatullāh's refutation of his book. Strangely, he asked Raḥmatullāh to describe what it meant. To establish *iṣṭilaḥī* meaning, Raḥmatullāh quoted from *Tafsīr M'ālam al-tanzīl*[50]: "*Naskh* is only in commands and prohibitions (*awāmir-o-nawāhī*) and not in the narratives (*akhbār*). Therefore, I consider stories and narratives not susceptible to *naskh* (Ṣābrī 2008:291).

After having understood that Muslims considered *naskh* only in commands, Pfander asked: "Which commands of the Gospel are abrogated according to you?" Raḥmatullāh replied: "Like illegitimacy of divorce" (Ṣābrī 2008:292). While Raḥmatullāh was insisting that *naskh* takes place only in the 'rulings'; Pfander insisted that, "The entire Gospel is *mansūkh* according to you [Muslims]". However, Raḥmatullāh believed in the partial abrogation of the Gospel. He said, "In the presence of the following commands 'Love your God and love your neighbour' (Matthew 22:37-40 and Mark 12:30-31), I cannot call the entire Gospel *mansūkh*" (Ṣābrī 2008:292).

Did Pfander succeed in defending his other assertions? Pfander and Raḥmatullāh's claims were totally opposite to each other. Pfander claimed that *naskh* has never taken place in the Bible nor was there any possibility of *naskh* in it. Raḥmatullāh, on the other hand claimed *naskh* had taken place in the Bible. He provided many examples where, according to him, Old Testament commands had been set-aside in the New Testament, like Moses' permission to divorce, abrogated by Christ. They also provided examples of *ḥarām* foods, which were declared *ḥalāl* in the New Testament (Romans 14:13; Titus 1:15). Pfander tried to defend his position on the basis of the unchangeable nature of God's word. He quoted 1 Peter 1:23 and contended; "according to this verse God's word is everlasting, it is not abrogated" (Ṣābrī 2008:293). Raḥmatullāh replied; a similar verse is also found in Isaiah [Isaiah 40:8]: "The grass withers and the flowers fall, but the word of our God endures forever." Raḥmatullāh said to Pfander, "after this verse it is incumbent on you not to consider any command or prohibition [of the Bible] abrogated."

Pfander's answer was: "*naskh* has taken place in Torah" but he said they were not debating about Torah at this point. He quoted Christ's words in Luke 21:33; Matthew

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[50] This *Tafsīr* is the work of a famous Persian Imām Al-Husayn ibn Mas`ud ibn Muhammad ibn al-Farra', Abu Muhammad (436/1044-510/1117). He belonged to the Shafiʻī School of thought and was a prolific writer on jurisprudence, hadith, and Qur'ranic exegesis. His major work consists of the sixteen-volume *Sharḥ as-Sunna* (The interpretation of the Sunna), in which he discusses the hadiths and verses of the Qur'ān upon which the rulings of the Shafiʻī School rest. His commentary on the Qur'ān called *Lubāb al-t'āwīl fī Ma`ālam al-Tanzīl* has been highly respected by scholars.

24:35 "my word shall never pass away". Muslims insisted that this saying of Christ was about the specific prophecies in this chapter and therefore not *'ām* (general, applicable to the whole Bible). But Pfander contended that it was *'ām* and covered the whole Gospel. Wazīr Khān, Raḥmatullāh's assistant at the debate presented proof for his argument from Richard Mant's commentary on Matthew 24:35. Mant has quoted Bishop Paris who said, "it means that my prophecies are perfect," and Dwayne Hupe who said, [Christ says]: "that heaven and earth which are unchangeable as compared to other things, but even they are not as secure as my prophecies" (Ṣābrī 2008:292).

Raḥmatullāh then moved to refute Pfander's rational objections against the doctrine of *naskh*. He quoted another text from *Mīzān al-Ḥaqq,* which accused Muslims of absurd thoughts and conjectures. Pfander had argued that if it is accepted the Psalms abrogated the Torah and the Gospel abrogated Psalms, and the Qur'ān abrogated the Gospel, then it will necessarily relegate God to the level of earthly kings, even to the level of weak and foolish men. Or that God intentionally started sending imperfect revelation, which will not make his Will fully known. It would be, however, foolish to say that about the eternal Being, who is clothed with perfection of wisdom and power (Pfander 1866:8)[51]. But Raḥmatullāh turned the table on Pfander. He replied:

> These conjectures have nothing to do with Muslims but with Paul who said in the Hebrews 8: First law because it was weak and useless was removed. And that if the first covenant was perfect then there was no place for the new. But he called the first old, and anything that is old is about to disappear. Paul writes again: "If the first covenant was perfect then there was no place for the second, he called the first old and that which is old is about to be finished. [Then Raḥmatullāh Said]: "Did you not notice that it is Paul who called Torah weak, useless, old, defective and abrogated" (2009:295).

Pfander seems to have become helpless. Ṣābrī noted that Pfander listened and remained silent. He did not answer, which indicated his surrender. Raḥmatullāh asserted: "You should remove these few pages from your book, *Mīzān al-Ḥaqq*" (Ṣābrī 2008:295). Wazīr seems to have understood their silence exactly in this way:

> At this point it is proved that *naskh* is not impossible in the word of God. Therefore, the claim of all the pastors, especially of the writer of *Mīzān al-Ḥaqq* was that *naskh* is impossible in the word of God. When in this regard the possibility of *naskh* has been

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[51] Imdād Ṣābrī has also quoted Pfander's statement, which looks like an account of the verbal discussion, not a verbatim account from Mīzān al-Ḥaqq. It however, captures Pfander's argument (Ṣābrī 2008:218).

proved then taking place of *naskh* in the Gospel after the coming of Muhammad will become clear (Ṣābrī 2008:296).

Pfander and French seem to have no more argument to offer. Therefore, reportedly, Pfander proposed: "Discussion of *naskh* is over; let us discuss *taḥrīf* (Ṣābrī 2008:296).

4. 'Imād-ud-dīn's contribution on the doctrine of *naskh*

'Imād-ud-dīn must have wrestled with this issue before his conversion. His views on *naskh* are spread over a number of his books but mainly in *Hadāyat al-Muslimīn* (1867-1899), *Naghma-i-Ṯanbūrī* (1871), *Khazānātul-Isrār* (1875), and *Kitāb Kawā'if al-Ṣaḥā'if* (1887). 'Imād-ud-dīn brought fresh arguments to the debate and introduced critical issues which were missing during the debate and from Raḥmatullāh's writings on *naskh*. As he attempted to refute Raḥmatullāh, he also added to and clarified Pfander's arguments.

4.1 Defining *naskh*

Raḥmatullāh ridiculed Pfander at the debate for not understanding the technical meaning of *naskh* as agreed upon by Muslims and demanded that he should throw out of his book a few pages he had written on *naskh* (Raḥmatullāh n.d: 59; 2009:237-38). However, there has been 'no agreed upon' definition of *naskh* among the Muslim scholars, as shown above in 1.2.

According to Raḥmatullāh, "in the idiom (*isṭalaḥ*) of Muslims, *naskh* means declaration of the ending of the period of some practical command with all its conditions" (2010:171). He further emphasized that, "For us *naskh* comes only in *awāmar-o-nawāhī*" (Raḥmatullāh n.d: 15). Raḥmatullāh clearly took the technical meaning of those whom Shah Walīullāh called *uṣūlīs* or *muta'ākhkhirīn* (those who came last) (Walīullāh 1955:32). He deliberately suppressed or rejected the original Qur'ānic/lexical meaning as understood by the Ṣaḥāba or *mutaqaddimīn* (ancients), which meant *izāla*, removal, annulment, erase, and abolish (Walīullāh 1955:32). The choice of Raḥmatullāh shows that he wanted to keep the debate away from the Qur'ān.

'Imād-ud-dīn, however, went back to the roots. It was more important for him to bring the debate back where it belonged – to the Qur'ān. He wanted to bring to light what Muhammad and the Qur'ān – Islam's most authoritative sources – taught about

this doctrine. His understanding was in line with the *mutaqaddimīn*. He rejected the definition of *naskh* as developed by the *muta'ākhkhirīn* Muslims and adopted by Raḥmatullāh. He argued that on the issue of *naskh* Muhammad was the final authority. He wrote: "*Naskh ke barah meiṉ Muhammad sāḥib kā aik qaul bas hai jo Qur'ān meiṉ hai* (About *naskh,* just one saying of Muhammad, which is in the Qur'ān is final) ('Imād-ud-dīn 1899: 330). He gave the translation of this verse as follows: "And We did not send before you any messenger or prophet except that when he spoke [or recited], Satan threw into it. But Allāh abolishes that which Satan throws in; then Allāh makes precise His verses. And Allāh is Knowing and Wise" (22:52).

By focusing on the Qur'ān and letting the context determine the meaning of *naskh*, he made a strategic move with serious implications for the debate. To him *naskh* meant to 'remove,' 'abolish,' and 'purge'; over against Raḥmatullāh's definition; "declaration of the ending of the period of some practical command" (2010:171). A. Saeed, among others would agree with Raḥmatullāh (Saeed 2006:77). But Rāghib Isfahānī says, "The real meaning of *al-naskh* is to remove one thing and bring another thing in its place…Sometimes we understand by it just abolition as the Qur'ānic verse has it (22:52)" (Rafiabadi 2005:299). While the scholars like Isfahānī would acknowledge this meaning 'sometimes', for 'Imād-ud-dīn it was 'the meaning', and the rest were innovations of the later scholars. After determining the meaning 'Imād-ud-dīn moved to determine and differentiate the nature and scope of the Islamic doctrine of *naskh*.

4.2 Nature and scope of abrogation

Although at the *munāẓara,* Raḥmatullāh's description of *naskh* was short, in his books he had detailed and complicated discussions on the nature and scope of *naskh*. He emphasized that, "*naskh* comes only in *awāmar-o-nawāhī*" (Raḥmatullāh n.d: 15). To put it simply, Raḥmatullāh argued that *naskh* takes place only in certain commands and *nāsikh* reveals the ending of the period of the first command, which was determined by God but was not told to men. In the category of those commands, biblical commands were also abrogated by the Qur'ānic commands.

'Imād-ud-dīn, however, saw the matter entirely differently. He argued that the process of *naskh* was an intra-Qur'ānic phenomenon, restricted to particular categories of verses, not to certain practical commands. From these two foundational verses: "We do not abrogate a verse or cause it to be forgotten except that We bring forth [one]

better than it or similar to it. Do you not know that Allāh is over all things competent[52]?" (2:106); and "And We did not send before you any messenger or prophet except that when he spoke [or recited], Satan threw into it [some misunderstanding][53]. But Allāh abolishes that which Satan throws in; then Allāh makes precise His verses. And Allāh is Knowing and Wise" (22:52). From these verses 'Imād-ud-dīn identified three main categories of abrogated verses: (i) The verses inspired by Satan, (ii) verses which were forgotten, and (iii) verses which were not good and needed improvement.

Thus, firstly, he argued that Surah 22:52 proves that the abrogated verses are "things of the Devil; not the temporary commands. The Qur'ān teaches that one kind of abrogated verses are those which are taught by Satan"[54]. To strengthen his argument he quoted from the *Tafsīr Jalālayn,* which gives the historical background or *asbāb al-nuzūl* of this verse. It is a rather lengthy quote but is needed to understand 'Imād-ud-dīn's point. This is the comment of Jalālayn on 22:52:

> The Prophet (s) had, during an assembly of the [men of] Quraysh, after reciting the [following verses from] Sūrat al-Najm, Have you considered Lāt and 'Uzzā? and Manāt, the third one? [53:19-20] added, as a result of Satan casting them onto his tongue without his [the Prophet's] being aware of it, [the following words]: 'those are the high-flying cranes (al-gharānīq al-'ulā) and indeed their intercession is to be hoped for', and so they [the men of Quraysh] were thereby delighted. Gabriel, however, later informed him [the Prophet] of this that Satan had cast onto his tongue and he was grieved by it; but was [subsequently] comforted with this following verse that he might be reassured [of God's pleasure]: thereat God abrogates, nullifies, whatever Satan had cast, then God confirms His revelations. And God is Knower, of Satan's casting of that which has been mentioned, Wise, in His enabling him [Satan] to do such things, for He does whatever He will (Jalālayn 2007:374).

Thus, 'Imād-ud-dīn showed that the first category of the abrogated verses of the Qur'ān were those which were put into the prophet's mouth by Satan.

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[52] The Arabic word '*qadīrun*' translated above as 'competent' (Ṣaḥiḥ International), is translated by Yusuf Ali, Maulana Maudūdī, and many others as 'All-Powerful'. The choice of words may be indicative of the translator's leaning towards one of the two interpretations of this verse: *naskh* is the expression of Allah's knowledge and wisdom (Raḥmatullāh); and Allah has the power to do whatever he wants to do (Rafiabadī 2005:311).

[53] The translator adds the words in brackets; they are not part of the Arabic text.

[54] Green argues that this incident known as the *story of Cranes or Gharānīq* is very well established. All major early sources mention this incident, which shows the historicity of this event that was still fresh in the memory of Muslim community (Green 2014). Green also shows from the early sources of Islam that Muhammad confessed: I ascribed to Allah, what He had not said. (Ibn Sa'd, *Kitāb Al- Ṭabaqāt Al-Kabīr*, vol. 1, p. 237). I have fabricated things against God and have imputed to Him words, which He has not spoken. (Al-Tabari, The History of Al-Tabari, vol. vi, p. 111). (Green 2014).

Secondly, from Surah 2:106 he argued that abrogated verses were those, which the Prophet had forgotten. There is a dynamic debate among the Muslim scholars whether Muhammad forgot some revelations. Scholars are divided on this issue (Burton 1990:44-46). Burton quotes Surah 87:6-7 "We will teach you to recite and you will never forget – except what Allah wills". He then states, "From this wording some Muslims concluded that Muhammad would assuredly forget certain portions of the Ḳur'ān, for whatever God wills will inevitably occur" (1990:44). 'Imād-ud-dīn, strangely did not dwell on this point and appeared to be a bit amused as he wrote:

> God not only abrogates but also causes some verses to be forgotten. What kind of *pesh-bandī* (pre-emptive planning) is this? One should ask, "what was the wisdom in causing to forget? When the door of *naskh* has been opened, then what is the benefit of causing to forget? From this it is proved that Muhammad must have forgotten[55] some [verses] and the likeness of that would be in the Qur'ān ('Imād-ud-dīn 1899:330).

Thirdly, the third category of abrogated verses falls into that which were 'not good'. Based on Surah 2:106, "We do not abrogate a verse or cause it to be forgotten except that We bring forth [one] better than it or similar to it…" 'Imād-ud-dīn highlighted the words *bikhayrin minha* (better than), *mithliha* (similar) and *'alā kulli shayin qadīrun* (having power over all things). In the spirit of a true *munāẓara* he remarked, "Allah is *qādir* over all things; *naskh* and *tabdīlī* (alteration) is also included in it" ('Imād-ud-dīn 1899:330). He further suggested that, "from *bikhayrin minha,*[56] it is proved that what was abrogated was not 'very good'; *nāsikh* is better than that". He wrote:

> "If someone asks, why that which was not good was given? they will say it was good at that time; although this argument is extremely weak. Because it reveals that the giver of those commands was not aware of their defects/flaws. When their defects were revealed to him [he] abrogated them. In this case he cannot be God. And this too is a strong argument against the Qur'ān being the word of Allāh" ('Imād-ud-dīn 1899:330).

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[55] This issue that Muhammad may have forgotten some revelation caused some unease among the early Muslim scholars. Burton notes, "'Ā'īsha and some other companions are reported to have confirmed that not only parts of the Qur'ān were withdrawn but Muhammad also forgot some verses. Muhammad is reported to have said, "No man learns the Qur'ān and then forgets it, except in punishment of some grievous sin". Burton asserts that, "it had serious implications for the doctrine of the sinlessness of Prophet Muhammad " (1990:45).

[56] Sayyid Yusuf Ḥāmid Masīḥī argued that in this verse word *bakhair minha* demands that *khair* be understood as the opposite of the abrogated verse. He said, "The word *khair* demands something that stands against and [is] opposite and that opposite/antonym is *la-khair* (no good or better). Thus *khair-o-la-khair* is contrary or opposite [to each other], therefore *naskh* is needed. Because in the state of similarity *naskh* is not needed. And in the state of 'no need' the act of *naskh* is proved absurd. Thus in spite of non-requisite of *naskh*, the Qur'ān testifies to *naskh* and all these defects become clear with the acceptance of *naskh*" (1875:311).

'Imād-ud-dīn also contended that the Qur'ān says what Allah abrogates or causes to be 'forgotten'; He replaces that with the one which is similar (*mithliha*) to what was abrogated. Contrary to the claim of this verse, however, he argued, "*nāsikh-o-mansūkh* are not similar but different – there was *mughāyarat* (difference/contrariety) not unity or similarity between the abrogated and abrogating verses". For him the obvious example of this contradiction could be seen in a large number of contradictions within the Qur'ān and Sunna. In his *Hadāyat al-Muslimīn* he noted just 36 major contradictions (1899). It is said that the previous verses were abrogated by the contradicting verses that came later. He stresses that the *nāsikh* is different from the *mansūkh*. It is not similar as claimed by the author of the Qur'ān. If 'Imād-ud-dīn was correct in his claim, then that would raise a serious question about the integrity and trustworthiness of the author of the Qur'ān. Burton makes an interesting observation, "The suggestion does at least have the merit of considering the meaning of: *na'ti bi-khair minha* and *mithliha* too often left out of account in the Muslim exegesis" (1990:82). 'Imād-ud-dīn showed that even the very claim of the author of the Qur'ān of bringing that which is similar or better than the verses he abrogated was untenable. After discussing these two main Qur'ānic verses 'Imād-ud-dīn concluded: "Therefore, in the Qur'ān, either that which was Satanic or that which was not good is abrogated; not the temporary commands, which are the proposals of the [Muslim] scholars" ('Imād-ud-dīn 1899: 331).

Another important aspect of debate was concerned with the agency and origin of this doctrine.

4.3 Origin of the doctrine of naskh

Many Muslim and non-Muslim scholars agree that the origin of the doctrine of *naskh* is found in the polemics between the Jews of Medina and Muhammad (Rafiabadī 2005; Maudūdī 2014; Burton 1990). It is reported by Muslim scholars that the Medina Jews accused Muhammad of not only contradicting earlier revelations but also his own previous statements. That led them to doubt Muhammad's claim to prophethood, and they also tried to create doubts among the followers of Muhammad (Maudūdī 2014)[57]. This occasioned the revelation of surah 2:106, and 16:101[58]. According to Rafiabadi who quoted a large number of authorities in his support, both verses were revealed in

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[57] Maudūdī (2014). *Tafhīm al-Qur'ān*. Expository note on 2:106 (note no. 109)
[58] Surah 16:101 reads, " When we substitute one verse in favour of another to elaborate with different examples- and Allah knows best what he reveals in stages- they say: "you are but a forger".

response to Jewish accusations against Muhammad (Rafiabadi 2005:299-305). The Qur'ān defended Muhammad and squarely put the responsibility on Allāh who was changing, replacing, and abrogating the verses of the Qur'ān. According to Burton Muhammad's honour was at stake and Muslims developed the doctrine of *naskh* to save his honour (1990:5). Following the Qur'ān and Muslim jurists, Raḥmatullāh and his followers defended the view that the author of *naskh* was Allāh who was all-wise, and *naskh* was Allāh's wisdom (Raḥmatullāh 2009:238).

'Imād-ud-dīn, on the other hand, put his finger squarely on Muhammad; and what Raḥmatullāh called the wisdom of Allāh, he called plotting and stratagem of Muhammad and his followers. Twenty-one years after his conversion he was still reflecting on Muslim accusations of *taḥrīf* and *tansīkh*. He wrote, "I have greatly contemplated about these things of theirs. After investigation, I have learned that these two accusations against the word of God have been levelled either due to a strategy (*ḥikmat-i-'amlī*), ignorance, or mere enmity" (1887:10-11). For 'Imād-ud-dīn, *naskh* was a strategy to overcome certain difficulties and achieve certain ends.

4.3.1 It was a *pesh bandī*

'Imād-ud-dīn argued that *naskh* was Muhammad's well thought out strategy. This strategy was adopted for *pesh bandī* (to act in advance to minimise or control the possible damage or loss), i.e., to cover the loss of parts of the Qur'ān. He questioned why according to Surah 2:106 Allāh would cause some verses to be forgotten when the door of *naskh* has already been opened? 'Imād-ud-dīn's argument was that *naskh* was Muhammad's strategy to provide an excuse for the loss of some of the Qur'ānic texts and his hope that Allāh will replace what Muhammad forgot with something similar or even better ('Imād-ud-dīn 1899:330).

4.3.2 Overcoming contradictions

'Imād-ud-dīn argued that the second reason for the origin of *naskh* was Muhammad's strategy to overcome contradictions within the Qur'ān. In his book *Hadāyat al-Muslimīn,* 'Imād-ud-dīn documented a large number of contradictions within the Qur'ān. His interlocutor Sayyid Muhammad in his attempt to explain away the Qur'ān's contradictions cited Ṭabarī and other authorities, and repeatedly said that the

first verse has been abrogated. For example in contradiction no. 34, 'Imād-ud-dīn contended that there was contradiction in the waiting period or *'iddat* for a divorced wife and a widow in Surah Two *rukū'* (paragraph) 30 and 31). He noted that in the first verse, if her husband dies "the waiting time is 4 months and 10 days and in the second verse it is one year". Sayyid Muhammad replied, "All expositors say in unison that the second verse is abrogated" ('Imād-ud-dīn 1899:336). It appears that 'Imād-ud-dīn did not deal with this particular example carefully. He referred to the *rukū'* 30 and 31 but then called it the first and second verse. He did not pinpoint those verses which he thought contradicted each other. He probably meant contradiction between Surah 2:228, which fixes the three menstrual periods for a divorced wife, and Surah 2:234 which prescribes 4 months and 10 days *'iddat* for a widow. However, waiting for one year is not mentioned anywhere in the Qur'ān. Perhaps, it is a scribal mistake. However, in the context of *munāẓara* such careless maistakes could prove quite damaging. In contradiction no. 36, he showed contradiction between Surah *Al-i-'Imran's* verse "Fear Allāh as it ought to be (3: 102), and *At-Taghabun's* verse "fear Allah according to your strength" (64:16). 'Imād-ud-dīn quoted the explanation from the *Tafsīr Jalālyan* and argued that when Muslims complained to Muhammad that who had the power to fear Allah, as it ought to be, then, "Muhammad abrogated the first verse with Surah 64:16" ('Imād-ud-dīn 1899:317). 'Imād-ud-dīn presented many other examples of contradiction within the Qur'ān which Muslims have tried to remove by saying the first verse has been abrogated. 'Imād-ud-dīn insisted that *naskh,* was Muhammad's and his followers' "clever scheme to remove contradictions" ('Imād-ud-dīn 1899:313).

4.3.3 Strategy to make the Qur'ān Acceptable

'Imād-ud-dīn asserted that Muhammad's scheme of *naskh* was meant to make the Qur'ān acceptable vis-à-vis the Holy Bible, and the Islamic claim that the Bible has been abrogated was part of that scheme. He wrote: "They [Muslims] say that God has abrogated all the commandments of his earlier books and their *nāsikh* Qur'ān has come. This accusation is certainly from Muhammad; but this is a matter of plotting and stratagem" (1887:12). According to 'Imād-ud-dīn:

> The real reason for this false accusation is this that the teaching of the Qur'ān is very weak,
> which cannot shine vis-à-vis the Bible. For this reason Muhammad put this false accusation
> on the Bible so that by considering it *mansūkh,* people may not trust it and accept his
> Qur'ān. He will have to give an account of it in the court of God that he despised Him by

putting fault on His word and desired that his own word, which is the word of man, be accepted in place of God's word (1887:12- 13).

Thus, the basic argument of 'Imād-ud-dīn was that *naskh* was an Islamic strategy devised to achieve the above noted specific ends.

4.3.4 An Islamic Novelty

The crux of the whole debate on *naskh* at Agra was Raḥmatullāh's defence that *naskh* was not specific (*khāṣ*) or unique to Islam. He claimed that *naskh* was common to all religions and that *naskh* has taken place in the Bible (2010:175-6). He claimed:

> That Pastor [Pfander], according to the claim and on the basis of evidence, inevitably, had to completely accept these three things. One, that *naskh* is possible in the word of God; two, that in the Torah, *naskh* has actually happened; three, that Christ himself abrogated some of his commands. And these three things completely destroy his whole discourse/assertion (n.d: 63).

Although Raḥmatullāh vigorously argued that *naskh* was not unique to Islam, some other Muslim scholars thought it was. Imām As-Suyūtī said, "Abrogation, which for many sound reasons, God has made exclusive to this community [Muslims]" (Suyūtī: 1). Fatoohi too says, "Abrogation, therefore, is unique in its implications for the historicity and transmission of the Qur'ānic text as well as its meaning and objectives" (2013:3). While Pfander yielded to Raḥmatullāh's arguments, 'Imād-ud-dīn argued that *naskh* was a particular characteristic of Islam. He wrote: "no one but Muslims who came to the surface in AD 700 have accused the word of God of two defects: First is *taḥrīf* and second *tansīkh* (1887: 10-11). He argued that Muhammad was the only prophet who taught the doctrine of *naskh*. He wrote:

> One after the other, prophets kept coming into the world but a later prophet never said that the word of a previous prophet has been abrogated. Rather, what he brought he attached with the words of the previous prophets, and asked that his word ought to be accepted. If God did like this [abrogated the word of previous prophet], then He would not be truthful (*ṣādiqul-qaul*) and steadfast [in] nature (*qāʾim mizāj*) and neither would there be any trust in his promises (1887:13).

Hence, to 'Imād-ud-dīn, Muhammad's teaching on *naskh* was a novelty in the long line of the prophets. Indeed this very fact made Muhammad and the Qur'ān not standing in

the line of biblical prophecy, and thus, entirely unreliable in his eyes ('Imād-ud-dīn 1899:330).

5. God and the doctrine of *naskh*

One of the reasons Pfander objected to the doctrine of *naskh* was that it would put God's honour at stake. Raḥmatullāh, like Uṣūlīs, defended it to save Muhammad and Allāh from embarrassment (Burton 1990:4). 'Imād-ud-dīn argued that God could not be the author of *naskh*. He claimed that it was originally Muhammad's, but subsequently, Muslims' ploy to create a space for the acceptability of the Qur'ān vis-à-vis the Bible. Muhammad imputed this act of abrogation to Allāh. However, in 'Imād-ud-dīn's judgment, behind *naskh* was an unseen personality, Satan, who wanted to uphold the Qur'ān by keeping people away from the Bible ('Imād-ud-dīn 1887:6-11).

'Imād-ud-dīn contended that God could not be the author of *naskh* because the arguments presented by the Qur'ān for its origin were false, namely, "God is powerful over all[59]" (Surah 2:106). The Islamic argument is "Allah is the Absolute Sovereign Being and has unlimited authority both to abrogate previous injunctions and to cause people to forget the injunctions he wants them to forget" (Rafiabadī 2005:300). Thus the origin of *naskh* is seen to be in God's absolute power. 'Imād-ud-dīn questioned the validity of such reasoning. For him God could not do anything that was rationally absurd. Therefore, *naskh* cannot be ascribed to God. Muhammad ascribed *naskh* to God, and made Him the author of contradictions and confusions. 'Imād-ud-dīn argued that in the Qur'ān, *naskh* happened to either verses inspired by Satan or those, which were not good. He appeared so averse to the idea of *naskh* that he asserted: "Therefore, in relation to God, we consider believing in the Islamic *naskh* is a sin. Such a *naskh* in the word of God, from the perspective of rationality or logic is false. Because He is Omniscient, does not change and is righteous. His word is eternal" ('Imād-ud-dīn 1899: 331).

Since in his view *naskh* was rationally absurd and theologically against the nature of God, He could not be the author of the doctrine of *naskh* ('Imād-ud-dīn 1899: 331). If that was the case, then, how about apparent occurrence of *naskh* in the Bible?

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[59] Rafiabadī quotes 'Abdul Sattār Muḥadith Dehlvī who said, "To deny the abrogation in the Qur'ān is equivalent to the denial of the divine authority" (2005:311).

6. *Tansīkh* (abrogation) or *Takmīl* (fulfilment)?

Raḥmatullāh argued that *naskh* had taken place in the Bible and that the only difference was the use of different terminology: Muslims call it *tansīkh* while Christians call it *takmīl*. Raḥmatullāh proposed:

> If Christians avoid applying the word *naskh* but confess the meaning and sense and instead of calling it *naskh*, call it "*takmīl*", then the contention between Christians and Muslims will be only over words, i.e. Muslims name the abolished command *naskh* and Christians call that fulfilment (*takmīl*)" (Raḥmatullāh 2009:262).

'Imād-ud-dīn, however, would not accept such an equation. He claimed that *naskh* shown by Raḥmatullāh in the Bible was totally wrong because there, it was *takmīl* (completion, perfection), not *naskh*. For him the meaning of these two terms was not the same. He explained:

> *Takmīl* means 'completed,' and the relation between *kammal* (to complete, to be completed) and *mukammal* (completed, perfected) is that of a shadow and the reality, as if, that is the same thing in two different forms. And because *mukammal* is *'ein* (the reality, the thing itself) and *kammal* is *sāya* (shadow), therefore, when reality had come shadow had gone. Therefore, this is not a change in the word of God, rather; it is progress. It is contrary to *nāsikh* and *mansūkh* because they are two permanent commands; and relation between them is that of '*tabāyun*' (opposition/contradiction). Therefore to say that the meaning of *naskh* and *takmīl* is the same is a great mistake ('Imād-ud-dīn 1899: 32).

Raḥmatullāh's argument that the Christian concept of *takmīl* was exactly the same as the Muslim concept of *naskh* was adopted by Sir Sayyid Ahmad Khān and Sayyid Muhammad. 'Imād-ud-dīn argued that Muslims were confused because they did not understand the difference between *takmīl* and *tansīkh*. He wrote:

> *Tansīkh* is a different thing, which is not allowed (*nājā'iz hai*). *Takmīl* is something else, *jo nājā'iz nahin hai* (which is not illegitimate); rather it is a necessary thing/matter. And this is the very meaning of Christ's saying that I have not come to abrogate the books; rather I have come to complete them. And their commands and customs and prophecies will be completed in me. I am the end of the law ('Imād-ud-dīn 1899:331-32).

'Imād-ud-dīn in his written debate with Sayyid 'Alī Muhammad *Mujtaḥid* (a Muslim Jurist) of Lucknow; encountered this issue again. The *Mujtaḥid* asked him: is *naskh* permissible/admissible or not? He replied:

> *Naskh* is not permissible at all; otherwise, God who is immutable and truthful will not remain trustworthy. Yes, *takmīl* takes place in the word of God. However, there is a great

difference between *naskh* and *takmīl*. A brief explanation of it [*takmīl* and *naskh*] is like this: that if the relation between the earlier/preceding (*amr sābiqa*) and later/following (*amr lāḥiqa*) is that of *tayammum* and *wuẓū*, then, *amr lāḥiqa* is called *takmīl*. And if this relation is not found between those two and some other relation is found, then; they are called *nāsikh* and *mansūkh*. And rationally (*'aqlan*) and authoritatively (*naqlan*), it is not acceptable in relation to God. When all the commands and incidents of the Old Testament are compared with the New Testament the relation of *tayammum* and *wuẓū* between them is as clear as the Sun. But this relation is not found between the preceding books and the Qur'ān; rather the real difference or contrariety is seen. Therefore abrogation is not permitted. However, *takmīl* is permitted and it is a necessary thing; see Matthew 5:17 (1871:80).

'Imād-ud-dīn ingeniously used the Islamic practice of *tayammum* and *wuzu* for purifying oneself before saying prayer. In Surah 5:6 Allāh commanded Muslims to use clean earth to wipe their hands and faces to purify themselves for prayers where they could not find water to do *wuzu*. This dry ablution is called *tayammum*. *Tayammum* is allowed in the absence of water. However, as soon as water becomes available *wuzu* would replace *tayammum*. In the words of 'Imād-ud-dīn when *wuzu* comes *tayammum* goes. However, this analogy has a very limited direct appeal to 'Imād-ud-dīn's idea of *takmīl* because relation between *tayammum* and *wuzu* does not seem to be that of 'shadow' and 'reality'. In the absence of water *tayammum* replaces *wuzu* and when water becomes available again, *wuzu* relaces *tayammum.* A Christian understanding of the relationship between the NT and OT is certainly different from the Islamic understanding of *tayammum* and *wuzu*. Yet 'Imād-ud-dīn utilized this analogy as he saw it helpful to reject the Islamic assertion that *naskh* has taken place in the Bible, and thus tried to recover the ground lost by Pfander at the Agra *munāẓara*, but also defended the character of God.

7. Christ: the *nāsikh*

Pfander had argued in *Mīzān al-Ḥaqq* that Christ himself said he did not come to abolish the Law and the prophets (Matthew 5:17-18). But Raḥmatullāh and Wazīr Khān forced him to accept that Christ did abolish certain OT and his own earlier commands: such as, allowing certain foods which were *ḥarām* according to the Law of Moses, and divorce which was allowed by Moses but forbidden by Jesus. Matthew 5:17-18 is

perhaps the most obvious verse on *tansīkh* versus *takmīl*. 'Imād-ud-dīn's commentary on Matthew 5:17-18 reveals his thinking on *tansīkh* versus *takmīl*. 'Imād-ud-dīn took the same verses to show that Christ did not abrogate any of the previous verses of the Bible but fulfilled them. He wrote:

> Christ says that I do not teach new things; I restore the same old things. I explain the things that you did not understand correctly. With your own words and traditions you have turned meat into a hard bone and God's pure words have escaped from your hand. I show you the same pure gold. Don't even presume that I give you something new by removing the old; no they are the same old things that I have come to fulfil: Torah or the books of the prophets, i.e. the whole Old Testament (Mat 7:12; Acts 13:15f). As if he says the rock on which you stand, namely, the Old Testament, I have not come to destroy it (1875:73-74).

Reflecting on Christ's own words that he came to fulfil, 'Imād-ud-dīn said:

> In his [own] life through his teaching, i.e., [through] his actions he fulfils the Law [and] explains it by his words. Thus he has come to perfectly complete the whole design or plan. [The relation between the Torah and the Gospel is], as if, the Torah was the bud and the Gospel is the flower, or the Torah was the ear of a corn and the Gospel- the grains. The Torah showed it briefly; the Gospel revealed it in details. It is not that the Torah was imperfect; the Torah was perfect in itself that was a shadow of the truly perfect thing [the Gospel]. Thus the house that was begun earlier Christ completes. He fulfilled the commands of the Torah by obeying God. He fulfilled the ritual law through his life, suffering and death. He fulfilled the national law by his spiritual laws. Thus he glorified and honoured the Law) (Isaiah 42:21) (1875:74).

Commenting on Matthew 5:18 he emphasized that Christ was speaking here as the Lord of the Torah, who knew that the Torah stood in need of fulfilment and that it must be fulfilled in its minutiae: "For truly I tell you, until heaven and earth disappear, not the smallest letter, not the least stroke of a pen, will by any means disappear from the Law until everything is accomplished". 'Imād-ud-dīn said:

> Christ speaks as God in this verse. He uses the word 'Amen' (the Truth), I tell you. No human can use this title. It is the Truth: God himself (Rev. 3:14). Pointing to its perfect fulfilment, he said heaven and earth, 'Is an example; they are more stable as compared to other things' (Ps. 119:89). The smallest letter is 'yod' in Hebrew… In the Hebrew Bible 'yod' is used 66,000 times. A least stroke of a pen: is a corner of a letter. Thus Christ says not one of them will be abolished unless all is fulfilled (1875: 74-75).

It amazed him how Christ thought that even the smallest points of Torah were extremely crucial. Keeping Christ's regard for the Torah in view 'Imād-ud-dīn wrote:

> None of God's commands is small and none of his commands is worth disobeying or ignoring. A man, who does not obey all commands, obeys nothing (James 2:10). If all the Torah stands then it endures, if a small part falls all falls. When a man builds a building, he may pull down the old one and build a new one; but God does not do this. He keeps putting one brick over another brick on one and the same foundation". (1875:75).

There was, for him, an essential and unbroken relationship between the Torah and the Gospel. He likened the Torah to a bud that blossoms into a flower: the Gospel. Again he likened the Torah to a foundation and a sketch of a building that is completed by the Gospel. Finally he likened the Torah to a seed. He said, "Seed of every tree dies in the soil only then a tree from that same seed is born. The old things [OT] was the seed from which this tree [NT] has come forth (see Ephesians. 2:15; Collossians 2:14; Romans 3:31). This is *Takmīl*, not *Tansīkh* – which is the *naskh* of the Muslims?" (1875:75).

'Imād-ud-dīn did, however, present Christ as the *nāsikh*, but not whose object of *tansīkh* was the Torah. He said, "The Lord Christ came to destroy [*naskh*] only the works of Satan and sin and not any good thing (Hebrews. 2:14). Christ honours what is good and does not reject it" (1875:74). Abrogating the 'works' of the devil rather than the 'words' of the devil is a new and very interesting concept. It resonates with Surah 22:52, Allāh abolishes what Satan throws into Muhammad's recitation but goes much further. He had in his mind 1 John 3:8, which says that the reason for Christ's coming was to abolish (*mansūkh*) the work of the devil. The Greek word λύω 'to destroy' also has the sense 'to annul'. Hebrews 2:14 referred to by 'Imād-du-dīn, actually speaks of Christ 'annulling, abolishing, or destroying' (καταργέω) not only the 'work' of the devil but also the Devil himself. Thus, Christ was *nāsikh* of the devil and his works, rather than the *nāsikh* of the previous prophets.

8. Assessment

It appears that the debate on the first point of the agenda did not go well for the missionaries. As compared to their opponents, they did not appear to be well prepared.

Their knowledge of the Muslim doctrine of *naskh* proved superficial[60]. They did not argue or bring counter arguments against their interlocutors from Islam's primary or secondary sources as their opponents did. Pfander was unable to back up his claims with evidence, and, Muslims ably refuted his proof texts from the Bible with evidence provided from the modern Western scholars. They also used the Bible to bring counter arguments and disarm them. Pfander and French seem confused about the unity of the Bible. Over against his written statements in the *Mīzān al-Ḥaqq*, Pfander took a different position at the debate and declared that *naskh* had taken place in the Torah. Thus he contradicted himself and destroyed the ground on which he had based his arguments against the abrogation of the OT by Christ (Matthew 1:17-18). Though Pfander insisted that the Word of God could not be abrogated, the lack of convincing arguments and his silence at crucial points suggested the contrary. The discussion was not brought to its logical conclusion and the crux of the whole debate was left untouched, i.e. whether the Qur'ān has abrogated the Bible. Raḥmatullāh was correct that the Qur'ān did not claim[61] that it has abrogated the Bible, but that would also go against Raḥmatullāh's argument of partial abrogation by the Qur'ān. Muslim scholars, however, have certainly asserted that the Bible has been abrogated. Ṣafdar Ali's analyses also provide an insider's knowledge. He wrote:

> Raḥmatullāh knew that the abrogation of the Bible could not be proved by any means. But instead of confessing that the doctrine of *naskh* was false and *Ijma'* (agreement) of Muslims was wrong, he wanted to favour and stand by the faith of his fathers and the religion of Muhammad. This is why he clearly denied that Muslims have such a doctrine that Torah and *Injīl* are abrogated by the Qur'ān … [Ṣafdar said] it is clearly written in the book of *Uṣūl-i-fiqh wa 'aqā'id* that by the agreement and *ijma'* of Muslims the reading and writing of the earlier books is *mansūkh*. Shāf'ī wrote clearly, all the previous commands are abrogated by the Qur'ān, whether their *nāsikh* is found or not [as insisted by Imām Abu Hanīfa]. And Shī'a too say that the Law of Muhammad is the *nāsikh* of all previous commands. Therefore Akhund wrote that the Law of Muhammad is the abrogater of all the laws. (Ali 1898:241-248).

This shows that the problem was not with Pfander's claim but Pfander's knowledge of his claim; he could not back it up with evidence.

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[60] Dieter Becht traces the reason for Pfander's superficial knowledge of *naskh* in his dependency on the apologetic of Hugo Grotius who himself did not have any good knowledge of the Muslim theories of *naskh* and *taḥrīf* (Becht 2018:75).

[61] 1866 version of English translation of *Mīzān al-Ḥaqq* does not mention 'Qur'ān and its interpreters,' but rather 'Muslim doctors'. It is possible that the Urdu version from which Raḥmatullāh read included the word 'Qur'ān' but could not be verified due to the non-availability of this Urdu version.

The discussion above raises a number of questions: does it make sense to claim that the Qur'ān abrogates the Bible? Does it make sense to claim that *mansūkh* would be in one book and *nāsikh* in another? *Mansūkh* addressed to one faith community, *nāsikh* to another? How would Jews and Christians have known that certain commands from the OT or NT have been abrogated? Luckily, Muslim *munāẓar* were not challenged with such questions. Raḥmatullāh took a unique position between no abrogation and total abrogation. Muslim debaters seemed well prepared and they used their manoeuvres quite effectively. They appeared to be in full control throughout the discussion and to a large extent achieved what they wanted. Raḥmatullāh's later statement, with some exaggeration, expresses a sorrowful performance by the missionaries:

> When in the debate, I publically proved his [Pfander's] mistake, then he could not do anything but to accept it and kept saying well, I made a mistake. And I also said that a few pages that you have written ought to be taken out of your book because they have nothing to do with the meaning of *naskh* agreed upon by the Muslims (n.d: 59).

The Pfander-French team was certainly distraught at the conclusion of the first point of the debate. They neither stood their own ground nor routed their opponents'.

'Imād-ud-dīn, on the other hand, clearly introduced new angles to the Agra *munāẓara*. His understanding of *naskh* stands in sharp contrast with Raḥmatullāh, which was based on Islam's primary sources.

In contrast to Raḥmatullāh who chose an *iṣṭilāḥī* understanding as developed by Muslim jurists, 'Imād-ud-dīn defined *naskh* on the basis of the Qur'ānic use of the term. It was a strategic move to bring the debate back to the Qur'ān, something Pfander and French failed to do. On the point of the nature and scope of the *naskh*, Pfander claimed that the Qur'an and Muslim scholars said that the Qur'ān had abrogated the Bible. Raḥmatullāh argued that *naskh* happened only in certain kinds of commands, and that the Qur'an had abrogated certain commands of the New Testament. 'Imād-ud-dīn, however, showed that the Islamic *naskh* was an intra-Qur'ānic phenomenon which had nothing to do with either the abrogation of commands, as claimed by Raḥmatullāh or as described by Pfander. The *naskh* was limited to the revealed verses of the Qur'ān, which were inspired by Satan, forgotten by Muhammad, and those which were not good and needed improvement. It would mean that the Qur'ānic concept of *naskh* could not be applied to the Bible at all.

For Raḥmatullāh, the origin of *naskh* was God's arbitrary power and changing needs of the Muslim society over the period of twenty-three years. 'Imād-ud-dīn argued that God could not be the author of *naskh,* and he showed that it was Muhammad who

devised this scheme of *naskh* to cover up and resolve contradictions in the Qur'ān, loss of the verses through the failing of his memory, and to make the Qur'ān acceptable. Raḥmatullāh's full force was spent to prove that *naskh* was not a uniquely Islamic doctrine and, to prove this, he selected examples from the Bible to show that *naskh* has taken place in it. 'Imād-ud-dīn argued that it was an Islamic novelty as no previous prophets ever claimed that his word was the *nāsikh* of previous prophets.

'Imād-ud-dīn also vigorously refuted Raḥmatullāh's assertion that both Christians and Muslims believed in *naskh* but used different terminologies. He showed that *tansīkh* and *takmīl* were not similar but different terms. He did allude to the Torah as the foundation, as understood by Pfander, but he expanded it, and introduced new analogies to elaborate on the unity and unbroken relation between the Old and New Testament. Both Pfander and French could not demonstrate the unity between the Old and the New Testament; therefore, they also failed to prove the OT's fulfilment in the NT.

Finally, Raḥmatullāh presented Christ as the one who abrogated certain commands of the Torah. 'Imād-ud-dīn rejected his claim and defended Jesus' position on the basis of Matthew 5:17-18. He also ingeniously introduced into this debate Christ's mission to abolish (*mansūkh*) the work and the person of Satan. As in the Qur'ānic background, it was Allāh who had the power to identify and abolish what the devil threw in the Prophets' mouth, 'Imād-ud-dīn appears here to be cleverly hinting at Christ's divinity.

'Imād-ud-dīn, however, did not engage with the other verses of the Qur'ān to defend against the Muslim accusation of *naskh* in the Bible or to refute their claim that *naskh* takes place in commands and prohibitions only. He did not even refer to the fact that there is not a single verse in the Qur'ān or a single hadith, which claims that the Qur'ān abrogates the Bible. He does not talk about the principles of *naskh* as developed by the *uṣūlīs*, neither does he use these principles to show that *'ijma'-i-ummat* on the abrogation of the Bible cannot be maintained based on those principles. He also does not show how Christ or the New Testament fulfilled the verses identified by Raḥmatullāh. He certainly rejected his interlocutors' arguments as mere proposals of the *'ulamā'*. Therefore, he appears to have aimed at cutting down the root rather than the branches or the fruits of the tree of *naskh*.

Despite strengths and weaknesses of 'Imād-ud-dīn's arguments, the significance of his contribution lies in this that he was the first Indian Christian to challenge Raḥmatullāh's arguments and conclusions on *naskh*. Even after losing out in the debate,

Pfander and French had not revisited the issue of *naskh*. He took the initiative back and reinitiated Christian-Muslim debates in India. 'Imād-ud-dīn's contribution would likely have strengthened Christian evangelism to Muslims and provided much needed arguments for their *munāẓarat* with Muslims.

Conclusion

This chapter addressed the question: what was 'Imād-ud-dīn's specific contribution to the Christian-Muslim *munāẓara* on *naskh*? It was argued that 'Imād-ud-dīn presented a different point of view vis-à-vis almost all the points discussed by Raḥmatullāh. While Raḥmatullāh took the debate on *naskh* away from the Qur'ān by choosing technical and *uṣūlī* use of *naskh,* 'Imād-ud-dīn brought the debate back to the Qur'ān. While Raḥmatullāh restricted the abrogated verses to commands only, 'Imād-ud-dīn showed that according to the Qur'ān, the abrogated verses have nothing to do with commands and were also restricted to those verses that were either inspired by Satan, were not good, or the ones forgotten by Muhammad. Raḥmatullāh believed that the origin of *naskh* lay in the wisdom of Allāh. 'Imād-ud-dīn believed it was Muhammad's scheme to overcome the loss and contradictions of the verses of the Qur'ān, and to make his Qur'ān acceptable vis-à-vis the Bible. Raḥmatullāh argued that *naskh* was not unique to Islam and that it had taken place in the Bible. 'Imād-ud-dīn argued that none of the true prophets ever taught *naskh;* therefore it was an Islamic novelty. He also argued that Raḥmatullāh was wrong to equate *takmīl* and *tansīkh*. In the Bible *takmīl* happens but not *tansīkh*. His arguments for *takmīl* were new – a marked advance on Pfander's original argument that the New Testament was the fulfilment of the Old Testament. Raḥmatullāh had argued that Christ abrogated the Old Testament commands but 'Imād-ud-dīn showed that Christ did not abrogate the Old Testament commands; rather he came to abrogate the work and person of Satan.

All these aspects of 'Imād-ud-dīn's discussion on the issue of *naskh* show that he has something new to offer to our understanding the issue of *naskh*, which in turn, helped the debate on *naskh* move forward at a much wider and deeper level than was witnessed at the Agra *munāẓara* or in the books of Raḥmatullāh and Pfander.

'Imād-ud-dīn's contribution to the second point of the debate, *taḥrīf* will be discussed in the next chapter.

Chapter Four: The Islamic *Taḥrīf* (corruption) of the Bible

Introduction

In this chapter, the following questions are addressed: how did ʿImād-ud-dīn respond to this central point of debate, and to what extent and in what ways did he make a contribution to the discussion on *taḥrīf*, and to what extent was he able to advance the Agra debate? These questions will be addressed by analysing how ʿImād-ud-dīn, in contradistinction to Pfander and French, responded to the charges of *taḥrīf*. The main lines of the argument will be that: (i) Raḥmatullāh and Wazīr Khān's claim of *taḥrīf* contradicted the Qurʾān and its early commentators; (ii) their premises, by and large, were irrelevant to the issue of *taḥrīf*; (iii) the Qurʾān has suffered more and certain corruption as compared to the Bible. An attempt will be made to locate the issue of the corruption of the Bible in the wider context of the debate on the integrity, authenticity, and authority of the Bible in the nineteenth-century.

1. *Taḥrīf* in the Muslim-Christian Munāẓara

When Pfander challenged the Muslim charge of *taḥrīf* in the Bible in the 1830s, this issue had already been debated for about thirteen centuries. Having originated in Muhammad's polemic against the Jews and Christians who rejected his claim to prophethood (Buhl 1934:618; Maimonides, cited in Roth 1987:7; Accad 2001:8, 223); it was later developed by Muslim apologists, especially by Ibn Hazm (AD 994–1064) and Ibn Taymiyya (1263 – 1328;) (Accad 2003:73; Shamoun 2013:2).

Taḥrīf had been one of the main issues since the sixteenth century debates between Jesuit missionaries and *ʿulamāʾ* connected with the Mughal courts. The heading of section eight of Jerome Xavier's *Āʿīnah-i-Ḥaqq Numā* (The Truth Showing Mirror, 1609) reads: "Showing that the Gospels and other sacred books in the hands of Christians, are same with those first written by the inspiration of God, and they have undergone neither change (*taghayur*) nor corruption (*taḥrīf*)" (Lee 1824:xviii).

In India a fresh debate on *taḥrīf* began with Pfander's arrival in Agra and the distribution of his *Mīzān al-Ḥaqq*. *Mīzān al-Ḥaqq* soon came under attack from Āl-i-Ḥasan, and especially, Raḥmatullāh and Wazīr Khān, which culminated in the Agra debate. After the Agra *munāẓara* the Muslim charge of *taḥrīf* in the Bible, in

Shamoun's words, "took a kind of quantum leap" (Shamoun 2013:2), and spread all over the world. Accad correctly observes, "If you are a Muslim living in the twenty-first century, you take for granted that the scriptures of the Jews and Christians have been corrupted" (Accad 2003:67). Abdullah Saeed notes, "Muslims 'generally assume' and 'usually accuse' Christians and Jews of corrupting their scriptures … this charge has been, "a significant point of tensions between Muslims … the Jews and Christians" (Saeed 2002:419). At the Agra debate of 1854 Muslims and Christians came head on to resolve this tension, which Raḥmatullāh and Wazīr Khān claimed to have successfully done by defeating Pfander and French. Their claim was however, challenged by 'Imād-ud-dīn. But before turning to 'Imād-ud-dīn, it is important to present Pfander and Raḥmatullāh's arguments for and against *taḥrīf* in the Bible.

2. Pfander's refutation of the Muslim charge of *Taḥrīf*

At the Great *munāẕara*, Pfander was challenged to defend the integrity and authenticity of the Bible as he had claimed in *Mīzan al-Ḥaqq*. In the third chapter of *Mīzan al-Ḥaqq*, Pfander claimed that the Bible had never been corrupted or changed. To understand the full force of Pfander's arguments it is important to look not only at what he said at the debate but also what he wrote, because, he was in reality, challenged to defend his *Mīzan al-Ḥaqq*.

Just like the issue of *naskh*, Pfander began by noting that:

The Mohammedan doctors argue, that as the Jews and Christians have corrupted and changed their sacred writings, – erasing those passages, which referred to the prophetic office of Mohammad, and inserting other matters, – the books, which are now in their hands, are neither genuine nor entitled of any respect. It will now be necessary to examine this statement (1866:11)[62].

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[62] There is a marked difference between the 1866 and 1910 editions of *Mīzān al-Ḥaqq*. The title of chapter three in the 1866 edition reads: "The Assertion of Mohammedans, that the writings of the Old and New Testament have been corrupted and changed, refuted". But title of 1910, last published in 1986 reads, "The Old Testament and the New Testament which are now in circulation are those which existed in the hands of Jews and Christians in Muhammad's time, and to which the Qur'an bears witness". In the same way there is a noticeable change in the opening statement quoted above. It reads, "In this and the next chapter our object is to consider the question whether the Old Testament, now in circulation among Jews and Christians, and those of the New Testament, now in the hands of Christians, are those which existed in Muhammad's time, and, if so, whether they have in any degree become corrupted or change" (1986:77). It appears that W. St. Clair Tisdall, who thoroughly revised and enlarged *Mīzān al-Ḥaqq,* had fully realized the problems of Pfander's bold assertions and tried to soften the tone as well as turned his assertions into questions. To access Pfander's unadulterated thoughts, I will use the 1866 edition.

Pfander's arguments against Muslim assertions of *taḥrīf* in the Bible are summarized below. The purpose of this section to provide a background for the debate on *taḥrīf* at the Agra 1854 as well as to set the stage to show, later, to what extent 'Imād-ud-dīn's argument in defence of integrity of the Bible was similar or different from Pfander, and to what extent he was able to advance the debate of *taḥrīf?*

i). When Muslims are asked, "at what period, by whom, and in what manner this tempering with the text was effected; and which are the corrupted passages;" they are unable to give any answer they repeat the mere assertion. On the other hand Christians are able to prove that the Qur'an is not in its original form, and has been corrupted and changed. He followed this up with proofs from the *Mishkāt al-miṣābih* (1866:11).

ii). The Qur'ān advised Muhammad to consult with those who had scriptures before him. From this, it is clear that up to the time of Muhammad the holy books of the Jews and Christians had not been corrupted. For otherwise how could God have commanded Muhammad to consult the Bible? Because it is impossible that God would have directed any one to consult falsified scriptures.

iii). There was no reason for Jews and Christians to alter their books after Muhammad proclaimed himself to be a prophet. They could not get any benefit from it. On the contrary Jews and Christians were warned of God's wrath if they would do so (Deuteronomy. 4:2; 12:32; Revelation 22:18). Jews and Christians have suffered much under Muslims. By accepting Muhammad they would have received much benefit. It was practically impossible, as the Christian religion has spread all over the world.

iv). The enmity between Jews and Christians would have made corruption of the Old Testament impossible.

v). Enmity between Christian sects would have made it impossible.

vi). In the presence of the ancient MSS there is no ground for the charge of falsification.

vii). Numerous writings of bishops and teachers who immediately followed the apostles of Christ afford a clear proof in support of our position. Among the books of those fathers he mentions Justin Martyr who would be later referred to by Pfander's protagonists as a witness to corruption in the OT. Numerous scriptural passages are found in those books. When they are compared with the OT and NT, no discrepancies are found.

viii). During the time of Caliph 'Umar the great libraries of Alexandria and Caesarea came under Muslim control. Muslims could have preserved the manuscripts and proved the corruption whenever they wanted.

ix). In the first three centuries many Christians were martyred for their faith and scriptures. How could such sincere Christians corrupt their scriptures?

x). The accusation that Jews destroyed all the passages referring to Muhammad before his time is false. Jews did not remove clear passages referring to Christ, even though they are said to be the enemies of Christianity. How could they do it because of their enmity to Muslims?

xi). Neither Christ nor his Apostles anywhere accused the Jews of falsifying the OT.

His conclusion based on these arguments was that Muslims' assertion that the Bible has been corrupted was false. Neither before the time of Muhammad nor after him, the books of the Old and New Testament had ever been changed or altered.

Pfander's arguments appear strong and convincing. He claimed that his interlocutors had failed to answer when, why, where, by whom, and in what manner the text of the Bible was corrupted. He quickly moved to show from Islam's trusted authorities that the Qur'ān had suffered much corruption. Pfander's argument that Allāh commanded Muhammad to consult the People of the Book and the Bible would have impressed common Muslims. This argument, however, could have cut both ways. Was Pfander prepared to concede the genuineness of Muhammad's inspiration and thus accept him as a true prophet? Pfander's preaching and books certainly alarmed Muslim leaders. 'Imād-ud-dīn who himself was present in Agra at that time and was participating in the meetings of the Muslim *'ulamā'* consulting how to bridle Pfander noted that:

> The whole Christian-Muslim debate began with the spreading of Pfander's preaching in Agra that the religion of Muhammad was not from God, and God did not at all sened Muhammad. Then *'ulamā'* became very anxious that now Islam would disappear, because in *Mizān al-Ḥaqq*, Pfander very well exposed the baselessness of Islam (1899:4).

This anxiety among the *'ulamā'* forced them to challenge Pfander and expose his weaknesses in public to save Muslims from being influenced by him. How then did Raḥmatullāh and his colleagues encounter Pfander?

3. Raḥmatullāh's effort at countering Pfander

Challenging Pfander on *naskh* in the Bible was to create equality between the two scriptures, i.e. *naskh* was present in both the Bible and the Qur'ān, and therefore, the Bible was not superior. What was Raḥmatullāh's purpose in challenging Pfander on the issue of *taḥrīf*? A closer look at his writings, reveals that his purpose was to destroy the Bible, and with it all essential doctrines of Christianity, and thus establish the superiority of Islam: the true purpose of the *munāẓara*.

Raḥmatullāh knew that his doctrine of partial abrogation of the Bible by the Qur'ān could not do much good to Islam. If the Qur'ān and Islam were to survive against the vociferous attack of Pfander, then, the Bible had to be destroyed ('Imād-ud-dīn 1899, Powell 1993:248). There was only one way to do it – to prove that the Bible had been so utterly corrupted, that the original word of God was hopelessly lost; and all doctrines of Christianity were based on the corrupted text – thus false and unacceptable. Powell and Schirrmacher (1997:1) have correctly identified that *taḥrīf* was the central point of the debate. According to Powell Muslims had realized before the debate that "in the charge of textual corruption lay the key to the 'taking of the fortress' of missionary claims" (1993:248).

4. *Taḥrīf* at the Agra Debate

Raḥmatullāh had concluded well before the debate that Muslim-Christian battle had to be fought and won in the field of scriptures. He wrote in the introduction of his book, *I'jāz-i-'Īsawī*[63]:

> Those *masā'il* (problems/issues of debate) about which Muslims and Christians differ and about which debate and argument is going on, one important problem among those is the issue of *taḥrīf*, and the reality also is this that all other *masā'il* are only its *furu'* (outer husk or branches). Therefore this seemed appropriate to write a permanent book about this so that the truth of the claims of the Muslims may become clear (Raḥmatullāh 1983:15).

Raḥmatullāh had argued that "the relation between the Bible and the other doctrines of Christianity was that of *uṣūl-o-furu'* (root and branches, causes and effects)" (Raḥmatullāh 1983:15). Powell argues that it was a collective conclusion of the Muslim *'ulamā'* led by Raḥmatullāh that, "a critique of the reliability of the Christian Scriptures, on which depended, they felt, most of the other areas of disagreement between them,

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[63] The new and revised edition of *I'jāz-i-'Īsawī* was published by Adārā Islāmiyāt, Karachi-Lahore, Pakistan in 1983. 'Imād-ud-dīn appeared to challenge the authorship of *I'jāz-i-'Īsawī*.

would silence the missionaries once and for all" (Powell 2013:n.p). Raḥmatullāh had identified the root, and by proving that the Bible had been corrupted he wanted to cut the very root of Christianity. Luckily, for him, Wazīr Khān had borrowed a newly forged 'axe' which was named by Wherry as, 'European infidelity". Wherry reflecting on the Agra debate wrote:

> The Muslims were obliged to abandon their own works and endeavoured to save the day by a counter assault, in which they scrupled not to use the stock arguments of European infidelity in their effort to overthrow the authority of the Christian scriptures" (Wherry 1905:2).

This new 'axe' was biblical criticism. Bennett recounts that Pfander's opponents used European biblical criticism "to impugn the integrity and historicity of Christian Scriptures" (Bennett 1996:76). From the Muslims' perspective, the issue of *taḥrīf* was the most important and the central point of the debate at Agra. Raḥmatullāh had identified the root. He had an 'axe' in his hand. Would he succeed in cutting the root? The following section seeks to address this question.

5. Raḥmatullāh and Wazīr Khān's arguments for *taḥrīf* in the Bible

Raḥmatullāh and Wazīr Khān's plan to win the *munāẓara* was not entirely dependent on providing evidence from the nineteenth-century Euoropean works on biblical criticism, as argued by Powell, Schirrmacher, and Bennett, but also on some other clever moves they made. One of the key moves to win the *munāẓara* was to redefine the very term '*taḥrīf*' in a way which would allow them to show the example of *taḥrīf* in the Bible.

5.1 Broadening the definition

As Raḥmatullāh began to argue for *taḥrīf*, reportedly, there was no agreement between him and Pfander as to what *taḥrīf* meant: *taḥrīf-i-lafzī* or *taḥrīf-i-maʿnawī?* Raḥmatullāh had defined *taḥrīf* in the broadest possible way. Yet during the discussion the use of this technical term "*taḥrīf*" remained unsettled. It was towards the end of the debate that Muftī Riyaz al-Dīn, one of the two judges, asked Raḥmatullāh to define *taḥrīf*.

Raḥmatullāh described it in these words, "*Taḥrīf* is that *taghaiyur*[64] (alteration) which is excess, whether damage or change of certain words, whether this change is intentional, due to dishonesty, mischief; or due to the overwhelming of conjecture or for the reason of correction" (Ṣābrī 2008:303). *In I'jāz-i-ʿĪsawī* he had made a specific claim of *taḥrīf-i-lafzī* and wrote, there were three kinds of *taḥrīf-i-lafzī*, i.e., to replace one word with another word; to add a word in the text and; to strike a word from the text. So he claimed that all these kinds of *taḥrīf* have taken place, whether it was intentional or unintentional, scribal or editorial mistakes. He wrote, "In our claim '*taḥrīf'* is '*āmm'* (non-specific, common) whether it is intentional or unintentional" (Raḥmatullāh 1983:16). By giving this broad definition, especially including 'scribal,' and 'unintentional' mistakes, from the outset, Raḥmatullāh created a wide range of possibilities to prove his claim. Providing such examples from European biblical critical works would not be difficult at all.

5.2 Argument for the corruption of the Old Testament

Just as Pfander in *Mīzan al-Ḥaqq* had tried to prove *taḥrīf* in the Qur'ān from the early Muslim writers, Raḥmatullāh also brought proofs of corruption of the OT from the respected Church Fathers and nineteenth-century European Christian scholars. Clark and Wherry's impression that Raḥmatullāh culled proofs only from the 'European infidelity,' is misleading (Powell 1993:249). Raḥmatullāh and Wazīr Khān based their arguments on the well-respected "Church Fathers" but also presented the findings of the liberal and critical scholars who have quoted the Church Fathers. For example, they quoted Justin Martyr (AD 100-165) who accused the Jews of distorting their Scriptures and removing certain prophecies about Christ from the Bible. This charge by Justin was also found in the writings of Eusebius and Augustine. The *'ulamā'* discovered these important statements in the commentaries of Watson, Horne and Scott. They took these statements as the admission of *taḥrīf* by the Church fathers.

At the *munāẓara* they asked Pfander; "Whether he considered Justin's claim true or false. (They said) if Justin is true then our claim is correct and if he is false then it is a sad thing that such great and powerful Christian leaders were such liars" (Ṣābrī

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[64] *Taghaiyur* is an important word with variety of meanings, i.e., becoming altered or changed, alteration, deterioration, removal, becoming vitiated or corrupt, falsification (of a document). See Platts's Dictionary of Urdu, Classical Hindi and English.

2008:296). Pfander was faced with a conundrum but his absolute confidence in the integrity of the Bible allowed him to say that, "Justin was also a man and he made a mistake". Raḥmatullāh argued for the truthfulness of Justin and said, "He did not make a mistake; all (*jumhūr*)[65] ancient scholars agree with him" (Ṣābrī 2008:296). Pfander objected that those writers were being quoted out of context, as in his estimation they all believed in the overall integrity of the Bible (Powell 1993:249). Powell concludes that, "The weight of Wazīr Khān's numerous examples soon forced Pfander to modify his initial categorical denial into an admission that a few mistakes had actually been made of a kind more significant than mere copyists' errors" (Powell 1976:56). Then Muslims proceeded to argue for the corruption of the NT.

5.3 Argument for the corruption of the New Testament

Raḥmatullāh and Wazīr began to argue for *taḥrīf* in the NT from what was seemingly wrong with the text. They approached the issue with their Islamic understanding of the descent of *waḥī* and the assumption that the inspired text cannot have any kind of mistakes in it. Their attack was based on the genealogy of Christ in Matthew 1. They quoted Matthew 1:17 "Thus there were fourteen generations in all from Abraham to David, fourteen from David to the exile to Babylon, and fourteen from the exile to the Christ". Wazīr Khān asked Pfander to tell "which were the fourteen names in the second group"? Reportedly, Pfander replied it was not his job and challenged Wazīr "to tell if the text were not the same in all manuscripts". Wazīr replied, "It is in the present manuscripts but God knows whether it was so in the previous manuscripts or not; but there is no doubt about it that it is wrong". Pfander said, "To be wrong is one thing and *taḥrīf* is another". To this, Wazīr replied: "If the complete *Injīl* is inspired and there is no possibility of mistake in the inspiration, then in this aspect, no doubt it is corrupted. If it is not inspired then, in this case, the second purpose will be achieved" (Ṣābrī 2008:298).

   In Wazīr Khān's view the loss of one name in the second set of the genealogy of Christ put a question mark both on the inspiration and integrity of the New Testament. Next came the proof for the interpolation in the NT. Wazīr presented 1 John 5:7 as the

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[65] *Jumhūr* (fr. *jumhr*) means to collect together and refers to a great number of people, a collective body (of men); the populace, a community and all (See Platts' *Dictionary of Urdu, Classical Hindi and English*. 2003. Lahore: Sang-i-Meel). Urdu writers to appeal to the reasonableness and truthfulness of their claims being accepted or corroborated by the majority in general frequently use this word.

proof of interpolation, which he argued was not present in the original manuscripts. Pfander accepted this and said, "In this place and couple of other places *taḥrīf* has taken place" (Powell 1976:56-7).

6. Pfander and French's response to the charges of *taḥrīf*

Pfander's earlier robust defence of the integrity of the Bible in *Mīzān al-Ḥaqq* came under severe criticism at the *munāẓara*. To what extent was he able to maintain his earlier position? To the first argument based on Justin Martyr's charge of *taḥrīf* against the Jews, Pfander provided no explanation as to why he might have accused the Jews. Pfander replied, "Justin was only a man and he made a mistake". Against the evidence presented by Muslims from the western scholars, Pfander presented the testimony of Christ for the authenticity and integrity of the OT. He considered Christ's testimony more reasonable and authoritative:

> If you believed Moses, you would believe me, for he wrote about me (John 5:46); And beginning with Moses and all the prophets, he explained to them what was said in all the Scriptures concerning him (Luke 24:27) and, He said to him, 'if they do not listen to Moses and the prophets, they will not be convinced even if some rises from the dead (Luke 16:31)[66].

It appears from the discussion that Pfander's entire defence of the OT was based on the authority of Christ. Pfander's reply to the objection raised against the genealogy of Christ and the demand by his opponents to tell "which were the fourteen names in the second group" was basically that it has nothing to do with *taḥrīf* (Ṣābrī 2008:298). He raised the counter question whether it was not present in all the manuscripts. His interlocutors could not deny it but stressed that it was a mistake. Pfander seems to acknowledge the mistake but said, "mistake" is one thing and "*taḥrīf*" is another (Ṣābrī 2008:298). This did not make sense to Muslims as for them inspiration had to be free from errors. Wazīr continued to press the point with "either/or" logic, trying to cast doubts on the inspiration of the Gospel (Powell 1976:56; Ṣābrī 2008:298).

On the issue of interpolation, according to the sources, Pfander not only accepted 1 John 5:7 but also acknowledged a few more places where interpolation had taken

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[66] Ṣābrī quoted these verses in his book (2008:297). He quoted the text correctly but gave wrong references for the first and third verses, i.e., John 6:46 instead of 5:46 and Luke 17: 301 instead of Luke 16:31. I have used the NIV translation here.

place (Powell 1976:56-7; Ṣābrī 2008:298). Wazīr wanted to secure the admission and asked if we should admit that at seven or eight places in the Bible *taḥrīf* had taken place? The Muslim audience began to urge Khādim ʿAlī, the editor of the Newspaper *Maṭbaʾ al-Akhbār* to publish that Pādrī (pastor) has admitted *taḥrīf* at eight places (Powell 2013:251; Ṣābrī 2008:298). Pfander said it was necessary for that much *taḥrīf* to take place but no damage had been done to the holy books. The essential doctrines of Christianity, like the Holy Trinity, divinity of Christ, atonement and intercession remained unaffected (Powell 1976:56). As there was no agreement, Pfander appealed to two judges Mufti Riyāz al-Dīn and Mosley Smith to adjudicate. The Mufti said, "That a *wathīqa* (deed) in which a corruption is proved at one place does not remain reliable, let alone the seven eight/places" (Ṣābrī 2008:298). On the other hand, English judge Mosley Smith chose not to give his opinion (Powell 1993:525).

French rejected Raḥmatullāh's claim that the Pope corrupted the Bible and Pfander reminded him what ʿUthmān did to the Qurʾān; but Raḥmatullāh did not allow him to discuss the Qurʾān at this point. French read his written reply and accepted that there were problems in the text but those were not significant. Pfander also argued for the originality and integrity of the Bible from the Qurʾān. To prove his point he quoted from Surahs 29:46; 5:5; 2:44; 98:1-4 and argued that the Bible existed in the time of Muhammad and that he acknowledged its integrity and authority. Raḥmatullāh rejected his argument and replied:

> From these verses only this much is proved that the word of God descended (*nāzil huwa*) in the past and (we) should believe in it. The Torah and the *Injīl* are the books that descended previously and were present in the time of Muhammad; though they were *muḥarruf* (corrupted). It is not proved from these verses at all (that the Bible was not corrupted); rather Qurʾān mentions *taḥrīf* by *Ahl-i-kitāb* (people of the book) at many places. He then quoted an ḥadīth, "Neither testify nor falsify the people of the Book" (Ṣābrī 2008:300).

Pfander's final defence of the Scriptures was a challenge to the Muslims to produce the copy of the uncorrupted Bible against which the allegedly corrupted passages can be compared. He continued to insist that unless *ʿulamāʾ* do this, they must accept that the spiritual doctrines of Christianity are unaffected. Pfander refused to discuss any further unless his interlocutors accepted his argument. The Muslim debaters refused to accept his position and the debate ended at this point (Powell 2013:255).

7. 'Imād-ud-dīn's response to the issue of *taḥrīf*

The immediate effect of the *munāẓara* was considered detrimental to the missionary cause, and thereafter, French and Muir avoided public controversy (Powell 1993:261). The charge of *taḥrīf-i-lafzī* took a quantum leap (Shamoun 2013:2) and became the central point in Christian-Muslim debates (Daly 1992:235). Raḥmatullāh's *I'jāz-i-'Īsawī*, almost unknown until the debate, became the handbook for the Muslim debaters. It remained unchallenged until the conversion of 'Imād-ud-dīn (Proceedings 1866-68:91). 'Imād-ud-dīn's response to the Islamic charge of *taḥrīf* was not limited to the arguments presented at the Agra debate but also included the refutation of the objections raised in *I'jāz-i-'Īsawī*. According to 'Imād-ud-dīn: "The greatest book they have to prove this claim (*taḥrīf*) is *I'jāz-i-Īsawī*, which deceptively faults God's holy books. Therefore, by asking the help of God I turn to this book and search within it for the proofs of *taḥrīf-i-lafzī 'amdī*" ('Imād-ud-dīn 1899:12-28). He responded to this issue throughout his life but initially in *Taḥqīq al-Īmān* (1866-1892[67]), and more fully in *Hadāyat al-Muslimīn* (1868-1899).

The remainder of this chapter will explore 'Imād-ud-dīn's specific contribution to the Christian-Muslim *munāẓara* on *taḥrīf*.

7.1 Delimiting the definition of *taḥrīf*

Similar to his approach to the issue of *naskh*, 'Imād-ud-dīn brought the debate on *taḥrīf* back to the Qur'ān, hadith, and *mutaqaddimīn 'ulamā'* and demonstrated that Raḥmatullāh's approach contradicted Islam's most authoritative sources. 'Imād-ud-dīn argued that in the Qur'ān *taḥrīf* has a specific meaning; i.e., *taḥrīf-i-ma'nawī* (alteration in the meaning), and a specific attitude, namely, deliberate or intentional alteration. He wrote:

> Although the accusation of *taḥrīf* in the holy books exists in the Qur'ān but Muhammad and Muslims of the past, did not at all, blame people of the book of *taḥrīf-i-lafzī 'amdī* but *taḥrīf-i-ma'nawī*. But now the Muslims of India put the fault of *taḥrīf-i-lafzī* and *'amdī* (deliberate) on the holy Bible ('Imād-ud-dīn 1899:2).

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[67] I have two editions of this book. The third edition was published in 1878 and has 129 pages, while the fourth edition contains 131. E.M. Wherry reviewed this book and noted that it consists of 140 pages. It might be a typographical mistake.

'Imād-ud-dīn emphasized that Raḥmatullāh's claim of *taḥrīf-i-lafzī* '*amdī* was a novelty, which not only contradicted the Qur'ān but also the earliest Muslim *'ulamā'*. He wrote:

> Since ancient Muslim scholars had not even heard such a claim from the Qur'ān, neither did they make such a claim. Therefore, there are no arguments for the proofs of such *taḥrīf* (*taḥrīf-i-lafzī* '*amdī*) in their books[68]. But now when *Mawlwīs* saw that the whole house (of Islam) was falling, they started writing novel things for the proof of *taḥrīf* ('Imād-ud-dīn 1899:3).

'Imād-ud-dīn was an insider and knew that Raḥmatullāh's innovations were necessitated by the fear of the falling of the house of Islam under the missionary onslaught. He was motivated by the spirit of *munāẕara* to win even if he had to contradict the Qur'ān. 'Imād-ud-dīn stressed that:

> Muhammad had taught this pretext of *taḥrīf* to Muslims from the very beginning. Even then we do not put more blame on Muhammad in this regard because in his text (the Qur'ān) this claim is not made in the way we are now hearing from Muslims. Muhammad's declaration is that Jews and Christians, in telling the meanings, deliberately changed the meanings, i.e., the real meanings are something else and they say something else; namely, *taḥrīf-i-ma'nawī* takes place; not that they changed the text of the word of God. The expositors of the Qur'ān are also witnesses to it that Muhammad's intention was exactly this (1899:26-27).

'Imād-ud-dīn a former friend of the Indian *mawlwīs* knew why they had to make an extra-Qur'ānic claim. In his view *taḥrīf-i-ma'nawī* compels Muslims to accept the integrity of the word of God, and:

> If they do this, they will lose both Muhammad and the Qur'ān. This is why they contended that *taḥrīf-i-lafzī* has taken place even when they cannot prove their claim of textual corruption from Muhammad's statement (the Qur'ān) because in the Qur'ān *taḥrīf-i-ma'nawī* is mentioned, which is not dangerous for Christians. Therefore it should be said that these are Muslims (not Muhammad or the Qur'ān) who say that *taḥrīf-i-lafzī* has taken place in the word of God (1899: 27).

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[68] Raḥmatullāh quoted no ancient Muslim authorities to back up his claim of *taḥrīf-i-lafzī*. Ryan Schaffner (2016), in his PhD thesis, *The Bible through a Qur'ānic Filter: Scripture Falsification (Taḥrīf) in 8th_ and 9th_century Muslim Disputational Literature"* has challenged previously held opinions that Ibn Hazm was the first Muslim who accused Christians of *taḥrīf-i-lafzī*. He contends that Muslims were advancing the charge of textual corruption as early as the 8th century.

'Imād-ud-dīn claimed that Muslims contradicted the Qur'ān when they claimed "*taḥrīf*" included both *lafẓī* and *ma'nawī*. He also argued that by including *sahw-i-kātib*[69] (unintentional scribal mistakes) in the notion of *taḥrīf* Muslims had again gone against the clear teachings of the Qur'ān. He was astonished that Raḥmatullāh claimed "*taḥrīf*" included both '*amdī* and *sahwī taḥrīf* (Raḥmatullāh 1983). 'Imād-ud-dīn insisted that *taḥrīf-i-sahwī* is excluded from the Qur'ān's accusation of *taḥrīf*. He wrote, "*magar Qur'ān mein 'amdan kī qaid hai*" (but in the Qur'ān condition/restriction is that of deliberate/intentional), namely, *wahum ya'ālamoona*[70]. To 'Imād-ud-dīn, "it was irreligion or faithlessness of Muslims that they include *sahw-i-kātib* in the clear condition of intentionality: [because] *sahw-i-kātib* is found in all old books" ('Imād-ud-dīn 1899:27).

'Imād-ud-dīn asserted that, "Muhammad blamed the Jews for *taḥrīf-i-ma'nanwī* which even if it were correct could not prove falsification in text of the Bible. Rather it puts blame on those interpreters who gave wrong meanings to Muhammad" ('Imād-ud-dīn 1899:27). To him, Raḥmatullāh, "cleverly added; "*ba-ghair qaṣad*" (without intention) to *taḥrīf-i-lafẓī* so that he may present words of *sahw-i-kātib* as proof of his claim; but this is against the claim of the Qur'ān" ('Imād-ud-dīn 1899:27).

To prove his point he quoted Surah 2:75 and two well-respected Muslim authorities Mawlwī Abdul Qādar's translation of this verse and commentary from the *Jalālayn*[71]. Abdul Qādar's translation reads "and they altered it due to a reason and they knew it". *Jalālayn's* comment is this: "They knew that it is a lie that we speak" ('Imād-ud-dīn 1899:30). The key point 'Imād-ud-dīn was making is that those who were twisting the meaning of the text were doing so 'intentionally' – they 'knew' it. 'Imād-ud-dīn asked, "From where has Raḥmatullāh put the condition of *ba-ghair qaṣad*?" 'Imād-ud-dīn insisted that, Muhammad's accusation was about *taḥrīf-i-ma'nawī 'amdī*

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[69] The term *sahw-i-kātib* refers to mistakes made by the scribes due to oversight, is used frequently by the apologetic writings in Urdu. Therefore, *taḥrīf-i-sahwī* means alteration of the original text due to the oversight of the copyists.

[70] These words come from Surah 2:75 and mean "they know". The literal translation of the complete verse reads: Do you covet that they believe you, and (there) had been a group/party from them (that) was hearing God's speech/conversation (words), then they alter/distort/change it from after what they understood/comprehended it, and they know. Yusuf Ali translated this verse in these words: Can ye (O ye men of Faith) entertain the hope that they will believe in you? Seeing that a party of them heard the word of Allāh, and perverted it knowingly after they understood it.

[71]*Tafsīr al-Jalālayn* is one of the most significant *tafāsīr* (commentaries on the Qur'ān) for the study of the Qur'ān. Composed by the two "Jalāls" – Jalāl al-Dīn al-Mahalli (d. 864 AH/ 1459 AD) and his pupil Jalāl al-Dīn al-Suyūtī (d. 911 AH / 1505 AD).

(intentional corruption of the meaning) and not *taḥrīf-i-lafzī ghair 'amdī* (not unintentional corruption of the words) ('Imād-ud-dīn 1899:30).

Thus 'Imād-ud-dīn tried to delimit a very loose and broad definition of *taḥrīf,* given by Raḥmatullāh to a very specific and Qur'ān based definition; i.e., *taḥrīf-i-'amdī* and that *taḥrīf-i-'amdī* was also limited to the *taḥrīf-i-'amdī ma'nawī*. Therefore, it excluded *taḥrīf-i-lafzī* and *taḥrīf-i-sahwī* and should not be applied to the Bible.

7.2 *Taḥrīf* in the Old Testament

As far as the Old Testament was concerned, 'Imād-ud-dīn upheld Pfander's argument that Christ's testimony for the integrity and authenticity of the Old Testament was final and superior to any one else's. He wrote:

> As far as the Torah is concerned, apart from other arguments, this argument that Christ testified to it and he took it in his hands and read it but did not say that it was *muḥarraf* (corrupted), is enough and convincing for us. He also said that not even a single dot would be removed unless everything is fulfilled. Now if someone says that *taḥrīf* was done after Jesus then this claim is not worthy of hearing. Because before Christ only Jews were the defenders of the OT, after Jesus two groups became the defenders of this book, i.e., Jews and Christians who are opponents of one another. Now if Jews did this Christians would make noise and if Christians did it then Jews would shout. Although, both these groups consider it impossible [to alter the word of God] ('Imād-ud-dīn 1892:9).

As discussed in section 5.2, Pfander rejected Justin's accusation that the Jews removed certain prophesies from the Torah concerning Christ. For him Justin was a man who made a mistake. 'Imād-ud-dīn also failed to refute their argument convincingly. However, he offered some additional arguments which involved: (i) the unity of otherwise hostile Jews and Christians: 'Imād-ud-dīn argued that after Christ's ascension, Christians also became guardians of the Old Testament and the corruption in the Bible thus became doubly impossible. He argued that, "Acceptance of these books (OT) without any disagreement by both Jews and Christians was witness to the trustworthiness of these books" ('Imād-ud-dīn 1899:34). (ii) *Tawātur* (succession or continuity): he argued that other books, which were contemporary of the biblical books, have been lost. But because they were considered inspired books these came down from the ancients from hand to hand and were included in the collection of the word of God in the time of Ezra. Therefore, by Ezra's testimony too, they are trustworthy ('Imād-ud-dīn 1899:35). (iii) The differences of opinion, which Muslims present, are based on

certain sentences of the books of these later scholars and not on those that were from the time of the Bible. Therefore, while dissenters are among the modern scholars and the source of differences is not trustworthy, and is also against the agreement of all (*jumhūr ke ittifāq ke khalāf hai*); it is not worth paying attention to. He concluded that the trustworthy saying in this regard is that which is *"muttafiq 'alaih"* (unanimous, agreed upon) according to the opinion of the ancient scholars ('Imād-ud-dīn 1899:35). While Raḥmatullāh asserted that *jumhūr* testified to the corruption of the Bible, 'Imād-ud-dīn contended that *jumhūr* testified to the authenticity of the Bible.

7.3 *Taḥrīf* in the New Testament

Muslims identified several problems in the NT, which in their view were examples of *taḥrīf*. These will be outlined below.

7.3.1 The issue of genealogy

Muslims claimed that *taḥrīf* had also occurred in the NT and the first proof of it was a mistake in the genealogy of Christ. The objection was based on Matthew 1:17, which divided Christ's genealogy into three sets of fourteen names, but there were thirteen rather than fourteen generations in the second group. Muslims took the lack of one name as an example of *taḥrīf*.

Raḥmatullāh had also raised this objection in *I'jāz* (Raḥmatullāh n.d: 406-7) and later Muslims, following Raḥmatullāh, continued to raise this objection. How did 'Imād-ud-dīn respond to this objection? In Christian-Muslim *munāẓara* this issue seems to have become quite important. This could be the reason that 'Imād-ud-dīn responded to the issue of Christ's genealogies in *Hadāyat al-Muslimīn*, *Khazāna-tul-Isrār*[72], and *Kitāb Tawārīkh al-Masīḥ*[73]. He offered two explanations: first, that one name might have been missed due to *sahw-i-kātib*. Second, David was counted twice. He interpreted Matthew 1:17 in the *Khazāna* as below:

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[72] *Khazānā-tul-Isrār* is an exposition of the Gospel of St. Matthew. 'Imād-ud-dīn wrote this book in collaboration with Rev. Robert Clark. Ludhiana Mission Press published it in 1875.
[73] *Kitāb Tawārīkh al-Masīḥ* was planned to be published in seven separate tracts; each covering one major theme. Part one deals with the genealogy of Christ. It consists of 86 pages and was published in 1893. Part two consists of 140 pages and deals with the Birth of Christ, and was published in 1894. Both these tracts were published at National Press, Amritsar.

> The apostle counted David twice. The first part ended with Abraham to David and the second again began with David and ended with Josiah. And the third began with Jeconiah and ended with Christ. If some God knowing person will see with spiritual eye the men of this genealogy then it will be known that from verses 1-6 is the rising of the moon of the family of David. Then, from verses 7-11, is the height of its light and ascendency. Then from verses 12-15 is its setting. The apostle divided the generations from this point of view so that he may show David's equal connection with both rising and setting-in. For this reason he is counted twice. But after his setting, the Eternal sun, i.e., the Lord Christ, from whom the moon of David received its glory, was revealed; which will never set ('Imād-ud-dīn 1875:10).

It is doubtful that Muslim debaters would have accepted this spiritual interpretation of the obvious missing number. Raḥmatullāh and his followers had also argued that there were contradictions in the two genealogies of Christ as given by Matthew and Luke. This issue was not raised at the *munāẕara* but 'Imād-ud-dīn also responded to it. For him there were no contradictions in Matthew's and Luke's genealogies as they were two different genealogies, one is of Mary and the other of Joseph. In *Tawārīkh al-Masīḥ* he wrote:

> There are two genealogies of Christ written in the word of God (Matthew 1:1-17, Luke 3:23-38) and they are related to his holy body. There is another, third genealogy of Christ in which the connection of Christ's divinity is shown in the divinity of the Father (John 1:1-5,14)… the first two genealogies are indeed two; to call them one is out of place; because the first comes from Solomon to Joseph and the second from Nathan to Heli or to Joseph the legal son of Heli. If both of these genealogies were of Joseph and none of Mary among them, then the result will be that Christ has no genealogy because Christ is not the real but figurative and legal son of Joseph. In reality, physically, he is the son of Mary ('Imād-ud-dīn 1893:14).

Thus, 'Imād-ud-dīn rejected that there were contradictions in the genealogies of Christ. He also rejected that there was a *sahw-i-kātib* in the second group of generations, though he considered it as a possible explanation. Rather, he stressed there was a deep spiritual reason for demonstrating the centrality of David by counting him twice. He brought in the third and even more important genealogy of Christ in John 1, where his direct link is shown with the Father and his essential divinity is established. To 'Imād-ud-dīn Christ's two genealogies cannot be understood apart from his eternal genealogy; his legal genealogies apart from his original genealogy; as a human he was not a son of any man; he took his humanity from Mary.

7.3.2 The issue of ilḥāq (interpolation)

Wazīr Khān presented 1 John 5:7 as the example of interpolation and evidence of *taḥrīf*, which Pfander had simply accepted. What was 'Imād-ud-dīn's response to this problem? 'Imād-ud-dīn responded to this charge in the larger context of *I'jāz-i-Īsawī's* chapter three where Raḥmatullāh presented ten proofs of *ilḥāq*. 'Imād-ud-dīn began his refutation by noting Raḥmatullāh's claim of interpolation in the *Injīl* at ten places[74]. He said it was not Raḥmatullāh's discovery; Christian expositors have already identified these ten *sahw-i-kātib*. 'Imād-ud-dīn noted that these *sahw-i-kātib* are called *ikhtilāf* (variance) in manuscripts, but "the Mawlwī named it *ilḥāq* so that in any way he may prove his point". 'Imād-ud-dīn explained the difference between *sahw-i-kātib* and *ilḥāq* as follows*:*

> *ilḥāq*, which is harmful, means to add something deliberately. S*ahw-i-kātib* means difference caused by oversight or negligence. The Mawlwī says that *sahw* is *ilḥāq;* but the readers can find out by looking at those places (presented by Raḥmatullāh) that these are not intentional differences. Through these (differences) neither a victory can be won over the opponents, nor can an addition be made to a teaching, nor can an addition be made to the greatness of Christ, nor is there any worldly or religious benefit. Therefore, only Dr. Wazīr Khān and Mawlwī Raḥmatullāh and their followers who do not want justice, can call it *ilḥāq*. But all intelligent people, by way of justice can say that these are surely [scribal] oversights, not interpolations ('Imād-ud-dīn 1899:81).

'Imād-ud-dīn accepted 1 John 5:7 as a *sahw-i-kātib* and acknowledged that this verse is not found in the manuscripts until the fourteenth century; but somehow crept into the Latin translation. Yet, even knowing this, by way of honesty, this *sahw* is kept in brackets. This verse is about the trinity and divinity of Christ and if its veracity is doubtful, one does not need it because, he said, hundreds of other verses are present in the Bible that prove the divinity of Christ and the Holy Trinity of *Allāh t'āla* (God most high). ('Imād-ud-dīn 1899:82).

'Imād-ud-dīn strongly argued that *sahw-i-kātib* could not be called *ilḥāq*. He stressed that *sahw-i-kātib* is found in all ancient books even the Qur'ān. And, "If this is *taḥrīf-o-ilḥāq* then the Qur'ān must be called *muḥarraf* too. But neither the Bible nor the Qur'ān is *muḥarruf* due to the differences in the manuscripts" ('Imād-ud-dīn

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[74] For example Raḥmatullāh referred to these verses to prove his charge of interpolation: Matthew 27:35 "the word that was spoken by the prophet" is found in certain manuscripts but not in others. The same is the case with 1 John 5:7, 1 Cor. 10:28, Matthew 12:8; 12:35; John 8:59; Matthew 6:12, etc. etc.

1899:85). He claimed there were more serious contradictions in the manuscripts of the Qur'ān but 'Uthman burnt them. He asserted that due to the *sahw-i-kātib* in the *Injīl* there could be no serious accusation against the *Injīl* as against those who burnt the variant manuscripts of the Qur'ān ('Imād-ud-dīn 1899:86).

7.4 The Qur'ān and *Taḥrīf-i-'amdī*

'Imād-ud-dīn also tried to show that the kind of *taḥrīf-i-lafzī* Muslims have shown in the Bible is also found in the Qur'ān. 'Uthmān burned the textual *ikhtilāf* (contradictions) from the very beginning; yet there are two kinds of *ikhtilāf in* the Qur'ān: in Arabic "diacritical marks" and in "words". He asserted that meanings of Arabic words are affected by the change of diacritical marks. *Ikhtilāf* in words is more serious and 'Imād-ud-dīn enlisted 118 differences in words which affect the meaning of the words as well. Then he claimed that these *Ikhtilāf* are surely the result of *sahw-i-qārī* (mistakes of reciters). It was necessary that the words should have been read with the same diacritical marks as were read by Muhammad. The alterations and differences in the words of the Qur'ān are absolute s*ahw*; therefore *sahw-i-qārī* is found in the Qur'ān. 'Imād-ud-dīn argued that *sahw-i-Qur'ān* are also due to *sahw-i-kātib* (mistakes made by scribes), for example, *kātib* wrote *lam takan* in place of *lam yakan.* Or it could also be because of the mistakes of the listeners. Therefore, to say that Muslim reciters did not remember the original word is correct. As per the *ilḥāq* (interpolation), he quoted from the *al-Itiqān* that, "'Alī told Abu Bakar that he saw that addition was being made in the book of God and he determined not to do anything until he had collected the Qur'ān. This shows that 'Alī also collected one Qur'ān" ('Imād-ud-dīn 1899:377-79). He concluded that:

> When 'Uthmān collected all Qur'āns and compiled one copy from them then he burned the rest of them, it shows, surely, great change (*taḥrīf*) took place. Those scattered papers, and, 'Alī's Qur'ān, were not mean things. To burn them and not to keep them as authority so that it may be known what were the differences between the different manuscripts clearly demonstrates that great change had happened. So, we say that the Qur'ān's *ikhtilāf-i- qirat* (variant readings) were not less than the Bible, rather they were more harmful too; therefore were burnt. And those *Ikhtilāf* were among the honourable people of the same period. This is why after some time books were written against 'Uthmān's Qur'ān. Therefore, if we take in [our] hand the principle with which they accuse the Bible of *taḥrīf*, and apply it to the Qur'ān then surely the Qur'ān is also *muḥarruf*. And it can never be that with which objections and the *Ikhtilāfāt* Bible is said to be *muḥarruf* and is rejected; with the same

objections and *Ikhtilāfāt* in the Qur'ān, it should be accepted correct and whole ('Imād-ud-dīn 1899:379).

'Imād-ud-dīn's stance was clear that the Qur'ān has more such issues than the Bible and that Muslims should not behave hypocritically.

7.4.1 Judging by the judge's standard

It appears that one of the most damaging aspects of the Agra debate was the legal opinion of the Muslim judge Muftī Riyāz al-Dīn. It was the Mufti's judgement that, "a *wathīqa* (deed, treaty, bond) in which a corruption is proved at one place does not remain reliable" (Ṣābrī 2008:298). Thus he declared the Bible unreliable. 'Imād-ud-dīn questioned the validity of the Mufti's judgement. Alluding to the Muftī he wrote, "A renowned Mawlwī in Agra (debate) said that if a slight mistake or doubt is found in the pages of *tamasuk* (bond, a legal document) it does not remain trustworthy" ('Imād-ud-dīn 1892:19). He applied the Mufti's criteria to Islamic holy writ and showed how damaging it could be for Islam:

> The whole Qur'ān, on account of those Qur'ans, which were burned because of *ikhtilāfāt* is doubtful; it should become untrustworthy. See, even now in the books of *qirʿat* (recitation), there are hundreds of *ikhtilāf* in the *qirʿat* of the words of the Qur'ān, i.e., *yarūn* and *tarūn*, *yuʿadūn* and *tuʿadūn*, *martaʿ-o-malʿab* and *yartʿ-o-yalʿab*, *malak* and *mālak, qulī* and *kulī,* etc. etc. Thus it should not remain trustworthy ('Imād-ud-dīn 1892:19).

Muslims have tried to overcome this objection of *ikhtilāfāt-i-qirʿat* by saying that the Qur'ān was revealed in *haft qirʿat* (seven different recitations). 'Imād-ud-dīn rejected this claim and argued that the Qur'ān itself does not claim that it descended in *haft qirʿat,* and the meaning of the hadith on which this claim is based is doubtful. As-Suyūtī in his *tafsīr al-Itiqān* gives forty meanings of the *haft qirʿat,* in the face of which the idea of *haft qirʿat* becomes completely false. He pressed the point saying:

> There are numerous *aḥādīth* in Bukhārī and Muslim[75] about which the *rāwī* (transmitter of ḥadīth) expresses his doubt with the word "*āwū,"* then, ḥadīth from the beginning to end should not remain trustworthy. In thousands of places in the books of ḥadīth, different manuscripts are found on the margins or in the interpretation. Therefore, like the example of *tamasuk,* do not consider them trustworthy ('Imād-ud-dīn 1892:19-20).

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[75] Ṣaḥīḥ Bukhārī and Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim are two of the most authentic books of ḥadiths.

'Imād-ud-dīn dismissed the total argument for *taḥrīf* based on *sahw-i-kātib* called *ilḥāq* by Raḥmatullāh. He said, "In conclusion *sahw-i-kātib* cannot be the reason for *taḥrīf* or doubts. Yes if the compiler of *I'jāz 'Īsawī* had proved that Christians at that (particular) time *'amdan* omitted a particular text or interpolated that word in the book (Bible), and then it would have been worthy of consideration" ('Imād-ud-dīn 1892:19-20).

8. The Qur'ān in defence of the integrity of the Bible

There has been a long but unsuccessful tradition of Christian apologists invoking the Qur'ān as the proof for the authenticity of the Bible. Pfander's final argument for the integrity and authenticity of the Bible was also based on the Qur'ān 2:44; 5:5; 29:46 and 98:1-4. Raḥmatullāh rejected his argument by saying these verses do not at all prove that the Bible was not corrupted; the Qur'ān mentions *taḥrīf* by *Ahl-i-Kitāb* at many places (Ṣābrī 2008:300).

'Imād-ud-dīn did not utilize the Qur'ān to prove the integrity and authenticity of the Bible. He probably knew that Pfander's way of appealing to the Qur'ān meant giving some sort of divine authority to the Qur'ān. As a convert who no longer believed the Qur'ān to be the Word of God, he would find it hard to appeal to it. His reason to appeal to the Qur'ān appears to be historical, to prove the Torah and the Gospel existed in the time of Muhammad; a fact hardly any Muslim had denied. He quoted these words from Surah 7:157, "The Torah and the Gospel which are with them." He said, therefore, you [because of these words in the Qur'ān] are also convinced of the presence of the Gospel and the Torah in the time of Muhammad. Then he challenged Raḥmatullāh and Wazīr that, "You should prove your claim of *taḥrīf-i-lafẓī 'amdī*: the claim which neither the Qur'ān nor the earlier scholars of Islam made, from the existing word of God" ('Imād-ud-dīn 1899:70).

9. Irrelevance of Raḥmatullāh's premises for *taḥrīf*

While the preceding points were, by and large, discussed at the *munāẓara*, in what follows, it is demonstrated that 'Imād-ud-dīn also critiqued Raḥmatullāh's other arguments advanced as proofs for *taḥrīf* in *I'jāz-i-'Īsawī* and *Izhār al-Ḥaqq*. 'Imād-ud-dīn, in contradistinction to Pfander and French, argued that most of Raḥmatullāh's

premises were irrelevant to the whole issue of *taḥrīf*. For example, Raḥmatullāh raised the following objections against the integrity and authenticity of the Bible: 1) debates about the book of Esther at the time of Canonization of the OT; 2) Samaritans accept only five books of Moses as the word of God; 3) certain books mentioned in the text of the OT are lost; 4) uncertainty about the dates and authorship of some books of the OT; 5) books included in the Catholic Bible but excluded from the Protestant Bible; 6) doubts about the status of the Hebrews, first epistle of Peter, and first epistle of John; 7) difference of opinion about the original language of the gospel of Matthew (Hebrew or Greek) and Mark (Latin or Greek); 8) certain parts of the Gospels considered by some not originally part of the gospels; i.e., part of the last chapter of Mark and 1, 2 and 22 of Luke; 9) doubts about the authorship of the Gospel of John.

Apart from this, Raḥmatullāh also gave nine causes and reasons for the corruption and claimed that under such circumstances *taḥrīf* could have taken place. In *I'jāz-i-Īsawī's* chapter three Raḥmatullāh talks about the causes and reasons for the corruption in the Bible which are: 1) Imperfect means of writing; 2) Nebuchadnezzar's attack on Jews and destruction of the Temple; 3) Antiochus' attack in 168 BC; 4) Titus' attack in AD 70; 5) ten persecutions of the Church under Roman Emperors; 6) In AD 303 Emperor Diocletian ordered the burning of all the books of the Christians; 7) Due to these tragedies atheists and dishonest people had full opportunity to corrupt the Bible; 8) From the days of Apostles till 1500 only a Greek translation of the holy books was read in the churches; 9) Rule of the Popes for 1500 years. Raḥmatullāh also brought the difference in translations as a proof of *taḥrīf*.

'Imād-ud-dīn gave a detailed reply to each objection, which we cannot present here, but his answers are briefly noted. For example, he argued that the difference in translations is natural but it cannot affect the original. He pointed out that the translations of the Qur'ān done by Shah 'Abd al-Qādir and Shah Walīullāh are different ('Imād-ud-dīn 1899:22). The exclusion of the apocryphal books cannot be considered corruption because they are not inspired and earlier Christians did not include them in the Bible. They are like the books of ḥadīth which one sect of Islam accepts while the other rejects.

As far as the apocryphal books are concerned not only the Roman Catholics but also all Orthodox churches receive these books as canonical on the basis that they are in the Septuagint. Anglicans receive them as deutero-canonical, while Luther puts them at the end of the Canon. Reformed tradition, however, on the basis of the Westminster

Confession, does not regard them as canonical and that, no doubt, 'Imād-ud-dīn, though Anglican, was influenced by this tradition, most probably by the Presbyterian missionaries in Lahore where he first wrote *Hadāyat al-Muslimīn*. However, irrespective of their status as canonical or deuterocanonical, up to the 16th century they were found in all bibles. But in the context of debate on *taḥrīf*, if someone removes books from the Bible, their version would be affected by the charge of *Taḥrīf*. Nevertheless, the unchanged version could still be produced for anyone who demanded it. None of the Fathers attempted to remove these books from the canon, not even Jerome!

Wayne Grudem, however, argues that some early Church Fathers like Melito (d. A.D 180), Origen (d. A.D 253), and Athanasius (d. A. D 373) did not include any of the apocryphal books in *their* list of the Old Testament books (1994:58). 'Imād-ud-dīn might have had these early Christians in his mind but it is not clear which early Christians he really meant. Equating the apocryphal books with the books of hadith shows 'Imād-ud-dīn's original thinking in the context of debate with Muslims but the comparison cannot be fully appreciated as both Roman Catholics and Muslims would have found it hard to agree with him.

Uncertainty about the date and authorship of any book cannot be called *taḥrīf*. He argued that if this is accepted as the proof for the *taḥrīf-i-lafzī ʿamdī* then it will also be a proof for the corruption of the Qurʾān. For example, some tell the duration of the writing of the Qurʾān was 20, some 23 and, some 25 years. In the same way there are many verses in the Qurʾān about which there are differences of opinion about the *shān-i-nuzūl* (the occasion, context or reason in response to which, particular verses of the Qurʾān were revealed). So if it is damaging for the Bible then it is also damaging for the Qurʾān. But, "it has nothing to do with *taḥrīf-i-lafzī,* or *maʿnawī* or *ʿamdī* or *sahwī"* ('Imād-ud-dīn 1899:39). As far as the issue of the heretical sects' rejection of Mark 16 and Luke 1, 2 and 22 is concerned, 'Imād-ud-dīn pointed out that this is similar to the Muslim sect of *Memonia*[76] that did not accept Surah Yusuf as part of the Qurʾān ('Imād-ud-dīn 1899:43). 'Imād-ud-dīn also contended that nine possibilities for *taḥrīf* are not a proof of *taḥrīf*. In the same way seventy objections raised against the character of God by Raḥmatullāh has nothing to do with the *taḥrīf-i-lafzī ʿamdī*. 'Imād-ud-dīn argued that all the objections Raḥmatullāh raised against the Bible fail to prove *taḥrīf* in the Bible. Reflecting back at the great *munāẓara*, he defended Pfander by saying that, 'he admitted

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[76] Memonia was an early Muslim sect which is mentioned in authentic Arabic book "*Ghuniyat al- ṭālbīn*", from which 'Imād-ud-dīn quoted.

sahw-i-kātib at eleven places in the *Injīl',* which people publicised as if he had accepted *taḥrīf* at eleven places. Moreover, the meaning of the *Injīl* is not distorted by *sahw-i-kātib* in these places:

> If this is the proof for the *taḥrīf* and untrustworthiness of a book then all the books of the whole world, whether religious or non-religious, should be considered unreliable; because this thing is found in every book, rather, it is found more in the Qur'ān. Therefore 122 places, as an example, are shown in the 6th chapter of *Hadāyat al-Muslimīn* ('Imād-ud-dīn 1892:14-15).

He argued that, "*sahw-i-kātib* cannot be the cause of *taḥrīf* or doubt. If Muslims were to prove *taḥrīf*, they must prove *taḥrīf-i-lafzī 'amdī*: that at such and such time, such and such text or words were *'amdan* extrapolated or interpolated; only then it could be considered" ('Imād-ud-dīn 1892:20). He further claimed that:

> For twelve hundred years no one has been able to give a perfect proof of *taḥrīf*; neither anyone can because, in reality, *taḥrīf-i-lafzī* has not taken place; this is a false claim. Therefore, how can we accept this false, without proof, and rather impossible claim? There is no religion in the world that all its followers would unite to change the book of their salvation. Such a thing has never been heard in all the earth. This claim is simply out of place ('Imād-ud-dīn 1892:21).

In this way, 'Imād-ud-dīn showed that his interlocutors' premises were irrelevant to the issue of *taḥrīf,* and their objections, he opined, 'were not raised for seeking truth but to impose accusation'. He thus tried to defend both Christian scripture and Pfander:

> These *mawlwīs* have not given any perfect argument for their claim; neither can they till the day of judgement because there is no proof. These people *nā ḥaqq* (unjustly) made noise in the streets of Agra and were *nā ḥaqq* active to fight against a truth worshipping and truth speaking pastor Pfander ('Imād-ud-dīn 1899:195).

10. Judging by the same standard: *taḥrīf* in the Qur'ān

After giving a detailed reply to the objections raised against the Bible 'Imād-ud-dīn also tried to demonstrate that using the same principles used by Muslims to argue for the *taḥrīf* in the Bible, will prove that the Qur'ān too was *muḥarruf*. Wazīr Khān argued at the debate that there was no possibility of mistake in the inspired books, therefore, any mistake in the Bible proved corruption of the Bible, which was no more the inspired word of God.

Was the Qur'ān so inspired that it was completely free from any mistake? Raḥmatullāh and Wazīr Khān certainly made this claim in their January 1854 debate with French and Key (Wazīr-ud-dīn 1875:14). 'Imād-ud-dīn's understanding of the Qur'ān will be discussed in chapter 8. What follows here is necessary to demonstrate his refutation of Raḥmatullāh and Wazīr Khān's arguments. In his *Hadāyat al-Muslimīn*, 'Imād-ud-dīn began his refutation of *I'jāz-i-'Isawī* with a lengthy discussion on *ilhām* (inspiration). He argued that Muhammad (subject of chapter 6) was not an inspired person therefore his Qur'ān could not be an inspired book.

Keeping Raḥmatullāh's and Wazīr Khān's argument in mind 'Imād-ud-dīn also claimed that because there were numerous obvious mistakes in the Qur'ān, it could not have been authored by the omniscient God. According to 'Imād-ud-dīn, "If all the contents in the Qur'ān, which are rationally *('aqlan)* and traditionally *(naqlan)* false described, a big book will be the result; because there are many kinds of mistakes in it" (1899:332). According to him these mistakes are found in the stories of the prophets told by Muhammad; stories or doctrines taken from the Jewish and Christian traditions, and ideas of Arabia and neighbouring nation written in the Qur'an, which educated people at the present time cannot accept (1899:332-33). 'Imād-ud-dīn presented thirty examples of what he claimed were clear mistakes in the Qur'ān. For example, turning of Jews into apes (Surah 2:65; 7:166), and pigs (Surah 5:60). The last example 'Imād-ud-dīn presented was that of the Qur'ān's denial of Christ's crucifixion (4:157) ('Imād-ud-dīn 1899:334-55). Thus, 'Imād-ud-dīn demonstrated that if the Qur'ān was judged by the standard applied to the Bible by Muslims, it would be proved *muḥarruf*.

10.1 The Qur'ān and *taḥrīf-i-'amdī*

'Imād-ud-dīn went a step further and claimed that the Qur'ān had suffered from *taḥrīf-i-lafzī 'amdī*. It appears that the charge of *taḥrīf* was not unilateral; at least from the time of 'Abd al-Masiḥ al-Kindī, Christians have also begun to accuse Muslims of corrupting their sacred text. Clare Wilde wrote, "Some early Christian Arabic texts charge later Muslims with corrupting the received Qur'ānic text – a theme also found in the works of some "sects" of Muslims, such as Ḫāriǧīs or Mu'tazila" (Wilde 2007:405). Wilde suggests that Christians and Jews living within the Islamic world appear to have been

forbidden from examining the Qur'ān in the early period. Yet Abū Qurrāh[77] (750-823) in his debate with Ma'mūn turned the charge of *taḥrīf* on Muslims (Wilde 2007:407-8).

While 'Imād-ud-dīn forcefully rejected *taḥrīf-i-lafzī 'amdī* in the Bible he argued that the *taḥrīf-i-lafzī 'amdī* has taken place in the Qur'ān. To prove his claim he quoted from *al-Itiqān* that:

> 'Alī told Abu Bakr that he saw additions being made in the book of God and he determined not to do anything until he had collected the Qur'ān. This shows that 'Alī also collected one Qur'ān. When 'Uthmān collected all the Qur'āns and compiled one copy from them; he burnt the rest of the variants. It shows surely, that great change took place. ('Imād-ud-dīn 1899:86).

'Imād-ud-dīn also argued that the Qur'ān's *ikhtilāfāt-i-qir'at* (variant readings) were not less than the Bible and were more harmful as well, that is why they were burnt. 'Imād-ud-dīn made an interesting comparison between the manuscripts of the Bible and the Qur'ān as he responded to the objection of difference/variants in the biblical manuscripts. He quoted the trusted ancient Muslim authorities to show that certain verses were in the Qur'ān but now they are not in the Qur'ān, namely, the verse of stoning and Surah Najm's verses (53:19-20) popularly known as the satanic verses. He also showed that there are verses in the Qur'ān which were found only with one *qārī* (reciter) at the time of the collection of the Qur'ān while there were still so many *hāfiz-i- Qur'ān* (preserver of the Qur'ān/one who has memorized the whole the Qur'ān) alive. He especially mentioned the case of Abī Hazīma. He questioned why one particular verse was found only with him and not with others? Then he said if all the *qārīs* and *hāfizes* are considered like manuscripts, then Abī Hazīma was one manuscript and what was in that manuscript was not in other manuscripts. There were hundreds of such manuscripts that perished during the wars and there were real contradictions in the written manuscripts which 'Uthmān attempted to cleanse by burning. This is why after some time books were written against 'Uthmān's Qur'ān. Therefore, he said:

> If we take in our hands the same principle with which Muslims accuse the Bible of *taḥrīf* and apply it to the Qur'ān then surely the Qur'ān is also *muḥarraf* and doubtful. And it can never be that with the [kind of] objections and the *ikhtilāfāt* Bible is said to be *muḥarraf* and is rejected; while the same objections and *ikhtilāfāt* are found in the Qur'ān, it should be accepted correct and whole ('Imād-ud-dīn 1899:86-89).

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[77] Theodore Abū Qurrah (c. 750 – c. 823) was a ninth-century Christian theologian who lived in the early Islamic period. He was the Chalcedonian or Melkite bishop of the nearby city of Harran between 795 and 812. He debated with the Abbasid Caliph Al-Māmūn (813-833).

With this conclusion 'Imād-ud-dīn tried to show to his former friends and *'ulamā'* that their attack on the Bible and confidence in the integrity and authenticity of the Qur'ān was unfounded. The Qur'ān had suffered more corruption as compared to the Bible and the *'ulamā'* were not justified in charging the Bible of corruption in the presence of even more serious problems in the Qur'ān.

11. Assessment

It is clear from the discussion above that the *munāẓara* did not go well for Pfander and French. Pfander was unable to maintain his unequivocal denial of textual problems in the Bible. He admitted that there were certain problems in the text as shown by his adversaries. Contrary to Wazīr Khān, Pfander's assistant was readily open to concede the presence of variant readings in the manuscripts, which for the Muslim audience was nothing less than the admission of *taḥrīf*. Yet Pfander did not accept that *taḥrīf-i-lafẓī* as identified by his interlocutors had affected the essential doctrines of Christianity. His demand that Muslim *munāẓars* should produce a copy of the uncorrupted Bible against which the corruption of the present Bible could be seen was a genuine demand but was not met by his opponents. It was unfortunate that the debate could not be concluded properly. Its incompleteness, however, left many questions unanswered and provided opportunity to later apologists, 'Imād-ud-dīn foremost among them, to challenge the outcome and opinions formed after the debate.

'Imād-ud-dīn challenged the claims that the Bible had been so utterly corrupted that it could not be accepted as the word of God. Raḥmatullāh's criticism of the Bible had severely shaken the missionary confidence in disputational methods. *I'jāz-i-'Īsawī* stood as the definitive proof of the falsehood of Christianity as no Christian challenged its claims (Proceedings 1866-68:91). From the Muslim side the thirteen centuries old Qur'ānic charge of *taḥrīf* of the Bible was irrefutably established (Raḥmatullāh 2010:223). Thus 'Imād-ud-dīn's challenge in itself was a significant step to restart Christian-Muslim *munāẓara* on *taḥrīf*. But 'Imād-ud-dīn did more as he defended the integrity of the Bible. He exposed not only the weaknesses in Raḥmatullāh's arguments but also the vulnerability of the Muslim scripture.

Pfander had failed to properly define the term *taḥrīf*. His undifferentiated use allowed Raḥmatullāh to define *taḥrīf* in the broadest and losest manner to count even the slightest and accidental change in the text as *taḥrīf*. 'Imād-ud-dīn went to a great length to challenge Raḥmatullāh's definition and redefined *taḥrīf* on the Qur'ānic terms

and understanding of the *mutqadamīn* expositors of the Qur'ān. He appears to have succeeded at once in establishing what the original Qur'ānic understanding of *taḥrīf* was and also demonstrating how Raḥmatullāh was guilty of contradicting his own highest authority. It was here he laid the foundation for refuting the Islamic charge of *taḥrīf* on Qur'ānic principles. It was different from Pfander's appeal to the Qur'ān for establishing the integrity of the Bible.

As for the question of the Fathers' witness to the corruption of the Old Testament by the Jews, 'Imād-ud-dīn considerably improved his argument over Pfander; yet he failed to address why Justin Martyr and Irenaeus levelled such accusations. Surprisingly, even after 161 years of the Agra debate, the first considerable western response aimed at refuting Raḥmatullāh's charge of *taḥrīf*: *The Gentle Answer* (2015) by Gordon Nickel, also neglected to address this very damaging question. One has to realize that Justin's accusation arose out of a specific context of severe polemics between the Palestinian Christians and Jews. Towards the end of the first century, the Jews began to take concrete steps to separate themselves from the followers of Jesus. The Council of Jamnia/Yavneh (AD 90) fixed the Jewish canon and forbade Jews from reading the writings of the Apostles and the Apocrypha; and the Jewish followers of Jesus were forbidden to worship in synagogues.

In the second century, the Septuagint, the Hebrew Bible for the Greek speaking Jews and Christians (Seidman 2006:39), came under threat. A new Greek translation prepared by Aquila of Pontus under the direct supervision of extremely anti-Christian Rabbis Akiva/Akiba and Gamaliel II was authorized by the rabbinic school of Jamnia to replace the Septuagint. Aquila was Roman who converted to Christianity in Jerusalem but was excommunicated because of his love for astrology. He then converted to Judaism and became a disciple of Rabbi Akiva. Aquila's translation was painfully literal (Nida 1964). He went for the etymological translation rather than cultural equivalent or transcription. Sebastian Brock notes that Aquila replaced earlier transcriptions by etymological translations (Brock 1979:84). Aquila's objective was to give new rendering to those passages of Septuagint on which the Christians primarily relied to prove to the Jews that Jesus was the Messiah. Moore states that Aquila deliberately removed the words 'Messiah' and 'virgin' from the Jewish Septuagint Bible [sic] because of their fulfilment in Jesus. Matthew 1:23 referred to Isaiah 7:14 to prove that the Jesus birth from a virgin was in fulfilment of Isaiah's prophecy. Aquila changed Septuagint's translation of Hebrew *ha alama* – '*parthenos*' (virgin) to *neanis* (young

woman) (Moore 1996; Reynolds 2010:196). According to Seidman at stake was the reliability of the translation and Jewish Christian interpretations of Isaiah 7:14, but also the legitimacy of Jesus, virginity of Mary, and ultimately the relation between Judaism and Christianity (2006:39).

This is the context in which Justin Martyr in his dialogue with Trypho accused Jewish Rabbis of removing certain prophecies regarding the Messiah from the Bible. Irenaeus in his *"Against the Heresies"* written about AD 200, discussed the 'misrepresentation' of Isaiah 7:14 by Aquila and Theodotion of Ephesus. Against Aquila, Irenaeus quoted from the Septuagint and argued that the Jews from the pre-Christian times confirmed the Christian interpretation of Isaiah 7:14 (Moore 1996).

It is absolutely clear here that the whole quarrel was over the translation of the Hebrew texts and not the *taḥrīf* of the Hebrew text. 'Imād-ud-dīn showed that there was a difference in the translations of the Qur'ān which did not mean corruption of the text, but he failed to relate this to the Justin question. Justin was right as far as the new translation was concerned but his accusation could not imply *taḥrīf-i-lafzī 'amdī* in the original Hebrew Bible.

On *taḥrīf* in the New Testament, 'Imād-ud-dīn aptly addressed the alleged problems with genealogies of Christ. While Pfander could not give an answer as to why there were thirteen rather than fourteen names in the second group in Matthew's Gospel. His answer would not have satisfied a Muslim polemicist who was not looking for an explanation but any possible hole in the text. Introducing John 1 as Christ's divine genealogy was an ingenious move to present Christ to his opponents. 'Imād-ud-dīn appeared to have successfully refuted 1 John 5:7 as an example of *ilḥāq*. As Muslims have argued that the doctrine of Trinity was based on this verse, 'Imād-ud-dīn claimed this verse was not needed for the proof of the Trinity. He accepted that it was a *sahw-i-kātib* but at the same time showed numerous *sahw* in the Qur'ān; thus he cut the Muslim accusation down to size.

Finally, judging the Qur'ān and hadith according to the Muftī and Raḥmatullāh's criteria, 'Imād-ud-dīn showed how vulnerable the Qur'ān was. He went a step further and demonstrated *taḥrīf-i-lafzī 'amdī* which Muslims, he claimed, could not prove in the Bible. 'Imād-ud-dīn also showed how Raḥmatullāh's premises in *I'jāz-i-'Īsawī* were totally irrelevant to the issue of *taḥrīf*.

Conclusion

This chapter addressed the question: to what extent and in what ways did ʿImād-ud-dīn contribute to the Christian-Muslim issue of *taḥrīf* in the Bible? It argued that reinitiating the debate on *taḥrīf* 12 years after the great *munāẓara* was in itself a significant contribution to the nineteenth-century debate on *taḥrīf*. Pfander's arguments in defence of the integrity of the Christian scripture in the face of Muslim accusation of *taḥrīf* were then presented. Raḥmatullāh and Wazīr Khān challenged Pfander's position who found it difficult to defend his earlier position of no *taḥrīf* in the Bible. Having set the stage thus, the chapter then presented ʿImād-ud-dīn's arguments for the integrity and authenticity of the Bible in contradistinction to Pfander and French and in refutation of Raḥmatullāh. In re-defining the term *taḥrīf* with all its nuances, ʿImād-ud-dīn delimited its wider application and exposed Muslim *munāẓars* questionable attitude towards both scriptures. ʿImād-ud-dīn advanced arguments on all the points raised at the *munāẓara* regarding the *taḥrīf* but went much further as he refuted *Iʿjāz-i-ʿĪsawī*.

As noted earlier this was the point at which the great *munāẓara* was abruptly ended without finishing its agenda. Therefore, this concludes our discussion of ʿImād-ud-dīn's contribution to Part II of this thesis. Part III will discuss ʿImād-ud-dīn's contribution to those points which could not be discussed at the *munāẓara*.

Part III: 'Imād-ud-dīn's contribution to the Unfinished Agenda of the *munāẓara*

In Part III, the aim is to find out from 'Imād-ud-dīn's writings to what extent he contributed to the items from the unfinished agenda, namely, the Trinity, prophethood of Muhammad, and the Qur'ān. The first item which could not be discussed, was the Holy Trinity to which we turn.

Chapter Five: The Trinity and the Divinity of Christ

Introduction

The Trinity has been the most hotly debated issue between Christians and Muslims. Raḥmatullāh recognized that the status of the doctrine of Trinity in Christianity was the same as that of *lā ilaha illilāh* in Islam. He boldly expressed the contradictory opinions that Christians and Muslims hold about this doctrine: "Christians consider salvation without it is impossible and we consider it absolute polytheism (*shirk maḥẓ*),[78] and source of punishment on the day of judgement" (Raḥmatullāh n.d: 58). Raḥmatullāh attacked the Trinity and divinity of Christ and declared it logically impossible, rationally absurd, unbiblical, polytheistic, and unacceptable[79] (Raḥmatullāh 1989:225-83). Montgomery Watt wrote, 'The denial of the divinity of Jesus is made in several passages [in the Qur'ān], and with it a denial of the doctrine of the Trinity' (1991:22). The doctrine of the Trinity thus cannot be discussed in isolation from the divinity of Christ. Mirza Ghulam Ahmad considered the divinity of Christ to be the foundation of the Trinity and he too had spent his full strength to refute it ('Attah al-Mujib 1992:72).

The main question to be addressed in this chapter is: what was 'Imād-ud-dīn's contribution to the debate on the doctrine of the Trinity? How did 'Imād-ud-dīn respond to the Islamic (Qur'ānic and scholarly) criticism of the doctrine of the Trinity? What unique personal dimension did he add to the debate? How did he use the Islamic sources in support of the doctrine of the Trinity? My conclusion will show that as a former Muslim *'ālim*, 'Imād-ud-dīn brought to this debate some very important insights, which could contribute toward understanding of this age-old controversy between Muslims and Christians. This chapter will bring together a wide range of 'Imād-ud-dīn's arguments directed towards refuting Islamic assertions and re-establishing the doctrine

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[78] According to Islamic theology '*shirk*' is an unpardonable sin. It means associating with Allah as God something or someone who is not God.
[79] Raḥmatullāh's comprehensive discussion on the Trinity is found in his *Izālatul awhām* vol. 1&2, and *Aḥsan al-aḥādīth fī abṭāl al-tathlīth*, and *Bible se Qur'ān tak* (Urdu translation of Izhār al-Ḥaqq), vol. 2.

of the Trinity and the divinity of Christ spread all over his many books. Pfander and Raḥmatullāh will also be referenced to show how and in what way 'Imād-ud-dīn was taking the debate forward. This forward movement began with 'Imād-ud-dīn questioning the very source of contention – the Qur'ān.

1. Faulty foundation: The Qur'an and the Trinity

Pfander had identified that Muslims' problem with the Trinity lay in their misunderstanding of it. He cited As-Ṣuyūṭī on Surah 5:77, and Baiḍāwi and Yahya on 4:156, and argued that it was clear from their commentaries they understood that, "the Virgin Mary was a goddess, and was one of three separate deities" (1986:177). 'Imād-ud-dīn took Pfander's argument and developed it. For him Muslims' problem in misunderstanding the Trinity was due to their trust in the faulty sources of information.

'Imād-ud-dīn in his first major book *Taḥqīq al-Īmān* (1868) noted that, 'Muslims think of the doctrine of the Trinity as absolutely unreasonable' (1868/1892:124). In the first edition of *Hadāyat al-Muslimīn,*[80] which was also published in 1868, he put his finger on the root problem:

> Let it not be hidden that Muhammad rejected the doctrine of the Trinity in the Qur'ān and
> referred to it in the Qur'ān with great pride over and over again. Therefore Muslims too, in
> accordance with this Qur'ānic teaching consider this doctrine extremely worthless and, due
> to ignorance, consider us *mushrik* (polytheists) and look on us with great contempt (1868:
> 425).

To show that Muhammad determines Muslims' attitude toward Christian doctrines he said, 'Muslims open their mouths wide and raise objections against the Trinity because Muhammad objected to it in his Qur'ān' (1868:422). 'Imād-ud-dīn, however, distinguished between the Qur'ān/Muhammad's refutation of the Trinity from that of modern Muslim scholars. According to him the Qur'ānic teachings on the Trinity are based on total misunderstanding of the Christian doctrines. The Qur'ān understood that Christians believe in three gods: God, Jesus and Mary. Surah 4:171 says, '*la taqulu thalathah,* i.e. do not say three,' but it does not tell who were those three (1868: 425). However, *mufassirīn* of *Tafsīr Ḥusainī*, *Tafsīr Madārak,* and Baiḍāwi understood that

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[80] 'Imād-ud-dīn noted that the *mawlwīs* in Lahore greatly opposed the *Taḥqīq al-Īmān* and many publishers refused to publish it. It was finally published in 1868. *Taḥqīq al-Īmān* and *Hadāyat al-Muslimīn* were 'Imād-ud-dīn's two major and earliest writings. At that time he was based in Lahore where he actually accepted Christ though he was baptized in Amritsar. Both these books were basically aimed at refuting Raḥmatullāh's *I'jāz-i-'Īsawī* and *Izālatul Awhām*, and Āl-i-Ḥasan's *Kitāb al-Istifsār.*

Christians believe in three gods and *thalathah* means Allāh, Jesus and Mary. Surah 5:73 states: they have certainly disbelieved who say Allāh is the third of the three.[81] Once more he quotes from *Tafsīr Ḥusainī*, which states that a Christian sect called Marqusia believed that God consisted of God, Jesus and Mary. These three are gods and God is one of these three (1868: 428). To 'Imād-ud-dīn it was clear that the Qur'ān suggests that Christians believed in "three gods". For example Baiḍāwi in his exposition of this verse wrote, 'Do not say three God, namely, not to call Allāh, Christ and Mary, God' ('Imād-ud-dīn 1899:381). He said '*Thalathah*' means three gods and that Muhammad understood Mary to be included in the Trinity of Christians. Further proof from the Surah 5:116 according to which Allāh will ask: 'Jesus did you say to people to accept my mother as Allāh, apart from Allāh and me'? He argues:

> It is proved from here that Muhammad understood that Mary was included in the Trinity and he rejected it and we too consider it *kufr*. Mary was a human not a god. All the expositors agree that Muhammad understood Mary as the third person of the Trinity (1899:381).

He acknowledged that, "Muhammad was right to reject such a trinity and whoever believes in this Islamic trinity is an absolute *kāfir*" (1868: 429). 'Imād-ud-dīn called this 'Islamic trinity' an erroneous trinity, which has nothing to do with the Trinity Christians believe in. The Qur'ān and its classical expositors did not understand the Christian Trinity. 'Imād-ud-dīn further exposed the Qur'ān's mistakes as it equates Christ's Sonship with Ezra (Surah 9:30), who according to the Qur'ān, was called 'son of God' by the Jews. While refuting Raḥmatullāh's argument against Christ's Sonship, in *buṭlān* (vanity/falseness) no.16, where Raḥmatullāh quoted Surah 9:30, 'Imād-ud-dīn pointed out this factual and historical mistake and challenged him, saying:

> When did Jews say Ezra is the Son of God? And even if some considering him a great man called him son of God; i.e. God's righteous and beloved; how could their saying be in accordance with Christians, who by faith say; Christ is the real and the only Son of God. And he is equal to His Father in divinity, and the Gospel is the decisive [authority as a proof] on this subject. But nowhere in the Torah is it written that Jews called Ezra the Son of God. This is a false accusation against Jews; read their books, this is not found in them (1899:341).

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[81] It is quite possible that this verse gave rise to a common mistake made by Indian Muslim scholars who continued to stress that Christian God consist of three parts (*juz*) (Kandhalwī n.d: 3; 'Aṭṭah al-Mujīb. 1992:132). Mirza Ghulam Ahmad said that Christians in their presumption say three *aqnūm* have separate existence and by coming together they make one God. He said can anyone demonstrate to me by making Dr Henry Clark, Pādrī 'Imād-ud-dīn and Pādrī Thākar Dās one. This is a glaring example of misunderstanding of the Trinity.

Ayoub agrees that most Muslim commentators argue against the Sonship of Christ but they misunderstand the Christian concept of Christ's Sonship (2007:118). He writes:

> *Ibn* and w*alad* both signify the filial relationship (2007:118). "*Ibn* ("son"), which is used only once in the Qur'an in relation to Jesus, may be understood metaphorically to mean "son" through a relationship of love or adoption. The term *walad,* on the other hand, means "offspring," and thus primarily signifies physical generation and sonship. It is this later term that is often used by the Qur'an commentators to argue against the Christian concept of Christ's divine sonship. The Qur'an, however, as we shall see when we study these two terms closely, does not use the term *walad* specifically to refer to Jesus. That is to say, the Qur'an nowhere accuses Christians of calling Jesus the *walad* offspring of God" (2007:118).

Ayoub quotes many examples of the Qur'ān commentators, including Rashid Rida who misunderstood the Christian concept of Christ's Sonship. Rida thought Christians were influenced by the Indian beliefs concerning Krishna. Sayyid Qutb also argued that the idea of divine sonship has no basis in either original Judaism or Christianity (2007:125). While Ayoub argues that most Muslims accuse Christians of calling Jesus *walad* Allāh which is contrary to both the Christian and the Qur'ānic understanding, he brings further evidence from the Qur'ān to support his claim. He writes:

> It must be further observed that in most cases the Qur'an uses the verb *ittakhadha* (took unto Himself) rather than *begot*, or any other verb suggesting actual generation. The verb *ittakhadha,* if anything, implies a relationship of adoption. Yet most [Muslim] commentators argue strenuously against attributing an offspring to God, this being allegedly an erroneous Jewish and Christian belief' (2007:125).

Ayoub contends that the Gospel and the Qur'ānic descriptions of Christ's birth are similar. While polemicist Muslims like Raḥmatullāh and Rida equated Christ's birth with the creation of Adam, Eve, and angels, to Ayoub Christ's birth is unique. He writes, "Jesus is himself a divine sign, one to be celebrated with joy, marvel, and faith. In the Qur'an as in the Gospel, the angels bring to Mary the glad tidings of a great miracle – the unique birth of a unique child, the "Word of God," the "Son of the Most High" (Q. 3:45; Luke 1:32-33) (2007:113).

Ayoub points to another misunderstanding of the Muslim scholars like Raḥmatullāh and Rida regarding Christ being the *Kalima* (the Word) of Allah. He argues that in the Qur'ānic narrative, the angel who appeared to Mary was sent to her by God. "He was the angel of revelation. The same angel who brought the Word of God, the Qur'an, to Muhammad brought the Word of God, Jesus Christ, to Mary[82]: "I am the

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[82] Ayoub equates Mary and Muhammad here as the recipients of revelation, 'the Word of God' by the same angel. However, there is an obvious difference in the content and the quality of the Word brought to Mary and to the apostle of Islam: the Word to Mary took flesh and became a pure child while the word to Muhammad took the form of commands and narratives and finally of a book. God had already purified Mary, the receptacle of God's Word (Q. 3:42). Ayoub states, "Only as an unblemished

messenger of the Lord," he said, "come to bestow upon you a pure child" (Q. 19:19) (2007:113). He writes:

> It is worth noting that the word *kalimah* is a feminine noun. The Qur'an is here speaking not of a name but of an actual being, of the Word of God manifested in human life and history. Is all this merely metaphorical or even metaphysical? Or is there not a mystery far greater than we have been able to fathom for the last fourteen hundred years?" (2007:114).

Ayoub's own understanding falls short of the Christian Orthodoxy, however, he quite helpfully explains how the majority of Muslim scholars have misunderstood the Christian doctrine of Christ's divine Sonship.

'Imād-ud-dīn showed numerous other mistakes in the Qur'ān like, confusing Jesus' mother with Mary, the daughter of Imran and the sister of Haroon (1899:382). 'Imād-ud-dīn claimed that none of the numerous Christian sects, in spite of their differences, at any time, in any country, in any nation, ever included Mary in the Trinity (1868: 430). He contended that it is clearly written in the Gospel that the Father, Son and the Holy Spirit, and only this, is the Trinity. He argued that the Qur'ān could not be the word of God because it contains such a serious flaw. 'Allāh knows all (*'ālim al-ghaib*)[83] man makes mistakes' (1899:382). The Qur'ān also could not be trusted, therefore, in matters of deep spiritual mysteries, like, the Holy Trinity.

'Imād-ud-dīn quoted Surah 5:75 in which the Qur'ān claims to bring forth clear arguments and proof against the Trinity. 'Imād-ud-dīn noted that Muhammad's argument against the divinity of Jesus and Mary was: 'both of them used to eat food'. This was understood to be a conclusive argument against the divinity of Jesus (1868:431). From the Muslim perspective it was a definitive proof because God is not dependent on anything and does not need to eat; since Jesus Christ used to eat food, he could not be God. 'Imād-ud-dīn questioned the Qur'ān's line of reasoning from the Christians' perspectives who believe that Christ was at once perfect God and perfect man. He wrote:

> One should ask what sort of an argument is this? Christians believe that Christ is God
> incarnate and many verses regarding his humanity are found in the Gospel. Sometimes he is
> called son of Adam, sometimes, son of David, and son of Joseph, servant, apostle, prophet

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virgin could she serve as a receptacle of the divine Word" (2007:113). Does the Qur'ān make a similar claim about its own receptacle? Moreover, the huge majority of the Muslims claim that the Qur'ān is the eternal and uncreated word of Allāh brought to Muhammad, does Ayoub's equation not suggest that Christ was the uncreated eternal Word of God and Muslims should accept him as such?

[83] *'Ālim al-ghaib* literally means, one who knows hidden or secret things. This epithet is reserved for God alone.

and sometimes the Lamb of God. And sometimes he is called God and Son of God. And many works of his humility [humanity] are written in the Gospel and many works of his glory, supremacy and divinity are also written. Works of humility are related to [his] humanity and works of splendour and glory are related to [his] divinity. The actions like eating, due to which he is called human, Muhammad has made them an argument for his non-divinity. What is the use of such an argument? (1868:432).

'Imād-ud-dīn goes on: "We say, well, this [eating] is a work of a human, but he was a man as well; therefore, he did eat. But how did his divinity, which has a different mode and characteristics become non-existent" (1868:432). Given the nature of the evidence presented against the divinity of Christ in the Qur'ān, 'Imād-ud-dīn once again questioned its divine authorship. He writes:

From here the degree of the intellect of the author of the Qur'ān is also revealed, and this too has become known that he is not omniscient. Rather, he is so ignorant that Christ's work, which everyone knows, i.e. eating food, after having heard from somewhere, presents with great pride as the evidence of his non-divinity. He does not even know that for this reason [Christians] already accept him as a human (1868:432).

He concludes, 'Thus it is proved that Muhammad neither understood the meaning of the Trinity nor could he refute it. Therefore, what is written in the Qur'ān about the Trinity is not worthy of attention' (1868:433).

This argument has implications for Muslim scholars who continue to do everything they can to prove Christ's humanity as a decisive argument against his divinity. 'Imād-ud-dīn showed that the very source of their highest authority and the foundation of their arguments in this debate is not trustworthy. If Allāh, supposedly, the author of the Qur'ān made serious mistakes in understanding Christian doctrines he criticised and condemned, and made a commonplace knowledge about Christ as an argument against his divinity; can Muslims see that the Qur'ān is not the final revelation from the All-Wise and Omniscient God?

'Imād-ud-dīn's refutation of Muslim scholars' arguments against the Trinity and divinity of Christ will be considered along with his arguments for the proof of the Trinity. 'Imād-ud-dīn was totally convinced of the veracity of the Trinity and divinity of Christ. It began with his profound personal experience to which we now turn.

2. Personal experience of the Christ as one belonging to the Trinity

Pfander had argued that the doctrine of the Trinity was founded on God's self-revelation. 'Imād-ud-dīn, however, argued that his own conviction of the Trinity rested on Christ's self-revelation to him. As a Muslim *'ālim,* 'Imād-ud-dīn had a special aversion towards the idea of the divinity of Christ. He wrote: "When I was not a Christian, I used to say to my friends: if all the teachings of the law of Christ were to be proved correct, it might be possible; but Christ Jesus is God how can anyone prove this" (1888: 224).

Muslims, even after conversion, hesitate to call Christ the Son of God (Brown 2005:92). Belief in the divinity of Christ was the biggest stumbling block for 'Imād-ud-dīn as it was for many Muslims who refused to accept Christianity (Webster 2007:101, 'Imād-ud-dīn 1866/1957:13). 'Imād-ud-dīn became a Christian after comparing Islam and Christianity (1957:12) but remained perplexed about Christ's divinity until Christ was revealed to him. 'Imād-ud-dīn described his dramatic coming to grips with this most difficult doctrine in order to encourage Muslim seekers. He wrote:

> For the benefit of the seekers I share my experience. In the beginning when I looked at the Christian teaching, I liked it very much. But I was greatly afraid of hearing that Christ is the Son of God. [It was] as if there was a great mountain in front of my eyes and I wanted to be satisfied by pastors about this. They too used to say [to me] pray to God only he can tell you. I knew perhaps these people were incapable to answer therefore they tried to avoid me. Then after a long time, when sin, death, punishment and resurrection frightened me [although] the teachings of Christ had destroyed my [earlier] absurd rational and authoritative principles, so much so, that I saw myself in an extremely helpless state and in great danger. In this state, late at night, I went on the roof of my house and I prayed such prayers wholeheartedly with loud cries: O God! I am in great perplexity. You know, only you I love. The defects of Islam have become manifest to me. I have also come to know the excellences of Christianity; but Christ is the Son of God, I cannot conceive. If this is true then I am here to accept it and if it is wrong then save me from it. On the day of resurrection I want to rise unashamed in your presence. You tell me what this is. In the same night it was revealed to me that Christ is the Son of God. Earlier, I trembled to say such a thing, but now such a great joy entered my heart with this doctrine that I was unable to contain it within myself. I was repeatedly saying that he is the Son of God, and till today I find strength to bear suffering with the taste of this [revelation] and celebrate it. And I came to know that pastors were telling the truth that only God reveals this mystery, and were not avoiding me. Therefore, seekers should ask this from God the Father; no man in this world will be able to satisfy them. But God is ready to reveal this mystery to all who righteously seek him. (1875:285-6).

After this event 'Imād-ud-dīn began to bear witness to Christ's divinity, "But now I testify in the presence of God that Jesus Christ is Allāh. And this mystery has been revealed to me when I drew near to him" (1888: 224). That Jesus Christ is Allāh became the new '*shahada*' for him. From here on, 'Imād-ud-dīn argued that the conviction of Christ's divinity rested on revelation. Reflecting on John 6:44 he wrote that:

> Christ Jesus is Allāh, couldn't be opened up to any man without God himself revealing it. When Peter confessed Christ's divinity, Christ clearly said to him, "my father has revealed it to you." And we Christians know this very well from our experiences that we did not make the confession of Christ's divinity with our rational arguments; rather Allāh revealed this mystery to us, then we became convinced of his divinity (1888: 225).

He exclaimed, "blessed be the name of God who enabled us to believe in Christ and revealed his blessed Son to us" (1870:9). Once Christ was revealed to him it became a living relationship and this involved a continuous assurance of his divinity. In *Hadāyat al-Muslimīn*, he briefly noted six arguments for Christ's divinity. His final argument is based on his personal experience. He wrote, "Even till now Christ proves his divinity by his power in our minds in such a way that it is impossible for us to deny his divinity" (1899:384). While Muslims consider Christians *kāfir* for calling Jesus the Son of God, Christ's revelation had so strongly convinced him of his divine Sonship that, for him, its denial constituted *kufr*. He resolved, "no matter how much people of this world murmur against us, we will say clearly and over and over again that Christ is *Ibn* Allāh" (1888: 226-7). This personal revelation of Christ enabled 'Imād-ud-dīn to reread Christian and Islamic sources to discover the proof of Christ's divinity and the holy Trinity. God's revelation in the Bible and Christ's revelation to him corroborated each other. He used his personal experience as a strong argument in this debate. For 'Imād-ud-dīn, this appears to be the most important step towards accepting and understanding the doctrine of the Trinity because the Son of God, the second person of the Trinity, revealed himself to 'Imād-ud-dīn.

In the history of Christian-Muslim debates on the Trinity and divinity of Christ spanning over fourteen hundred years, 'Imād-ud-dīn appears to be the first Christian debater/apologist who argued for the veracity of this holy doctrine from the perspective of his personal encounter with the risen Christ. Middle Eastern apologists like John of Damascus, 'Abd al-Masiḥ Ibn Isḥāq al-Kindī, Timothy I, Patriarch of the Church of the East, Amar al-Basari, Abū Qurrah, and Nonus of Nisibis did their best to convince their Muslim interlocutors of their belief in the divinity of Christ and the Holy Trinity rested

on reasonable grounds. Their arguments, however, were based on rational principles and interpretations of the biblical and the Qur'ānic proof texts.

In the context of South Asia, from the sixteenth century onward, the Jesuit missionary scholars including the great Jerome Xavier, Western Protestant missionaries foremost among them Karl Pfander, and even other Muslim converts to Christianity like 'Abdullah Atham, Ṣafdar Ali, Sultan Muhammad Paul, and 'Abd al-Ḥaq who defended the doctrine of the Trinity, ('Abd al-Ḥaq's speciality was his debates with Muslims on the Trinity) employed the same method as previously done by the Arab Christian apologists. In this debate Christ's revelation to 'Imād-ud-dīn sets him apart and places him in the company of the Apostles, especially with St. Thomas and St. Paul. Both of them believed in the divinity and the lordship of Christ after the risen Christ revealed himself to them (John 20:24-28; Acts 9 etc.). The Apostle Paul particularly used his personal experience of Christ's revelation to him in his defence (apologia) of his faith and propagation of the lordship of Christ (Acts 22:3-19: 26:1-18). Like the Apostle Paul, 'Imād-ud-dīn used his unique personal experience of Christ's revelation to him as a strong argument in the nineteenth-century debates on the Trinity in India. There were alternative sources of authority to him as well. Naturally, the first among them was the Bible, not the Qur'ān.

3. Alternative Source of Authority: The Bible

Raḥmatullāh claimed that the doctrine of the Trinity was non-biblical and thus was an 'innovation' (Raḥmatullāh 1989:225 & 250). An important part of the Muslim argument had been that Christ never claimed to be God. Raḥmatullāh wrote, "More astonishing than anything else is this that Christ to the point of his ascension never clearly said, 'I am God'" (Raḥmatullāh n.d: 116). Contrary to Muslim arguments, 'Imād-ud-dīn demonstrated that the doctrine of the Trinity was taught in the OT but was more fully elaborated in the NT (1868: 434-5).

For establishing the plurality of divine persons in One God, 'Imād-ud-dīn used traditional evidence like plural pronouns used for God, and the presence of the 'Word and Spirit of God' in the Old Testament (Genesis 1:1-4; 1:28; 3:22 and 11:7). 'Imād-ud-dīn masterfully used Zechariah 13:7, a previously unnoticed verse in the Christian-Muslim debate on the Trinity in India to demonstrate the plurality of the divine persons in the OT. 'Imād-ud-dīn was particularly concerned to demonstrate the divinity of

Christ. Zechariah 13:7 was chosen because he saw in it the potential for supporting the notion of plurality of divine persons as well as the potential to challenge the Islamic concept of the absolute unity of God. It reads: 'Awake, O sword, against my shepherd, against the man who is close[84] to me …' (NIV). He translated the Hebrew word *'mith* (my associate) as *'hamtā'* (equal). In this verse, he argued that there is a certain man who is also God's *hamtā* and this points to that *aqnūm* (in Arabic *uqnūm*) who became incarnate. 'Imād-ud-dīn did not elaborate the term *'hamtā'* but in the context of the Qur'ān it would have been readily understood by Muslims. The word *hamtā* means 'an equal in power and dignity, 'a peer', 'a fellow' (Platts 2003). Muslims have always emphasized in connection with Allāh's *waḥdat*, that He is *'be-hamtā'* (without equal or like, peerless, incomparable Surah 112). Here 'Imād-ud-dīn shows that God is not *be-hamtā*. In this verse God speaks through his prophet Zechariah that he has a *hamtā*. But more importantly, 'Imād-ud-dīn identified that this *hamtā* was the Christ. He quoted Matthew 26:31 where Jesus referred to Zechariah's prophecy in 13:7 which was to be fulfilled in him shortly, i.e., Christ claimed to be that *hamtā*. 'Imād-ud-dīn said there were many such verses in the Old Testament but this was a clear proof of the plurality of persons in the divine unity. In the nineteenth century Indian context of Christian-Muslim *munāẓara* this appeared to be a new and an important argument. What Islam considers to be an unforgiveable sin – *shirk,* committed by Christians, 'Imād-ud-dīn was able to show that 400 years before Christ's birth God revealed to his prophet that he had an 'associate' who would become man. Yet 'Imād-ud-dīn acknowledged that while the Old Testament shows the plurality of *aqānīm*, the Gospel proves that these *aqānīm* consist of three (1868:437-8).

The New Testament begins with the story of the incarnation of the Son/Word of God; a key issue related to the doctrine of Christ's divinity and the Trinity. Muslims reject the doctrine of incarnation and argue that Christ was a mere human being created by God (Raḥmatullāh n.d: 89). In response to Raḥmatullāh's argument that the genealogies of Christ provided by Matthew and Luke proved definitively that Christ was only a human, 'Imād-ud-dīn however, showed that the Apostle John presented the divine genealogy of Christ (John 1:1, 14). He asserted that two genealogies in Matthew 1:1-17 and Luke 3:23-38 are related to Jesus' humanity. But the genealogy in John 1:1-

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[84] The Urdu translation reads: ('*Aye talwār tū maire charwāhe us insān per jo mairā hamtā hai baidār ho'i).* The Hebrew word *'mith* in this verse has been translated as "one who is close to me," "my associate," and my fellow. Current Urdu and Arabic Bibles translate it as my "*rafīq*". My associate seems to be a better translation, which agrees with Arabic and Urdu languages, which are closer to Hebrew.

5, and 14, is his divine genealogy which shows the relation of Christ's divinity to the divinity of his Father (1893:14). In his commentary on the Gospel of John[85] he wrote:

> Matthew and Luke wrote the Lord Christ's bodily genealogy. Matthew shows his body's relation to Abraham, and Luke to Adam. The Apostle John shows Christ's other nature, namely, genealogy of the Divinity that he is eternal and God Most High (Micah 5:2), and his coming forth is from eternity" (1888: 6).

Thus for 'Imād-ud-dīn, the Gospels from the outset establish that Christ is both perfect man and perfect God. 'Imād-ud-dīn pointed out that 'John also repeats this in 1 John 1:1-2, and then calls God the 'Father' and *Kalima,* the Word of life, which shows that Christ is Allāh' (1888: 7). 'He stressed, "Because this same Word became incarnate, he is surely God". He referred to 1 Timothy 3:16 where Paul says, "This is a great mystery – God appeared in flesh". He argued that, "by Christ's incarnation God's holy nature is revealed to us". The very reason that Christ is called the "Word" is because he reveals God. To him 'in the beginning was the Word' meant, that:

> Beyond the beginning of the universe, in eternity, the self-existent eternal Word was present. And that 'Word was with God' [means] that these were two persons: one God, and one Word. And both of them were self-existent before the creation of the world. And though there was co-existence even then there was personal differentiation; the one was with the other (1888: 6).

'Imād-ud-dīn repeatedly invoked Zechariah 13:7 to argue for Christ's equality with God. This time his purpose appears to establish Christ's essential equality.[86] James strong explains that *'mith* comes from a primitive root and means 'to associate, companionship, a comrade or kindred man, fellow neighbour' (1890:89). *'mith* is used in Leviticus 6:2 for *neighbours*, and in 18:20; 19:17; 24:19; 25:14-15 and 17 for *countryman*. These instances show equality of fellow Israelites, who were all relatives, neighbours, and equal as human beings. Thus, 'Imād-ud-dīn is clearly challenging Surah 112:4 which speaks of God having no equal, and Muslim theologians' claim that

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[85] 'Imād-ud-dīn co-authored this commentary with Robert Clark which was published in 1888. In 1897 Mawlwī Ṣafdar 'Ali reviewed his commentaries on Matthew, John and Acts of the Apostles. He wrote, 'The Commentary on the Gospel of St. John concerns itself, especially in part, with the refutation of Unitarianism … I trust those dear friends of mine who for some time have been under the spell of Unitarianism will profit by these books' (Clark 1904:43).

[86] Jamieson explains, 'The man that is my fellow' means: "The man of my union". The Hebrew for man [here] is "a mighty man," One peculiarly man in his noblest ideal, "my fellow", that is "my associate", "My equal" [DE WettE]; (a remarkable admission for a rationalist). "My nearest kinsman" [HENGSTENBERG] (John 10:30; 14:10,11; Philp 2:6) (Jamieson 1871).

Allāh is *be-hamtā*. This term implies essential equality and refers to Christ's co-eternity and co-equality with God. 'Imād-ud-dīn further quoted Revelation 1:8, 17 and 22:13: 'I am alpha and Omega, first and last', John 5:17-23, and again Psalm 2 in which David calls Christ 'the Son of God' (1892:12).

According to 'Imād-ud-dīn the phrase 'the Word was with God': "Shows a perfect unity and accord along with personal identity and eternal Sonship of the Word, which, is indescribable. Because his Sonship is clear from [the defect of] before and after, and is not a Sonship that is generally known; yet it is Sonship" ('Imād-ud-dīn 1888: 6). 'Imād-ud-dīn was clearly responding to Muslims' objection that the birth of a son implies that he cannot be co-eternal with the Father.[87] The third phrase of John 1:1, 'and the Word was God' meant neither an attribute of God nor a being created by God, but that 'the Word' himself was God. 'Imād-ud-dīn was responding here to Raḥmatullāh's argument that Christ's appellation *'kalimatullāh'* did not imply Christ's divinity. According to Raḥmatullāh wherever the word *kalima* comes in the Qur'ān it means *kalām-i-khudā* (speech of God) and *ḥukm-i-khudā* (command of God), not the *ẕāt* (nature) of a person (1888: 192). This shows, once again, a sharp difference of Christian and Muslim understanding of the meaning of some key theologically shared terms, like, *naskh, taḥrīf, tathlīth*, and here *'Kalimatullāh'*.

'Imād-ud-dīn argued that *kalima* was neither a *lafẕ* (word) nor a *jumla* (sentence) of any writing, but 'a title' of the second person, because, just as a word reveals some meaning, in the same way, this person revealed the meaning of God in his nature, attributes, and speech (1:18). Through his incarnation, this person revealed the whole glory of the divinity in his own holy nature – this is why he is called *'kalima'*. 'Imād-ud-dīn asserted that this same *kalima*, which was with God in the beginning, after [his] incarnation is called Jesus Christ. God the Father and the *kalima* have *tashakhkhus* (personhood), but their nature is the same. Then *kalima* is not an attribute but is a 'person' ('Imād-ud-dīn 1888:7-8).

John 1:1 reveals Christ's eternity, his relation with God the Father, and the unity of his nature with God Most High' ('Imād-ud-dīn 1888:7). For him the divinity of 'the Word' was so obvious, he said: "He, who finds Christ Jesus, finds God. With whom Christ is, he who was with the Father from eternity, He is with him; this is the meaning of the word Immanuel. Paul says this is a great mystery that God appeared in the body"

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[87] Muslim understanding of Christ seems to have been influenced by Arianism. John of Damascus, 'Abd al-Masīḥ al-Kindī, and Abū Qurrah seem to believe that the prophet of Islam was taught by an Arian monk Sergius (Roggema 2009:168).

(I 'Timothy'. 3:16) (1888:7). To him John 1:4, 14, 16 and 17 reveal that this *kalima*, within himself, had 'life,' 'light,' 'grace,' and 'truth' – qualities that exist in God alone; and they existed in Christ also because he was *Allāh t'āla* (1888: 8-9). Here 'Imād-ud-dīn is seen making a conscious connection with certain most beautiful names of Allāh; i.e. Al-Ḥaqq (the truth), Al-Nūr (the light), Al-Ḥayī (the living) and Al-Muḥayī (the giver of life).[88] A perceptive Muslim can readily see that the Apostle John ascribes those names to Jesus, which the Qur'ān ascribes to Allāh.

'Imād-ud-dīn was sure that the OT prophecies of God's coming to the world were fulfilled in Christ which proves that he is God. He saw three promises in the OT which had to be fulfilled in 'one person' to prove that he was the Christ: he must be the seed of woman – born only from a woman, and the son of Abraham and David; i.e. from their race, and the *Tsemach* Yahweh (Isaiah 4:2), namely, the branch of the Lord. One can see that 'Imād-ud-dīn was building a case for Christ's unique and perfect humanity and perfect divinity on the basis of OT prophecies. Here, he was especially concerned to show that *Tsemach* Yahweh means that Christ should come forth from the essence of God. God ordained that these three things must come together in the person of Christ and He brought them together in the *ẕāt* (nature) of Christ: that he be a legal son of Joseph son of David, and the physical son of Mary, the daughter of David, the seed of woman without any relation to man. 'These three promises are fulfilled in him. He alone is our God who is worshipped' (1893:83-84). Through incarnation the 'Word' became man and that 'Word' is God Most High. He was "the Yahweh *Tsemach* (The Lord's Branch). [Christ said that] I came forth from the Father and came into the world"[89].

'Imād-ud-dīn also underlines his position on the authority of the Bible as he refutes the Muslim argument that Christ never claimed to be God. Only certain thoughtless people could make this claim, he believed ('Imād-ud-dīn 1888: 229). John 5:16-18 shows that Christ's Jewish audience clearly understood that Christ was making a claim to be equal with God the Father, which they considered as blasphemy. 'Imād-ud-dīn explains:

> Christ has said that, "My Father is working till this very day, and I too am working". When Jesus said God was his father, from this Jews did not understand that just as God being the creator is father of all, or as he is father of saints and chosen people, Christ calls him father

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[88] These names appear in the following verses of the Qur'ān: Al-Ḥaqq (6:62; 22:6; 23:116; 24:25), Al-Nūr (24:35), Al-Ḥayī (2:255; 3:2; 20:111; 25:58; 40:65) and Al-Muḥayī (7:158; 15:23; 30:50; 57:2).
[89] John 16:28

in the same way. Had they understood this meaning from Christ's words, they would not have become his enemies at all. However, they fully understood Christ's special meaning; that he was telling them that he was equal to God by sharing his nature and this was the reason for their greater enmity (1888: 182).

Jesus did not consider himself God's Son and God his Father in the general Jewish sense (metaphorical), as has been argued by Raḥmatullāh.[90] Rather, 'Christ considered himself to be the true and one and only Son of God who partakes in His nature and all works from eternity to eternity; and this is what seemed so blasphemous to them' ('Imād-ud-dīn 1888: 182). 'Imād-ud-dīn quotes St. Augustine who condemned Arians for not understanding what Jews understood. He added Muslims to this list, as they do not understand what the Jews clearly understood. He referred to Surah 5:116 and said: "It is written in the Qur'ān that Christ did not say I am God but 'the Gospel clearly reveals that Jesus Christ surely and absolutely without any ambiguity made claim to divinity … and the main reason for the enmity with Jews was also this [claim]" ('Imād-ud-dīn 1888: 183).

Christ clearly claimed to be God when he said 'I and the Father are one' (John 10:30). Here, 'Christ claimed substantial unity with God, as the Greek means 'I and the Father are one thing' ('Imād-ud-dīn 1888: 337). And Jews wanted to stone him (John 10:31) because, 'they understood it clearly that he was calling himself 'God Most High'. Jesus questioned his adversaries for what reason they wanted to stone him. Their answer was; 'for committing blasphemy' that – 'you being a man make yourself God' (John 10:33).

Jesus' response to Philip's request 'show us the father,' is revealing too (John 14:8-11). Jesus answered to Philip: "he who has seen me has seen the Father; I am in the Father and the Father is in me, the Father lives and works in me, if you do not believe my words believe on the evidence of the works I do". From the words, 'I am in the Father and the Father is in me' (14:10), 'Imād-ud-dīn emphasized the oneness of the substance and nature of the Father and the Son. He invited his readers to consider four things from Jesus' answer to Philip:

> (i) He who knows me knows the Father, namely, the knowledge of me is the knowledge of God. (ii) He who has seen me has seen the Father, namely, to see me

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[90] Israel is God's son (Exodus 4:24) and that God is his father (Deuteronomy 32:6), and that you are gods and all of them are children of God (Psalm 82:6), and that God is certainly our father (Isaiah 63:16), and that He is the only God who is our father (Malachi 2:10). Then what is the reason that when Christ calls himself the Son of God, they say he blasphemes. The only reason is that he does not ascribe himself to be a kind of son mentioned in the above verses ('Imād-ud-dīn 1888: 182).

is to see God. (iii) I am in the Father and the Father is in me, namely, essence of both of us is one. (iv) The Father who is in me does these works and he says these words, namely, my action and his action is one, and my word and his word is one. In this place, Christ most clearly speaks of his divine nature. The result of this is that they are two persons whose essence, power, wisdom and life is one ('Imād-ud-dīn 1888:339).

'Imād-ud-dīn asserted that towards the end of his earthly life Jesus made it absolutely clear to the Jews that he was not only the son of David but also David's God (Matthew 22:41-46). He pointed out that Christ asked this question to the Pharisees in the presence of all the people, 'whose son is Christ? (Matthew 22:42). The Jews answered that he is the Son of David. Their answer came from Psalm 132:11: 'The Lord hath sworn *in* truth unto David; he will not turn from it; of the fruit of thy body will I set upon thy throne'. But, Psalm 110:1 also says, "The LORD says to my lord. 'Sit at my right hand until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet.'" Reflecting on this encounter 'Imād-ud-dīn said:

Although Christ's divinity is proved from most of the prophets, when Jews answered his question from a Psalm of David; then immediately he showed his divinity from the Psalm of David in such a manner that everybody's mouth was shut. This is true that as a human, he is also a son of David because he was born into David's family. But according to his second, namely, divine office he is David's God. Therefore the correct answer is that Christ the son of David is the Son of God, i.e. the root and seed of David[91] ('Imād-ud-dīn 1933:14-15).

Further reflecting on Psalm 110.1, 'Imād-ud-dīn writes:

It is very astonishing that when Christ was about to depart from the world, not only did he reveal his divinity from Psalm 110:1; but he also hinted at his ascension according to this verse, "I am about to go from the world and sit at the right hand of my father. And I will remain there till my enemies will become my footstool. When all the enemies will be conquered then I will come again and will reign on the throne of David for eternity" (1933:15).

He also draws his readers' attention to the prophetic nature of this verse and how it was being fulfilled. He says:

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[91] Revelation 22:16.

It is necessary to ponder upon the condition of the world by pondering on the words of Christ at that time, that how many of his enemies have been defeated in these eighteen hundred years, how many countries and how many souls have submitted to him and how many of his adversaries have perished, and till to day the world continues to submit to him. How truthful was what he said to Jews at that time. Now how can we say that he was not *Ibn* Allāh and was only a prophet? Surely he is *Ibn* Allāh and is now sitting at the right hand of God and one day will come again. This doctrine is absolutely correct that Jesus Christ is Son of the Living God (1933:15).

Thus 'Imād-ud-dīn provided many proofs that Jesus himself unambiguously claimed to be the Son of God and God.

On the other hand he also argued that Muslims have accepted the doctrine of *tawḥīd* and many other articles of their faith based on the belief that the Qur'ān came down from Allāh, not on the basis of rational proofs. Bishop Michael Nazir-Ali notes, 'the doctrine of *tauḥīd* is regarded as revealed and must be accepted *bila kaif* (without asking how)' (1987:16). In the same way, 'Imād-ud-dīn contends, that the Bible is the sole authority for Christians and since the Trinity is evident in the Bible its acceptance amounts to true faith and its rejection, *kufr*. He found his personal experience of the Trinity fully justified from the Bible. 'Imād-ud-dīn wrote:

I say clearly to the readers of this book [*Tawzīn al-aqwāl*] that if books of the Old Testament did not convince me about the coming of the saviour Christ the way I am now convinced, then it would have been difficult for me to become a Christian. And now, with my heart and soul, I am convinced of the humanity and divinity of Christ, and of the atonement, the Trinity in the holy nature of God, because, this is the teaching of the apostles and prophets. And all the statements against it are their [opponents] own words and deadly teachings of the carnal teachers (1894:53).

Thus 'Imād-ud-dīn was convinced that the doctrine of the Trinity and the divinity of Christ were true because this truth was revealed by the Holy Spirit to the true prophets and apostles, and the view of Muslims that Christ did not claim to be God and the Trinity was non-biblical is wrong. Arguably, this also shows that Powell's assertion that "Apart from the seemingly intractable problem of explaining the Trinity, 'Imād-ud-dīn found the text of the Bible to constitute the sufficient and essential basis for the acceptance of all other Christian doctrines" (2013:243) can be somewhat misleading. The whole discussion above under the sub-heading 3 of the present chapter: "*The Alternative source of authority: the Bible*", demonstrates 'Imād-ud-dīn's vigorous engagement with the Bible to show to his Muslim interlocutors that the doctrine of the Trinity and the divinity of Christ was fully revealed by God in the Bible. He was totally

convinced that God the Holy Spirit revealed this doctrine to the biblical prophets and apostles, and he used the biblical evidence extensively to demonstrate it. He particularly expounded Psalm 110, Isaiah 4:2, the *Tsemach* Yahweh (the branch of the Lord), and Zechariah 13:7 *'mith* Yahweh (the associate of the Lord) from the Old Testament, and extensively used the Gospel of John and Matthew 16 (see pages 132-33 above) to argue for the Trinity and divinity of Christ. Moreover, his booklets *Mein Kon Hūn* or *Man Ana* (Who am I?), and *Buzurg Nathaniel Ke Masīḥī hone kā Tazkarā* were especially written to argue that Christ himself revealed his divinity to his disciples before his crucifixion and after his resurrection (see the bibliography). In the light of the presentation above, it can be safely said that for ʿImād-ud-dīn the Bible did constitute a sufficient and essential basis for the acceptance and explanation of the doctrine of the Trinity.

 ʿImād-ud-dīn however, went a step further to show that the Trinity and divinity of Christ were not just based on the biblical authority or his personal experience of Christ but could also be argued for from Islamic sources.

4. The Trinity occurs, albeit inconsistently, in the Qur'ān

ʿImād-ud-dīn did not need any extra biblical evidence for the Trinity, yet in the context of debates he was forced to argue for the divinity of Christ from the Qur'ān and hadith. Raḥmatullāh had denied that the Qur'ān acknowledged Christ's divinity in its presentation of Christ's miraculous birth, sinless nature, amazing miracles like making birds from clay and imparting life to them, and by bestowing unique titles, like Kalimatullāh and Ruḥullāh upon him. He said that Christian arguments were based on the ambiguous verses while the Qur'ān clearly condemns the Trinity. ʿImād-ud-dīn makes two kinds of argument: firstly, the Qur'ān rejects Christ's divinity because its author misunderstood the Christian doctrine (Surah 5:75). Christians believe he is perfect man and perfect God (1899:383). Secondly, the Qur'ān does present Christ to be the second person of the Trinity in the divine figures of *al-Ruḥ, Mālik yaum al-Dīn*, and the Second Adam which have been misunderstood and misrepresented by Muslim scholars.

4.1 Christ, the Qur'ān and *al-Ruḥ* (The Spirit)

'Imād-ud-dīn developed an argument for the divinity of Christ and the Trinity from the perspectives of eschatology. A central line of his argument is that there is a vital agreement between Christians and the Qur'ān on the second coming of Christ, resurrection, and judgement on the last day. In the Qur'ānic eschatology, a person called *al-Ruḥ* will descend from heaven with the hosts of angels on the last day and will judge the world (Surah 78:38-39). 'Imād-ud-dīn argued that this Qur'ānic description corresponds to the biblical prophecies about the second coming of Christ, and that *al-Ruḥ* is none other than Christ.

'Imād-ud-dīn's starting point was to underline the biblical teaching about the second coming of Christ and compare it with Islamic eschatology:

> Jesus Christ, will come to judge the living and the dead of the world. He will cause the resurrection, and then he himself will judge. The last affair of all humanity is related to him; he will give reward and punishment. Thus according to these biblical teachings, from the beginning till today, all Christians wait for his [second] coming (1894:17).

'Imād-ud-dīn underlined that there is a marked difference in the Qur'ānic descriptions and what hadiths tell us about the second coming of Christ. He rejected the second coming of Christ based on the hadiths which he believed were true only to the extent that Jesus son of Mary is to come; everything else was invented by early Muslims to perplex Christians.[92] Yet he argued that the Qur'ānic description of Christ's coming generally corresponds to that of the Gospel. He wrote:

> The Gospels tell us that Christ's return is for resurrection and judgement. It is [also] written in (Surah Naba, [78:38]) 'The Day that the Spirit [al-Ruḥ] and the angels will stand forth in ranks, none shall speak except any who is permitted by Allāh, and He will say what is right. That Day will be the day of the Truth [*Yaum al-Ḥaqq*][93] (1894).

'Imād-ud-dīn argued that the Qur'ānic *al-Ruḥ* who will stand [on the earth] with the angels is the Christ:

> This al-Ruḥ is the same person whom Muhammad called Ruḥ Allāh, and mentioned him in (Nisa, raku' 23)[94] in these words: and *Kalima* sent to Mary and *Ruḥ* from him. It is about the same *Kalima* [who] in (John 1:1) is called God. And the meaning of *Ruḥun minhu* is that the Spirit of Christ is the Spirit of God. And those *mawlwīs* who say all spirits are from

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[92] He notes, "Christ will come, he will become a Muslim follower of Muhammad, he will say his prayer in the mosque, will destroy the faith of the Cross, will forbid eating pork, he will marry, will beget children and will die and will be buried by the grave of Muhammad. Then after a long time resurrection will take place and Christ's mother will marry Muhammad. All these unholy things are for torturing Christians" (1894:18).
[93] Surah 78-39.
[94] Surah 4:171

the command of God (*amr Rabbi*)[95], there, it is about human spirit, not about the Spirit of God. And how it could be while (in the end of [Surah] *Taḥrīm*)[96] [is written] that we breathed 'Our' Spirit into Mary (1894:20).

He cleverly identifies that the Qur'ānic *al-Ruḥ* and *Ruḥ Allāh* are the same person and thus immediately removes him from the realm of created beings. Since Christ is called *ruḥ allāh* in the Qur'ān, he has no difficulty in identifying *al-ruḥ* with Jesus. Quite importantly, 'Abd al-Karīm Jilānī also identifies Jesus with *al-ruḥ* (1894:20). In his translation of 4:171 'Imād-ud-dīn maintained that Jesus was a spirit from *within* Allāh ('Imād-ud-dīn 1894:51).[97] Thus 'Imād-ud-dīn shows that according to the Qur'ān Jesus cannot be considered one of *amr-i rabbī*; he is the very Spirit of God and thus not a created spirit as suggested by Raḥmatullāh. Having established that *al-ruḥ* is the same person who is also called *kalimatullāh* and *ruḥ allāh* in the Qur'ān, he turns to consider what expositors of the Qur'ān have to say about the second coming of Christ and *al-ruḥ*.

He begins by quoting from Jilānī's book *al-Insān al-Kāmil*[98] chapter 61 in which he discussed Jesus and Dajjāl. He notes that Jilānī wrote: "Jesus the Spirit will descend and a weapon of victory will be in his hand. Thus he will kill Dajjāl in the same place, because Jesus is the Spirit of God" ('Imād-ud-dīn 1894:20). 'Imād-ud-dīn also quotes from the *Tafsīr Baidāwī* that *al-ruḥ* was 'the Master over all spirits,' to which he adds from the *Tafsīr Ḥusainī* that 'no one is greater than him [*al-ruḥ*] in the whole creation'. He notes that *Tafsīr Madārak* identifies *al-ruḥ* with Gabriel and remarks, 'after His Throne, Allāh has not created anything greater than *al-ruḥ*' ('Imād-ud-dīn 1894:20).

Muslims were absolutely wrong in 'Imād-ud-dīn's view when they say *al-ruḥ* is Gabriel. He argued that Gabriel could not judge as God's vicegerent, because, "a person of a different genus is not allowed to judge another genus. For this reason even God himself does not judge" ('Imād-ud-dīn 1894:20). 'Imād-ud-dīn is making an important

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[95] He is referring to Surah 17:85.
[96] Surah 66:12. Literal translation is, we breathed (*fanafakhnā*), into (*fīhi*) Mary, of (*min*) our spirit (*rūḥinā*)
[97] His Urdu translation reads: '… *Masīḥ 'Isa Ibn Maryam Allāh kā rusūl aur us kā kalima hai jise us ne Maryam kī ṭaraf dālā aur Ruḥ hai us meiṉ se (y'ane Khudā meiṉ se)*.
[98] His full name is 'Abd al-Karīm bin Ibrāhīm al-Jilī or Jilānī. He was born in Baghdad in 1365/66 and died in 1424. He is said to be a descendant of Saint Gilānī or Jilānī, the founder of the Qadiriyya dervish order. He travelled to India and lived in Yemen. He wrote about twenty books of which *al-Insān al-Kāmil* is the best known. The term *al-Insān al-Kāmil*, in its technical sense was first used by Ibn 'Arabi. Ibn 'Arabi's doctrine was systematically developed by 'Abd al-Karīm Jilānī in his book *al-Insān al-Kāmil* (Nasr 1989:185). Reportedly, he brought the Qadiriyya Sufi Order to India (Nicholas Lo Polito 2010:14) to which order, at one point, 'Imād-ud-dīn belonged. Jilānī's work is considered to be among the highest authorities in Sufi literature and is said to have influenced the great 20th century Indian Muslim philosopher and poet Allama Muhammad Iqbal.

point here; the angels and even God, will not judge because they belong to a different genus or species. Therefore, it is not appropriate for them to judge human beings. He was alluding to John 5:22, 'Moreover, the Father judges no one, but has entrusted all judgment to the Son'. Thus, 'Imād-ud-dīn refuted the common Muslim understanding that Gabriel was *al-Ruḥ*. Even according to Baidāwī's description the greatness of *al-ruḥ* could not be ascribed to Gabriel ('Imād-ud-dīn 1894:20-21).

In equating *al-ruḥ* with Christ, he quotes from Jilānī's description from *al-Insān al-Kāmil* to support his point. Jilānī wrote, "Know that in the Sufis' *iṣṭilah*[99] this angel [*al-ruḥ*] is called *al-Ḥaqq al-makhlūq* (the created Truth) and *al-Ḥaqqīqat al-Muhammadiya* (the truth of Muhammad)" (1894:21). 'Imād-ud-dīn's response to Jilānī was:

> I say, in Christian *iṣṭilah* he is called the *ḥaqq maulūd* (truth begotten). Because he is not *makhlūq* (a creature): *makhlūq* is something that comes into existence from non-existence (*'adam*), and *maṣnu'* (made) is that which is formed using matter. But this angel neither came from *'adam* nor from matter, rather he has come forth from the *zāt* of God, therefore is called *maujūd-i-azalī* (eternally present). And to consider him to be the *haqqīqat-i-Muhammadiya* is [a] great sin, because he is God and *haqqīqat-i-Muhammadiya* is not divinity ('Imād-ud-dīn 1894:21).

'Imād-ud-dīn argued that Sufīs could not be right in their claim that *al-ruḥ* was Muhammad's *Ḥaqqīqat*, because, in the Qur'ān, Muhammad himself confessed to be 'a slave', 'a messenger' of Allah, and 'only a man' like other men.[100] Mu'tazilites considered Muhammad lesser than Gabriel. And, "there is not a single word in the whole Qur'ān, which will carry Muhammad's *haqqīqat* (truth) into divinity.[101] Thus to call him God who is not God, is not only a sin; it is *kufr-i-'azīm* (greatest unbelief)" ('Imād-ud-dīn 1894:21). Contrary to Muslim argument that belief in Christ's divinity is *kufr* and *shirk*, 'Imād-ud-dīn argued that those who hold either Gabriel or Muhammad to be *al-ruḥ*, are guilty of committing *shirk*. Positively, however, he deduced from Jilānī's description, an argument for the divinity of *al-ruḥ*. Since Jilānī explained that *al-ruḥ* came out of God Most High, 'Imād-ud-dīn asserted that Jilānī too believed that

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[99] Technical term, conventional meaning or idiom.
[100] 'Imād-ud-dīn uses these words to describe him: *'abadah wa rasūlah wa anā bashar mithlikum*. The last phrase comes from Surah 18:110 in which Muhammad says 'I am only a man like you'
[101] Certain Muslim scholars on the basis of the last part of Surah 5:15 "there has come to you from Allah a light and a clear Book" have argued that light in this verse means Muhammad. According to certain Muslim sects all prophets were created from Allah's light and Muhammad was created first. This is what is called *nūr-i-Muhammadī* or *haqqīqat-i-Muhammadī*.

this angel is God". Because, "a created being does not come out of the Most High; God comes forth from God (*ḥaqq se ḥaqq nikaltā hai*)" ('Imād-ud-dīn 1894:21).

'Imād-ud-dīn is interacting here with the Qur'ān and its Sunni and Sufi scholars. One can see his Christian theology emerging from these discussions as he coined new terms to describe the divinity of Christ: *ḥaqq maulūd* (truth begotten), and *maujūd-i-azalī* (eternally present), '*makhrūj*' (one who comes or goes out of) etc. In so doing he could even be seen to be making a contribution to the development of the theological vocabulary of the Urdu language. [102]

After establishing the divinity of *al-ruḥ*, 'Imād-ud-dīn showed that Jilānī himself said, 'God looked at that angel the way he looks at himself. Thus God brought forth this angel from his light and created the entire world by this angel' ('Imād-ud-dīn 1894:21). Here Jilānī's language 'God brought forth this angel from his light' corresponds to Christian confessional language like, 'begetting and proceeding,' about the second person of the Trinity. This appears to have played an important role in 'Imād-ud-dīn's argument. He wrote, "See! God brought him forth from his *ẕāt* (nature), even then, Sufis, mistakenly call him *makhlūq*. They should call him '*makhrūj*' (One who comes or goes out of) or '*maulūd*' (begotten)' (1894:21). This is exactly what Christians believe about the second person of the Trinity. 'Imād-ud-dīn finds Jilānī's statement that God created everything through this angel closely corresponding to Christian faith because God created everything through his *Word*. He is not a *makhlūq* but *khāliq* (creator). 'Imād-ud-dīn asserted:

> This is the place that you [Muslims] can understand the birth of the Second Person [of the Trinity], that in our Athanasius' Creed, it is written absolutely correctly [about Christ] that [he is] neither created nor made, but begotten. And this is the very place from where his name is called, the Son; not metaphorically but in reality – that he came forth from Divine nature, therefore he is Son. And he is called *iklotā* (the only begotten) because nothing else came forth from the nature of God. He alone came froth from Him and he created all that has been created ('Imād-ud-dīn 1894:21).

'Imād-ud-dīn showed that Jilānī taught that one among many names of this angel is '*amr allāh*' and that God made this angel to be the mirror of his nature (*apnī ẕāt kā*

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[102] Garsan Datasi a great scholar of Urdu literature studied the development of the Urdu language. In his *Maqālāt-i-Gārsān Datāsī* he recognised that 'Imād-ud-dīn's books were making a significant contribution to development of the Urdu language (1943).

ā'ina banāyā hai). God does not reveal himself in his nature but in this angel (he is the manifestation of God's nature).[103] Jilānī said that this angel is:

> The Centre[104] of this world and the world to come, and he is the Centre of the people of heaven and hell and of high mountains and of *a'rāf*[105], who is mentioned in the Book of Allāh where he said *yaum yaqūm al-Ruḥ*[106] [al-Ruḥ will stand that day], this angel is meant till the end. This is the day of *al-Ḥaqq* … this angel … is the perfect manifestation of God and is his highest revealer (1894:22-23).

For 'Imād-ud-dīn, Jilānī's description of *al-ruḥ* simply could not be ascribed to Muhammad or Gabriel. He claimed, "All of this is the description of Jesus Christ" ('Imād-ud-dīn 1894:23). 'Imād-ud-dīn surmised that Muhammad and Muslim scholars have misunderstood it because they do not read the Gospel:

> Had they found the Gospel, they probably would have understood that this is the same angel who is called *aqnūm-i-thānī* (Second person), who after having incarnated is called Jesus Christ. This is the same angel who met Adam in the Paradise, Ibrāhīm under the oak tree, to Jacob at the heavenly end of the ladder, to Moses in the bush, to Joshua outside of Jericho, and to Manoha in the field. Who came through incarnation, became man and helped men ('Imād-ud-dīn 1894:23).

Having thus argued from the Qur'ān and its expositors, especially from the author of *al-Insān al-Kāmil* that *al-ruḥ* is in fact the second person of the Trinity, he turned to the hadith. He quotes a hadith narrated by 'Ali that, "*al-ruḥ* is an angel … Apart from *'arsh*[107] Allāh has not created anything greater than this angel *al-ruḥ*. And if this *al-ruḥ* would wish, he would devour seven heavens and earths in one morsel" ('Imād-ud-dīn 1894:24). Imām Razi thought this was a weak hadith because there was an element of exaggeration in it and Muhammad told this only to 'Ali. 'Imād-ud-dīn, however, believed that this was a *ṣaḥiḥ* hadith because it was also reported by Ibn Mas'ud[108] exactly in the same way. ('Imād-ud-dīn 1894:24-25).

'Imād-ud-dīn's view was that both the Bible and the Qur'ān agree that the same person will judge the world. Muhammad called him *al-ruḥ*, but after his incarnation

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[103] Words in brackets are 'Imād-ud-dīn's. In Urdu it says, '*woh khudā kī ẓāt kā muzhar hai*'.
[104] 'Imād-ud-dīn translated Arabic word *quṭb* with *markaz* (Centre). It means a pole, round which anything revolves. In Sufi cosmology, Allāh appoints *quṭbs* to run the affairs of his world. Here this great Sufi scholar says that *al-Ruḥ* is the *quṭb* of both worlds; this world and world to come revolves around him. He is the Centre of the universe.
[105] According to Islamic belief *a'rāf* is the name of a wall that separates heaven and hell. Qur'ān's Surah seven is also called *al-A'rāf* (the Heights).
[106] Surah 78:38
[107] In Islamic understanding this is the highest heaven where God's throne is.
[108] 'Ali ranks number four and Ibn Mas'ud number five among the ten most authentic and original expositors of the Qur'ān.

Christians call him, Jesus Christ. Although the Qur'ān apparently denies Christ's divinity, 'Imād-ud-dīn and scholars like Jilānī are convinced of the existence of the *aqnūm-i-thānī* (1894:25). Thus the second coming of Christ is described in the Qur'ān in the same way as it is in the Bible, and those hadiths which contradict the Qur'ānic description of the second coming of Christ, cease to be trustworthy ('Imād-ud-dīn 1894:25).

'Imād-ud-dīn continued to argue for the Trinity from the Christian-Muslim eschatology by claiming that Christ is not only the Qur'ān's *al-ruḥ* but also the *mālik yaum al-Dīn* (The Master of the day of judgement).

4.2 Christ, the Qur'ān and *mālik yaum al-Dīn*

While Muslim scholars differ about the identity of *al-ruḥ*, there is no doubt that Allāh is the *mālik yaum al-dīn*. The opening Surah declares unequivocally that *allāh al-raḥmān al-raḥīm* is the *māliki yaumi al-dīn*. 'Imād-ud-dīn argued that although persons of the Trinity essentially share the attribute of judgement, 'on the day of judgement,' Christ alone will judge (John 5:22). He argued that though Christ as the second person of the Trinity is by nature the judge, as the incarnate Son, he is also the judge in the secondary sense; i.e., the Father has given him authority to judge. 'Imād-ud-dīn explained:

> But the second degree of exercising judgement is that God may appoint someone a judge to carry on judgement. So Christ being a human has also received this second-degree office from the Father; that only the Son of man may judge the world. From among the three persons, only the second person took on human nature and apart from sin, experienced all human weaknesses. Thus being a human, when judging human beings, he will appropriately exercise severity and gentleness. And a man, in his human form, will appear as God-man, the judge of men. ('Imād-ud-dīn 1888: 185-86).

Thus, 'Imād-ud-dīn argued that it is the most reasonable position that the Son alone should judge because he is the God-man; and the Father has made him the *mālik yaum al-dīn*. 'Imād-ud-dīn refers to Enoch's prophecy here: 'Behold the Lord is coming with thousands of his holy ones to judge all', which Jude applied to Christ (Jude 14,15). In this context, he also refers to other verses that talk about Yahweh coming to judge:

> See Zechariah 14:5 'Yahweh will come and Yahweh Elohi will come, and all the holy ones will come with him; therefore, the one to come is Yahweh Eloh, i.e. one *aqnūm*. Again in Joel 3:12 'I will go there to judge all the nations on all sides'. [He reiterates], 'The one who judges: Yahweh is Lord Christ (John 5:22-23). If this person is not Yahweh then, contrary

to his promise, why does Yahweh give his honour to him (Isaiah 42:8; 48:11)? Does God make people to worship idols, not at all? This is for the reason that Christ is God from God. He and his father have one divine nature, and he is God incarnate ('Imād-ud-dīn 1893:38-39).

This shows that by virtue of being the second person of the Trinity who took on the human nature and became God-man, Jesus Christ alone qualifies to be the judge of the world. In his second coming he will come as predicted in the Bible with hundreds of thousands of his angels to usher in the resurrection and the day of judgement. Therefore, the Qur'ān's angelic figure, *al-ruḥ* and the one who is said to be the *mālik yaum al-dīn* are none other than Jesus Christ: God incarnate. This God incarnate is also known in the Gospel as the Second Adam (1Cor. 15:45-47). The Qur'ān also alludes to it but uses it as an argument against the divinity of Christ.

How 'Imād-ud-dīn explains the point about Adam will be discussed below.

4.3 Christ, the Qur'ān and the Second Adam

Surah 3:59 reads, "The similitude of Jesus before Allāh is as that of Adam; He created him from dust, then said to him: "Be". And he was" (Yusuf 'Ali). Based on this verse Raḥmatullāh and other Muslim scholars have argued that Christ's birth without a father is similar to Adam and therefore not a proof of his divinity. 'Imād-ud-dīn's originality is seen here as he turned Surah 3:59 into a positive argument for the divinity of Christ. He says that the Qur'ān, here, agrees with the Gospel that Christ is *Ādam-i-thānī* (the Second Adam, [1Cor. 15:45-47])' (1930:5). The birth of the First and the Second Adam was essentially similar. There are two kinds of laws of birth: the *kun fikūnī*[109] (Be, and it is Surah 19:35; 36:82) and *'ādī* (habitual or natural). Gabriel, in response to Mary's question, explained that Christ would be born under the law of *kun fāyākun* and for this reason this *qudūs* (holy one) shall be called the Son of God (Luke 1:35; Surah 19:20-21, 35). 'Imād-ud-dīn asserted, 'The angel called the one to be born *'qudūs'*. All three

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[109] This is Urdu form of the Arabic words *'kun fāyākun'* used in Surah 3:59 for the creation of Adam from the dust

persons of *elohim* are *'qudūs'* (Isaiah 6:3). David too called the body of Jesus Christ *'qudūs'* (Psalm 16:10; Acts 4:27) (1894:19)'. For 'Imād-ud-dīn, Christ was not born as a man like all other men: it was the second Adam who was born. Why was the second Adam needed? For 'Imād-ud-dīn, God was bringing the second Adam into the world because:

> The first Adam could not handle his divine vice regency (*Khalāfat-i-Ilāhī*). He sinned and
> fell from his position and was defeated by the Devil. He lost all the blessings and brought
> all kinds of curses into the world. Now God's zeal presents the second Adam to defeat the
> Devil and save humanity ('Imād-ud-dīn 1894:21).

How should the second Adam be born? According to 'Imād-ud-dīn the second Adam must be born under the law in which the first Adam was born because if he were to be born from the descendants of the first Adam then he could not be the second Adam. Rather, he would be a man among other men in need of being saved by someone else. For this very reason Christ was born under the same law under which Adam was born. There is similarity between the births of Adam and Jesus:

> God was the father of the first Adam (Luke 3:38) and there was no woman to become his
> mother. His body was taken from the soil. And at that time the natural law of procreation
> was not established. Now to give birth to the second Adam the same power is present
> which was at work for Adam. And Gabriel says God will be the father of this child. To this
> extent there is equality with Adam ('Imād-ud-dīn 1894:21-22).

'Imād-ud-dīn saw the similarity in the fact that God was especially and directly involved in the birth of both Adams. Both were born under the law of *'kun fāyākun'*. Therefore, God was the father of them. But 'Imād-ud-dīn argued there was a huge difference between their births. The second Adam had a mother, the Virgin Mary, from the race of Adam. Why was the second Adam not created just like the first Adam? Anticipating this question from his challengers, 'Imād-ud-dīn reasoned this was because the second Adam wanted to 'come into' the race of the first Adam to save this corrupted race. Therefore, the physical father was removed from his birth so that he may remain the real son of his father: God. He came into the race of Adam with his father's holiness, so that he who was naturally holy may purify them who were naturally unholy (1894:22). 'Imād-ud-dīn, here, cleverly refutes the Islamic doctrine of the sinlessness or innocence of all prophets. To him no child of first Adam could be innocent; all are bitter fruits of the bitter tree. Only Christ was innocent because he was born apart from the

race of Adam. He saw the prophecy regarding the 'Woman's race,' fully revealed and fulfilled in Christ's birth.

> A 'Woman' came out of Adam, now a man comes forth from a woman … God's first law [of birth] is seen [active] again (Galatians 4:4,5) … see this person who was to born from the woman is same who was mentioned by God before the execution of the law of procreation. ('Imād-ud-dīn 1894:24).

The Second Adam was not only different; he was also far greater than the first Adam. Because by means of *kun fāyākun* the child who came into Mary's womb, was perfect God and perfect man. A new human [second Adam] was born who remained both 'in' and 'outside' of Adam's race. And because 'the Word' (*kalima*) who is Allāh, has incarnated in this second Adam, the perfect divinity was in him (John 1:1, 14). After quoting John 1:1,14 he explained that:

> The holy human who came into existence in the womb of the Virgin Mary by the power of God; whose birth was similar to Adam, and who was born from the daughter of David became the Son of David, he is called *Ibn* Allāh by coming into being through the power of the Most High God. Right at the coming into being of this holy human the 'Word incarnate' was in him. And 'the Word' is the name of the second person in the Divine nature. ('Imād-ud-dīn 1894:29).

Like the first Adam, the second Adam came into existence by the power of God. This is why like the first Adam, he is also called *ibn allāh*; and because the divine holiness is in him, he is Allāh's *qudūs*. The *kalima,* which incarnated in him, is the true and eternal *ibn allāh* and the eternal *maulūd*. His birth has happened within the divine nature from eternity in which there is no before and after (Micah 5:2-4). For 'Imād-ud-dīn, God's special power was operative "to prepare for Him who was eternal a holy body namely, holy human, in the womb of the chosen Mary without any help of man; so that the eternal creator may eternally live in him and he may be the true temple of God" ('Imād-ud-dīn 1894:30). Thus the Qur'ānic description of the similarity between Jesus and Adam did not mean a negation of Christ's divinity but an affirmation of the creation of special humanity of the second Adam who was God's *qudūs*; 'true God' lived in him in the way He has never lived in anyone. In him perfect humanity and perfect divinity were united: he was God-man, not simply a man like Adam ('Imād-ud-dīn 1894:30).

5. The Trinity in Muslim Tradition

'Imād-ud-dīn found evidence of the Trinity not only in the Qur'ān but also in some concrete Muslim traditions. He showed that certain Shi'a sects believe in incarnation. For example, "The sect of Ghāliya believes 'Ali to be God' ('Imād-ud-dīn 1899:213). And to the Yāziy'ia 'Imām Ja'far was hidden God. The form which he brought in the world was not real; rather it was similar to the real' ('Imād-ud-dīn 1899:216). He showed that it is written in the beliefs of the sect of Ṣālihiya[110] that, "To say there is Trinity in the nature of God is not *kufr*" (1892:125). Again, Ṣālihiya say, "to know is faith and not to know is *kufr* and to believe in the Trinity in the nature (*zāt*) of God is not *kufr*" (1899:217).

Muslims had not uniformly rejected the idea of plurality in unity and this can also be seen even in some Mu'tazili thinkers. The Muslim poet-philosopher, Sir Muhammad Iqbal (1877-1938) also noted that Ahmad and Fadl, two disciples of the great Mu'tazili scholar Nazzām recognised the eternity and divinity of Christ. They held that, "the original creators are two – God – the eternal principle and the word of God – Jesus Christ – the contingent principle" (Iqbal 1959: 41-42). 'Imād-ud-dīn presented evidence not only from Shi'a sects but also from Sufīs and Sunni traditions. He extensively quoted Jilānī to show that he believed in the Trinity. Muhammad Iqbal and the Ahmadi founder, Mirza Ghulam Ahmad (1835-1908) concurred with him. Iqbal quoted the following verse from Jilānī's *Insān al-Kāmil* vol. 1, p. 8 in which he recognizes God as one and three at the same time: "If you say God is one, you are right; but if you say that He is two this is also true. If you say no, but He is three, you are right, for this is the real nature of man." (Iqbal 1908/1959:130-31). Akbar Masīḥ quotes Mirza's vehement complaint against those Muslims who accepted the Trinity. Singling out Jilānī he wrote, Jilānī: "Has crossed all boundaries in this regard and said Trinity in one aspect is correct and there is no problem with it; and Jesus is like this and that, rather he points out that he is not a creation of God most high" (Akbar 1957:95). This brief discussion shows that certain Shi'a sects, rationalist Sunnis, and Sunni Sufīs have believed in the Trinity and divinity of Christ and did not consider it *kufr*.

'Imād-ud-dīn went much further and even claimed that the prophet of Islam clearly confessed the Trinity which has informed and formed Muslim religious and social practices, that tacitly bear witness to the Trinity. He refers to three *wuqūf* (to know or be aware of) in Sufi practice of *dhikr* (remembrance), namely, *wuqūf-i-*

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[110] He quoted it from *Ghuniyat at-Ṭālibīn*, in which the beliefs of the sect of Ṣālihiya are described.

zamānī[111], *wuqūf-i-'adadī*,[112] and *wuqūf-i-qalbī*.[113] He discusses the Trinity under *wuqūf-i-'adadī*. *Wuqūf-i-'adadī* means the *dhikr* of "*nafī athbāt*" negation of everything and affirmation of Allāh alone. *Nafī athbāt* (*kalimah Tayyabah*); the cycle of first *kalimah* which is: *nafī* (negation): *Lā-ilaha,* and *athbāt* (affirmation) *illallāh*. 'Imād-ud-dīn argued that *Wuqūf-i-'adadī* demands that the *dhikr* of "*nafī athbāt*" must be done in *ṭāq* (odd number) because of the Muslims' understanding of Muhammad's saying '*in allāh witran yaḥub al-witr*– Allāh is *ṭāq* and He loves *ṭāq* ':

> The *dhikr* of "*nafī athbāt*" should be done in *ṭāq* (odd number) not in *juft* (even number), i.e. not to remain 20 but to become twenty-one. So that after separating *jufts* (pairs), at the last three, which is *ṭāq,* should be left (*ākhar ko tīn jo ṭāq hein bāqī rahe*). Because they understand *in Allāh witran yaḥub al-witr*– Allāh is *ṭāq* and He loves *ṭāq* ('Imād-ud-dīn 1889:127).

He says that Sufis, Muslims and Christians ought to think deeply about this hadith because in it Muhammad testified that Allāh is *ṭāq* '. According to 'Imād-ud-dīn *majarrad wāḥid* (bare or mere one) cannot be *ṭāq* (1889:127). He emphasized the fact that this is *ṣaḥiḥ* hadith:[114] "All numerologists know that number one (*eik kā 'adad*) is neither *ṭāq* nor *juft*. Two is *juft* and three is *ṭāq*. And all the Muslim philosophers say that the first number is three "*'adad awwal nām hai tīn kā*)" ('Imād-ud-dīn 1889:127). 'Imād-ud-dīn utilised this Sufi practice to argue for the Trinity and the Bible:

> We Christians, according to the guidance of the word [of God] understand God Most High as the *Ṭāq*, i.e. Trinity. And this is also true that God loves *ṭāq* because his holy substance has [a special] relation with it. This is the reason that in His presence angels in heaven observe *'adad ṭāq,* and they say Holy, Holy, Holy Lord of the hosts ('Imād-ud-dīn 1889:128)

'Imād-ud-dīn argued that the Sufīs did not grasp the depth of *'adad ṭāq* and *wuqūf 'adadī*. He writes, "Sufis teach, *'adad ṭāq* should be observed in the *zikr,* so that God may like it; we say *ṭāq* should be observed even in the nature of God". Christians, not Sufis, have the perfect *wuqūf* of number *ṭāq* ('Imād-ud-dīn 1889:128). His criticism of the Sufis was that 'they left out *Allāh witr,*' which was the real thing and put *hamā ūst*

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[111] These three *wuqūf* were added to the practices of the Naqshbandi Order by Baha-ud-dīn Naqshband (d. 1389) (see more in The Golden Sufi Centre 2015).
[112] See more in The Golden Sufi Centre 2015.
[113] See more in The Golden Sufi Centre 2015.
[114] 'Imād-ud-dīn does not give full hadith or its proper reference. However, this hadith is found in Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhari, book of invocations, vol. 008, book 075, no. 419 and is narrated by Abu Hurairah: Allāh SWT has ninety-nine names, i.e. one hundred minus one, and who ever believes in their meanings and acts accordingly, will enter paradise; And Allāh SWT is Witr (one) and loves 'the Witr' (i.e.; odd numbers).

(pantheism) in place of that; but want to practice '*yaḥub al-witr*' ('Imād-ud-dīn 1889:128). Muhammad understood that three is a blessed number and commanded the observance of number three in all of his law (*sharī'at*). 'Imād-ud-dīn exclaims that Muhammad adored the number three so much that he ordered his followers to observe it:

> While doing *wuẓū* (ritual ablution) to put water in the nose three times, to rinse the mouth three times, to wash every organ three times, to praise God three times during *rukū'* (bending of the body during the prayer) and *sijda* (prostration); so that all three *aqānīm* may be worshipped. The most pleasing *namāz* is that of witr,[115] he appointed three *rak'at* in it. He asked to give *ṭalāq* (divorce) three times. Three prayers, *fajr, ẓohr, 'aṣr* in the whole day and three in the whole night, *maghrab, 'ishā*, and *witr* were appointed. He said to wash a polluted place or clothes three times, to take three breaths while drinking water so by the blessing of the Trinity water may not disturb the belly ('Imād-ud-dīn 1868:444-5).

The reason for this discussion was to show that in 'Imād-ud-dīn's view the idea of the Trinity exists in the Islamic tradition but in a form that remains suppressed. Muslim tradition bears witness to the Trinity. The discussion below shows however, it was his view that the doctrine of *tawḥīd* was untenable and in reality Muslims do not have a uniform understanding of *tawḥīd*.

6. Diversity of the notion of *tawḥīd* in Islam

In the Christian-Muslim *munāẓara* over the Trinity, the heart of the debate involved *tawḥīd*. 'Imād-ud-dīn argues that though all Muslims confess it, they do not have a uniform understanding of *tawḥīd*. He broadly divided the idea of *tawḥīd* into *waḥdat al-wujūd* (unity of being or existence) and *waḥdat-i-muṭlaq* (absolute unity) or *waḥdat-i-ḥaqīqī* (real unity). *Waḥdat al-wujūd* was also known as *hamā ūst* (He is all, or all is He) and is held by many Sufis, especially since the time of Ibn al-'Arabi (1165-1240) ('Imād-ud-dīn 1889:84, Faruqi 1989:1).

6.1 *Waḥdat al-wujūd*

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[115] *Namāz-i-witr* is also called '*Ṣalāt al-witr*' (odd numbered prayer). In this *ṣalāt* Muslims say three-rak'at prayer. *Ṣalāt-i-witr* is considered to be the greatest act of worship that draws a person closer to God. Muslims differ whether it is an obligatory prayer or must not be neglected because it is a confirmed Sunnah of the prophet of Islam. *Namāz-i-witr* is said at night after the evening and before the dawn *namāz*.

Waḥdat al-wujūd is predominantly a Sufi understanding of *tawḥīd*, which according to 'Imād-ud-dīn is unreasonable, contrary to God's honour and glory, and thus untenable. Contrary to Muhammad Iqbal's thesis that Sufism emerged as a reaction to the 'dry as dust Islam of rationalists' (Iqbal 1908/1959: x, xi); 'Imād-ud-dīn argued that the roots of Sufism lie in the idol worshippers of Greece, Egypt and India. He also proposed a direct link of Sufism to the pre-Islamic idolatrous Arab nation of Sufa – the custodians and priests of the K'aba before Muslims took over Mecca ('Imād-ud-dīn 1889:15-23). The philosophically inclined later Sufis, argued for *hamā ūst* from Surah 57:3: "He is the first and the last and the manifest and the hidden." The Sufis claimed, says 'Imād-ud-dīn, that Muhammad was one of the *mufrids* (singularists). They believed Muhammad saying, "I am Ahmad without *mīm* and Arab without *'ain"*. 'Imād-ud-dīn considered these were the "words of *kufr* invented by Sufis" ('Imād-ud-dīn 1889:89-90). His even more forceful argument against the doctrine of *waḥdat al-wujūd* or *hamā ūst* was that, "If this world had come out of God then it would have shared God's nature, and the attributes of that Holy Nature would have been found in this world" ('Imād-ud-dīn 1889:90). This is an extremely important argument. It affords him an opportunity not only to refute one type of Islamic *tawḥīd* but also to demonstrate the legitimacy of *waḥdat fil tathlīth* and *tathlīth fil waḥdat*. He writes:

> Behold, Jesus Christ came out of the nature (*ẕāt*) of God and came to this world; and the Holy Spirit came forth from God and Christ … and the attributes that belong to the Divine nature, and the very same nature, which is in the essence (*ẕāt*) of God are equally found in those two persons. They have God's nature ('Imād-ud-dīn 1889:93).

He further argues that, "*waḥdat-i-wujūdī* destroys the distinction between God and creatures and he who believes in it becomes a *musharak* and atheist" ('Imād-ud-dīn 1889:11). Historically speaking, Christians have been called *musharak* by Muslims for believing in the Trinity; 'Imād-ud-dīn turned this charge against the followers of *waḥdat al-wujūd* around and asserted that this kind of Islamic doctrine of *tawḥīd* is weak and is contrary to the honour and glory of God.

6.2 *Waḥdat-i-ḥaqīqī*

According to 'Imād-ud-dīn Muslims conceived *waḥdat-i-ḥaqīqī* in opposition to both *waḥdat al-wujūd* and *waḥdat fil tathlīth*. He defined *waḥdat-i-ḥaqīqī* as *waḥdat-i-fardī* (*fard*, i.e. single, sole, singular), *waḥdat-i-'adadī* (numerical unity), and *waḥdat-i-'aqlī*

(conceived and proposed by *'aql*). 'Imād-ud-dīn rejected all these kinds of *waḥdats* as he considered them to be contrary to God's honour and glory. 'Imād-ud-dīn was of the opinion that Muhammad also believed in *waḥdat-i-ḥaqīqī* ('Imād-ud-dīn 1882:40). 'Imād-ud-dīn appears to be confused here. He had also argued that Muhammad believed in the Trinity. One cannot believe in the Trinity and *waḥdat-i-ḥaqīqī* at the same time. Perhaps the spirit of *munāẓara* was causing him to make contradictory statements at different points if they could serve his purpose.

Waḥdat-i-ḥaqīqī means numerical oneness, as the Qur'ān argues that more than one God would have fought with each other (Surah 21:22). Faruqi asserts, that Sheikh Sirhindi's doctrine of *tawḥīd* was developed in opposition to *waḥdat al-wujūd* and must be [understood] to be numerically one (1989:37). According to 'Abdul Ḥaqq, generally the Muslim concept of *tawḥīd* means '*wāḥid maḥdūd*' (limited *wāḥid*), which in turn means '*wāḥid m'adūd*' (numbered *wāḥid*) (1939:2). To 'Imād-ud-dīn *waḥdat-i-ḥaqīqī* is the Islamic concept of 'absolute oneness of God' – *waḥdat,* which excludes every kind of plurality ('Imād-ud-dīn 1939:3).

'Imād-ud-dīn further elaborated that since the Islamic concept of 'absolute oneness' is indeed mathematical and numerical, they claim *tathlīth* is contrary to *'aql*; therefore no reasonable person can accept it. He noted their argument is that "oneness indicates the negation of numbers, while the Trinity indicates numbers. These are two opposites and their conjunction in one person at the same time, in reality is absurd" ('Imād-ud-dīn 1876/1930:75). 'Imād-ud-dīn presented two arguments against such accusations: firstly, Muslim argument is based on physical or material principles, which cannot be applied to God. For example, the being of the Creator who is not material is rationally impossible to grasp. It cannot be conceived how the immaterial God has created this material world; a carpenter cannot make a table unless he has wood and tools.

In the same way how can a being (*wujūd*) without space (*makān*) be conceived; but we accept that God exists and is free from place. *'Aql* does not accept any being which is free from six dimensions (*jihāt-i-sitta*), whereas God is free from *jihāt-i-sitta*. 'Imād-ud-dīn showed awareness of and utilised arguments developed by Muslim theologians concerning the attributes of God. He alluded to their argument that God's attributes are neither *'ain ẕāt* nor *ghair ẕāt*. He pointed to the difficulty Muslim theologians have faced that, if [His] attributes are accepted *'ain ẕāt* then created things would be in the station of divinity. Thus the doctrine of *hamā ūst* will be correct which

is rationally false. If God's attributes were considered *ghair ẕāt* then separation would have to be allowed, for example, of all visible attributes. In this case God would be imperfect. Therefore, compulsorily (*majbūran*) it has to be accepted that His attributes are neither *'ain ẕāt* nor *ghair ẕāt,* which is beyond conception. 'Imād-ud-dīn argues that there are only two possible outcomes of such thinking: either apply all these materialistic, rationalistic laws to God and lose God or consider him above *'aql* (reason, intellect) and confess God who transcends *'aql* without question ('Imād-ud-dīn 1876/1930:75).

Secondly, he argued that Muslims do not understand the nature of the divine unity. They deduce the negation of *ta'addud* (numbers) with *waḥdat* because they do not understand in what way God is *wāḥid*. He argued that *waḥdat* means that, 'the Essence of the divinity is one; no other essence is included in his essence. He is one essence, which exercises Godship over all creation ('Imād-ud-dīn 1868:441-2)'. In the same way, argued 'Imād-ud-dīn, they draw a proof of *ta'addud* from *Tathlīth. Tathlīth* means that it is the same essence in which there are three persons. Although they are three persons even then to call them three gods is *kufr* because the essence is one not three essences. Had we said that God is one (*māhiyat)* essence and the same God is three essences, then it could have been a contradiction. He reasoned that there is a specific restriction (*qaid*) here, i.e., God is one *māhiyat* and the same *māhiyat*, in respect of *tashkhīs* (determination) has three *aqānīm*. Thus, he argued as far as this discourse can be understood, it is free from contradiction ('Imād-ud-dīn 1868:441-2; 1876/1930:75).

While 'Imād-ud-dīn defended that the Christian concept of *tathlīth* was not irrational and showed that Muslims themselves could not strictly apply rational principles to God, he argued that the Muslim understanding of *tawḥīd* both as *waḥdat al-wujūd* and *waḥdat-i-ḥaqīqī* are *'aqlī waḥdats* (conceived by the human mind). He argued that, *waḥdat al-wujūd* is a description of *hamā ūst* which is rationally absurd and *waḥdat-i-ḥaqīqī* necessarily implies *jihat* and *makān* from which God is *'aqalan* free ('Imād-ud-dīn 1882:30). Thus 'Imād-ud-dīn tries to demonstrate that there is no uniform understanding of *tawḥīd* among Muslims and that Islamic concepts of *tawḥīd* are rationally absurd and contrary to the honour and glory of God. This is exactly what Raḥmatullāh and other Muslims had argued in speaking against Christianity– i.e. the doctrine of the Trinity is irrational and absurd.

The basic point was that the Islamic concepts of *tawḥīd* had their origin in human intellect and that Muslims had in this sense no intellectual superiority over Christians. The reality is that the doctrine of *tawḥīd fil tathlīth* is a *sirr-i-aẓīm* (great mystery), which is clearly taught by Christ and his disciples in the Gospel ('Imād-ud-dīn 1882:30). The fact that *tawḥīd fil tathlīth* is beyond comprehension is, for 'Imād-ud-dīn, a proof of its divine origin over against the invention of human intellect. He argued that had it originated in the human mind, it would have been understood by the human mind. 'Abdul Ḥaqq, another Muslim convert, concurs with him and asserts that; "the reason itself demands that God's *waḥdat* be higher than our understanding" ('Imād-ud-dīn 1939:4). The truth of Divine Unity has to be accepted by faith alone. 'Imād-ud-dīn said, 'God is one this is the truth and by faith we say *laillah ilaillah* (no god except God) ('Imād-ud-dīn 1889:10). He asserted:

> The third kind of *waḥdat* is way higher than [human] understanding. And the numbers of persons of the Trinity do not exclude that *waḥdat* from the [revealed] *waḥdat*. That *waḥdat* is that of *māhiyat*. Our faith, in the imitation of prophets and guidance of the Bible, is on that *waḥdat*; not on *waḥdat-i-wujūdī* and *waḥdat-i-ḥaqīqī*; because, both these *waḥdats* are far from the glory of God ('Imād-ud-dīn 1882:40).

The above discussion shows that 'Imād-ud-dīn not only gave a defence of the doctrine of the Trinity, but also argued that the Islamic concepts of *tawḥīd* were untenable.

7. Continuities and discontinuities with previous positions

The preceding discussion shows that 'Imād-ud-dīn utilized many of the arguments historically employed by Christians for supporting the Trinity and divinity of Christ. For example, John of Damascus and the anonymous author of the *Fī Tathlīth Allāh al-Wāḥid,* Abū Qurrah, Abu Ra'ita, Amar al-Basri, Timothy I, and Nonnus of Nisibus, argued for the plurality of persons in the Godhead and divinity of Christ on the basis of the Bible and that the Qur'ān calls Christ *Kalimatullāh* and *Ruḥullāh,* and testifies to his birth without a father. Some have also argued for Christ's divinity from his unique miracles like making birds from clay and giving them life. However, as far as I have perused the secondary sources on Arab Christian apologists through the writings of

William G. Young[116], Sidney Griffith[117], David Thomas[118], Thomas Ricks[119], Jean-Maurie Gaudeul[120] and Mark Beaumont[121]. They show that 'Imād-ud-dīn added some fresh arguments not only from the previously unnoticed passages of the Qur'ān and the Bible, but also from his personal experience and Islamic traditions, which had/have particular relevance for Muslims.

In the context of India, Muslim-Christian debates on the Trinity began in the 16th Century with the arrival of Jesuits at the Court of the Mughal Emperor Akbar (1542-1605) (Maclagan 1932:29). 'Imād-ud-dīn significantly added to Rudolf Aquaviva's (head of the first mission 1580-1583) basic argument that since 'Muhammad acknowledged the divine origin of the Gospel, he was inconsistent in refusing to acknowledge the divinity of Christ' (Maclagan 1932:30); and to Jerome Xavier's (head of the third mission) arguments for the Trinity and the divinity of Christ from the Qur'ānic epithets of Jesus: 'the word' and 'the spirit' of Allāh (Camps 1957:100-113).

Pfander argued that the Trinity must be accepted on the authority of revelation alone, but did argue from the Qur'ān as well (Pfander 1986:179). He argued that Muslims reject the Trinity because the Qur'ān and its commentators misunderstand that the Trinity consists of God, Mary and Jesus; this is a trinity, which Christians also reject. His evidence from the Qur'ān includes the use of plural pronouns used for Allāh and one of Allāh's names *al-wadūd* (the lover) (Pfander 1986:182-3). For Christ's divinity, he argued that the Qur'ān recognizes his status higher than all other prophets by acknowledging his birth without a father and ascribing him the titles 'word and spirit of Allāh'. Thus, for him, Muhammad testified to his divinity (Pfander 1895:5).

'Imād-ud-dīn's discussion on the Trinity shows both continuity and change. He utilized Pfander's arguments selectively with subtle twists and nuances but also neglected or rejected some of Pfander's important arguments to support the notion of divine plurality in unity, such as, God's attribute of being a lover both in the Bible and the Qur'ān

[116] William G. Young. 1974. *Patriarch, Shah, and Caliph: a study of the relationships of the Church of the East with the Sassanid Empire and the early caliphates up to 820 A.D., with special reference to available translated Syriac sources.* Rawalpindi: Christian Study Centre.

[117] Sidney H. Griffith. 2002. *The beginnings of Christian theology in Arabic: Muslim-Christian Encounters in the Early Islamic Period.* Aldershot, Great Britain: Ashgate

[118] David Thomas. 2001. *The Doctrine of the Trinity in the Early Abbasid Era.* In, Lloyd Ridgeon (edit), *Islamic Interpretations of Christianity.* London and New York: Routledge

[119] Thomas W. Ricks, 2013. *Early Christian contributions to Trinitarian Theology: The development of the Doctrine of the Trinity in an Islamic Milieu.* Minneapolis: Fortress Press.

[120] Gaudeul, Jean-Marie. 1990. *Encounters & Clashes: Islam and Christianity in History.* Rome: Pontificio Istituto di Studi e Islamici. Volume I, A Survey

[121] Mark Beaumont. 2005. *Christology in dialogue with Muslims: a critical analysis of Christian presentations of Christ for Muslims from the ninth and twentieth centuries.* Bletchley: Paternoster

(Pfander 1986:182-3). It shows that he was employing his own mind and not blindly following Pfander. For example, he used John 1:1-14 to establish Christ's divine genealogy, a totally new argument coined to refute Raḥmatullāh's argument that Christ's human genealogies in Matthew and Luke negated Christian claims to his divinity (Raḥmatullāh n.d: 89). While both argued that God revealed the Trinity, 'Imād-ud-dīn added a personal dimension to this argument: self-revelation of the second person of the Trinity to him. 'Imad-ud-din stressed that accepting Christ as Allāh completely depends on the revelation from God. Reflecting on John 6:44 he wrote:

> Christ Jesus is Allāh, couldn't be opened up to any man without God himself revealing it [to him]. When Peter made the confession of Christ's divinity, Christ said [to him] clearly, that my father has revealed it to you. And we know this very well from our experiences that we did not make the confession of Christ's divinity with our rational arguments. Rather, Allāh revealed this mystery to us, then, we became convinced of his divinity … And when an extremely great desire to meet God (*wasl*) was born within us then he removed the curtain[122]. And we saw through the eyes of the heart that Christ Jesus is Allāh and we bowed the head of our spirit on his feet and he gave us eternal life and now we live and are happy (1888: 225).

We should recall that even as a Muslim 'Imad-ud-din's greatest desire was to meet God (*Allāh se wasl*) (1957). Although he gave a somewhat fuller description of Christ's revelation to him under the interpretation of Matthew 16 [see page 124], it seems that Christ gave his revelation to him more than once. He wrote:

> Christian religion is not mere words; we conduct ourselves in a special way. And certain strange things happen to us through which our hearts continue to know Christ's great power and glory, and keep uniting with him (*us ke sath wa-basta hote jate hein*) and receiving strength [from him]. Because he answers our prayers and is ever present for help (*madad ke liye hazir-o- nazir[123] paya jata hai*), and he is effective in us and reveals himself to us (1888: 168).

The argument from the personal experience is missing from all previous discussions.

'Imād-ud-dīn also added a cultural argument - every culture shows some consciousness of the Trinity through its practices; particularly in the religious and social practices ordained by Muhammad for his followers. 'Imād-ud-dīn's argument that Muhammad has clearly confessed to the Trinity in Unity in a *ṣaḥiḥ* hadith: '*in Allāh witran yaḥub al-witr*', is a novel argument for the proof of the Trinity from the hadith. 'Imād-ud-dīn as shown above argued that it means Allāh is *tathlīth* and he loves *tathlīth* and he shows from the Bible that in the presence of Allāh angels observe *ṭāq* as they

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[122] The Islamic tradition states that no one can see God because curtains of light separate Him and his creatures and even Gabriel could not cross those curtains and get closer to God. Gabriel informed Muhammad that there remained 70 curtains of light between him and God and if he would go closer he would be burnt (Qutbuddin n.d: 269). 'Imād-ud-dīn was, perhaps, illuding to such Islamic traditions and claimed that God himself removed the curtain and revealed himself to 'Imād-ud-dīn in Christ.

[123] *Hazir-o-nazir*, literally means "present and seeing". This is an epithet of Deity (Platts 2003).

praise the Triune God saying: holy, holy, holy (Isaiah 6:3). This is also a different way of arguing from Islamic sources for the truth of Divine Trinity, especially in the backdrop of Muslim objection – why Christians confess only three persons in the Trinity.

Christian scholars, including Pfander, have stated that the Qur'ān misrepresents the Trinity. 'Imād-ud-dīn, however, turns this fact into an argument against the Qur'ān's denial of the Trinity and divinity of Christ, and declares that the Qur'ān could not be a revelation from the all-knowing God. Thus 'Imād-ud-dīn tried to cut the very ground on which Muslims stand and raise objections against the Trinity. 'Imād-ud-dīn also subjected Muslim concepts of *tawḥīd* to detailed analyses and argued that they are contrary to reason. Thus he implicates Muslims exactly of the charges they bring against the Trinity. He also contended that faith in *waḥdat-i-ḥaqīqī*, like *waḥdat fil tathlīth*, does not rest on rational grounds, and Muslims have not accepted the doctrine of *tawḥīd* and many other articles of their faith on the basis of rational proofs but rather on the mere belief that the Qur'ān came down from Allāh. Since the Trinity is taught in the Bible, he asserted, its rejection is *kufr* and acceptance faith. Muslims, he argues, do not have any intellectual supremacy over Christians.

Although an appeal to the doctrine of *bilā kaif* has been made in Christian-Muslim discussions, 'Imād-ud-dīn added another dimension to it and appealed to the doctrine of *mutashābihāt*[124] for the acceptance of the mystery of the Trinity ('Imād-ud-dīn 1899:382). As the Qur'ān itself professes to consist of *moḥkam* (clear), and *mutashābiha* (ambiguous) verses, and that the meaning of *mutashābiha*, according to Surah 3:7 is known to Allāh alone, 'Imād-ud-dīn could claim that the Trinity and divinity of Christ are among the *mutashābihāt* of the Bible. This would have certainly resonated with Muslim scholars. 'Imād-ud-dīn was able to show that many Muslims from Sunni, Shi'a and Sufi sects acknowledged that belief in the Trinity was not *kufr*. 'Imād-ud-dīn's argument for the *waḥdat fil tathlīth*, which emerges from his refutation of *waḥdat al-wujūd* was also a new argument. He argued, had the world proceeded from God, it would have demonstrated God's nature and attributes. Since our world is devoid

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[124] Surah 3:7 declares that it is Allāh who sent down the Qur'ān and it consists of *muhkamāt* (clear) and *mutashābihāt* (ambiguous) verses, and no one except Allāh knows the interpretation of *mutashābihāt*. But those who are firm in knowledge say, "We believe in it. All [of it] is from our Lord." Scholars have had different opinions regarding the correct meaning of *mutashābihāt*. However, As-Suyūtī after a thorough discussion, on the authority of Ibn 'Abbas, who is reported to have interpreted this verse as, 'and none knows its interpretation except God; and those steeped in knowledge simply say: we believe there in it concludes that his opinion should be given priority over other scholars because the verse itself supports it (As-Suyūtī 2014).

of divine nature, the doctrine of *waḥdat al-wujūd* proves to be false. However, the Bible shows there are only two persons: Son and the Holy Spirit, who came forth from God, they share God's nature and attributes.

'Imād-ud-dīn's most important contribution in this debate comes from his arguments for the divinity of Christ from the Qur'ān and hadith. 'Imād-ud-dīn added many new arguments from the Qur'ān and hadith. He argued from Jesus Christ's miraculous birth as compared with Adam in the Qur'ān and asserted that Jesus was not simply like Adam but was the second Adam. His arguments emerge from his interaction with Muslim commentators on the Qur'ānic figures called *al-ruḥ,* (Surah 78:38-39), *mālik Yaum al-dīn* (1:4), and *ruḥ al-amīn* (Surah 26:193-94). He rejected conflicting Muslim scholarly opinions, which have identified *al-ruḥ* and *ruḥ al-amīn* either with Muhammad or Gabriel. He claimed that *ruḥ al-amīn* and *al-ruḥ*, who will stand with angels to judge the world, is the same person who is also called *kalimatullāh* and *ruḥullāh* in the Qur'ān – Jesus Christ. He finds also a similarity between the Qur'ān and Bible's description of the second coming of Christ: who is coming to judge the world. Basing his argument on Christ's claim in John 5:22 'the Father judges no-one, but has entrusted all judgement to the Son' he asserts that only Christ qualifies to judge humanity and that *al-ruḥ* and even Allāh who is said to be *mālik yaum al-dīn* is none other than Jesus Christ (see 3.1-3.3). Thus, Christ's divinity and plurality of persons in the Godhead had for him support in the Qur'ān itself.

Conclusion

This chapter showed that 'Imād-ud-dīn was convinced of the truth of the doctrine of the Trinity. His conviction rested on his absolute confidence in the divinity of Christ. The certainty of Christ's divinity, for him, was not based on mere faith, wishful thinking, or even on rational arguments but his personal experience of the Son of God. This proved to be a life-changing event after which he began to testify that Christ is *ibn allāh*. This special revelation, once for all, settled the issue of Christ's divine Sonship and that of the Trinity. This led him to re-read the Bible, which gave him further confidence that God revealed the doctrine of the Trinity to his inspired prophets and Apostles. This enabled him to engage in Christian-Muslim debate on the Trinity with confidence.

His discussion on this central issue of Christian-Muslim debates shows both continuity and change in Christian arguments. His knowledge of Orthodox, Sufi, and

Shiʿa Islam enabled him to show diversity of their understanding of divine unity as well as their attitude towards the doctrine of the Trinity. His analyses of *waḥdat al-wujūd* and *waḥdat-i-ḥaqīqī* revealed untenability of Muslim doctrines of *tawḥīd,* which he hoped would shake their confidence in this most precious doctrine of Islam. This he hoped would also give added confidence to Christians, especially to Muslim converts about the Christian doctrine of *tawḥīd fil-tathlīth*.

ʿImād-ud-dīn's re-reading of his former scriptures and his engagement with Muslim scholars, as he attempted to prove the Trinity and divinity of Christ from Islam's own revered sources, provided him the possibility to challenge and negate Muslim interpretations of some of the key Qurʾānic passages and re-interpret them to establish Christ's divinity. His arguments attempted to take Christian-Muslim debate on the divinity of Christ further. That included: the role of Christ in the second coming; the judge of the world; the identification of Jesus with the Qurʾān's *al-ruḥ* and *mālik yaum al-dīn*; his positive use of the Qurʾānic comparison of Jesus' birth with Adam; his belief that only Christ is the second Adam and *ruḥ al-amīn* etc. His arguments for the Trinity from the Orthodox as well as from the Sufi religious practices were also new additions to this on-going debate.

His take on the remaining items of the unfinished agenda where he questioned the authenticity of Muhammad's prophethood, as a prophet in the biblical sense, and of the Qurʾān, is something that we now turn to.

Chapter Six: Biblical Prophets and the Prophethood of Muhammad

Introduction

At the Agra *munāẓara* Muslims were to defend the prophethood of Muhammad and the revelation and finality of the Qur'ān. Reportedly, Muhammad's call to prophethood began with the *waḥī*[125] through the angel Gabriel. The prophethood of Muhammad has been a cause of the fault-line between Christianity and Islam. One who accepts Muhammad's claims must reject Christianity and vice versa. The main question to be addressed here is what was 'Imād-ud-dīn's specific contribution to the debate on the Prophethood of Muhammad? It is argued here that the fundamental reason for 'Imād-ud-dīn's conversion was that Muhammad lacked the credentials of a biblical prophet because he was rather unlike and separate/different from the *bā'ibalī silsila-i-anbiyā* (chain of biblical prophets)[126]. Thus, he could not be a prophet in the biblical tradition let alone be the *khātam*[127] *an-anbiyā* (seal of the prophets) (Surah 33:40) of Israelite prophets. A substantial body of 'Imād-ud-dīn's writings came into being over a period of 30 years. Using these as the primary sources, this chapter hopes to highlight 'Imād-ud-dīn's contribution to the nineteenth-century debate on Muhammad.

1. *Silsila-i-Anbiyā* and Muhammad's family origin

Muslims claim that Muhammad was the last, the "seal" in a long line of prophets (Carson 2016:1076). They also claim that Muhammad's coming was prophesied in the Bible, especially Deuteronomy 18:18; and that he belongs to Abraham through the line of Ishmael. How did 'Imād-ud-dīn respond to this Muslim claim? 'Imād-ud-dīn argued that Muhammad in his very origin was separate from the Abrahamic *silsila-i-anbiyā*. Contrary to the genealogical bond of biblical prophets with Abraham through Isaac, Muhammad and Muslims claim his genealogical link to Abraham through Ishmael

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[125] In Islamic theology the technical term *'waḥī'* is reserved for the inspiration of prophets and apostles and the revealed books. *Waḥī* comes through different means, which will be discussed within the text.
[126] Muslims believe that there was a succession of prophets beginning with Adam and ending with Muhammad. All these prophets were sent by one and the same God (surah 23:44, Irfan Alli 2013). Thus there is a succession, chain or a *silsisla* of prophets of Islam. Twenty-five of them are mentioned in the Qur'ān. Apart from Muhammad they are mostly mentioned in the Bible thus they are in fact biblical prophets. 'Imād-ud-dīn used this term 'biblical chain of prophets' (1930:4).
[127] The Arabic word *khātam* is derived from the root *khatama* and means, to seal, to provide with a seal of signet, to stamp, impress with a stamp, to seal off, to close, complete, finish etc. (Hans Wehr).

(McCurry 2011:1). Muhammad's claim of being a true prophet, in the biblical sense, hangs on his linkage with Abraham. Muhammad refused to follow either Judaism or Christianity, both physical and spiritual children of Abraham, but he followed the religion of Abraham, the *ḥanīf*[128] (2:135). Surahs 3:67, 95; 4:25; 6:161; 10:105 claim that Abraham was a *ḥanīf*. In the Qur'ān Allāh declares that he revealed the religion of Abraham to Muhammad (16:123; 30:30). Muhammad saw himself as the prophet sent to revive the religion of Abraham. It would seem both Jews and Christians were considered *mushrik* (9:30) and thus were not thought to belong to the Abrahamic faith. However, biblical narrative shows an unbroken chain of prophets from Abraham to Christ through the lineage of Isaac. Christ is called the Son of David, Son of Abraham (Matthew 1:1).

Muhammad claimed he was the last in the chain of Abrahamic prophets. 'Imād-ud-dīn argued that this claim could not be substantiated. In order to establish that Muhammad was Abraham's promised seed[129] (as claimed by Muslims), he believed the genealogical proof was necessary. For this very reason Christ's genealogy was presented in Matthew and Luke. But neither the Qur'ān nor the Hadith provides any proof of his descent from Abraham. He wrote:

> Muhammad, who considered himself *that* same-promised seed, it was necessary for him, apart from other things, to demonstrate his genealogy from Abraham. And this was the responsibility of the Qur'ān, which is considered the word of God by them [Muslims]. His genealogy should have been demonstrated by inspiration in the Qur'ān so that historians could [check and] compare it with their own histories just as Christ's genealogy was checked. But Muhammad's genealogy is neither in the Qur'ān nor in the Hadith, even then Muslims are convinced that he was from the descendants of Ishmael (1878:31-32).

'Imād-ud-dīn argued that Muslim scholars did realize the necessity of Muhammad's genealogical link with Abraham for their claim that he was foretold in the Jewish Scriptures and that he was from the brethren of Israel (Deuteronomy 18:18). Thus they created one:

> Muhammad is Abdullah's son, and he Abdul Mutlab's, and he of Hashim, and he of Abd Manaf, and he of Qusa, and he of Qalab and he of Marrah, and he of Ka'ab, and he of

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[128] Master Ram Chandra, in his *'Ijāz al-Qur'ān* argued that before Muhammad's prophetic claim, there were many Arabs who had abandoned idolatry, but were neither Jews nor Christians; they professed to follow the religion of Abraham. They called themselves *Ḥanīfs*. The founders of the *Ḥanīf* sect were Waraqa bin Naufal, 'Ubaidullāh bin Jahsh, 'Usman bin Hawairis, and Zaid bin Amr. These men set out to discover true religion. Waraqa, 'Ubaid and 'Usman became Christian and Zaid did not adopt any other religion (1895). Zaid "had great influence over Muhammad, who then and ever afterwards held him in high esteem" (E. Sell, 1913:21). S. Griffith points out that Nonnus of Nisibis enjoyed calling Muslims Hanpe, a Syriac cognate for *Ḥanīf*, which means "pagans" (2002:127). 'Abd al-Masīḥ al-Kindī, in his apology to al-Hashami contended that ḥanīfite faith, in reality was the idolatrous religion of the Sabeans, which Abraham professed before his conversion to the worship of the One True God (Muir 1887:41).
[129] Genesis 12:3

> Mulvi and he of Ghalib, and of Muhrah and he of Mālik, and he of Nazr, and he of Katanah and he of Khar 'a, and he of Madrakah, and he of Ilyas and he of Mazr and he of Nadr and he of M 'ad and he of 'Adnan (1878:32).

'Imad-ud-dīn noted that Muhammad himself said he did not know his forefathers beyond 'Adnān and those who tell his genealogy further from 'Adnān were liars[130] (1878:32, Barkatullāh 1951:20).

Muslim scholars have also acknowledged that from 'Adnān to Ishmael there is a gap of fourteen to forty generations ('Imad-ud-dīn 1878:31-33). He asserted that Muslims neither know the number nor names of persons missing from the genealogy of Muhammad to Ishmael. 'Imād-ud-dīn's argument is confirmed by Ibn Kathīr in his *Al-Sira al-Nabawiya*. Though he asserted that there was no question about 'Adnān being in the line of Ishmael, son of Abraham, yet he acknowledged a dispute among the scholars about the number of forebears missing from 'Adnān to Ishmael: this missing number ranged from seven to forty. He quoted Imām al-Suhayli and other Imāms who have contended that the time lapse between 'Adnān and Ishmael was too great even to consider twenty generations between them. However, Ibn Kathīr retreats to a familiar formula where uncertainties prevail: God knows best. Kathīr also noted utter disapproval of Imām Mālik for tracing Muhammad's genealogy. 'Urwa b. al-Zubayr said, "We have no one who knows the line between 'Adnān and Ishmael". Ibn 'Abbas asserted that thirty ancestors between 'Adnān and Ishmael were unknown and that genealogists have lied twice or thrice from 'Adnān to Muhammad. He noted that the scepticism of Ibn Mas'ud was even greater than Ibn 'Abbas and 'Umar b. al-Khatab stated, "We carry back the genealogy only as far as 'Adnān" (Ibn Kathīr 2004:50-51).

Akbar Masīḥ, another nineteenth century Indian Christian apologist, developed 'Imād-ud-dīn's original argument. He argued that there was little authenticity in Muhammad's genealogy even up to 'Adnān. But even if it is accepted there are only 22 generations, and if each generation is counted for 30 years, then beginning from Muhammad's birth in AD 570 to 'Adnān, aggregate reaches to 660. Thus 'Adnān's period would be first century AD. Abraham lived about 1900 years before Christ. Therefore, even according to Muslims, Muhammad's genealogy is missing for about 1800 years. How can Muslims suppose that Muhammad was Ishmael's son in the absence of such proof (Akbar Masīḥ 1893:6)? Muir agreed that there were 2000 years

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[130] For an excellent discussion on the genealogy of Muhammad see Sam Shamoun's article *"Ishmael is not the Father of Muhammad, revisited"*. He quotes a number of hadiths, which report that Muhammad said, "Genealogists are liars" (http://www.answering-islam.org/Shamoun/ishmael2.htm. Accessed: 16/01/2016 21:30

between Muhammad and Ishmael and the connection between Ishmael and Muhammad was a blank legend (1861:cxcii).

'Imād-ud-dīn too was of the view that Muhammad and Muslims have failed to produce his genealogy to Ishmael (1878:31-33). He noted that the author of *Rauza tul Aḥbāb*[131] confessed, "Although genealogy [of Muhammad to Ishmael] is not proven, even then the *'ulamā'* have agreed that Muhammad certainly is a descendant of Ishmael-Abraham-Noah and Seth" ('Imād-ud-dīn 1878:33). It is clear that for obvious reasons Muhammad's link with Ishmael is established by the *ijma'* (consensus) of scholars rather than genealogical proofs. 'Imād-ud-dīn complicated this issue by suggesting that after the deluge everyone born has links to Noah through his three sons. And since Noah was the descendant of Enoch and Seth, every living person is from Noah, Enoch and Seth; Muhammad had no distinction in this regard ('Imād-ud-dīn 1878: 33).

Establishing Muhammad's link with Ishmael and Abraham is crucial for Muslim scholars because the prophet like Moses, according to Deuteronomy 18:15-18, had to come from the brethren of Israelites. This is considered to be the most important prophecy in the Torah about Muhammad who would come from the children of Ishmael. However, the veracity of this claim hangs on the missing proof that Muhammad indeed was a brother of the Israelites.

Apart from refuting Āl-i-Hassan and Raḥmatullāh's claim that the Deuteronomic prophecy was about Muhammad, 'Imād-ud-dīn argued that Christ himself, and his disciples, 600 years before Muhammad, applied this prophecy to Christ (John 1:45; 5:46; 6:14; Luke 24:27; Acts 3:22). The lack of a genealogical connection has been an issue but this was compounded by 'Imād-ud-dīn's assertion that the Israelites did not consider the Ishmaelites their brothers ('Imād-ud-dīn 1878:50-51). Shah Walīullāh acknowledged that one of the reasons Jews denied the prophethood of Muhammad was his descent from Ishmael rather than Israel (Walīullāh 2004:31-32). 'Imād-ud-dīn did not even accept that Muhammad had any genealogical link with Ishmael. Therefore, in the very start of his prophethood, Muhammad was not considered to be from the *silsila-*

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[131] *Rauza tul Aḥbāb*, originally written in Persian by Sayyid Jamāl ud-dīn, was considered one of the most authentic biographies of Muhammad. Shah 'Abdul Ḥaqq Dehlawi, one of the most respected Sunni scholars of India based his *Madāraj An-Nubūwat* on *Rauza tul Aḥbāb*. Raḥmatullāh Kairanawi considered both of these books authentic ('Imād-ud-dīn 1869:17-19). Muhammad 'Ali in his *Mir'at al-Yaqīn* written to refute 'Imād-ud-dīn's *Hadāyat al-Muslimīn*, referred to these books as authorities on Islam (1300/1882:35-36).

i-anbiyā leading back to Abraham. There was therefore no basis, it was argued, for Muhammad's claim to be the last prophet in the line of Abrahamic/biblical prophets.

2. Muhammad, inspiration, and the *silsila-i-anbiyā*

Having argued that Muhammad did not belong to the Biblical *silsila-i-anbiyā*, 'Imād-ud-dīn demonstrated that the means and modes of Muhammad's inspiration were also unlike the Biblical prophets. It is claimed in the Qur'ān that God inspired and sent the biblical prophets and that Muhammad too was inspired and sent just like them (Surah 4:163-66; 16:123). However, 'Imād-ud-dīn, argued that the source of his inspiration was also different from them. The apostles, Peter and Paul taught that prophecy never had its origin in human will but in the Holy Spirit (2 Peter 1:20-21), and that all Scripture is given by *theopneŭstos*, 'inspiration' (God-breathed) (2 Timothy 3:16). Michael Williams suggests that the idea of *theopneŭstos* is better expressed as "expired" than "inspired", meaning that the scripture is breathed out in that it comes from God (Williams 2012:27). It means that the origin of the prophetic inspiration and biblical text were God the Holy Spirit. 'Imād-ud-dīn asserted that "*Ilhām-i-ḥaqīqī* (true inspiration), occurs on the spirit of a prophet from the Spirit of God" (1883:15). Muhammad claimed the same God who inspired the Hebrew prophets also inspired him. But 'Imād-ud-dīn contested his claim.

2.1 The *nuzūl-i-waḥī*: Muhammad's inspiration

Muslim scholars differentiate between the *waḥī* (revelation) made to the prophets, and *ilhām* (inspiration) given to the saints and mystics. Edward Sell explained, when *waḥī* comes in the very words that God wishes to give to his prophets, it is called *waḥī ẓāhir* (external inspiration). It is considered to be the highest form of *waḥī,* which was used to produce the Qur'ān. He quotes Al-Ghazali who distinguished between *waḥī* and *ilhām*. In *waḥī,* the recipient knows the medium, as in Muhammad's case the medium was Gabriel. In *ilhām,* the recipient does not know the source (Sell 1914:354). Muslims claim Muhammad received both *waḥī* and *ilhām*; the Qur'ān being the product of his *waḥī* and Hadith of his *ilhām*. *Waḥī* plays the most important role in the mission and message of prophets or apostles. J.W Sweetman notes from Ibn Rushd that, "evidence of the Qur'ān depends on the prophethood of Muhammad. And unlike Moses and Jesus,

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proof of his prophethood is not miracles but *waḥī*. Because, what really qualifies a prophet to be a prophet, is, *waḥī"* (Sweetman 1967:159-60).

It appears, however, that the concept of *waḥī* has broader meanings within the Qur'ān; even a 'Bee' may receive *waḥī* (Surah 16:68), and not everyone who claims to have received *waḥī* be accepted as a prophet of God. The Bible speaks of false prophets and there were a number of Muhammad's contemporaries, like Musaylima b. Habib, and al-Aswad b. K'ab who claimed to receive *waḥī* (Ibn Ishaq/Guillaume 1998:648-649). One such person was even Muhammad's scribe, 'Abdullah b. Abi Sarah ('Abd al-Ḥaqq 2015:412-13). Musaylimah and Sajjah b. Harith, his wife, claimed they were prophets who just like Muhammad received *waḥī*. Muslims killed them in the war of Yamama (Tabari 1993:123-126, 'Imād-ud-dīn 1892:31). Therefore, 'Imād-ud-dīn reasoned that a mere claim of receiving *waḥī* could not be accepted as valid; the means, modes and the message of an authentic *waḥī* were equally important, and they ought to correspond with the character of the true prophet. Did Muhammad's inspiration correspond with the biblical prophets?

2.2 Kinds and sources of Muhammad's waḥī

'Imād-ud-dīn noted that according to Muslims Muhammad received inspiration in the following ways: 1) Sometimes Muhammad had a dream; 2) Sometimes the Angel put God's word in his heart; 3) Sometimes Gabriel came in the form of a man, Muhammad's friend called Kalbī. The *waḥī* that came in such a fashion is called '*waḥī kalbī*' ('Uthmānī 2013); 4) Sometimes he heard a sound of bells and he became unconscious. This was the hardest mode of receiving the revelation which made Muhammad sweat even in the chilly weather and he would also foam at his mouth and produce the sound of a young camel; 5) sometimes Gabriel appeared to him in his real form and talked to him; 6) he was given some revelation in the night of ascension in heaven; 7) at times God talked to him from behind the curtain; 8) and finally, God talked to him face to face ('Imād-ud-dīn 1878:69; 1899:222-223).

Muhammad received inspiration from many other sources as well which will be discussed in the next chapter. 'Imād-ud-dīn also suggested that Muhammad's friends and his wives were also sources of his inspiration. He referred to As-Suyūtī's *Itiqān*, in which he mentioned those verses of the Qur'ān which descended on the tongues of Muhammad's friends. As-Suyūtī acknowledged that in fact this was also a type of

nuzūl[132] ('Imād-ud-dīn 1899:224-5). He noted that many of those verses were ascribed to caliph 'Umar, especially the verses concerned with changing of the *qibla*, *hijab* (covering) of Muhammad's wives (Surah 33:33), and the threat to Muhammad's wives in Surah 66:5. 'Imād-ud-dīn showed that, "Sentences of S'ad bin M'ad, S'aeed bin Musaib, and Mas'ab bin 'Amair also found their way into the Qur'ān. Even what Muhammad's wives said on the day of the battle of Uhud is recoded in Surah 3:140" ('Imād-ud-dīn 1899:224-32).

According to 'Imād-ud-dīn another source of his inspiration was the Bible, the proof of which is in Surah 16:103. He asserted that Muslim commentators acknowledged that Muhammad used to go to Christian slaves[133] from whom he learned the Bible. According to 'Imād-ud-dīn, the final kind of Muhammad's inspiration was the 'inspiration from his own heart'. 'Imād-ud-dīn called it '*qiyāsī nuzūl*'. He explained it as follows: "This means that he made verses according to his own need and will, and said that they had descended. Proof of this is found in the *shān-i-nuzūl*, which describes what the issue was and what was the debate behind many verses" ('Imād-ud-dīn 1899:224-232).

Ibn Kathīr also noted certain other strange manners of revelations to Muhammad during which a great agony used to seize him. Muhammad said, … "never did once I receive revelation without thinking that my soul was being seized by it" (Ibn Kathīr 2006:307-8). He noted 'Umar b. al-Khattab saying: "When revelation came down to the messenger of God, it would be heard like the buzzing of a bee near his mouth" (Ibn Kathīr 2006:306). This kind of *waḥī* was also considered to be a very heavy physical burden under the load of which a camel could not stand or walk. At one point, it is noted that even a camel's neck was broken (Ibn Kathīr 2006:308). Another unique way was that Muhammad received revelations when he was exclusively in 'Aisha's garment (Ṣaḥiḥ Bukhari, vol, 3. Book 47, no. 755; vol, 5. Book 57, no. 119).[134]

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[132] As-Suyūtī has discussed types of *nuzūl* in *Itiqā*n's chapter ten of volume 1, under the heading, "Description of those parts of the Qur'ān which descended on the tongues of certain Ṣaḥāba". (see Urdu version 2008:97-98).

[133] 'Imād-ud-dīn, in his Urdu translation of the Qur'ān and explanatory notes within parentheses of this verse, which in his translation is number 16:105, wrote, "And we know that they (people of Mecca) say that a man teaches Muhammad (namely, Jabar or Abu Fakha, and Sayyar and 'Aayish etc. were Christian blacksmiths in Mecca and usually they gathered at night and read the holy books to Muhammad. He read an Arabic translation of the Bible to him and spoke broken Arabic" ('Imād-ud-dīn 1894:130). A hadith by Abu Hurairah informs us that the People of the Book used to read the Torah in Hebrew and explained to Muslims in Arabic. (Qutbuddīn, vol. 1, p250).

[134] There is a variety of hadiths that talk about Muhammad receiving revelations not in any one of his wives but 'Aisha's "*thobe*", "*lihaf*" and "*mirt*", etc. For a detailed discussion of this phenomenon see Dimitrius & Sam Shmoun's, *Cross Dressing and Islam: An examination of Muhammad's dress Code.*

'Imād-ud-dīn asserted that most of these forms of inspiration, especially the 4th one, contradicted the way former prophets and the apostles received inspiration. He summed up such thinking in these terms, "Most probably he was suffering from epilepsy and all these ideas were due to this illness" ('Imād-ud-dīn 1899:223). His position was that, "these forms of inspiration are contrary to *'aql* and *naql* because it never happened to any of the former prophets; it is against the way *silsila-i-anbiyā* received inspiration" ('Imād-ud-dīn 1899:223). Thus he argued Muhammad's sources and means of inspiration were different from the biblical prophets. Islamic tradition puts heavy emphasis on one of the main agencies of Muhammad's inspiration – Gabriel. To what extent did 'Imād-ud-dīn consider this claim justified?

2.3 Gabriel the chief inspirer

The Qur'ān 2:97 declares that Gabriel brought down the Qur'ān to Muhammad's heart. Muslim tradition holds that Gabriel began and completed the revelation. Muneer Fareed in the English translation of As-Suyūtī's *Itiqān* remarks, "Canonization occurred when Gabriel for twenty three [years] served as the angel of revelation made one final review which established the present text as the *ipsissima verba* of God" (Fareed n.d: 7). Thus Gabriel served as the chief inspirer of Muhammad. But was he? 'Imād-ud-dīn was sceptical. He argued that the source of his inspiration was possibly not the same Gabriel who is mentioned in the Bible. He argued that due to the contradictory messages allegedly brought by Gabriel, the Islamic and the biblical Gabriel could not have been the same. According to 'Imād-ud-dīn, Gabriel is mentioned only three times in the Qur'ān; twice in 2:97-98 and once in 66:4, where Muhammad told his wives that Gabriel was his friend. In the Bible Gabriel is mentioned four times (Daniel 8:16; 9:21 and Luke 1:19, 26). Gabriel came to give the good news of the birth of John to Zechariah and of Christ to Mary. He came to Daniel and Mary to tell them about the coming of Christ, his kingdom, and to make them understand God's will ('Imād-ud-dīn 1894:39,40). 'Imād-ud-dīn argued that the Qur'ānic Gabriel was different because his message contradicted Gabriel's message in the Bible. He contended:

> If he is the same angel who spoke to Daniel, Zachariah and Mary, then it is necessary that
> the inspiration, which he gave and is [preserved] in the Qur'ān, should not be accepted at

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(http://www.answering-islam.org/Responses/Abualrub/mhd_cross_dressing1.htm. Accessed: 12/05.2016 22:23.

all. Because this Gabriel spoke to those three persons in this world and gave complete teaching about Christ. Now he has come to Muhammad to teach him against that teaching of God. Thus his word is not trustworthy. What he taught and made them understand; now he has come as a deputy of God to give inspiration against that: not acceptable at all. And if he is not he, but is some other angel; then we know that demons come in the form of the angels of light to lead astray (2 Cor. 11:14) ('Imād-ud-dīn 1894:41).

Interestingly, using Sir Sayyid Ahmad Khān's rationalistic explanation, 'Imād-ud-dīn opined that Gabriel was Muhammad's own mind or *'aql'* speaking to him. 'Imād-ud-dīn agreed that Muhammad called his own mind Gabriel so that he may get the words of his own mind accepted more widely. In an earlier tract, he quoted from Sayyid's *Tahzīb al-Ikhlāq* (1882:108), where he argued that *waḥī* and *ilhām* are the perfect natural ability of a person to discover moral and spiritual truths; and one who is able to do this is called a prophet. This ruled out any angelic agency for inspiration. 'Imād-ud-dīn agreed with Sir Sayyid because it set Muhammad vastly apart from the biblical prophets ('Imād-ud-dīn 1882:1-12). He cited Mirza Ghulam Ahmad who said that inspiration was 'a general overflow of the Sun', 'Imād-ud-dīn remarked, "this too can be true … Thus the Qur'ān too is vapour of Muhammad's heart" ('Imād-ud-dīn 1894:42). It is to be noted however that most Sunni Muslims do not accept either Sayyid Ahmad Khān or Mirza Ghulam Ahmad. Most Muslims subscribe to the non-rationalistic explanation for Muhammad's inspiration. For 'Imād-ud-dīn, however, this was unacceptable because, he argued, the inspiration of Muhammad often contradicts the one given to biblical prophets ('Imād-ud-dīn 1894:42).

'Imād-ud-dīn was making an important distinction between the main medium of Muhammad's inspiration, Gabriel, whom Muslims believe to be *ruḥ al-amīn* and *ruḥ al-quds*, and the biblical Gabriel. According to him, Gabriel's messages in the Bible were mainly concerned with the coming of Christ; the Holy One, the Anointed One, and the Son of God who through his death atones for sins (Daniel 9:25, 26; Luke 1:32,35). Since the Qur'ān rejects such a characterisation of Jesus in Gabriel's messages, 'Imād-ud-dīn questioned the identity of the Islamic Gabriel. 'Imād-ud-dīn, however, overlooked other important differences that set these figures apart: The manner of his first appearance to Muhammad and the message he delivered appears to have no precedence in the Bible. Muhammad saw him sitting on a throne in the midst of heaven and the distance between his eyes was like two horizons (As-Suyūtī 2014:286). The methods of delivering the message also differ – especially the way he choked Muhammad and forced him to read even though, reportedly, he was an illiterate man.

This Islamic Gabriel has never seen God. He informed Muhammad that there remained 70 curtains of light between them and if he would go closer he would be burnt (Qutbuddīn n.d: 269). However, the biblical Gabriel declared he stood in the presence[135] of God (Luke 1:19). Though Gabriel appeared in the form of a man, in Islamic tradition he took many different forms. Commonly he took the form of Muhammad's friend Dahiya Kalbī (As-Suyūti 2014:287). Muhammad is reported to have seen Gabriel in his original form only twice and the descriptions are rather telling: Ibn Mas'ud reported that when Muhammad saw Gabriel in his original form he had six hundred wings and each wing covered the horizon. Ibn 'Abbas reported that when Muhammad said to Gabriel that he wanted to see him in his original form, he directed him to pray to his Lord. When he prayed, he saw blackness appeared towards the East, which kept rising and spreading. 'Aisha reported when Muhammad saw Gabriel he was descending from heaven to earth and his body had covered the heavens and the earth (As-Suyūtī 2014:285-6).

It is also worth noting that while Gabriel identified himself by name to Daniel, Zechariah, and Mary, the Gabriel who appeared to Muhammad in the cave did not identify himself. Muhammad was terrified and attempted to commit suicide. Khadija went to Waraqa, and to 'Addas a Christian slave of 'Utba, and to a Christian monk who lived near Mecca inquiring the identity of the spirit that appeared to Muhammad. They all said it was Gabriel who appeared to Muhammad, just as he appeared to Moses. Ironically, according to the biblical tradition Gabriel never appeared to Moses. Initially, Waraqa too expressed his doubts. He said to Khadija: "I am afraid, he might be someone other than Gabriel, for certain devils imitate him and by so doing can mislead and corrupt some men. This can result in a man becoming confused and even crazy whereas before he had been of sound mind" (As-Suyūtī 2014:297).

Khadija herself performed a strange test to ascertain whether it was a demon or a good spirit that appeared to be haunting her husband. She is reported to have made Muhammad sit on her left and then right leg and finally uncovered herself at which the spirit left him. Ibn Ishaq reported that 'Abdullāh b. Hassan commented, "I heard my mother Fatima relate this account from Khadija, except that I heard her say, 'She took the Messenger of God (SAAS) inside her shift, and it was then that Gabriel…went

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[135] The Greek word translated "in the presence" of God in Luke 1:19 is *enopion* from *en* "in" and *ops* "the eye". When used in reference to a place, it means that which is before or opposite of a person, towards which he turns his eyes (Lk 1:19; Acts 4:10; 6:6; Rev 1:4; 4:10; 7:15), in the presence of (Vine).

away'" (As-Suyūtī 2014:298). This Gabriel used to change forms and sometimes his nature overcame Muhammad's at other time Muhammad's nature overcame his. This brief description makes us ask whether Muhammad's chief inspirer is quite different from the biblical Gabriel?

2.4 Muhammad, inspiration, and the Holy Spirit

The NT says that the Holy Spirit inspired all biblical prophets (I Peter 1:21). Did the Holy Spirit inspire Muhammad? 'Imād-ud-dīn pointed out that many Muslim scholars believe that *ruḥ al-quds* and *ruḥ al-amīn* are also the names of Gabriel. To him this was a real contradiction because *ruḥ al-quds* is, according to the biblical tradition, the Spirit of the Father and the Son, not Gabriel. He asserted:

> To give inspiration is the work of the Holy Spirit. But Muhammad did not receive anything from him; he just used his name so that he may be accepted. [Referring back to 2:97 he said] finally, the truth came out of his mouth that he received from Gabriel, not from Ruḥ al-Quds or Ruḥ al-Amīn ('Imād-ud-dīn 1894:40).

According to 'Imād-ud-dīn, Muslims tried to remove this contradiction by ascribing these two names of God to a creature of God (Walīullāh 2004:35). This highlights, for 'Imād-ud-dīn, the Qur'anic ignorance of the true nature of the Holy Spirit; indeed, Christians would never accept that *ruḥ al-quds* is just another name of Gabriel ('Imād-ud-dīn 1894:40). Further, 'Imād-ud-dīn asserted that to put divine content/knowledge in the spirits or hearts of the prophets is not the work of any angel but solely of the Spirit of God. In his *Tanqīd al-khayālāt* (vols, 3 & 4), he argues that the distinguishing mark of a true prophet was that the Spirit of God resided in him and his spirit received from the Spirit of God. To him all true inspiration came from the Spirit of God. Prophets spoke because they were 'moved by the Spirit' (I Peter 1:21). Contrary to that, he argued, it is written that Satan and certain demons did influence certain individuals. For example, a spirit entered the mouths of the prophets of Ahab to entice him to war (1 Kings 22:22). According to Surah 22:52 Satan influenced all prophets when they stood to recite, just as he did with Muhammad ('Imād-ud-dīn 1894:40-41). 'Imād-ud-dīn argued that from these examples we can see that such evil works are performed by demons. 'Imād-ud-dīn argued that for an angel to come between *ilhām* and the heart of a prophet has no previous example. Thus, he concluded, "We know from this that the Spirit of God does not want to touch Muhammad's heart. Gabriel, not the God Most

High, came in and continued to give him inspiration for 22 years" ('Imād-ud-dīn 1894:41).

While 'Imād-ud-dīn attacked this well-known tradition that Gabriel acted as the angel of inspiration, there is another less known Islamic tradition that Muhammad was taught by other angels too, a point which was overlooked by 'Imād-ud-dīn. Ibn Kathīr noted a tradition, which he considered correct, that when Muhammad was 40:

> The angel Isrāfīl was entrusted with his prophethood for three years, during which he would teach him words and facts. The Qur'ān was not revealed then. After those three years Gabriel was entrusted with his prophethood and the Qur'ān was revealed through his voice over a twenty years period… (Ibn Kathīr 2014:281).

The above statement raises a number of questions: what were those words and facts, if it was not the Qur'ān that it took Isrāfīl three years to teach Muhammad? This angel, Isrāfīl is neither mentioned in the Bible nor in the Qur'ān. The Jewish Encyclopaedia mentions many angels that supposedly taught Adam, Noah, Seth and Moses but Isrāfīl's name is not among the instructing angels; who was he? (1906). He never taught or brought any message from God to previous prophets, why was he appointed to prepare Muhammad before the descent of the revelations? 'Imād-ud-dīn noted that a Muslim sect of Sālimiya believed that Muhammad announced his prophethood after he had secretly memorized the Qur'ān ('Imād-ud-dīn 1899:221). This hadith might be the basis for their belief. The above observations would set Muhammad apart from the *silsila-i-anbiyā*.

2.5 Muhammad's Lord, the ultimate source of his inspiration

Perhaps the most important point in 'Imād-ud-dīn's discussion about Muhammad's sources and means of inspiration is his analysis of Surah An-Najm (53:1-18). Here Allāh is shown confirming on oath that Muhammad was inspired and taught directly by his Lord, whom he had also seen twice. Who did Muhammad see? Did he see Allāh or some other being? 'Imād-ud-dīn quoted from *Fauz al-Kabīr*[136] that according to Ibn 'Abbas[137] Muhammad saw his '*rabb*' (Lord) but in 'Aisha's opinion he saw 'Gabriel'

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[136] *Fauz al-Kabīr fī Uṣūl al-Tafsīr* is one of the most authentic and well-known writings of Shah Walīullāh Dahlawī (1712-1763). It was originally written in Persian but has been translated into many languages, including Urdu and Arabic.

[137] 'Imād-ud-dīn considered Ibn 'Abbas's version correct as text of the Qur'ān supports him (1894:43-44)

('Imād-ud-dīn 1894:43-44). Therefore, the question for 'Imād-ud-dīn was what does the text and context of Surah An-Najm reveal as to who Muhammad's Rabb was?

'Imād-ud-dīn, unsurprisingly, sees dissimilarity between the God of the Bible and Muhammad's Rabb as he reviews this Surah. Surah An-Najm begins with the word *Wannajmi idha hawa* (by the fallen star).[138] He notes that in the Qur'ān God swears[139] a lot: he swears seven times by his own name and forty times by created things. On the contrary, he claimed, in the whole Bible God swore only by his 'own holy being' and only about three things ('Imād-ud-dīn 1894:45). [140] The phrase "by the fallen star" appears to be uniquely Qur'ānic. 'Imād-ud-dīn says, "God forbid, he swears by an evil thing, i.e., swearing by a dead or the one who is in the hell – the thing that has fallen from its station is dead whether spiritually or physically" ('Imād-ud-dīn 1894:44). It was not befitting for God, he believed, to swear by a creature. The Qur'ān, he asserted, had no objective proofs like miracles, true prophecies, and excellent teachings; swearing was used, he asserted, so that the message and its sender might be accepted as trustworthy but, anyone who swears a lot ceases to be reliable ('Imād-ud-dīn 1894:45). There appear to be different attitudes to swearing in the Bible and the Qur'ān and based on this 'Imad-ud-dīn's conclusion was: "It has to be said, from whichever side we take hold of the Qur'ānic God, it proves that he is not the one who caused the Bible to be written" ('Imād-ud-dīn 1894:45). Thus 'Imād-ud-dīn believed that Muhammad's Lord who taught him the Qur'ān and the God of the Bible were not the same.

Surah 53 claims that, "Muhammad does not speak out of his own desire". 'Imād-ud-dīn said: "We can accept that but it does not prove that God made him to speak. Some alien spirit might have made him to speak because he spoke against all the prophets, sound reason, and the revealed knowledge of God; and in accordance with human desires and worldliness" ('Imād-ud-dīn 1894:45). 'Imād-ud-dīn invited his readers to read his two-volume study of Muhammad's life and teaching because he

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[138] Muslim translators have translated '*hawa*' as 'goes down, setteth, descends' tumbles down, vanishes, goes down to set, and fade away' (Ṣaḥīḥ International). 'Imād-ud-dīn's Urdu translation reads: "*tāre kī qasam jab gir paṛe*" (by the star when it has fallen) (1894:252), and in *Tauzīn al-aqwāl*, "*gire huwe tāre kī qasam*" (by the fallen star) (1893:43). The emphasis of 'Imād-ud-dīn's translation is clearly on the 'fallenness' of the star rather than the natural course in which star appear to rise and set in or appear and vanish. He would later identify who that star was.

[139] 'Imād-ud-dīn noted that in the Qur'ān there are five things about which Allāh swore: *tawḥīd*, *Ḥaqqīqat-i-Qur'ān*, *Ḥaqqīqat-i-risālat-i-Muhammad, Ḥaqqīqat-i-jiza wa saza*, and the condition of humanity.

[140] These three things are: first, the whole earth will be full of my glory (Numbers 14:21), second, evil doers will not enter my rest (Psalm 95:11), and third, Jesus Christ will remain High Priest in his presence for eternity, and every thing in heaven and earth, apart from God will submit to him (Psalm 110) (1894:45).

argues here that Muhammad's life does not support this Qur'ānic claim ('Imād-ud-dīn 1894:46).

'Imād-ud-dīn also comments on the difference between the biblical God and the Qur'ānic Lord by expounding the particular characteristics of the Prophet's divine teacher in this passage: *Allamahu shadīdu alquwa dhu mirratin* (he who taught him is intense in power and is the possessor of bitterness). The first characteristic described here is that he is '*shadīd al-quwa*'. According to 'Imād-ud-dīn *shadīd al-quwa* is that person whose all powers have been hardened. Because *quwa* is the plural of *quwwat* and *alf lam* is *istighrāqī* (encompassing all). Edward Sell understood it to mean "One terrible in power" (1913:32). Who could be that person who has hardness in all of his powers? 'Imād-ud-dīn argued that *shadīd al-quwa dhu mirrah* could not be God because along with the power of wrath, he also has power of mercy. God does not have hardness in all of his powers. Therefore, he must be a created being. He even could not be God's *muqarrab* (one who is near) because softness/gentleness has been taken out of him, and he has been deprived of compassion. That is why hardness has come in all of his powers. He thus prayed, "May God save us from such a person" ('Imād-ud-dīn 1894:46).

His second attribute is, ''*dhu mirrah*'. According to 'Imād-ud-dīn the Qur'ānic expositors differ about the meaning of '*dhu mirrah*': one who is wise, understanding and powerful, or the one who is beautiful to look at. 'Imād-ud-dīn contended that the Arabic lexicon does not support the meanings which Muslim expositors give to *dhu mirrah*. To him, '*mirrah*' means: bitterness, bile, and the bitterness of gall.[141] 'Imād-ud-dīn stressed that this meaning was appropriate for the one whose all powers had been hardened to be 'the [*dhu*] possessor/master of bitterness.' He quotes the author of Qāmūs, a great lexicologist and idiom writer in his support: "*Abu mirrah* [father of bitterness] is the name of Satan and *dhu mirrah* is the title of Gabriel. And I cannot tell the reason for this title, nor can I tell in what sense *dhu mirrah* became the title of Gabriel" ('Imād-ud-dīn 1894:46). 'Imād-ud-dīn claimed that the author of the Qāmūs avoided telling the real meaning in favour of Islam. He cited 'Aisha who said that 'Muhammad saw *dhu mirrah* had six hundred wings'. To 'Imād-ud-dīn what appeared to Muhammad looked like "a monster" ('Imād-ud-dīn 1894:47). The context of this verse is important. Muhammad made this claim in the context of his struggle with idol

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[141] Hans Wehr backs up 'Imād-ud-dīn. *Mirrah* means: to be or become bitter, to make bitter, embitter, gall, bile.

worshippers of Mecca. According to 'Imād-ud-dīn Muhammad treated the idols of K'aba with contempt and said he had seen *shadīd al-quwa dhu mirrah* – and that his Lord was greater than their idols. 'Imād-ud-dīn believed that by describing his Lord's fearsome characteristics Muhammad hoped to intimidate them. This being the context he claimed, surely, by *dhu mirrah*, Muhammad meant 'the possessor of bitterness,' or 'the master of all bitterness' who he said had taught him ('Imād-ud-dīn 1894:46-47).

According to Islamic tradition, the Qur'ān taught to Muhammad by *shadīd al-quwa dhu mirrah*, descended for both men and Jinn. 'Imād-ud-dīn notes that Muhammad used to be visited by Jinn[142] sent to him by Allāh in order to listen to the Qur'ān (46:29). 'Imād-ud-dīn speaks of *tafāsīr* which suggest that seven or nine jinn came to Muhammad from Nasibin and the city of Nineveh. Muhammad was therefore also a prophet for the Jinn and this is why he was called *nabī al-thaqlain* (prophet of the two classes). Satan, according to Muslims said 'Imād-ud-dīn is from the class of Jinn (18:50). Muhammad included *shayātīn* (pl. of *shaytān*) in his *ummat*. 'Imād-ud-dīn considered this teaching frightening. He pointed out that of all the rewards mentioned in Surah Raḥmān (Surah 55) for the dwellers of Paradise, Jinn are equally included with men. To 'Imād-ud-dīn the contrast between the biblical and Qur'ānic teachings was so telling he said this is a place to ponder that: "Former prophets taught that men will become like angels and will live with them [Matthew 22:30; Mark 12:25; Luke 20:36]; Muhammad joined his *ummat* with jinn that they will have to live together. Gifts of paradise are equally for both of them" ('Imād-ud-dīn 1894:48).

He stressed that the Bible strictly forbids having any contact with jinn, and the mediums were to be exterminated (Deuteronomy 18:10-12). But Muhammad was not only a friend of jinn but also their prophet ('Imād-ud-dīn 1894:47). This, to him, was absolutely contrary to the biblical prophets: "What is the relation of believers with demons that they should come together?" ('Imād-ud-dīn 1894:48). For 'Imād-ud-dīn these were the clues to identify who *shadīd al-quwa* is, what is his teaching, and to where does he take [those who follow him]? 'Imād-ud-dīn urged his readers to carefully read Revelation 9:1-11, as in his view, what is described there fully relates to this passage of the Qur'ān. He claimed that with the help of mathematics we can know that

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[142] Muhammad's frequent interaction with Jinn is a well-established tradition. He taught them Qur'ān, acted as a judge between Muslim and *kāfir* Jinn. Jabir b. 'Abdullah reported that once while he was traveling with Muhammad, suddenly a black male python appeared. He put his head on the ear of the prophet and whispering continued for some time. Then suddenly the python disappeared as if earth had swallowed him. Jabir said to him, Sir I was afraid for you. Muhammad said to him, he was an ambassador of Jinn. They forgot a Surah and sent him to ask me. I recited the Qur'ān to him (As-Suyūtī 2014:94-5).

the timing of the falling of the Star corresponds with the emergence of Muhammad, and these verses, in words and meanings are related to the same description ('Imād-ud-dīn 1894:48). After this lengthy discussion 'Imād-ud-dīn concluded:

> Now it is known that Muhammad knows neither Holy Spirit nor Ruḥ al-Amīn, which is the spirit of Christ. And he does not know Gabriel well, nor did he come to him. In reality *shadīd al-quwa dhu mirrah* taught him the Qur'ān whom he also named Raḥmān; see the first sentence of Surah Raḥmān [55:1-2]. Notice also how much hardness and bitterness there is in his teaching, which proves that it indeed is the work of *shadīd al-quwa*. And this person wants to unite men and Jinn. Read Surah Raḥmān very carefully. We know that Jinn and demons are community of Satan and their lot is in the hell forever … it is the Qur'ān's mistake that, against the decree of God, it opens the way for demons' salvation. Thus if one wants to arrive in the company of holy prophets and angels, when one will depart from the world, then one should sincerely become Christian and live as a Christian. But if he wants to reach the company of demons, then he should become Muslim and follow the teachings of *shadīd al-quwa dhu mirrah;* and face the full hardness and bitterness. And this is the result of certain verses of the Qur'ān, I have not written anything on my own ('Imād-ud-dīn 1894:50).

Thus 'Imād-ud-dīn argued that the sources, means and modes of Muhammad's inspiration were different from the biblical *silsila-i-anbiyā*.

3. Teachings of Muhammad and *silsila-i-anbiyā*

'Imād-ud-dīn argued that not only Muhammad's, sources, means, and modes of inspiration, but also his teachings contradicted the biblical prophets. He begins his 372 page book, *Ta'līm-i-Muhammadī,* by laying down a simple principle, "Every good or bad person is proved by his words and deeds; there is no other principle for recognizing good and bad people. Whether Muhammad was from God can also be known through this principle" ('Imād-ud-dīn 1880:1). In his many writings, including *Taḥqīq al-Īmān, Hadāyat al-Muslimīn, Naghama-i-Tanbūrī*, and *Anjām-i-Mubāḥatha*, 'Imād-ud-dīn vigorously argued that Muhammad lacked all the signs and evidence of a biblical prophet, such as, prophesying, doing miracles, and exhibiting the holy character etc. (CMI 1875:277).

Although miracles, prophecies, and good conduct are signs of a true prophet, ('Imād-ud-dīn 1880:6-7), in *Ta'līm-i-Muhammadī,* 'Imād-ud-dīn asserted that the litmus test for those claiming prophethood was their teachings ('Imād-ud-dīn 1880:3). In order to evaluate Muhammad's teachings, he made two important distinctions: (i) between his

teachings that correspond with, and those that contradict the earlier prophets, and (ii) between the teachings of Muhammad and Muslim scholars. For example, he argued that the teachings about the oneness of God and against idolatry are not Muhammad's original teachings; earlier prophets also taught this ('Imād-ud-dīn 1866/1878:79). Further, Muslim scholars have developed the teachings of Islam in such a way that Muhammad's and their teachings appear the same. However, Muhammad's teachings can be easily distinguished, as these are primarily found in the Qur'ān and Hadith. He argued that the teachings of Muhammad were those which were either not taught by former prophets or those that contradicted their teachings ('Imād-ud-dīn 1899:232-233). He divided Muhammad's teachings into: *'aqā'id* (doctrines), *'ibādāt* (worship), *mu'āmalāt* (affairs, dealings), and *qiṣṣaṣ* (stories) ('Imād-ud-dīn 1899:234) and assessed them to see if these prove him to be a prophet in the biblical sense. His conclusion was that Muhammad's teachings were contrary to the teachings of *silsila-i-anbiyā*.

3.1 *'Aqā 'id*

'Imād-ud-dīn explained that Muslim *'aqā'id* are related to God, Muhammad, prophets, books of prophets, resurrection, hell and paradise (1880:11). First among them is *īmān* (faith).

3.1.1 *Īmān*

To 'Imād-ud-dīn *Īmān* is the foundation of all godliness. The Qur'ān teaches that a man is saved by his faith and works (14:23). Although *Īmān* means belief in all the articles of Muslim faith, it boils down to Allāh and Muhammad. 'Imād-ud-dīn wrote, "In Muhammad's words, *Īmān* means profession of *lā ilāha illallāh Muḥammad raṣūl Allāh*, and good works mean to act according to the commands of the Qur'ān and Hadith. Such a person will be saved" ('Imād-ud-dīn 1880:12-13). *Īmān* in the unity of God is so central, he asserted, that mere belief in the unity of God ensures salvation. 'Imād-ud-dīn quoted from *Mishkāt, kitāb al-Īmān*, a hadith reported by Bukhari and Muslim, transmitted by Abu Dar and Abu Hurairah that Muhammad said:

> If someone says God but no God and dies while remaining in this faith, he will enter paradise (only by the confession of the *tawḥīd* of God without good works). Abu Dar asked even if he steals and commits adultery, he would enter paradise. He said yes, even after theft and adultery he will enter paradise. Abu Dar asked this three times with surprise.

Muhammad said, yes, surely he will go to paradise even after theft and adultery, putting dust on your nose. Whenever Abu told this hadith he also said this, "putting dust on your nose"[143] (1880:13-14).

'Imād-ud-dīn also showed that in Muhammad's teachings there was some disconnect between *īmān* and *a'māl* (faith and actions), as *Īmān* plays no effective role in overcoming evil and doing good. He noted that Tirmidhi and Abu Dāūd reported from Abu Hurairah that Muhammad said, "When someone commits adultery then his faith comes out of his heart and like a shade stands over his head. When he had committed adultery then faith comes back to [his] heart"[144] ('Imād-ud-dīn 1880:15). Such hadiths show that "*Īmān* is separate from works and that salvation is only by faith" ('Imād-ud-dīn 1880:14). 'Imād-ud-dīn argued that mere faith in the unity of God for salvation, *'aqlan* and *naqlan* is false. Even "demons know that God is one."[145] Since this knowledge is not beneficial for them, how could it be for us? Faith cannot help at the times of temptation. Thus, when someone's carnal soul rebels, faith leaves its place, stands above the head, and waits till the act of adultery is finished and then comes back. This faith is considered the sole means of salvation and good works are allowed *maṣlaḥatan*[146] (expediently) ('Imād-ud-dīn 1880:16-17).

'Imād-ud-dīn also contrasted Muslim *īmān* with Christian faith, which is revealed in the Bible: One God – Trinity in Unity, namely, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit is one God. His *waḥdat* is beyond human reasoning but this mystery is revealed in our spirits by divine revelation. This faith is not born from *'aql*, rather it is a gift of God – true faith is the work of God. God draws man's heart towards him and reveals himself to him. Then his heart gets firmly established in God. His strength to do good works also comes from God. Just as a mother puts her nipple in the mouth of a new born baby and he sucks milk, in the same way, we receive this faith from God and find strength to do all good works, and power to supress and kill all evil desires. Thus all of our righteous and good works are the fruits of that same faith. Wherever this faith is, good works necessarily are found there; without it there cannot be good works and without good

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[143] Qutbuddīn noted this hadith in his *Mazāhir-i-Ḥaqq*, (*sharah Mishkāt*), vol. 1, p. 141-142. He noted and commented on a number of hadiths which teach that sheer belief in the unity of God and the apostleship of Muhammad is required to save people from hell (see pp. 38-42)

[144] See *Mazāhir-i-Ḥaqq*, vol. 1, p.173

[145] James 2:19

[146] It is reported by Abu Hurairah that when Muhammad sent him to preach this that 'whoever will say *la ilaha illa Allāh* will enter paradise', Caliph 'Umer physically beat Abu Hurairah, and advised Muhammad not to proclaim this message otherwise people will stop doing good works. Then Muhammad said, 'let them do good works' (1880:16). Also see *Mazāhir-i-Ḥaqq*, vol. 1, pp. 151-2).

works this faith cannot be found anywhere. Faith and works are inseparable. This faith is tested in temptation. This living Christian faith generates hope in man. Christian faith, he asserted, also consists of two parts: to accept God as he has revealed himself – unity in Trinity of three persons, and Trinity in unity. And that the second person became incarnate, fulfilled all duties on our behalf, and became the atonement for our sins. Thus faith and confession of the *waḥdat fil tathlīth* and atonement is *īmān* ('Imād-ud-dīn 1880:18-19). 'Imād-ud-dīn asserted that Muslim and Christian faiths are as different from each other as heaven from earth. This sort of faith characterised, he believed, all biblical prophets ('Imād-ud-dīn 1880:20). This shows that in 'Imād-ud-dīn's evaluation Muhammad's teachings on *īmān* contradicted the teachings of the biblical prophets.

3.1.2 Belief in the former prophets and books

Muhammad also taught that Muslims must believe in all previous prophets and their books sent by Allāh. A person cannot be a Muslim without this *'aqīda*. 'Imād-ud-dīn said that this was absolutely the belief of Muslims. However, their belief that previous books should not be followed because they have been abrogated is unacceptable. He considered it 'a deceptive way of separating people from the company of the prophets' ('Imād-ud-dīn 1880:21). Muhammad not only taught that earlier books have been abrogated but also forbade reading them. He again quoted from *Mishkāt, kitāb al-Īmān,* that Muhammad became angry with 'Umar for reading *Taurat*.[147] Muhammad is reported to have said: "By Allāh in whose hand is my life, if Moses was in front of you then you would have deserted me and submitted to him; and would have wavered from the straight path. And if Moses had continued to live till my time, he would have submitted to me" ('Imād-ud-dīn 1880:23-24).

According to 'Imād-ud-dīn, Muslim scholars inferred from this hadith that apart from the Qur'ān and hadith, turning to the books of Jews and Christians was forbidden to them.[148] Muhammad's contradictory attitude towards former scriptures shocked 'Imād-ud-dīn: 'Muhammad said that *Taurat*, *Injīl* and *Zabūr* were the word of God, and then he forbad his followers to read and listen the same word of God' ('Imād-ud-dīn

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[147] It is reported from Jabir that 'Umar brought a copy of Torah to Muhammad and showed to him. Muhammad kept quiet. Then 'Umar began to read from it at which Muhammad became angry and Abu Bakr informed him of Muhammad's anger and he stopped reading it. See *Mazāhir-i-Ḥaqq*, vol. 1, p.283.
[148] The author of *Mazāhir-i-Ḥaqq* noted this hadith from Jabir. In his explanatory note he wrote, " From this hadith it is proved that apart from the Qur'ān and the Sunnah of Muhammad, there is no need to turn ones attention to the books of the Jews and Christians and philosophers" (Qutbuddīn, vol 1. P. 283).

1880:24). He challenged Muslims to consider that Muhammad himself abrogated numerous verses, which are still present in the Qur'ān. Why did he not forbid reading or command exclusion of those verses from the Qur'ān? He argued that if abrogated verses are not excluded from the Qur'ān, and are even recited in the *namāz,* then those [considered abrogated] books should also be read; rather, the holy books should be bound with the Qur'ān. He asserted that Muhammad's attitude towards the former prophets and their books have serious implications for his *risālat.* He asserted, "he is certainly not the apostle of God, otherwise he would not have resented the word of his own sender" ('Imād-ud-dīn 1880:24). He further noted, "None of the earlier prophets taught this and the belief that God abrogates [previous scriptures] is sin" ('Imād-ud-dīn 1899:331). Muhammad's teachings, he believed therefore, contradicted the chain of biblical prophets.

3.2 *Taqdīr* (predestination/determinism)

The *'aqīda* of *taqdīr* is said to have exerted the most powerful influence on Muslims. Muhammad taught that God determined everyone's *taqdīr* fifty thousand years before the creation of heaven and earth.[149] 'Imād-ud-dīn quoted a hadith from Mishkat's *bāb al-qadr*: "good and evil are ordained by Allāh".[150] In the same chapter there is another hadith from *Ṣaḥiḥ Muslim,* Muhammad said: "Allāh has decreed for every son of Adam his share of *Zina* (adultery), and there is no way to escape from it"[151], i.e., he will eventually commit adultery. In the same chapter it is also narrated by Abu Darda that Muhammad said, "In relation to every man God has settled five things: death, place of death, good and bad actions, place of living, and livelihood" ('Imād-ud-dīn 1880:32-33). 'Imād-ud-dīn pointed out that Muslims are so strongly urged to accept this doctrine that they are forbidden to have any relationship with the person who denies *taqdīr*. He noted that Muhammad said, "If they are sick do not go to visit them and if they die do not go with their funeral"[152] ('Imād-ud-dīn 1880:33). Muhammad forbade arguing about

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[149] See *Mazāhir-i-Ḥaqq*, vol. 1, p. 187.
[150] In his introductory remarks to the chapter on *qadr*, Qutbuddīn wrote that after creating the world God divided it into two, one to go into paradise by the grace of God and other to go into hell by the justice of God. He said God has determined the destiny of everything before the creation of all things. It is a duty to believe in the doctrine of *taqdīr* and that Allāh is the creator of all the actions of men whether good or evil *Mazāhir-i-Ḥaqq,* vol. 1, pp. 186-7).
[151] *Mazāhir-i-Ḥaqq* Pp.193-94
[152] *Mazāhir-i-Ḥaqq* P. 208

this doctrine as well.[153] 'Imād-ud-dīn reflected on the impact of this doctrine on Muslims:

> The effect of this teaching on Muslims is more than other teachings. At every predicament they say, it was ordained in God's decree in this way. With every hope they say, if it is in *taqdīr* then we will receive it. And after committing evil they say, God decreed it in our *qismat* (fate) to do this (1880:33).

To 'Imād-ud-dīn this teaching contradicted the biblical prophets and was very dangerous as it makes God the source of all evil, and thus the first evil one (*sharīr-i-awwal*); while according to the Bible Satan is the first evil one. This doctrine has serious implications; he warned: if one accepts it, it brings insult to God and if one does not, one cannot remain a Muslim. Moreover, one cannot be held accountable for one's evil deeds and men become bold to do evil. They feel no remorse for their wrong doings and consider that it was Allāh's will for them, and they will die without repentance. This doctrine gives great consolation to prostitutes and adulterers and other active wrongdoers; considering that they have been decreed by Allāh to do this; they become strong in evil as if they are doing God's will. This doctrine impinges on God's righteous character. To him, on the day of judgement God will be considered a cruel dictator because He would be seen punishing those whom he himself has ordained to do wrong. And if this whole mischief and evil is the work of God, and the Qur'ān claims he forbids evil, then there is no harmony in God's word and deed; and there must not be any contradiction in his word and deed ('Imād-ud-dīn 1880:34-38).

In his earlier objections against the teachings of Muhammad, 'Imād-ud-dīn had not included *taqdīr*. It reveals that with the passage of time he kept adding arguments against Muhammad's claim to prophethood in the line of the biblical prophets. 'Imād-ud-dīn argued that there is a huge difference between the biblical and Islamic understanding of *taqdīr*. God does most certainly not ordain evil thoughts and deeds to be done by men. They originate from men because God created them with free will and freedom to act. In their actions they are not under the compulsion of divine *taqdīr*. He said it is written in the Bible that God elected and ordained certain men to eternal life [Ephesians 1:4]. This eternal election depended on God's eternal knowledge that certain people will follow God's will and thus will enter paradise. He created some to be the vessels of honour and others of disgrace [Romans 9:21; 2 Timothy 2:20]. This belongs to God's hidden wisdom which we cannot know, and even angels cannot know it. Our

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[153] *Mazāhir-i-Ḥaqq* pp. 202-3

duty is to trust God and obey him. Passages regarding the eternal election in the Bible are beyond understanding ('Imād-ud-dīn 1888:34-35).

It is a bit confusing that 'Imād-ud-dīn just alluded to the biblical teachings about predestination and did not even quote any verses. He could have quoted Ephesians 1:4-5 which talk about God having elected us in Christ before the creation of the World and predestined us for adoption to Sonship according to his good pleasure, which is very different from the Islamic doctrine of *taqdīr*.

3.3 Sin

'Imād-ud-dīn argued that Muhammad's teachings about sin are fundamentally different from the biblical prophets. He noted that Muslims define sin as a deviation from the law of Muhammad. To 'Imād-ud-dīn, however, the perfect definition of sin was found in 1 John 5:17: "all wrongdoing is sin", and 1 John 3:4, "sin is breaking the law". Muslims, however, do not consider deviation from Torah and the Gospel as sin. 'Imād-ud-dīn asserted, the Bible proves that God appointed only one law for former and later people: the Law of Moses, which was the law of all prophets. Therefore, whoever turns away from that divine law commits sin. However, centuries later, Muhammad taught that deviation from the law of all prophets was not sin. Rather, he declared that the previous law was abrogated and replaced by his new law[154], which must be followed by all people ('Imād-ud-dīn 1880:39; 'Abdullah al-Khatib, d. 742/1341:16-17).

'Imād-ud-dīn reasoned that earlier prophets and Muhammad do not agree on the 'origin of sin,' 'God's attitude toward sin,' 'accountability of sin,' and the 'forgiveness of sins'. The biblical prophets taught that sin entered the world through Satan and spread among men through Adam, but Muhammad, in his doctrine of *taqdīr*, taught that evil comes from God and he is the fountainhead of sin.[155] 'Imād-ud-dīn cries out, "behold, how much Muhammad opposes the word of God in the fundamental things of godliness" ('Imād-ud-dīn 1880:40).

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[154] The author of *Mishkāt* noted a hadith from Muslim narrated by Abu Hurairah that the prophet of Allāh said, "By Him in whose hand is my soul, if any Jews or Christian dies in this *ummat* (nation) without hearing my words and did not believe in the Dīn and sharia (religion and law) which I have brought, then his abode will be surely in hell" ('Abdullah al-Khatib, d. 1341:17-17).
[155] A hadith narrated by 'Umar Ibn al-Khatab, tells that as Muhammad explained for a questioner what *Īmān* (faith) was, he said to believe that both good and evil are by God's will (*Mishkāt*, trans. A.N. Matthews, p 5).

The biblical prophets and Muhammad also differ about God's attitude toward sin. According to the Bible God hates sin. The Qur'ān too teaches that Allāh hates sin; therefore, he does not love *kāfirīn*, *mushrikīn* and *munāfiqīn*. 'Imād-ud-dīn found it 'astonishing,' though, that Allāh himself being the author of evil and the one who causes all evil to be committed, why should he hate the evil doers? He considered this 'the real contradiction in the Qur'ān'('Imād-ud-dīn 1880:41). Even more astonishing is Allāh's attitude towards the forgiveness of sins. 'Imād-ud-dīn cites from *Mishkāt's bāb al-istaghfār*, a tradition by Abu Hurairah that Muhammad said, "By him in whose hand is my soul, if you do not sin then God will necessarily destroy you and will create such a nation, which will ask forgiveness after committing sin, and God will forgive them".[156] Again a *Ṣaḥiḥ hadith* narrated both by Bukhari and Muslim from Abu Hurairah:

> Man sins then says, O God I have sinned, forgive me. God says this my servant knows, that there is a God who has the power to forgive and punish, therefore, God forgives him. He commits sin again and gets it forgiven in the same way. Thus he may get his sins forgiven in the same way as long as he wishes ('Imād-ud-dīn 1880:41-42).

'Imād-ud-dīn argued that from this statement it is clear that God does not hate sin greatly, rather he likes people asking for forgiveness after committing sin. On the contrary, he said, earlier prophets taught that God totally hates sin. Due to sin, once, he destroyed the whole world by deluge. Even now because of sin, his wrath kindles on the children of disobedience. Muhammad, however, teaches that the pattern of committing sin and then asking forgiveness should continue, because if we do not do this then God will destroy us and will create another nation. He stressed: it is written in the Bible that God sent death because of sin but Muhammad says death will come if we do not sin. Thus for our continuous existence we must sin and ask forgiveness ('Imād-ud-dīn 1880:42-43).

'Imād-ud-dīn also argued that there is contradiction in the teaching of Muhammad and former prophets about the accountability of sin. He explained that Muslims divide sin into two kinds: sin in thoughts and sin in actions. A thought of committing a sin is called *waswasa*. Contrary to the teachings of the prophets, Muhammad taught that all *waswasas* are forgiven to his *ummat*. 'Imād-ud-dīn quoted from *Mishkāt bāb al-waswasa* a Ṣaḥiḥ hadith reported from Abu Hurairah by Muslim and Bukhari, "The *waswasas* that come in the heart of my *ummat*, God has forgiven all of them until they

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[156] Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim also recorded this hadith reported by Abu Hurairah. See book 37, no. 6621 & 6622.

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are acted upon, or until they are spoken out"[157] ('Imād-ud-dīn 1880:45). 'Imād-ud-dīn argued that any sin that a person commits, first its thought comes to the heart and then that thought is demonstrated in action. Thus that bad thought is the root of that sin. Sin is an action that emerges from the thought as a tree from the little seed. 'Imād-ud-dīn stated, 'since the roots and seeds of sin are forgiven to Muslims, then see how much seeds of evil are sown with this teaching'. 'Imād-ud-dīn then contrasted this with the biblical teachings where sinful thoughts are identified as the cause of actual sins (James 1:15; Job 15:35; Psalm 7:14; Isaiah 59:40; Hosea 10:13; Romans 6:21-23). The author of Ecclesiastes 12:14 taught that God will bring into judgement both thoughts and deeds. Christ taught that even a thought of committing adultery makes a man a sinner like the one who has actually committed adultery but Muhammad says that such evil thoughts are forgiven and sets that man free from punishment. He cited a tradition from Abu Hurairah in Muslim that certain people came to Muhammad and said, 'such and such thoughts come into our heart that we cannot even say those things. Then Muhammad said '*dhalaka ṣarīh al-īmān*' (this is clear/evident faith)'.[158] 'Imād-ud-dīn remarked: "When coming of evil thoughts in the heart becomes evident faith, and they [Muslims] are taught that all their evil thoughts are forgiven, then why will they be sorrowful, and fearful because of their sins in their hearts and why should they repent" ('Imād-ud-dīn 1880:46).

'Imād-ud-dīn declared that this teaching was unacceptable. God is holy and in his presence all people in thoughts, acts, and speech are sinners. It is written in the word of God, blessed are the pure in heart for they will see God. The purity of heart is necessary for the inner intimacy of man's spirit with God. He said what else is the purity of heart other than this that correct faith and good thoughts should abide and evil thoughts, which are detestable, should be banished from the heart. He argued that Muhammad acknowledged *waswasas* are sin yet he taught God will not hold Muslims accountable for those sins simply because they are Muslims. ('Imād-ud-dīn 1880:46-47).

The final contrast between the teachings of the biblical prophets and Muhammad is shown about the forgiveness of sins. 'Imād-ud-dīn noted: "Muhammad taught that Islam cancels sins committed before conversion to Islam, and later sins are forgiven by *ḥijrat*, *ḥajj*, *namāz*, *jihad*, and other [acts of] worship.[159] The major sins, like adultery

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[157] The author of *Mazāhir-i-Ḥaqq* noted this hadith from Mishkāt, in vol.1, p.176).
[158] See *Mazāhir-i-Ḥaqq*, vol. 1, pp. 176-77
[159] *Mazāhir-i-Ḥaqq*, vol. 1, P.143

and murder are forgiven by suffering their punishment" ('Imād-ud-dīn 1880:48). 'Imād-ud-dīn showed that this contradicts the Bible, which teaches that sins are forgiven through the sacrifices [Hebrews 9:22]. Forgiveness of sins cannot be received by physical punishments, or performing *ḥajj* and other good deeds; this is against the teachings of all biblical prophets, because all of them taught that the dirt of sin could be removed by sacrifice alone ('Imād-ud-dīn 1880:50). It is the final and perfect sacrifice of Christ which liberates us from the bondage of sin (Hebrews 9).

3.4 Change of heart

It is generally agreed that all men are sinners, but can a sinner's heart be changed? What did Muhammad teach in this regard? 'Imād-ud-dīn argued that contrary to all prophets Muhammad taught that to change someone's heart is impossible. He acknowledged that there is no clear teaching in the Qur'ān in this regard but hadiths give a detailed description about it. He quoted from *Mishkāt, kitāb al-Īmān*, chapter *'azāb al-qabr* that Abi Darda narrated that Muhammad said, "If you hear that a mountain has moved from its place, believe this. But when you hear that a man's *khulq* (nature/disposition) is changed, then never ever believe it because man returns to his natural disposition"[160] ('Imād-ud-dīn 1880:53). He cited another hadith from Abu Hurairah that Muhammad said, "Men are like mines of silver and gold. Those who are good in the state of *kufr* are also good in the state of Islam" ('Imād-ud-dīn 1880:54). 'Imād-ud-dīn argued that, "It is clear from these two hadiths that Muhammad taught that it is impossible to change human nature and that Islam cannot affect it – those who come into Islam with good disposition are good in Islam and vice versa, this is due to their natural habits"[161] ('Imād-ud-dīn 1880:54).

'Imād-ud-dīn claimed that Islam did not change even Muhammad and his companions' nature; for as Surah 48:29 says, "Muhammad and those who are with him are harsh against unbelievers and compassionate amongst themselves…" In this verse, Muhammad's and his companions' nature is described as if they have the same nature in them, which is found in all men of worldly and carnal nature: they love their own people and inflict pain to their enemies. Here Muhammad confessed that Islam had no

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[160] See *Mazāhir-i-Ḥaqq*, vol. 1, pp.221-22
[161] 'Imād-ud-dīn quoted this hadith from *Mishkāt's bāb al-'itasām,* which I have not been able to find. However, this is a well-known hadith and is found in Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim, book 45, hadith 205. http://sunnah.com/muslim/45. Accessed:04/05/2016 11:30

impact on his nature or his companions'. 'Imād-ud-dīn's view therefore was that if "the Qur'ān and hadith are not convinced about the possibility of change in human nature, then what is the use of Islam" ('Imād-ud-dīn 1880:55).

On the contrary, 'Imād-ud-dīn argued that the biblical prophets do not agree with Muhammad. Christ made regeneration a precondition for entering the kingdom of God (John 3:3), and Peter talks about deliverance from the corruption of this world and evil desires, and participation in the divine nature (2 Peter 1:4). To 'Imād-ud-dīn it was clear from the history of the disciples that hundreds of thousands of people were changed, and the very meaning of becoming Christian is to be changed – not a small change but a huge change. Here, he was likely thinking of his own conversion that the Gospel brought about ('Imād-ud-dīn 1880:57).

4. Prophets and Muhammad on Christ's death, resurrection, and paradise

'Imād-ud-dīn argued that most of Muhammad's teachings on resurrection differ from earlier prophets and are presented with much exaggeration. For example, Muhammad and his people will be admitted to the paradise first where they will be provided with beautiful women, servants, wine etc. Evil Muslims will go to hell with *kāfirs* but after sometime they too will go to paradise while the *kāfirs* will remain in hell forever ('Imād-ud-dīn 1880:58).

'Imād-ud-dīn speaks of Muhammad foretelling the signs of resurrection[162] which include: multitude of children being born from the slave women; tall houses being built by those utterly poor; decrease of knowledge and increase in ignorance, adultery, drinking of wine; one man will be the master of fifty women; great increase in wealth; and Arabia will become lush with gardens and flowers.[163] He said: "When my kingdom will arrive in Jerusalem, know that [the day of] resurrection has drawn near. And calamity and evil and other big events have arrived. On that day, resurrection will be so close to people as my hand is close to my head"[164] ('Imād-ud-dīn 1880:62).

'Imād-ud-dīn's critique of this was to remind his Muslim opponents that Caliph 'Umar did succeed in occupying Jerusalem thirteen hundred years ago but the resurrection has not yet come ('Imād-ud-dīn 1880:60-62). Muhammad had also spoken

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[162] See Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim, book 1, and no.7.
[163] Qutbuddīn, vol.5, p24-25
[164] Qutbuddīn, vol.5, P31

of Imām Mahdī (from the seed of Muhammad's daughter Fatima) coming before the resurrection. The Mahdi was to be named Muhammad and his father's name would be 'Abdullah. He was to look like Muhammad and his role was to fill the world with peace and justice according to the teachings of the Qur'ān.[165] 'Imād-ud-dīn characterised the Mahdi as a model of the biblical anti-Christ and a false prophet ('Imād-ud-dīn 1880:63). 'Imād-ud-dīn argued that Muhammad's teachings about Christ and his second coming are so contrary to the Bible, that it was right to call him anti-Christ ('Imād-ud-dīn 1880:64).

There appears a contradiction in 'Imād-ud-dīn's thinking because he also argued that Muhammad's teachings about the second coming of Christ in the Qur'ān was generally in accord with the Bible. However, it does confirm his other argument that the Qur'ān and hadiths contradict each other on this subject. He also quoted Ibn Jawzi's tradition from 'Abdullah bin 'Umar that Jesus will come back to earth. He will marry and will have children. He will live on earth for forty-five years and then will die. He will be buried in the tomb of Muhammad at Medina. Then on the day of resurrection, along with Muhammad, Abu Bakr and 'Umar, he will rise. He cites another tradition from Abu Hurairah: when Jesus will come he will break crosses, kill pigs, and will collect *jizya*.[166] Muhammad also denied Christ's crucifixion, his death, resurrection and his divinity. 'Imād-ud-dīn asserted that the prophets predicted that Christ will be crucified (Isaiah 53:5-9; Daniel 9:26). Christ himself said he would be crucified (Matthew 16:21). His disciples and Jews claimed he was crucified (Acts 4:10). The Romans said he was crucified. But Muhammad said he was not crucified: To 'Imād-ud-dīn, "the denial of Christ's crucifixion was the greatest proof against Muhammad's claim to biblical prophethood and his integrity" ('Imād-ud-dīn 1899:355).

'Imād-ud-dīn observed that contrary to these proofs, Muhammad, whose prophethood remains unproved, whose knowledge of the Bible remains sketchy, born six hundred years later in a different country, denied it because he desired to start a religion against the Cross. He wrote:

> It is legitimate to call Muhammad anti-Christ because he girded his loins to strongly oppose Jesus. In opposition to Christ's whole religion he revealed his own law and taught doctrines contradictory to Christianity. He denied the Cross, Trinity, atonement, divinity of Christ, and his resurrection from the dead. In the same way Muhammad also changed the form of Christ's second coming. And this is opposition of the whole Bible. ('Imād-ud-dīn 1880:64).

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[165] Qutbuddīn, vol.5, P35
[166] Qutbuddīn, vol.5, pp90-93

'Imād-ud-dīn concluded this whole discussion on the *'aqā'id* by saying that "what Muhammad teaches against the word of God will be accepted only by a man who does not fear God. Such teachings are dangerous, those who seek eternal peace should be very alert" ('Imād-ud-dīn 1880:64 & 69).

5. Worship

'Imād-ud-dīn also offers his critical commentary on the worship enjoined by Muhammad and held that this contradicted the true worship taught in the Bible by the Hebrew prophets and apostles. 'Imād-ud-dīn noted that Muhammad put a huge emphasis on *ṭahārat* (cleanliness) for six reasons: without *ṭahārat namāz* cannot be said, the Qur'ān cannot be touched, a mosque cannot be entered, *ḥajj* cannot be performed, *darūd* cannot be said for Muhammad, blessings of God do not descend on a man, and certain forms of worship *('ebādāt)* cannot be accepted without it. Its importance is clearly emphasized in this hadith, 'cleanliness is half of *īmān*' ('Imād-ud-dīn 1880:71). *Tahārat* consists of clean clothes and bodily cleanliness, which is achieved through *wuẓu, ghusl* and *tayammum.* A hadith reported from 'Uthmān by Bukhari and Muslim reports that a properly done *wuẓu* removes all sins from the body, even from under the nails ('Imād-ud-dīn 1880:76-77). Validity of prayer also depends on the right kind of clothes. The Prophet forbade saying the *namāz* in silken and crackling clothes and the pyjamas must not cover the ankles ('Imād-ud-dīn 1880:113). 'Imād-ud-dīn's critique involved what he saw as the lack of equal emphasis on spiritual cleanliness. The biblical prophets concur on this as is evident from the following passages: Psalm 24:3-4; 51:10; 73:1. The Jews of Jesus day also put too much emphasis on outward cleanliness and were severely reprimanded by Jesus Christ (Matthew 5:8; 23:26; Mark 7).

'Imād-ud-dīn argued that the form of prayers ordained by Muhammad was enjoined by none of the former prophets. For example, praying five times a day as a duty (*farẓ*) at specific times, with specific words said in Arabic and accompanied with specific body movements, and direction to K'aba is unique to Islam. While turning the face to K'aba in prayer does seem at odds with the former prophets, 'Imād-ud-dīn appears to be less informed about the Jewish and Christian influence on the Muslim acts of worship. Both Jews and Christians (although not enjoined by the Bible) have had

fixed morning, afternoon, evening and night prayer. Islamic prayer practices,[167] timings and number of prayers, prayer rugs, prostrations etc. etc., are heavily influenced by the prayer life of the Syrian Orthodox churches (Kosloski 2017; Chirathilattu 2004). However, contrary to the biblical prophets, Muhammad taught that saying prayer at certain times was *ḥarām* (forbidden). For example, Muhammad forbade praying at the time when the Sun was rising, at noon, and when the Sun was setting. A hadith explains the reason behind this injunction: the Sun rises from between the two horns of Satan; i.e., at the rising and setting, Sun is between the horns of Satan, and at noon angels put fuel in hell, except on Friday[168] ('Imād-ud-dīn 1880:111). Such teaching about prayer appears at odds with the biblical prophets.

Muhammad also taught many *du'ās* (voluntary prayers) which 'Imād-ud-dīn reasoned are also contrary to the former prophets. The greatest of these *du'ās* is called *du'ā umm al-kitāb* or the mother of the Qur'ān, i.e. Surah al-Fatiḥa. No *namāz* is said without it. The final two verses of this Surah read, *"Show us the straight way, the way of those on whom Thou hast bestowed Thy Grace, those whose (portion) is not wrath, and who go not astray"* (Yusuf Ali). 'Imād-ud-dīn claimed that all expositors of the Qur'ān agree that Muhammad meant Jews and Christians by those who have gone astray and are under God's wrath. 'Imād-ud-dīn argued that if this is the case, then Muhammad and Muslims seek an alternative to the way of the Jews/Christians and the way of the prophets/apostles ('Imād-ud-dīn 1880:122).

In contrast to the biblical prophets, Muhammad also taught *waẓā'if*[169] for the forgiveness of sins, the most important being *darūd* (prayer for Muhammad). Surah 33:56 states, "Allāh and His angels send prayers on the Prophet: O ye that believe! Send ye blessings on him, and salute him with all respect" (Yusuf Ali). According to Imād-ud-dīn Muhammad said he who prays for me would receive great reward. Hoping to receive reward on the last day, certain Muslims recite this *waẓīfa* around a thousand times every day. 'Imād-ud-dīn, however, questioned the validity of the command enjoined in Surah 33:56. He asked, "God who gives to all, to whom does he pray to have mercy on Muhammad. Or why does he need to say *tasbiḥ* (magnify or praise) of a man's name, his creature, and also order his angels to do the same" ('Imād-ud-dīn

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[167] My supervisor, Dr Michael Nazir-Ali told me that he once attended the worship of the Syrian Orthodox Church in India with his Muslim colleague who was stunned to see the striking similarity between the Syrian Orthodox and Islamic way of saying prayers. His Muslim colleague said he had never understood why Muslims prayed the way they pray before having this experience. This is anecdotal.
[168] Qutbuddīn, vol. 1,807-9.
[169] prescribed verses of the Qur'ān and prayers which are often repeated

1880:125). 'Imād-du-dīn further said, "Never a prophet taught that people should praise his name (like God); all taught to worship God. Muhammad was a man; it was not right for him to seek for himself the honour of God" ('Imād-ud-dīn 1899:235). His critique of Islamic prayer continues: so, when many Muslims sit in the presence of God during the *namāz*, they mention Muhammad's name, as if he were God present among them. At the time of *attaḥiyāt*[170]the third person is used for God, but Muhammad, who was a mere man and not omnipresent, it appears he is 'worshiped' in the first person with *yā* and *kāf*. He said, 'if Muhammad is God then his divinity should be proved; otherwise his worship with God is illegitimate ('Imād-ud-dīn 1899:232-36).

Fasting in the month of Ramadān is mandatory for all able-bodied Muslims. 'Imād-ud-dīn acknowledged this to be a good spiritual discipline but in line with his general tone he reminded his reader that none of the earlier prophets taught the number and manner of fasting enjoined by Muhammad. Not everyone in this world could observe the Muslim fast (e.g. those living in the polar parts of the globe). Ḥajj, the fifth pillar of Islam, and one of the greatest acts of worship is also a *fard* on all able-bodied people. The pilgrimage to K'aba in Mecca and its circumambulation was however considered to be a strange kind of worship of a stone. Thus, this too was, in his view, contrary to *silsila-i-anbiyā* ('Imād-ud-dīn 1899:237).

6. *Mu'āmalāt* (dealings with fellow human beings)

While worship is concerned with matters related to man and God, *mu'āmalāt* are concerned with people's relations with one another. 'Imād-ud-dīn deals with a host of teachings of Muhammad which he saw as being contrary to the teachings of the biblical prophets, however, the focus here is on a small selection of those.

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[170] It is a prayer, which is not found in Qur'ān but Muhammad taught to his companions. *Attahiyātu lil Allāhi wa assalawatu wa attaiyibat. Assalamu 'alaika aiyoha annabiyyu wa rahmatu Allāhi wa barakatuh. Assalamu 'alaina wa 'ala ībadi e llahi essalihīn. Ashahadu alla ilaha illa Allāhu wa ashhadu anna Muhammadan abduhu wa rasūluh.*
(All the salutations, prayers and nice things are for Allāh. Peace be on you O Prophet, and the blessings of Allāh, and His grace. Peace on us and on all the righteous servants of Allāh. I bear witness that none but Allāh is worthy of worship and bear witness that Muhammad is the servant and messenger of Allāh.)

6.1 Occupations and *ḥalāl* income

'Imād-ud-dīn noted that there are four kinds of occupations of *ḥalāl* income: *jihād*, business, agriculture, and handicraft. Booty of the wealth of the *kāfirs* in *Jihād* was deemed to be a good way of resource mobilisation.[171] 'Imād-ud-dīn naturally critiqued this for violence and booty could neither be justified by *'aql* nor the word of God. The roots of this teaching lay in Arab Bedouin customs. Muhammad himself exemplified this, he asserted, since apart from his claim to *nubūwat*, from the *ḥijrat* to his death, *jihād* was an important activity and source of booty[172] ('Imād-ud-dīn 1880:149).

Interestingly, one of Muhammad's claims to superiority over other prophets was that Allāh made booty *ḥalāl* for him (Qutbuddīn, vol.5: 281). Excepting Moses and David, none of the other prophets took to warfare as a way of gathering booty and none taught his followers to do so. These are some exceptions (Deuteronomy 20:10-17; 2 Samuel 3:22).

6.2. Teachings about women and marriage

'Imād-ud-dīn also demonstrated that Muhammad's teachings on women; marriage and sex were also different from the biblical prophets. For example he taught to do '*mut'a*': a marriage in which a man marries a woman for a limited time at the end of which the marriage is dissolved automatically. Sunnis now consider it abrogated while Shi'a still practice it. Ibn Mas'ud narrated: "We were with Muhammad in *jihād* and women were not with us. So we said to Muhammad shall we become eunuchs? Muhammad forbade becoming eunuchs and allowed us to do *mut'a*. Thus some of us did *mut'a* for appointed time by giving clothes to women" ('Imād-ud-dīn 1880:156). 'Imād-ud-dīn considered this practice essentially wrong – even a form of prostitution. The important thing for 'Imād-ud-dīn was that both Sunni and Shi'a agree that Muhammad taught *mut'a* ('Imād-ud-dīn 1880:157).

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[171] Qutbuddīn notes this in *Mazāhir-i-Ḥaqq*, vol. 3, p.43
[172] Muhammad received two kinds of booty from *Jihād*. Contrary to the booty possessed after a fight with an opponent of which 5% was allocated for him, he had authority not to give anything to *jihādis* from the booty received without a fight from the opponents. He used to meet the yearly expenses of his household from such booty. Booty received after fighting is called *ghanīmat* and without fight *fa'y*. The booty from Bani Nazir was *fa'y*. (Qutbuddīn, vol.3, pp974-6). 'Imād-ud-dīn talked only about *ghanīmat* and not about the *fa'y*.

Muhammad also taught a Muslim could marry four wives simultaneously, provided he does justice with them[173] (Surah 4:3). 'Imād-ud-dīn asserted, none, not even Muhammad could be absolutely just in this matter. In *Taḥqīq al-Īmān* (1866), and *Tawārīkh-i-Muhammadī* (1878), 'Imād-ud-dīn described Muhammad's marital and sexual life in detail. He argued, though Muhammad's teaching about polygamy itself was objectionable, Muhammad himself did not abide by Allāh's Command in Surah 4:3. He noted that according to Abu al-Fida, Muhammad had 18 wives. Sauda was deprived of her turn for intercourse while 'Aisha had two turns. He also had eight women slaves. Mamūna b. Harith, Khaula b. Hakim, Um-i-Sharik, Zainab b. Hazima, Um-i-Sohail, Khawila b. Hazil, and Asma Junia, gave themselves to Muhammad as a gift (*ḥiba*)[174] without any dower (*mahr*) or marriage (*Nikāḥ*) contract. 'Imād-ud-dīn quoted Ibn 'Abbas who said, "Before the descending of the Surah 33:50, no woman had done it. After this several women gifted themselves to the prophet" ('Imād-ud-dīn 1878:86). According to 'Imād-ud-dīn: "God kept sending verses to allow Muhammad whatever kind of women he desired. This is against the glory of God described in the Bible. [He said] due to such teachings and actions I cannot accept such a god and prophet" ('Imād-ud-dīn 1878:94).

To 'Imād-ud-dīn Muhammad's teaching on polygamy was unjust. It means all four women completely belong to their husband but he is only ¼ for each wife. He pointed out that if Muslim wives refuse their husbands, then angels curse them all night ('Imād-ud-dīn 1880:173).[175] 'Imād-ud-dīn argued such teachings could not originate from God (1880:170-71). Muslim men were/are also allowed to divorce their wives simply saying three times, 'I divorce you,' and divorce becomes effective. The divorced woman could not become his wife again unless she married another man and consummated the marriage before re-marrying her first husband. This was called hard divorce ('Imād-ud-dīn 1880:178). Ironically, Muhammad also taught that among all things *ḥalāl*, divorce makes God very angry,[176] and Satan greatly rejoices when a divorce takes place ('Imād-ud-dīn 1880:176). 'Imād-ud-dīn said that Jesus explained that the Law allowed the Jews to divorce their wives due to their hard-heartedness but

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[173] According to 'Imād-ud-dīn, Muslim scholars define 'doing justice with wives' as appointing their turns for intercourse, and equal distribution of food and clothes to them.
[174] This practice was based on Surah 33:50. Imām Shafʿi believed that this privilege was only for Muhammad. However, Hanīfites believe that *ḥiba* is allowed to all but not to give *mahr* was only for Muhammad (Qutbuddīn, p. 377).
[175] Angels curse and Allāh becomes unhappy with the woman who denies sex to her husband. Both Bukhari and Muslim report it. (See Qutbuddīn, vol. 3, pp408-9).
[176] // P. 437

Muhammad gave no reasonable explanation. In the light of Christ's explanation why Moses allowed the Jews to divorce their wives, and in a tone so commonplace among debeters in the 19th century[177], 'Imād-ud-dīn claimed that Islam's prophet must have been hard-hearted because of his divorces[178] ('Imād-ud-dīn 1880:176).

Muhammad also taught that more women would go to hell than men. 'Imād-ud-dīn quoted a hadith that Muhammad said:

> O women! I see more women are in hell than men. They asked why? He said because you
> are deficient in intellect and religion. You curse often and are ungrateful to your husbands
> and you make a clever man lose his mind. Your intellect is deficient because in my law, a
> woman's witness is equal to half a man. And your religion is imperfect because you cannot
> pray or fast during menstruation ('Imād-ud-dīn 1880:182-83).[179]

'Imād-ud-dīn deemed such teachings unacceptable. A woman is equally human; and if so then why should her testimony not be equal to a man? Why should she abstain from praying in the days of menstruation? He argued that God's worship is done in spirit[180], which she can do in any condition. He contended: "It is a great defect in the law of Muhammad that women are considered lesser or inferior than men. And this is the proof that this law is not from God. The word of God tells us that man and woman are equal in the presence of God.[181] God's blessings are equal for them"[182] ('Imād-ud-

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[177] 'Imād-ud-dīn was not alone who used such language. In the context of interreligious debates in India debaters quite frequently used derogatory and even abusive language against their opponents, and sometimes even against the objects of their devotion. 'Imād-ud-dīn was personally abused by Muslims throughout his life (see page 38). Mawlana Muhammad Ali complained that Christian missionaries used inappropriate language against Muhammad as, in his opinion, "they were under the impression that the darker the picture they drew of the prophet of Islam, the greater would be their success in winning over converts from among the Muslims. This made the Muslims' blood boil" (Ali 2008:82). Mirza Ghulam Ahmed used insulting language against Christ for which even Muslims condemned him. This trend can be traced back to the sixteenth century Christian-Muslim debates in the courts of Mughals. Jesuit missionaries are reported to have become quite bold and used offensive language in debates. The royal historian Badāūnī (d. 1615) gave a detailed description of these debates. Badāūnī described missionaries' attack on Muhammad in these words, "the attributes of the abhorred Anti-Christ are ascribed to our holy prophet by these lying imposters" (1873:528-29).

[178] In *Tawārīkh-i-Muhammadī*, 'Imād-ud-dīn noted that Muhammad divorced his wife Fatima b. Zahak. She lived a miserable life after divorce as no one helped her in Medina. He also divorced Sauda, as she was old and could not please him any more. She pleaded with Muhammad not to send her away in exchange of relinquishing her turn of intercourse for 'Aisha (1878:199). He also divorced Hafsa, daughter of 'Umar, who is said to have put dust on his head at this humiliation. Then God sent Gabriel to Muhammad and advised him to take Hafsa back (1878:231). Interestingly, ḥalāla, (an Islamic law which demands that a divorced woman must marry another man, consummate marriage, and get devorece before she could remarry her first husband) was not required in this case.

[179] This hadith with certain variations is found in all hadith collections. The Arabic word for majority is *akthar*, which indicates a vast majority (http://www.answering-islam.org/Women/in-hell.html. 2016 09:55).

[180] John 4:24

[181] Genesis 1:27

[182] 1Peter 3:7

dīn 1880:183). 'Imād-ud-dīn believed that the cause of the wretched condition of the women of Asia [he meant Muslim nations], as compared to the European women, was the law of Muhammad ('Imād-ud-dīn 1880:183).

7. *Qiṣṣaṣ al-Anbiyā* (stories of the prophets)

'Imād-ud-dīn also considered *qiṣṣaṣ* told in the Qur'ān and hadiths. Often in the retelling of these stories an attempt is made to dwell on the similarities. 'Imād-ud-dīn focussed on the significant differences. He suggested that these stories are found piecemeal in the Qur'ān and Muslims have tried to complete them by expanding them in the hadiths. Even so, they do not have the correct and complete stories. He showed that most of the stories contradict the narratives told about the same persons by the biblical prophets. For example, consider the creation of Adam. He noted that Islamic sources narrate: God sent Gabriel, Michael, and Isrāfīl, who failed to bring soil from the earth to form Adam's body. Finally he sent 'Azrael, the angel of death, who forcefully took a handful of soil from the earth. Then it took God forty years to make the dough. Then for forty years God poured water on it from the sea of grief. Then God made the body of Adam and put it between Mecca and Ta'if. Thousands of angels came to see him for forty years but Satan made fun of him. Three times, the spirit refused to enter into Adam's body, then, God forcefully put her in. Then Adam was taken into heaven where God had angels and Adam compete. Angels could not answer God's questions but Adam did because God had secretly told him all the answers. Then angels were ordered to prostrate before Adam. Satan refused and vowed to lead all men astray and bring them to hell ('Imād-ud-dīn 1880:251-53; Surah 2:34).

In the story of Noah, it is told that he took Adam's coffin in the boat. Satan also entered the boat holding a donkey's tail. Noah advised him to repent. God said if Satan bowed before Adam's dead body in the coffin then his repentance would be accepted. Satan said, he did not bow when Adam was alive; why should he bow to him when he was dead? ('Imād-ud-dīn 1880:263). This story also tells that pigs were born from the tail of an elephant, when Noah was given *waḥī* to touch her tail. Again he was given *waḥī* to touch the forehead of a lion to bring forth cats. The reason for the creation of pigs was to clean up the mess made by animals and cats to control mice in the boat ('Imād-ud-dīn 1880:264).

We are told that Abraham escaped the fire of Nimrod and he brought Ishmael and Hagar to the wilderness where Mecca was later built. He also built the K'aba. Every day he travelled from Canaan to Mecca to visit Ishmael and Hagar. There is a difference of opinion among Muslims but contrary to the teachings of the biblical prophets it is generally held that Abraham sacrificed Ishmael (Genesus 22).

The story of Joseph's escape from the temptation by Potiphar's wife is well known (Genesus 39). In the Islamic tradition this story has a twist (Surah 12). After years of wandering as an old woman, Potiphar's wife encountered Joseph again in the jungle. Upon seeing her, Joseph had compassion on her. He prayed for her and she immediately became a young virgin, more beautiful than before. Thereupon, Joseph married her. We are told that Joseph's two sons Ephraim and Manasseh were born from her ('Imād-ud-dīn 1880:289-94).

There are many other Islamic accounts that differ from the biblical ones. For Christians what matters the most is the story of Jesus as taught in the Qur'ān and Hadith. Quite contrary to the Gospel accounts, after her miraculous pregnancy, Mary wished to die and so she went into a jungle. She gave birth to Jesus under a date palm tree. She is confused with Miriam, the daughter of 'Imran ['Imram] and sister of Aaron and Moses. She is accused of committing adultery but the child Jesus defended her. The child Jesus confessed to be a servant of God who was given the *Injīl* and commanded to say the *namāz* and give *zakat* (Ibn Kathīr d. 774/1372; 2010:685-690). Apart from certain non-canonical miracles, like making birds from the clay and giving them life and power to fly, and raising Shem, son of Noah, he is reported to have cursed those who did not believe in his miracles, and some 33 to 5000 people turned into swine. They ate garbage and died after three days. Jesus abrogated the Torah for which the Jews began to abuse him and his mother, for which God punished them by turning their young men into monkeys, and children into pigs. This is in clear contradiction with Jesus's declaration that he did not come to abrogate the Law and the Prophets (Matthew 5:17).

Muhammad also taught that Christ was taken up into heaven, and someone else was made to look like Jesus who was crucified. He will come back again. He will then kill Dajjal. In his time all the Jews will be killed, crosses will be broken, and there will be no *kāfir* in the world. He will follow the Law of Muhammad. He will marry and bear children. He will die after forty years and will be buried in the grave beside Muhammad's tomb in Medina ('Imād-ud-dīn 1880:343-350).

After the 350-page discussion of Muhammad's teachings in *Ta'līm-i-Muhammadī*, 'Imād-ud-dīn said that he left out a part of Muhammad's teachings which

was extremely objectionable, and presented only his good teachings, from the Qur'ān, hadiths, and authentic writings of Muslim scholars. He concluded his two-volume study on the life of Muhammad and his teachings saying:

> Now looking at *Tawārīkh-i-Muhammadī* and *Ta'līm-i-Muhammadī*, readers can know that
> though it has a form of religion, but there is no life in the religion of Muhammad at all.
> Therefore, it is a dead religion or a body, which a man created with great skills but couldn't
> put soul into it ('Imād-ud-dīn 1880:350).

'Imād-ud-dīn said Muhammad's teachings and conduct[183]have revealed that indeed this religion is not from God, rather it is a product of man's intellect and carnal desires. He wrote: "God neither put the seal of his miracles of power on his teaching, nor do his teachings reveal that wisdom, which is in God. Therefore, thirst of the spirits cannot be satisfied with his teachings, and this is a great proof that he was not a prophet from God" ('Imād-ud-dīn 1880:352).

According to 'Imād-ud-dīn, Muhammad's teachings about *'aqā'id*, *'abādāt*, and *mu'āmalāt* were all based on 'lack of knowledge, rationality, and things heard from the word of God, and traditions. Muslim *qiṣṣaṣ* show that Muhammad did not know the history of the prophets. After reading the Bible, 'Imād-ud-dīn asked, 'who can accept the history as told by Muhammad?' This is because 'every sentence of this history is filled with manifest errors.' ('Imād-ud-dīn 1880:353-54).

'Imād-ud-dīn's aim in offering a contrasting story of Muhammad's prophethood and the biblical tradition was to show that all histories, guidance, all rituals, and orders in the Bible are meant for only one thing: to show that salvation is only in Jesus Christ and this is something, he believed, Muhammad did not grasp ('Imād-ud-dīn 1880:359). Since his teachings were so different from the Bible, he said, "it is a duty to demur about the prophethood of Muhammad and testify to the word of God" ('Imād-ud-dīn 1880:9).

Conclusion

One of the main reasons 'Imād-ud-dīn left Islam was that Muhammad's claim to prophethood could not be reasonably substantiated, and that in his being and doing,

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[183] *Tawārīkh-i-Muhammadī* was written to reveal his conduct. We have not dealt with his conduct but mainly focused on his teachings.

character and teachings, he was quite unlike the biblical prophets. This chapter demonstrated that 'Imād-ud-dīn took a new line of argument regarding the prophethood of Muhammad. He challenged the Muslim claim that Muhammad belonged to the biblical chain of prophets and in this regard he was the last and the greatest of prophets of God. It was shown that both the Qur'ān and Hadith fail to establish his genealogical link with Ishmael and Abraham. Moreover, his means and modes of inspiration were also different from the Hebrew prophets. Contrary to the biblical prophets who were indwelled and inspired by the Holy Spirit, Muhammad had no knowledge of the Holy Spirit. At close scrutiny, even Gabriel, 'Imād-ud-dīn reasoned, proved to be different from the biblical Gabriel. Muhammad claimed to be the prophet for the Jinn as well, which had no precedence in earlier prophets.

Muhammad's teachings, the ultimate test of the prophethood, in 'Imād-ud-dīn's view, were also shown to contradict the biblical prophets. His teachings about *'aqā'id*, *'abādāt*, *mu'āmalāt*, and *qiṣṣaṣ* essentially differed from the biblical prophets. This led 'Imād-ud-dīn to demur about his claim to be one of the prophets sent by the God of the Bible. Even Shah Walīullāh acknowledged that the Jews denied the prophethood of Muhammad because of his difference from the biblical prophets (Walīullāh 2004:31-32). Due to the vast difference between Muhammad and the biblical prophets it was 'Imād-ud-dīn's conclusion that Muhammad was not a prophet: "Thus the result is that neither Muhammad is proved to be a prophet, nor his Qur'ān seems to be from Allāh…nor Muhammad's teachings are satisfying" ('Imād-ud-dīn 1899:241).

The last point of the unfinished agenda was the authenticity of the Qur'ān, which will be discussed in the next chapter.

Chapter Seven: 'Imād-ud-dīn and the Divine authorship of the Qur'ān

Introduction

Muslims believe that the Qur'ān is the final revelation from God. This involves abrogation of the previous scriptures and their supersession by the Qur'ān. This high view of the Qur'ān arises from the Qur'ānic claims about itself, and rests on the belief in the finality of Muhammad's prophethood. "The Qur'ān (Kor'an) is the foundation of Islam" (Nöldeke 1892) and "the evidence of the Qur'ān depends on the prophethood of Muhammad" (Sweetman 1967:159). The Qur'ān's own testimony to Muhammad's prophethood rests on its 'miraculous nature and incomparability' (Surahs 17:88; 13:31; 2:23; Al-Ghazali 1993:224). The Qur'ān is also considered as a proof of Muhammad's prophethood; the two are inseparable (Moshay 2007:10-11). The early Muslims expressed this connection as follows: "His character is the Qur'ān" (Muir 1861:xxv 11-111).

This explains the veneration of the Qur'ān by Muslims. The critics however view the reverence offered by Muslims to the Qur'ān as something that "borders on bibliolatry and superstition" (Ibn Warraq 1998:9). As a convert to Christianity, 'Imād-ud-dīn offered his own perspective on the Qur'ān. Since these were made in the 19th century context of the debates, they are understandably critical. The main questions to be addressed here are: What are the Muslim assertions about the authorship of the Qur'ān and how modern western scholarship has responded to such claims? What was 'Imād-ud-dīn's response to the Qur'ān's self-authenticating assertions, and Muslim claims to its miraculous nature? How does 'Imād-ud-dīn's appraisal contribute to the nineteenth-century Christian-Muslim debates on the Qur'ān?

1. Authorship of the Qur'ān

According to Stefan Wild the Qur'ān is "the most self-conscious … self-reflexive and self-referential foundational text of any world religion" (2006: 3). The self-referential nature of the Qur'ān consists of both positive (what it claims to be) and negative (what

it denies or rejects to be) claims. William Goldsack[184] observed, "The Qur'ān is full of the claims of its divine origin and full of curses for those who do not accept its claims" (1909:5). Indeed, the Qur'ān asserts itself to be the word of Allāh (Surahs 2:23-24; 4:82; 6:19; 6:92; 15:9; 25:4-6, 32; 27:6; 45:2; 56:80; 69:43; 75:16-19; 97:1 etc.). Apart from these positive assertions, the Qur'ān also claims that it is not a word of Satan (Surah 81:25)[185], of a poet (Surah 69:41)[186], or of a soothsayer (Surah 69:42). The Qur'ān further asserts that it was brought down or taught to Muhammad by *ruḥ al-quds* (Holy Spirit) (Surah 16:102), *ruḥ al-amīn* (the trustworthy spirit) (Surah 26:193-94), *shadīd al-quwa dhu mirrah* (Surah 53:4-6), *al-raḥmān* (Surah 55:1-2), and Gabriel (Surah 2:97-98). It is clear that the Qur'ān vigorously asserts its divine authorship.

The *aḥādīth* contain greater descriptive content on how the Qur'ān was brought down to Muhammad. For example, it is said that, 70,000 or 80,000[187] angels descended with certain Surahs of the Qur'ān (As-Suyūṭī 911/2008:104). A hadith in *Mishkāt* reports that Muhammad said, "Allāh wrote the *kitāb* (the Qur'ān) 2000 years before the creation of the heaven and earth" (Qutbuddīn n.d: 449).[188] Wild notes, "To many Muslim scholars and to the majority of Muslims, the Qur'ān became God's uncreated word, divine, true, and unsurpassable in every Arabic syllable" (2006:2). Imām al-Qurtubi stated: "The first aspect of the excellence of the Qur'ān … is that it is from the Lord of the worlds and is uncreated … It came from the Light of Allāh's Essence" (2003:4). Not all Muslims subscribe to al-Qurtubi's opinion; yet most Muslims believe that Allāh alone is the author of the Qur'ān.

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[184] William Goldsack's *Yanābi' al-Qur'ān* was compiled from different sources. One of the sources he mentioned was 'Imād-ud-dīn's *Hadāyat al-Muslimīn*. He made a number of references to *Hadāyat* (1909:8).

[185] *Tafsīr Jalālayn* explains, "And it, that is, the Qur'ān, is not the word of an accursed Satan, eavesdropping stealthily". *Tafsīr Ibn 'Abbas*, "(Nor is this) i.e. the Qur'ān (the utterance of a devil worthy to be stoned) the utterance of an accursed, rebellious devil whose name is al-Marmi". (http://www.altafsīr.com/Tafasir.asp?tMadhNo=0&tTafsīrNo=73&tSoraNo=81&tAyahNo=25&tDisplay=yes&UserProfile=0&LanguageId=2). Accessed: 25/06/2016 15:11.

'Ali Ibn Ahmad al-Wāhidī (d. 468/1075), the earliest scholar of the Qur'ānic science known as the *'Asbāb al-Nuzūl'* did not give the reason of the revelation of 81:25.

[186] About the Qur'ān being the word of a poet or a soothsayer, Maudūdī says, in short: "I swear by whatever you see and by whatever you do not see that this Qur'ān is not the word of a poet or a soothsayer, but it is a Revelation from the Lord of the worlds, which is being presented by the Messenger who is noble and gentle." (http://www.englishtafsīr.com/Quran/69/index.html). 25/06/2016 19:14.

[187] For example, As-Suyūṭī reports that at the time of descending of *al-Inām* 70,000, and 80,000 angels descended at the time of the descending of *al-Fateha* with Gabriel. (As-Suyūṭī 911/2008:105). The Qur'ān, however, does not make such claims.

[188] Qutbuddīn, *Mazāhir-i-Ḥaqq*, vol. 2, p.449.

Muslims argue for the Qur'ān's divine authorship mainly by asserting Muhammad's inability, described as an *ummī* (illiterate)[189] (Surah 29:48), to produce such a Qur'ān. It is also asserted that Muhammad could not have written these verses for his own embarrassment (Surahs 33:37; 69:45-46; 80:1-2). They claim that unlike Muhammad's style in the *aḥādīth*, the style of the Qur'ānic prose is authoritative. They argued that the Qur'ān could not be the word of Satan because its author curses Satan (Surahs 35: 6; 36:60). And the Qur'ān teaches Muslims to say, "…I seek refuge in God from Satan the accursed" (Surah 16:98). They also assert that it could not have been authored by the *jinn* because, no one (including the *jinn*), could produce anything like the Qur'ān (Surahs 2:23-24, 17:88). Muslims consider this to mean that the Qur'ān is a miracle [intellectual/literary]. Raḥmatullāh argued that the Qur'ān was the first miracle of Muhammad ('Imād-ud-dīn 1892:26). Some modern Muslim apologists have claimed that the Qur'ān is also a mathematical miracle, which, only God could have done. Therefore, it must be Allāh's word. Daniel Madigan states, "The scholarly consensus is underpinned above all by the Qur'ān's own insistence that it be considered a *kitāb* of divine origin, just like the examples bestowed earlier upon Christians and Jews" (Madigan 2001:4). Thus, the Qur'ān, Hadith, and nearly all Muslims, assert that the Qur'ān is a divinely authored book.

2. Challenges to Islamic claims

The Qur'ān itself is the primary witness to the fact that its claims were being challenged. Muhammad's opponents dubbed his revelations as the mere '*asātīru*[190] *al-awwalīn*' (tales of the ancients) (Surahs 8:31; 16:24; 23:83; 25:5; 27:68; 46:17; 68:15). The Qur'ān specifically mentions *Zabūr* (Psalm) where Surah 21:105 "the meek shall inherit the earth," already exists. This verse comes directly from Psalm 37:11 but is also found in Matthew 5:5. Islamic tradition too recognizes that certain parts of the Qur'ān

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[189] Al-Ghazali (1058-1111), praising Muhammad stated, God gave him these qualities though he was illiterate and had no education and lived always with the illiterate Arabs…being illiterate…how could he acquire such knowledge about God without worldly knowledge? How could he know what was beyond man unless he received revelation? His miracles prove that he is a true prophet of God (1993:222).
Rashad Khalifa, however, vigorously argued that Muhammad was literate. He claimed Muhammad left the complete Qur'ān written with his own hand, and this original Qur'ān was destroyed by Umayyad ruler Marwan Ibn Al-Hakam (d. 684). (2003:3-4).

[190] Hans Wehr explains that '*asātīr*' is a plural of *ūstura*. It means, 'legend, fable, tale, myth, and saga' (1976:16).

were revealed to former prophets (Ibn Kathīr 911/2008:108).[191] Gilānī[192] acknowledged that the Qur'ān was "the last edition of the heavenly book" (1950-2005:39).

Muhammad's contemporaries claimed that he was a forger (Surah 16:101-103), and that a foreigner was teaching him (Surah 16.103). They considered his revelations as "Falsehood invented by Muhammad with the help of other people" (Surah 25:4). They accused him of "plagiarism and fabrication" (Muir 1878:13, 16). Nadr bin al-Harith claimed that Muhammad had copied[193] the tales of the ancients just like him (Ibn Ishaq/Guillaume 1998:162). The Quraish chiefs said to Muhammad, "We have learned that you just received your revelation from a man in al-Yamama known as al-Raḥmān, we will never, by God, believe in that al-Raḥmān" (Ibn Kathīr 1998-2006:349). They rejected Muhammad's claim to prophethood and rather considered him a 'sorcerer' and *kāhin*[194] ('Abdullah 2014:215, 218).

Following Muhammad's interlocutors, early Christians and modern scholars too have generally not accepted Islamic claims about the Qur'ān. To John of Damascus the Qur'ān was "an ignorant imitation of the Bible" (Thomas 2008:3). 'Abd al-Masīḥ al-Kindī considered the Qur'ān "a confused heap, with neither system nor order" (Muir 1887:78). Ibn Warraq quotes Gibbon saying that the Qur'ān was an "incoherent rhapsody of fable", and Carlyle, "an insupportable stupidity" (1998:9). St. Clair Tisdall (1905) identified the sources of the Qur'ān and claimed that it drew from the ancient Arabic, Sabian, Zoroastrian, Jewish, Christian apocryphal, and Hanīf sources.

Arthur Jeffery, John Wansbrough, Keith Small, Andrew Rippin, and John Gilchrist, have shown that Islamic traditional claims regarding the Qur'ān are untenable. They see Muslim narratives of the revelation and preservation of the Qur'ān were

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[191] For detail, please see As-Suyūtī's *Itiqān Fī 'Ulūm al-Qur'ān*, section 15, pp. 107-109.

[192] Gilānī, on the basis of Surah 25:5 and 52:3 argued that the complete Qur'ān had been written on *Raqq* (parchment) in the life of Muhammad. A cursory reading of these verses indicates that Allāh was swearing by the book written on the *raqq* spread open. Jewish Scriptures were written on the *Raqq* scrolls (2 Timothy 4:13). The Qur'ān as believed by Muslims was written not on the *raqq* but *al-lauh al-maḥfūz* (the secure tablet or slab), palm leaves, stones, bones, and parchments. It appears that the material was being copied from the *Raqq* parchment. Surah 80:13-16 says that the book was in the hands of scribes (*bi-aydi safaratin*).

[193] Guillaume notes in the footnote that, "the word 'copied' in Surah 25:6, *iktataba* means to write oneself, or to get something written down by others. The former seems to be demanded by the context" (1998:162).

[194] Edward Sell observed that, "Muhammad's first utterances were in genuine *kāhin* form and *kāhin* spirit [rhymed prose called *saj'*]. When a prophetic spirit came upon a *kāhin* he was for a time out of himself. This was exactly the state in which Muhammad often was … This identified him with the *kāhin* class, and naturally his opponents looked upon him as a *kāhin*, and revelations came to rebut this allegation (69:42)" (1913:38).

invented to serve political and sectarian interests of different communities (Wansbrough 1978).

Scholars also contend that there are serious problems in text of the Qur'ān. Ibn Warraq observes:

> 'Uthmān's codex was supposed to standardize the consonantal text; yet we find that many of the variant traditions of this consonantal text survived well into the fourth Islamic century. The problem was aggravated by the fact that the consonantal text was unpointed, that is to say, the dots that distinguish, for example, a "b" from a "t" or a "th" were missing. Several other letters (f and q; j, h, and kh; s and d; r and z; s and sh; d and dh, t and z) were indistinguishable. In other words the Qur'ān was written in a *scripta defective*. As a result, a great many variant readings were possible according to the way the text was pointed (had the dots added) (1998:15).

The study of the Qur'ānic manuscripts reveals the text remained fluid centuries after the death of 'Uthmān. Small noted Rezvan's observation, "that real history of the fixation of the Qur'ānic text attested in the early manuscripts differs in extremely serious fashion from the history preserved in the Muslim tradition" (Small 2013). Small claimed that there were at least six periods throughout which Qur'ānic material continued to evolve: Muhammad's career 610-632, Companions' collection 632-653, 'Uthmān and Al-Hajjaj[195] 653-705, editing and developing orthography 705-936, consolidation of the ten readings 936-1924, and the Hafs text [current and standardized in] 1924. He showed that *ḥamza* was not a separate Arabic letter, nor was Arabic grammar codified until the 8th century (Small 2012:163,172). Small claimed there was no original Qur'ānic text nor any unified recitation and in the 900s, there were fifty systems of recitation, but ten became canonical text-forms. Small concludes that because of its defective consonantal text, and variant readings, "efforts of Muslim rulers to unify through editing and supressing the Qur'ānic materials, have resulted in the irreparable loss that neither the original oral nor written text can be recovered" (Small 2012:168). Muslims, however, argue that the absence of vowels did not affect the text because *ḥufāz* knew how to pronounce the words. Small further argues that:

> The history of the transmission of the text of the Qur'ān is at least as much a testament to the destruction of the Qur'ānic material as it is to its preservation. It is also a testimony to the fact that there never was one original text of the Qur'ān" (2012:180).

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[195] 'Abd al-Masīḥ al-Kindī in his apology to Al-Hashimi was perhaps the first Christian apologist who pointed out that Hajjaj b. Yusuf edited the text of the Qur'ān (1887:77).

Wild, contends that, "…the Qur'ānic text we have does not represent the prophetic recitations of Prophet Muhammad in their original order. The process of collecting and writing down most probably also involved eliminating certain reading traditions" (Wild 2006:11).

R. S. Gabriel observes that until the publication of the Egyptian text in 1924 the Qur'ān was not standardized. In the manuscript discovered in the Great Mosque of San'a, Yemen (1973), not a single Surah is identified as Meccan or Medinan (Gabriel 2010:4). Hajjaj b. Yusuf (d. 95/714), in his bid to standardise the Qur'ān, "corrected the text of the Qur'ān in eleven places" (Radscheit 2011:96-97). Yet all efforts to standardise the Qur'ān seem to have failed. Radscheit says, "Ibn Abi Dāūd (4th/10th century), states in his *Kitāb al-Maṣāhif*, that eleven collections of the Qur'ān existed among the companions of the prophet, and eleven other collections in the subsequent generations" (Radscheit 2011:96). "There are no complete Qur'āns from the first and second century of the *hijra*. It is no wonder that not a single complete copy exists among the fragments of more than 1000 Qur'āns that were found in 1973 in Sanaa" (Radscheit 2011:96). The two oldest Qur'āns, which Muslims claim, belonged to 'Uthmān: the Samarkand and Topkapi codices are written in Kufic, which shows they did not originate from Medina, but both of them are also incomplete. The Samarkand manuscript begins with Surah 2:7 and ends with 43:10 (Gilchrist 1989). Tom Holland has questioned the very origins both of the Prophet of Islam and his book. He writes:

> So how is it, in a book supposedly composed there in Muhammad's lifetime that the monotheism of the far-distant Fertile Crescent should have been given such a starring role? It is all very mysterious; and made even more so by the fact that Mecca is not alone in seeming to have had a spectrally low profile in the early decades of the Arab Empire. So too did the Qur'ān itself. As with the reputed birthplace of the prophet, so with the compendium of his revelations: there is not a single mention of it in the writings of the period. In the first flush of the Ishmaelite takeover, the Patriarch of Antioch assumed that his new masters' holy book was the Torah (2013:335).

For Tom Holland mystery surrounds the origins of Muhammad and the Qur'ān, which is "compounded by the complete absence of any commentaries on the Qur'ān prior to the ninth Christian Century" (2013:335). Tom's observation begs an obvious question – had the Qur'ān existed from the time of Muhammad or even 'Uthmān, why were no commentaries written until the ninth century? Tom quotes Puin, one of the only two Germans ever allowed to study the Sana'a Qur'āns, "Ger-Rudiger Puin publically asserted that the fragments demonstrated that the Qur'ān, no less than the bible, had

evolved over time and was a veritable 'cocktail of texts'" (Holland 2013:336). A discovery of the Qur'ānic parchment at the University of Birmingham in 2015 brought much excitement as the experts declared it to be the oldest written Qur'ān. However, the Radio Carbon Dating tests conducted in Oxford University determined that the text was written between AD 568 to 645 and it contains only parts of Surahs 18 to 20. Moreover, these dates may suggest that the Birmingham text predates Muhammad's claim to prophethood (quran-manuscript-22-07-15.aspx).

The above discussion shows that Islamic claims about the Qur'ān have been seriously challenged. For the present study, however, our main interest is to discover how in the context of nineteenth-century Christian-Muslim debate on the Qur'ān in India 'Imād-ud-dīn might have challenged the Islamic claims; and to what extent his insights and arguments could have contributed to advancing this age-old debate?

3. 'Imād-ud-dīn's response to the Qur'ānic and Islamic claims

'Imād-ud-dīn's original contribution to Christian-Muslim debates on the Qur'ān is seen in his serious attention to the Qur'ān's self-authenticating assertions, and producing evidence from Islam's revered sources that both Qur'ānic and Islamic claims about the Qur'ān were questionable. 'Imād-ud-dīn challenged the claim that the Qur'ān was the word of Allāh. First, he identified the Qur'ān's own claim as to who brought down or taught the Qur'ān to Muhammad: *ruḥ al-quds, ruḥ al-amīn, ar-raḥmān*, Gabriel, and *shadīd al-quwa dhu mirrah,* and then investigated these claims to see whether they would hold under his scrutiny.

It was noted in the previous chapter that the majority of Muslim scholars have taught that *ruḥ al-quds*, *ruḥ al-amīn*, and *shadīd al-quwa dhu mirrah* were other names of Gabriel. 'Imād-ud-dīn questioned the identity of Gabriel and also rejected the notion that *ruḥ al-quds* and *ruḥ al-amīn* were alternative names of Gabriel. 'Imād-ud-dīn's understanding of these Qur'ānic figures who reportedly taught the Qur'ān to Muhammad is given below.

3.1 *Ruḥ al-Quds*

'Imād-ud-dīn's understanding of Muhammad's inspiration by the Holy Spirit was presented in chapter six. However, the discussion here is from a different perspective,

whether Muhammad was taught or the Qur'ān was brought down to him just as the Qur'ān claims. 'Imād-ud-dīn quoted Surah 16:102, a command to Muhammad to say that the Qur'ān was, in truth, brought to him by *ruḥ al-quds*.

'Imād-ud-dīn's argument that unlike the biblical prophets Muhammad was not inspired by *ruḥ al-quds* was also noted in the previous chapter. Here the argument is that *ruḥ al-quds* did not give him the Qur'ān. The Holy Spirit, as is known from the Bible, never brought down a book for any of the prophets. 'Imād-ud-dīn noted that *ruḥ al-quds* is mentioned four times in the Qur'ān and three of these are related to Christ (Surahs 2:87&253; 5:110). All these verses talk about Christ being aided and empowered by *ruḥ al-quds* which resulted in the demonstration of amazing signs and works of wonders: Jesus speaking from the cradle, healing sick people, creation of birds out of clay, and the raising of the dead. 'Imād-ud-dīn argued, had Muhammad been inspired by *ruḥ al-quds*, one would have hoped to see 'Christ-like' signs and wonders proceeding from his life. A Muslim could argue that not all inspired biblical prophets exhibited Christ-like powers. Nevertheless, the majority of Muslim scholars have insisted that Christ was helped by *ruḥ al-quds*, and the mention of *ruḥ al-quds* in Surah 16: 102 means that Gabriel brought down the revelation to Muhammad. Thus they do not see *ruḥ al-quds* to be a Divine Person who authored the Bible (2 Timothy 3:16; 2 Peter 1:19-21), but a created angel. However, none of the earlier prophets received scriptures from Gabriel, nor did any of them perform miracles with his help.

The Islamic tradition also tells us that not only Muhammad but also his companions were being inspired and supported by the Holy Spirit and Gabriel. Muhammad's poet Hassan b. Thabit was one of them. Al-Bukhari recorded:

> The Prophet said to Hassan, "Abuse them (with your poems), and Gabriel is with you (i.e., supports you)." (Through another group of sub narrators) Al-Bara bin Azib said, on the day of Quraiza's (siege), Allāh's Messenger said to Hassan bin Thabit, "Abuse them (with your poems), and Gabriel is with you (i.e. supports you)" (Al-Bukhari vol.5, chapter 59, number 449).

A number of *aḥādīth* specifically state that Hassan was helped by *ruḥ al-quds* in composing his satires against Muhammad's enemies. He also praised and defended Muhammad in his poetry.[196] One may ask if Gabriel and *ruḥ al-quds* inspired Hassan,

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[196] See *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, the book 44, on the merits of Ṣaḥāba and then the merits of Hassan b. Thabit. Numbers, 6071, 6072, 6081, *Tirmidhi*, 36, number, 09, 223, and 2859, and *Abu Dāūd* 4997 also reported the same thing.

then can Muslims consider his poetry equal to the Qur'ān? 'Imād-ud-dīn, however, believed, "Muhammad named his own mind *Jibrīl*, *ruḥ al-quds,* and *ruḥ al-amīn* so that the thoughts of his own mind might be accepted" (1894:42). 'Abd al-Masīḥ al-Kindī, however, observed that "Muhammad's companion used to call Sergius both Jibrīl and *ruḥ al-amīn*, namely the angel that descended with the Qur'ān to Muhammad" (Muir 1887:72). It is clear, however, that the name *ruḥ al-quds* in Surah 16:102 in 'Imād-ud-dīn's view was not the *ruḥ al-quds* as revealed in the Bible.

3.2 *Ruḥ al-Amīn*

'Imād-ud-dīn noted that Surah 26:193-94 declares that *ruḥ-al-amīn* brought the Qur'ān down upon Muhammad's heart, and by *ruḥ-al-amīn* Muslim scholars understand Gabriel. 'Imād-ud-dīn asserted that, "there is no evidence in the Qur'ān which would prove that Gabriel's name is *ruḥ al-amīn*" (1894:35). He argued that the Qur'ān uses the word '*amīn*' in a variety of ways: 'a *jinn*' is called '*amīn*' (Surah 27:39), certain 'prophets' are called '*amīn*' [Surahs 26:107, 125, 143, 162, 178], 'paradise' (*bihisht*) is called *makām-i-amīn* [Surah 44:51], and the 'city of Mecca' is also called '*amīn*' [Surah 95:3] ('Imād-ud-dīn 1894:36).'Imād-ud-dīn also acknowledged that:

> In Surah *At-Takwīr* (81), an exceedingly honourable person is called '*Amīn*', and Muslim scholars apply this passage to Gabriel, though it cannot be applied to him. No thoughtful person would agree that this passage is about Gabriel. Because, the characteristics [of the person] mentioned there, cannot be accepted to be that of Gabriel (1894:36).

'Imād-ud-dīn also quoted Surah 81:19-21, "Indeed this (Qur'ān) is a word of the honourable Messenger. Owner of the power with the owner of the Throne, [the one who is] obeyed and is trustworthy". He argued that Gabriel could not have possessed these qualities: 'possessor of power' with the 'possessor of the Throne,' one who is 'obeyed', and is 'trustworthy'. 'Imād-ud-dīn reasoned that these could not be Gabriel's attributes; because, if they were, then, he would become God's vicegerent – he would have taken the status, which belonged to *Ḥaqq maulūd* (Truth begotten, second person of the Trinity)" ('Imād-ud-dīn 1894:36). So then, whom was Muhammad talking about?

'Imād-ud-dīn noted that in this Surah the Qur'ān also asserts that it is "the word of the Honourable Messenger (*rasūl karīm*)" (Surah 81: 19-21).[197] These verses put

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[197] *Innahu laqawlu rasūlun karīmin* (81:19). *Dhī quwwatin ʿinda dhī l-ʿarshi makīnin* (81:20). *muṭāʿin thamma amīnin* (81:21)

Muslim exegetes in an obvious quandary. The context of the verse here does not make clear the identity of the one called '*rasūl karīm*,' whose word this Qur'ān is. Muslim opinion is divided between Muhammad and Gabriel, but 'Imād-ud-dīn argued that neither Muhammad nor Gabriel could be accepted as the "possessor of the power" with "the owner of the Throne" (Allāh), who is obeyed in heaven ('Imād-ud-dīn 1894:36). This *rasūl karīm*, obviously, is not Allāh either. Muslims believe that the Qur'ān is the verbatim word of Allāh. But this verse declares that the Qur'ān is the 'Word of *rasūl karīm*' who possesses the Power with 'the Owner of the Throne': Allāh. The distinction between the two persons with divine qualities is a point of interest here. 'Imād-ud-dīn, however, argued that all the attributes ascribed to *rasūl karīm* are found in neither of them but only in Jesus Christ – he alone is *ruḥ al-amīn* and *rasūl karīm* [198] (see chapter 4, 8.3). This, however, would mean that Muhammad claimed to have seen Christ on the horizon (Surah 81:23) and Christ's Spirit taught him the Qur'ān. 'Imād-ud-dīn argued that:

> The Spirit of Christ, the Spirit of God, and the Holy Spirit, is the one and the same spirit …
> This is similar to Muhammad's claim that the Holy Spirit taught him the Qur'ān. He uses
> these names so that he may be accepted … we cannot accept that he was taught by Ruḥ al-
> Amīn (1894:37).

'Imād-ud-dīn argued that Muslim scholars' claim that *ruḥ al-amīn* is Gabriel's name, is based on lack of knowledge. The Bible shows that God does not consider angels '*amīn*' (Job 4:11; 15:15; 25:5). No created being could reach the status described in Surah 81:19-21, otherwise, "the creator and the creature would become equal" ('Imād-ud-dīn 1894:39). No other person, apart from Christ qualifies to be called *rasūl karīm* (Malachi 3:1), and *ruḥ al-amīn* (Revelation 3:14; 19:11; Hebrews 3:2). Muhammad, however, he claimed, did not receive the Qur'ān from him. "He used the name of '*ruḥ al-amīn*' just as he used the name of '*ruḥ al-quds*', so that his words might be accepted" ('Imād-ud-dīn 1894:37, 40, 42).

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[198] S. Zwemer argued that one of the reasons Muslims do not accept Christ's claims is that they have ascribed many of Christ's titles and qualities to Muhammad (*Arabia: The Cradle of Islam*, p. 185). Tisdall also argued that Muslims have so exalted their master that he replaces Christ (*The Religion of the Crescent*, 218-220).

3.3 *Al-raḥmān*

'Imād-ud-dīn referred to Surah 55:1-2, which informs us that *al-raḥmān* taught Muhammad the Qur'ān. Ibn Kathīr in his *tafsīr* says, "This refers to Allāh teaching the Qur'ān that is, teaching the servants how to recite it by making it easy for them to speak and pronounce with the various parts of the mouth" (2016). This obviously contradicts Islamic tradition, which says Muhammad saw his Lord only twice. But more importantly, the question is, did Allāh teach him the Qur'ān and are Allāh and *al-raḥmān* one and the same person?

Scholars differ over the identity of *al-raḥmān*. Generally Muslims consider *al-raḥmān* not to be a proper name but an adjective describing Allāh's attribute of being 'compassionate and beneficent'. Sweetman, however, talking about the divine mercy in the Qur'ān observed: "The name Ar Raḥmān is not used in the Qur'ān very noticeably in reference to the exercise of mercy. It seems to be mainly used as a proper name of God alternative to Allāh. This is implied in Sura xvii.10 and xxv.60-61 where people asked who was Raḥmān?'" (Sweetman 1947:56).

I.Q. Al Rassooli goes a step further and argues that *al-raḥmān* is a proper name of another deity mentioned in the Qur'ān, not an adjective. He observes that:

> The fact is the expression name **Al Raḥmān** was **Not** and is **Not** a characteristic [compassionate, most gracious] of Allāh but was and is the actual **Name** – not adjective of the Supreme pagan god of the Yemen. Muhammad appropriated the name of this deity during his early Mecca period and used it extensively in his initial verses to bring the pagan Quraysh to believe in this god. The name Al Raḥmān, **Not** Allāh, appears in twelve Meccan Suras forty seven times, and in the very early Medina Suras three times (2012:509).

Al-Rassooli points out that in Surah 55:1-2, which claims that *al-raḥmān* taught Muhammad the Qur'ān, in 78 verses, Allāh is not mentioned even once. He suggests that in Surah 17:110, "Call upon Allāh or Call upon al-Raḥmān, by whatever name you call upon him…" *Al-raḥmān* is used as an alternative name of Allāh. He asserts that "Allāh was the name of the supreme god of the K'aba in Mecca and Al Raḥmān was the name of the god of Yemenites" (Al-Rassooli 2012:513). It is interesting to note that the Quraish initially rejected Muhammad's call to follow him, as they understood that he was inviting them to submit to a foreign god – *al-raḥmān*. And it was *al-raḥmān* some foreign deity, not Allāh, who the Meccans refused to bow down to (Surah 25:59-60). Al Rassooli says about verse 60, "This particular verse is pregnant with the meaning because the Quraysh, Muhammad's tribe, do not believe in al Raḥmān the god of the

Yemenites and are challenging Muhammad as to why they should adore this god instead of Allāh" (Al-Rassooli 2012:514).

The Quraish rejection of Muhammad's invitation to bow to *al-raḥmān* is also apparent in *tafāsīr*. The authors of the *Tafsīr al-Jalālayn* explained the verse 60:

> And when it is said to them, to the disbelievers of Mecca, 'Prostrate yourselves before the Compassionate One' [Ar-Raḥmān], they say, 'and what is the Compassionate One [Ar-Raḥmān]? Should we prostrate ourselves to whatever you bid us' (ta'murunā; or read ya'murunā, '[whatever] he bids us') — [in both cases] the one bidding is Muhammad (s) — when we do not know who He [Ar-Raḥmān] is? No! And it, this that is said to them, increases their aversion, to faith (Al-Mahalī, As-Suyūtī 2007:408).

Tafsīr Ibn 'Abbas clarifies the reason for which Meccans refused to prostrate to Ar-Raḥmān:

> (They say: And what is the Beneficent [ar-Raḥmān]) we do not know anyone with this name except Musaylimah the liar? (Are we to adore whatever thou (Muhammad) biddest us) a manifest lie? (And it) i.e. the mention of the Beneficent; and it is said: the mention of the Qur'ān; and it is said the call of the Prophet (pbuh) (increaseth aversion in them) from faith (Ibn 'Abbās 2016: n.p).

These examples show that Muhammad's fellow Meccans did not recognise that *al-raḥmān* was the supreme deity of K'aba, namely Allāh. According to Ibn 'Abbas, they actually thought *al-raḥmān* was a man, Musaylimah. Interestingly, Musaylimah did have his own Qur'ān. Talking about the Qur'ānic formula *bismillah al-raḥmān al-raḥīm*, the Encyclopaedia of Islam states, "it may be that it contains a reference to the Raḥmān of pre-Islamic South Arabia, and that Raḥmān should be taken as a divine proper name" (1960:406). Al Rassooli points out that Surah 19 contains the name *al-raḥmān* the most. In verses 44-45 Abraham warns his father of the wrath of *al-raḥmān*. In 19:61, he threatens nonbelievers of his revenge and wrath. Verse 93 says all may come to him as servants. Verses 85-95, he believes:

> Presents the most powerful and clarifying illustrations of the meaning of Al Raḥmān. His name is used repeatedly and forcefully condemning the worship of Isa (Jesus) by Christians and any allegation that Al Raḥmān shares power with any other (son), or procreates (Al-Rassooli 2012:516).

He also gives a lengthy treatment to Surah 20, *Ta Ha*. The verse 4 clearly says that the Qur'ān is a revelation from *al-raḥmān*, the creator of heaven and earth. The verse 5 declares his authority (not his mercy or beneficence), 6, his ownership of heaven and

earth, and 7, his omniscience. He states, "All of it shows that Al Raḥmān is, powerful, Almighty divinity" (Al-Rassooli 2012:519). Surah 20:108 talks about the Day of judgement, and says on that day all shall humble themselves in the presence of *al-raḥmān*. The verse 109, says on that Day, there shall be no intercessor except the one to whom *al-raḥmān* shall grant the permission. Al-Rassooli says, "Verses 108 and 109 give a devastating description of the Day of Judgment and Al Rahman's terrifying power and authority on that Day" (2012:519). Referring to 20:110-111, he says that "Those who carry the burden of a single act of sin will be doomed (there is no reference to forgiveness, mercy or beneficence here)" (Al-Rassooli 2012:519). After conducting a thorough study, Al-Rassooli concludes that in the context where the name *al-raḥmān* occurs, he does not appear as the most gracious, most compassionate but the Almighty, and wrathful deity (Al-Rassooli 2012:519).

'Imād-ud-dīn did not say much about *al-raḥmān* but simply equated him with *shadīd al-quwa dhu mirratin*. He said, "Muhammad also named *shadīd al-quwa dhu mirratin* – raḥmān" (1894:50). This would imply that all the characteristics of *shadīd al-quwa dhu mirratin* are found in *al-raḥmān*. This would further imply that the meaning of *al-raḥmān* was opposite to what is generally described by Muslims, namely, rather than being 'beneficent and gracious'; he is 'the master and possessor of hardness and bitterness'. Therefore, we now turn to his discussion of *shadīd al-quwa dhu mirratin*, who is also said to have taught Muhammad the Qur'ān.

3.4 *Shadīd al-Quwa Dhu Mirratin*

From among all the supernatural sources claimed by the Qur'ān and identified by 'Imād-ud-dīn, he really put much emphasis on the *shadīd al-quwa dhu mirratin* (henceforth *shadid al-quwa*). Surah 53 claims that this Qur'ān was taught to Muhammad by *shadid al-quwa*. This is an extremely important statement with serious implications. 'Imād-ud-dīn exclaimed, "now we know from where the Qur'ān has come: it was taught to Muhammad by "*Shadīd al-quwa*" ('Imād-ud-dīn 1894:46).[199] 'Imād-ud-dīn vigorously argued that *shadid al-quwa* was not the same God who caused the Bible to be written. Muhammad claimed to have seen this *shadid al-quwa* twice and reckoned that he had 600 wings. 'Imād-ud-dīn argued that this was not a picture of God

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[199] For his detailed discussion on who, he thought, *shadīd a-quwa* was, the reader may refer to chapter 7, 2.5.

('Imād-ud-dīn 1894:47). He also did not accept that *shadid al-quwa* was another name of Gabriel.

'Imād-ud-dīn, after having discussed the acclaimed divine authors of the Qur'ān concluded: "Now it is known that Muhammad knows neither the Holy Spirit nor *ruḥ al-amīn*, which is the spirit of Christ. And he does not know Gabriel well nor did he come to him. In reality *shadīd al-quwa* taught him the Qur'ān whom he also named Raḥmān" ('Imād-ud-dīn 1894:50). Thus 'Imād-ud-dīn argued that claims about the Qur'ān's ultimate authors are empty, put forward so that the Qur'ān may become acceptable. The author of the Qur'ān cannot, therefore, be the God who revealed the Bible.

'Imād-ud-dīn appears to be guilty of selectively using the Qur'ān to achieve his desired result because he did not examine or deliberately ignored a large number of verses where the Qur'ān appears to make a direct claim that Allāh revealed it. In response to 'Imād-ud-dīn, Muslims can refer to these verses to argue for the divine authorship. Here are some examples where 'Allāh', and 'we' a supposed plural of majesty, or other titles indicative of the divinity are linked with the revelation of the Qur'ān to Muhammad. What can be said about those claims? For example: Surah 25:1, *tabāraka alladhī* (Blessed is he who) sent down the *al-furqān* (the criterion). It is assumed that it refers to Allāh but the proper name Allāh is not mentioned here. In Surah 15:9, *naḥnu* (we) sent down *l-dhik'ra* (the reminder). It is assumed that the speaker in Surah 15:1-9 is Allāh, but the name Allāh is not mentioned. This is the feature of many other verses (6:92; 12:1-2; 15:87; 36:69; 42:7; 43:3; 76:23).

Surah 26:192-94 says that the Qur'ān is the revelation of the Lord of the worlds (*rabbi l-ʿālamīna*). At the time of the very first revelation Muhammad was commanded to, 'recite in the name of your *rabb*' (Lord) (Surah 96:1). Muhammad also said, "he followed only what was revealed to him by his *rabbi*"[200] (Surahs 7:103; 10:15). Interestingly, the term *rabbi*, in Judaism, was frequently used as a title for the distinguished and authoritative teachers of the Law. Nicodemus addressed Christ as *rabbi* (John 3:2). Surah 27:6 states, "Indeed you have received the Qur'ān from one wise and knowing". This could refer to a learned teacher as well. The Arabic words

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[200] *The Jewish Encyclopedia* informs us that *rabbi* is a "Hebrew term used as a title for those who are distinguished for learning, who are the authoritative teachers of the Law, and who are the appointed spiritual heads of the community. It is derived from the noun רב, which in Biblical Hebrew means "great" or "distinguished," and in post-Biblical Hebrew, "master" in opposition to "slave" (Suk. ii. 9; Giṭ. iv. 4) or "pupil" (Ab. i. 3). In the Palestinian schools the sages were addressed as "*rabbi*" (my master) … "The title 'Rabb' is Babylonian, and that of '*rabbi*' is Palestinian" (JewishEncyclopedia.com, Accessed: 23/01/17 15:10).

used are *ḥakīmin ʿalīmin* (one wise and knowing), not *al-ḥakīm* and *al-ʿalīmin* (all-wise and all-knowing).

Surah 20:113-114, however, makes a direct claim that "this Arabic Qur'ān is revealed by Allāh". There appears no direct mention in the Qur'ān that Allāh taught Muhammad the Qur'ān. It could be assumed from the ambiguous 'we' in Surah 36:69, "we did not teach him poetry," that Allāh taught him the Qur'ān, not poetry. Leaving aside as to why Allāh did not teach him poetry, while a large part of the Bible consists of the poetry inspired by the Holy Spirit, it could refer to any one of Muhammad's teachers. Surah 75:17-18 shows that someone was teaching Muhammad how to recite the Qur'ān. The speaker of these verses said, "Indeed, upon us is its collection and recitation. So when we have recited then follow its recitation". It is obvious Muhammad's teacher was busy collecting the Qur'ānic material and then reciting it to Muhammad. It is not clear that the pronoun 'us' in these verses refers to Allāh. Contrary to this Surah 5:110 reveals that Allāh himself taught the Book to Jesus.

While it appears difficult to determine who authored the Qur'ān, having argued that the Qur'ānic appeal to the biblical characters as the source of its revelation was unfounded, 'Imād-ud-dīn was convinced that God of the Bible was not the author of the Qur'ān ('Imād-ud-dīn 1894:45). Although 'Imād-ud-dīn did not agree with Muslims' claims, yet the Qur'ān for them is the sacred text imbued with miraculous qualities which to them is an evidence of its divine origin. What 'Imād-ud-dīn thought of such a claim is discussed below.

4. The Qur'ān as the divine text

The Qur'ān itself declares that if it were not the work of Allāh then there would be many contradictions in its text (Surah 4:82).[201] And since it is God's handiwork, a combined effort of human and jinn could not produce a Surah similar to the Qur'ān (Surah 17:88). This is sometimes called *'I'jāz al-Qur'ān* (the miracle of the Qur'ān). The author of *Dalā'il an-Nubūwat*[202] stated, "Among all the miracles of the Prophet the most splendid and brightest is the Qur'ān" (Isfahānī 2014:214). 'Imād-ud-dīn examined

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[201] This is a rather strange claim. Can any book, which is free from contradictions, be accepted as a divine book?

[202] Abu Na'im Ahmad Bin 'Abdullah Isfahani (d.1038/430) is considered to be one of the great Imāms and authority on Hadith. He authored some one hundred books. *Dalā'il an-Nubūwat* (proofs of prophethood) is one of his very important works devoted entirely to provide the proofs of Muhammad's prophethood.

these claims to see if they could be substantiated. His position was against the inimitability or, *'I'jāz al-Qur'ān'*.

4.1. The Qur'ān: A divine miracle

To refute this Islamic assertion 'Imād-ud-dīn suggested that first, one should know what excellence Muslims see in the Qur'ān, what kind of excellence it is, and then ponder whether it really is an excellence. As a summary of the Muslim argument he quoted from *Itiqān's* section 64:

> Miracles are of two kinds: *hissy* (related to senses or feelings), and *'aqlī* (intellectual). *Hissy* miracles are those, which are seen with eyes, like the staff of Moses, the she-camel of Saleh, and Christ's healing of the sick people, or raising of the dead. God gave such miracles to the Israelite prophets. And the reason for this was that Israelites were extremely foolish and deficient in intellect. For this reason, these obvious miracles were given to them. And their taste was limited to that time, and with the passage of that time their taste had also passed away. The second kind of miracle is the intellectual miracle, and that is the *faṣāḥat* of the Qur'ān. Because Arabs are very wise, intelligent, and clever, therefore, an intellectual miracle was given to them, so that the wise people of every age may always see it with the eye of intellect ('Imād-ud-dīn 1899:350-51).

'Imād-ud-dīn identified that, "Muslims claim that the Qur'ān's eloquence is of such a degree that nothing equals it in the Arabic language, nor it is possible. And this is a proof of its being from Allāh" (1899:40). Raḥmatullāh argued that the Qur'ān was the first miracle of Muhammad. 'Imād-ud-dīn observed that Muslims' claim is based on the Qur'ān's own assertions in Surahs 2:23; 17:88 (1892:26).

4.2. The eternal and inimitable Qur'ān

In order to challenge Islamic claims that the Qur'ān was a miracle, 'Imād-ud-dīn presented two kinds of arguments: (i) certain Muslim scholars denied the eternity and inimitability of the Qur'ān, (2) Certain verses of the Qur'ān clearly originated from human beings. The second argument provides internal evidence against the Qur'ānic claim that *jinn* and men together could not produce verses similar to the Qur'ān.

The Qur'ān asserts that it is found on the preserved tablet (*al-lauh al-maḥfūẓ*) in heaven (Surah 85:22). This gave rise to a generally held belief that the Qur'ān is the uncreated or eternal word of God. If the Qur'ān was uncreated, it would immediately

make it inimitable, since that which is eternal cannot be imitated. In the ninth century, there were fierce debates among the Muslim scholars on the unity and attributes of God. Was the Qur'ān the created or eternal word (word being an attribute of God)? Muslim scholars were divided on this issue. Hoffman observes:

> Sunni Muslims believe that the Qur'ān is uncreated or eternal, because it is associated with God's attributes of word, speech, and knowledge, which are eternal. The Mu'tazila, on the other hand, denied the reality of God's eternal attributes, and said that the belief in the eternity of the Qur'ān was tantamount to polytheism. They were supported in this view by the 'Abbasid Caliph al-Ma'mun (ruled 218-227/813-833), who in the *Minha* ("Inquisition") persecuted the religious scholars like Ahmed b. Hanbal who insisted that the Qur'ān was uncreated (2014:38).

Hoffman surmises, "Despite –or perhaps because of – the *minha*, the doctrine of the eternity of the Qur'ān came to be embraced by the majority of Muslims" (2014:39). Michael Nazir-Ali, however, points out that the doctrine of the eternity of the Qur'ān has its antecedents in the Christian Muslim debate about Christ as the eternal Word of God. He writes:

> The Muslim doctrine of the eternal Qur'ān was influenced by Christian claims, by John of Damascus, that Christ was the eternal word of God. John distinguished between Christ the eternal Word of God and *Rhemata* as the created spoken words of God. The radical Mu'tazilites, who could not accept the Qur'ān to be eternal, uncreated word of God and accepted Christ to be the eternal word of God, were influenced by John of Damascus (Nazir-Ali 2006:49).

First, 'Imād-ud-dīn produced evidence against this popular belief of the eternity and inimitability of the Qur'ān from the Islamic sources. He quoted Shahanshah Isma'il who wrote in the doctrines of the sect of Mazdāriyah that they believed that, "in regard to the language, eloquence and style, man has the power to make something similar to the Qur'ān… This sect also believed that the Qur'ān was created" ('Imād-ud-dīn 1892:27). He also quoted from 'Abdul Qadir Jilānī's *Ghuniyat at- Ṭālibīn*. In the beliefs of Nazzāmiyah, Jilānī wrote, "According to Nazzām, the Qur'ān in regard to the style of its text is not a miracle … [and] that the followers of the sect of Mu'ammariyah said that the Qur'ān is the work of men not of God" ('Imād-ud-dīn 1892:28). After quoting the above evidence, 'Imād-ud-dīn said:

> Now it is necessary to ponder upon this that these people believed in the Qur'ān and in their time were jurists and Imāms of their sects, and were particularly inhabitants of Arabia. Did even they not understand the Qur'ān and its eloquence? They very well understood the style

and eloquence of the Qur'ān but did not consider the text of the Qur'ān to be a miracle (1892:28).

4.2.1. Human ability and inimitability of the Qur'ān

'Imād-ud-dīn also showed evidence from the Islamic tradition that the Qur'ān was not a pure word of God. He presented from the Qur'ān itself evidence against the Qur'ān's claim that no one could make anything similar to the Qur'ān. He identified a number of verses within the Qur'ānic text, which Islamic tradition tells, were originally spoken by the companions of the prophet. 'Imād-ud-dīn copied those verses from As-Suyūtī's *Itiqān,* section ten.

The first person he claimed whose words became verses of the Qur'ān was Caliph 'Umar. 'Imād-ud-dīn quoted three traditions recorded by Tirmidhi from Ibn 'Umar, Ibn Marodiya from Mujahid, and Bukhari from Anas to show the influence of 'Umar on Muhammad and the Qur'ān. Ibn 'Umar reported the prophet said, "God has placed truth on the tongue of 'Umar … Companions said, 'has not the Qur'ān descended according to the sayings of 'Umar" ('Imād-ud-dīn 1899:225). Ibn Marodiya reported from Mujahid who said, "whatever opinion Caliph 'Umar gave the Qur'ān descended exactly according to that" ('Imād-ud-dīn 1899:225). Bukhari reported from Anas that:

> 'Umar said in three things my will and God's will became one. I said [to Muhammad], make *maqām* Ibrāhīm a place of prayer. Then this verse (2:125)[203] with same words and meaning that 'Umar had said was revealed. Then I said O apostle of Allāh your wives are without veil; good and bad people come to them. It will be better if they remain veiled. Then this verse 33:33[204] was revealed. Then when Muhammad's wives protested. 'Umar said to Muhammad's wives, "why do you quarrel, if Allāh wills he will cause you to be divorced and give Muhammad wives better than you. 'Umar's words are found in Surah 66:5.[205].

These three examples were enough for 'Imād-ud-dīn to assert, "Indeed certain verses have descended according to the sayings of 'Umar" ('Imād-ud-dīn 1899:225). He, however, continued to give more evidence: Ibn Abi Hashim reported from Anas that 'Umar said in four things God's and my will became one when this verse *walaqad khalaqnā l-insāna min sulālatin* (Surah 23:12) descended, at that time I said, "Blessed is Allāh, best of creators". 'Umar's words are found in Surah 23:14 (*fatabāraka al-lahu*

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[203] (*wa-ittakhidhū min maqāmi ib'rāhīma muṣallan*)

[204] (*waqarna fī buyūtikunna walā tabarrajna tabarruja l-jāhiliyati l-ūl*)

[205] (*'asā rabbuhu in ṭallaqakunna an yub'dilahu azwājan khayran minkunna mus'limātin mu'minātin sāiḥātin thayyibātin wa-abkāran*)

aḥsanu l-khāliqīna) (1899:225-227). 'Abd ar-Raḥmān Abi Laila reported that 'Umar met a Jew who said to him that Gabriel of whom your friend Muhammad speaks is our enemy. 'Umar replied to him, 'whoever is an enemy of Allāh and angels and apostles and Gabriel and Michael; Allāh is the enemy of that infidel'. This sentence is found in Surah 2:98 (*man kāna ʿaduwwan lillahi wamalāikatihi warusulihi wājib'rīla wamīkāla fa-inna al-laha ʿaduwwun lil'kāfirīna*) ('Imād-ud-dīn 1899:228).

'Imād-ud-dīn also showed that the words of some other close fellows of Muhammad became part of the Qur'ānic text. For example, 'Saʿeed bin Jabir's *tafsīr* which contains a tradition relating to 'Aisha. It is reported that S'ad bin M'ad said, "This is a great calumny about 'Aisha". This same sentence is found in Surah 24:14 (*sub'ḥānaka hādhā buh'tānun ʿaẓīmun*). Another tradition from Saʿeed bin Musaib is that "Zaid bin Harith and Abu Ayub were two men; whenever they heard this accusation about 'Aisha said *hādhā buh'tānun ʿaẓīmun*" ('Imād-ud-dīn 1899:229).

Ibn Abi Hatam reported from 'Ikrama that during the battle of Uhud Muslim women were waiting for news about their men. They met with two men on the camels. They asked them how was Muhammad? They said he was alive. The women said, "No worries, Allāh makes his servants martyrs". This very sentence is found also in Surah 3:140: *al-lahu alladhīna āmanū wayattakhidha minkum shuhadāa*. Another tradition is reported by Ibn Saʾeed in his *Ṭabqāt* from Waqadi that Ibrahim bin Muhammad bin Sharjeel reported from his father that during the battle of Uhud Musʿab bin 'Umair was the standard bearer of Muslims. Both of his hands were cut off during the battle. Until his death he kept saying, "*wamā muḥammadun illā rasūlun qad chalet min qalbī l-rusulu afa-in māta aw qutila inqalabtum ʿalā aʿqābikum?*[206] These exact words were then included in Surah 3:144" ('Imād-ud-dīn 1899:229-230).

In light of this evidence of the words of Muhammad's companions finding their way into the Qur'ān, 'Imād-ud-dīn asked, "What does it even mean to say it [Qur'ān] descended?" ('Imād-ud-dīn 1899:240). He reasoned:

> Those sentences, which were spoken by ordinary people of this world were collected and put in the Qur'ān. Yet the claim is that it is so eloquent that it is excluded from the power of men. See! The sentences made by the human power are present in the Qur'ān. Then how out of place this claim is that men cannot make verses like this. Ignorant *mawlwīs* claim it;

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[206] Muhammad is no more than a messenger: many were the messengers that passed away before him. If he died or were slain, will ye then turn back on your heels? If any did turn back on his heels, not the least harm will he do to Allāh; but Allāh (on the other hand) will swiftly reward those who (serve Him) with gratitude (Yusuf 'Ali).

learned men have become silent. Munshi Charagh ʿAli did not present this miracle in his book *Taʿaliqāt*[207] (1899:230).

ʿImād-ud-dīn claimed, "Nearly half of the Qur'ān consists of the words of men" (1899:244): "All the verses revealed for the benefit of Muhammad, or those which are in accordance with the practices of his forefathers, were made by him. The proof of which is found in the *shān-i-nuzūl* of those verses" (ʿImād-ud-dīn 1899:31). In his dialogue with Sayyid ʿAli Muhammad, ʿImād-ud-dīn contended, that his claim about the supernatural qualities of the Qur'ān was totally unreliable. He wrote, "We can say with certainty that what is in the Qur'ān are the *irshādāt* (speeches/directions/biddings) of Muhammad" (ʿImād-ud-dīn 1871:33).

ʿImād-ud-dīn's claim that the Qur'ān is Muhammad's *irshādāt* or 'nearly half of the Qur'an' being words of men' was not fully supported with proofs. He also did not specify all of the verses, which he believed were from people and not God. The spirit of the 19th century *munāẓara* appears to be at work here. Such a blanket assertion could be interpreted as wholesale prejudice. Nonetheless, Muhammad's contemporaries never thought that the Qur'ān was beyond the power of men. They also claimed that they could make something similar to the Qur'ān if they so desired (Surah 8:31). There are plenty of verses which appear to be the direct speech of Muhammad (Surahs 11:2-3; 21:57; 9:30; 63:4).[208] The Qur'ān's most loved and five times a day recited Surah, Al-Fatiha e.g. was a prayer of Muhammad or some unknown man and not the words of Allāh.

During his debates ʿImād-ud-dīn made his interlocutors acknowledge that the Qur'ān was not a pure word of Allah. He engaged with Sayyid Muhammad on the matter of contradictions in Surahs; thus e.g. in 4:76: *inna kayda l-shayṭāni kāna ḍaʿīfan*, (Indeed deception of Satan is weak), and 12:28: *inna kaydakunna ʿaẓīmun* (indeed your deception [of women] is great). Sayyid Muhammad responded that there was no contradiction in these verses because in the second verse, 'a man's statement is recorded, and not the word of God'. ʿImād-ud-dīn noted too that Sayyid Muhammad

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[207] Munshi Charagh ʿAli wrote *Taʿaliqāt* to refute ʿImād-ud-dīn's *Taʿlīm-i-Muhammadī,* and for furnishing the proofs of Muhammad's prophethood. He presented a number of miracles performed by Muhammad, like splitting of the Moon, but did not include the Qur'ān among his miracles. In his reply to Charagh ʿAli ʿImād-ud-dīn took notice of this shift. He wrote, "Let it be known to readers that, now, Muslims have stopped mentioning the miracle of eloquence. Because, now to some extent, even they have understood that this is not a miracle. And for this very reason now Munshi did not mention that" (1869:43-44).

[208] 11: 2, "… Indeed, I am to you from Him a warner and a bringer of good tidings". 11:3, "I fear for you the punishment of a great Day.

said that "the 'statements of infidels' were also recorded in many places in the Qur'ān, and these cannot be our beliefs and accepted doctrines" ('Imād-ud-dīn 1899:308). Clearly for 'Imād-ud-dīn this raised serious implications for the belief that the Qur'ān is the very word of Allāh:

> Nearly half of the Qur'ān is gone from Sayyed's hand because according to his belief all the statements of men recorded in the Qur'ān are not the word of God. And those words of men, which are recorded in the Qur'ān, are the words of men. Therefore, the Qur'ān is the collection of the words of men and God. And those words of men which are in the Qur'ān, Sayyid Muhammad would not at all claim for their unique eloquence because they are words of men which are not beyond the power of man…This honourable scholar of Agra has given us a great gift that: all the words of infidels which are in the Qur'ān are not the word of God. Thus it should be remembered that, for the Shia,[209] the whole Qur'ān is not the word of God. And if someone does not accept this he should see *Tanzia al-Furqān*[210] (1877, p.355) (1899:309).

Apart from the material within the Qur'ān which reveals that ordinary men did have a role in its making, 'Imād-ud-dīn also asserted that some Arabic literature was equally eloquent as the Qur'ān. 'Imād-ud-dīn referred to the odes of Imrul Qais who lived forty years before the rise of Islam as evidence for his claim. One of his odes was included in the *Saab' Mu'allaqāt*. He quoted the learned Mawlwī 'Abdul Rahim of Calcutta who wrote about those odes as follows: "All teachers of literature and eloquence agree about their excellence, beauty, grace, and eloquence" ('Imād-ud-dīn 1892:30). 'Imād-ud-dīn also referred to 'the Qur'āns' of Musaylima and Aswad 'Ansi, the contemporaries of Muhammad who also claimed receiving *waḥī*. Aswad convinced many people in San'a by reciting his Qur'ān and performing miracles. He quoted verses of Musaylima's Qur'ān from the history of Abu al-Fida.[211] He invited Muslims to compare those verses with 'their Qur'ān': "If anyone knows the taste of knowledge and

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[209] 'Imād-ud-dīn had another written debate with Sayyid 'Ali Muhammad *Mujtahid* of Lucknow. The Mujtahid argued that the order/ context of the Qur'ān was the order of 'Uthman, which was not trustworthy" ('Imād-ud-dīn 1871:19). Reflecting on his response that 'the order of the Qur'ān is 'Uthmanic and thus unreliable', 'Imād-ud-dīn argued that with this statement of Ali Muhammad, total Qur'ān has become unauthentic. ('Imād-ud-dīn 1871:19). This is exactly what Raḥmatullāh had said about the Bible to Pfander at Agra Debate, i.e., the Bible has been corrupted and is unreliable, thus could not be used as an authority in the debate.

[210] *Tanzia al-Furqān* was written by Mawlwī Sayyid Muhammad to refute 'Imād-ud-dīn's *Hadāyat al-Muslimīn*, especially his criticism on the Qur'ān ('Imād-ud-dīn 1899:232).

[211] Muhammad Rida Naji, in his article on *Tārīkh Abu al-Fida* notes: A historical book in Arabic by Abu al-Fida' 'Imad al-Dīn Ismail ibn 'Ali Mahmud Ayyubi, a ruler of Hama (r. 710-732/1311-1333). The original title of the work is *al-Mukhtaṣar fī Akhbār al-Bashar*. (2013:133-135).

literature he would never accept the text of the Qur'ān as a miracle" ('Imād-ud-dīn 1892:30).

'Imād-ud-dīn argued that both these claimants of *waḥī*, Musaylima and Aswad were killed by Muslims. Abu Bakr sent an army under the command of Khalid Bin Walid against Musaylima, and Aswad was killed in his home: "If eloquence of the books is the proof of *nubūwat*, then why were they killed? … Thus, it becomes clear that the text of the Qur'ān was not a miracle for Abu Bakr" ('Imād-ud-dīn 1892:31). 'Imād-ud-dīn further quoted from the *Dīwān*[212] of 'Ali and claimed that its eloquence was not less than the Qur'ān: "if eloquence of the text of a book was the proof of *nubūwat* then, the sect of Ghāliya, who consider 'Ali to be better than Muhammad, would have surely declared 'Ali's *Dīwān* as the word of God" ('Imād-ud-dīn 1892:32). He said that Arab Christian scholars have also considered the text of Hariri's *Maqāmāt*[213] better than the Qur'ān. Faizi's *Mawārid al-Qalm* has been called *Faizi's Qur'ān*. In 'Imād-ud-dīn's view Faizi's work constituted a greater miracle than the Qur'ān in that "he wrote the beliefs of Islam in the words without dots and did not let any word with dots come into his text, and filled it with the eloquence as it ought to be … He showed a greater miracle than the text of the Qur'ān. Therefore, if text of a book is a proof of *nubūwat* then Faizi can be a prophet before anyone else" ('Imād-ud-dīn 1892:33).

'Imād-ud-dīn also asserted that if "great Muslim scholars like Naẓẓām, Mu'ammar, and Mazdār, etc., did not consider Qur'ān to be a miracle in respect of its text, then how could opponents of Muslims have accepted it" ('Imād-ud-dīn 1892:34).

4.2.2. The unique style of the Qur'ān

'Imād-ud-dīn further noted that Muslims argue that the style of writing of the Torah and the Gospel is historical while the style of the Qur'ān's writing is *ahkāmānā* (authoritative/consists of commands); which implies that this is the word of Allāh ('Imād-ud-dīn 1892:34). Such a claim is hard to substantiate in light of the fact that a large part of the Bible also consists of direct commands of God, especially in the Torah.

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[212] *Dīwān* is a complete collection of odes or other poems by one author.
[213] Al-Hariri, Abu Muhammad al-Qasim Ibn 'Ali (AD 1054-1122), was a famous poet, grammarian and a man of letters. It is noted, however, in the *Encyclopedia of Islamic Civilization and Religion*, that: "al-Hariri's continuing reputation has rested on *Maqāmāt*, a collection of fifty short narrative pieces in rhymed prose (*saj*). By general consent al-Hariri's *maqāmāt* have never been surpassed for their eloquence…" (2008:216).

Moreover, the Qur'ān's style was also not unique. E. Sell has argued that the Qur'ān's style was similar to the utterances of Muhammad's contemporary *kāhins* called '*saj*', a rhymed prose' (Sell 1913:38). 'Imād-ud-dīn, however, reasoned that many parts of the Qur'ān too are historical in nature since they contain narratives of Muhammad's personal and family affairs ('Imād-ud-dīn 1892:34-35). McAuliffe agrees with 'Imād-ud-dīn, "Viewed from the perspective of historical analysis, the Qur'ān quite clearly represents a *sitz im leben* of religious contestation" (2006:4). Donner remarked, "… Muslims over the centuries elaborated highly detailed traditions about the Qur'ān's historical context" (2006:23). The whole science of *Shān-i-Nuzūl* is geared towards this end. But to make the matter more complicated, 'Imād-ud-dīn considered this 'unique style' of the Qur'an a *defect* rather than a proof of Qur'ān's divine authorship:

> From the time of Moses to the Disciples of Christ there are 66 books, and the style of their writing is similar. Only the style of the Qur'ān's writing is different and novel, although the speaker (*mutakallim*) of all these words is considered to be the one person [God]. Now be just – which believer's sound reason can reject the writing style of the proven prophets, and accept the writing style of the Qur'ān which is contrary to all, and whose *mutakallim* does not have miracles and other signs of prophethood? not at all. Surprisingly, this contradictory style of writing, the ignorants have declared a proof of the Qur'ān ('Imād-ud-dīn 1892:34-35).

'Imād-ud-dīn was making an assertion here, which was not entirely accurate when he declared that the writing style of the sixty-six books of the Bible is similar: clearly a mistake that would have made him vulnerable in the context of *munāẓara*. Since the Bible contains a variety of literary genres, simply a different style of writing could not be considered a reason to reject the Qur'ān's divine authorship. Nevertheless, 'Imād-ud-dīn's argument that not all Muslims accepted the Qur'an to be a miracle, and "even the infidels of Arabia, due to this ornamental style, called Muhammad a poet, not a prophet" ('Imād-ud-dīn 1892:35), makes sense. He asserted, 'eloquence of the Qur'ān', even if it was accepted, would be a very defective miracle: because, "Apart from the Arab poets, none else could have observed this miracle. And when translation of the Qur'ān is sent to the believers in other countries, this miracle does not go with the translation; it remains shut in the Arabic text" ('Imād-ud-dīn 1892:35).

4.2.3. The unique eloquence

In *Izhār al-ḥaqq's* part 4, Raḥmatullāh enlisted twelve divine qualities of the Qur'ān to argue for its divine origin, the first was its eloquence. He wrote, "The Holy Qur'ān maintains throughout the highest possible standard of rhetoric in its speech, to the extent that it is literally impossible to find its parallel in human works" (Raḥmatullāh 1989). 'Imād-ud-dīn also argued that from the linguistic point of view, the Qur'ān was not as eloquent as Muslims claim. One problem 'Imād-ud-dīn identified was that there were no pre-Qur'ānic books on the principles of eloquence against which the eloquence of the Qur'ān could be measured. On the other hand, he argued that the text of the Qur'ān has a number of problems, which militate against the assertion of its unique eloquence. He begins by considering the meaning of eloquence (*faṣāḥat*)[214] as described by Muslim scholars. The dictionary meaning of *faṣāḥat* involves fluent speaking. Technically, it means a speech or text that is "free from those words which are not found in the speech of rhetoricians, unfamiliar order, and words, as well as, free from heavy and difficult words" (1899:248). He also quoted a definition of *faṣāḥat* from the Arabic book called *Talkhīṣ*:

> *Faṣāḥat* is characterised with *lafz mufrad* (one or single word), *kalām* (speech), and *mutakallim* (speaker). *Faṣāḥat al-mufrad* (literal eloquence) means that *lafz* be free from *mufarr-o-tanāfur* (repugnance and aversion) words, *gharābat* (foreign words), and *mukhālif qiyās-i-lughawī* (contrary to the established principles of a language and meanings of words). Therefore, if any one of these three defects were found in a *kalima* (sentence), then it would not be *faṣīḥ* (eloquent) ('Imād-ud-dīn 1899:248).

He further explains, "*Kalām-i-faṣīḥ* (eloquent speech) is that which is free from weaknesses of composition, i.e., grammatical problems, and *tanāfur al-ḥurūf* and *ta'qīd* (knitting together, tying in knots, i.e., meanings which are not readily clear)" ('Imād-ud-dīn 1899:248). *Faṣāḥat-i-kalām* also requires that it should be free from repetition ('Imād-ud-dīn 1899:249). Based on these criteria, 'Imād-ud-dīn wrote:

> Certain verses of the Qur'ān are *ghair faṣīḥ* (not eloquent). The Qur'ān is full of repetition: one thing is said over and over again. There are many passages from which meaning of the author is not clearly expressed as to what it is. Then how can we say that the Qur'ān's author was *faṣīḥ*? Even till today, no one has understood the *ḥurūf maqt'āt* (unconnected or disjointed letters) (1899:249).

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[214] According to Hans Wehr dictionary, *fasaha* means to be eloquent, express in flawless Arabic, to speak clearly, distinctly, intelligibly, plain, purity of the language, fluency, and eloquence.

'Imād-ud-dīn was of the view that the text of the Qur'ān was unclear in the sense that it is "dependent upon the Hadith. Its terms (*iṣṭlāḥāt*) are often contrary to the apparent [meanings], and cannot be known without the explanations of the companions and companions' companions" ('Imād-ud-dīn 1899:263). The *ḥurūf maqt'āt*[215] are fourteen letters of Arabic alphabets, which appear in the beginning of 29 Surahs. The use of *ḥurūf maqt'āt* was, in his view, against the definition of *faṣāḥat* because their meanings are neither described in Arabic dictionaries nor are they found in the *kalām* of the *fuṣaḥā*: their meaning remains clear:

> Now, either exclude these [*ḥurūf*] from *faṣāḥat* or remove the condition of *qiyās-i-luḡhawī* from the definition of *faṣāḥat*; and write that a *faṣīḥ* man can also say such things, which are not found in the dictionary, and no one can know what they mean. And that *faṣāḥat* would be declared such a quality which would be excluded from the power of man. And one who would raise questions about this kind of *faṣāḥat* would be considered a man with defect in his heart, but the man who says such things which are contrary to the principles of *faṣāḥat* would not be declared *ghair faṣīḥ*. Thus, all *ḥurūf maqt'āt* are contrary to the definition of *faṣāḥat* ('Imād-ud-dīn 1899:257).

Apart from *ḥurūf maqt'āt*, *ta'qīd* is also found in the Qur'ān, i.e., apparent meanings differ from the intended meanings of the author. As evidence, he referred to *Itiqān's* chapter 36 where he said the meanings of hundreds of words [of the Qur'ān] are explained by Ibn 'Abbas which are contrary to the apparent meanings. He argued:

> If Ibn 'Abbas and Muhammad's *tafsīr* [of those words] is not known, then, a reader of the Qur'ān would never understand the intention of its author; because the apparent meanings of the words are different from author's intention. And this is a kind of *ta'qīd*, which is against the *faṣāḥat*. Thus the Qur'ān's meaning is not clearly revealed. And unless thoughts of the renowned expositors of the first and second class are known from other books, the text of the Qur'ān alone, cannot express the complete meaning of its author ('Imād-ud-dīn 1899:257).

He further noted from *Itiqān's* section 36 that As-Suyūtī had said that, "even those in whose language the Qur'ān was revealed, did not understand the meaning of certain words"[216] ('Imād-ud-dīn 1899:258). He quoted those words with the confession of the companions. For example, Abu Bakr said, about the meaning of *wa-fa Kihah wa-aba*, "how can I describe something from the book of Allāh what I do not know". Ibn 'Abbas

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[215] 'Imād-ud-dīn gave the list of *ḥurūf maqt'āt* such as, *alf lām mīm, alf lam sād, alf lām mīm ra, Alf lām Ra, ha mīm, nūn, yā sīn,* and *ṭā ha.*
[216] As-Suyūtī discussed these words under the topic *Gharā'ib al-Qur'ān*, and subtitle, *Gharā'ib al-Qur'ān se ṣaḥāba kī lā 'ilmī* (ignorance of companions from the rarely used words) (2008:257-58).

said, "I do not know the meaning of *fatir al-samot*". He also said, "I know the total Qur'ān but *ghaleen* and *hanana* and *awawah* and *raqim*" ('Imād-ud-dīn 1899:258). 'Imād-ud-dīn questioned: "Is this *faṣāḥat* that a word would not express its meaning clearly? Can the definition of *faṣāḥat* be truly applied to these words?" ('Imād-ud-dīn 1899:258).

'Imād-ud-dīn further argued that for two more reasons the text of the Qur'ān could not be *faṣīḥ*: firstly, different regions of Arabia had different dialects and specific idioms. 'Imād-ud-dīn appears to be quite informed about the intra-Islamic linguistic debates. So he raised the question, which Muslim scholars had already discussed: was the Qur'ān revealed in the language of a specific tribe or did it include all other Arabic dialects as well? He said Muslim scholars differ in their opinions. Again he pointed to *Itiqān's* section sixteen, where Ibn Qutaiba, on the basis of (*wamā arsalnā min rasūlin illā bilisāni qawmihi* 14:4) said that the Qur'ān was revealed in the language of the Quraish because Muhammad was a Quraishī. He cited again from *Itiqān* section 18, where it is written that 'Uthmān believed that the Qur'ān was revealed in the language of the Quraish therefore he ordered that the Qur'ān be written in the idiom of the Quraish, though it contained idioms from other tribes as well. He pressed on:

> Now there is no doubt in the Qur'ān being a Quraishite [document]. And it is also proved from the description of Jalāl-ud-dīn [As-Suyūtī], that though there were other idioms in the Qur'ān, but now 'Uthmān wrote it in 'one language' namely, in the dialect of the Quraish. Thus an authentic and acceptable statement is this that the Qur'ān is in the idiom of the Quraish ('Imād-ud-dīn 1899:259-60).

Secondly, others claim that the Qur'ān is a collection of the dialects of all the regions of Arabia. This opposite opinion is based on a *mutawātir* hadith noted by As-Suyūtī in his *Itiqān* section 10, "the Qur'ān was revealed in seven words (*ṣaba' ḥurūf*)". 'Imād-ud-dīn argued that the meaning of *ṣaba' ḥarf* is contested: some say it means seven *qir'at* (seven ways of recitation), others, seven dialects (*lughat*), yet others think differently. He quoted Ibn Haban who said, "There are 35 opinions of the people about seven words. And these are all conjectures" ('Imād-ud-dīn 1899:260). After having noted the conflicting views of Muslim scholars, He wrote:

> A book that is written in the language of a particular country with appropriate rules and regulations is called *faṣīḥ*, not the one filled with idioms from every region. Thus, the Qur'ān according to Ibn Qutaiba and 'Uthmān is written in the dialect of the Quraish. And in the opinion of certain others, it is written in accordance with the idioms of all Arabs. Thus, if all [kinds of] idioms have been filled in it, then, rationally and traditionally it

cannot be as eloquent as Muslims claim. And if it is only in the idiom of the Quraish, even then its eloquence is not excellent because, certainly, there are foreign idioms in it ('Imād-ud-dīn 1899:260-61).

'Imād-ud-dīn also quoted from *Itiqān* section 37 the words which are described as those which were foreign to the language of Ḥijāz. He noted As-Suyūtī's statement that Abu Bakr Wasti, in his book *Irshād* wrote, "There are fifty different kinds of idioms and dialects in the Qur'ān". He then copied the names of those Arab tribes, like, Quraish, Hazail, Kinana, and Khash'am etc. His position here is that not only the idioms of different Arab regions but also the words of foreign languages, like Rome, Habsha (Abyssinia), Faras, Nabt, Barbar, Syrian, Hebrew, and the Qabt are also found in the Qur'ān. 'Imād-ud-dīn used this evidence from the authentic Islamic sources to support his argument that the Qur'ān is not written in clear Arabic. He argued that according to the definition, the use of foreign words destroys *faṣāḥat* and here Muslim scholars confess that there are a large number of foreign words in the Qur'ān. 'Imād-ud-dīn noted 114 non-Arabic words in his *Hadāyat al-Muslimīn* (1899:276-283) and concluded that "the eloquence of the Qur'ān is not beyond the power of man; Muslims uselessly quarrel because of their prejudice" ('Imād-ud-dīn 1899:272).

Although he did not fully develop it, 'Imād-ud-dīn also made an argument against the linguistic miracle of the Qur'ān, namely, the progressive nature of the Arabic language. He argued that, "Before Muhammad, old Arabic was of a different kind. During his time it took another form. It kept changing and now there is a new kind of Arabic which is different from the Qur'ān" ('Imād-ud-dīn 1899:274). This is an important argument and its implications are clear: even modern Arabs would find it difficult to understand the Qur'ānic Arabic. Therefore, Muslims' assertion that the Qur'ān is an everlasting linguistic miracle could not be upheld.

'Imād-ud-dīn also held that Muslim sources had no evidence to offer of any of Muhammad's contemporaries becoming Muslim because of the eloquence of the Qur'ān. On the contrary, their attitude towards Muhammad's recitations (as already noted above) was contemptuous. Moreover, the best and the most eloquent poet among Muhammad's own tribe, 'Atba bin Rabi'a, could not understand anything at all when Muhammad recited Surah 41 to him.[217] Abu Na'im Isfahani gave a detailed description of 'Atba's meeting with Muhammad as he was chosen by the Quraish chiefs and sent to talk to Muhammad. In his response to 'Atba's speech Muhammad recited Surah 41.

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[217] Surah 41 draws its name from the third verse "*Fussilat*", which means explained in details.

'Atba stopped him from continuing with the recitation and returned to the Quraish. They asked him what was Muhammad's response; his reply was that:

> He [Muhammad] did not accept what I said to him. I swear by the Lord of the Ka'ba, I could not understand what he said. I could only understand this that 'I frighten (warn) you like the lightening thunder of 'Ad and Thamud'. The Quraish said to him, 'Woe to you, Muhammad was speaking in Arabic and you could not understand'. He said, By God I understood only this, that he was talking about a thunder" (Isfahani 2014:217).

'Atba's failure to understand Muhammad's recitation was, for 'Imād-ud-dīn, an evidence that the Qur'ān failed to impress him with its eloquence because it remained incomprehensible to him. Moreover, according to the Arab custom, the best and the most eloquent poems were hung in the K'aba. Yet we find no mention that any of the Surah of the Qur'ān was hung in the K'aba as a challenge to Arab masters of eloquence. Could it be that Muhammad actually never claimed that his Qur'ān was endowed with miraculous eloquence?

4.3. The Qur'ānic Contradictions and Divine Authorship

'Imād-ud-dīn also examined the second assertion of the Qur'ān that, 'had it not been the word of Allāh then there would be many contradictions in it' (Surah 4:82). According to Mahmud, Ibn Hazm's "critique on Christianity (perhaps following this Qur'ānic assertion) rests on the premise that the scripture (the Bible), which is revealed by God, cannot be inconsistent and contradictory in content" (Ahmad 2011:23). Raḥmatullāh in the part 2 of *Izhār al-ḥaqq* demonstrated numerous contradictions in the Bible and argued that on account of these contradictions the Bible cannot be accepted as an inspired book (Raḥmatullāh 1989). 'Imād-ud-dīn presented 36 examples of contradictions in the Qur'ān. For example, 21:101, "Those for whom the good (record) from Us has gone before, will be removed far therefrom [hell]," contradicts, 19:71, "And there is none of you except he will come to it [hell]. This is upon your Lord an inevitability decreed". 'Imād-ud-dīn asserted that this was a clear contradiction as 21:101 says some will remain far from hell while 19:71 says that there would not be a single person who will not enter hell (Raḥmatullāh 1899:317). Thus he asserted that, "the Qur'ān, according to Muhammad's own claim is not the word of God...many contradictions are found in it. Therefore, it is not the word of Allāh" (Raḥmatullāh 1899:328).

On the issue of the Qur'ān's claim of being free from contradictions, and obvious presence of numerous contradictions in it, the following possible explanations could be offered: (i) Muhammad could not have made such a claim about the Qur'ān being of divine origin as there was no such thing as a *muṣḥaf* or a codified Qur'ān during his life. It does not make any sense to challenge anyone to see whether a book was not free from contradictions when the book had not come into existence. Thus Surah 2:48 would appear a later interpolation when the Qur'ān was collected into one book. (ii) Muhammad was actually accused of contradicting himself. The doctrine of abrogation was introduced to overcome this accusation. (iii) If the author or compiler of the Qur'ān was so confident about the lack of contradictions that he considered it a proof of divine authorship, then either he was naive and boastful, or someone corrupted the book later and introduced contradictions in it. 'Abd al-Masīḥ al-Kindī had argued that contradictions in the Qur'ān were the result of the many hands involved in editing the Qur'ān (1887:77). (iv) Though God is expected not to contradict himself, however, none of the previous scriptures made this claim as a proof of their divine origin. Thus even a book free from contradictions cannot be accepted as a revealed scripture on this single merit. Irrespective of the above observations, to 'Imād-ud-dīn the Qur'ān did not measure up to its own assertions and therefore he could not accept the Qur'ān as a divine revelation (Raḥmatullāh 1899:289).

4.4. Jinn and the inimitability of the Qur'ān

A part of the challenge remained unanswered. 'Imād-ud-dīn demonstrated that men had the ability to produce a book like the Qur'ān, but were the *jinn* capable of this? It is important to note that the Qur'ān is the only revealed book, which claims to be for the *jinn* as well. The Qur'ān and hadiths are full of the descriptions of *jinn*. Surah Jinn (72), informs us about the *jinn* listening to the Qur'ān and becoming Muslim. When Muhammad recited Surah *An-Najm, jinn* also prostrated with him (Bukhari, vol.2, no. 177).[218] 'Imād-ud-dīn did not directly respond to this challenge, although he had argued that the first category of the abrogated verses of the Qur'ān were those which were regarded as an attempt by Satan to interfere in the prophetic message.

It could, however, be demonstrated from the Islamic sources that *jinn* too were capable of producing literature similar to the Qur'ān – indeed they did. One needs to

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[218] http://sunnah.com/bukhari/17. Accessed: 08/09/2016 22:53

remember that Muslim theologians believe that Satan is a *jinn* not an angel (Geisler, Saleeb 2002:39; see Surah 18:50). It is also well known from the Muslim tradition that Satan did make certain verses and mixed them in Muhammad's recitation. *Tafsīr Jalālayn* states that Muhammad was reciting Surah Najm in the assembly of the Quraish. When he recited the verse nineteen:

> Have you considered the Lat, 'Uzza and Manat, the Third one? [53:19-20][219], Added, as a result of Satan's casting them onto his tongue without his [the prophet's] being aware of it, [the following words]: 'those are the high flying cranes (*al-gharaniq al-ʿula*) and indeed their intercession is to be hoped for; and so they [the men of Quraish] were thereby delighted. Gabriel however, later informed him [the prophet] of this [incident] that the Satan had cast these [verses] onto his tongue and he was grieved by it… (Al-Mahali and As-Suyūtī 2007:374).

Surprisingly, even Muhammad could not distinguish between the verses given by Allāh and Satan; they were same in style and eloquence. It was only some time later that Muhammad was informed by Gabriel that those verses came from Satan. Then Allāh announced that he was cancelling out Satan's recitation. The doctrine of *naskh* originated with this very understanding that Satan had been making verses and mixing them with the revelations of Allāh (Surah 22:52). Since Satan is a *jinn*, it is clear that the *jinn* too could make verses like the Qur'ān. Thus the second part of the Qur'ānic assertion that the *jinn* could not make anything similar to the Qur'ān also proves to be weak. ʿImād-ud-dīn's position would have been much stronger had he also shown that both men and *Jinn* did make verses similar to the Prophet's Qur'ān. Imād-ud-dīn also could not accept the Qur'ān for other problems he saw in it.

5. Problematic contents in the Qur'ān

One of the arguments of ʿImād-ud-dīn was: because there are numerous problems in its text, God could not have been the author of the Qur'ān (1899:332). ʿImād-ud-dīn gave 30 examples which he claimed were clearly problematic. This list of the problems included: i. the stories of the prophets as told by Muhammad, ii. The stories or doctrines, which have been taken from the Jewish and Christian tradition e.g., the

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[219] Surah 53: 19 reads, *afara-aytumu l-lāta wal-ʿuzā wamanata l-thālithata l-ukh'rā*. According to *Tafsīr Jalālayn* these words were followed by *Tilka l-gharaniq al-ʿula wa ina shafaʿithuna l-turtaja*, which were cast onto the tongue of the Prophet by Satan. Surah 22:52 was revealed to abrogate this verse. These words have been omitted from the current Qur'ān. (1899:329).

stories of Aṣḥāb Kahaf, Nimrod, and the birth of Jesus, and Mary etc.; iii. Ideas of Arabia and the neighbouring nations found in the Qur'ān, ('Imād-ud-dīn 1899:332-33). The review of this below will be restricted to only two examples as the space is limited. These examples have been chosen because they have direct implications for Muslim–Jewish–Christian relations.

5.1 Turning of the Jews into apes and swine

'Imād-ud-dīn quoted Surah 2:65, "Indeed you know of those among you who broke the Sabbath, and We said to them, 'be you apes despised and hated', and they became monkeys." To 'Imād-ud-dīn, it was strange, that "this story of Israelites turning into monkeys is not mentioned anywhere in the Bible, yet the Qur'ān claims that the Jews know about it" ('Imād-ud-dīn 1899:333-34). 'Imād-ud-dīn's interlocutor, Sayyid Muhammad's view was that this story was likely in the lost books of the Jews. 'Imād-ud-dīn's response was that nothing is lost from the word of God. And if this story was found in the lost books of tradition or history as supposed by Sayyid Muhammad, then the Qur'ānic story was based on an inauthentic source. And if something was lost, then, how do the Jews know it? Sounding similar in tone to the Agra Debate where Muslims had the upper hand, 'Imād-ud-dīn demanded that his Muslim interlocutors "prove it from a historical book that the Jews of Muhammad's time knew it, and/or bring a proof from their books" ('Imād-ud-dīn 1899:334). This story seems to have been told to Muslims as a warning of severe consequences if they rebelled against the commands of Allāh and followed the ways of Jews and Christians. However, this story has over time become a justification for hatred towards the Jews. Some other verses also report Allāh's punishment upon the Jews by turning them into apes (Surah 7:166). Surah 5:60 reports that in addition to apes, Jews were also turned into swine. Aluma Slonich has documented how Muslims across the world including the Imams of Al-Azhar university and the grand mosque of Mecca (in their sermons) in print and electronic media like al-Jazira are calling Jews the children of apes and pigs in the twenty-first century. She writes, "Depicting Jews… as "the descendants of apes and pigs" is extremely widespread today in public discourse in the Arab and Islamic worlds" (Slonick 2002). The question remains, whether these questionable statements, which the author of the Qur'ān presents as historical facts can be substantiated?

5.2 Denial of Christ's Crucifixion

Another example of the problems (noted by 'Imād-ud-dīn) was the denial of Christ's crucifixion in the Surah 4:157. Muslims have given many explanations as to who was crucified in place of Jesus, and who was taken into heaven before crucifixion. The Qur'ān teaches that the Jews were deceived; it only appeared to them that they killed Jesus by crucifixion. Ayoub notes that later interpreters did question this popular Muslim theory on the basis of grammar that *shubiha lahum* means that someone else was changed into the likeness of Christ and he was crucified (2007:169). For 'Imād-ud-dīn, the problem was that this Qur'ānic denial of the crucifixion is contrary to the prophetic and apostolic witness and the historical truth:

> Muhammad merely denies the crucifixion of Christ. Thus the testimony of the former prophets that Christ will be killed, and Christ's own words that I will be killed, and the statements of Christ's disciples that he was certainly killed, and the testimony of the Jews that they did kill Christ – all of this discourse is false; but his saying that he was not killed but they were deceived – is correct. If someone's mind can accept it, he may accept it. He has cut the root of salvation. ('Imād-ud-dīn 1899:354-55).

Does the Qur'ān really deny Christ's death? Many Christian scholars have argued for Christ's death from the Qur'ān. 'Imād-ud-dīn argued that the Qur'ān contradicts itself on this issue. Surah 3:55 predicts his death but 4:157 denies it. He said:

> The first verse is for the proof of Christ's death and ascension, and second denies the crucifixion. But in the Qur'ān, it is not mentioned anywhere how Jesus died and ascended into heaven, so that the first verse be proved true … the second verse denies the crucifixion and death, but no other method of his death is mentioned in the Qur'ān. It was necessary to do so, so that the crucifixion could be denied after proof. Now if Christ went from the world without death the word *mutawaffika* is wrong and if he went up after death then we should be told the method of his death. If it is not done, then the same well-known way of his death [crucifixion], which is denied without any proof, will remain in contradiction with the verse that denies crucifixion (1899:305-6).

'Imād-ud-dīn's argument reveals that there is a double contradiction here: Surah 4:157 contradicts 3:55 as well as the Bible. "It was early reported on the authority of Ibn Abbas, that the word *mutawaffika*[220] means "causing you to die," *mumituka* (Ayoub

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[220] Ayoub writes that the solutions offered to this problem were, " first, that the word *mutawaffika* means "receiving you". The word *tawaffa,* literally means "to reclaim a debt or a charge in its entirety from

2007:169). Sultan Muhammad Paul, another Muslim convert and a Christian apologist said that "both the Gospel and the Qur'ān agree that in reality God first gave death to Christ and then raised him to heaven" (Paul 1927:44). He noted from Sir Sayyid Ahmad Khān's *Tafsīr al-Qur'ān*:

> Wahab said that Jesus remained dead for three hours, then came back to life and went up to heaven. Ibn Isḥaq said, Jesus remained dead for seven hours, then came back to life and went to heaven. And Ibn Anas said, Allāh caused Jesus to die at the time when He was raising him to heaven (Paul 1927:44).

Sultan argued that the Qur'ān's denial *wamā qatalūhu wamā ṣalabūhu* was meant not to deny the crucifixion of Christ, but the cross and its result, i.e., declaration that the one who died on the cross was accursed of God (Dt. 21:22, 23). The Qur'ān denies their desired result and declares that they certainly did not kill him but God raised him from the dead and took him up to himself (Paul 1927:25). Beaumont observes that in interpreting 4:157 Abu Ra'ita said that the Qur'ān's denial means that the Jews did not kill or crucify Jesus in his divine nature and their claim only applied to the crucifixion of Christ's human body (Beaumont 2008:59).

In spite of certain Muslim scholars' concession that Christ did die, it contradicts the Qur'ān's *wamā qatalūhu wamā ṣalabūhu*, which, 'Imād-ud-dīn asserted denies the Scriptural and historical truth of Christ's death on the cross. 'Imad-ud-din considered the denial of Christ's crucifixion more grievous than any other denial, and "the greatest proof against Muhammad being a *biblical type prophet* and a *person in possession of the truth*" ('Imad-ud-din 1899:355). His view therefore was that God could not have authored such material.

6. The Bible's superiority over the Qur'ān

'Imād-ud-dīn could not accept the divine nature of the Qur'ān not only because none of its self-authenticating claims stood up to his enquiry but also because it lacked certain qualities of the true word of God: the Bible ('Imad-ud-din 1866/1892:128). These are:

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another person". In general usage, however, it means in its passive form *tuwuffī*, "to die," hence the verbal noun *wafat*, "death". Thus, the dilemma is whether Jesus died and his soul was received by God, or his soul and body were both reclaimed and he went to heaven alive. The second solution implies that Jesus is still alive in heaven, having been taken up in his sleep so that he would not be frightened by the experience" (2007:168-9).

Firstly, things related to the truth and deep knowledge of God (*ḥaqā'iq wa ma'ārif*), which the true seeker of God cannot find anywhere in the sacred book of the Muslims, but are easily found in the Gospel. The testimonies of the former prophets endorse these doctrines, which is why their reality cannot be doubted (*'ain al-yaqīn to ḥaq al-yaqīn'*).[221] By reading the Gospel one can know one's own condition and the perfection and glory of God, provided one seeks truthfully.

Secondly, the one who caused the Gospel to be written, is surely *'ālim al-ghaib*, because he describes the secrets of every heart.

Thirdly, the Gospel shows that there is not a slightest deception or carnal desire in the speaker of this word. Rather, he is truthful, holy, and merciful.

Fourthly, the Gospel transforms the heart of unprejudiced men. Therefore, because of the Gospel, even immoral, rebellious, and bigoted people become humble, kind, gentle, and of good disposition: it is happening even now. In contrast, he claimed that:

> The Qur'ān does not have this. For twenty years we read it with great love and understanding but did not see this. And did not find this change of heart in any Muslim. Rather, the same carnality, anger, and prejudices prevail, and heart remains the same no matter how perfect a Muslim might be ('Imad-ud-din 1892:129).

The Qur'ān's ineffectiveness to change a sinner's heart, as experienced and observed by 'Imād-ud-dīn, was a clear proof for him that it was not the word of God in the biblical sense. Reflecting on the stations and authority of the Sufi saints, 'Imād-ud-dīn talked about the *abdāls*, who, according to certain Sufis have received change from their bad characteristics to good characteristics. 'Imād-ud-dīn disagreed: "Change happens only with the Bible not with the Qur'ān. Because, the great and foremost teaching of the Gospel is, that a Christian believer, by the power of Christ, receives a change of heart and nature. True Christians are true *abdāl*" ('Imad-ud-din 1889:62). 'Neither the Qur'ān nor Sufism could, in his view, change the heart or nature of the people: "No man can receive a change of heart from the Sufism of the Sufis and Islam of the Muslims. And unless the heart is changed no one can become a *muqarrab* (one drawn near) of God. Change comes only by the Christian religion and a man becomes *abdāl* "('Imad-ud-din 1889:63).

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[221] In Sufis' understanding, there are three levels of *yaqīn* (a sound and proven belief): (i) *'ilm al-yaqīn*, this is received by absolute arguments (*dalā'il-i-qāt'ia*), (ii) *'ain al-yaqīn*, certainty of something received through observation with eyes, and (iii) *Ḥaqq al-yaqīn*, which is achieved by receiving a thing itself (1889:83).

Fifthly, a man who compares the Gospel and the Qur'ān only as a seeker of the truth without prejudice immediately believes in the Gospel; the Qur'ān does not transform people in this way ('Imad-ud-din 1892:129-30).

Sixthly, the issue of salvation was at the heart of 'Imād-ud-dīn's entire life. As a Muslim he desperately searched for it within Islam, as a Christian he wholeheartedly strove to bring the message of salvation to Muslims. He believed that "the Qur'ān does not offer the way for human salvation" ('Imad-ud-din 1899:302; 1930:53).

Seventh, only the Bible contains true *ilhām;* which demonstrates the true power, wisdom, honour, and glory of God. He argued that a superior power must accompany the true *ilhām*. To him, the Bible demonstrates this glorious power of God at the creation of the universe: God said, 'let there be, and it was'. We see this amazing power with our own eyes in the ordering and governing of the universe, which testifies that its creator is God. He said, from Moses to Jesus God revealed his Will; through this, the power of God was revealed. He cited two examples: "Pharaoh's magicians confessed, "this is the power of God" (Exodus 8:19). Jesus said, "But if I drive out demons by the finger of God, then the kingdom of God has come to you" (Luke 11:20) ('Imad-ud-din 1930:30). He asserted: Even now an unseen power and divine support is clearly seen with the Bible. In spite of the fact that the opponents leave no stone unturned in their opposition, even then this divine book keeps conquering. His view was that there was no book in the whole world, which could compete with the Bible ('Imad-ud-din 1930:30-31).

'Imād-ud-dīn also argued that because God is the Most Wise, this should also be the case with his *ilhām* (1930:31). He said there are many things in the Bible, which we understand very well and see in them the greatness of God's wisdom. But those things in the Bible that are beyond our comprehension are actually the proof that it is the word of the All-wise God: "If all the things of *ilhām* could be understood by our *'aql*; then, we would have clearly rejected it and would have said that it is not *ilhām*. Rather, they came forth from the *'aql* of some man because our minds can comprehend them" ('Imād-ud-dīn 1930:32).

He further argued that *ilhām* is from God in whom all perfect attributes are found. Therefore, *ilhām* must reveal God's greatness in the most perfect way. He claimed that, "We do not see any teaching in the world which can show God's honour and reveal his perfect attributes more than the Bible" ('Imād-ud-dīn 1930:32). Since he defined *ilhām* as 'a light from God which enlightens *'aql'*. He asked, "Which book can show our condition, good and evil, and God's divinity more than the Bible? This is the beauty of

the Bible that it helps *'aql* and makes it more enlightened" ('Imād-ud-dīn 1930:33). One of the most important purposes of the *ilhām* is to satisfy the spiritual needs of people:

> Pure reason and the books of other teachers did not even understand the desires of the spirit, let alone to satisfy them. Only the Bible reveals spiritual desires of men and also tells them how they can be satisfied. If *'aql* and those teachers even understood something, they either rendered the spirit hopeless of eternal joy, or ensnared it in a false hope ('Imād-ud-dīn 1930:33-34).

What humans need now are: "redemption from sin and its punishment", "hope of eternal joy with certainty at present". The source of these gifts, he believed, was the Bible and "no other book" ('Imād-ud-dīn 1930:34). The Qur'ān could not satisfy the desires of the spirit. He argued that Sufism emerged because of certain Muslims' dissatisfaction with Islam:

> Sufism did not emerge from the Qur'ān and hadith. Sufis collected these foolish teachings from outside because Islam did not satisfy their hearts. The hunger and thirst of their spirits were not quenched. Hungry and thirsty [Muslims] looked here and there to find something. But what they found from the idol worshipers and swallowed that was a killer poison, because, their spirits got destroyed and descended into the pit of *hamā ūst*" ('Imād-ud-dīn 1889:14).

Once himself a Sufi without hope, he pitied the Sufis:

> Salvation, peace, life, and joy are received only from the word of God Most High, and that word was not with the Sufis. Therefore, their end was not good. They passed away from this world mired in their sins. They went away crying in doubt and perplexity, whether they will be saved or not ('Imād-ud-dīn 1889:15).

He asserted that, "there is not a single place of hope in the entire Qur'ān" ('Imad-ud-din 1889:85). He himself did not find satisfaction either in Islam or Sufism ('Imād-ud-dīn 1989: 137-8). On the contrary he asserted:

> God's servants, believers in the Bible, always die receiving peace and forgiveness through the word of God. All of us who came to Christ, by faith received peace and satisfaction. We do not look here and there for drawing near to God or for the forgiveness of sins. We have been satisfied and this is the special characteristic of the word of God – it satisfies. This cannot be done by the Qur'ān and Sufism; or religious austerity, *darūd* and *waẕā'īf*. Christ alone does it, because he is the Eternal Word ('Imād-ud-dīn 1889:15).

Another great desire of the human spirit, asserted 'Imād-ud-dīn, is 'to see God' –
a good and holy desire placed by God in the human spirit. But where is this desire seen
to be satisfied? In order to see God, 'Imād-ud-dīn said, Muslims have proposed to
practice *murāqaba*[222]*, ḥaẓūrī qalb*, *qibla sāzī* or *fanā fil sheikh* and *fanā fil rusūl*, and
they hope to see God on the day of resurrection, but satisfaction can be achieved by no
means. He claimed God is only revealed in the Bible: One God in three persons is able
to reveal himself to his servants. Only the Bible shows that God did reveal himself to
Adam (Genesis 3:8), Abraham (Genesis 17:1), Isaac (Genesis 26:2), Jacob (Genesis
32:30), Moses (Exodus 3:6), to Joshua (5:15), Manoah (Judges 13:18), Samuel (1
Samuel 3:10), Isaiah (6:1) ('Imād-ud-dīn 1930:63). He said this is about God's
revelation in the Old Testament, but in the New Testament a person is revealed who
says: "I am Ibn Allāh, and Allāh. And all the perfect attributes which are in God he
clearly shows [those attributes] in himself, which means that God is in the form of man"
('Imād-ud-dīn 1930:65). Thus the human spirit's desire to see God is satisfied only by
the Bible.

6.1 *Ma'rifat*: the true knowledge of God

The true word of God must also present the true *ma'rifat.* 'Imād-ud-dīn described that
technically, in Sufi terms, the recognition/knowledge of God's person and attributes is
called *ma'rifat*. He claimed that the true *ma'rifat* is found only in the Bible: "the
ma'rifat of the Bible is as dominant over others [books] as God is dominant over all
things" ('Imād-ud-dīn 1889:77):

> The correct knowledge of the Holy God, description of his eternal attributes and his will,
> mention of his works of wonder, providence in the past and present, his glorious wisdom
> and clear foresight, etc., the way they can be known from the Bible cannot be known from
> any other book ('Imād-ud-dīn 1889:77).

'Imād-ud-dīn claimed that only the Bible reveals the true God. Alluding to the Qur'ān,
he argued that:

> We should not at all be deceived by this if certain teacher according to the reach of his own
> intellect tells us God's attributes; [and his followers]' say in our book God is called *Karīm*,
> *Raḥīm, ghafūr, ḥalīm, ḥakīm, qudūs*, and *qādir*, etc., therefore this book is from God.

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[222] It refers to oft-practiced Sufi exercise in which a Sufi sits, either in his home, mosque, jungle, or
especially at the tombs of Sufi saints. He closes his eyes, and turns his attention, especially to his heart in
the hope to see some light in there (1889:141).

Because it is possible that someone should tell God's attributes by learning from someone else. Two things would be satisfying in this regard: (i) that book ought to be a treasure house of excellences so that every wise and truth seeking person should be satisfied by reading it, and his conscience should testify that it is from Allāh. (ii) This excellence should not be confined to few words, rather in the positive and negative commands but, events and news of that God should testify that this book is from God" ('Imād-ud-dīn 1930:86-7).

Keeping these two considerations in view he claimed that, "the True God is revealed only in the Bible, not in any other book of the World" ('Imād-ud-dīn 1930:87). 'Imād-ud-dīn's comparison of the Bible and the Qur'ān, in a nutshell, can found in his *Ta'līm-i-Muhammadī*. He stated:

> Our opinion, which we express in the presence of God without prejudice is this: that the Qur'ān is a book in which 'Uthman collected Muhammad's utterances. It is not descended from the heaven at all. Muhammad wrote some of it after hearing from the Jews and Christians, but he also misunderstood here and there. Some of the customs of Arabia and its neighbouring regions are also written in it. And some words of the opinions and counsel of his friends talk about women and battle, and the division of booty are also written in it. In the whole book those things, which are according to the Bible, are correct, but they are not received by *ilhām*. They were learned from the People of the Book. But those things, which are against the Bible, are sui generis. Unless such a particularity is shown in the Qur'ān which would prove its coming from God, and until our arguments about the Qur'ān which show that it is not directly from God are destroyed, this belief that the Qur'ān is directly from God cannot be accepted ('Imād-ud-dīn 1880: 29-30).

On the contrary he wrote:

> "We believe about the Bible that it is the word of God. We do not say that it is verbatim word of God. Here and there literal words from God's mouth are also written, but the majority of the text is that of the prophets; the contents are from God. And not one man but many prophets are its compilers. However, one and the same Spirit of God was speaking in all those prophets who lived in different times. They all spoke about the one true subject … All spiritual teachings, words of life, divine will and purpose, God's hidden wisdom, power, and government are mentioned in it … And it is proved to be the pure word of God when it comes into the hands of critics and evaluators. This is the only word that provides the proof of God's 'godhead,' and shows the way of man's betterment. It has many other particularities, which prove that it is from God. It has many powers within itself by which it destroys the false ideas of its opponents. It also relates to the understanding of people of every level, and is beneficial and gives guidance to all. It is not dependent on the *aḥādīth, ijma' Ummat* and *qiyās*, nevertheless it has the power to reveal the whole will of God. It is enough to say for the proof of our claim, judge yourself by reading it. ('Imād-ud-dīn 1880:31-32).

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With this appeal to the Bible's self-authenticating and inherent divine power to convince its readers to be the word of God, ʿImād-ud-dīn sought to answer Islamic claims that the Qurʾān was the final and the purest word of God.

Conclusion

This chapter argued that in the nineteenth-century Indian context of debates, ʿImād-ud-dīn introduced fresh arguments which contributed significantly to the Christian-Muslim *munāẓara* on the Qurʾān. This was not debated in Agra as noted but the chapter shows it was not forgotten. ʿImād-ud-dīn's discussion of the Qurʾān shows that his position stood in sharp contrast to the claims Muslims and the Qurʾān itself makes about its divine origin, its miraculous nature, and its unique eloquence. He argued against the identification of the Qurʾānic *ruḥ al-quds* and *ruḥ al-amīn* with the Holy Spirit and the Angel Gabriel; the notions of *Al-raḥmān*, and *shadīd al-quwa dhu mirrah* were for him also not the same as the biblical God. ʿImād-ud-dīn drew his evidence from the Islamic tradition, Muslim scholars, and the Qurʾān itself to support his position that the Qurʾān was not the pure word of God. He appears to have been successful in pushing his interlocutors to admit that the order of the Qurʾān was ʿUthmanic, not divine, and there were statements of *kufār* (infidels) in the Qurʾān which were not the words of Allāh. His argument from the progressive nature of the Arabic language and evidence from the text of the Qurʾān that a large part of its corpus could not measure up to the definition of eloquence shows a marked progress in the Muslim-Christian debate in India on the Qurʾān. The Qurʾān, he argued, lacks the qualities of a divinely inspired book, which the Bible has.

This was an important step forward for the nineteenth-century Christians engaged in debates with Muslims. The debates on the Qurʾān, however, did not end with ʿImād-ud-dīn as the concluding discussion hopes to show.

Part IV: - Concluding Discussion

Chapter Eight: Beyond the Agra debate and ʿImād-ud-dīn

Introduction

The person in focus here was a Muslim convert to Christianity from the fledgling stage of Christianity in the Punjab, India - Mawlwī Reverend Doctor ʿImād-ud-dīn Lahiz. Best known for his *munāẓarat* (debates) with Muslim *munāẓarīn* (debaters), his critique of Islam and defence of Christianity with his former *ʿālim* friends turned foes appeared at a time when there was hardly any missionary left who was able or willing (after Pfander's transfer from India) to debate with Muslims. This thesis examined his works to assess the contribution he made to the theological issues in Muslim-Christian debates in nineteenth-century India.

This final chapter will first summarise the main questions, thesis arguments, and main conclusions. Secondly, it will show the contribution this research makes to an existing body of knowledge and how this work builds on previous research and offers something original. Thirdly, it will discuss also how this work helps identify areas/topics/questions or problems for further research beyond the Agra Debate and ʿImād-ud-dīn's own context. The aim is to indicate this work's broader relevance not just for the contexts of debates but also for interfaith dialogue/relations, apologetics, and theology.

1. Summary

The aim here is to present a summary of the main research questions, the arguments of the thesis, and the conclusions reached through this research.

1.1 Main questions

This research started with the following questions: What did ʿImād-ud-dīn contribute to the issues of Christian-Muslim theology selected for debate at the Great *munāẓara* of Agra in 1854, and to what extent did he succeed in completing the unfinished agenda and advancing the debate beyond the Agra *munāẓara*? As the focus was on the five points of the unfinished agenda, each point was addressed separately. The evidence

presented attempted to demonstrate that 'Imād-ud-dīn did indeed make a significant contribution to the historic Agra *munāẓara*. This was evident in that unlike Pfander and French, he succeeded in completing the unfinished business of the *munāẓara* by systematically addressing each point of the agenda. The specific points of the debate concerned here were: *naskh, taḥrīf, the trinity*, Muhammad's prophethood, and the Qur'ān. The investigation into these issues led to conclusions, which corroborated the initial hypothesis. The main argument and the major conclusions have been summarised below.

1.2 Main arguments

The main arguments presented in this thesis were that 'Imād-ud-dīn made a significant contribution to the Christian-Muslim *munāẓara* in the nineteenth-century South Asia, and that he played an important role in advancing the Christian-Muslim *munāẓara* from the 1854 Agra debate and beyond. In order to make this these arguments, the thesis was divided into four parts:

Part I, was meant to present the broader historical and theological background from which emerged the Agra *munāẓara* and 'Imād-ud-dīn. Chapter One showed that the Agra Debate and books written by Pfander, Raḥmatullāh, and 'Imād-ud-dīn fall into the category of *munāẓarātī adab* therefore, the term *munāẓara,* ought to be preferred over other terms. The chapter also attempted to justify the use of the adjective 'great' in the title of this thesis, as well as the need to do research on 'Imād-ud-dīn to fill gaps identified in the literature related to the existing studies on the Agra *munāẓara.* Chapter Two argued that in the aftermath of the Agra *munāẓara,* 'Imād-ud-dīn's conversion and preparation for the Christian-Muslim *munāẓara* were important processes; and contrary to Powell's claims, through the process of his conversion, he was prepared to take up the role of a principal Christian *munāẓar* in nineteenth-century India.

Part II, consisted of Chapters Three and Four in which 'Imād-ud-dīn's contribution to the issues that were debated at the great *munāẓara* was presented. In Chapter Three the main argument was that 'Imād-ud-dīn made a significant contribution to our understanding of the debate on one of the most important Islamic doctrines – *naskh,* which was debated by Pfander and Raḥmatullāh. It helped to reignite and advance the Christian-Muslim debate on *naskh* in the nineteenth-century India. This main argument was supported by demonstrating that the Islamic doctrine of *naskh* was

far more complex than understood by Pfander and Raḥmatullāh. ʿImād-ud-dīn brought the debate back to the Qurʾān and showed that *naskh* was an intra-Qurʾānic phenomenon which could not be applied to the Bible, and that this doctrine had serious implications for the prophethood of Muhammad, Islamic theology, and jurisprudence.

In Chapter Four the argument was that ʿImād-ud-dīn made a distinct contribution to the debate on the issue of *taḥrīf* debated by Pfander and Raḥmatullāh. This argument was supported with evidence from ʿImād-ud-dīn's own works: (i) Raḥmatullāh and Wazīr Khān's claim of *taḥrīf* contradicted the Qurʾān and its early commentators; (ii) that their premises, by and large, were irrelevant to the issue of *taḥrīf*; (iii) that the text of the Qurʾān has suffered more and certain corruption as compared to the Bible.

Part III, consisted of Chapters Five to Seven, and dealt with the points of the agenda which could not be discussed at the Great Debate. In Chapter Five, the argument was that as a former Muslim *ʿālim*, ʿImād-ud-dīn brought to the debate on the Trinity and divinity of Christ some very important insights, which contributed significantly toward understanding of this age-old controversy between Muslims and Christians. This main argument was supported through showing evidence of ʿImād-ud-dīn's own struggle to come to grips with this most difficult to understand doctrine; his own struggles at understanding it prepared him to present it to others. As a convert, ʿImād-ud-dīn was convinced of the truthfulness of the doctrine of the Trinity primarily because of his conviction about Christ's divinity. His conviction was fundamentally based on Christ's self-revelation to him, which enabled him to re-read and reinterpret certain passages of the Bible and, especially, the Qurʾān and Islamic traditions in a way that had significance and fresh appeal for both Christians and Muslims in the context Christian-Muslim debates.

Chapter Six focussed on the issue of the prophethood of Muhammad. The fundamental reason for ʿImād-ud-dīn's rejection of Islam was his conviction that Muhammad lacked the credentials of a true prophet in the biblical sense; because he was rather unlike and separate/different from the *bāʿibalī silsila-i-anbiyā*. Thus, he argued that Muhammad could not be a prophet in the biblical tradition let alone the *khātam an-nabiyīn* (Surah 33:40) of Israelite prophets.

Chapter Seven looked at ʿImād-ud-dīn's investigation of the Qurʾān's claim to its divine authorship and how this contributed to the nineteenth-century Christian-Muslim debate on the Qurʾān. The evidence showed that for ʿImād-ud-dīn, the Qurʾānic and Islamic assertions about the divine authorship of the Qurʾān, the notion of its unique eloquence, and its miraculous nature were not tenable.

1.3 Main conclusions

The conclusions for each chapter have been presented at the end of each chapter. Here are the summaries of the main conclusions.

1. ‘Imād-ud-dīn’s conversion filled a gap created by Pfander’s transfer and brought much needed strength to the Christian missions to Muslims in India.

2. The long process of ‘Imād-ud-dīn’s conversion prepared him to become a *munāẕar* of note. His pre-conversion roots in an *ashrāf* Muslim family had a considerable significance for him as a *munāẕar* who debated with the *‘ulamā’* of *ashrāf* status.

3. ‘Imād-ud-dīn reinitiated the debate exactly where it got terminated twelve years earlier. It was, therefore, a fresh beginning of the old debate but a crucial difference was that now the debaters were all Punjabi *mawlwīs*, one of whom was now a Christian convert.

4. ‘Imād-ud-dīn reignited the debate on *naskh* in a fresh and creative way. Placing *naskh* on top of the agenda was a part of the Muslim interlocutors’ strategy. Pfander was not well prepared for this debate and Raḥmatullāh was not honest in his assertions. Both Ṣafdar Ali and ‘Imād-ud-dīn proved with evidence that Pfander’s basic claim was correct.

5. ‘Imād-ud-dīn’s insights on the issue of *naskh* were new enough to help the debate on *naskh* move forward beyond the Agra *munāẕara,* and beyond the books by Raḥmatullāh and Pfander. ‘Imād-ud-dīn’s critique showed too that the idea of *naskh* also has implications for the prophethood of Muhammad, the Qur’ān, hadith, and Islamic law.

6. That the debate on *taḥrīf* was reinitiating after 12 years of the Great *Munāẕara* was in itself a significant development in the nineteenth-century context of India. During the debate, Pfander had found it difficult to defend his position on the absence of *taḥrīf* in the Bible. By re-defining the term *taḥrīf* based on the Qur’ān, ‘Imād-ud-dīn delimited its wider application and exposed Muslim *munāẕars’* attitude towards both scriptures. In particularly critiquing *I’jāz-i-‘Īsawī,* ‘Imād-ud-dīn went much further than Pfander. In doing so, he showed that Muslims cannot prove *taḥrīf-i-lafẕī ‘amdī,* and that it was possible to defend the integrity of the Christian scripture in the face of Muslim criticism.

7. 'Imād-ud-dīn was fully convinced of the truth of the doctrine of the Trinity and divinity of Christ. His confidence was based on personal experience of the Son of God, the second person of the Trinity, who revealed himself to him. This enabled him to engage in Christian-Muslim debate on the Trinity with confidence. His discussion shows both continuity and change in Christian arguments. His insider's knowledge of the Orthodox, Sufi, and Shiʻa Islam enabled him to restate the doctrine of the Trinity in light of the Muslim objections, and in terms appealing to Muslims. He exposed the diversity in Muslims' understanding of the divine unity and the Trinity. In doing this, he engaged with some key Islamic ideas such as *waḥdat al-wujūd* and *waḥdat-i-ḥaqīqī* and argued that the Islamic doctrine of *tawḥīd* was untenable. The aim of this was not only to convince Muslims but likely for the insiders; i.e. to embolden and inspire Christians, especially the converts still in the process of comprehending the Christian doctrine of *tawḥīd fil-tathlīth*.

8. 'Imād-ud-dīn's approach involved supporting the Trinity and the divinity of Christ from Islamic sources. In challenging Muslim interpretations of some of the key Qur'ānic passages and re-interpreting them to support Christian doctrines, he demonstrated his originality as a theologian. His arguments for the Trinity from the Orthodox as well as the Sufi practices were also new in the context of the on-going debate. These creative inputs thus provided the much needed resources for Christians to better understand both Islam and Christianity.

9. The fundamental reason for 'Imād-ud-dīn's rejection of Islam was his conviction that Muhammad lacked the credentials of a biblical prophet; because, in his origin, means and modes of receiving inspiration, teachings, and claim of being the prophet to jinn, Muhammad was quite unlike the *bāʻibalī silsila-i-anbiyā*. Therefore, he could not be a prophet in the biblical tradition of prophets. This was a new line of argument about the prophethood of Muhammad in the nineteenth-century debate about Muhammad in India.

10. Some of 'Imād-ud-dīn's arguments were in line with Pfander's, but in the Indian context; most of his arguments like singling out and challenging the Qur'ān's self-authenticating assertions, particularly, that it was revealed and taught to Muhammad by *ruḥ al-quds*, *ruḥ al-amīn*, *al-raḥman*, and Gabriel, appear fresh and original.

11. 'Imād-ud-dīn pushed his interlocutors hard to admit that the order of the Qur'ān was 'Uthmanic, not divine, and there were statements of *kufār* in the Qur'ān

which were not the word of Allāh. It was, for him, an important step forward towards refuting the assertions that the Qur'ān was eternal, verbatim, and inimitable word of God. His argument from the progressive nature of the Arabic language and evidence from the text of the Qur'ān that a large part of its corpus could not measure up to the definition of eloquence shows a marked progress in the Muslim-Christian debate on the Qur'ān.

2. Contribution

The aim here was to contribute to our understanding of the history of Christian-Muslim *munāẓara*. The history of debates spans over fourteen hundred years. The scope here was limited to examining the literature created around the Great *munāẓara* of Agra 1854. This study of 'Imād-ud-dīn is significant in that it is the very first research undertaken by a Punjabi Christian on the life and writings of one of the most important Muslim converts to Christianity in South Asia. It not only uncovered and used a large number of his writings not previously studied but also the writings of missionaries and Muslim interlocutors besides those involved in the Great Debate. This research is hoped to broaden our awareness of the theologies of Muslim converts to Christianity in general, and particularly of South Asian converts. It seeks to add a new layer or dimension to the existing works on the theology of the Middle Eastern Christian theologians whose works on Christological and Trinitarian debates with Muslims have been important and fruitful. Some of these works may be listed as follows: Mark Beaumont 2005; David Thomas 2001; Thomas Ricks 2013; Jean-Marie Gaudeul 1990; Sidney Griffith 2002; Daniel Janosik 2016; Dale Johnson 2007; Samir Khalil 1994; Samir and Nielsen (editors) 1994.

The context of this study moves scholarly focus from the Middle East to South Asia, which has an equally interesting history of debates. This history is perhaps not as old as the Middle East but the Indian Subcontinent could offer a new trajectory in that the nineteenth-century roots of modern Muslim apologetics lay in South Asia. The South Asian history of debates remains grossly understudied. It is also a region which is most religiously diverse and where majority of the world's Muslims live. The study presented here, in a small way, fills this gap. Moreover, as is well known, Middle Eastern Christian theologians defended their faith from the position of weakness as conquered subjects of the powerful Muslim governments (Griffith 2002:66). The main purpose of

their apologetics was to protect their communities from converting to Islam (Reynolds 2004:218; Griffith 2002:64).). They generally did not have the freedom to engage in open debate with Islam. In the nineteenth-century in British India, however, Christian apologists could debate with Muslims (and Hindus) without fear for their life. This study, in a small way, highlights the creation of such a balance and equality in Christian-Muslim intellectual encounters as demonstrated through the example of 'Imād-ud-dīn. The evidence shows that 'Imād-ud-dīn took this opportunity however to carry on his debate and writings which often kept his Muslim interlocutors on the defensive even long after his death. Arguably, a principal nineteenth-century Indian Christian theologian, 'Imād-ud-dīn's theological ideas and approach to Islam could be especially significant for Christian-Muslim relations today as Christians search for models to learn from or avoid emulating.

This study of 'Imād-ud-dīn hopes also to contribute to the history of Christian theology of religions in general and particularly to Christian-Muslim discourse on the central and most contentious issues of debate between them. Mark Beaumont (2005) has done a commendable job in bringing to light Christology done by the 9th and the 20th century Christian theologians in dialogue with Islam. His most recent book (2018) demonstrates the continuing need of a deeper dialogue between Christians and Muslims about Jesus who simultaneously attracts them yet drives them apart. The nineteenth-century Christian-Muslim apologetic, rich as it is, can certainly deepen our understanding of this central figure of Islam and Christianity, but as discussed in this thesis, has largely been neglected. The present research, it is hoped, has begun to address this concern, and to some extent filled this gap.

Secondly, this study challenges the long held scholarly and general opinions about the outcome of the debate. It was understood in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries that Muslims won the Agra *munāẓara* (Raḥmatullāh 2010:223; Ṣābrī 2008; Powell 1993:271; Schirrmacher; Bennett 1992). The damage done could not be recovered but this research tries to see things from the perspectives of an influential eyewitness convert and humbly challenges such a conclusion in the following ways: (i) the fact that the agenda of the debate remained unfinished (Powell 1993:255; E. Williams 1854:309), therefore, no conclusion could be reached. (ii) There was no official verdict from the judges as to who was the winner. (iii) Had Pfander lost the debate, he would have to convert to Islam (Yaacob 2013:2). (iv) There was no conversion from the Christian side during or after the *munāẓara*. (v) It is generally understood, that the Muslims won the Agra *munāẓara*, by proving that the Bible had been corrupted and that

Pfander did accept *taḥrīf* in some places. What may have contributed to this widely held opinion seems to be the use of technical terminology understood very differently by the debaters. What Pfander called *sahw-i-kātib* (copyist's oversight) Raḥmatullāh called *ilḥāq*. 'Imād-ud-dīn highlighted that, "Pfander, at the end of the debate, described eleven places where *sahw-i-kātib* has taken place; at which people advertised that Pfander has accepted *taḥrīf* at eleven places" ('Imād-ud-dīn 1892:14). In his view, Pfander accepted *sahw-i-kātib,* not *taḥrīf-i-lafzī 'amdī*. 'Imād-ud-dīn demonstrated that *sahw-i-kātib* could never be called *taḥrīf.* Thus Pfander did not admit *taḥrīf-i-lafzī 'amdī*. (vi) Ṣafdar Ali and 'Imād-ud-dīn's conversion, fundamentally, was affected through the reading of the New Testament ('Imād-ud-dīn 1957:12; CMI 1900: 789-90; 1901:18;). The conversion of Ṣafdar Ali and 'Imād-ud-dīn and their confidence in the integrity and authenticity of the Bible in itself is an argument against the evidence of the *taḥrīf* presented by Raḥmatullāh and Wazīr Khān, and thus against their supposed victory. (vii) According to 'Imād-ud-dīn Muslims' shouts of victory in the streets of Agra were nothing more than unjust noise ('Imād-ud-dīn 1899:195). In light of the above arguments it appears questionable to declare that Muslims won the Agra debate.

This study also builds upon and complements the earlier works on the Agra *munāẓara* and 'Imād-ud-dīn, such as written by E. M. Wherry (1905), Avril Powell (1993; 1997; 2013), Dieter Becht (2018), Christine Schirrmacher (1997), and R. D. Paul (1961); Clinton Bennett (1996), and Gordon Nickel (2015). For example, Wherry (1905) merely touched upon the Agra debate and reviewed the principal writings of Pfander and 'Imād-ud-dīn. His purpose was to introduce to the missionary students of Islam an outline of the arguments of these books against Islam. He listed fourteen books of 'Imād-ud-dīn addressed to Muslims but reviewed only six.[223] This research demonstrated the use of all of 'Imād-ud-dīn's available writings; these have been listed in the bibliography.

In the concluding chapter of her seminal work on the Agra *munāẓara* (1993), Powell stated that after the 1857 'uprising', in *munāẓara* confrontations, 'Imād-ud-dīn took on Pfander's role in debating and tract writing in refutation of Islam, which was 'outstanding', and 'deserved fuller consideration' than can be given here (Powell

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[223] These fourteen books have been listed in the bibliography. Wherry reviewed six of these books because "these contain the teachings of this distinguished champion of Christianity on the subjects of controversy with the followers of Islam" (1905:16). However, the present research has shown that the other eight books also have a direct relation and bearing on the Christian-Muslim debate in the nineteenth century.

1993:288). In another article Powell observed, "Although there has been some study of the relationship between Christian convert theology and Hindu theology and philosophy, very little attention has been paid to Muslim Christian theology, at least as it emerged in the Indian rather than the Middle Eastern environment" (Powell 2013:224). This study has, one hopes, to some extent, addressed Powell's concern.

Powell (1993), when it comes to the actual debate of Agra 1854, has generally, highlighted weaknesses of the missionaries and strengths of the strategy and arguments of the Muslim debaters. Her discussion is also limited to *naskh* and *taḥrīf*. In fact she gives a very little space to *naskh* and mainly focuses on the issue of *taḥrīf*. This research however, presented somewhat fuller arguments of both parties on these issues, and then advanced this debate through the presentation of 'Imād-ud-dīn. While one can generally agree with the weaknesses demonstrated by Powell, the attempt here has been to demonstrate that even though Pfander might have conceded the point, his claim regarding the Muslim assertion that Islam and the Qur'ān have abrogated the Bible and Christianity was correct. Although Raḥmatullāh's explanations and claims about the Muslim doctrine of *naskh* appear to have been accepted at the debate, by presenting 'Imād-ud-dīn's arguments, this research showed that Raḥmatullāh's understanding was contrary to the Qur'ān and early Muslim scholars. 'Imād-ud-dīn's fuller discussion showed the serious implications of the doctrine of *naskh* for Islamic theology and jurisprudence.

In the same way, this work complements Powell, Schirrmacher, and Nickel's discussion on *taḥrīf* by adding an eyewitness and a convert's perspectives on this issue of the debate. 'Imād-ud-dīn sharply disagreed with the majority Muslim and some western accounts that Pfander admitted *taḥrīf* in the Bible. He believed Pfander accepted *sahw-i-kātib*. To him, Muslims' claim to victory was nothing (as noted before) but "unjust noise". The fact that Imād-ud-dīn was present at the debate lends some weight to his assertion. His own conversion, and the conversion of Ṣafdar Ali and Ganga Ram, two other eyewitnesses of the debate, shows that the supposed Muslim victory was due to the *munāẓara* setting and public emotions rather than to sound evidence and arguments. These converts did not appear to have been convinced that the Bible suffered from *taḥrīf*. Powell speaks of the "balance of evidence' being "so heavily weighted in Islam's favour in the numerous Urdu and Persian accounts of the *munāẓara*" (1993:288); by examining a convert's account this research has in a small way sought to redress this imbalance.

This work also expands and adds considerably to what Powell, Schirrmacher, Becht, and Nickel have written on these themes, which broadens our understanding of the Muslim accusation of *taḥrīf*. For example, all have noted that the Islamic charge of *taḥrīf* originates in the Qur'ān and has been an issue of debate for a very long time but then focused on the Muslims' use of the western critical material to prove their point. 'Imād-ud-dīn brought this debate back to the Qur'ān and showed how Raḥmatullāh-Wazīr Khān's claim of *taḥrīf-i-lafẓī 'amdī* contradicted the Qur'ān and its early commentators. Moreover, the Qur'ānic charge of *taḥrīf* was limited to *taḥrīf-i-m'anawī 'amdī*. Powell rightly pointed out that it was ingenious on Muslims' part to launch an attack by citing from Eusebius' *History of the Early Church* Fathers, like; Justin Martyr who had accused Jews of doing *taḥrīf* in the Bible (1993:249). But she, like Pfander and 'Imād-ud-dīn also did not give any explanation as to why Justin or certain other Fathers would have accused the Jews and what was the reality of such a charge. This research attempted to address this extremely important question and tried to give a reasonable explanation as to how Justin's accusation did not prove *taḥrīf* in the Old Testament (see chapter 4).

Wherry, R. D. Paul, Becht, and Powell have given short biographical information on 'Imād-ud-dīn mostly quoting his autobiography. Becht did add some interesting details. Powell (2003) has especially studied the process of 'Imād-ud-dīn's conversion. This study has looked at 'Imād-ud-dīn's process of conversion from the angle of his preparation as a *munāẓar*, and thus tried to add a new angle to his biographical studies. More importantly, the presentation of 'Imād-ud-dīn here brings to light and provides much needed perspectives on all points of the great *munāẓara* from the standpoint of a former *mawlwī* who was deeply connected with the Agra debate, its celebrated Muslim debaters and the broader context of the nineteenth-century Christian-Muslim *munāẓara* in South Asia. It challenges the claims of Raḥmatullāh (2010:223), Ṣābrī (2008), 'Uthmānī (1968), Powell (1993), Bennett (1996), and hosts of others who have held that Muslim debaters won the Agra *munāẓara*. The study has introduced the concept of unfinished agenda not only to highlight the incomplete nature of the debate, which 'Imād-ud-dīn took upon himself to complete, but also as an opportunity to challenge Muslim claims to victory and advance the debate further.

This research has also some important historical relevance as it sheds light on the events, issues, and personalities related to the Agra *munāẓara* considered by some Muslims as the greatest *munāẓara* in the entire history of Christian-Muslim debates

(Vahed 2017:35; Yaacob 2013:1-2). The *munāẕara,* as shown by Powell (1993), Schirrmacher (1994 &1999), Bennett (1996) and others, influenced the immediate and long-term Christian-Muslim apologetics like no other debate. Literature generated and the events that transpired after the debate, like the rebellion of 1857, had deeply impacted Christian-Muslim relations. Following the debate almost all accounts have tilted in the favour of Muslims. Certain missionaries severely criticised Pfander's approach to Muslim evangelism. Miller wrote, "Results of famous 1854 debate in Agra… were largely negative to the Christian cause..." (2005:373). Powell has shown that from missionary perspectives the Agra debate was a disaster and Pfander's transfer from Agra to Peshawar was a tactical move on the mission's part (Powell 1993:287).[224] Pfander's partner in debate French, lost faith in debates and never debated again (Webster 2007:102; Stacey 1982:5, CMI 1877:577-88). Bishop Lefroy, French's successor, did not like the controversial approach to Muslims at all (Studdert-Kennedy 1991:83).

In the entire literature created around the Great *munāẕara*, apart from Becht, converts' perspectives remained largely missing. However, as shown in the literature review, Becht's focus is limited to two issues: *naskh* and *taḥrīf*. Becht appears to be the only one who has questioned the popular opinion that Muslims won the debate (Becht 2018:129). It is, however, unfair to single out Powell as many others including Schirrmacher and Bennett directly or indirectly share her opinion. This study has given many reasons as to why the Muslim claim to victory is untenable. But more importantly, it has attempted to add 'Imād-ud-dīn's most clear voice on this matter and has added a convert's perspective to the whole drama of the Agra debate.

This study has not only presented 'Imād-ud-dīn's refutation of Raḥmatullāh/Wazīr Khān duo, but on specific topics, also of other Muslim apologists with whom he was engaged. They included Munshi Chiragh Ali, Mujtahid of Lucknow, Sayyid Ali Muhammad, and Abu al-Manṣūr. Sir Sayyid Ahmad Khān and Mirza Ghulam Ahmad were especially singled out. *Tawzīn al-aqwāl* written to refute Mirza, and *tanqīd al-khayalāt* were extensively quoted in this study to offer an alternative view to Sir Sayyid. In so doing, this study contributes to the body of Christian-Muslim *munāẕarātī adab* in the late nineteenth-century India.

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[224] Becht strongly disagrees with Powell. He argues that Pfander's transfer to Peshawar was not because of his so-called "defeat"; rather as an experienced missionary he was asked to set up a new mission station together with the young and inexperienced R. Clark (2018:131)

3. Broader Relevance

At this point it is important to answer the question as to what is the relevance of this study? This author understands that the present study not only has relevance for our understanding of the nineteenth-century history of Christian-Muslim debates and historical theology but also relevance beyond this period.

3.1. Debates in the Twentieth Century

A new generation of debaters from both communities have continued to lock horns well after Agra and 'Imād-ud-dīn. The Agra agenda has thus remained relevant. However, there is a very little discussion on *nāsikh-o-mansūkh*[225], and a marked change in attitude towards Islam is also observable. Christian *munāẓars* paid more attention to the interpretation of the Qur'ān to reconcile it with the biblical teachings rather than attacking it. Their attitude towards the Prophet of Islam and the Qur'ān is far more respectful (Barkatullāh 1969:17).[226] I will present below a few examples from the most important and well-known Christian apologists following 'Imād-ud-dīn.

Sultan Muhammad Paul (1884-1969) was a Muslim *munāẓar* who converted to Christianity in 1906. His autobiography (1927) *Mein Kyuṉ Masihi ho Gaya?* (why I became a Christian?) shows a heavy influence of 'Imād-ud-dīn's autobiography. Both 'Imād-ud-dīn and Paul left Islam because they did not find salvation in it. Paul debated with many Muslim scholars, one of whom was Sanaullāh Amritsarī (1868–1948)[227] (Paul 1930:2). In a *munāẓara* between Paul and Sanaullāh,[228] Sanaullāh criticised Paul's booklet *Mein Kiyūṉ Masihi ho Gaya*. Paul wrote *Sher Afgan* (killer of lion, Sanaullāh was known as the lion of Punjab) (1930) to refute Sanaullāh. He also debated with Khawaja Kamāl al-Dīn, an Ahmadi[229] scholar on the topic of salvation. Maulānā

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[225] Sifting through many periodicals, I have found only a few articles on *nāsikh-o-mansūkh* in a monthly *Kalām-i-Ḥaqq*, July 1966, pp. 9-10; November 1966, pp. 3-14; Jan 1967, pp. 19-29. These articles were written by 'Abd al-Qayyūm.

[226] In emphasizing 'the Qur'ānic testimony,' Sultan Muhammad Paul and Akbar Masīḥ, deviated from 'Imād-ud-dīn's stand. Barkatullāh, however, among all Christian apologists also went at great length to establish the integrity and authenticity of the Bible on the basis of European biblical criticism (see his *Ṣeḥat-i- kutab-i-muqaddisa,* and two volumes *Qadāmat wa aṣliat-i- anājīl-i-arab'a* (1959-1960).

[227] Amritsari was a leading Muslim scholar who dialogued with Ahmadis and Christians.

[228] The account of this *munāẓara* was published under the title *Munāẓara Ḥafizabad* (1928).

[229] The followers of Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of Qādīāṉ came to be known as the 'ahmadis' or 'qādīānis'. They were Sunni Muslims and they continue to call themselves Muslims. However, there was a strong

Muhammad 'Ali, an Ahmadi apologist, wrote an essay and Paul's refutation was published in *Noor-e Afshan* 1924.[230] Paul also wrote *Hamārā Qur'ān* (Our Qur'ān) (1928) to demonstrate that the Qur'ān uses Biblical material and thus it is *Our Qur'ān* (Paul 1928: 26). This is an echo of 'Imād-ud-dīn's position: whatever is good in the Qur'ān was taken from the Bible ('Imād-ud-dīn 1878:25; 1892:29). He wrote *Taṣḥīf al-taḥrīf* (1925) to refute Muslim claims that the Bible has been corrupted. His *'Īsa Ibn Maryam* was written to refute Maulānā Niyaz of Bhopal (1884-1966), the editor of *Nigār* who denied Christ's virgin birth, his miracles and Christ's ascension.

Another convert, 'Abdul Ḥaqq (1889-1970) became a well-known apologist and debater. In September 2-3, 1928 along with Paul, he debated with Sanaullāh Amritsarī and two of his colleagues. Its account was published as *Munāẓara Ḥafizabad* (Khān 1928). *Taḥrīf* in the Bible and *taḥrīf* in the Qur'ān was on top of the agenda and in this sense it extended the Agra agenda. Continuing 'Imād-ud-dīn's legacy, *tawḥīd* of Islam, Trinity, Islamic way of salvation were also part of the discussion. 'Abdul Ḥaqq defended the doctrine of Trinity in unity and brought Islamic *tawḥīd* under sharp criticism. He distinguished himself through his numerous debates with Muslim scholars on the issue of *tawḥīd* and *tathlīth* throughout India. His *Athbāt al-tathlīth fī al- tawḥīd* (1925-1969) argued for the reasonableness of the Christian doctrine of *tathlīth fī al-tawḥīd* and untenability of Islamic *tawḥīd*. However, its cumbersome logic and opaque terminology makes it hard to understand and only a few specialists can appreciate it.

Barkatullāh (1891-1971) was arguably the most important among the 20th century Christian apologists. His conversion to Christianity was directly influenced by reading 'Imād-ud-dīn and Pfander's books. In the 20th century, *taḥrīf* continued to be the most hotly debated issue. According to Barkatullāh Christian scholars were generally content with refuting the *taḥrīf* allegation by presenting the Qur'ānic verses in support of the Bible (1969:13). Although Barkatullāh did not abandon this approach, he asserted that the Holy Bible was absolutely free from any need of Qur'ānic testimony. He employed historical critical methods to establish the authenticity, integrity, and reliability of the Bible and used the Qumran discoveries to support his claims (1969:13). His *ṣeḥat-i-kutab-i- muqaddisa* (1969) and *Qadamat wa aṣliyat-e Anājīl-i- arb'a* (1959-1960) were written to establish the reliability of the Bible. One can hear an echo of 'Imād-ud-dīn's

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opposition to Ghulam Ahmad and its movement and the group was declared non-Muslim by the act of parliament of Pakistan in 1974.
[230] Paul's essay *Habūt-i- nasl-i-insānī* in refutation of Mawlwī Muhammad Ali, Amīr of Ahmadiya sect. It was published in four parts in Noor-i- Afshan 1924

argument in these books e.g., that Muslims level the charge of *taḥrīf* in absolute contradiction to Qur'an (1969:17). Barkatullāh wrote *Taurat-i-Mūsawī aur Muhammad-i-'Arabī* to refute any claim that Moses prophesied the coming of Muhammad. He is again seen utilising and expanding 'Imād-ud-dīn's original argument that Muhammad had no genealogical evidence to prove his relation with Ishmael son of Abraham (1951:75-80). Barkatullāh wrote three books[231] to refute objections against the divinity of Christ. It is clear that the unfinished agenda of the Agra debate was alive and hotly debated in the 20th century.

Many newspapers and magazines also continued a lively debate between Christians and Muslims in the twentieth century. There was a yearlong written debate between Paul Ernest, a Catholic (b. 1902) and Manzūr Ahmad, which was being published in *Catholic Naqīb*[232] from 1955-56. Gujranwala Theological Seminary's magazine *Masīḥī Khādam*, in its June 1957 issue also published Ernest's essay *Tathlīth-i-Aqdas wa alūḥīyat-i-Masīḥ*. This essay was written in response to Malawi Manzūr Ahmad's book *Who is Christ*? The Henry Martyn Institute published the periodical, *Huma*. *Huma* contained articles of seasoned Christian apologists like Barkatullāh, 'Abdul Ḥaqq, and Tālib Shahabādi (Sam Bhajjan) who carried on 'Imād-ud-dīn's tradition. It is interesting that in its Oct-Dec 1969 issue, *Huma* published 'Imād-ud-dīn's tract on Christ's divinity, *Mein Kaun Hooṉ?* (Who am I?) in its entirety. It shows the continuing influence and importance of 'Imād-ud-dīn's argument for the proof of Christ's divinity (Shahabadi 1969:23-28). Another periodical, which was actively engaged in debate with Muslim scholars, was *Noor-e Afshān*[233] (1873-1966). After the partition of India in 1947 Gujranwala theological seminary played an important role in Christian-Muslim apologetic. Its *Masīḥī Khādam* in 1950s and 1960s, which was replaced with *Kalam-i-Ḥaqq* was an important tool of Christian apologetic against Islam. Christian Study Centre Rawalpindi's (est. 1967) *al-Mushir* was published from Rawalpindi. Scholars like Yusuf Jalīl and Barkatullāh regularly contributed on the issues of *taḥrīf*, authenticity of the Bible, the Qur'ān and so on.

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[231] These are, *Abūwat-i-Khudā aur Ibniyat-i-Masīḥ* (Fatherhood of God and Sonship of Christ), *Abūwat-i-Ilahī kā Mafhūm* (the meaning of the Fatherhood of God), and *Qānā Galīl kā Mo'ajaza* (The Miracle of Qānā of Galilee).

[232] The Roman Catholic diocese of Lahore, which has been regularly published since then, established *The Catholic Naqīb* in 1929.

[233] *Noor-e Afshan* was one of the most important Christian periodicals in the 19th and 20th centuries. It was published from Lahore and Ludhiana by the Presbyterian Mission in the Punjab under the editorship of great scholars like, G. L. Thākar Dās, Ghulam Masīḥ, and E. M. Wherry. For a good introduction of Noor Afshan read *Nur-e Afshan* Archives: perspectives on Inter-religious history Punjab from 1873-1944 (EAP660), https://eap.bl.uk/project/EAP660.

3.2. 'Imād-ud-dīn's relevance Today

Does this study have any relevance for Christian-Muslim debates and interfaith relations in the 21st century, especially for the South Asia? C.F. Andrews, and Bevan Jones have consigned 'Imād-ud-dīn's apologetic writings to by-gone days (Andrews 1908:123, Jones 1932:241). George Smith, however, envisioned that his writings would live on (1893:181). A missionary colleague of 'Imād-ud-dīn believed that the mass of material he produced "will be more and more valuable as time goes on" (CMI 1900:915). He further remarked, "The effect of 'Imād-ud-dīn's controversial works has been great. It is but an index of what the ultimate effect will be" (CMI 1900:915). A taste of future value and impact of 'Imād-ud-dīn's apologetic may be seen in the conversion of two Muslims after five years of 'Imād-ud-dīn's death, solely by reading his books without the help of any missionary or local evangelist (CMI 1905:75). Ṭa observed that "'Imād-ud-dīn's books concerned with debate cannot be excluded from the Urdu literature. Rather, as long as debate will continue the currency of his books will not cease" (1900:6). At the close of the 20th century, Powell observed that issues selected by Pfander and Raḥmatullāh for debate at Agra are very much alive and are being debated afresh (Powell 1993:298). This situation has not changed.

In the 21st century, the issues of debate at the great *munāẕara* will remain relevant and the debate may even get intensified as Muslim populations grow in the West. Jay Smith's weekly debates in the Speakers' corner, Hyde Park, London, and hundreds of debates between Christians and Muslims can be watched on YouTube. Muslim scholars like Fatoohi (2013), Makhmoor (2018), Denffer (1989), and Dakdok (2019) argue for the legitimacy of *naskh*. Christians like Ibrahim (2019), Silas (2019), and Father Zakaria Boutros (2019) are arguing against the doctrine of *naskh*.

The issue of *taḥrīf* continues to be a central point of debate between Christians and Muslims. For example see, Accad (2003), Zebiri (1997), Sirry (2014), Nickel (2015), My search at the Bodleian Library showed that 300,877 papers have been published only on "the falsification of scriptures". The current discussion both in the electronic and print media on the issue of the corruption of the Bible and debate on the Trinity and prophethood of Muhammad are countless. The doctrine of the Trinity continues to be 'the thorniest of theological issues dividing Christians and Muslims . . .' (Ridgeon 2001:xv). Husseini (2011, 2014), Keating (2010), Griffith (2002), Ricks

(2013), and the latest debates on the Trinity, the one between Muhammad Hijab and David Wood (2018), can be readily accessed on YouTube.[234]

Smith's, and Small's extensive work (2012; 2013), and many works cited in Chapter Seven on the refutation of the Islamic claims about the Qur'ānic text reveal the relevance of this point of the Great Debate. There is no doubt that the issues debated at Agra are very much alive. There are many websites dedicated to this cause. As Muslim *da'wah* movements become more innovative, vigorous, and global, a demand for apologetic literature will also grow both for defending the Christian faith as well as for presenting the Gospel to Muslims. A large number of European and North American, South African, and Australian Christian apologists are already doing it. In this global context 'Imād-ud-dīn's arguments provide fresh perspectives in the current debates and dialogues between Christians and Muslims.

Modern Muslim apologists too have realised the continuing importance of the nineteenth-century apologetic works. Raḥmatullāh's works are still considered unsurpassed by many Muslim apologists, such as Taqī 'Uthmānī and Rashid Rida (2008). Technology and Internet have made it possible to digitalize, reprint and republish, and make these classics available worldwide. There are hundreds of websites where classical debate material is available. www.only1or3.com is one such site where works of Raḥmatullāh and other Muslim debaters of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries are available. A number of Christian websites have also been developed which are dedicated to provide nineteenth and twentieth century Christian books on Christian-Muslim debates. Noor-ul-huda.com is an important online source for Urdu apologetic books. Among others some of 'Imād-ud-dīn's books are available on this site. One major site is answering-islam.org. This site provides links to all major Christian and Muslim websites committed to debate and dialogue. It also gives links to other language websites, including Urdu. Digitalization of Noor-e Afshan (1877-1944) at Forman Christian College University, which is linked with the British Library;[235] shows the importance of the nineteenth and twentieth century apologetic arguments developed in South Asia. All five points of the Agra agenda were quite freely debated in Noor-e Afshan.

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[234] Muhammad Hijab vs David Wood. November 11, 2018. *Tawheed vs Trinity*. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZyhvQ0O4yxI. Accessed: 12/06/2019 06:41

[235] British Library approved a major grant of GBP 35600 under its Endangered Archives Programme to preserve Noor Afshan. Noor Afshan can be accessed at https://eap.bl.uk/project/EAP660.

In recent years, great interest has been shown both by Muslim and Christian scholars in the study of early Christian-Muslim apologetic. Texts and arguments from the ninth century onward are becoming available in English.[236] Along with the earlier Christian apologists, 'Imād-ud-dīn has shown how the doctrines of the divinity of Christ and the Trinity can be defended in the context of Islam. He has also, as with earlier Christian apologists, shown how it is possible to defend the Trinity in the Islamic context which can be important for the future of apologetic and indeed in the construction of systematic theology which takes account of such a context.

The second half of the twentieth century has seen a big shift in interreligious relations. The Vatican II, *Nostra Aetate*, and WCC have played a key role in the pursuit of dialogue and theological change toward Islam (Wingate 2011:xi). Since 1960 the Henry Martyn Institute's work became focused on dialogue and reconciliation (D'Souza 1998:16; 24-31). The Henry Martyn Institute's sister institution Christian Study Centre (CSC), Rawalpindi, Pakistan has also gone in the same direction (Riaz 2017:7). It is humbly submitted that there are certain benefits of interreligious dialogue, but in the context of South Asian Islam, dialogue at the cost of healthy and respectful apologetic may not help because Muslims are generally interested not in dialogue but in *da'wa* as Riaz's analysis of CSC also shows (2017). Riaz stresses that since interfaith dialogues lack this core objective, the majority of Islamic scholars prefer to avoid them (2017: 3-4). He observed that Muslim emphasis is on theology, but Christian focus has been on sociology, peace and harmony and, hence, there is a mismatch on objectives (2017:7). One of the main reasons for different objectives for dialogue in South Asia appears to be a lack of freedom for Christians to put their point of view as vigorously as 'Imād-ud-dīn had done in his own context.

Maria Fuchs (2016) focussed on purely Catholic efforts to promote interfaith dialogue with Muslims. According to Fuchs, Bütler (1915-96), a Swiss Jesuit was the pioneer of interreligious dialogue in Pakistan. She observes, "Bütler's efforts usually remained restricted to personal contacts and failed to leave a lasting legacy within the broader society" (2016). She presents Bütler's struggle for Christian-Muslim understanding and dialogue as a case to highlight the limitations set on such conversations in Pakistan by the rise of religious fundamentalism. Her analysis of Bütler's correspondence with Maudūdī (1903-1979) reveals the problems inherent even in initiating interreligious dialogue. Zia ul-Ḥaqq's policy of Islamization in the late

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[236] Works written or edited by Birmingham university's scholar Thomas 2007; 2006; 2003; Keating, 2006; Griffith, 2012; 2002; 2013; 2012.

1970s, Fuchs argues, became one of the most important stumbling blocks in the way of interreligious dialogue in Pakistan. According to Fuchs, Bütler's project failed to leave a lasting legacy. Interreligious dialogue at Loyola Hall remained throughout most of its time the project of a single person. She argues that failure to have any meaningful dialogue with Maudūdī indicates the failure of the spirit of Vatican II, which wishes for Christian encounters with Muslims on a personal level that would transcend past failures, ideologies, and political enmities (Fuchs 2016:1-16).

Shabana Mahfooz reflects on the nature of dialogue in Pakistan in these words, "Occasionally, there may be gatherings of interfaith harmony, but only for promotional purposes and declarations of love, brotherhood, and tolerance only for the time being" (2017). Under the extremely difficult situation facing the Christian community in Pakistan, different governments have set up interreligious peace committees headed and dominated by government officials. There has hardly been any meaningful dialogue in these interreligious gatherings. Though dialogue and cooperation for peace, justice and improving social conditions is desirable, studies done by Riaz and Fuchs show this is not what Muslims in Pakistan are interested in, they are generally interested in *da'wah* and encounter. This does not mean that none of the Muslim scholars are interested in Christian-Muslim dialogue. Riaz Mahmood and Ihsan ur Rehman identify six[237] serious challenges facing Christian-Muslim dialogue, which make dialogue almost impossible yet they strongly advocate for it and recommend that these challenges must be removed (2017). Riaz Ahmad and Tahira Basharat argue that "Christian-Muslim dialogue is possible only if the principles of Muhammad's dialogue with Najran Christians are applied; *da'wah* is an integral part of these principles. Furthermore, without these characteristics the Muslim–Christian dialogue will be incomplete and fruitless, but unfortunately the modern dialogue lacks these characteristics" (2014).

The history of Christian-Muslim relations is filled with examples of debates rather than dialogue. David Singh citing Goddard observes "The shared history of Christians and Muslims shows that perhaps with some exceptions in the 9th century, conflict and confrontation has been a norm. The principle of exchange has rarely been explored" (2011:39; see also Goddard 2000). Debate rather than dialogue had been a normal course of discussion (Keating 2006:3).

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[237] These challenges are: i), Inadequate understanding of the true nature and spirit of the dialogue. (ii) The lack of collective common sense and intellect of being Pakistani. (iii) Misconception about other religions. (iv) Unfair use of religion for political interest and personal revenge. (v) The improper attitude of the so-called Muslim 'ulamā'. (vi) The poor role of political parties.

Intellectual relations between Muslim and Christians from the time of the Prophet's emergence have been dominated by *munāẓara* and encounter. Richard Martin observes, "The Qur'an presumes and anticipates a dialogical, disputational context for the propagation of its teaching" (2008:113). He shows that the basic Qur'ānic term for inviting non-Muslims to Islam, *da'wa*, which means, "to summon, call, invite, and pray" in its various forms appears over two hundred times (2008:96). According to Martin, Muslims are not only commanded to do *'da'wa'* but also to *al-amr bil-ma'ruf wa nahy 'an al-munkar* "commanding the good and prohibiting evil". He says it is a duty that applies to all Muslims (2008:97). Martin observes, "The purpose of "inviting" non-Muslims to submit to Islam meant renouncing one's religion (and religious community) and accepting another, Islam" (2008:98).

In the current religio-political context of Pakistan, dialogue for peaceful and respectful co-existence is very important but it cannot replace witness and apologetic. For the protection of the weak and vulnerable Christian community rapidly converting to Islam, apologetic is inevitable and demanded. At best it must be both/and, not either/or. Pakistan has been identified as one of the top five countries most difficult for Christians to live in (World Watch list 2019). According to the World Watch report, "Pakistan had the most violence recorded against Christians" (World Watch 2018). Christian faith is constantly under attack and an estimated 700 – 1000 Christian girls are forced to convert and marry Muslims every year (Khān March 17, 2017). Figures for Christian men and women voluntarily converting for the sake of marriages, and conversions of Christian males for other reasons are not known. However, newspapers in Urdu language routinely report Christians embracing Islam. Aoun Sahi, a Muslim journalist looked into the conversions taking place only at two places in Lahore: Jamia Naeemia and the Badshahi Mosque. His article (2011) reveals that Christians in Pakistan are converting to Islam at an alarming rate. Sahi further reports that, "The record at Jamia Naeemia reveals that 678 Christians converted to Islam in 2009, the number reached 693 in 2010". Badshahi Mosque's protocol officer Muhammad Yusuf told him that, "rarely a day goes without some cases of conversion. Sometimes dozens of people convert to Islam during a day. Overwhelming, majority of them come from Christian minority". Sahi quoted Peter Jacob, Executive Director of the National Commission for Justice and Peace (NCJP) saying, "These are troublesome and dangerous days for the country's religious minorities… Blasphemy laws are also being misused to pressurise Christians to convert to Islam" (Sahi 2011). To what extent these conversions are genuine or authentic is pretty much irrelevant because once somebody

is conveted to Islam reversion to the former faith is almost impossible. An apostate from Islam may be in danger of being killed. Sookhdeo has shown that "The death penalty for apostasy is clearly specified in all four main schools of [Islamic] law" (Sookhdeo 2002:279).

Moreover, studies have shown that curriculum at the *madāras* prepares students for *munāẓara* not dialogue. Tariq Raḥmān argues that:

> *Munāzara* occupies an important position in madrassa education and the 'ulamā' create their identity around a core of differences from other sects, sub-sects, heretical, or alien beliefs which are brought out in the open in the *munāzaras*, and that the art of *munāzara* is at the heart of teaching methodology" (2008:198).

As Imams of the countless mosques are drawn primarily from the *madāris*, they are well equipped in the art of *munāẓara.* Contrary to this, none of the Christian theological seminaries or Bible schools/colleges is teaching courses on Christian-Muslim *munāẓara.* Rarely taught courses on apologetics are out of context – often books written for the Western readers. However, apologetic and debate are indispensable in the context of Islam. Even systematic theology, in the context of Islam, cannot be done without apologetics.

The Qur'ān's negation of the fundamental beliefs of Christianity will require a Christian defence as long as the Qur'an exists. Its necessity is seen also because a huge majority of Muslim academia tend to write in refutation of Christianity. Andleeb Gul in her essay (2017), talks about the contemporary trends. She lists nine Muslim apologists/polemicists: Raḥmatullāh Kairanawi (1818-1891); Ahmad Deedat (918-2005); Ismael Raji al-Faruqi (1921-1986); Zakir Naik (b. 1965); Shabir Ally; Yousif Estes (b. 1944); Bilal Philip; Jamal Badwi; and Amir Hussain. Raḥmatullāh still leads this list and, of his *Izhar al-Haqq,* Gul says, "It is the primary Muslim book to criticise western academic works with a specific end goal to find out the mistakes and inconsistencies of the Bible" (Gul 2017:64). She observes that just skimming through the list of contemporary publications one can tell how the contemporary Muslim theology is not in line of its own heritage in the field of religious studies. "Books published are focused on specifics and the only approach one can see is refutation. She concludes, "the current works, with few exceptions proving the rule, demonstrate how the rich heritage have been narrowed down to refutation only" (Gul 2017: 68).

This study of 'Imād-ud-dīn shows that apologetic and debate in Christian-Muslim relations is unavoidable. Although after the Allahabad missionary conference (1873) 'Imād-ud-dīn decided not to engage in debate with Muslims, yet after 'Abdullah

Ātham's *munāẓara* with Mirza Ghulam Ahmad (*Jang-i-muqaddis* 1893), he had to return to apologetic. He began and ended as an apologist for Christ and Christianity. It confirms Jean-Marie Gaudeul's observation that for Muslims, Allāh himself has set the agenda for the Christian-Muslim issues, and the answers given in the Qur'an are Allāh's definitive answers (1984). Moreover, the divine mandate for Christians is not only to witness to the 'Lordship of Christ', which the Qur'ān not only resists but also denies with full force, and to invite all people to believe in him (Matthew 28:18), but also to give *apologia* (defence) to those who would question their faith (1 Peter 3:15). Muslims are also commanded to invite non-Muslims to Islam, and argue/debate (*jadala*) with Christians (Surah 16:125). The greatest modern, and also rare, Muslim initiative to dialogue with Christians was the invitation issued by 138 Muslim leaders to come to "the Common Word between Us and You". One must note however that it is significant that the "Yale response", to this invitation as shown by Martin Accad, one of the signatories, has caused much bitter debate among evangelical Christians (2011).

Leaving aside the issue of motives, one needs to note that though the Muslim invitation in the Common Word initiative was unprecedented, it was an echo of the *da'wah* of the Prophet to the Najrān Christian delegation (Surah 3:64). Interestingly, the original context of the "Common Word" was rooted in the danger of war looming large over Christians of Najrān. Muhammad had issued a *da'wah* to them to submit and become Muslims or face Islamic attack. Their discussion with Muhammad appears to be more like *mujādala/ munāẓara* rather than *mukālama* (dialogue), which ended in the Prophet's invitation to *mubāhala*. Muhammad not only denied Christ's lordship, but also the invitation to 'come to a common word between Us and You' included the negation of Christ's divinity and lordship. The end result of this debate was not a peaceful co-existence with justice and equality. Christians submitted to Muhammad's terms and agreed to pay *jiziya* for the protection of their lives and properties from the government of Madina. With the passage of time the Najrān's Christian community disappeared.

4. Further Research

The discussion above makes it clear that apologetics in the context of Islam is necessary and unavoidable. However, the socio-political and religious landscape of the Indian Sub-continent has dramatically changed, and the freedom with which 'Imād-ud-dīn wrote is no longer available. Another difficulty is that 'Imād-ud-dīn's writings have

been perceived by some, especially Muslims, as very offensive and polemical. That might explain why 'Imād-ud-dīn's name is not so frequently invoked by twentieth century Christian writers who have adopted an eirenic attitude towards Islam. 'Imād-ud-dīn, however, should not be taken as an exception. Many Muslim apologists, especially Mirza Ghulam Ahmad and his followers used extremely offensive language against Christ and Christians. To other scholars 'Imād-ud-dīn is an apologist. The question is to what extent 'Imād-ud-dīn can show us how to engage in doing apologetics and systematics in such a context of Islam. To what extent, in the context of present day Islam in Pakistan, is a positive use of 'Imād-ud-dīn's apologetic possible? What were the fundamental similarities and differences between the approaches to Islam by nineteenth and twentieth-century Muslim converts turned Christian apologists in South Asia, and how could they help in developing a new approach in the twenty-first century? These questions have to be left for the future research of other scholars.

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ʿImād-ud-dīn. 1969. *Mein Kon Hūṉ*? (Who am I?). In, Talib Shahabadi (edit.) *Lucknow Huma*, Oct-Dec. pp. 23-28. Lucknow: Henry Martyn School of Islamic Studies. *Mein Kon Hūṉ* is another title of "*Man Ana*". In this small booklet ʿImād-ud-dīn argued Christ did not leave the issue of his divine identity to the conjectures of men. Rather, he himself settled this issue with his disciples before his crucifixion and resurrection. The booklet is an answer to Muslim apologists like Raḥmatullāh who claimed that Christ never claimed to be God.

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APPENDIX: Glossary of terms

1. *Abdāl,* (from *badal,* to change, exchange or substitute) according to certain Sufis *Abdāl* are those persons who have received change from their bad characteristics to good characteristics, and by whom God rules the earth)
2. *Abūwat* (fatherhood)
3. *Abūwat-i-Ilāhī* (Fatherhood of God)
4. *Ādam* (Adam)
5. *Ādam-i-thānī* (second Adam)
6. *Afshān* (to spread)
7. *Aḥādīth ,* (pl. *ḥadīth,* sayings of Muhammad)
8. *Aḥkām* (pl. of *ḥukm,* commands)
9. *Ahl-i-kitāb* (people of the book, Jews and Christians)
10. *Aqdas* (most holy)
11. *Akhbār* (pl. of *khabr,* news, narratives)
12. *Akthar* (often, frequently, great many, majority)
13. *Aqnūm* (pl. *aqānīm* divine person, a person of the Holy Trinity, hypostasis)
14. *Aqnūm-i-thānī* (Second person)
15. *Allāh t'āla* (God most high)
16. *al-Ḥakīm* (all-wise, one of Allah's names)
17. *al-Mushīr* (the counsellor)
18. *al-Wadūd* (the lover)
19. *'Adālat* (Judgment)
20. *'Ādī* (habitual or natural).
21. *'Azāb* (punishment in hell)
22. *'Ālim* (pl. *'ulamā',* one who knows or has the knowledge, learned person, a scholar)
23. *'Ālim al-ghaib* (knower of the secret or hidden things, usually applied to God)
24. *'Āmdan* (deliberately, intentionally)
25. *'Āmm* (general, common)
26. *'Asātīr* (pl. of *ūstura,* legends, tales, fables)
27. *'Asātīru al-awwalīn'* (tales or legends of the former people)
28. *'Aql* (reason, intellect), *'aqlan* (rationally), *'aqlī* (intellectual, rational)
29. *'Aqīda* (creed, doctrine. pl. *'aqā'id* doctrines)
30. *'Ain* (the very same, exactly alike, the reality, the thing itself)
31. *Amr* (command)
32. *Anbiyā* (pl. of *nabī,* prophets), *silsila -i- anbiyā* (chain of prophets)
33. *Ā'īna* (mirror)
34. *Anjām* (end, conclusion)
35. *Arb'a* (four)
36. Ar-Raḥman (the most gracious)
37. *Asbāb al-nuzūl/ shān-i-nuzūl* (reason or occasion of the Qur'ānic revelations as understood by Muslim scholars)
38. *Ashrāf* (pl. of *sharīf,* noble, highborn)
39. *Aṣlī* (real, in reality)
40. *Aṣliat* (originality, reality)
41. *Athbāt* (pl. of *thubūt,* proofs, establishing, confirming)
42. *Awwal* (first or being first, prior)
43. *Awāmir-o- nawāhī* (commands and prohibitions)
44. *Auhām* (pl. of *waham,* conjectures, false ideas)
45. *Azāla* (removal, annulment, to erase, and abolish)
46. *Azliyat* (eternity)
47. *Bā'ibalī* (biblical)
48. *Bakhair* (lit. with good, blessed, safe)
49. *Ba-ghair qasad* (without intention)
50. *Bila kaif* (without asking how)
51. *Chahal Qaf* (extreme Sufi practice which is associated with Shaikh 'Abd al-Qadir Gilānī. It is a *wazīfa* (a special prayer) in which a practitioner was supposed to fast for forty days and repeat it constantly for *chehal* (forty) days in seclusion. It is also called the practice of *chilla.*)
52. *Dafa'-i-dīn* (defence of religion, apologetics)
53. *Darūd* (a prayer in which Allah's blessings are invoked for Muhammad and his family)
54. *Da'wah* (invitation to accept Islam)
55. *Dil-kharāsh* (heart-rending, heart-breaking)

56. *Dīwān* (a complete collection of odes or other poems by one author)

57. *Dhāt* (nature)
58. *'Ain dhāt* (the very same or exactly alike nature)
59. *Ghair dhāt* (different nature)
60. *Dhikr* (remembrance of Allah)
61. *Du'ā* (prayer, other than the five prescribed prayers called *namāz* or *ṣalat*)
62. *Fāteḥ* (victor)
63. *Faqīr* (derived from the Arabic word *faqr* (poverty). A *faqīr* is a Sufi ascetic who takes the vows of poverty and renounces all worldly possessions)
64. *Faṣīḥ* (eloquent person, pl. *fuṣaḥa*)
65. *Ghair faṣīḥ* (not eloquent)
66. *Faṣāhat* (eloquence)
67. *Faṣāḥat al-mufrad* (literal eloquence)
68. *Fikr* (thought, consideration, reflection) *be-fikr* (thoughtless)
69. *Furu'* (outer husk or branches)
70. *F'el* (verb)
71. *Fiqh* (jurisprudence)
72. *Fanā* (to perish, get absorbed into)
73. *Fanā fil sheikh* (to get absorbed into the sheikh)
74. *Fanā fil rusūl* (to get absorbed into the *rusūl*)
75. *Ghair* (different, foreign, stranger, other, prefix. without, besides, except)
76. *Ghalaba* (upper hand, victory)
77. *Gharīb* (to become distant, go far away, foreign, alien) *gharābat* (foreignness, 'Imād-ud-din used this term for indicating the foreign words in the Qur'ān)
78. *Ghusl* (washing the body, bathing)
79. *Habūt* (fall)
80. *Hadāyat* (guidance)
81. *Haft qir'at* (seven ways of reciting the Qur'ān)
82. *Ḥalāl* (permitted)
83. *Ḥalīm* (humble, forbearing)
84. *Ḥakīm* (wise)
85. *Ḥazūrī* (presence, attendance) *ḥazūrī qalb* (presence of the heart)
86. *Hama ūst* (He is all, or all is He)
87. *Hamārā* (ours)
88. *Hamtā* (associate, fellow, an equal, a peer)
89. *Be-hamtā* (without equal or like, peerless, incomparable)
90. *Ḥāfiz* (protector, preserver); *ḥāfiz-i-Qur'ān* (preserver of the Qur'ān/one who has memorized the whole Qur'ān)
91. *Ḥaqq* (truth) *al-Ḥaqq* (the truth)
92. *Ḥaqīqat* (essence of a thing, truth, reality, fact) *ḥaqā'iq* (pl. *ḥaqīqat*)
93. *Ḥaqq parast* (truth worshipping, a true worshipper of God)
94. *Ḥaqq go* (one who speaks or tells the truth)
95. *Ḥaqqīqat* (reality, truth)
96. *Ḥarām* (forbidden)
97. *Ḥarf* (pl. *hurūf*, letter, letters)
98. *Ḥurūf maqt'āt* (unconnected or disjointed letters of the Qur'ān)
99. *Ḥalāla* (describes Islamic teaching that if a divorced couple wishes to remarry the woman must first marry another person, get divorce from him and then marry her first husband again)
100. *Hiba* (a gift, to give as a gift)
101. *Hiba nafs* (women's gifting themselves to Muhammad based on Surah 33:50)
102. *Ḥijrat* (immigration)
103. *Ḥikmat-e-'amlī,* (a well-thought-out strategy or scheme)
104. *Ḥiss* (sense) *hissy* (related to senses or feelings)
105. *Ḥizb ul-Bahr* (lit. party of the sea). An extreme Sufi rite performed by a stream of running water.
106. *Ḥukm* (command) *ḥukm-i-khudā* (command of God)
107. *Ibn* (son, son of)
108. *Ibniyat* (sonship)
109. *'Ibādat* (pl. *'ibādāt* worship)
110. *'Ijāz* (miraculousness)
111. *Ijma'* (consensus, agreement)

112. *Ikhtilāf* (pl. *Ikhtilāfāt*, contradiction, differences)
113. *Ikhtilāf-i- qir'at* (variant readings of the Qur'ān)
114. *Istighrāq* (being immersed, drowning) *istighrāqi* (that which causes everything to sink in, or submerged together, encompassing all)
115. *Iklotā* (one and only)
116. *Ilḥāq* (addition, interpolation)
117. *Ilhām* (inspiration)
118. *'Ilm* (knowledge, science)
119. *'Ilm-i-safīna* (book knowledge)
120. *'Ilm-i-sīna* (heart knowledge), which Muhammad is said to have secretly passed on to the Caliphs
121. *'Ilm al-Munāzara* (the science and art of debating)
122. *Iqrār* (confession, affirmation, ratification)
123. *Imām* (Muslim prayer leader, leader of a mosque)
124. *Īmān* (faith)
125. *Infikāk* (separation)
126. *Insān* (human being)
127. *Ism* (name, noun)
128. *Iṣṭalah* (pl. *iṣṭlāḥāt* , a technical meaning that a term has acquired)
129. *Izhār* (revelation, demonstration, manifestation)
130. *Jang-i-muqaddas* (holy war)
131. *Jihad* (struggle, Islamic invasion against non-Muslims)
132. *Jihat* (side, dimension) *jihāt -i-sitta* (six dimensions)
133. *Jism* (physical body, *jismānī,* of the body)
134. *Jiziya* (protection tax levied by Muslim government on the non-Muslim subjects)
135. *Juft* (even number)
136. *Jūlāhay* (pl. weavers)
137. *Jumla* (a sentence)
138. *Jumhūr* (public, a great number of people)
139. *Juz* (a part of a whole)
140. *Khādam* (a servant)
141. *Khātam* (from the root *khatama,* to seal, to provide with a seal of signet, to stamp, impress with a stamp, to seal off, to close, complete, finish)
142. *Khātam an-nabiyīn* (seal of the prophets)
143. *Khulq* (nature/disposition)
144. *Kāfir* (pl. *kufār*, disbelievers)
145. *Kufr* (unbelief), *kufr-i-'azīm* (greatest unbelief)
146. *Kāhin* (soothsayer)
147. *Qaid* (restriction)
148. *Kāmil* (perfect)
149. *Karīm* (noble, magnificent, bountiful, merciful)
150. *Kalām-i-khudā* (speech of God)
151. *Kalimatullāh* (the Word of God)
152. *Lughat* (language, dictionary), *lughawī* (lexical)
153. *Kitāb* (a book)
154. *Kitāb al-Maṣāhif* (the book of codices).
155. *Khāṣ* (specific, particular, unique)
156. *Khosha* (the ear of a corn, a bunch or cluster of grapes or dates)
157. *Khudā'ī* (divinity, godship).
158. *Kalām* (Islamic theology, speech)
159. *Kalām-i-faṣīḥ* (eloquent speech)
160. *Kammal* (to complete, to be completed)
161. *Kāmyābī* (success)
162. *Khānaqāh* (a building designated for Sufi gatherings).
163. *Khāṣ* (special, particular)
164. *Khat* (letter, epistle)
165. Kitāb (a book), pl. *kūtab, kitābeiṇ*
166. *Kun* (God's creative word of command "be")
167. *Lafz* (word)
168. *Māhiyat* (nature)
169. *Mahr* (dower)
170. *Ma'dūm* (non-existent)
171. *Ma'ārif* (pl. of *ma'rifa* or *ma'rifat*, knowledge, especially of God)

172. *Makan* (space, a place of dwelling)
173. *Makhlūq* (created beings, creation)
174. *Mālik* (owner)
175. *Mansūkh* (abrogated)
176. *Mazmūn* (subject matter, content)
177. *Mazhar* (a person or place or something that manifests or makes something manifest or apparent, pl. *mazharon̠*)
178. *Minha* (Inquisition)
179. *M'arifat* (knowledge of God, inspired knowledge)
180. *Mirrah* (to be or become bitter, to make bitter, embitter, gall, bile)

181. *Mo'ajaza* (miracle)

182. *Muḥāl* (impossible). *Muḥālāt-i-'aqlīya* (that which is rationally absurd or impossible)
183. *Mufrad* (one or single)
184. *Mufarr-o-tanāfur* (repugnance and aversion)
185. *Muḥkamāt* (pl. of *muḥkam*, clear, unambiguous)
186. *Maulūd* (begotten)
187. *Maujūd-i-azalī* (eternally present)
188. *Maujudāt* (existing things, existences, i.e., animals, non-organic things, and plants classified as *haiwānāt*, *jamādāt* and *nabātāt*)
189. *Mubāḥasa* (debate, argumentation)
190. *Mubāhala* (practice of invoking curses on the liar)
191. *Mujtaḥid* (a Muslim Jurist)
192. *Mukālama* (dialogue)
193. Mu'āmalāt (pl. affairs, dealings, conducting business with other people)
194. *Murāqaba* (meditation, contemplation, to watch, observe). It refers to oft-practiced Sufi exercise in which a Sufi sits, either in his home, mosque, jungle, and especially at the tombs of Sufi saints. He closes his eyes, and turns his attention, especially to his heart in the hope to see some light in there
195. *Muqalid* (follower of the four Imāms). *Ghair muqalid* (one who does not follow the four Imāms)
196. *Muqalid Hanfi*: Follower of the teaching of Imām Abu Hanīfa.
197. *Mukammal* (complete, perfect)
198. *Makhrūj* (One who proceeded or came out of)
199. *Mukhālif* (opposite, contrary, opponent)
200. *Mukhālif qiyas-i-lughawī* (contrary to the established principles of a language and meanings of words)
201. *Mut'a* (marriage for a limited time practiced by Shi'a, treated by Sunnis as abrogated)
202. *Muttafiq alīh* (unanimous, agreed upon)
203. *Masala* (pl. *masā'il*, *masalon̠*)
204. *Mawlwīs* (scholars learned in Islamic sciences)
205. *Mīzān* (balance, a weighing scale)
206. *Mu'amalat* (matters, issues, transacting business, dealings with other people)
207. *Mubāḥatha* (discussion)
208. *Mufākhara* (pride, boast, glory)
209. *Mufasrīn* (pl. expositors, interpreters)
210. *Mughāyarat* (difference/ contrariety)
211. *Mughāyarat ḥaqīqī* (real difference/ contrariety)
212. *Muḥarruf* (corrupted)
213. *Mujādala* (polemic)
214. *Muqarab* (one who is near or is brought near)
215. *Mukālama* (dialogue),
216. *Munāfara* (boasting, vainglory)
217. *Munāzar* (debater)
218. *Munāzara* (pl. *munāzarāt,* debate)
219. *Munāzarātī adab* (debate literature)
220. *Murīd* (disciple)
221. *Mushrik* (pl. *Mushrikīn,* those who associate non-gods with Allah)
222. *Muṣḥaf* (a codex or a codified Qur'ān)
223. *Muta'ākhkhirīn* (those who came last, or later)
224. *Mutaqaddimīn* (ancients or those who came earliest)
225. *Mutakallim* (in Gram. First person, one who speaks, a speaker)

226. *Mutashābihāt* (pl. of *mutashābiha,* ambiguous verses of the Qur'ān)
227. *Matwātir* (uninterrupted, successive, continuous, unbroken)
228. *Matwātar* hadith (a class of hadith of which the chain of *isnād* is unbroken)
229. *Nabātāt* (pl. plants)
230. *Nabī* (pl. *anbiya*, a prophet (s))
231. *Nabī al-thaqlain* (Muhammad's title, prophet of the two classes).
232. *Nabūwat* (prophecy)
233. *Nabūwat-i-Muhammadi* (prophethood of Muhammad)
234. *Nā ḥaqq* (unjustly, without proper reason)
235. *Naik* (good)
236. *Narm/ narmī* (soft, gentle, softness/gentleness)
237. *Nājā'iz* (not permitted or allowed)
238. *Naql* (copy, imitation), *naqlan* (used to refer to traditional and authoritative understanding of an issue)
239. *Naskh* (abrogation)
240. *Naṣab nāma* (genealogy)
241. *Nasl* (race)
242. *Nasl-i-insānī* (human race)
243. *Nāsikh* (abrogating)
244. *Nikaḥ* (marriage)
245. *Nikaḥ-i-muwaqqat* (temporary or time-limited-marriage)
246. *Noor/nūr* (light)
247. *Padre* (spiritual father, pastor or priest)
248. *Pesh-bandī* (an action taken to forestall an imagined or possible damage)
249. *Qabr* (grave)
250. *Qadāmat* (ancientness)
251. *Qā'im mizāj* (steadfast in nature, behaviour, or attitude)
252. *Qādir* (powerful, one who has the power to do something)
253. *Qahr* (wrath)
254. *Qudūs* (holy one)
255. *Qā'im maqām* (vicegerent)
256. *Qasam* (to swear, oath)
257. *Qalb*   (heart)
258. *Qasīda* (poem written in praise of Muhammad)
259. *Qātil* (killer, murderer)
260. *Qayāma* (resurrection)
261. *Qibla* (K'aba in Mecca toward which Muslims turn their faces in prayer)
262. *Qibla sāzī* (Sufi practice of making *qibla*)
263. *Qir'at* (recitation),
264. *Qiṣṣaṣ* (pl. of *qiṣṣa*, stories, narratives)
265. *Qismat* (fate)
266. *Qiyās* (analogy, deductive and analogical reasoning). 'Imād-ud-din, used it to describe Muhammad's practice of producing Qur'ānic verses to support his needs.
267. *Qu'ūd* (the act of sitting, sitting down, remaining in one place)
268. *Qawā'id-e-naḥwiyya* (principles of grammar)
269. *Quwwat* (pl. *quwa*) (power, strength)
270. *Quwwat-i-qahr* (the power of wrath)
271. *Quwwat-i-raḥm* (the power of mercy)
272. *Radd* (refutation)
273. *Rafīq* (associate, fellow)
274. *Rāh-i-rāst* (right path)
275. *Rā'ij* (current or in use)
276. *Rabbī* (my Rabb/God)
277. *Raḥīm* (merciful)
278. *Raushan* (lighted up, luminous, clear, evident)
279. Ruḥ (spirit)
280. Ruḥ al-Quds (holy spirit)
281. Ruḥ al-Amīn (trustworthy spirit)
282. *Ruku'* (bending of the body during the prayer)
283. *Rāwī* (transmitter of ḥadith)
284. *Risālat* (apostleship)
285. *Saba'* (seven)
286. *Saba' ḥurūf* (the Qur'ān is said to have been revealed in seven words, or recitations)

287. *Saba' Mu'allaqāt* (seven odes hung in K'aba)
288. *Sābiqa* (prefix, earlier/preceding, something that has happened in the past)
289. *Saj'* (a rhymed prose)
290. *Sahw-i-kātib* (unintentional scribal mistakes)
291. *Sahw-i-qāri* (mistakes made by the Qur'ān reciters)
292. *Ṣeḥat* (soundness, integrity)
293. *Shadīd* (to be hard, violent, strong, vehement, intense, heavy, grave, heinous)
294. *Shahāda* (witnessing, testifying, Islamic confession of faith)
295. *Shākh* (branch)
296. *Sharīk* (to share, participate)
297. *Sharīr* (evil being)
298. *Sharī'at* or Shari'a (divine law, first five books of the Bible, also refers to the law of Moses or Muhammad)
299. *Sharī'at-i-Masīḥā* (the law of Christ)
300. *Shā'ir* (poet)
301. *Shān-ī-nuzūl* (reason or occasion of the descending of a verse/verses of the Qur'ān)
302. *Shayātīn* (pl. of *shaytān*, Satan, devils, demons)
303. *Sher* (lion), *sher afgan* (lion killer)
304. *Shirk* (association with God)
305. *Shirk maḥz* (absolute polytheism)
306. *Sijda* (prostration)
307. *Silsila* (chain, series)
308. *Silsila anbiyā* (chain of prophets)
309. *Sukr* (a state of being beside oneself, one who is beside himself, because of the contemplation of God, lost in meditation).
310. *Ṣādiq* (truthful, righteous, *ṣādiqul-qaul*, true to his words)
311. *Ṣufī* (one who practices Sufism, a follower of Sufi orders)
312. *Ṣaḥīḥ* (sound, correct)
313. *Tabādala-i-khayyālat* (interchange or exchange of ideas)
314. *Tabāyun'* (opposition/contradiction)
315. *Tabdīlī* (alteration, change, replacement)
316. *Tafzīlia* (one who believes that it would have been better if Ali had occupied the first place as Caliph)
317. *Tahārat* (purity, cleanliness, consists of clean cloths and body)
318. *Taḥqīq* (research, investigation, pl. *taḥqīqāt*)
319. *Taḥrīf* (corruption)
320. *Taḥrīf-i-lafzī* (alteration or corruption of the text or words)
321. *Taḥrīf-i-ma'nawī* (alteration or corruption of the meaning)
322. *Taḥrīf-i-'amdī ma'nawī* (intentional alteration or corruption of the meaning)
323. *Taḥrīf-i-lafzī 'amdī* (deliberate or intentional corruption of the text)
324. *Taqdīr* (determinism, predestination, fate, fore-ordination)
325. *Takmīl* (fulfilment)
326. *Ṭalāq* (divorce)
327. *Ṭalaq-i-mughallaza* (solemn or hard divorce)
328. *T'alim* (teaching). *T'alim-i-Muhammadi* (teachings of Muhammad)
329. *Taghayur* (change)
330. *Tasbīḥ* (magnifying or praising)
331. *Tashakhkhus* (personal identity as a person, personhood)
332. *Tashkhīṣ* (determination, individuating)
333. *Tanbūr* (drum or tambourine)
334. *Tanāfur al-ḥarūf* (words feeling heavy on the tongue and are said with difficulty)
335. *Tansīkh* (abrogation)
336. *Taqadam-o-ta'khur* (before and after)
337. *Tasawwuf* (Sufism)
338. *Ta'qīd* (knitting together, tying in knots, i.e., meanings which are not readily clear)
339. *Ṭāq* (odd number)
340. *Tayammum* (an alternative way of preforming *wuḍū* with sand or dust where water is not available)
341. *Tathlīth* (trinity)
342. *Tauḥīd* (divine unity)
343. *Ummi* (illiterate, non-Jews and Christians who didn't possess a holy book)
344. *Umm al-kitāb* (mother of the book or the Qur'ān i.e. Surah al-Fatiḥah)

345. *Ummat* (people of the same religion, the whole Muslim community is described as Muslim ummah)
346. *Uṣūl* (principle, root), *uṣūl-o-furu'* (root and branches, causes and effects)
347. *Uṣūlī* (a jurist)
348. *Ulūhīyat* (divinity)
349. *Waḥī* (technical term reserved for the inspiration of the prophets)
350. *Waḥī zāhir* (external inspiration)
351. *Wāḥid* (being one)
352. *Wāḥid maḥdūd'* (limited *wāḥid*)
353. *Wāḥid m'adūd* (numbered *wāḥid)*
354. *Waḥdat* (being single or alone, doctrine of divine unity, oneness)
355. *Waḥdat al-wujūd* (unity of being or existence/pantheism)
356. *Waḥdat-i-muṭlaq* (absolute unity)
357. *Waḥdat-i-ḥaqīqī* (real unity)
358. *Waḥdat fil tathlīth* and *tathlīth fil waḥdat* (unity in trinity and trinity in unity)
359. *Wājib* (necessary)
360. *Waswasa* (In Islamic theology, a thought of committing a sin)
361. *Wāqi'āt* (pl. matters, incidents)
362. *Waqt* (time) *waqt mu'aiyan* (appointed time, time that has been already determined).
363. *Wazīfa,* (pl.*wazā'if* (prescribed verses of the Qur'ān and prayers which are often repeated)
364. *Witr* (odd number). *Namāz-i-witr* is also called '*Ṣalāt al-witr*' (odd numbered prayer). In this *ṣalāt* Muslims say three-rak'at prayer
365. *Wuẓū* (ritual ablution for saying *namāz*)
366. *Wujūd* (being)
367. *Wuqūf* (awareness)
368. *Wuqūf-i-zamānī* (To keep account of one's temporal states)
369. *Wuqūf-i-'adadī* (means the *dhikr* of "*nafī athbāt*" negation of everything and affirmation of Allāh alone)
370. *Wuqūf-i-qalbī* (an expression meaning an awareness and presence of heart toward the Most High Real felt in such a manner that the heart feels no need of anything except the Real)
371. *Yaum* (day)
372. *Yaqīn* (sure or certain knowledge, certainty, assurance. In Sufis' understanding, there are three levels of *yaqīn* (a sound and proven belief): (i) *'ilm al-yaqīn*, this is received by absolute arguments (*dalā'il-i-qāt'ia*), (ii) *'ain al-yaqīn*, certainty of something received through observation with eyes, and (iii) *ḥaq al-yaqīn*, which is achieved by receiving a thing itself)
373. *Zabūr* (Psalms, according to Islamic belief a book given to prophet David)
374. *Ẓāhir* (apparent, things seen)
375. *Zakāt* (Islamic religious tax obligatory on able Muslims)
376. *Ẓāt* (social identity, nature)
377. *Zina* (adultery)
378. *Ẓo'f-i-tālīf* (weakness of composition, i.e., grammatical problems)