

Historic Background of Ahmadism

"I dare say the founder of the Ahmadiyya movement did hear a voice; but whether this voice came from the God of Life and Power or arose out of the spiritual impoverishment of the people must depend upon the nature of movement which it has created and the kind of thought and emotion which it has given those who have listened to it."

This quotation comes from Dr. Iqbal who has clearly unmasked "the real content of Ahmadism in the light of the history of Muslim theological thought in India at least from the year 1799."

He says: "The year 1799 is extremely important in the history of the world of Islam. In this year fell Tippu; and his fall meant the extinguishment of Muslim hopes for political prestige in India. In the same year was fought the battle of Navarneo which saw the destruction of the Turkish fleet".

Thus in the 1799 the political decay of Islam in Asia reached its climax. But just as out of the humiliation of Germany on the day of Jena arose the Modern German Nation, it may be said with equal truth that out of the political humiliation of Islam in the year 1799 arose modern Islam and her problems. I want to draw the reader's attention to some of the questions which have arisen in Muslim India since the fall of Tippu and the development of European Imperialism in Asia.

Does the idea of Caliphate in Islam embody a religious institution? How are the Indian Muslims and for the matter of that all Muslims outside the Turkish Empire related to the Turkish Caliphate? Is India "Dar-ul-Harb"^{[1](#)} or "Dar-ul-Islam"^{[2](#)}?

What is the real meaning of the expression "From amongst you" In the Qur'anic verse "Obey God, obey the Prophet and the masters of the affair, i.e., rulers, from amongst you?" What is the character of the traditions of the Prophet foretelling the advent of Imam Mehdi? These questions and some other which arose subsequently were for Muslims only. European Imperialism, however, which was then rapidly penetrating the world of Islam, was also intimately interested in them."

Mr. M. O. Abbasi of Dar-es-Salaam (Tanzania) writes in "The Mirror" (published by Makki publications): "In order to reach the bottom of this reality, it is necessary as a preliminary, to understand the

background in which it became possible for Mirza Ghulam Ahmad to advance his claims and to achieve success in his mission."

"The Muslims of India, after leading a life of governance, glory and honor for an approximate period of 700 years, were beset with a variety of calamities and catastrophes owing to their indifference, in action and ignorance:

(1) Internal dissensions and disunion led to internecine quarrels and they became extremely debilitated.

(2) Due to the aggression of their age-old enemies, the infidels, Muslim Blood flowed in profusion at the hands of the Marahatas and the Sikhs.

(3) European Imperialists took undue advantage of this and extended their Imperialist tentacles. They knew that the Muslims were endowed with a spirit of revenge, sacrifice and martyrdom and possessed of a passion for defense of their religion in the fullest degree. It was necessary therefore, to:

(1) Break their collective strength and disorganize them.

(2) Crush their sense of self-respect and their spirit of sacrifice and martyrdom.

(3) Cultivate a spirit of devotion to and expectations from the Imperialist Powers.

(4) Entirely expunge the spirit of '*Jihad*', that is readiness to sacrifice and gamble away their lives in defense of religion and community.

"In view of the above, the chess players of Western Imperialism prepared a few peculiar pawns for the political board, the choicest of which were those that entered the field under the cloak of religion and exponents of its technicalities."

Mirza Ghulam Ahmad Qadiani was such a pawn who served the interests of the British Imperialism using the religion as his tool.

As will be seen afterwards, his tenets were "Obey Allah and Obey the British Imperialism." Those who want a fuller account should read the quotations given by Professor Ilyas Berni in "Qadiani Mazhab Ka Ilmi Muhasiba"[3](#). Here a few quotations are given just as a sample.

Mirza Ghulam Ahmad Qadiani writes:

"In short my father was always hopeful on mercies of the British Government and continued to render services as the need arose, so much so, that the English Government honored him with notes of appreciation and remembered him specially with their gifts and bounties and sympathized with him and favored him and considered him among their well-wishers and sincere supporters.

When my father expired, my brother succeeded him in these qualities, and his name was Mirza Ghulam Qadir, and the favors of the English Government were likewise showered on him just as on my father.

A few years after the death of my father, my brother also expired and after the decease of these both, I stepped into their shoes and followed them in their characteristics.

"But I was not possessed of wealth or property. Therefore, I rose to serve the Government with my hand and my pen, and God was assisting me, and I made a compact with God from that time that I would never write a single volume which does not contain a description of the obligations of the Queen Empress of India. Nay, the volume must contain a narration of all the obligations done to the Muslims of India for which the Muslims of India have to be grateful to her."[4](#)

"For the achievement of this object of mine I made it a practice to repeat in every writing of mine (Vide, for example, Baraheene Ahmadiyya, Shahadatul Qur'an, Surmae Chashme Arya, Ainae Kamalate Islam, Hamamatul Bushra, Nurul Haq, etc.) that '*Jihad*' against this Government is not at all permissible to the Muslims."

Statement worthy of the attention of the Government, which was published for the perusal of the Empress of India (i.e., Queen Victoria), His Excellency the Governor-General of India and His Excellency Lieutenant Governor of Punjab and other High Officials from the humble Ghulam Ahmad of Qadian; dated 10th December, 1894; recorded in 'Tabligh-e-Risalat'[5](#).

"The second matter to be submitted is this, that from the earliest age till now – and I am sixty years old now – I have been engaged with my tongue and pen in this important task that I should turn the hearts of the Muslims of India towards true love; well-wishes and sympathy towards the English Government and remove from the minds of some senseless ones all ideas of '*Jihad*', etc., which stop them from sincerity of heart and honesty of relations and I notice that a tremendous impression has been made on the minds of the Muslims owing to my writings and hundreds of thousands of persons have been converted to a changed attitude."[6](#)

"The major portion of my life has passed in support of this English Government and I have written so many books on the 'Prohibition of '*Jihad*' and 'Obedience to the English' and have issued pamphlets that, if they were gathered together, no less than fifty cupboards could be filled with them. I have sent such books to all the countries like Arabia, Egypt, Syria, Kabul and Turkey.

"I have always endeavored that Muslims should become true well-wishers of this Government and the baseless traditions about Bloody Mehdi and Bloody Messiah which animate and inflame the hearts of fools may be obliterated from their minds."[7](#)

The British Government reciprocated this service as Mirza Mahmud Ahmad, the son and second Caliph of Mirza Ghulam 'Ahmad, writes:

"The obligations of the British Government on us are great and we are passing our lives in great comfort and tranquility and accomplishing our object and if we are to go to other countries for '*Tabligh*' (propaganda), there, too, the British Government renders us assistance."[8](#)

How much Mirza Qadiani served the British Imperialism, is clear from the following declaration:

"Thus, my religion which I do repeatedly declare is only this, that Islam has two parts: One, to obey God, secondly, to obey this Government.

Thus, if we raise our head against the British Government, we are raising our head against Islam, against God and against the Holy Prophet." [9](#)

It would be of interest to see what was their attitude towards the freedom movements of India. There were two organizations endeavoring to get independence: All India National Congress and All India Muslim League. Qadianis attitude towards the Congress can be seen from the lecture of Mirza Mahmud Ahmad (the son and second caliph of the founder of Ahmadism), which was published in the newspaper 'Al-Fazl' [10](#) dated 29th January, 1935. He said:

"After that whenever the Congress launched any disturbance, we helped the (British) Government. At the time of the last movement of Gandhi, we spent Fifty Thousand Rupees on tracts and advertisement and we can prove it by records. Our men gave hundreds of lectures against that movement. We gave best advices which were appreciated by the High Officials."

About Muslim League: The said 'Al-Fazl' [11](#) wrote:

"We remember that the real Reformer of the Muslims and the True Guide of the world. Prophet Masih-e-Mawud and Mehdi Akheruzzaman (i.e., Mirza Ghulam Ahmad Qadiani) when Muslim League was mentioned before him, he expressed his displeasure at it. Can such a thing, which the Chosen of God and Ordained dislikes, be beneficial and blissful for the Muslims? No, Never."

Mirza Ghulam Ahmad Qadiani went so far as to turn himself into a spy of the British Government against nationalists. He wrote in 'Government *Ki Tawajjuh Ke Laiq*' (recorded in Tabligh-e-Risalat):

"Whereas it is expedient that for the well-wishers of the English Government, the names of such Muslims also should be recorded in charts who look upon the British India as *Dar-ul-Harb*. Therefore, this chart has been drawn up with the single object of preserving therein the names of those ungrateful people who are endowed with such rebellious nature."

"Therefore, for the political sympathy of our benevolent Government, we have thought it proper on this blessed occasion that we should record as far as possible the names of such wicked people whose seditious intentions can be proved by their beliefs. But we respectfully request the Government that such Charts will remain with us as a State secret in any of the Government offices until such time."

We should thank Allah that East Africa was not populated with persons of such servile mentality. Otherwise, these countries would have remained under British yoke forever, and the Union Jack would have been flying over the State Houses of Dar-es-Salaam, Nairobi and Entebbe even now.

Dr. Iqbal says:

To the intensely religious masses of Islam only one thing can make a conclusive appeal, and that is Divine Authority. For an effective eradication of orthodox beliefs it was found necessary to find a

revelational basis for a politically suitable orientation of theological doctrines involved in the questions mentioned above.

This revelational basis provided by Ahmadism. And the Ahmadis themselves claim this to be the greatest service rendered by them to British imperialism. The prophetic claim to revelational basis for theological view of a political significance amounts to declaring that those who do not accept the claimant's views are infidels of the first water and destined for the flames of Hell.

In primitive countries it is not logic but authority that appeals. Given a sufficient amount of ignorance and credulity which strangely enough sometimes co-exists with good intelligence and a person sufficiently audacious to declare himself recipient of Divine revelation whose denial would entail eternal damnation, it is easy in a subject Muslim country, to invent a political theology and to build a community whose creed is political servility. And in the Punjab even an ill-woven net of vague theological expressions can easily capture the innocent peasant who has been for centuries exposed to all kinds of exploitation.

As I have explained above the function of Ahmadism in the history of Muslim religious thought is to furnish a revelation basis for India's present political subjugation. (i.e., under British imperialism).

To show how the Qadiani missionaries tried to twist the subject, I quote here from 'A Lively Discussion' published by the 'Ahmadiyya Muslim Mission Of Tanganyika' in 1967. Their Chief Missionary, Sheikh Muhammad Munawwar H.A., trying to refute this blame has written:

"Muslim scholars over the ages have been praising their governments for one reason or the other without being criticized by their fellow-Muslims. Here in Tanzania the Shia Alim, Sayyid Sa'eed Akhtar Rizvi, wrote an article in The Standard dated August 25, 1967 to show that the Arusha Declaration contained certain aspects that went parallel with the Islamic teaching. No finger was pointed at the writer of the article to condemn his "collusion" with the un-Islamic government. Nor was he given the title of a "toady" or a "Quisling".

He is so naive that he does not see the difference between showing that an ideology of a free national government contained certain aspects that went parallel with the Islamic Teachings" and supporting the tyrannical rule of an imperial power and forbidding the wretched 'subjects' to rise against it and making that support an integral part of the religion, next in importance to the belief in the unity of God! If he wants to keep his eyes shut to such clear differences, nobody on earth has any power to make him see.

Dr. Iqbal further writes:

"A similar drama had already been acted in Persia; but it did not lead, and could not have led, to the religious and political issues which Ahmadism has created for Islam in India. Russia offered tolerance to Babism and allowed the Babis to open their first missionary center in Ishaqabad. England showed Ahmadis the same tolerance in allowing them to open their first missionary center in Woking. Whether Russia and England showed this tolerance on the ground of imperial expediency or pure broadmindedness is difficult for us to decide. This much is absolutely clear that this tolerance has

created difficult problems for Islam in Asia."

Then Dr. Iqbal winds up his discourse with declaring the Ahmadi movement as being a "strange mixture of Semitic and Aryan mysticism with whom spiritual revival consists not in the purification of the individual's inner life according to the principles of the old Islamic Sufiism, but in satisfying the expectant attitude of the masses by providing a 'promised' Messiah.

The function of this promised Messiah is not to extricate the individual from an enervating present but to make him slavishly surrender his ego to its dictates. This reaction carries within itself a very subtle contradiction. It retains the discipline of Islam, but destroys the will which that discipline was intended to fortify."

- [1.](#) Dar-ul-Harb – Alien country.
- [2.](#) Dar-ul-Islam – Muslim country.
- [3.](#) Part 2, Chapters 11 to 14.
- [4.](#) "Nurul Haq", Part 1, Page 28, written by Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of Qadian.
- [5.](#) Vol. 3, p. 193, edited by Mir Qasim Ali Qadiani
- [6.](#) Petition to Nawwab Lieutenant Governor – May his fortune be eternal – from the humble Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of Qadian; dated 24th February, 1898; recorded in 'Tabligh-e-Risalat' Vol. 7, p. 10, edited by Mir Qasim Ali Qadiani
- [7.](#) Tiryauqul-Qulub, p. 15, by Mirza Ghulam Ahmad Qadiani
- [8.](#) Barakat-e-Khillifat, p. 65.
- [9.](#) Government Ki Tawajjuh Ke Laiq; by Mirza Ghulam Ahmad Qadiani.
- [10.](#) Vol. 22, No. 91.
- [11.](#) Vol. 3, No. 78. dated 8th January, 1916.

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