

Muslim Deviant Thought And Reform Efforts By Muslim Scholars In Mughal Era

Nadia Alam¹, Dr. Ali Akbar Al-Azhari², Dr. Hafiz Abdul Ghani³, Dr. Muhammad Riaz⁴

¹Nadia.alam550@gmail.com

²Associate Professor Islamic Studies Department, Lahore Garrison University, Lahore.

³Associate Professor, Department of Religious Studies, FC College University, Lahore.

⁴Assistant Professor Islamic Studies Department, Lahore Garrison University, Lahore.

Abstract

The Sufi Muslims spread Islam throughout the subcontinent, guiding every section of the society towards the true teachings of Islam and also presenting the best practical examples of Islamic teachings. However, in the last period of the Delhi Sultans, there was a proliferation of counterfeit Sufis who generally became a source of error and disbelief in the society. Although at the beginning of the Mughal period, the Qadri and the Chishtia orders were spread all over the subcontinent, many hoax Sufis began making a profound impact here during this period too. This later emerged in the form of various movements and orders like the Mughal emperor Akbar, during his reign, introduced the divine religion or Din-e-Ilahi for various reasons. Madariya, Mahdia, Roshniya, Zakaria, Jalalia and Kak were some other noteworthy misleading movements and orders of that time which caused a large number of Muslims to go astray. This article contains a brief historical overview of the movements and orders of those deviant Muslim Sufis and a brief account of the important efforts of religious scholars who spent their lives in reforming the deviant religious ideas and misguidance.

Keywords: Sufi, Delhi Sultanate, Muslim Scholars, Din-e-ilahi, Muslim Deviant Thought.

Introduction

Zaheer-ud-Din Babar Gorkani laid the foundation of the Mughal Empire in 932 Hj/1526 AD, which later turned out to be the most widespread, stable, ordered, and long lasting of the various Muslim dynasties in Indian history. A historical analysis of these dynasties shows that neither the Mughal Emperors, nor the Delhi Salateen that preceded them presented a true picture of Islam in the Indian subcontinent. Furthermore, in order to gain favors and goodwill of the rulers, the Islamic scholars associated with the courts of these kings instead of acquainting and guiding these rulers according to Islamic teachings, misrepresented and misconstrued the orders of

Allah to such an extent that their shape, importance, and underlying rationales were completely altered. Thus, it was only the presence of the class of Sufi saints that spread the true Islam in subcontinent, while also guiding the common folk, the aristocracy, and the ruling kings towards the heavenly teachings of Islam, and presented a practical specimen of these teachings through their personal actions and lives.

In the last years of Delhi Salateen, there came to be an abundance of fake Sufis, who became a source of waywardness and heresy. While the Chistiya and Qadriya orders were spread throughout the subcontinent in the tenth century Hijri, which was the heyday of Mughal

rule, these fake Sufis were still able to leave their impacts on society, which later appeared in the form of different heretical movements. The Mughal ruler Akbar, for instance, initiated the Deen-e-Ilahi during his rule, for a number of reasons. Other such significant heretical movements and orders included the Madariya, Mahdiya, Roshniya, Zikariya, Jalaliya, and Kok. Numerous Muslims were lead into waywardness and heresy because of these movements. The following work undertakes a brief historical analysis of these misleading movements and orders, as well as a study of the eminent Muslim Saints whose lives were spent in correcting the wrongs brought about by these movements into the society.

Akbar's Din-e-Ilahi

Around 30 years after the establishment of the Mughal Empire, the third King in Mughal dynasty, Jalal-ud-Din Muhammad Akbar, took the reign in 962 H/1556 AD, aged only 14. A study of the history of this period shows that Akbar's reign was composed of two entirely different phases. In the initial phase after taking the throne, Akbar comes off as a religious and properly believing Muslim youth. He used to respect Islamic teachings and showed reverence for the venerable Islamic elders. He used to strive for issuing orders in accordance with the Sharia. He also used to lead the call for prayers, led the prayer congregations himself, and also used to clean up Mosques by himself. He also gave strict punishments for accusations of heretical beliefs. Frequently visited the shrines of holy men, and gave them charities.⁽¹⁾ Liked to spend his time in the company of Islamic scholars and virtuous men. Owing to his extreme reverence and attachment with Sheikh

Saleem Chishti, he constructed a building "Ibadat Khana" near his monastery. He used to hold a court at this place on every Friday, with Mashaikh, scholars, and selected nobles in attendance.⁽²⁾ Owing to the unfavorable conditions of his childhood, Akbar was unable to get any formal education, and held these event in the Ibadat Khana mainly due to his religious fervor. However, the selfish interests of the lowly scholars, imitation of practices of different religions, and the arguments about viability of different religions had a significantly negative impact on him. Then under the influence of power loving scholars, especially Mullah Mubarak and his sons Faizi and Abul Fazal, he developed even more mundanely oriented. Secondly, the polluted environment created due to the close presence of Hindus also contributed in him rebelling from the religion of Islam.

In 987 H/1579 AD, due to machinations of Sheikh Mubarak and Abul Fazal, a heretical "Mahzar-nama" for issued for Akbar, through which the Emperor became a Reformer-Imam, who was expected to be followed by the Muslims, and the Khalifa of Allah.⁽³⁾ Akbar became the source of fulfillment of the desires of his followers, and a prostration of reverence was made mandatory. Then, these close aides of Akbar held and decided that as one thousand years have passed since Islam arose in the world, its second phase of age has begun, it needs a new religious code, new constitution, new direction, and a new ruler, and there was no one more suitable for this position than someone as wise and just as Akbar. Akbar was enamored with this idea. Fed up with the meaningless guidance of the court scholars, Akbar readily initiated a new heretical sharia,

1. Bhakkari, Shaikh Farid, *Dhakhirat ul Khawanin*, Compiled, Dr Mueen ul Haq, (Karchi: Pakistan Historical Society, 1961), 1/67; Badauni, Abdul Qadir, *Muntakhab ul Tawareekh*,

(Tehran: Anjuman- i Asar wa Mafakhir-i Farhangi, 1379h).

2. Badauni, *Muntakhab ul Tawareekh*, 2/375.

3. Badauni, *Muntakhab ul Tawareekh*, 2/404.

as the "Din-e-Ilahi", which later gained popularity as the Deen -e-Akbari.⁽⁴⁾

Aspects, Reasons, and Implications of Akbar's Din-e-Ilahi

Akbar implemented Din-e-Ilahi in the 28th year of his reign, 990 H/ 1582 AD, for a number of reasons. Badayuni lists out these reasons as: creation of a single united religion, belief in metempsychosis, a wrong understanding of the concept of Wahdat-ul-Wajood, imagination of a perfect man, ideas of wrong and right, impact of Shiism, acceptance of the concept of Holy Trinity, sun worshipping, creation of Aatish Kada and fire worshipping, and the irreligiousness of Abul Fazal (held to be the most important of these reasons).⁽⁵⁾

Din-e-Akbari claimed itself to be an amalgamation of tolerance, inclusion, and the egalitarian values of Islam, Hinduism, and some other religions. However, history witnessed that Akbar's laws were more closer and favorable towards Hinduism than Islam. The main practices promoted by Akbar included holding worshipping ceremonies at morning, noon, and night times instead of the five prayers stipulated by Islam, annulment of Islamic call to prayer and congregational prayers in the court, exemption from Zakat, annulment of Hajj pilgrimage, fire worshipping, addressing public while facing towards the sun, making a Hindu mark on the forehead, shaving beards, bhadra (shaving beard, eyebrows, and moustaches while mourning), forbidding cow sacrifice, elimination of jizya, prostration of reverence,

alcohol consumption, consumption of pork, drinking Ganges water during travelling, replacing Islamic Eids with unislamic festivals, and replacing the belief in the day of judgment with the Hindu concept of metempsychosis.

The Kalma of Din-e-Ilahi was "Laa ilaaha illal Lahoo Akbar Khalifatullah". For greetings, the Islamic phrases of Assalam-u-likum and Waalikum-as-salam were replaced with "Allah-u-Akbar" and "Jallay Jallaluhu". Arabic education and literature was started to be treated with contempt. The Hijri calendar was replaced with San-Ilahi, which started with the elevation of Akbar as the demigod. The prayer rooms in the court were turned into warehouses.⁽⁶⁾ Akbar legislated that consuming alcohol was allowed if this was done for medicinal purposes. He also got a wine shop opened near the court, which sold alcohol at state stipulated rates. A gambling house was established under Akbar's own supervision which encouraged gamblers. A whole community of wenches was established by the name of Shaitaanpura, which was accompanied with an allowance of adultery. Prohibited the circumcision of children under the age of 12. Legally disallowed polygamy. Introduced the Hindu practice of doing rounds around a fire for wedding ceremonies. Heretical innovations were also introduced around the burial ceremonies. For instance, when Sultan Khawaja died, a window was made into his grave for the reason that the light coming through this window would cleanse his sins.⁽⁷⁾

4. Mohammad Aslam, *Deen e Ellahi aur is ka Pasmazar*, (Lahore: Nadwaul musannefin, 1979), 188; Badauni, *Muntakhab ul Tawareekh*, 2/416.

5. Badauni, Abdul Qadir, *Muntakhab ul Tawareekh*, Translator: Mahmood Ahmed Farooqi, (Lahore: Sheikh Ghulam Ali sons (private) limited, publishers, N D), 2/466-472.

6. Badauni, *Muntakhab ul Tawareekh*, Abulfazl (Allama), *Aeen e Akbari*, Translator: Mohammad Fida Ali Taalib, (Haider abad dakkan: darul matba Usmania, 1939), 2/2-3.2/400.

7. Mohammad Aslam, *Deen e Ellahi aur is ka Pasmazar*, 197-199; Badauni, *Muntakhab ul Tawareekh*, 2/432.

Inception of So-called Sufi Disciplines

A number of individuals claimed themselves to be Sufis during the Mughal period, especially in 10th Century Hijri, but the ideas and ideologies of most of these individuals were not in line with Islamic teachings. This created restlessness and instability in the society, and these individuals started misleading the common folk, instead of leading them on the true Islamic path. Most notable of these individuals are Ibrahim Kak, Mian Bayazid Ansari, Badiy-ud-Din Shah Madar, Shah Daulah Gujrati, Sarmad, Sheikh Suleman Misri Qalandar, Sheikh Aala-ul-Bayanui, Sheikh Muhibullah Allahabadi, Mullah Mohsin Fani Kashmiri, Syed Muhammad Jaunpuri, Mian Bari, and Mullah Muhammad Attock. These individuals drastically impacted the society, and a number of people were also held to be heretics and non-believers on the basis of their teachings. Their teachings, ideas, and actions resulted in creation of an anti-Islamic thought in their followers. Their libertarian ideas consistently resulted in taking their followers out of the sphere of Islam, and into a realm which only brought misguidance and anarchy in the society. The following sections would undertake a discussion on these different sects, including Madariya, Mahdaviya, Roshniya, Zikriya, Jalaliya, and Kak/Kakan.

Madariya

The Madariya discipline played an important role in promoting libertarian Sufi thought in 10th century Hijri and was fairly popular among the masses. It was also believed to be the first spiritual discipline of India. However, owing to its shortcomings, it was not regarded very highly among the Ulama. The basis of this discipline was laid down by Badiy-ud-Din Zinda Shah Madar, and historical opinion of him is highly divisive. There is no consensus among historians about his lineage, age, or time period. Opinions about his lineage are that he belonged to a Hassani-Hussaini Syed family, was a Quraishi, was originally a Jew but then converted to Islam,⁽⁸⁾ and that his lineage reaches up to Hazrat Abu-Huraira (R.A). Similarly, opinions about the time of his birth and death are also highly mismatching.⁽⁹⁾ One line holds Madar to be a disciple of Jesus Christ, who brought his greetings to Hazrat Muhammad (PBUH).⁽¹⁰⁾ The followers of the Madariya discipline believe that Shah Madar was blessed to be taught by the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) himself, and also that he studied the books belonging to Judaism, Christianity, and Islam under the guidance of Imam Mahdi- the disappeared Imam of the Shias. Another opinion is that he was a disciple of one of Hazrat Bayazid Bastami's disciples, and had learned from Hazrat Bayazid himself.⁽¹¹⁾ It is also said that Shah Madar came to India in 15th century AD, where he was instructed by his Jewish teacher Huzaifa Shami to study Islamic teachings, and knew all the

8. There are forty four different sayings about genealogy. Ansari, Abdul Qadir, *Sawanah Zinda Shah Madaar*, (Dakkan, Majlis Suffa e Sufia, 1352h), 7; Aziz Ahmed (professor), *Barr e Saghir mein Islami Culture*, Translator: Jameel Jjalbi, (Lahore: idaara Saqafat e Islamia, 2014), 240.

9. There are many differences in the date of Badiuddin's birth and death, these are 242h-838h, 716h-840h 771h-851h. According to which his age

has been described as 596, 250 and 124 years respectively. See:

Brief biography of syed Badiuddin Zinda Shah madar/ myislamicinfo.in/2020/01.

10. Mandavi, Muhammad Ghosi Shattari, *Gulzar-e-Abrar*, Translator: Fazal Ahmad Jiori, (Lahore: Maktaba Sultan Alamgir 1427h), 76.

11. Aziz Ahmed, *Barr e Saghir mein Islami Culture*, 240; Ansari, Abdulqadir, *Sawanekh Zinda Shah madar*, (Dakkan: Tassuf Manzil, 1352h), 13.-

heavenly books by heart. A number of Islamic scholars are convinced of his wisdom and intelligence. Some believe that while Shah Madar had eventually accepted Islam, there still was a heavy influence of his earlier Jewish upbringing in his personality. Christian influence on his personality is also frequently brought up. The source of his unity of religions were basically Christianity and Judaism, instead of Islam. ⁽¹²⁾ Later, with his arrival in India, he also readily absorbed Hindu philosophy and traditions in his teachings. ⁽¹³⁾ It was publicly gossiped that Shah Madar has not eaten for 12 years. That the clothes that he wore never required cleansing. That he used to keep his face covered because if anyone saw his face, he involuntarily fell into a prostration of reverence. ⁽¹⁴⁾ When he arrived in India, he set himself up in environs of Kanauj, at a place called Makhanpur, where he remained till his death. ⁽¹⁵⁾

After his arrival in India, Shah Madar had completely adopted Indian clothing, lifestyle, and spiritual practices. His disciples used to wander in markets completely naked, with their hair tangled liked recluses. Their bodies were covered with ashes and their heads and shoulders supported iron chains with which they used to beat themselves. Generally they used to keep a black turban and a black flag with themselves. They were not very concerned with prayers or fasting, used to keep sitting alongside a fire, but claimed to be Sunni. While this was not the case in its initial period, nudity and lack of proper bodily

covering became common among the followers of Madariya discipline in the later parts of the tenth century Hijri. This practice increased to such an extent that later day Madariyas used only to cover their private parts, and left the rest of their body uncovered. They used to protect themselves from cold by lighting a fire atop a mountain, and covering their bodies with its ashes, instead of using clothes. Thus, by adopting these uncouth practices, these individual not only got out of the sphere of religion, but also left the circle of proper humanly behavior. ⁽¹⁶⁾ According to Dabistan-e-Mazahib, these Madariyas used to gather at the shrine of Shah Madar at Makhanpur, an outskirt of Kanpur, every year. They believed that the blind and handicapped can be cured by visiting this shrine of Shah Madar. ⁽¹⁷⁾

Gradually, the usage of drugs became common among the followers of this discipline. Taking inspiration from the Christian concept of Trinity, they presented the idea of Islamic Trinity, in which Allah was held to be the spirit, Prophet Muhammad (PHUB) as the body, and Shah Madar as the ego. "Dam Madar" was their usual chant. Most of the followers of this discipline used to hold Shah Madar even higher than the Holy Prophet (PBUH). Most of the Madariyas were vegetarian, and used to avoid consuming meat. ⁽¹⁸⁾ As they believed that these ideas and ideals would make their discipline unpopular, they avoided propagating these beliefs in public, and used a secret language among themselves

12. Aziz Ahmed, *Barr e Saghir mein Islami Culture*, 240.

13. Qureshi, Ishtiyahq Husain, *Ulma Maidan e Syasat mein*, Translator: Hilal Ahmad Zuberi, (Karachi: Bureau of Composition, Compilation & Translation, University of Karachi Publisher, 1994), 62.

14. Mohammad Ikram, Sheikh, *Rood e Kausar*, (Lahore: Idara Saqafat e Islamia, 2015), 41.

15. Mujaddidi, M Iqbal, *Tazkirah Ulama wa Mashaikh Pakistan wa Hind*, (Lahore: Progressive Books, 2013), 1/277.

16. Mandavi, *Gulzar-e-Abrar*, 76.

17. Asfandyar Keykhosrow, *Dabestan e Mazaheb*, taliqat: Rasheed Ahmad Jalandhri, (Lahore: idara Saqafat e islamia, 2020), 219-220.

18. Aziz Ahmed, *Barr e Saghir mein Islami Culture*, 241.

for communication. Their beliefs, which went against the actual teachings of Islam, resulted in a highly distorted picture of Islam in the sub-continent.

Mehdavi Movement

The ninth century Hijri India saw the emergence of the Mehdavi movement, which was a reaction against the new innovations brought by the heretical Sufis. Its founder was the religious teacher in one of the mosques of Jaunpur, Syed Muhammad (846-910 H/ 1443-1504 AD).⁽¹⁹⁾ He was a first class scholar, highly intelligent, and strictly obedient to the injunctions of Shariah. Owing to these attributes, he was given the title of "Asad-ul-Ulama" during his youth by his spiritual leader, Sheikh Daniyal Jaunpuri, and other scholars. He gave his all to protect Islam from impure and heretical innovations. His religiousness, purity, and calls towards Islam resulted in the formation of a large group of followers. Then one day, he claimed to have had an ilham that he was the Imam Mehdi. After that, he started undertaking steps in his capacity as the "Mehdi Mauood" aimed at restoring the prestige of Islam.⁽²⁰⁾ He performed Hajj in 900 H/ 1495 AD, and reasserted his claim of being the Mehdi Mauood there. Prior to that, his teachings and ideas were quite popular in Sindh and Qandahar. Thus, the ruler of Qandahar openly supported the Mehdavi movement, which led to a political and religious instability in this region.⁽²¹⁾

There would have been no considerable problem if he had used the word "Mehdi" only to mean a religious leader. However, he claimed himself specifically to be the hidden Imam Mehdi. This claim was rejected by the Ulama in India, who also turned against him.⁽²²⁾ Because of this hostility of the Ulama, Syed Muhammad moved from Jaunpur to Gujrat. The opposition of religious authorities here resulted in him then emigrating to Arabia, and then to Iran. There too he was banished by the orders of Shah Ismail Saffavi, mainly because of his growing popularity. On his way back to India from Iran, he died at a place called "Frah".⁽²³⁾ After his death, the Mehdvi ideals penetrated rapidly into the society. Sheikh Abdullah Niazi became the most influential leader of the Mehdavi movement after the death of Syed Muhammad Jaunpuri. The third most important personality in the history of the movement was that of Sheikh Alai.⁽²⁴⁾

In its initial period, the Mehdavi movement was simply a reaction to the heretical beliefs that were predominant in the era, and its main motive was to spread the true Islam and the orders of Shariah. With time, innovations that were not in line with the original teachings of Islam came to be a part of the movement. Particularly in Gujrat, the ideological basis of this movement was severely impure. Owing to these innovations, the Mehdists were started to be seen as heretics and being killed, which led to a breakdown of public order. Owing to the violence undertaken by the followers of Mehdi

19. M Ikram, *Rood e Kausar*, 25.

20. Qureshi, Ishtiyag Husain, *Barre-Azeem Pak-o-Hind Ki Millat-e-Islamia*, Translator: Hilal Ahmad Zuberi, (Karachi: Bureau of Composition, Compilation & Translation, University of Karachi Publisher, 1983), 169.

21. Nadvi, abul Hasan Ali, *Tareekh e Dawat o Azeemat*, (Karachi: Majlis Nashriyat e Islam, N D), 3/53-54.

22. Qureshi, *Ulma Maidan e Syasat mein*, P: 43.

23. Qureshi, *Barre-Azeem Pak-o-Hind Ki Millat-e-Islamia*, 170.

24. Lakhnawi, Abdul Hai, *Nuzhat al Khawatir*, (Beirut: Dar Ibn Hazm, 1420h), 282-283 ;M Ikram, *Rood e Kausar*, 354.

Jaunpuri, the beliefs of Muslims were further contaminated, leading to an increased agitation in the society. The rightly guided Ulama were particularly concerned with such a situation. Sheikhd Ali Muttaqi (885-975 H) and Sheikh Muhammad bin Tahir Pattani (913-986 H) brought resistance against the movement and aimed to bring it back to the right path. The actions of these two leaders lead to a breakdown of the influence of the Mehdavi movement in Gujrat. This influence of the movement was then further reduced when Akbar conquered Gujrat in 980 H/ 1572 AD and appointed Meerza Aziz to eliminate the Mehdavi influence in the region.⁽²⁵⁾

Roshniya Movement

Another facet of the spiritual degeneration in the tenth century Hijri sub-continent can be observed in the form of the Roshniya movement. The Roshniya played an important part in politically supporting the rapidly declining Afghans and to contain the increasing influence of Mughals. The founder of this movement was Mian Bayazid bin Abdullah Ansari (931-994 H/ 1525-1585 AD). His followers used to refer to him as "Pir Roshan" or "Pir Rokhan", while the Mughal historians, and personalities like Mullah Zangi and Akhund Darweza used to call him as "Pir Tareek".⁽²⁶⁾ Mian Bayazid originated from an Ansari tribe in village Kanigram, Southern Waziristan. His father used to travel to Jalandhar frequently for his business activities, and this is where Mian Bayazid was born. Later, his father left the mother of Mian Bayazid to marry another woman, which resulted in his childhood and youth remaining neglected, and he was also unable to get any

formal education. In these days, an Ismaili religious teacher, Mullah Suleman, was very popular in Jalandhar. The "Pir Roshan" got admitted in his seminary, and developed the same twisted beliefs as were held by Mullah Suleman by being in his close company.⁽²⁷⁾

Hagiographers believe that he was inclined towards philosophizing even during the days of his youth. Then he started having visions and started hearing supernatural voices. When he was forty years old, he claimed that he was ordered by the Almighty to eschew the Shariah based procedure of cleansing and purifying oneself, and to offer prayers not as the Muslims do, but as the Prophets used to offer it.⁽²⁸⁾ He started seeing everyone as a heretic and wrongly guided, became a hermit, and then claimed himself to be a prophet.⁽²⁹⁾ He began the Roshniya movement during Akbar's reign. His teachings were an amalgamation of Bhakti, Ismaili, Mehdavi, and Sufi traditions.

Main Teachings of Roshan Bayazid

1. The animals sacrificed by those who do not believe in Peer Roshan and who believe in the philosophy of Wahdat-ul-Wajood would not be recognized.
2. Any person who does not recognize himself and Allah is not a human being. If he is harmful, he should be treated as Islam teaches to treat other harmful animals like wolves, lions, snakes, and scorpions, i.e. should be killed before it can harm any human being. If he is not harmful and follows the practices of Islam, then he should be treated as domesticated animals like cows or goats, i.e. is allowed to be

25. Ibid, 354.

26. M Aslam, *Deen e Ellahi aur is ka Pasmanzar*, 82.

27. Mohammad Husain, *A Few Phases of the Afghan Busties*, (Jalandhar, 1938), 42.

28. According to his inspiration, only the praise of God is the prayer of the Prophets. Keykhosrow, *Dabestan*, 313.

29. Nadvi, *Tareekh e Dawat o Azeemat*, 4/49.

- killed. Thus, Roshan Bayazid taught his followers to kill his rivals like animals.⁽³⁰⁾
3. Gave the idea of equality of men and women.
 4. Taught that prayers were not required to be offered while facing Qibla.
 5. Abolished the major ablution after sexual intercourse. Roshan Bayazid believed that all the four elements of nature have a purifying quality, and the body is cleansed whenever it comes into contact with air, and thus purifying the body specifically with water is not necessary.⁽³¹⁾ Thus, he made life easier for the Afghans living in harsh cold climates, which resulted in a lot of Afghans entering his circle of disciples.
 6. He added the levels of Qurbat, Wislat, Wahdat, and Sakunat to the original three levels of knowledge in Islam, i.e. Shariat, Tariqat, and Ma'arifat. These more advanced four levels were only attainable by Roshan Bayazid himself.⁽³²⁾
 7. Any person who does not recognize himself, and does not know about the eternal life is actually dead. The wealth and property of such a person, whose relatives are also dead like himself, is then supposed to be used by the living beings in the community. Thus, he taught his followers to kill the ignorant and the unlearned, and he himself lived as a highwayman along with his sons for a significant period of his life. He used to pillage Muslims, put one fifth of the pillage in bayt-al-maal, and distribute resources among the poor according to his own understanding.⁽³³⁾
 8. He wrote a book in Pushto for his followers, called *Khair-ul-Bayan*. This book was later written in Arabic, Persian, and Hindi by himself. This book is said to be the first Pushto book written in prose.⁽³⁴⁾ His other literary works include *Fakhar-ul-Talibeen*, *Sirat-ul-Tauheed*, *Muqsood-ul-Momineen*, *Haalnama*, *Risala-e-Aalam*, and *Risala Fakhar-ul-Mujtaba*.⁽³⁵⁾

He set Peshawar as the base of his movement, and gained the loyalty of a lot of Afghans. Propagated his teachings mainly among the Mahnadzayis. Sindhi and Balochi tribes were also influenced by his teachings. He gained immense popularity among the masses, despite the opposition of the Ulama. The local landlords and Ulama were particularly in opposition to the teachings and actions of Roshan Bayazid, due to which he had to keep migrating from one place to another. Still, his followers were still increasing in these difficult times. On complaints from his rivals, the Lord of Kabul, Mirza Muhammad Hakeem, ordered for his elimination. However, he was able to convince the local Qazi and those present at his trial with his arguments. He sent his envoys to the rulers, nobles, and Ulama of the neighbouring countries. He sent Akbar a copy of his work, *Sirat-ul-Tauheed*, which was happily accepted by Akbar, and returned with gifts from the Emperor. When he sent his

30. Keykhosrow, *Dabestan*, 315.

31. In this way, he saved the Afghans of the cold regions from a great difficulty. His fellow Afghans saw the benefits of his teachings, so they joined his circle of followers. Keykhosrow, *Dabestan e Mazaheb*, 317.

32. Ibid, p: 316.

33. Ibid, p: 317.

34. M Aslam, *Deen e Ellahi aur is ka Pasmanzar*, 82.

35. Nadvi, *Tareekh e Dawat*, 4/49; Keykhosrow, *Dabestan*, 317.

second in command to Meerza Suleman in Badakhshan, he was returned with a valuable horse, an Afghan posteen, and the expression of a wish to personally visit Roshan Bayazid.⁽³⁶⁾

His last years were spent in conflict with the Mughals, and he died during this period in 980 H/ 1572 AD. He was buried in an Afghan hilly area known as Bhatpur.⁽³⁷⁾ His successors continued his struggle against the Mughals, and their high point came when they captured the city Ghaznin. Jahangir dealt with them in a strict manner, while Bayazid's grandson was given the title of Rasheed Khan and a rank of Char Hazari during Shah Jahan's period. Owing to the constant battles and struggles, the movement eventually weakened and ended. However, the actual credit to eliminate the ideas promoted by the movement should be given to the Ulama who spent their lives in order to keep Muslims away from the waywardness brought about by this movement. The most notable of these Ulama was Akhwand Darwaiza, who also wrote a book, *Makhzan-e-Islam*, to contest the teachings of this movement.

Zikriya

The Zikriya discipline also came into being in the 10th century AD, and proved to be a very dangerous and divisive for Islam. The followers of this discipline followed Mullah Muhammad Attockki (977-1029) as their messenger. Mullah Muhammad was born in 977 H/ 1529 AD on a mountain in Nawah Attock.⁽³⁸⁾ It is believed that Mullah Muhammad Attockki was one of the disciples of the founder of the Mehdavi movement, Syed

Muhammad Jaunpuri. However, this is historically impossible as the dates of the life of Mullah Muhammad Attockki do not overlap with those of Syed Muhammad Jaunpuri (846-910 H). He can still be a disciple of one of the original disciples of Syed Muhammad Jaunpuri. Mullah Muhammad Attockki came from Iran to Balochistan, where he met a branch of the Batini Ismaili community, which called themselves as "Syed". After mutual communication, both these parties were able to convince each other. Thus, Mullah Attockki established the Zikriya discipline as a synthesis of the Batini and Mehdavi sects. He started preaching this religion from the Balochi city of Turbat, and following the footsteps of his spiritual leader, declared himself first to be the Imam Mehdi, then a prophet, and then as the last of the prophets.⁽³⁹⁾

His followers believe him to be the Mehdi, a khalifa, one with perfect knowledge and intelligence, an immortal, the last and the highest of prophets. He is believed to neither have a mother or a wife, nor any offspring, and to be the guide for not only men, but also for jinns, animals, and insects. They believe that all the heavenly books predicted his arrival, and that he and Allah love each other. As love is a stronger bond than friendship, his rank is higher than any other prophet. That all the messengers had pledged their allegiance to Mehdi in the presence of Allah, and that Allah had given heaven to Mehdi, so he can select who goes to heaven, and this task was delegated by Mehdi to his disciples. That Mehdi annulled the Shariyat-e-Ahmadi, and introduced the Shariyat-e-Muhammadi, which will go on till the day of judgement.⁽⁴⁰⁾

36. M Ikram, *Rood e Kausar*, 46.

37. Keykhosrow, *Dabestan*, 318.

Siddqui, Zia ul Haq, *Zikri Mazhab ka Tafseeli Jaiza*, Manthali Alhaq, Akora Khattak: Dar al-Ulum Haqqania, jan1080, voll:15, No: 4, 36.

39. [https://zikrimazhab.com/Introduction Zikri Religion/](https://zikrimazhab.com/Introduction%20Zikri%20Religion/) 14-05- 20222.

40. Siddqui, *Zikri Mazhab ka Tafseeli Jaiza*, 37.

Mullah Muhammad himself also claimed to have been the recipient of a divinely revealed book. This book is known by Persian names of Burhan, Burhan-ul-Taweel, and Kanz-ul-Israar. He claimed that this book annulled the Shariat-e-Ahmadi. This book was not formally published, and his followers used to keep this book a secret. One of the kalimas of these followers is "Laa ilaaha illal Lahoo Noor Pak Noor Muhammad Mehdi Rasool Allah". There are also other Kalimas which replace some of the their original words.⁽⁴¹⁾ Zikris also do not believe in the daily 5 prayers, and ridicule those who offer these prayers. They believe that offering these daily 5 prayers, Eid prayers, and Jumma prayers is a mistake, and those who offer these prayers are misguided, irreligious, and pagans. These daily 5 prayers were replaced by Zikr, which is why they are known as Zikris, while they used to call other Muslims as "namazis".⁽⁴²⁾

South of Turbat, around 2.5 miles on the road to Pisni, there is a small dry mountain, known as Koh-e-Murad, i.e. the mountain that fulfills wishes. This mountain is now surrounded by a 4 feet high wall. This is the Haram for Zikris. They believe that Medhi stayed on this mountain for 7 or 10 years. They also believe it to be a replacement of Holy Kaaba, while they also call the base of this mountain as Arafaat. Every 9th of Zilhajj, a ceremony of Zikr is held here, which imitates the staying at Arafaat as a component of Islamic Hajj, and Tawaf is also held on the same mountain on 10th Zilhajj. Currently, a ziyarat is held here on every 27th of Ramadan. A cave situated on another mountain to the west of Koh-e-Murad is said to be the replacement of Gar-r-Hira.⁽⁴³⁾

Main Religious Practices of The Zikri Religion

1. They replace daily 5 prayers with Zikr, with Allah's zikr taking place 5 times a day, and rukoo and sujood 3 times a day.
2. Instead of paying Zakat, they pay their religious leaders a tenth of their income.
3. Instead of Hajj to the Holy Kaaba, they gather at "Koh-e-Murad" on every 27th of Ramadan, perform some of their ceremonies, and give refer to this whole process as their own Hajj.
4. They fast on the first 8 days of Zilhajj, instead of the whole month of Ramadan.
5. They perform the "Chogan" ceremony, in which men and women form a circle and perform a dance without any music. The dance takes place on the rhythm of a sweet voiced man or woman sings about the virtues of the Mehdi and the attributes of God, and is placed in the centre of the circle. The last line of the song is sang in a chorus by everyone in attendance, and they believe that attending is ceremony is a great source of good.
6. One of their unique praying practice is the "sajda", in which they gather at sunrise and say some verses aloud in unison and rhythm. Then without any standing or bowing phase, go straight into a long sajda. Two more sajdas are then performed individually.
7. Do not believe in major ablution.

41. Abdul Majid, *Zikri Mazhab and Islam*, (Karachi: Siddiqui Trst, N D), 12; Ludhyanvi, Rasheed Ahmad (Mufti), *Ahsan ul Fatawa*, (Karachi: H. M. Saeed Company, 1435h), 1/192.

42. Siddqui, *Zikri Mazhab ka Tafseeli Jaiza*, 36-45.

43. Ibid, p: 45.

8. Do not perform the namaz-e-janaza for their deceased, but bury them in a similar way to Muslims.⁽⁴⁴⁾

Critics argue that it is the only religion which has a Punjabi prophet, Persian book, and Balochi followers. This sect and its followers caused great instability and an intellectual and practical anarchy in their era. According to the Ulema, this sect is zandeeq and murtid like Ismailis and Qadianis, owing to its rejection of the finality of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), rejection of the main components of Islam, and other heretical beliefs. It is not allowed to believe them to be Muslims, or to treat them as Muslims. The Mughal noble implemented the Shariat-e-Muhammadi in his area, while also fighting against the heretical activities of the Zikris. He finally eliminated this sect in a decisive battle after a number of bloody fights, however its remains can still be observed. Zikris can still be found in Karachi, Lasbela, Khuzdar, and Kohlu in limited numbers. The Baloch tribes living in the coastal belt of Makran are specifically known to have Zikris amongst them. They still visit the Kod-e-Murad and perform their annual ceremonies. Places have been specified for them to offer their prayers, which are known as Zikranas. While the Zikri religious teacher are not very knowledgeable, and are mainly learned in their traditions, they still wield a high influence among their community.⁽⁴⁵⁾

Jalaliya

The Jalaliyas are the followers of a great Sufi saint from Uch Sharif, Hazrat Syed Jalaluddin Bukhari (595-690 H). They claim themselves to be Shai, and are against the revered companions of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). They do not offer daily prayers or observe fasts, and were generally ignorant of

the teachings of the Sufis. They used hemp frequently, and snakes and scorpions were commonly found in their diets. Some of these also used to eat a snake whole, and claim that a snake was Hazrat Ali's (R.A) fish, while a scorpion was his shrimp. Like the Madaris, they also remained unclothed, even in severe colds, and kept themselves warm by sitting aside a fire. However, unlike the Madaris, they did not keep their hair unkempt. Some of them also commonly practiced Chaar Zarb. Most of them were Jalali-Saylani, and did not remain at one place for long. In 10th century Hijri, their guide and leader was Hamid Muhammad. Whatever they used to earn, it was offered to their leader. The leader then gave them a turban and his family tree. The followers kept this turban on their heads, and kept the family tree held on their necks in the form of a locket.

They believed that when Izrael (A.S) came to get their soul, the turban that their leader had given them automatically gets set on their eyes, so they do not have to see the terrifying face of the death angel. Their religious guide, Hamid Muhammad, used to dress as a bridegroom every day, and whenever he heard of a beautiful daughter of one of his followers, he ordered his followers to sound a bugle. Then, riding a horse, he used to take the said girl from the house of his follower, even without a nikah. When the author of Dabistan Mazahab, Isfand Yar, asked a Jalali that "how come your leader takes the daughters of his followers without marriage"? The follower answered that "the Safvi kings of Iran also frequently take the wives, daughters, and sons of their subjects, and these subjects are perfectly content with it. Then why should our leader, who is the one true Khalifa of Allah, not take the women of his followers? This practice is a sign of being a Syed". According to the author of the Dabistan,

44. Rasheed Ahmad, *Ahsan ul Fatawa*, 1/193-196.

45. <https://zikrimazhab.com/Introduction/Zikri-Religion/> 14-05-2022.

the religious leader of the Jalalis has a lot of followers, and he is an avid hunter.⁽⁴⁶⁾ Most of the beliefs of the Jalali discipline were against the teachings of Islam, and presented a false picture of Islam in the subcontinent.

Kak Sect

Ibrahim Kak⁽⁴⁷⁾ established a different sect during the reign of Mughal Emperor Jahangir (1569-1627 AD), whose adherents were referred to as "kakan" or "kakan Kashmir". They believed in monotheism, but did not perform any of the ceremonies associated either with Islam or Hinduism. They lived in solitude and believed in the philosophy of Wahdat-ul-Wajood.⁽⁴⁸⁾ It is believed that Ibrahim Kak made his eyes especially attractive, and used these to attract his followers, who then followed him blindly. Thus he gained a lot of followers. Religion was not of any concern for him. He did not convert his followers, and let them follow their religion, whether it was Islam or Hinduism. A Hindu follower was not asked to utter his belief in Tauheed or to get himself circumcised, neither was a Muslim asked to mark his forehead in the Hindu way. He never praised or criticized either Islam or Hinduism, or even mention any of the Prophets or other notable Islamic personalities, or any of the Hindu deities. He only used to mention Ram, Allah, and Khuda. He introduced the way of sleeping with the backs of two followers supporting each other, instead of the normal way of sleeping by lying down. He claimed both Azan and Goz to be the words of God. When a student asked him on how both these could be the words of God, he reasoned that both these

sounds came with the movement of air, thus they are the same.⁽⁴⁹⁾

The Kakan also consumed a lot of hemp. When Ibrahim Kak was chided on his usage of hemp, and told that the users of hemp would not be able to cross the Pul-e-Sirat on the day of judgment, he replied that hemp users were in a majority, and would establish their own city on this side of the bridge, which they will name as Bhangipur. Thus, there would be no need to cross the bridge.⁽⁵⁰⁾ Thus, owing to his heretical beliefs, he misguided the people of Kashmir.

The Reformative Struggle of The Rightful Ulema

The Mughal Emperor Akbar gave the self made idea of "universal peace" during the zenith of the Mughal rule, i.e. 11th century hijri. He gave the Hindu so many concessions, and gave them so high ranks that they made the lives of ordinary Muslims difficult. Akbar also implemented a new legal code in his court. Matters reached such a low point that Hazrat Imam Rabbani was expecting the Medhi to appear during this era. The Ulema and Islamic saints reacted in different ways to these turbulent times. Some took up strong struggle against the status quo, while others, disheartened with the state of affairs, left the country. For instance, Sheikh Saleem Chisti, the son of Badar-ud-Din Chisti migrated from India to Makkah, and spent the rest of his life there. When Sheikh Abdul-Haq Muhaddis Dehlavi left to study Hadith in the Holy Hejaz, he also abandoned his plans to return to India.⁽⁵¹⁾

46. Keykhosrow, *Dabestan*, 221.

47. According to Aziz Ahmad, He was a Kashmiri Brahmin. See: Aziz Ahmed, *Barr e Saghir mein Islami Culture*, 236.

48. Aziz Ahmed, *Barr e Saghir mein Islami Culture*, 236; Phillauri, Shardha Ram, *Usool e Mazahib*, (Lahore: Matba Metrwas, 1895), 238.

49. Keykhosrow, *Dabestan*, 222.

50. Phillauri, *Usool e Mazahib*, 238.

51. Bada'uni, *Muntakhab-ut-tawareekh*, 2/380.

The Qazi and Alim of Jaunpur, Mullah Muhammad Yazdi, gave a fatwa that Akbar has become an apostate (murtad), so it was the duty of every Muslim to take up the sword against him.⁽⁵²⁾ The Qazi of Bengal, Mir Yaqoob, also supported this fatwa. Most of the Ulema of Punjab also praised the courage of Mullah Muhammad Yazdi, and supported the jihad against Akbar. This resulted in a revolt against Akbar in Bengal, Bihar, and the Eastern Districts, and brave nobles like Muhammad Masoom Kabuli, Mir Maaz-ul-Mulk, Niyabat Khan, Muhammad Masoom Khan Farankhodi, and Arab Bahadur rising against the Emperor. ⁽⁵³⁾Some nobles planned to replace Akbar with his brother, the ruler of Kabul, Mirza Muhammad Hakeem, and started correspondence for this matter. In the revolting areas of Bengal and Bihar, Akbar's name was replaced by Mirza Muhammad Hakeem's in the Friday prayer sermon. ⁽⁵⁴⁾

Then Akbar started a campaign against these Ulema, who were arrested and harshly penalized. Thus, the Qazi of Bengal, Mir Yaqub, was thrown into the River Jamuna with his hands and legs tied. Qazi Mullah Muahmmad Yazdi and Mir Maaz-ul-Mulk met the same fate. Most of the Ulema from Lahore were also martyred, and from those who remained alive, Qazi Saddar-ud-Din Lahori, Mullah Abdul-Shakoor, Mullah Muhammad Masoom, and Sheikh Munawar were exiled into far away areas.⁽⁵⁵⁾ Dr. Muhammad Yasin writes that while Akbar was successful in eliminating these rightly guided Ulema

temporarily, but the pious Muslims were ultimately successful in their struggle against the Emperor.⁽⁵⁶⁾ The Ulema worked hard against the heretical beliefs like Din-e-Ilahi, and other such false beliefs, and served their lives for this endeavor. Among these Ulema, Sheikh Ali Muttaqi, Sheikh Tahir Pattani, Akhwand Darweza, Khwaja Baqi Billah, Sheikh Abdul-Haq Muhaddis Dehlavi, and Imam-e-Rabbani Sheikh Ahmad Sirhindi deserve a special mention. It was mainly due to the struggle of these brave Ulema that Islam was able to survive in its real form in the sub-continent. The following sections discuss the main contributions of these Ulema.

Sheikh Noor-ud-Din Ali Muttaqi Shazli Burhanpuri

Sheikh Ali Muttaqi (885-975 H) is one of the highly notable names of the religious and scholarly history of India. His hometown was Jaunpur, and he was taught by the best of teachers.⁽⁵⁷⁾ He is the author of more than a 100 books, and was mainly interested in Tassawuf and knowledge of Hadith.⁽⁵⁸⁾ He laid a lot of emphasis on teaching and writing, both in India and in the Haramain. He corrected most of the false changes that had beset the sufi tradition in his time, as well as fighting superstitious beliefs with his intellect and bravery. One example of this struggle against the innovations creeping in the sufi tradition in his time was his opposition to the "Risala Mairajiya" of Sheikh Ghous Gawaliori. He was quite active against the Mehdavi movement in particular, and rejected the misleading ideas of

52. M Aslam, *Deen e Ellahi aur is ka Pasmanzar*, 239.

53. Bada'uni, *muntakhab-ut-tawareekh*, 2/406.

54. M Aslam, *Deen e Ellahi aur is ka Pasmanzar*, 239.

55. Bada'uni, *muntakhab-ut-tawareekh*, 2/407.

56. Muhamad Yasin, *A social History of Islamic India*. (Lakhnau, The Upper India Publishing House, 1958), 144.

57. Matala, Mohammad Yusuf, *Mashaikh e Ahmad Abad*, (Lahore: Maktaba Al Haramain, 1432h), 365-366.

58. Chishti, Abdul Halim, "*Sahib e Kanzul Ummal Shaikh Ali Muttaqi Alhindi*" Maarif Mujjala e Tahqeeq, June 2017, 100.

Mehdi Jaunpuri. For this purpose, he not only ensured the collaboration of the local notables, but also published two strong publications by the names of "Risala fil Abtal-e-Dawaa Al-syed Muhammad bin Yousaf Al-Jaunpuri" and "Al-Burhan fi Alaamat al-Medhi Akhir-uz-zaman", in which he described the correct details of the rise of Medhi and mentioned injunctions given by the scholars in Holy Makkah to reject the claims of Mehdi Jaunpuri. It was mainly owing to his activities that the Mehdavi movement failed in Gujrat, which was a center of Mehdavism in its early days. (59)

Sheikh Muhammad bin Tahir Pattani

Sheikh Muhammad bin Tahir Pattani (913-986 H/ 1507-1578 AD) belonged to the Bohra community of Pattan Gujrat. After his early education in his home town, he went to the Haramain, where he was instructed by the scholars and teachers there. He was particularly attached to Sheikh Ali Muttaqi, and returned to India on his advice. He worked widely on writing and spreading the Hadith, and got the title of "Raees-ul-Muhaddiseen". His famous works are Majma-al-Bahaar and Magni. Sheikh Ali Pattani, under guidance of his highly venerable and venerated teacher, spent his life working for eradication of heresies and misguided beliefs throughout his life.⁽⁶⁰⁾ His Bohra community had accepted the Mehdavi notions, and had become followers of Syed Muhammad Jaunpuri. Like his teacher, he committed to bringing back his community towards the right path of Islam, and vowed never to wear his turban unless he had washed away the stain of heresy from his community. Thus, his head mostly remain uncovered. When Akbar conquered Gujrat in 980 H, he personally went to Pattan to meet Sheikh Tahir,

and himself set a turban on his head. He also encouraged Sheikh Tahir by saying that Allah had made them both saviors of the glory of the true religion. Sheikh Tahir embraced martyrdom in pursuit of these previously stated aims.

Hazrat Akhwand Darweza Nangarhari

Sheikh-ul-Islam Akhwand Darweza bin Gada bin Sa'adi (952-1048 H) was born in Nangarhar, a place next to Kabul. His initial life was spent among the Mohmands. He knew Quran by heart, and his memory was so remarkable that any book that he read remained in his head. After his early education, he swore allegiance to Syed Ali Tirmizi- who was known popularly as Peer Baba- and got lessons in a number of books in Tassawuf. Then on the orders of his Sheikh, he journeyed to a number of different countries and places. During these times, he remained committed to spreading the word of Islam, encouraging good and denouncing evil, and publishing the Sunnah of Rasool (PBUH). To those who were close to him he was known as Akhwand Sahib, while the general populace knew him as just Akhwan.

During this time, heresies, innovations, and atheism were on the rise. A number of movements aiming at liberty from religion were underway. Like his Sheikh, the Akhwand himself also spent his whole energy and strength to fight these misguided movements, and kept alive the original teachings of Islam in the inhospitable and faraway frontier regions. Whenever an individual claimed to be a Sheikh in these lands, Akhwand Darweza used to gather the locals and talk to the claimant. If his ways and beliefs were in line with the Ahl-e-Sunnat-wal-Jamat, he was allowed to practice and live in the land,

59. M Ikram, *Rood e Kausar*, 354.

60. M Mian, Syed, *Ulama e Hind ka Shandar Mazi*, 1/208-209-

otherwise he was exiled. Like others in the region, he also acted strictly against one particular heretic by the name of Meer Qasim. Similarly, he also worked against the Roshnayi movement of Peer Tareek Bayazid Ansari. He defeated him in debate at a number of times, and made people realize the wrong beliefs and ideas being spread by him, and thus broke his influence in the region. He was also a remarkable writer, and authored around 50 books in total. Among these, Tazkara al-Abrar wal-Ashrar, Irshad-ut-Talibeen, Irshad-ul-Murideen, Makhzan-al-Islam, Kaseeda-al-Amali, and Sharh Asma-ul-Husna have been published. His tomb is situated in a place one mile east of Peshawar called "Hazaar Khwani", and the main graveyard of the area is named after him.⁽⁶¹⁾

Sheikh Abdul-Haq Muhaddis Dehlavi

Abu-al-Majd Abdul-Haq bin Saif-ud-Din Muhaddis Dehlavi (958-1052 H/ 1551-1624 AD) is a renowned Alim, famous researcher, and a highly respected personality. He was incredibly intelligent, and had been blessed with a habit of reading since his childhood. His allegiance was to Hazrat Musa Pak Shaheed of the Qadriya discipline, and he himself was closely attached to this discipline. After the death of Hazrat Musa Pak Shaheed, he became disillusioned with the situation in India, and migrated to Hejaz in 996 H, aged 48 years. This was Akbar's reign, and the disregard for Islamic teachings and heretical innovations under the state patronage severely saddened him. While also completing his studies under highly able teachers in Hejaz, he also vowed his allegiance to the special disciple of Sheikh Muttaqi al-Hindi, Hazrat Abdul Wahad Muttaqi Shazli (902-1001 H). He returned to India in 1000 H on the orders of his Sheikh, and

spent the rest of his life here in writing and publishing, teaching, and eliminating heresy.⁽⁶²⁾

A study of the different religious movements that started during this era shows that the main point of difference was the status and respect bestowed to Holy Prophet (PBUH). Imamism, belief in Mehdism, the Din-e-Ilahi, and all such heretical and innovative sects aimed to undercut the respect and reverence that Holy Prophet (PBUH) is given in Islam. In such circumstances, the most important contribution of Sheikh Abdul-Haq Muhaddis Dehlavi was explaining the status and venerated position of Holy Prophet (PBUH) through writing and speeches, and strongly rejected all the misleading beliefs. Thus, his most notable contributions remain his two prefaces to Mishkat Shareef, and his highly celebrated book on the personality of Holy Prophet (PBUH), Madaraj-al-Nabuwat. In this book, he specifically mentioned his contemporary Ulema at various places, and highlighted their duties in such a critical time. He attracted everyone towards the teachings of Holy Prophet (PBUH), including Sheikhs, Nobles, and the common men. He also established a madrasa for teaching Hadith, and especially taught people about the status of Holy Prophet (PBUH). His main motivation behind these activities was to eliminate the different heresies and fitnas through the life and ahadith of Holy Prophet (PBUH). The most dangerous of the fitnas during this time was the "Alfi Ideology", which held that the time limit for Islam was only one thousand years. As this time period had expired, there was no need to follow the injunctions of Islam and the Shariat.

61. Qadri, M Ameer Shah, *Tazkira Ulama-o-Mashaikh Sarhad*, (Peshawar: Maktaba Al Hasan yakka Toot, N D), 1/25-38.

62. Lahori, Ghulam Sarwar, (Qadri), *Khazeena tul Asfia*, (Lahore: Maktaba Nabvia, N D), 1/27.

Not only the common people, but the Emperor Akbar was also misled by this ideology.

With his return from Hejaz, he wrote letters to different influential personalities of the time, and took steps to bring Muslims out of the decline that they were facing during this era. Thus, he guided the people of Subcontinent till the age of 92, through his writings, his madrassah, and his letters. He guided the people on important topics like; what is real Islam, how can one be a true Muslim, how Shariat and Tariqat are related, and how adherence to Shariat can help one achieve true heights. His other books, like Akhbar-al-Akhiyar and Zaad-al-Muttaqeen were also aimed at guiding his contemporaries in their thoughts and actions. Thus, through his writings and teachings for an extended period, he corrected the wrongly directed innovations that were coming up in the garb of tawassuf, and making the people realize the importance of life and teaching of Holy Prophet (PBUH), Islamic beliefs, and the lives of other venerated Islamic elders, he alone performed the functions of an entire institution. He played a fundamental role in bringing the heretical thought and beliefs in Subcontinent back on the right path.

Khwaja Baqi Billah

Hazrat Khwaja Abul Moeed Razi-ud-Deen Muhammad Baqi bin Abdul Salam (971-1012 H/ 1563-1603 AD) was a well known scholar, Sufi, writer, and poet of the eleventh century Hijri. He came to India for promoting Islam either at the end of 1004 H or in 1005 H, on the orders of his Sheikh, Khwaja Muhammad Muqtadi Amkanagi. He came to Delhi through Lahore, worked for the promotion of the Naqshbandi discipline.⁽⁶³⁾ Following his elders, he not only preached to the commoners,

but also kept communication with the nobility. He had a number of important achievements only in a short period of four or five years. A number of nobles belonging to Akbar's court swore their allegiance to him. He followed a well crafted strategy to eliminate the heretical beliefs spread during Akbar's reign, under which a party of rightly guided nobles, scholars, and Sufis was prepared to establish a permanent front against these misguided religious tendencies. The members of this party conditioned their support of Jahangir in his succession to the throne on the promise that he would help them in their struggles to promote Islam in the subcontinent. It was significantly due to his actions that the atheism that developed during Akbar's reign was eliminated to a good degree. The noble classes developed a love for religion, and the ideas of Akbar's time were not able to develop further. One of his highly distinguished disciples, Hazrat Mujaddid Alif-e-Sani played a historical role and is discussed in the following section.

Sheikh Ahmad Sirhindi, Hazrat Mujaddid Alif-e-Sani

Imam Rabbani, Abul Barkaat, Sheikh Ahmad Sirhindi bin Abdul-Ahad Farooqi (971-1034 H/ 1564-1624 AD) is among the most notable Sufi in the subcontinent. He was a disciple and viceregent of Khwaja Baqi Billah in the Naqshbandi discipline. He performed a number of important tasks in his life, which included spreading the Shara'a, publishing work on Shariat and Tariqat, writing about the Naqshbandi way of things, evolution of Islamic philosophy, and opposing heresy, etc. His most famous work was the revival of Islam. His letters are better than most books on points regarding the spread of Islamic teachings and explanation of detailed points of Sufism. Even

63. Khan, Ghulam Mustafa, Dr, *baqiyat e baqi*, (Karachi: Gaba Educational Books, N D), 20.

today, people seek guidance from these letters. He opposed any strand of Sufism which was not in accordance with the Shariah. Akbar's idea of Universal Peace had taken from Islam the support it had always enjoyed ever since the first Islamic government came to power. He believed that Islam cannot be spread without the support of a ruler. As has already been discussed above, this period saw a gradual replacement of Islamic beliefs and customs with Hindu ones. The power of Hindus was constantly expanding in the court, which created a different problems for Muslims. He stressed the importance of respecting the basic tenets of Islam, and encouraged the nobles and other functionaries of the state towards this point of view. He himself created an example of bravery, courage, and love of religion, as he faced imprisonment for opposing the orders that were against the Shariah. This sacrifice on his part encouraged others to be more courageous, and also strengthened the Islamophiles in the ruling classes. One of his notable service in spreading and promoting Islam was that he himself wrote letters to the close allies of the King and instructed them about the real spirit of Islam. Then he stressed them to take benefit from their close position to the King and guide him about the teachings that make the basis of Islam. He also worked to make the religious nobles get closer to the King, and thus render the heretical or Hindu nobles unable to get close to the King and influence his mind, and thus kept the Islamic nation from facing the same problems in Jahangir's era that they had faced during Akbar's reign.

He lived for about 40 years into Akbar's reign, and then Jahangir came to the throne. He constantly struggled for the revival and glorification of religion. He could also have taken a position of power in the government and then worked for spread of Islam, but he

kept himself away from any such political activity, and focused his attention on guiding the nobles about the true teachings of Islam. The main purpose of these letters was to restore Islam to the position that it had lost under Akbar, and to keep any such situation from developing in the future.

Epilogue

The current study aimed to inform the readers about the main heretical movements that developed during Mughal times in the subcontinent, as well as discussing the distinguished personalities which helped eliminate the impacts of these heretical innovations. It is generally believed that the Mashaikh Tariqat avoided any active and militant role in the spread of Islam. This study shows that, like in any other time and place, the Ulema and Mashaikh in the subcontinent also faced difficulties courageously and did not back out of any required sacrifice. As Hindu influence was deeply rooted in this area, as it still is, these distinguished Ulema fought with heresy and innovation in a very severe environment.

The important thing about these Ulema is that they were also proficient writers and teachers. Another purpose of this study was to help the current day Ulema and Mashaikh realize that they also need to contribute to the promotion and spread of Islam, irrespective of their sects, biases, or any vested interests.