

**FULL PARTICULARS IN REGARD TO ACADEMIC QUALIFICATIONS, PREVIOUS EXPERIENCE, PERSONAL DATA AND PUBLICATIONS OF S. MOHAMED HUSSAIN NAINAR**

**Educational Qualifications:**

1. Three years Course at the Victoria Memorial High School, Bodinayakanur, Madurai District, Madras State from 1918-1921. Subjects studied: English, British History, Indian History and Advanced Tamil under A&C Group.
2. Two Years Intermediate Course at the American Mission College, Madurai from 1921-1923. Subjects studied: Part 1 English and Tamil; Part II Optional subjects Tamil and History (British history, Greek history and Roman history).
3. Two Years B.A. (Bachelor of Arts) Degree Government Mohamedan College, Mount Road, Madras from 1923 to 1925. Subjects studied: Part I: English Part II: Arabic and Islamic history. (The American Mission College in Madurai and the Government Mohamedan College in Madras are both affiliated to the University of Madras.)
4. Two Years M.A. (Master of Arts) Degree at the Aligarh Muslim University from 1925 to 27. Main subjects: Arabic and Islamic history; Subsidiary subjects: Comparative grammar of Semitic languages – Hebrew and Syriac.
5. Bachelor of Laws (LLB) Degree: Muslim University, Aligargh. (Two years' course). LLB, previous 1925-1926; Final 1926-1927; concurrent with the course for Master of Arts in the Muslim University, Aligarh.
6. Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D) Degree from the School of Oriental Studies, London, University of London, 1936-1938.  
Subject of Thesis: Arab Geographers' Knowledge of South India. (Did the research under the guidance of three Professors of the University of London, namely, Prof. Sir E. Denison Ross, Prof. Sir Hamilton A. R. Gibb and Prof. A.S. Tritton.

**SERVICE IN THE UNIVERSITY OF MADRAS:**

Soon after he obtained in July 1927, the degree of Master of Arts in the Muslim University, Aligarh, he was appointed in September 1927 by the Syndicate of the University of Madras on the recommendation of an expert committee to the post of Senior Lecturer and Head of the Department of Arabic, Persian and Urdu. In the due course, he was promoted as Reader and Professor in the University of Madras (1927-1938).

The Department of Arabic, Persian and Urdu is one of the many sections of the Oriental Research Institute established by the University of Madras, for the first time in 1927. The other sections are Tamil, Telugu, Malayalam, Kannada and Sanskrit.

As the Islamic department was established for the first time in 1927, Mr. Nainar had to work hard with his two Assistants to make the Department a success, create a good record and a tradition throughout his career as Senior Lecturer, Reader and Professor in the University of Madras. His main object was to project his studies in a manner as to reflect South Indian culture and studies, either from Arabic, Persian or Dravidian sources. His knowledge of Tamil and South Indian culture was always utilised to the fullest advantage. His publications will testify to this fact (1938-1953).

As head of the Department of Islamic Studies in the University, he had, besides his own duties, to guide the research work of his two junior lecturers in the department, to train postgraduate

students in advanced studies and research for higher degrees in the University, deliver lectures to postgraduate students of the University.

## MAIN PUBLICATIONS

1. *Sources of the History of the Nawabs of the Carnatic* – Five volumes  
(Persian records and a few Tamil documents were utilised)
2. *Arab Geographers' Knowledge of South India*  
Knowledge of Tamil and South Indian culture were very helpful to interpret and decipher many obscure facts and points mentioned by the Arab writers from the 8<sup>th</sup> to 13<sup>th</sup> century AD, about South Indian people, customs, manners, etc.
3. *Tuhfatul Mujahideen*  
An historical work in the Arabic language on the Portuguese activities on the west coast of India (Translated into English). Here again, the many South Indian customs recorded in Arabic could not be interpreted without a knowledge of Tamil, Malayalam, and South Indian culture.
4. *Java as Noticed by Arab Geographers*
5. *Hindi, High Hindi, Dakni, Urdu, Hindustani*  
All the above works were published, from time to time by the University of Madras.
6. A Tamil book on Seethakkathi Vallal – Published by the author in 1953
7. *Islamic State and Non-Muslims* – in English
8. *Life of the Prophet Muhammad* – in Tamil
9. Biographical sketches of Tamil Muslim Poets – in Tamil
10. *Arabic and Persian Words in the Tamil Language*

Recognising the knowledge of Tamil possessed by Mr. Nainar, the authorities of the University of Madras gave him permission to undertake also, research in Tamil as part of his duties in the Department of Islamic Studies. They also gave him a Tamil Assistant to prepare a press copy of *Seera-puranam* in Tamil. This work was compiled in Tamil verse by Umar, a Muslim poet towards the end of the 17<sup>th</sup> century AD. It has about 5000 stanzas, each stanza comprising four lines. It took nearly two years to get ready a press copy.

The University of Madras also gave him permission to write biographical sketches of Tamil Muslim poets. This is the first work of its kind in Tamil language and will show the contribution made by the Tamil Muslims to Tamil language and literature.

As General Editor of the Madras University Islamic Series, he edited a number of Persian, Arabic and Urdu manuscripts for the University of Madras. He was also editor and editor-in-chief for a term of the *Annals of Oriental Research*, published by the University of Madras.

During the Second World War, he was asked by the War Effort Committee, under the auspices of the Government of Madras, to prepare Tamil-Urdu books for the use of Madras Regiments. The basic text was in Tamil; it was translated into Urdu so that the Tamil soldier may learn Urdu. This book was prepared by Mr. Nainar with the permission of the authorities of the University of Madras.

**Other Academic Activities:**

- Contributed regularly, papers to the Oriental Conference held from time to time in India and took active part in the deliberations of the conference as member of the Executive Committee for two terms.
- Presided over the Arabic section of the Oriental Conference held in Hyderabad in 1944.
- Presided over the Islamic History section of the Oriental Conference, held in Benares in 1946.
- Took active part in the discussions of the Tamil section of the Oriental Conference.
- Contributed a paper to the Urdu section of the Oriental Conference on the influence of Tamil in the early development of Urdu in the Dakhan (Deccan).
- He also sent papers from time to time to the Indian History Congress, during the Fifteenth Session of the Indian History Congress held at Gwalior, North India, in December 1952, Prof. Nainar presided over Section III (1206-1926 AD) of the Congress.
- Contributed about 25 papers on various subjects to learned journals in India and abroad.
- Was a member of the Board of studies in Arabic, Persian, Urdu, Hebrew and Syriac for nearly 25 years in the University of Madras, served as the President of the Faculty of Oriental Learning for a term in the University of Madras.
- Was associated with all the universities in India as member of the Board of Examiners in Islamic subjects.
- Appointed by the Director of Public Instruction, Government of Madras, to serve on the Tamil text book committee to advise on the suitability of books for use in schools.
- Nominated by the Government of Madras as one of the members of the Expert Committee to advise on the possibility of improving the Tamil alphabet. The Head of the Tamil Department, University of Madras was also one of the members of the Committee. The Hon'ble Mr. Avinasalingam Chetty, the then Minister of Education, Government of Madras, was the chairman of the Expert Committee.
- Prof. Nainar was a member of the Editorial board of *Islamic Culture*, an English quarterly published from Hyderabad (Deccan).
- Was a member of Tamil Encyclopaedia Committee.
- Had several opportunities to visit a number of Universities in different parts of India and is well acquainted with Indian culture.

**Language Qualifications:**

Tamil is his mother tongue. Besides English, he knows Arabic, Persian, Urdu and Malayalam, can read and understand French and Dutch. Now during his stay in Indonesia since May 1958, he has learned Malayan and Bahasa Indonesia. He can speak Bahasa Indonesia.

**Foreign Travel:**

In the year 1936, University of Madras sent him to the School of Oriental Studies, London, to get training in modern methods of research and also qualify himself for the Ph.D degree in the University of London. He stayed out of India for two years (1936-38). This provided an

opportunity to visit various centres of learning in England, Europe, Egypt and Turkey. He had to consult several manuscripts in the Bodleian Library, Oxford, in the State Library, Cairo, Egypt, and in the Bibliotheque Nationale, Paris. He stayed in Oxford for about a month and for about three months in Paris to work on some manuscripts connected with the subject of his study, and about the same period in Cairo. From Cairo, he went by ship to Istanbul and stayed for six weeks in Turkey. He had also visited the Universities in Berlin and Bonn (Germany).

Prof. Nainar's acquaintance with the sources of the history and culture of the South East Asia began ever since he worked for his thesis for the Ph.D degree in London. The original plan was to write a thesis on Arabs' knowledge of South East Asia. But in the course of study, the materials collected by him became so voluminous that it was considered advisable to restrict it to South India only. The book knowledge gained by him became an incentive to visit these regions. In 1947, he spent his summer vacation in Burma, Malaya and Indonesia. From Madras, he went to Rangoon and after spending a few weeks there, he travelled by ship to Singapore, visited Ipoh, Kuala Lumpur and Penang. Then he went by air to Djakarta, Surabaya and some of the smaller towns in East Java and returned to Madras by air.

Ever since he returned from his trip to Indonesia in 1947, his interest in the study of these regions became deeper.

In 1951, the Ministry of Education, Government of India, New Delhi, invited the views of universities in India in connection with the Five-Year Plan. The Registrar, University of Madras, requested different departments in the University to give their respective suggestion.

Mr. Nainar, as Head of the Islamic Department, submitted a report on the scope for a study of cultural relations between India and Indonesia. In the year 1952, Mr. Nainar was asked to submit a few of his publications. Then early in 1953, he was deputed as Research Scholar to Indonesia by the Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR), Ministry of Education, Government of India.

Mr. Nainar reached Djakarta in May, 1953 to pursue his cultural studies. He travelled the whole of Java and in the outer islands. In Sumatra, he travelled from Atjah to Palembang. In Kalimantan, from Bandjarmasin to Balikpapan and in Sulawesi from Manado to Makassar. He also stayed in Bali for some period. Thus he had greater opportunities to visit various centres in Indonesia and gain intimate knowledge about the country, people and their culture and language. He has submitted to the Government of India, a report on Indians in Indonesia.

Prof. Nainar retired from the University of Madras in May 1954 on the completion of fifty-five years of age.

In 1955 he wrote three talks for All India Radio, New Delhi, on the coming of Islam to India and Indonesia and the talks were sent to Delhi.

After the contract with the ICCR came to an end, Mr. Nainar was delivering lectures in the University of Medan, Sumatra and also pursuing his cultural studies for his book 'Islam in Indonesia'.

In February 1957, the Government of Indonesia engaged him as professor to work in the Government Institute of Islamic Studies 'Aljamia-al-Islamia-al-Hukumiya.' Since 1957, he had been working in Jogjakarta as professor. He returned to India in November, 1960.

Mr. Nainar comes from an ancient family of Tamil Muslims in Palni, Madurai District. His elder brother who held a senior civilian post in the Listed Services, retired in 1952, as the District and Session Judge in the Madras State.

References may be made to:

1. Mr. B.F.H.B. Tyabji,  
Ministry of External Affairs  
Government of India

2. Mr. G. Parthasarathi,  
Indian Ambassador to the People's  
Republic of China, Peking

*NOTE: This document was prepared by Dr. S.M. Hussain Nainar, possibly in the early 1960s, shortly before he joined Sri Venkateswara University in Tirupati. I have typed it out for future digital access.*

*Nahla Nainar  
Tiruchi, February 27, 2023*